

President Obama reminded us of the fact that having more than 40 million uninsured Americans is unacceptable. It is not only bad for the individual, but it is for the American economy. It is bad for hospitals who absorb the loss for these indigent patients or shift the costs to other patients.

During the campaign, the President went on to painfully highlight the unfair practices of some insurance companies in making people think they have quality insurance policies, when, in fact, in many instances, it is not worth the paper it is written on.

After fierce debate, and after the right-wing Tea Party instilled unfounded fear in the hearts of good Americans, the Congress passed the Affordable Care Act, and it is good policy for the American people. But there are those who have exploited the legitimacy of the Affordable Care Act, and now we await a ruling from the Supreme Court on the act's constitutionality.

Should the Supreme Court decide to undermine the most vital provision of the law, the individual mandate, one thing will be clear: it would be an act of judicial activism and judicial overreach, placing the Court firmly in the role of Congress.

Precedent for the Affordable Care Act already exists. Social Security is a program which all Americans are required to pay into and to participate. Car insurance is mandated in almost every State; yet the Supreme Court is on precipice of possible unfastening the linchpin that makes true health care reform attainable.

Such a decision would confiscate benefits that the public and businesses largely support. Lifetime coverage limits could be re-imposed on 100 million Americans. Seventeen million children with preexisting conditions could lose insurance coverage, and 6 million young adults may be forced off their parents' insurance plans.

Preservation of this law means 40 million uninsured Americans will be insured. It creates state-run health exchanges to give consumers maximum choice when selecting a policy, and it contains skyrocketing costs in medical care. The Affordable Care Act will lower insurance premiums driven by uncompensated care for the uninsured, saving the average family in North Carolina \$1,400 a year.

Mr. Speaker, the Affordable Care Act has already paid great dividends in my district. Under the law, 94,000 seniors have received Medicare preventive services without paying a dime. More than 5,000 young adults have health insurance when they previously did not. About 400 small businesses received tax credits to expand care to their employees; 34,000 children with preexisting health conditions can no longer be denied.

As a policy-maker representing 700,000 people, I hope the act will remain intact. As a former judge, I hope the Supreme Court recognizes the im-

pact an unfavorable decision will have on the role of Congress.

We cannot let the perfect, Mr. Speaker, be the enemy of the good. We should explore ways to improve upon the law instead of ways to further deny Americans access to affordable health care.

AMERICA'S FOREIGN POLICY OF MISCHIEF AND INTERVENTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, last week I introduced legislation, H.R. 5993, that would prohibit the President from providing military or paramilitary aid of any sort to any faction in the internal fighting in Syria. Unfortunately, it appears that the administration is already very much involved in supporting the overthrow of the Assad government.

There's nary a whimper of criticism in Congress over our growing involvement in the civil war in Syria. The only noise we hear from Congress, and repeated in the media, is the complaint that we're not doing enough and that immediate, direct U.S. military action must be taken.

Tragically, our political leaders show both bad judgment and short memories when it comes to the downside of our foreign policy of mischief and intervention. Our compulsion to engage ourselves in every conflict around the world is dangerous to our national security.

In dealing with Syria, the administration pretends to pursue diplomacy and provide humanitarian assistance to the people. In reality, the U.S. Government facilitates weapons transfers to the rebels who are demanding immediate regime change.

My goal is to stop our dangerous participation in the violence in Syria; yet evidence mounts that we're already deeply involved, with no expectation that the administration will back away from military engagement.

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Recent reports indicate that the U.S. is providing logistics and communication assistance to the rebel forces. Assistance in getting arms to the rebels through surrogates is hardly a secret. Cooperating with the rebels' propaganda efforts has been reported and is used to prepare the American people for our coming involvement.

There is every reason to expect that the well-laid plans to, once again, coordinate a favorable regime change will end badly. Even the strongest supporters of our direct and immediate military involvement in Syria admit that the rebel forces are made up of many groups, including al Qaeda, and no one is sure to whom the assistance should be given. All they claim is the need for the immediate removal of Assad.

This policy is nothing new, and too often in our recent history our assist-

ance with dollars and weapons used to overthrow a government ends up with the weapons being used, instead, against us. The blow-back from our policy of intervention has caused a great deal of harm to us since World War II:

Propping up the Shah in Iran for 26 years was a powerful factor in motivating radical Islamists to eventually overthrow the Shah in 1979. The hostages taken at the U.S. Embassy at that time was as a consequence of our putting the Shah into power in 1953;

In working with the mujahadeen in the 1980s, our CIA supported radical Islam in an effort to combat communist occupation in Afghanistan. Later, this led to the radical Islamists' hatred being turned against us over our occupation and interference in Muslim countries;

The \$40 billion given to Egypt for over 30 years to prop up the Mubarak dictatorship and to buy an unstable peace with Israel has ended with what appears to be the takeover of Egypt by the Muslim Brotherhood. They may well turn Egypt into a theocratic Islamic state unless our CIA is able to, once again, gain control. Al Qaeda now has a presence in parts of Egypt and has been involved in the bombing of the pipelines carrying gas to Israel. This is hardly a policy that is enhancing Israel's security.

What are the possible unintended consequences of this policy if we foolishly escalate the civil war in Syria?

The worst scenario would be an all-out war in the region involving Russia, the United States, Israel, Iran, Turkey, and others. The escalating conflict could rapidly make containment virtually impossible.

Chaos in this region could encourage the Kurds in Syria, Iraq, Turkey, and Iran to decide it's an opportunity to move on their long-sought-after goal of establishing a Kurdish state. Significant hostilities in the region would jeopardize the free flow of oil from the Middle East, causing sharp increases in the price of oil. The already weak economy of the West would suffer immensely. Some will argue erroneously that a major war would be beneficial to the economy and distract the people from their economic woes.

War, however, is never an economic benefit, although many have been taught that for many decades. If liberty and prosperity are to be our goals, peace is a necessary ingredient of that process.

PARTISAN ACRIMONY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MILLER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of North Carolina. Tomorrow will be a peculiar day in Washington and in American politics.

Republicans will denounce ideas that they enthusiastically supported until those ideas became associated somehow with the Obama administration.

We expect to hear the ruling on the individual mandate across the street at the Supreme Court. The individual mandate was the centerpiece of Republican health care proposals until the Obama administration embraced it. Then the Republicans decided it was an outrageous infringement on personal liberty.

Here in this Chamber, we will debate Operation Fast and Furious. Most Democrats, including me, don't really even quite get what the supposed scandal is about, but have always thought that gun sales in large quantities to drug cartels was just generally a bad idea. For Republicans, on the other hand, the gun sales that were part of Operation Fast and Furious appear to be the only gun sales they've ever had a problem with. We will also have a 180-degree reversal on the issue of information that Congress can require as part of our oversight powers.

I was an Oversight Subcommittee chairman for 4 years. I believe congressional oversight is an important check on the executive branch of government, an established, important part of our Republic system of checks and balances. I support investigations that might make an administration of my own party look foolish or worse. I want people who have the power of government, of either party, to be accountable for their decisions. I want them to pause over how they will explain their decisions in public; and if they can't explain them, maybe they shouldn't do it. Congressional oversight exposes and deters abuses of power and garden-variety stupidity of which there is plenty in the public sector, in the private sector, and in all activities in which human beings are involved.

But the courts have also recognized that uninhibited, candid discussions improve decisions. Decisions are less likely to be stupid when they are carefully discussed, and the courts protect the privacy of some discussions within the executive branch to further the goal of fewer stupid decisions. The courts recognize a strong privilege for discussion between the President and his top advisers and a lesser privilege, a qualified privilege, for other debates within the executive branch.

When I was an Oversight Subcommittee chairman, I read many of the court decisions that discussed those privileges. Anyone who says that the law is clear, in that what is privileged and what is not is well defined, is misinformed or dishonest.

Five years ago, the Democratic majority disagreed with a Republican President over whether information we sought as part of our oversight powers was privileged. There was plenty of partisan acrimony at the time, but we found a simple solution. We filed a lawsuit to ask a judge to decide whether we were entitled to the testimony and the documents that we had subpoenaed. The Bush administration argued that the court shouldn't decide the case. The judge disagreed. The judge

said that enforcing subpoenas and deciding what testimony or documents are privileged is something courts do every day. Judges expect lawyers to make careful, calm arguments based on the law and the facts; and they have little patience for tedious, dishonest talking points or personal attacks.

The debate here tomorrow will not even remotely resemble a legal argument in court. So we could go now to a court to clarify the law. I would support that—but no. Instead, House Republicans are going to force a vote to prosecute the Attorney General for the crime of taking a plausible position on uncertain legal issues. Instead of asking for a careful, calm decision by a judge on a legal issue, House Republicans are choosing an intemperate, acrimonious debate here in this Chamber over legal issues about which few Members have the first clue.

Why? The only possible reason is that House Republicans just like partisan acrimony.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SPECIALIST JARROD LALLIER, AN AMERICAN HERO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. McMorris Rodgers) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. McMorris Rodgers. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heart full of sadness and sorrow to honor the life of Specialist Jarrod Lallier.

Jarrold was a proud member of the prestigious 82nd Airborne Division, serving his first tour in Afghanistan. He was a graduate of Mead High School and a lifelong resident of Spokane, Washington. He was an athlete, a son, a brother, and an American hero.

Jarrold was just 20 years old when he lost his life last week in Afghanistan. He was just 20 years old when men in Afghan police uniforms turned their weapons on his unit and robbed him of his life. He was just 20 years old when he said goodbye to his family forever.

He would have celebrated his 21st birthday this week.

But since he is not here to do that, I want to celebrate the life he lived and the country he served.

Today, we celebrate a man who dreamed of serving America since he was young. We celebrate a man who fought for America, who protected America, who defended America. We celebrate a man who died in the name of American freedom.

Today, my thoughts and prayers and gratitude are with Specialist Jarrod Lallier and with all those who will carry on his legacy forever: his father, Gary; his mother, Kim; his sister, Jessica; and his brother, Jordan.

May God bless this great American hero, his family, and all the brave men and women who have answered America's call to freedom.

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THE PATHWAY OF CONTEMPT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. Jackson Lee) for 5 minutes.

Ms. Jackson Lee of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this is a solemn place and a solemn moment when Members come to express their views.

A previous speaker drew us to heroes, and we thank those who have served us in the United States military. This morning I draw us toward constitutional and congressional responsibility. It is all intertwined in the honor that we have in serving in this august institution entrusted to us by the American public, our individual constituents.

I first suggest that earlier this week the Supreme Court established the superiority of the United States Government in immigration reform. In all of the points that were brought by the State of Arizona, two-thirds were rejected under the understanding and the law that the United States Government is in charge of immigration enforcement, immigration benefits, and that we should do our job.

For the one provision that remained standing—and as the ranking member formally of the Immigration Subcommittee and on Homeland Security, I see this every day. Having just come from Arizona, I have seen the good work Congressman Grijalva and Congressman Pastor and others are doing. I know that we are working to ensure the safety of the border, but I also recognize the need for the dignity of human beings. I fight for the dignity.

Congress should get out of the way in terms of being in the midst of confusion and stand in the way and close the gap on immigration reform. The only provision left standing was a provision that the Court warned the State that if they engage in racial profiling, that too may be proven unconstitutional.

Law enforcement officers have always had the right in a legitimate stop to ask for the credentials of anyone they stop. The question is now burdening those officers to see who they stop and why they stop. Again, I speak to the issue of congressional responsibility.

Now I come to the act that is going to take place tomorrow, and a number of us are writing the Speaker and asking and imploring him, as Speaker Newt Gingrich did in 1998, refusing to bring forward a contempt charge against Janet Reno that was pointedly personal. We suggest now that there is much work to be done. As my colleague indicated, this case could be taken to the courts to determine what documents should be brought in.

In addition, the work has not been completed. Kenneth Melson, who headed the ATF, has never been allowed to speak before the committee to explain that he never told any of the officials, including the Attorney General, about the intricacies of Fast and Furious. The former Attorney General, who has