

very foolish mistake if we lose sight of the terror threat from Iran, the world's greatest state sponsor of terror.

In the past week, two alarming developments have exposed why Iran cannot be trusted:

First, a December 2 report from the International Atomic Energy Agency revealed that Iran had previously been working on nuclear weapons.

That is right, Mr. Speaker. Despite Iran's repeated insistence that its nuclear program had only been for peaceful purposes, the IAEA report makes clear that Iran had an active nuclear weapons program.

In short, Iran lied, and it has been telling a very big lie for some time. This deceit is precisely why we must not close the book on uncovering Iran's past nuclear efforts.

Second, Mr. Speaker, it has now been reported that on November 21, Iran tested a ballistic missile, one capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. This is a breach of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions and is in obvious defiance of the 8-year ban on ballistic missile work that was part of the nuclear agreement.

This is Iran's second such launch of a ballistic missile since the conclusion of the nuclear agreement. Regrettably, no such action has been taken against Iran for that first test in October. Instead, the U.N. Security Council is still debating on how to respond. They are still debating. What message does that send?

Mr. Speaker, Iran cannot be given a pass for these flagrant provocations. A failure to forcibly respond now with repercussions will only encourage Iran to incrementally cheat in the future again and again, as it already has.

The unavoidable truth is that simply looking the other way so as not to ruffle any feathers in Tehran will neither bring peace nor an end to belligerent behavior from the Iranians. We know that Iran cannot be trusted, plain and simple. We know that Iran will continue to test the world's resolve.

The real question now, Mr. Speaker, is whether the world will even be interested in responding. It is time for our voices to be heard loud and clear. The United States must step forward and lead.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 22 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) at noon.

PRAAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

As the two parties negotiate the funding of government in these waning days of the first session, grant them a surfeit of wisdom and a spirit of cooperation in ongoing negotiations.

Continue to bless our Nation with a sense of peace and healing as the victims of San Bernardino are being laid to rest. During this holy season, continue to be with us.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PAULSEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PAULSEN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

THE PRESIDENT SHOULD CHANGE COURSE

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, it is sad to me that it took the President 5 days to identify the attack in San Bernardino as terrorism. After I heard the tragic news last Wednesday, I knew in 5 seconds it was a terrorist attack.

The President needs to revisit the 9/11 Memorial in New York City, which clearly establishes the timeline of the global war on terrorism. He can see copies of fatwas by Islamic extremists declaring war on modern civilization dated in 1996. The war has never stopped.

The Second Amendment's right to bear arms has never been more important for citizens to protect their families. The thought that gun control can stop terrorism is a diversion from the real threats. This was revealed by the

mass murders in Paris, despite French strict gun control.

In the past weeks, the terrorists' mass murders have been horrifying, of Lebanese, Russians, and French, along with Americans in Iraq, Israel, Paris, and San Bernardino, of Muslims, Christians, and Jews.

The President should change course to actually destroy ISIL, not just give pathetic political lectures. We are facing an enemy that requires us to set aside partisanship to protect American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President by his actions never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

SOLAR INVESTMENT TAX CREDIT

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, notably absent from the tax extenders bill released this week is a provision on which 174,000 American jobs depend.

The solar investment tax credit, a 30 percent credit for the installation of solar on residential and commercial properties, was implemented in 2006. The result has been an annual growth of 73 percent.

That growth allowed the industry to develop panels that have soared in efficiency and plummeted in price. Solar is our fastest growing energy source and is responsible for 40 percent of all new generating capacity brought online this year. Solar employment is growing at a rate 20 times higher than the overall economy.

If the solar investment tax credit is not extended, that growth will stop, demand will drop by 71 percent, and 100,000 jobs will be lost; but a 5-year extension would create 60,000 jobs and allow the industry to come to maturity.

Mr. Speaker, tax legislation that does not include the solar investment tax credit is not serious about creating American jobs. I urge its inclusion.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MARY CALDWELL PLUMER

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the life of a patriot and dear friend, Mary Caldwell Plumer, known as Mere.

Mere accomplished so much throughout her long and rewarding life and did it with a constant smile and positive outlook. We treasured the moments we had with Mere because we knew we could not have her forever.

As per her wish, I will not stand by her grave and cry but adhere to the standards she established and always maintained of loving life and each other. Her friends, family, and loved ones admired her, and we were blessed to have known her.

Mr. Speaker, Mere is now reunited with her husband of 45 years, Dick, and two of her children, Penny and Christopher. Though Heaven has gained her, we have not lost her; and we will never lose her, for she is rooted in our hearts and in our memories now and forever.

Mere is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Patience and Charles Flick; her son, Richard; and her three loving grandchildren, Penny, Bonnie, and Willis Flick.

May God bless and keep Mary Caldwell Plumer in His bosom.

TERRORIST WATCH LIST LOOPOHOLE

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on my Republican colleagues to approve the Denying Firearms and Explosives to Dangerous Terrorists Act, which would prevent individuals on the terrorist watch list from buying weapons here in the U.S. This legislation has been blocked from coming to the floor for a vote nearly a dozen times over the past 2 weeks.

Most Americans find it mind-boggling that we continue to allow individuals deemed too dangerous to fly to buy weapons in the U.S., guns designed to kill as many people as possible, as quickly as possible.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my Republican colleagues to fix this loophole and protect our citizens, to find some courage and put the safety of the American people before the politics of the gun lobby.

Mr. Speaker, if Republicans truly have concerns over how the terrorist watch list is constructed, then they should offer an amendment to fix it. But more than 2,000 suspects on the terrorist watch list have already bought guns in our country. We don't need to add to that list. We need to act right now.

WEST VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

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

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of three West Virginia State football champions, all of which are from the First District of West Virginia: Head Coach Josh Nicewarner and the Indians of Bridgeport High School on their third straight Class AA championship title; and from Magnolia High School, Head Coach Josh Sims and the Blue Eagles on their single A championship title; and for the first time in school history, Chris Daugherty and the Wheeling Park Patriots on the Class AAA championship.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am told by my astute research staff that, except for States with one Representative, this is the first time in American history that

all three high school champions have come in a single year from one district. So I challenge my esteemed colleagues, Mr. JENKINS and Mr. MOONEY, from the other districts of West Virginia, to match that title next year.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate International Human Rights Day.

This year we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Mr. Speaker, the United States of America was founded upon freedom, democracy, and liberty, and America must perform its role as an advocate and as a defender of these values.

Today, more than 140 prisoners of conscience are currently imprisoned in Vietnam due to their political views and activities. These activists are victims of constant mental and physical harassment and oftentimes are forced to endure unsanitary prison conditions.

Activists, including Tran Huynh Duy Thuc, Dang Xuan Dieu, and Ho Duc Hoa, were falsely tried and imprisoned simply for practicing their right to assemble.

This year, in November, Burma, a country known for its horrendous human rights record, held its first free election, yet Vietnam continues to function as a single-party system. Today, on International Human Rights Day, I urge Vietnam to finally open up its society and to empower its people.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS GALLAGHER

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

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Thomas Gallagher, an honorable public servant who passed away earlier this week.

Following his service in the United States Air Force during the Korean war, Thomas earned an undergraduate and master's degree while simultaneously pursuing his career in law enforcement and raising a family.

Thomas joined the New York City Police Department in 1957 and went on to serve the city for 37 years, rising all the way to the rank of assistant chief.

Mr. Speaker, Thomas Gallagher was the son of Irish immigrants. From a very early age, he learned the importance of hard work and selfless dedication to his family and the community. Though he endured many tragedies in his life, including the loss of all three of his wives to various diseases, he never lost his zeal for life. He was often

buoyed by the great pride he held for all three of his children, who rose to become great successes in law, business, and the Secret Service.

Thomas personifies the great American spirit. Not only did he persevere through trying times, he prospered. His was a life well lived, and I feel truly blessed to have known him and his great family.

May God now hold Thomas in the palm of His hand.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF PROFESSOR JOHN ARTHUR RASSIAS

(Ms. KUSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the life of a truly extraordinary Granite Stater, Professor John Rassias, who passed away last week in New Hampshire at the age of 90.

Professor Rassias was a lifelong Granite Stater, a World War II veteran, and an internationally renowned language professor at my alma mater, Dartmouth College. He developed the Rassias method, a revolutionary way of teaching languages that includes rapid-fire drills and dramatic flair, allowing students to be immersed in the language and culture.

He was an extraordinary mentor. His teaching style has been widely adopted at universities and institutions around the world, including in the Peace Corps, where Dr. Rassias was the first director of language programs in 1964.

His legacy extends far beyond simply teaching language. Dr. Rassias' deep commitment to cultural dialogue and understanding shaped the perspective of countless students and inspired them to make the world a better place. He will be truly missed by the entire Granite State and members of the Dartmouth community throughout the world.

PINKY SWEAR FOUNDATION

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, the pinky swear promise is a universal symbol to keep one's promise and one's word. For the Pinky Swear Foundation, keeping that promise means helping children who are battling cancer and their families.

The foundation's work was actually started 12 years ago, after 9-year-old Mitch Chepokas of Chanhassen, Minnesota, had been diagnosed with terminal bone cancer and, while in his hospital room, overheard others discussing that there would not be enough money for Christmas that year.

Mitch decided that he would give away all of his money to those families so they could celebrate the holidays, and he made his father pinky swear to continue to make sure that they will