

talking about one issue, and that's high unemployment. And in order to wipe out unemployment, which we've been recording from 1890 to 2011, we need a massive jobs program in this country. I recommend a jobs program that benefits all Americans: the rebuilding of 95,000 schools in this Nation to an equal high-quality standard; putting roofers, brick masons, electricians, teachers, carpenters to work; providing unprecedented technological access to the Internet and modern forms of communication to 60 million children across our country.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, tea party activists and conservatives in both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, many of them don't see it that way. But I see something different. I see an America that can build runways for airplanes in States all across this country and build an interstate transportation system by one national Federal standard.

We simply can't build schools and provide an equal high-quality education for 60 million children in 50 different States in 15,000 locally controlled school districts in 3,100 counties in 19,000 cities across this country one school at a time. If there's enough money to fight the war in Iraq, if there's enough money which this Congress keeps writing the check for to fight the war in Afghanistan, if there's enough money to spend \$550 million in 1 week bombing Libya, then, Mr. Speaker, we can find the money in this Congress to rebuild these schools, reduce unemployment, put 15 million unemployed Americans to work, and change the course of our country. If we can put 15 million Americans to work, we can wipe out the Nation's debt, its deficit, and provide a long future for the American people.

With that said, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PRESIDENT CARTER'S RECENT VISIT TO CUBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NUNNELEE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. I appreciate the recognition.

Mr. Speaker, on March 28, former President Jimmy Carter arrived on a trip to Cuba at the invitation of the Cuban dictatorship. He arrived there, and originally in his agenda that was made public he had no meetings with any of the internal opposition leaders, no meetings with any of the civil society leaders, no meetings with anybody other than the regime.

I know that he met with the dictator who's been oppressing and torturing and savaging that population without obviously having free elections for over 52 years, for over half a century. He called the dictator, Mr. Castro, his dear friend.

Mr. Speaker, right before former President Carter arrived at that

enslaved island, the regime went about arresting and detaining a rather large number of people, people who they wanted to make sure didn't make trouble. Now, remember, that making trouble in that totalitarian regime, Mr. Speaker, is speaking out, asking for freedom, just getting together and organizing and asking for some basic human rights. So they started systematically detaining and arresting and harassing people so that former President Carter wouldn't have to see, wouldn't have to be bothered with the inconvenience of people actually speaking out and asking for freedom and asking for democracy.

□ 2000

A group of people, Mr. Speaker, actually went in front of the old capitol building. A capitol building, by the way, that doesn't look very dissimilar to this Capitol building, where at one time, debates in the democratic society used to take place, where people argued and debated in a peaceful fashion about their future, about their agreements and disagreements.

So a group of people decided to demonstrate in front of that building, which is actually very emblematic as to what they were talking about, and basically just to say, We want freedom. We want democracy. We want the ability to speak out and determine our future. But for that they were again harassed, and for that they were arrested.

Eriberto Liranza was reportedly beaten by state security rather harshly. Several were detained at the protests in Havana, including activist Eriberto Liranza Romero, the president of the Cuban Youth for Democracy movement, and Boris Rodriguez Jimenez, a member of that same organization.

Mr. Speaker, one of the heroes that I greatly admired is a man named Jorge Luis Garcia Perez. Everybody knows him as "Antunez," by one name. He mentions, and he said, This action, this action of just demonstrating is a demand for the freedom of the political prisoners; and in response, a moral slap in the face for the campaign's undertaking by the regime to divide the opposition. He went on to say, Mr. Speaker, "We are true to our motto: The streets belong to the people."

But, you see, unfortunately in Cuba, just standing out, walking together, like the Ladies in White do, and when they just demonstrate peacefully together, they walk together as a symbol of just speaking out because their relatives, their husbands and fathers and sisters and daughters and brothers and sons, et cetera, are in prison. Just for doing that, they get savagely beaten by that regime.

While President Carter was there, did he insist on free elections for the Cuban people? No. Did he insist on meeting with and speaking about and talking about those who are suffering in the dungeons, the political prisoners? No, Mr. Speaker, he did not.

And as I mentioned at the beginning, sir, he really didn't even have it on an agenda to even meet with anybody, other than the regime, until I guess he was a little bit embarrassed by some of the reports and eventually decided to allow some people to try to meet with him.

So did he speak out about the savagery of the regime? Did he speak out about the lack of elections? Did he demand free elections for the enslaved people? Did he demand for an end to the apartheid system? Did he demand that that regime turn over the multiple, the many fugitives from American law who are harbored by that terrorist regime 90 miles away from the United States? No, Mr. Speaker, he did nothing of that sort.

But let me tell you what he did do. He spoke of and he complained about the sanctions that the United States Government has to try to show solidarity with the Cuban people, to have leverage with that regime once Castro is no longer in the picture, which I think is sooner than people expect. He complained about the attitude and the policies of the United States Government but not about the policies of that thug, that dictatorship 90 miles away. He didn't complain about what they do, what that dictatorship does to its own people.

Did he complain about the mass arrests of those heroes who wanted to speak out and who decided to use that opportunity in front of the capitol building to just ask for freedom? No, he didn't do that, Mr. Speaker, but he did complain about U.S. policy.

He went a step further. He went on to demand the release in the United States of five convicted criminals, five people who were convicted in the United States, in a country where we have due process, we have all the rights and all the rights that are provided to a defendant, five people who were convicted of espionage and one who was also convicted of conspiracy to commit murder. So former President Carter did ask that those convicted in a court of law, with all the due process that we have in this country, for espionage and for conspiracy to commit murder, he did ask and demand their release. But he did not ask or demand the release of the hundreds and hundreds of political prisoners who are rotting in prison while he was there.

So it's a sad day, Mr. Speaker. It's a sad day, I think, for humanity.

I know a lot of people who are listening are probably not surprised. I recall that when the Cuban dictator was gravely ill, it was reported that former President Carter wrote him a nice little letter, a nice note, hoping that he would recover and that he would recover his health. And now, again, former President Carter called him his dear friend, hoping that he would recover.

This is a regime who had asked on multiple occasions for the then-Soviet Union to strike the United States with

nuclear weapons, to do a first strike on the United States with nuclear weapons, and yet former President Jimmy Carter was hoping that he would recover. This is a regime that is a state sponsor of terrorism 90 miles away from the United States, and yet former President Jimmy Carter sent him a note that he would hope that he would fully recover. This is a regime who our GIs died in Grenada, the island of Grenada, liberating that island and died at the hands of the troops that the Cuban regime had sent there, and yet former President Jimmy Carter was hoping and writing that that dictatorship would fully recover. This is a dictatorship that harbors U.S. fugitives, that harbors terrorists, that is on a list of states that sponsor terrorism, one of just four on that list, and yes, former President Jimmy Carter was hoping that he would fully recover.

Well, unfortunately, the dictator has somewhat recovered. And what has he been doing? Well, more of the same. He still harbors the terrorists. He still harbors the fugitives, and he still is creating all sorts of havoc around the hemisphere. But he also, in addition to that, continues to enslave his people, to oppress his people, to torture his people. And we've seen example after example of that with, again, the last arrests that I just spoke of.

Mr. Speaker, a couple of weeks ago a group of us here in Congress spoke to another one of my heroes, Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet. Oscar Elias Biscet is a brilliant young Afro-Cuban physician. He founded the Lawton Foundation for Human Rights in 1997, and that was founded just to promote the study and defense of human rights and to denounce human rights violations inside of Cuba and wherever else they may take place. Now, for denouncing the double standards and discrimination against the Cuban people, the discrimination that the Cuban health care system has for the Cuban people, he was forbidden from practicing medicine. Again, he is an M.D.

In November of 1999, Dr. Biscet was imprisoned for 3 years just for organizing a peaceful pro-democracy protest. He was released in 2002. By the way, again, he was no longer allowed to practice medicine. But he was released in 2002. So what he did was he organized seminars on just the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

I snicker because, you know, that's something that every day people talk about. I mean, my colleague on the other side of the aisle just spent quite a large part of his time talking about the evolution of the Constitution, et cetera, and human rights. Well, Dr. Biscet, when he was released in 2002, he talked about the Declaration of Human Rights.

□ 2010

So he was arrested once again in December of 2002 for attending seminars and for organizing some of those seminars.

On April 7, 2002, Dr. Biscet was sentenced to 25 years in prison. He has been incarcerated in multiple prisons around the island in multiple gulags and has suffered greatly in his incarceration.

On November 5, 2007, President Bush recognized Dr. Biscet by presenting him, in absentia of course, he was not allowed to visit with him, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and stating that Dr. Biscet is a champion in the fight against tyranny and oppression. Despite being persecuted and imprisoned for his beliefs, he continues to advocate for a free Cuba in which the rights of all people are respected.

I said, Mr. Speaker, that a group of us, CHRIS SMITH from the State of New Jersey, Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, chairperson of the International Relations Committee, and I, spoke to Dr. Biscet by telephone. And, obviously, the first thing was we asked him about his health. And he has suffered greatly in prison.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that he has not, however, given up his efforts. He said, You know, I am recuperating so I can continue the struggle for freedom.

We asked him about, well, what was his opinion about the policy, the United States policy? By the way, the same policy that former President Jimmy Carter now has just criticized. He said, there are some that claim that if we just opened up trade and we just opened up and we got rid of the sanctions that freedom would come to the Cuban people.

He was emphatic. He was so emphatic. He said, no, no, no, no, no. He said, tyrants are always looking at ways to get more money. Tyrants are always looking at ways of getting more revenue. But he further stated, the only thing that would do—and I'm paraphrasing what he said—but he was very emphatic and very clear. The only thing that would do, he said, would be to strengthen the dictatorship. It wouldn't help the Cuban people. It would strengthen the dictatorship.

Did former President Jimmy Carter meet with Dr. Biscet, the recipient of the Medal of Freedom? No, he did not. He did not because he probably would have not liked to have heard what Dr. Biscet would have had to say. He would have not liked to have heard about the oppression and the lack of human rights and the lack of dignity that those who suffer in Castro's gulags have to suffer, while former President Jimmy Carter calls the dictator in Havana his good friend.

There are other such incredible heroes that are on the island, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned Dr. Biscet, but I also want to mention Antunez, as I mentioned before. Antunez served almost two decades in prison. He received incredible tortures, beatings, multiple beatings, while he was there; and, yet, when released, his attitude has been what? His attitude has been one of great dignity, of great courage, of

standing up and he continues to demand elections, continues to demand freedom.

And he also would tell you, if he could be speaking here today, that we have to stay firm and we have to hold steadfast and show solidarity with the Cuban people, not with the regime, not with those that former President Carter calls his good friends, not with those that former President Carter says that they should continue to prosper, when they were ill, hoping that they would do well and fully recover. No, we have to hold firm and stand with the Cuban people.

Mr. Speaker, I'm so convinced, so convinced that the Cuban people will be free, despite the apologists, despite those that go out of their way to try to make the regime look good, try to make the regime look like they're this wonderful, charitable regime because every once in a while they may free a political prisoner as a token gesture.

Despite that, the Cuban people continue to stand firm. Their heroes are still there; the Mandelas and the Havels of Cuba are on the island. They're speaking out. Most of them, many of them have been in prison. Many of them have been tortured and beaten, but their spirit remains strong, Mr. Speaker. They continue to speak out.

And despite individuals like, unfortunately, former President Jimmy Carter, who looks for every excuse and every opportunity to criticize the policies of the United States and yet refused to criticize the savagery of that dictatorship, despite that, I'm absolutely convinced that the Cuban people will be free because of the heroes like Dr. Biscet and Antunez and many more.

So I am not discouraged. I am not discouraged when I see these gestures of solidarity with the dictatorship. I am not discouraged when people go down to Havana and, you know, might have a mojito and relax and go to the beaches and tour the hotels where the Cubans are not allowed to go unless they're accompanied by foreigners. I'm not discouraged because ultimately truth always reigns, because ultimately the rights of individuals always surface. Ultimately, those that sacrifice and that work hard and the heroes who, by the way, are the future leaders of a free Cuba, those heroes who are in the dungeons or who are in and out of the dungeons, they don't give up. And they're not discouraged, and they're not quieted, and they will not be intimidated.

So, Mr. Speaker, despite this, what some would call a slap in the face to the cause of human rights and democracy in Cuba, I will tell you further than that, the cause of human rights and human dignity around the planet, despite that that former President Jimmy Carter has just attempted to do, I'm not discouraged. On the contrary, I am as encouraged as ever.

I think I might end by reading a letter, if I actually have it here. No, I

don't think I have it. I do want to mention, though, that one of our colleagues in the Senate, a Democrat, Democrat from New Jersey, Senator MENENDEZ, wrote a letter to former President Jimmy Carter where he expressed, and I will be submitting that for the RECORD, Mr. Speaker, where he expressed what Jimmy Carter, what former President Jimmy Carter should be talking about. And he expressed how it was rather incredible that the former President would not demand the freedom of the Cuban people and would criticize the policies of the United States.

And as Senator MENENDEZ says in that letter, the issue is not what the policy of the United States is with the Cuban regime. The issue is the policies of the regime and the oppression of the regime with its own people. And once again, Senator MENENDEZ, Democrat from New Jersey, is right on.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I just want to again say that we do not forget the heroes in the island. We do not forget those who are struggling and working and speaking out and suffering the consequences for their actions in the island. We do not forget them. We admire them. We support them. We are humbled by their courage. We are humbled by their love for freedom and what they are willing to sacrifice for that freedom, and we know that sooner than I think some may believe and clearly sooner than some would like, they too will be free. They too will be able to discuss the issues in public. They too will be able to make the determination as to the future of their country.

I am encouraged and humbled by their leadership, despite sometimes the

sadness of what we have to listen to by those who still continue to call Fidel Castro their good friend.

MARCH 29, 2011.

Hon. JIMMY CARTER,
*The Carter Center, One Copenhill,
Freedom Parkway, Atlanta, GA.*

DEAR PRESIDENT CARTER: I am writing to express my grave concern about your visit to Cuba this week to discuss improving U.S.-Cuba relations.

Your visit suggests that the improvement of relations between the United States and Cuba is contingent upon some action by the United States, rather than acknowledging that it is Cuba's intolerant and tyrannical actions that continue to define the future of U.S.-Cuba relations. While you are visiting with President Castro and other Cuban officials to learn about new economic policies and the upcoming party Congress, the regime's thugs are in the streets harassing and arresting scores of political dissidents who dared to hope that you would hear their pleas and argue on their behalf for the adoption of political reforms. The fate of American Alan Gross, a USAID contractor who sought to assist the island's Jewish community, also hangs in the balance while you meet with the political elite that are directing the crackdown on Cuba's peaceful civil society activists. On Sunday, the regime detained activists Adriano Castañeda Meneses, Yris Tamara Pérez Aguilera and Jorge Luis García Pérez Antúnez and on Monday, Liranza Romero, president of the Cuban Youth for Democracy Movement and Boris Rodríguez Jiménez were arrested when they attempted to stand in front of the Capitol with signs reading "Freedom without Forced Exile for Cuba's Political Prisoners" and "The Streets belong to the Cuban People."

I urge you to address with President Castro the aspirations of Cuba's civil society to live in a democratic state whose laws are derived and implemented by their democratically elected representatives and are based on the core principles of respect for human and civil

rights, including the freedom of expression and freedom of assembly.

As we witness unprecedented movements for democratic change in the Middle East, I appeal to you to recognize that same heartfelt desire amongst the Cuban people and to urge the regime to fulfill the democratic aspirations of the Cuban people.

Sincerely,

SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BARTON of Texas (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) from noon today and for the balance of the week on account of a death in the family.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1079. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend the airport improvement program, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 20 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 31, 2011, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Speaker-Authorized Official Travel during the fourth quarter of 2010 and the first quarter of 2011 pursuant to Public Law 95-384 are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO KUWAIT, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN FEB. 20 AND FEB. 26, 2010

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. David Dreier	2/20	2/21	Kuwait		425.00		(9)				425.00
Hon. David Price	2/20	2/21	Kuwait		316.00		(9)				316.00
Hon. Lois Capps	2/20	2/21	Kuwait		425.00		(9)				425.00
Hon. Sam Farr	2/20	2/21	Kuwait		425.00		(9)				425.00
Hon. Jim McDermott	2/20	2/21	Kuwait		425.00		(9)				425.00
Rachael Leman	2/20	2/21	Kuwait		425.00		(9)				425.00
Brad Smith	2/20	2/21	Kuwait		425.00		(9)				425.00
Robert Lawrence	2/20	2/21	Kuwait		425.00		(9)				425.00
John Lis	2/20	2/21	Kuwait		425.00		(9)				425.00
Asher Hildebrand	2/20	2/21	Kuwait		316.00		(9)				316.00
Brian Monahan	2/20	2/21	Kuwait		425.00		(9)				425.00
Hon. David Dreier	2/21	2/25	Indonesia		777.00		(9)				777.00
Hon. David Price	2/21	2/25	Indonesia		681.00		(9)				681.00
Hon. Lois Capps	2/21	2/25	Indonesia		777.00		(9)				777.00
Hon. Sam Farr	2/21	2/25	Indonesia		777.00		(9)				777.00
Hon. Jim McDermott	2/21	2/25	Indonesia		777.00		(9)				777.00
Rachael Leman	2/21	2/25	Indonesia		777.00		(9)				777.00
Brad Smith	2/21	2/25	Indonesia		777.00		(9)				777.00
Robert Lawrence	2/21	2/25	Indonesia		777.00		(9)				777.00
John Lis	2/21	2/25	Indonesia		777.00		(9)				777.00
Asher Hildebrand	2/21	2/25	Indonesia		711.00		(9)				711.00
Brian Monahan	2/21	2/25	Indonesia		777.00		(9)				777.00
Hon. David Dreier	2/25	2/26	Timor-Leste		190.00		(9)				190.00
Hon. David Price	2/25	2/26	Timor-Leste		165.00		(9)				165.00
Hon. Lois Capps	2/25	2/26	Timor-Leste		190.00		(9)				190.00
Hon. Sam Farr	2/25	2/26	Timor-Leste		190.00		(9)				190.00
Hon. Jim McDermott	2/25	2/26	Timor-Leste		190.00		(9)				190.00
Rachael Leman	2/25	2/26	Timor-Leste		176.00		(9)				176.00
Brad Smith	2/25	2/26	Timor-Leste		176.00		(9)				176.00
Robert Lawrence	2/25	2/26	Timor-Leste		190.00		(9)				190.00
John Lis	2/25	2/26	Timor-Leste		190.00		(9)				190.00