

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, 2 weeks ago, Representatives BARBARA LEE, CHRIS GIBSON, RICHARD HUDSON, and I hosted a Poverty Simulation for Members of Congress and their staffs here on Capitol Hill. Run by Entergy and Catholic Charities USA, this poverty simulation provided a way for policymakers and their staffs to experience poverty in a new and different way.

This simulation allowed participants to experience firsthand what it is like to be poor in America. Far too often, we talk about poverty, but we don't understand it. Being poor is hard work. It is hard to figure out how to stretch your food dollar and get from home to school to work with limited transportation, for example, when you are poor and are living on a limited income.

This simulation is one step in understanding how we end hunger and poverty. We can't begin this fight if we can't come together as Republicans and Democrats, and simulations like this could prove to be the way we all start working together on this common goal.

THE ERADICATION OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, Pope Francis has spoken about the conditions in Iraq for Christians.

Now His Grace Bishop Angaelos, General Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the United Kingdom, said the following today:

As the widespread violence and aggression facing Christians and minority groups in Mosul, Iraq, intensifies, it is increasingly evident that the fundamental right and freedom to practice one's faith and belief is—and continues to be—grossly violated.

We are currently witnessing an unacceptable widespread implementation of extremist religious ideology that threatens the lives of all Iraqis who do not fit within its ever-narrowing perspective. While this situation stands to eradicate centuries of coexistence and culture in the region, it also threatens to significantly and negatively impact these communities for generations to come. If left unchallenged, it is not Iraq alone that is at risk, but the potential is intensified for the replication of this ideology as a viable and legitimate model for others across the Middle East.

He then thanked the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies and its chairman, His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan, for expressing his concern about the current situation in Mosul.

Everyone—the President, the Congress, religious leaders—should speak out on the eradication of Christianity in the Middle East.

VETERANS' CARE AND CONGRESS' AUGUST RECESS

(Mrs. BUSTOS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BUSTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge congressional leaders to keep the Senate and House in session and to forgo the August recess until both Chambers come together and pass compromise legislation to help our veterans get access to the timely and quality health care they have earned and deserve.

In light of the serious allegations of wrongdoing within the Department of Veterans Affairs, in addition to unacceptably long wait times at the VA medical facilities, it is urgent that a fix be put in place now.

Last month, both the Senate and House passed legislation that would expand veterans' ability to seek care at non-VA facilities under certain conditions, strengthen Congress' oversight of the VA, and eliminate performance-related bonuses for VA employees. Since then, the Conference Committee, tasked to work out a compromise between the two bills, has yet to do so.

I know I speak for many when I say the health of the veterans who have served us so bravely should not be placed on hold while Congress is away in August. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in calling on Congress to stay in session until we do right by our veterans.

PASSAGE OF THE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the National Defense Authorization Act and to call on Congress to come together and pass this important bill so that our troops have the support they need to succeed in the field and so that our military commanders and policymakers have the certainty they need to conduct our Nation's national security affairs.

This year's NDAA has already been voted on by the House, passing with bipartisan support.

In addition to keeping troops adequately equipped and trained, this year's legislation also includes a piece of legislation called the Medical Evaluation Parity for Service Members Act, or MEPS Act, which is a bill I introduced that will help our military move toward a more comprehensive and effective approach to suicide prevention and detection.

While our military has made great strides to address issues of mental illness, it is tragic events such as those at Fort Hood that remind us we must do better.

Madam Speaker, I am calling on the Senate to move forward on this legislation so that we can fulfill our commitment to those who serve in uniform. They deserve as much.

JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Madam Speaker, as a former State supreme court justice and now as the ranking Democrat on a subcommittee whose responsibilities include child well-being, I ask my colleagues to avoid the easy political path advanced by those who claim they would help vulnerable children by deporting them. We must say "no" to those who would hold up needed Homeland Security funding unless we agree to blame the victims—stripping these desperate children of their vital right to be heard.

Let's heed the good counsel of ABA President James R. Silkenat. He says:

The U.S. finds itself at a critical crossroads. The American Bar Association has long recognized the special vulnerabilities of children. We oppose any diminution in the rights available to Central American children under the law. It is imperative that children's immigration cases be conducted in the presence of an adjudicator. In addition, added resources are needed to reform and bolster our system for immigration adjudication, a system that has been severely short-funded for many years.

Shortcutting justice for children cuts short justice for abuse.

WORLDWIDE DAY OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIANS

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Madam Speaker, moments ago, the House opened in prayer. Today, I am rising in solidarity with those who are calling for a worldwide day of prayer for Christians suffering in Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and across the Middle East.

Radical Islamists have a phrase: "first the Saturday people, then the Sunday people."

Those who call for Israel's destruction are the same radicals who are persecuting Christians throughout the Middle East. Reported cases of Christians killed for their faith doubled worldwide from the previous year. Others have been kidnapped, forcibly converted, or exiled, while churches and holy sites have been destroyed.

Iraq's Christian community has dropped from 1.5 million people in 2003 to only 200,000 today, and in Mosul—home of one of the world's oldest Christian communities—ISIS militants have overrun the city. They are using this Arabic symbol and are painting it on homes to identify Nazarenes, or Christians, who are told to convert to Islam, pay a religious tax, or be executed. Now almost no Christians remain in Mosul, a city with a 2,000-year relationship with the Christian faith. The situation is also dire in Syria and elsewhere.

Middle East Christians need our prayers, our support, and our voices,

and I am proud to stand with those who follow the Nazarene.

AMERICA STANDS WITH ISRAEL

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

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, the war in Gaza continues. Every human life that is killed is a tragedy, particularly those of civilians, but I think it is important to put it in perspective. The fight is not between Israelis and Palestinians. The fight is between Israelis and Hamas, which is a terrorist organization.

Week after week, month after month, year after year, Hamas has lobbed missiles into the Israeli civilian population—killing Israelis, maiming Israelis. Israel is fighting back in order to try to stop the onslaught of Hamas.

What would we do, Madam Speaker, if missiles came over the border from Canada or from Mexico, attacking population areas of the United States? Of course, we would go over the border and attempt to stop the terrorists who were doing that to our civilians.

That is precisely what Israel is doing, and quite frankly, the media coverage of the war in Gaza has been absolutely one-sided against Israel and absolutely disgraceful.

Hamas uses its people as human shields. They build bomb factories and missile factories in heavily populated civilian areas. So, when civilians are killed, it is the fault of Hamas, not the fault of Israel, which has tried to defend its way of life and defend its citizens.

I am proud that America stands with Israel, and we will continue to do so.

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LET'S GET THE CHILDREN OUT OF HARM'S WAY IN GAZA

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, last night, on the national news I saw the terrible agony and tears of a man whose children had been, according to the report, blown to pieces when a school was hit in Gaza.

Hamas started this war. Israel certainly has a right to defend its people.

In today's Washington Post, Michael Oren, the former Israeli Ambassador to the U.S., said it is "indeed agonizing" to watch the images of the dead and wounded and, I might add, especially the children.

Israel agreed to an Egyptian-sponsored cease-fire. Hamas did not. I rise today to plead for both sides in this war to at least let the little children get out of the war zone.

The United Nations has never been very effective, but it should at least attempt to lead in an effort to get children out of harm's way.

If this fighting, unfortunately, has to continue, our President and State Department should at least do everything possible to get little children out of Gaza and to some safe place away from the bombs and the rockets.

REMOVING UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES FROM IRAQ

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the order of the House of July 23, 2014, I call up the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 105) directing the President, pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution, to remove United States Armed Forces, other than Armed Forces required to protect United States diplomatic facilities and personnel, from Iraq and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Wednesday, July 23, 2014, the amendment numbered 1 printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD is adopted, and the concurrent resolution, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the concurrent resolution, as amended, is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 105

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. PROHIBITION REGARDING UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES IN IRAQ.

The President shall not deploy or maintain United States Armed Forces in a sustained combat role in Iraq without specific statutory authorization for such use enacted after the date of the adoption of this concurrent resolution.

SEC. 2. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION

Nothing in this concurrent resolution supersedes the requirements of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1541 et seq.).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend and to submit any extraneous materials for the RECORD on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution. I very much appreciate the way in which Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. ENGEL, the bipartisan leadership of the House, and the staff of the committee have worked through this issue to bring us here this morning. I thank all of the Members. I also think all of the Members of this body can support this motion.

Earlier this week, the Foreign Affairs Committee heard testimony from sen-

ior officials from the Departments of State and Defense on the situation in Iraq.

Madam Speaker, the situation in this critical Middle Eastern country is precarious. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, an al Qaeda offshoot, has taken over most of western Iraq, it has turned its sights on Baghdad, and it may be preparing to launch attacks against the United States.

Never has a terrorist organization itself controlled such a large, resource-rich safe haven as ISIS does today. Never has a terrorist organization possessed the heavy weaponry, the cash, the personnel that ISIS does today, which includes thousands of Western passport holders.

What started as a crisis in Syria has become a regional disaster with serious global implications, including credible threats of international terrorism, humanitarian disaster, and upward pressure on energy prices in a fragile global economy.

The top State Department official told our committee that ISIS represents a growing threat to U.S. interests in the region, local populations, and the homeland, calling it a vital national security challenge. This is a common assessment outside of government as well.

As part of the response to this threat, the Obama administration has deployed additional military assets and up to 475 troops to secure our Embassy, our personnel. A few hundred U.S. military advisers are evaluating how we might best train, advise, and support the Iraqis to take on ISIS.

As the Department of Defense testified this week, these small teams are "armed for self-defense, but do not have an offensive mission." It was noted, these teams are not unlike the missions being carried out by U.S. forces around the world. U.S. forces currently maintain these types of troops in more than 70 countries, in Africa, the Americas, and Asia.

Now, if the President did decide to take more aggressive action in Iraq, Members on both sides of the aisle would be deeply split. Some don't see any role for the U.S. military. Others believe we should be more active in this region, believing that our absence has contributed to a vacuum that is churning the entire region.

But where I think all Members can agree is that if the President of the United States ordered U.S. Armed Forces into sustained combat in Iraq, then he should be coming to Congress to seek an explicit statutory authorization and the backing of this body.

That is the text before us today:

The President shall not deploy or maintain United States Armed Forces in a sustained combat role in Iraq without specific statutory authorization for such use enacted after the date of the adoption of this concurrent resolution.

At the same time, this text preserves the flexibility the President may need to respond to the rapidly evolving national security in order to protect our