

CONDEMNING THE SHOOTING THAT KILLED SIX INNOCENT PEOPLE AT THE SIKH TEMPLE OF WISCONSIN IN OAK CREEK, WISCONSIN, ON AUGUST 5, 2012

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform be discharged from further consideration of House Resolution 775, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MULVANEY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 775

Whereas on Sunday, August 5, 2012, a shooting took place at the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin in Oak Creek, Wisconsin;

Whereas as a result of the shooting, six innocent individuals lost their lives while preparing to attend a Sunday morning worship;

Whereas three individuals were severely injured in the attack;

Whereas many individuals and members of the Sikh community selflessly sought to aid and protect others above their own safety; and

Whereas the quick action of law enforcement officials prevented additional losses of life: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns the senseless attack at the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, on Sunday, August 5, 2012;

(2) offers condolences to the families, friends, and loved ones who were killed in the attack and expresses hope for the full recovery of those injured in the attack;

(3) honors the selfless, dedicated service of—

(A) the emergency response teams and law enforcement officials who responded to the attack; and

(B) law enforcement officials who continue to investigate the attack; and

(4) remains hopeful, as additional details regarding the attack are gathered, that the citizens of this country will come together, united in a shared desire for peace and justice while standing with the Sikh community to grieve the loss of life.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SOLIDARITY WITH THE SIKH COMMUNITY

(Mr. ROYCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak in favor of the resolution I coauthored with the Wisconsin delegation here in solidarity with the Sikh community in Oak Creek and the Sikh community all across the United States.

In a strange coincidence, I had a previously scheduled meeting in California at a Sikh temple on the very day when that murderous attack in Oak Creek occurred. Obviously, our discussion shifted to the subject of that premeditated attack.

I was able to hear about the plight of being targeted because of one's religion, the plight of being targeted for one's appearance.

We are in a constant struggle against bad ideas, despicable ideas.

Passing this resolution will not ease the pain of those affected by this tragedy, but it does show to the world that people from across the United States can unite and denounce bigoted violence.

Our great country is rooted in religious tolerance. The Constitution makes freedom of religion first and foremost. There is no place in this country for religious-motivated terrorism, and this resolution that we passed reaffirms that.

I end by thanking Mr. RYAN and the Wisconsin delegation for their efforts on this resolution, but also I thank the leadership of both parties here today for working with us to make sure that this resolution came to the floor.

NO MONEY FOR LIBYA OR EGYPT

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I'm really disappointed today. We passed a CR for 6 months, and it contained language in there that was supposedly designed to keep Libya and Egypt from getting funds. My colleagues overwhelmingly voted for it. I do not criticize them for that.

But I do feel very strongly in my heart that we made a mistake by not, in the Rules Committee, passing an amendment which would make sure that the money in that bill for foreign assistance did not go to Libya or Egypt.

I read the document that they put out, and it does not prohibit the money from getting to Libya and Egypt. The Muslim Brotherhood runs Egypt. They hate the United States, and their President has said he wanted to model his country after Iran.

In Libya, they killed our Ambassador and scaled the walls. They burned our flag. They did it in Egypt, and they held up the al Qaeda flag; and we're going to give them money. It makes no sense.

If the American people were paying attention to this right now, they would raise hell.

HUNGER STRIKES IN CUBA

(Mr. RIVERA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RIVERA. Mr. Speaker, this Monday, prominent Cuban dissident Marta Beatriz Roque launched a hunger strike in order to draw attention to the unwavering attempts by the Castro dictatorship to suppress pro-democracy supporters. She has since been joined in her hunger strike by an additional 25 dissidents. Roque suffers from diabetes,

and her water-only fast could easily kill her in days.

Castro's thugs have continually increased the level of repression against the opposition movement. It is intolerable that this has become the "norm" in Cuban society. Jailing, beating, and detaining peaceful protestors who are simply demanding their basic human rights is not the norm. It is unacceptable.

The Castro brothers will continue their violent and abusive ways and will stop at nothing to remain in power. How bad do things need to get before the international community finally recognizes the plight of the Cuban people? These brave men and women continue to risk their lives every day, and we must call attention to their struggle.

RUSSIA PNTR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about an issue that both Democrats and Republicans, and virtually every American, is talking about, and people all over the world are talking about. What is that issue? How do we increase global economic growth; and here in this country, how do we create more good American jobs.

It's obviously a key part of the Presidential campaign. We have Democrats and Republicans daily stand in the well of the House of Representatives and offer proposals, talk about their ideas as to how we can create good jobs.

We have the sad report of 380,000 people who fell off the rolls even looking for jobs. We have literally millions of our fellow Americans who are looking for jobs, and we have many businesses that are struggling.

One of the great challenges that President Obama put forward was the goal of doubling our exports, and we all know that he very much wanted to do that. We, as Members of Congress, came together after a decade, and we finally were able to successfully pass market-opening opportunities for U.S. workers to sell their goods and provide our services in Panama, Colombia, and South Korea.

□ 1840

It took us a long time to get there. I know that it's easy to point the finger of blame, but the fact is we've been ready for a long time. This institution

was ready for a long time, Democrats and Republicans alike, and we were finally able to get the legislation up here from down on Pennsylvania Avenue, and we were able to make it happen with strong bipartisan votes on all three of those agreements.

Well, Mr. Speaker, with recognition that opening up markets around the world for U.S. goods and services is a key way to create jobs here—because, again, as we debated the Panama, Colombia, and Korea Trade Agreements, there were Members on both sides of the aisle who stood up and argued in behalf of those great agreements—we now have before us what I believe is an absolute no-brainer, but tragically it's created some political consternation over a lot of confusion.

We know that the idea of seeing countries join the WTO, the World Trade Organization, creates a scenario whereby they have to comply with a rules-based trading system. We know that once they enter the WTO, there are constraints imposed on them along with the benefits that they get for their membership in the WTO. And there was a lot of negotiation, a lot of talk about Russia's entry into the World Trade Organization. The idea of seeing Russia forced to comply with a system that would prevent them from engaging in discriminatory practices, from engaging in the kinds of acts that prevent products and services from getting into their country, the structure of having to comply with a rules-based system is something that membership in the WTO forces and creates.

Again, there were a lot of negotiations. The last was dealing with a border dispute with Georgia that was resolved, and that was resolved several months ago. That put into place a structure that allowed, on August 22—last month—for Russia to enter the World Trade Organization.

Russia is part of the WTO. They are now, having been for over 3 weeks, a member of the World Trade Organization. That means, as I said, tremendous benefits that Russia gets. They have 140 million consumers, and there are going to be opportunities for countries around the world to export into Russia. We, last year, exported \$11 billion of goods and services into the WTO. But guess what, Mr. Speaker? We're not at the table anymore. We've lost out on our chance to be able to sell our goods and services into Russia, that market of 140 million consumers.

Now, why is it that we've lost out? Well, we haven't been able to have a vote here in the Congress on Russia's accession into the WTO. Why hasn't that happened? Well, I hate to be political—even though this is the time of year when people are especially political—but we need to get this sent up here to the Congress so that we can put together what I know is going to be broad bipartisan support to make this happen. When it comes up, I know that we will see tremendous support on the Republican side of the aisle. And I say

that because I'm particularly proud of the 73 newly elected Republican Members of Congress. Of the 87, 73 sent a letter to President Obama saying that they believe it very important for us to open up that market, so that if we all have this desire of creating more good jobs in the United States, let's open up that market to 140 million consumers. Well, unfortunately we're still waiting for that.

And I know that it's not just Republicans who are in support of this, Mr. Speaker. We have Democrats who are passionately and strongly in support of it. My very dear friend from New York (Mr. MEEKS) says he's going to join us. We've got other colleagues of ours who are going to join us in just a minute. But I want to say that this is something that absolutely should be done.

Now, I talked about the fact that I believe it's a no-brainer, but I recognize that there is a lot of political consternation about this because it's Russia. We all know that Russia has an absolutely horrendous human rights policy. We know that Russia has engaged in trying to expand its sphere to other former republics of the Soviet Union. We know that there is tremendous corruption and cronyism that exists in Russia today, and it is not acceptable. It is not acceptable to any of us.

Now, there are some, Mr. Speaker, who argue that for us to deny the U.S. an opportunity to have a vote on PNTR—basically repealing Jackson-Vanik and allowing us to proceed with this—would be a good thing and it would send a message to Russia, when in fact the exact opposite is the case. There is nothing that we could do as the United States of America that would be a greater boost to supporting the perpetuation of the aberrant behavior that we have seen from Russia than for us to deny a vote on permanent normal trade relations that would see us, then, have access to that market.

I said that last year we exported \$11 billion of goods and services to Russia. If we could pass PNTR here, projections are that by 2017 we would double that from \$11 billion to \$22 billion. Now, what does that mean? It means more good U.S. jobs. And what does it mean? It means an expansion of our American values. It means, again, this forced compliance with a rules-based trading system. It means creating a structure that will allow us to undermine the kind of political repression that exists in Russia.

Our sticking our head in the sand would be just plain wrong. Now, those are not just my words, Mr. Speaker. We, on the 12th of March, received a letter from seven of the most prominent and outspoken human rights activists in Russia. They, in a letter, an open letter that was sent to those of us who are considering this issue, said the following. Now this is from these very, very prominent dissidents and activists, some of whom I'm sure have been imprisoned. They've had long histories of being opposition leaders to Vladimir

Putin. So in the letter that they sent to us, Mr. Speaker, they said:

Some politicians in the United States argue that the removal of Russia from Jackson-Vanik would help no one but the current Russian undemocratic political regime. That assumption is flat wrong. Although there are obvious problems with democracy and human rights in modern Russia, the persistence on the books of the Jackson-Vanik amendment does not help to solve them at all. Moreover, it brings direct harm. It limits Russia's competitiveness in international markets for higher value-added products, leaving Russia trapped in its current petro-state model of development and preventing it from transforming into a modern, diversified, and more high-tech economy. This helps Mr. Putin and his cronies.

At the end of the day, those who defend the argument that Jackson-Vanik's provisions should still apply to Russia in order to punish Putin's anti-democratic regime only darken Russia's political future, hamper its economic development, and frustrate its democratic aspirations.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to include this letter from the seven dissidents in the RECORD in its entirety, underscoring how critically important it is for us to take this action so that we can boost those who are struggling to improve the plight of those Russians who are seeing their human rights jeopardized based on the current policies.

MARCH 12, 2012.

REMOVE RUSSIA FROM JACKSON-VANIK!

Removal of Russia from the provisions of the Cold War era Jackson-Vanik Amendment has long been an issue of political debate. Although the outdated nature and irrelevance of the amendment is widely recognized, some politicians in the United States argue that the removal of Russia from Jackson-Vanik would help no one but the current Russian undemocratic political regime.

That assumption is flat wrong. Although there are obvious problems with democracy and human rights in modern Russia, the persistence on the books of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment does not help to solve them at all. Moreover, it brings direct harm. It limits Russia's competitiveness in international markets for higher value-added products, leaving Russia trapped in its current petro-state model of development and preventing it from transforming into a modern, diversified and more hi-tech economy.

This helps Mr. Putin and his cronies, who continue to benefit from control over raw materials exports and who have no real interest in diversifying Russia's economy. During the period of their rule, dependence on oil and gas exports has become even greater than before. Needless to say, hanging in a petro-state limbo prevents the emergence in Russia of an independent and advanced middle class, which should be the main source of demand for pro-democracy political transformation in the future. More and more talented and creative Russians are leaving the country because there are better opportunities for finding good jobs in hi-tech industries abroad.

At the end of the day, those who defend the argument that Jackson-Vanik's provisions should still apply to Russia in order to punish Putin's anti-democratic regime only darken Russia's political future, hamper its economic development, and frustrate its democratic aspirations.

Jackson-Vanik is also a very useful tool for Mr. Putin's anti-American propaganda

machine: it helps him to depict the United States as hostile to Russia, using outdated cold-war tools to undermine Russia's international competitiveness.

We, leading figures of the Russian political opposition, strongly stand behind efforts to remove Russian from the provisions of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment. Jackson-Vanik is not helpful in any way—neither for promotion of human rights and democracy in Russia, nor for the economic interests of its people. Sanctions which harm the interests of ordinary Russians are unhelpful and counter-productive—much more effective are targeted sanctions against specific officials involved in human rights abuse, like those named in the Senator Benjamin Cardin's list in the Sergey Magnitsky case (Senate Bill 1039).

It is time to remove Russia from Jackson-Vanik!

SERGEY ALEKSASHENKO,
*Political Council member,
People's Freedom Party (Parnas).*

ALEXANDER LEBEDEV,
Independent businessman and politician.

VLADIMIR MILOV,
Leader, "Democratic Choice" movement.

ALEXEY NAVALNY,
Attorney and civil activist.

BORIS NEMTSOV,
Co-chairman, People's Freedom Party (Parnas), "Solidarity" movement.

ILYA PONOMAREV,
State Duma member, Just Russia Party.

VLADIMIR RYZHKOV,
Co-chairman, People's Freedom Party (Parnas).

I also want to say that as we look at this question of job creation and economic growth, it's not something that, again, is at all partisan, and it's something that transcends this institution. We have received a number of letters—and let me see if I can dig this one up here. We have a bipartisan letter from Governors across this country that was sent just weeks ago, on the 25th of July. It was sent to us by Governors from Alabama, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Iowa, Michigan, Mississippi, North Dakota, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, and Washington, a broad cross-section geographically and politically, Democrats and Republicans. All these Governors were signatories to this letter in which they say:

As Governors, we know from firsthand experience in our States that expanding opportunities for international trade and attracting foreign investment are essential to promoting U.S. economic growth and creating new and better jobs right here in America. Russia's impending membership in the World Trade Organization offers a significant opportunity to increase our trade and investment with the world's ninth-largest economy.

So I've got to say, Mr. Speaker, you can understand why I see this as a no-brainer.

□ 1850

To me, this is a pretty simple thing. But I recognize that some might be-

lieve that it's a reward to Russia and to Vladimir Putin, and I stand with them for all the reasons that they're opposing it. But I argue that the reasons that they and I oppose the actions of Vladimir Putin underscore why we need to ensure that the U.S. is at the table.

And so, with the President having stated that he has this goal of doubling U.S. exports, and we've got 140 million consumers there who very much want to have access to U.S.-manufactured products, to our goods and services, we need to get it done.

And why don't I begin, since I see a number of my colleagues here, by recognizing my very good friend from New York (Mr. MEEKS), who has joined us. As I recognize Mr. MEEKS, I'd like to say that a number of Members have come up to me from both sides of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, and indicated that they very much wanted to be able to be here this evening to talk about this.

With that, I would like to yield time to my very good friend from New York (Mr. MEEKS).

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank my friend from California (Mr. DREIER). And he's correct. This is a bipartisan bill that makes common sense, just common sense that we get this done.

So, as I stand here today, I say to you, it is the right thing for America, it is the right thing for businesses in America, and it's the right thing for us to create jobs in America, passing PNTR for Russia.

Mr. DREIER said Russia is the ninth largest market in the world and wants the United States-manufactured goods and services, and U.S. companies are eager to supply Russia's rapidly expanding consumer market. So why are we waiting to make this happen?

While we wait, the failure of the United States Congress to grant permanent normal trade relations to Russia has compromised the competitiveness of United States businesses, hindered the increase of export of goods and services, and stood in the way of growth for United States domestic jobs.

On August 22, the Russian Federation joined the World Trade Organization, concluding nearly 20 years of negotiations and discussions with the United States and about 150 other WTO members. And during these years, it wasn't easy, but Russia did complete numerous reforms of its businesses and trade practices and of its legal system to conform to the norms of the international community and to the WTO rules. These reforms will benefit—not hurt, benefit—U.S. companies. It puts them in a rules-based system.

Now, since August 22, Russia has significantly opened its markets to more than 150 WTO trading partners, with the sole exception—the sole exception—the United States of America. That means that, since August 22, businesses from more than 150 WTO member countries with, again, the sole ex-

ception of those of the United States, have conducted trade with Russian counterparts protected by the WTO dispute resolution mechanisms. And while we wait to act, U.S. businesses are at a competitive disadvantage.

Business analysts say that the U.S. exporters currently underperform with respect to Russia. They predict that with PNTR, U.S. trade with Russia could admittedly double over the next 5 years.

Now, I'm from New York, and I just look at what it means for New York, just a small piece. In New York, where exports to Russia nearly reached a half a billion dollars in 2001, half a billion dollars, now, that's a big deal. But when you consider the transportation, the shipping, the customs brokers, the airport personnel jobs involved, the potential economic impact is tremendous.

Clearly, increased trade is good for New York, but it's also good for every State in the United States and stands to benefit every State. Every State, I repeat, stands to benefit from the new opportunity to sell more American goods and services to Russia through PNTR. So, I say we've got to get it right.

Let me just conclude by saying this. I also am the ranking Democrat on Europe, and as I go and talk to a number of the nations who used to be part of the USSR, some who still have some conflicts with Russia, one of the things that I want to talk to them about, well, what do you think?

A, are you happy to be in the WTO? They all said yes.

B, should we get rid of Jackson-Vanik and make sure that we're able to trade? They all said yes, that it sends the right message and it compels Russia to play by some rules, and we then have a referee in which to make sure they do that.

So I'm hopeful that we get this together and, before we leave here, we pass PNTR for Russia, because every single day that we don't, we're losing out on creating jobs here in America.

I look forward to working with you, and hopefully we'll get this done.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for his very thoughtful comments, and I would just like to underscore this notion of doubling our exports. Taking that level from \$11 billion in the next 5 years to \$22 billion will inure to the benefit of New York, of California, of Minnesota, of Louisiana, and it will provide benefits all across this country.

And at the same time, it will help us deal with this human rights question, which is such an important one, because I haven't talked about it, but obviously including the legislation that deals with the very tragic death of Sergey Magnitsky, who was a lawyer in Russia who was raising questions and, basically, a whistleblower of raising concerns about the behavior of the Russian Government. He was left to die in prison. And we, with this legislation,

will be ensuring that those who are responsible are brought to justice and that it never happens again.

And so I think that, all the way around, this can be a win-win for the cause of human rights and for the cause of creating jobs right here, and I thank my friend from New York for his thoughtful contribution.

We're very pleased to be joined, Mr. Speaker, by my good friend from Minnesota, with whom I've been privileged to travel and has a great understanding and grasp of the issue of globalization and how opening up new markets around the world will benefit his constituents. And I'm happy to yield to my friend.

Mr. PAULSEN. Well, I thank the chairman for yielding.

And let me just first say, with the bipartisan support of this important issue, which I will concur in comments from Mr. MEEKS, but I want to say I want to thank Mr. DREIER, the chairman, because I think we're having these types of discussions on the floor today thanks to his many years of leadership to educate all of us in the House on a bipartisan basis about the benefits of trade, about selling American, and his leadership in establishing this Free Trade Caucus has been so valuable to me as a newer Member. And I know that our country is in great gratitude, and we're going to miss your leadership down the road, Mr. Chairman, in the future.

Let me just say that I also want to rise in strong support for passing this permanent normal trade relations status with Russia. We must pass this legislation to give American manufacturers, American farmers, and American service providers a fair chance to compete and then win and sell more of their goods in the markets of Russia.

□ 1900

Russia joined the WTO already. They already joined the World Trade Organization back on August 22. They've already begun to open their markets to the rest of the world, so now there are about 150 countries, except the United States, that can fully benefit from much better access to the Russian marketplace. Additionally, all of these nations, except the United States, can benefit from Russia's WTO entrance commitments, including stronger international property protections, greater transparency, recourse to the WTO's dispute settlement procedures if Russia fails to meet its commitments.

Until Congress approves PNTR, the United States cannot claim all the benefits that go along with Russia's entrance into the WTO membership obligations. From the President's Export Council, we've already heard some great statistics that are real. They are real, Mr. Speaker. They estimate that U.S. exports to Russia will double and triple over the next 5 years if we pass PNTR, adding jobs here in the United States. These are jobs in manufacturing; these are service jobs; these are

jobs in high-tech; and all across the spectrum of other industries. There is no doubt that Russia's demand for foreign services and goods is growing. This is a country with a population of 142 million people. It has got a rapidly growing middle class.

I will speak in particular about a company, Medtronic, which is a medical device manufacturer based in Minnesota, my home State. It's one of the companies that will lose out if we don't pass permanent normal trade relations soon. And Russia, as I mentioned, is one of the fastest-growing markets. It is also a fast-growing market for medical devices and medical technology. It's a key player in the Russian medical device market. In fact, since 2005, there have been 10,000 Russian health care professionals who have been trained in Medtronic technologies. In the last 5 years, these Medtronic technologies and therapies have benefited about 70,000 patients across Russia.

So Russia has now agreed to substantial tariff reductions for imported medical devices. Russian tariffs on these products will average about 5 percent. It is going to give U.S. medical technology companies the opportunity to significantly expand into the Russian market. Meanwhile, Russia PNTR does not require any tariff reductions or market liberalization by the United States. Yet all of this will go away and all of this will be at risk if we do not act in passing PNTR with Russia in the near future here.

Mr. Speaker, I would just say that the approval of Russia PNTR is a critical step towards ensuring that U.S. companies can benefit from Russia's WTO ascension and remain competitive in the markets today. Until we do that, all other WTO countries will continue to grab market share, market share that is much more difficult to grab back in today's global, competitive environment. So, when I think of a competitor and a company like Medtronic that's based in Minnesota, we want to make sure that their workers and their ingenuity and their innovation is going to continue to grow and prosper so we can sell American across the world. In other words, U.S. companies are being left behind as our competitors continue to grow in this very profitable market of medical devices, losing ground we may never be able to make up.

With other countries gaining this head start now in the Russian market, our time is running out, so this PNTR really benefits the United States. I hope that we act next week, Mr. Chairman, before we head back for the election season because this is critical for jobs; it's bipartisan; the President can claim great ownership and credit for this as well if we act soon. I will do all I can to continue to work with you, Mr. Chairman, to move this forward as well.

Mr. DREIER. If I could reclaim my time, I thank my friend for his very strong commitment to this.

I would like to expand on this Medtronic example for a moment, if I

could, because we talk about big pictures; we talk about numbers; we say, yes, we want to create jobs, but the example of Medtronic is very clearly a specific opportunity.

I wonder if my friend has any examples or if he has talked to executives at Medtronic about the benefits of opening up that market in Russia, because it's true. We are horrified at the crony capitalism that exists in Russia, and we are horrified at the human rights violations that exist, but there are also many very, very good, dedicated, hard-working Russian people who would like to have an opportunity to have access to many of the products that are made right here in the United States. I know my friend and I have traveled around the globe, and one of the things that consistently comes forward is people saying we want to be able to purchase goods from the United States of America, goods manufactured in the United States of America.

I wonder if my friend might tell us a little bit about the success of Medtronic and what has happened and exactly what benefit we would see created for jobs here and also for the consumers in Russia.

Mr. PAULSEN. I will just say that, whether it's a company like a Medtronic or an agricultural-based company like a Cargill, which is based in my district in Minnesota as well, clearly there is the opportunity to sell American knowing that 95 percent of the world's consumers are outside of the United States. This opportunity in Russia with huge market share is going to mean more medical devices being sold in Russia. These are life-improving, these are life-saving technologies, and there is no doubt in a competitive environment that European companies are trying to access that market and are moving forward to do that. So a world-class leader like a Medtronic is going to have a vacuum unless it's able to move forward and unless Congress acts to give permanent normal trade relations.

Mr. DREIER. In reclaiming my time, my friend is absolutely right, and I just want to again express appreciation to his commitment to our Trade Working Group, which is on a wide range of issues. We've been able to focus on creating jobs for millions of Americans as we have sought to recognize the benefits of exports and imports as well when it comes to improving the standard of living and the quality of life for our fellow Americans. He has been very dedicated to his constituents, and I appreciate your participation this evening, too.

I am also very pleased to see that we are joined by my very good friend from Louisiana, another hardworking member of the House Ways and Means Committee and someone who understands the world extraordinarily well. I would like to recognize my friend Mr. BOUSTANY.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Thank you, Chairman DREIER.

Let me say thank you, first of all, for your tremendous service to our country in your capacity as a Member of Congress and as chairman of the Rules Committee. I want to thank you for your leadership on international trade and in promoting America's role in international trade. I also want to thank you for your friendship and for your wise counsel. I've enjoyed the time I've been able to travel with you.

Mr. DREIER. We've still got months to go.

Mr. BOUSTANY. We still do, but I'll say this: I'll miss having you here, and I look forward to keeping in touch in the future.

Mr. DREIER. Absolutely, we should do that.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Thank you for organizing this round of speeches tonight to talk about this crucial piece of legislation that we need to pass because what it will do will be to ensure a level playing field for U.S. workers, U.S. farmers, employers who are competing for business in Russia.

Now, we all know that, until Russia came into the WTO, it was a very difficult place to get market access for our businesses, especially, certainly, large companies, but small companies, mid-sized firms. I believe it is vital for Congress to grant Russia permanent normalized trade relations by removing them from the Jackson-Vanik amendment. If we don't do this, if we don't terminate that provision and grant PNTR, Russia will deny or could certainly deny U.S. exporters some of the market-opening concessions it has made to join the WTO, and the United States would not be able to challenge those actions in a rule-based system through the WTO's dispute settlement system.

This is critically important, especially if we talk about small- and mid-sized firms that are in manufacturing that want to export. They need that kind of rules-based system to work within. Otherwise, they don't have the recourse to fight protracted battles in a difficult market like Russia's.

Of course, it's with some trepidation that we undertake this as we know that the relationship between our two countries is somewhat tenuous. We know very well about Russia's human rights abuses. We know about the poor respect for the rule of law. We've heard extensive stories about the corruption. The reality, though, is that Russia has now become a full-fledged member of the World Trade Organization, and to avoid putting the U.S. at a disadvantage, we need to move forward and grant permanent normalized trade relations.

I'll say this: that the best thing we can do as a country from a foreign policy standpoint with our relationship with Russia is to move forward with normalizing trade relations with Russia. If you want to see political reforms in Russia, if you want to clean up the corruption, if you want to see the rule of law flourish in Russia, our commer-

cial relationship with Russia is critical because it will help build a strong, vibrant middle class in Russia, which will help bring about political reforms there and help overall in the world of security. At the same time, it's a win-win because this grants the United States' businesses and farmers access to a market which will help create good-paying, high-paying jobs here in the U.S.

PNTR will also make permanent the trade status the United States has extended to Russia on an annual basis for more than a decade. So we're not doing anything new. We're permanently normalizing this, which essentially grants Russia the same access to the U.S. market that all of our other trading partners enjoy.

□ 1910

This is nothing new or anything special for Russia. Rather, it is far more important for the United States, for our manufacturers, our service providers, our agriculture interests who are seeking open access into the Russian market.

In an attempt to continue a level playing field for international trade, the WTO requires members to extend normal trade relations to all other WTO members on an unconditional basis, unless a country does not want to apply WTO rules to another country. After 18 years of negotiations, Russia officially became a member of the WTO on August 22 of this year. Currently, the United States has a condition that is placed on Russia. It dates back to the 1970s when the Soviet Union had restrictive immigration policies preventing Jews from leaving its territory.

Congress passed the Jackson-Vanik amendment to the Trade Act of 1974. However, since 1992, the United States has certified annually that Russia complies with the Jackson-Vanik amendment's provisions, and we have conferred normal trade relations on an annual basis to Russia. Only by graduating Russia from the Jackson-Vanik amendment, making these normal trade relations permanent will the U.S. be able to be in full compliance with its WTO obligations, enabling U.S. businesses and farmers to enjoy all the trade concessions and commitments that Russia has made in order to join the WTO.

Mr. DREIER. I'll just reclaim my time there to underscore the very important point that my friend has made, Mr. Speaker.

We all know that the intentions behind the Jackson-Vanik amendment were very good. We saw horrendous policies from the Soviet Union in a wide range of areas. Virtually everything they did was bad as the Soviet Union, a totalitarian country. But the denial of opportunities for Jews to emigrate, especially going back to Israel, is what led to that amendment to the 1974 agreement.

I would like to ask my friend to repeat again—he said that we've had

complete compliance that we've been able to certify for now exactly two long decades since 1992. That's 20 years ago, 1992 to 2012. For 20 years, we've had annual certification because there has been an opportunity in Russia since, thank God, the Soviet Union came down with the work of so many people. We saw it come down, and we now have seen really what you would call a Cold War-era provision that has been left in place for two decades.

Why in the world would we still have this? It seems to me that it's the right thing for us to do to ensure that we sweep this aside so that we can move ahead with these market-opening opportunities. I assume that's the point the gentleman was making.

I'm happy to yield to my friend.

Mr. BOUSTANY. That's exactly right. This is a Cold War relic, this amendment that was put into place. The gentleman is correct that since 1992, we've on an annual basis waived its provisions, but we now need to move forward. The world has changed.

As we look to move forward with expanding market access for our farmers, our businesses, especially small and mid-sized firms, it's critical that we grant permanent normalized trade relations if we're going to maintain U.S. competitiveness globally. Right now we're slipping. We're losing our competitive edge.

A country like China, for instance, has consummated well over 100 trade agreements just in the last couple of years. We have done three, and it took us 5 years since the Bush administration to put in place three relatively small trade agreements. We need to take advantage of the WTO structure. And with Russia coming on board as the ninth largest economy, we have a huge opportunity to promote American competitiveness and American business interests at no cost to us. Staying out of this hurts us, and that's why we need to move forward.

If we don't act to grant PNTR to Russia, our Nation's dedicated workforce, our determined business community, we'll be left at a competitive disadvantage, vis-a-vis our foreign competitors. Given the slow growth of our economy and the continued high unemployment rate, we can't allow this to happen. And with Europe struggling, this is an important market to help with global growth by helping U.S. growth and jobs in the United States.

I was a cosponsor of the vital legislation to grant PNTR to Russia, to place additional reporting requirements, of course, on both Russia and the U.S. administration. These conditions ensure that Russia implements its WTO obligations and those obligations are enforced.

Some will raise the question of, Wait a minute, we had a problem with China when they came onto the WTO, and we're still struggling with that. We have learned from that process, and we have additional safeguards in this agreement that will help make sure

that Russia fully maintains its obligations under permanent normalized trade relations.

Mr. DREIER. Reclaiming my time just to underscore this point, this notion that the WTO, which is an entity that stems from an agreement that the postwar leaders put together in 1947 called the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the idea behind that was to diminish tariff and nontariff barriers. When we saw in the early 1990s the WTO put into place, the idea is to see issues like intellectual property violations, which we know are rampant around the world, in Russia, and we have intellectual property violations here in the United States, as well. We see lots of retaliatory action that is taken. With the structure of the WTO, there is pressure to live with a rules-based trading system to deal with these kinds of corrupt practices that go on with great regularity.

I'm happy to further yield to my friend.

Mr. BOUSTANY. If we're going to work through these commercial types of agreements and eliminate the corruptions, the abuses, the intellectual property theft, we have to make the rules-based system work. And the WTO framework which basically grew out of the general agreement on tariffs and trade in the 1940s is that mechanism, and it works. That's what allows us to make a claim against China, for instance, when they're doing abusive practices. It is an equalizer. It basically puts in place a framework that ensures that trade is conducted fairly and openly. That's what U.S. workers and U.S. farmers are looking for.

It's also very important as a critical piece to maintaining global security. If we focus on international economics, commercial relationships through open navigation of the seas, open trade, we're going to see less conflict in the world. I think this is critical from a security standpoint, and it's critical from a standpoint of economic prosperity for the United States. As the United States continues to face economic challenges, our national exports have remained relatively strong. They've probably kept us out of a recession over the last several quarters.

Mr. DREIER. If I could reclaim my time, I think the gentleman makes a very important point about what I like to refer to as the interdependence of economic and political liberalization.

We know people in this country are hurting. We all have constituents who are having a difficult time keeping a roof over their head, keeping food on the table. People have lost their jobs and their homes. We know it's been very tough. We know again that creating markets for these workers is very important. So seeing the standard of living improve throughout the rest of the world creates new markets for us, and it leads to political liberalization.

As we see that the many people in Russia who are suffering have opportunities to improve their quality of life

and their standard of living by buying U.S. goods and services, it seems to me that's going to lead towards greater pressure for political reform, to address these human rights problems, to address the crony capitalism that exists, to address the kind of outrageous behavior that we see with great regularity from Vladimir Putin.

I'm happy to further yield to my friend.

Mr. BOUSTANY. I agree with that.

Any of these things that will help promote the development of a middle class in these other countries, whether it be China or Russia in this particular class, creates a new consumer class for American goods.

Now, we're all patriotic. We want to buy American. I love to go to the store, and I'll buy something; and if the label says "Made in America," I feel good. I feel good about it. Most Americans do. But by God, I want a Russian mother to buy something on the shelf that says "Made in America." We need to sell America, sell American goods overseas. That's where 95 percent of the world's consumers are, and our economy has been too much mired in domestic consumption at the expense of not looking into the outside world to export American-made goods to these consumers who live outside the United States.

By normalizing our trade relationship with Russia, we will create the mechanism to do that with Russia. This will increase critical sales of American goods and services to Russia. Not only that, we will create very good high-paying jobs here in the United States. This is definitely a win-win situation.

We spoke about Russia being the ninth largest world economy, importing more than \$400 billion in goods and services. And as some of my colleagues may be aware, Louisiana, my State—it's a small State, but it's seventh among the 50 States in total exports because of our location on the Gulf of Mexico and our waterways and our ports.

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In the first quarter of 2012, Louisiana farmers and small businesses exported nearly \$14.25 billion in goods and services to the rest of the world. In fact, in 2011, Louisiana exported \$135 million worth of goods to Russia, which created a lot of good jobs in Louisiana.

Louisiana was a top supplier of PVC plastics to Russia in 2011, with \$21.4 million in exports, but exporters in the EU and in China still accounted for more than 60 percent of Russian imports of that particular material. We have an opportunity to grow this if we grant this kind of permanent, normalized trade relations.

Mr. DREIER. Reclaiming my time, just to underscore again, PVC is that material that's used in sprinklers. And I see this PVC material. I have been very familiar with it for many years.

What my friend is saying is there is an opportunity for exports to exceed

the \$24 million coming from Louisiana to Russia, but right now we're seeing other parts of the world transcend that. By virtue of the fact that they have access to that consumer market in Russia, it's denying the people of Louisiana from being able to see an increase in the level of exports of PVC material into Russia.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. BOUSTANY. That's exactly right. Louisiana produces a PVC plastic, or looking for opportunities to get into that market, and yet they're being superseded by countries in Europe and China.

In fact, Russia, when it joined the WTO, agreed to reduce its average tariffs on plastic products from 10 percent to 6.2 percent. If we don't do this, we're going to be subject to higher tariffs, putting us at a major competitive disadvantage, and our foreign competitors will take advantage of this. Again, we'll have the mechanisms in place, if we do grant trade relations, to have a dispute mechanism in place to ensure that Russia keeps its commitments to our workers, our businesses back here at home.

Now, there's no reason not to move forward with this, and I hope that we can see some action on this relatively soon, because as each day kicks by, we are losing competitiveness.

One last tidbit of information, Louisiana doesn't have large Fortune 500 companies. We have a couple, but we have a lot of small- and mid-sized firms that are manufacturers, and we are a leader in manufacturing on the small scale in the energy sector with equipment and services that are vital to energy production, energy security globally.

These companies would love to get into the Russian market, to have the right protections of law so that they could sell their goods and services. This would lead to a lot of economic activity in Louisiana. It would help, you know, create good-paying jobs once again, help promote our energy sector, development and manufacturing in the energy sector, of which Louisiana—and the United States, frankly—has been a leader.

Congress must continue to support these kinds of agreements to boost our economy here at home to create job opportunities, good-paying job opportunities right here at home. That's why it's so important to move forward on this.

Mr. DREIER. Well, Mr. Speaker, let me express my appreciation for the very thoughtful remarks. The dedication that my friend has shown to his Louisiana constituents and the American people is, really, very, very respected in this institution. And I want him to know how much, Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate his understanding of what it's going to take to create more jobs in Louisiana for the people there who are struggling and working so hard.

One issue that I wanted to mention, I talked about it earlier, but I think is

very important, and it's really what's led to people who are in opposition to this, and that is this question of human rights. We have horror story after horror story.

I have stood in this well and several times talked about the relationship that I developed with a man who is currently in prison in Russia, and this man's name is Mikhail Khodorkovsky. He was in the energy business, a company called Yukos. He was one of the most successful, dedicated, and hard-working Russians. He was one of the greatest philanthropists in Russia, giving huge sums of money to support many, many charitable causes.

But, Mr. Speaker, he was guilty of one thing and one thing only: He was not a supporter of Vladimir Putin. And he sat in my office in the Rules Committee, right upstairs here, and, having visited him in Moscow and then having him visit me here in the Capitol. He said that he was nervous, and he was concerned that he was going to face some consequences for his opposition to Vladimir Putin.

Today I'm embarrassed to say how I reacted. I laughed. I said, The Soviet Union no longer exists. We have moved to a country that is independent, free, strong, vibrant, moving away from corruption, and, you, Mr. Khodorkovsky—Mikhail, I was calling him then—I said, You are, in fact, one of the most successful people in the country. There's no way that you would face that kind of threat.

Well, Mr. Speaker, tragically, we saw Mikhail Khodorkovsky jailed for 7 years, and then we saw an extension, another 7-year extension of his sentence. I will tell you that that is one of the reasons, because of the dedication that I have to the name of Mikhail Khodorkovsky, who at this moment is suffering in a prison in Russia, it is for that reason that I want us to take every step that we can to ensure that we bring about the kind of reform and the change that is essential.

What we've done in this legislation, Mr. Speaker, is we have dealt with a specific case where a man died. Sergey Magnitsky was relatively young. He was in his thirties, a lawyer who raised questions and concerns about the behavior of Vladimir Putin's Russia. For that, he was sentenced to prison. He was beaten, tortured, and left to die.

That has raised concern here in the United States and around the world. That kind of action is not acceptable, and we have to do everything that we can to ensure that those who are responsible are brought to justice and that it never, ever happens again.

Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to say that in this legislation we have the so-called Magnitsky bill, which was reported unanimously out of our House Foreign Affairs Committee. This measure has passed the Senate. We need to see the melding of these. We need to see this put together and passed so that we can say that we're going to expand our American values, creating jobs in

the United States by opening up this market and, at the same time, saying we will ensure that whoever is responsible for this kind of outrageous behavior is brought to justice. We're seeing, obviously, horrendous human rights violations take place around the globe.

Yesterday morning I stood here to talk about our great, great Ambassador, an amazing Foreign Service Officer who represented the United States in Damascus, Jerusalem, and other spots in the world in his dedicated career. Tragically, Chris Stevens was killed, as we all know.

We are seeing a very, very dangerous world, and that's why it's important for us to stand up and take action, and that's exactly what this measure calling for the U.S. to be at the table with Russia by granting PNTR will do.

Again, my friend has said it perfectly. Mr. PAULSEN said it. Mr. MEEKS said it. My colleague, I know, in his talking points that I submitted for the record, Mr. MORAN, would have said it. KEVIN BRADY, the chairman of the Trade Subcommittee had to go to a meeting, but he very much wanted to be a part of our presentation this evening, and he passionately believes that this is the way for us to most effectively deal with the very, very serious problems that we have on economic growth and on human rights violations. I hope, I hope that we will be able to see passage as soon as possible.

Again, I know that this is the time of year, as I said at the very outset, just weeks before the election, to be very partisan. This is something that we can have a bipartisan victory on.

That's why, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to implore President Obama to get engaged on this. I know that there are many issues, again, looking at Africa and the Middle East. I know he is campaigning in his quest to be reelected. This is something that Democrats and Republicans in the House will pass with strong support if he will get engaged and work with us, work with us to ensure that we can bring this together.

□ 1930

And so I hope very much that he will do that in the coming days and weeks to underscore his goal of creating jobs.

I'd like to further yield to my friend. It looks like he'd like to offer something.

Mr. BOUSTANY. I thank the chairman for yielding some time back to me. I share his sentiments about the situation with human rights and liberty. America has always been the beacon of liberty—individual liberty. And it's also been the hope of the world with regard to human rights. And we have to understand, the American public has to understand that one of the most important tools that we have as a Nation is our economic strength. And it comes from each and every one of us in this country—from a plumber to a mechanic or someone engaged in small manufacturing, our farmers. That eco-

nomie strength comes from each and every one of us. It wells up into the mighty country that we have.

We think about American might in terms of military might. Yes, it's a great and wondrous thing, but our economic strength is even more important. And the way we use that to influence events in the world to help promote liberty, to promote human rights is to engage in trade. And the surest way that we're going to help promote changes in Russia for the better is to help that middle class. And by engaging in trade, that middle class will be stronger, it will be wealthier, it will want to engage; and that will lead to serious political reforms.

The last thing I want to say is I share your sentiments with regard to Ambassador Stevens. He was a wonderful man. He served his country in many hotspots, difficult places. He was fearless. And I would also say that we oftentimes talk about our military men and women and we put them up on the pedestal, where we should, rightly so, but we forget to talk about our diplomats and our foreign service officers who do the same sorts of things, putting themselves in harm's way in these very tough places around the world. They are extremely patriotic. They do their duty. They make us all proud. We lost a great patriot with Ambassador Stevens.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for his very thoughtful contribution on that. As we talk about human rights violations and the kind of threat that exists to those lovers of freedom around the world, I will say that just a couple of hours ago I talked to a friend of mine who is Libyan. In fact, his father was the lead opposition for four decades to Muammar Qadhafi in Libya. And he was in tears in our conversation, saying that the people of Libya owe everything to the United States of America. He said Benghazi would have been completely lost were it not for the United States of America and what it is that we did to bring about the kind of liberation that they so desperately needed, having been repressed for 42 years under Muammar Qadhafi.

And he went on to say that as we look at Libya, it's important to note that the tragic murder of Ambassador Stevens did not come from the people of Libya. It came from individuals, a few individuals. He said the people of Libya love the American people and revere the American people. I suspect that as we're talking about Russian PNTR that the same thing exists in Russia. Because they're living with great oppression. They're living with what is little more than an authoritarian dictatorship with the kind of crony capitalism and the violations of human rights that we're speaking of. Mr. Speaker, the people of Russia—and I know many Russians; we all do—have great respect and love for us as well.

So, again, our goal is to bring an end to repressive policies and use, as my

friend so eloquently said, the economic strength of the United States that is exemplified in every American who is working in whatever capacity at all to see our economy grow. Because we're the only complete superpower left in the world today, the only complete superpower. By virtue of that, I mean militarily, economically, and geopolitically. And we have to step up to the plate and continue to exercise that strong leadership role; and passage of permanent normal trade relations, taking this step will go a long way towards doing just that.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all of my friends who participated. And I know, as I've asked for general leave, others who wanted to be here who were unable to are going to be joining in submitting statements for the RECORD.

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to underscore the importance of immediate approval legislation to repeal Jackson-Vanik establish U.S. permanent normal trade relations with Russia.

There is demonstrated and widespread bipartisan support for Russian PNTR among our colleagues in the House, as well as in the Senate. And we cannot and should not wait to pass this legislation which will greatly benefit American business and their employees as they seek entrée into the expanding Russian market.

We all share serious concerns with the ongoing human and political rights situation in the Russian Federation, but the maintenance Jackson-Vanik does nothing to address those concerns.

What it does do is deny the United States and our business the ability to fully take advantage of the benefits of Russian accession to the WTO both in terms of market access and trade enforcement.

PNTR will provide the United States with important benefits at no cost to us.

With PNTR, American companies will be able to take full advantage of lower Russian tariffs, stronger IP protections, and other market-opening concessions that the Russians agreed to as part of joining the World Trade Organization.

Last month's WTO accession promises to open that country large and growing consumer market to exporters around the world.

Unfortunately, because we have yet to establish PNTR with Russia, all the members of the WTO except the United States are now fully benefiting from increased access to the growing Russian market, which is the world's 9th largest economy.

Unlike the United States, other countries also have the ability to use the WTO's dispute settlement process to help ensure Russia honors its new WTO commitments. This is particularly important in a market such as Russia's which is relatively new to market capitalism and continues to present serious problems for foreign businesses.

Anders Aslund and Gary Hufbauer from the Peterson Institute for International Economics predict that U.S. exports to Russia should double within 5 years after accession to the WTO. Evidence from countries that joined the WTO between 2000 and 2010 suggest this statistic to be true, and maybe even a con-

servative estimation. If Exports to Russia grow at the same rate as they did for exports to Ukraine and the Baltics, exports could triple, approaching \$30 billion. This would place Russia among America's large second tier-markets, such as Australia, India and France.

Every day we have not passed PNTR is a day where we put this opportunity in jeopardy by according a competitive advantage to non-American companies doing business in Russia.

We have the opportunity now to pass bipartisan legislation that advances American economic interests, which should not dither and continue to allow the partisan politics of election season to prevent us from grasping that opportunity.

PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, my name is KEITH ELLISON. I'm the cochair of the Progressive Caucus. Tonight, I come before the people on the floor of the House of Representatives to discuss important issues facing our economy and the huge challenges that our Nation is facing, particularly with regard to the events that are going to take shape right after the election.

The Progressive Caucus has come together, Mr. Speaker, and thought very carefully about what a deal would look like and should look like. I want to talk about that tonight. I want to go into what we call the Deal for All and to elaborate on some of the complexities that are facing our country and how this is a time where we really need to focus on the real core of what is important to make sure that as all these fiscal matters come together, the United States and the people of America, particularly the working people, come out on top and in the right space.

Before I dive into that, Mr. Speaker, I do want to yield just for a moment to talk about the great service of Ambassador Chris Stevens. Ambassador Stevens was a dedicated public servant, and he and the individuals who lost their lives in Benghazi recently have to be remembered for the dedicated service that they lent to our country. It's important to note that Chris Stevens loved Libya, loved Libyans; and it's not any accident that Libyans took to the streets not to attack America, but really Libyans came to the street holding up placards apologizing for the act of these terrorists who killed Americans and Libyans when they assaulted the consulate in Benghazi, and many of them held up placards extolling the great virtues of Chris Stevens. And it's important to point out that as Americans are watching these things unfold across the Middle East, that the last thing Chris Stevens would want would be for us to withdraw or pull out of Libya.

This horrible incident that occurred in Benghazi was not done by the Liby-

an people. It was done by terrorists who have nothing but contempt for the democracy in Libya, which is unfolding; and that is why they would take their action against the consulate as they did do. But it's important to note that there were about seven Libyans who died. The numbers are yet coming in. Of course, they're subject to being revised. But there were a number of Libyans who lost their lives trying to defend that consulate. And I think Americans should keep that in mind. They also should keep in mind that as the outbreak of these protests across the Middle East—you have one in Yemen, you have them in Libya, you have them in Egypt—it is important to point out that leaders of these countries have apologized for these things, particularly Yemen and Libya. And Egypt eventually got there.

And it's important to point out that Americans should know that this is not representative of certainly the will of the Libyan people. And there are a lot of people across the region who support the United States and support a good relationship with the United States. We should not allow ourselves to be confused by these events. I could easily see how people could be; but when you see dedicated public servants risking their lives to build bridges, the last thing we want to do is withdraw and abandon these relationships that have been fought hard for and now have been paid for in the blood of our heroes, Ambassador Chris Stevens being one of them.

So I do want to just wrap up this section of my discussion tonight and just point out Chris Stevens, a dedicated servant of the United States, a dedicated and committed man who has gone and offered the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of his country to build bridges between people and particularly to help build democracy in the weak state of Libya, a state that threw off a dictator.

Chris Stevens went there to help the people and to help them build a democracy, and he must be remembered for his great sacrifice and also that of the individuals who lost their lives with him, four Americans and several Libyans. And as the names come forward and as their names are released, we'll come back to this microphone and share the information with the people.

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So now let's talk about the business we're here to talk about, Madam Speaker. Tonight, we're talking about the Progressive Caucus message. The Congressional Progressive Caucus is the organization in Congress dedicated to talking about what's good for the average working American, making sure that the average American's interests are looked out and regarded highly as we move forward.

I want to talk a little bit about the Budget For All, and not only the Budget For All, but also the Deal For All.

I want to get right to the point. Everybody is talking about the fiscal