

One year ago the Joplin community was devastated by an EF-5 tornado but showed the Nation and the world what it means to help your neighbors in their greatest time of need.

The tornado that wreaked havoc on our friends and neighbors was a ½ mile to ¾ mile wide and traveled approximately 13 miles, forever changing the landscape of the community and lives of those who call Joplin home. This destructive force of nature claimed 161 lives, damaged an estimated 7,500 residential dwellings, damaged nine schools, and damaged 545 businesses.

I saw the immediate aftermath of this disaster with my own eyes, and I know it is vital to get the right resources to the right people as quickly as possible, because lives depend on it. As Joplin's representative in Congress it was my job to make sure the Federal Government worked with local and state officials to provide disaster relief. As a neighbor it was my job to help in any way I could, from setting up cots in aid stations with other volunteers to helping with search and rescue. Missouri is called the Show-Me State, and Missourians and Americans from across our great country showed the Nation and the world the compassion and generosity of the American spirit. Over 120,000 volunteers poured into the Joplin area to offer their help and support, and some are still assisting with rebuilding efforts.

Before the life-changing event of May 22, 2011, Joplin was just a town in Missouri, but now its sense of community is known throughout the Nation. While the Joplin community is still picking up the pieces from that fateful day, I know they have a bright future ahead. Though lives were lost and homes and businesses destroyed the one thing the tornado did not take is the sense of community that makes Joplin a welcoming place to live, work and visit. Joplin is stronger despite this unfortunate disaster.

As we commemorate the one-year anniversary which changed the lives of all families impacted by this horrific disaster we treasure the good times in the past and look forward to a promising future for Joplin and all who call this wonderful place home.

Even though we can't explain why tragedy strikes, we can use what happened here to remind us of the good inside us all and to remind us that even though we lost a lot, we did not lose everything. Joplin has faced challenges that most communities will not ever experience, but the outpouring of support is also something any community would be fortunate enough to receive.

If anyone thinks that there are not good, generous and compassionate people in this world, then they need to come down to Joplin to see firsthand how this community came together during their time of need.

MISSING CHILDREN'S AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN PROGRAMS

HON. TIMOTHY J. WALZ

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2012

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, child abuse is an unacceptable behavior in our society that must be condemned and prevented. Our children deserve to grow up in safe and loving environ-

ments. As a parent and teacher, I am always in search of ways to eliminate this problem in homes, schools and child care centers. I would like to commend the committee for its support of the Missing Children's and Exploited Children programs. This funding is essential to combating child abuse, which is a national problem.

In order to end child abuse, it is essential we support programs that train child protection professionals to better recognize, react and respond to abuse. Each and every day, child protection professionals work directly with maltreated children across the country. They fight tirelessly to reduce cases of child abuse and to respond effectively to child maltreatment. Unfortunately, the vast majority of these professionals leave college inadequately trained to handle cases of child maltreatment. And, once in the workforce, it is often far too difficult for them to access the quality training they need to do their jobs more effectively.

In my district, I am proud to have the National Child Protection Center located in my district at Winona State University. The National Child Protection Center works to end child abuse, neglect and other forms of child maltreatment through education, training, awareness, prevention, advocacy and the pursuit of justice. The Center trains future and front-line child protection professionals around the nation so that they will be prepared to recognize and report the abuse of a child. This work should be applauded and supported.

I would like to commend the Senate Commerce Justice and Science committee for including language in their Committee report that would support efforts to train current child protection professionals, continue prevention programs and to develop undergraduate and graduate curricula on the maltreatment and exploitation of children. As we continue through the appropriations process, I would like to encourage my colleagues in the House to support this language and to include it in the final report.

BAHRAIN

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2012

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, tonight I wish to call the attention of my colleagues to the situation in Bahrain. Since gained independence from the British in the 1970's, Bahrain has forged close links with the United States, and become one of our most important allies in the strategically important Persian Gulf region. In fact, Bahrain is home to the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet.

Since last year, however, the country has been disrupted by a series of anti-government demonstrations. Understanding how important our relationship with Bahrain is, especially to our efforts to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, I recently traveled to Bahrain to assess the situation first-hand. And I would like to thank Dr. Al Khalafalla and the Bahrain American Council for helping to make my visit a success.

I think it's important that we get the proper perspective on what's going on over there. There is no question there have been problems in the past. There has been overreaction

by the police in certain instances in the past year, year and a half. As a result, there were people who were hurt severely when they were demonstrating in the streets of Bahrain. But the King and the Crown Prince have worked very hard to solve this problem. As a matter of fact, the King appointed an outside commission, and the commission's report and reform recommendations are strongly supported by both sides of the dispute. Yet, the parties involved seem to be having difficulty approaching the conference table. Why?

One of the problems they have over there is the Iranian Government is working to try to undermine many of the countries in the Persian Gulf, and Bahrain is one of them. Some have suggested that the demonstrations have been infiltrated by outside radical elements—supported by Iran—dedicated to destabilizing and undermining the Bahrain Government. The evidence is inconclusive but the possibility of Iran doing just that is plausible. Whatever the reasons, for the demonstrators, this conflict is not going to be resolved in Bahrain, it must be resolved through negotiation.

I am submitting an article from the May 1, 2012 edition of the New York Times for the RECORD which I believe lays out the case for the United States to actively encourage both sides to take a step back, take a deep breath, and commit to resolving their differences around the conference table. I strongly urge my colleagues to read these articles.

[From the New York Times, May 1, 2012]

THE PRINCE AND THE AYATOLLAH

(By Ed Husain)

When I was invited to visit Bahrain by members of the royal family, I hesitated. They had crushed peaceful protesters last year, and their police had used tear gas against human rights activists. Like everybody else, including some of the Bahraini policemen I later spoke with, I was appalled at the violence and thought the monarchy had blood on its hands. But I felt that declining the offer was irresponsible. I wanted to know the monarchy's side of the story. So I accepted the invitation—on the condition that I was free to meet Bahrain's opposition.

Bahrain is a tiny island nation of 600,000 citizens, with a Parliament of only 40 members, and it cannot be understood if looked at in isolation. For one thing, it stands at the forefront of a regional cold war. Saudi Arabia lies to the west, connected by a 25-kilometer causeway built jointly by the Saudis and Bahrainis. To the east, across the waters of the Gulf, lies Iran. Both Tehran and Riyadh have major stakes in Bahrain.

En route to Bahrain, I stopped by in Riyadh and had many conversations with top government officials, journalists and academics. Their views were clear: Saudi Arabia would not stand by and see Bahrain's ruling al-Khalifa family fall from power. The Saudis sent in soldiers to help the al-Khalifas regain control of Bahrain in March 2011 and are prepared to do so again.

If King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa abdicates, they asked, then who would be next among Arab kings? What consequences would the ensuing chaos have on global energy supplies? If power falls into the hands of the main Shiite opposition group, Bahrain could join Hamas, Hezbollah, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon under the Iranian sphere of influence in the Middle East.

In Bahrain, I was a guest of the king's son, Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa, who, in the context of the country's current political climate, is a liberal's liberal. Educated in Washington and Cambridge, England, the 42-year-old prince spoke

about Britain's constitutional monarchy, the dire need for political reform in his country, and his yearning for a political settlement with the opposition.

He appeared genuinely contrite about the excesses of the government in Bahrain, but also convinced that the opposition has no vision of how to improve matters. "The path to hell is paved with good intentions," he said. Constantly, he referred to the need for "evolution" rather than "revolution."

Within the ruling family, he led the charge for reform last year, but was abandoned by Al Wefaq, the main opposition party, midway through discussions. The party kept changing its demands and the leaders were divided over what they wanted. This strengthened the hand of the more conservative wing of the royal family, led by the conservative, long-serving prime minister, Prince Khalifa bin Sulman al-Khalifa, 74.

The opposition wants the prime minister to resign, but neither the king nor the crown prince can dare ask a family elder to depart in ignominy.

Just as there are divisions within the royal family, there are serious splits in Bahrain's Shiite political scene. Not all the Shiites in Bahrain want to topple the monarchy. Nor is the opposition composed only of democrats who simply want to oust a monarchy.

Again and again, in villages and in meetings with Shiite opposition figures, one name kept coming up: Ayatollah Issa Qassim, spiritual leader of Al Wefaq, whose writ runs large across the Shiite opposition movement. Educated in Iran, his sermons are generally anti-American, anti-democracy and vehemently pro-Iran. When Iran's green movement challenged the mullahs in Tehran, Ayatollah Qassim accused the West of "trying to divide an otherwise peaceful country" and of "hatred toward Islam."

He is also intolerant of Shiites with divergent views back home. Three Shiite members of Bahrain's Parliament explained to me the consequences of daring to challenge Ayatollah Qassim. When they decided not to honor Al Wefaq's call to boycott elections last October, Al Wefaq-controlled mosques called on people to attack them; firebombs were thrown at their homes and their children were harassed on the streets. They live in fear for their lives, and they are not alone.

Ayatollah Qassim's supporters not only undermined the crown prince's efforts at reconciliation, but in recent weeks have taken to rioting in villages across Bahrain. In Sitra, one such village outside Manama, I spoke in Arabic with a police official, a Shiite, who said: "I am Bahraini before I am Shiite. We must live as Bahrainis and do what's right for our country, and not be controlled by Iran's clerics."

Like Bahraini Sunnis, the official felt the monarchy was not giving him the means to respond to the rioters. They have no guns, he complained, which left them at the mercy of rioters with home-made arrows and Molotov cocktails. "Last year, my colleagues in the army and interrogation units were wrong to torture protesters," he said. "But what about the attacks on us now? How are we to defend ourselves?"

Ayatollah Qassim has not called on his supporters to cease violence against the police, government and dissenting Shiite leaders. Instead, he has demanded that Jawad Hussain, one of the legislators I spoke with, and other dissenting Shiite political leaders and clerics come to the ayatollah's mosque during Friday services and publicly repent for betraying "the community."

Ayatollah Qassim's message does not justify the torture and human rights violations exercised by the government of Bahrain. The demands of the opposition for an end to discrimination in government jobs and for

greater political freedoms are valid. But calls for greater human rights must not be selective. Last year the opposition blocked bills that gave women equality and freedom in Bahrain because the ayatollahs opposed it, while the monarchy and Sunni parties supported it.

Bahrain is an important nation because it is a focal point of what is happening in the Middle East today—the battle to find a balance between preserving the best values of the Islamic tradition while the region eases its way into the modern world.

It is crucial that Western nations help the country achieve this balance, and that they not provide diplomatic cover for rioters and clerics in the name of human rights and democracy.

Instead, they should be using every pressure point to strengthen the reformist strands within the monarchy in support of political change, equal rights for women and an end to the language of Shiite sectarianism in Bahrain. Negotiations around the political table are the only way forward in Bahrain.

Ed Husain is a senior fellow for Middle Eastern Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations.

HONORING AWARD-WINNING BROADCAST JOURNALIST STEPHEN DEAN

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2012

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor award-winning broadcast journalist Stephen Dean, whose dedicated investigative reporting exposes abuses of power and government missteps. Arrests and indictments tend to follow his in-depth reporting of shady dealings, including those by judges and other elected officials.

A master of the hidden camera, Stephen Dean and his team at Local 2 Investigates get results from Houston to Austin to Washington, DC. Even the venerable Washington Post has reported on one of his award-winning investigations.

From catching seven Houston law enforcement officers cheating in a traffic investigation class to reporting that Houston police were using mentally ill prisoners to practice drawing blood for DWI arrests, Stephen Dean has never been afraid to dig for information no one else will.

For nearly three decades, Stephen Dean's hard work has earned him award after award including the highest honor in broadcasting. He was honored with a Peabody Award for his series of reports on how the U.S. military used to investigate crimes. Dean's reporting documented how the armed services were ignoring crucial evidence in crimes against their own soldiers, prompting Congress to force changes with a law that was signed by the President.

For nearly two decades from radio to television, the Houston area has counted on Dean's watchdog eye on law enforcement. His dogged pursuit of M.U.D. policing led to a change in Texas law.

In addition to the Peabody Award, his national investigative reporting honors include the Society of Professional Journalists' Sigma Delta Chi Award, the Radio Television News Directors Edward R. Murrow Award and sev-

eral State Bar of Texas "Gavel Awards" for legal reporting. In 2005, Dean was named Best Reporter by the Texas Associated Press Broadcasters for his live coverage of breaking news. The TAPB also named him the sole winner of its "Freedom of Information Award" four years in a row for his ability to overcome obstacles in digging through public records.

A nationally published author, Dean's 2011 book "PR Misfires Under the Gun", detailed costly public relations mistakes that people make in emergencies. Stephen Dean, his wife Cindy, and his precious Harley Davidson will soon ride out of Houston to start a new journalistic chapter in their home state. We wish them safe travels and we feel obligated to warn Ohio wrongdoers, he is on the way.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. FRANCISCO "QUICO" CANSECO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2012

Mr. CANSECO. Mr. Speaker, due to a family emergency that required me to return to Texas, I missed several votes during two separate vote series on April 26, 2011 and April 27, 2011. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall vote 184, "aye" on rollcall vote 185, "aye" on rollcall vote 186, "aye" on rollcall vote 187, "aye" on rollcall vote 188, "aye" on rollcall vote 189, "aye" on rollcall vote 190, "nay" on rollcall vote 191, "aye" on rollcall vote 192, "aye" on rollcall vote 193, "nay" on rollcall vote 194 and "aye" on rollcall vote 195.

RECOGNIZING CITIZENS' VIETNAMESE HUMAN RIGHTS PETITION TO WHITE HOUSE

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2012

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, in honor of the 18th annual Vietnam Human Rights Day on Friday, May 11, 2012, I would like to highlight a petition that can be found on the "We the People" section of the White House's Web site. This particular petition, which collected over 150,000 signatures from across the country, urges the administration to "stop expanding trade at the expense of human rights."

Vietnam's human rights record remains disgraceful and I look forward to the day when we can gather together to celebrate true freedom in Vietnam. This administration must show the world that promotion of human rights is a priority in U.S. foreign policy.

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. PEDRO R. PIERLUISI

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under