

truly rely on Syrian rebels to lay the targets for our elite air assets?

There are boots on the ground today. We can call them military advisers, but the fact is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff yesterday said, if necessary, he would recommend putting them in a combat role. We are not having that debate here on the floor of the House.

The American people deserve a President and a Congress that are honest about what we face as a Nation militarily. The doubt in this debate in this Congress has been palpable. We question the strategy, we question the trust of Syrian rebels, we question our constitutional responsibility, and yet we are prepared as a body to ignore all doubt, to ignore our uncomfortable conviction of opposition to this request simply out of a desperate hope that somehow this matter might resolve itself without the President and the Congress having a hard conversation, recognizing that we are a war weary and tired Nation faced again with an asymmetric threat from terrorists who have threatened our homeland.

We want to believe the beheadings and the audible threats of terror to our shores is not real, but we know it is. We as a Nation do not have the luxury to choose what threats confront us; we only choose our response.

So my request of my colleagues in this House is that we have a full debate on what we face as a Nation. The President has brought us this very limited request merely out of statutory convenience, not out of constitutional conviction. We should not accept that.

My request of the President is this: very respectfully, do not trample on the constitutional authority of this Congress as you reluctantly march to the drumbeat of war that you are rightfully hesitant to engage in and with an elusive strategy that leaves so many unanswered questions today.

This body should have a full debate. The American people deserve to know that the President has requested full authorization and this Congress has had an opportunity to deliberate on it. I reluctantly oppose the request today, knowing we must do so much more to confront ISIS. I ask my colleagues to do the same.

CONGRESS AND THE USE OF MILITARY FORCE

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

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, later today we are likely to see bipartisan support for an amendment to authorize the Secretaries of Defense and State to provide limited assistance to properly vetted factions within the Syrian opposition as part of the broader effort to "degrade, and ultimately destroy" the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. The President specifically asked Congress to provide these authorities, and I somewhat reluctantly will agree to support it.

But I want to add a caution, that this action should not be interpreted as granting congressional authorization for the broader use of military force to combat the growing threat posed by ISIL. Quite the contrary, the amendment specifically prohibits the introduction of U.S. Armed Forces into hostilities absent such explicit authorization.

Now, the President asserts he already has the authority to confront ISIL. In his most recent notification to Congress, he cites the executive's constitutional authority "to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief . . ." While this issue has been the subject of long-simmering debate between our branches and among historians and scholars, I would modestly note that the Constitution explicitly grants to Congress, and only to Congress, the power to declare war. If there are inherent unenumerated powers in the role of Commander in Chief, most surely logic dictates there are similar inherent, unenumerated powers Congress is vested in with our role to declare war.

Let us make no mistake, we are confronting here on this issue a matter of war and peace. Yet, in the same breath we are discussing the danger, we are preparing to shutter Congress for another 7 weeks until after the election.

The President said he welcomes congressional support for this effort to show the world we are "united in confronting this danger." I am glad he welcomes congressional input, but I, for one, believe the President actually needs specific congressional authority, whether he wants it or not, for what he himself acknowledges will be a prolonged campaign to eradicate the cancer-like ISIL. Anything short of that is an abrogation of our sworn duty to defend and uphold the Constitution of the United States.

This isn't President Obama trampling on the Constitution. This is Congress, in a long 60-year history, of winking and blinking about our responsibility because we don't want to bear it. But on matters of war and peace, we either live up to our constitutional responsibility, which is quite clear, or we go on a 7-week recess.

My colleagues know there are historical cases in which congressional acquiescence has been construed to confer support or authorization where none has been given. The Gulf of Tonkin resolution is certainly a case in point. It led to a prolonged war and 55,000 U.S. deaths.

The 93rd Congress adopted the War Powers Resolution to reassert Congress' role after both Korea and Vietnam. The War Powers Resolution requires the President to consult with Congress prior to introducing American forces into hostilities.

The administration has recently argued that the aerial strikes do not constitute hostilities because they don't involve sustained fighting. But again, out of the President's own words, he

said last week this would be "a comprehensive and sustained effort." That doesn't sound like a temporary action by the Commander in Chief.

And to put an even finer point on the issue, I remind my colleagues of H. Con. Res. 105, which was adopted in July, that prohibits the President from deploying or maintaining U.S. Armed Forces in a sustained combat role in Iraq without specific statutory authorization.

I agree with the President when he said we are strongest as a Nation when the President and Congress work together. On the most important issue we ever vote on, war and peace, we must come together, and this branch must live up to its constitutional responsibility at long last.

FIGHTING THE ISLAMIC STATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOLLY). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, contrary to the President's assertion last week, the Islamic State is Islamic and it is a State, or at least it has all the attributes of a State. It is precisely this combination that makes it so dangerous, a messianic and clearly stated intention to wage jihad on American soil and the resources and equipment to do so.

In response to this danger, the President proposes that the United States wage a continuing air war against the Islamic State, but to avoid any commitment of ground forces. Instead, he seeks to use vetted elements of the Free Syrian Army as the American proxy force and proposes to arm and train them for that purpose.

This raises two major concerns. First, many elements of the Free Syrian Army have a long history of collaborating with the Islamic State. Its principal mission is to destroy the Syrian Government, which though utterly despotic, is currently fighting the Islamic State. We court a very real risk that this equipment will either be turned against Syria as it fights the IS, or turned over to the IS as elements of Iraqi Security Forces recently did.

Second, committing insufficient force in any conflict is self-defeating, and air strikes alone cannot win a war. For 13 years, the brave young Americans who stepped forward to defend our country after 9/11 have found themselves hamstrung by political correctness on the battlefield, perilously commingled with hostile forces, endangered by rules of engagement that undermine their ability to defend themselves, and denied the full resources and commitment of our country.

We are in precarious times, with an administration that either cannot or will not learn from the mistakes of the past. Until we are prepared to put the full might and resources of our Nation behind a war against the Islamic State, we can at least act to contain IS advances, protect our people, and restore

the martial strength and national will that will certainly be needed in the years ahead.

First, I believe the President is correct to order selected air strikes in tactical support of resistance forces where they are actively engaged against the IS. Where we can turn the tide of battle in these engagements, we must. And the immediate destruction of oil fields under IS control is vital to reduce the resources that it is currently converting to cash.

Second, it is appropriate to take immediate, significant, and focused retaliatory strikes against the Islamic State in response to specific acts that it commits against American interests. This is the Reagan model in Libya, and it worked.

Third, the direct threat posed to the United States by the IS is not on Syrian or Iraqi soil, but on American soil. The Islamic State has been explicit in declaring its intention to insert a Fifth Column within our borders and wage jihad on Americans. For far too long we have ignored the threat posed by a wide open southern border, lax enforcement on the northern border, and non-enforcement of visa overstays. And this neglect needs to stop now. We must secure our borders, enforce the time limits on visas, and change the law to revoke the passports of any American who takes up arms for the Islamic State.

Fourth, we must recognize that the improving world situation that justified reducing military spending in recent years has now reversed, and so must our priorities. The world is now becoming more dangerous and unstable, and our military budget must be adjusted to meet that growing danger. Our Nation's weakened fiscal condition requires a comprehensive review of our spending priorities as a matter of vital national security.

Fifth, we must assure that our only reliable ally in the Middle East, Israel, has all the equipment and supplies and assistance it may need in coming years, and that it will have the unqualified support of the United States when it must take action for its own security.

Mr. Speaker, Islamic fascism is now advancing into a vacuum that many past blunders have created, the worst of them being to underestimate the terrible demands that war requires. These are mistakes we can no longer afford to make. Confronting the rise of European fascism in the 1930s, Churchill counseled measured resistance where possible, while undertaking utmost martial preparation. That advice lights our path that we must take today.

ANYTHING FOR FOOTBALL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, "anything for football." It is a phrase I have

heard a lot recently, that we should ignore what happens off the field for the sake of the sport.

This creed used to mean something positive. Vince Lombardi, the namesake of the Super Bowl trophy, said he viewed his players as "neither black nor white, but Packer green." "Anything for football" meant he had to fight racism and homophobia off the field to coach the best football team possible.

Recently, "anything for football" has been used to justify an organization that perpetuates violence and sexism rather than teamwork, family, and sport. Instead of fighting injustice off the field for the sake of the sport, the NFL chooses deafening silence. We are told to ignore what happens on the sidelines, in disciplinary boardrooms, or behind elevator doors, all for the sport. Well, I refuse to ignore what is happening.

The NFL thinks they can play by their own rules. As we saw in the Ray Rice case, these decisions go all the way to the top. Commissioner Roger Goodell is judge and jury, yet he is also the one who stands to profit by seeing these cases hushed and unpunished.

Since he took over the NFL in 2006, there have been 56 arrests of players for domestic violence. The NFL has been inconsistent in its response, ranging from counseling, to single game suspensions, to conditional fines, to nothing at all.

After a player is arrested, more often than not they continue to play, even if there is clear evidence for their violent crime. When a police officer is being investigated for domestic violence, they are suspended with pay until the investigation ends. If the NFL is serious about zero tolerance, why shouldn't it play by the same rules?

Of the 56 football players arrested for domestic violence, they only saw a combined 13 games suspended. The NFL would rather see these players on the field than take a stance against violence. After all, "anything for football." I say, "Bench them."

Ray McDonald of the San Francisco 49ers was arrested at a party after his fiancée, who was 10 weeks pregnant, showed police bruises on her neck and arms. He has played the last 2 weeks. Why hasn't he been benched? "Anything for football." I am an avid 49er fan, but this is disgusting. I expect more from my 49ers.

Greg Hardy of the Carolina Panthers was arrested and convicted for assaulting his former girlfriend. The woman said Hardy picked her up, choked her, threw her on a couch covered in assault rifles and shotguns, and bragged to her that they were loaded. He is appealing his case and still playing. Why hasn't he been benched? "Anything for football."

Ray Rice of the Baltimore Ravens, who was indicted in March with assaulting his then-fiancée, has finally received a punishment befitting his crime, but only after a video of the ac-

tual event was released. After he was indicted, his coach, John Harbaugh, said, "He will be part of our team. Support the person without condoning the action." Why wasn't he benched from the start? "Anything for football."

The list goes on and on. Like the military and universities, the NFL thinks they can enforce their own justice internally. They have failed. The NFL should change their policies so that these players stay on the bench while they are investigated.

This week I will send a letter to Commissioner Goodell and team owners, calling on them to immediately change their domestic violence policy. When a player is arrested for domestic violence, the NFL should immediately suspend the player and continue to pay them until a preponderance of the evidence determines their guilt or innocence. This suspension should continue until the end of court proceedings, when the NFL can then apply its player policy. It is what we do with police officers. This is what zero tolerance looks like.

Two-thirds of all Americans watch the NFL. Let us work together to put an end to the NFL's inaction. Lombardi didn't just think we could fight racism through football. He said, "People who work together will win, whether it be against complex football defenses or the problems of modern society."

It may be difficult, but we deserve sports that show the best in our society. After all, "anything for football."

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 4194. An act to provide for the elimination or modification of Federal reporting requirements.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1214. An act to require the purchase of domestically made flags of the United States of America for use by the Federal Government.

S. 2117. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to change the default investment fund under the Thrift Savings Plan, and for other purposes.

S. 2440. An act to expand and extend the program to improve permit coordination by the Bureau of Land Management, and for other purposes.

S. 2511. An act to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to clarify the definition of substantial cessation of operations.

S. 2539. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain programs relating to traumatic brain injury and to trauma research.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 106-286, the Chair, on behalf of the President of the