

At most tables, you could hear the hagglers looking for a better deal or discussing options for their purchase. They would ask: Chrome-lined or stainless steel barrel? What about a free-float rail? The possibilities seemed endless, as people wandered among dozens of tables.

Sellers were offering everything from high-volume magazines and sophisticated scope systems to attachable bipods and customized stocks. Prices for assault weapons typically ranged from \$600 to \$2,500, including a bipod and two drum magazines, each capable of holding 100 rounds. One dealer explained that the wide variation in pricing depended on the bells and whistles and the markup.

Not every weapon was particularly pricey. One vendor, who seemed eager to reduce inventory, marked down one of his assault rifles to under \$400. There were tables upon tables of handguns for sale, as well as a folding single-shot, .22-caliber rifle, small enough to fit in a backpack, for under \$200. Still other vendors offered to help customize your purchase on the spot. You could choose from dozens of barrel lengths and styles to go with your choice in stocks and other components.

There was plenty of ammo to go with any weapon you might purchase. Depending on the caliber and ammunition type, prices started as low as \$10 for a box of 50. Boxes of ammunition with a similar number of rounds for many assault rifles cost as little as \$20. Another dealer offered high-capacity, 50-round magazines for a gun show special of one for \$20 or three for \$55.

There was a lot of gear aimed toward women as well, with pink, single-shot rifles, body armor tailored for women, and purses designed for concealed carry. Even local charities got on the scene, with an AR-15 being auctioned off to benefit the Marine Corps League. All you had to do to be included was buy a \$1 raffle ticket and give your first name and phone number.

It was a surreal atmosphere within the midst of recent tragedies. It made me wonder if those in attendance were either oblivious or all too aware of those heartbreaking headlines. The gun show returns this month to Crown Point, but given the number of deadly weapons already on the streets of my hometown of Chicago, I think I will wait for the next home improvement show before making a return trip.

#### KILLING THE INNOCENTS IN SYRIA

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

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you a story. There was a little boy named Ali Daqneesh, age 10, and his little brother is Omran. That is the boy you see in the photo here that was shared across the Internet, worldwide, 2 weeks ago.

Ali was a really good big brother. He loved to play outside, and he was still

at that age when kids really get to dream big and imagine their future. I can only imagine the life that Ali looked forward to. Maybe he wanted to be a police officer; maybe he wanted to be a teacher or a doctor. I really can't say for certain because, tragically, his life was cut short by an airstrike.

Ali's death is an all-too-common fate for many of Syria's men, women, and children. These are the people who have lost their chance at life from the brutality of Bashar al-Assad and Vladimir Putin.

Of the over 500,000 dead Syrians, more than 50,000 are Syrian children who have been killed since the evil dictator Bashar al-Assad turned against his own people in 2011. Yet, even as the world continues to be outraged over these atrocities and pictures of dazed and bloody Syrian children like Ali's brother Omran, Assad and Russia and their Iranian backers are still barrel-bombing and launching chemical weapons against civilian targets.

On a daily basis, we hear that Syrian and Russian fighter planes have launched attacks on medical facilities and hospitals across the country. When these facilities are bombed, it is the children who suffer. In fact, the regime's belief is don't target, necessarily, military assets because, when you target innocent civilians, you inflict more collective pain on the population of Syria; and in Assad's estimation, that brings the war closer to an end.

At the end of July, a maternity hospital in Idlib was bombed. A recent story in *The New Yorker* highlighted the horror that comes with these bombings. In Aleppo, newborns in incubators suffocated to death because a Syrian or Russian airstrike cut off power to a hospital. Who is doing this? And why?

Bashar al-Assad continued the legacy of brutality against his people from his father—his father, who had one goal, and that was to keep power. Power is a crazy motivator for some people. The people of Syria, in 2011, decided they wanted some freedom, as is humanity's right, and they stood up and protested peacefully against Assad.

What did Assad do? Did he respond by saying: Well, let's talk and maybe find a way to have an outlet for your interests or your concerns? No. Assad rolled the tanks. Assad said he would kill his opposition. And what ensued after that was the incubation of a group we know today as ISIS, the opening of a civil war in Syria that is now spreading all over the Middle East, a massive refugee crisis around the world.

I hear some people in political conversations today express admiration for Vladimir Putin. They express admiration for Vladimir Putin's strength, as if oppressing and killing people is something to be proud of. That doesn't show strength. That shows weakness.

Mr. Speaker, Vladimir Putin and Russia are tearing Europe apart. Vladimir Putin and Russia are delivering

bombs on medical facilities and on children in Syria. They are no ally of ours. Sometimes the enemy of our enemy is still our enemy.

Mr. Speaker, I hear people sometimes say that dictatorships work in the Middle East. Sometimes they say that this introduction of freedom has somehow been terrible for people who just aren't ready for it. I agree. The introduction of freedom to a society that is not used to it can sometimes be very messy, and sometimes in the course of looking back over 20 years of history we see the success. That happened in our own founding. We went through the Civil War. We went through a bloody Revolution. We went through a time where we kept an entire race in chains. But, Mr. Speaker, when people say that dictatorships work, no, they don't.

This kid, I always wonder what is going through his mind. Probably not much because he was stunned at the bomb that landed on his house and killed his brother.

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#### FUND THE ZIKA EMERGENCY

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

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, we often hear from constituents who are frustrated by Congress' failure to act on many of the most pressing issues facing our country.

Seven weeks ago, as if we were determined to confirm this indictment, Congress adjourned for summer recess with a long list of critical unfinished business. We came nowhere near finishing our appropriations bills, leaving open the question of whether we can even keep the government open past September 30. We failed to pass the most rudimentary gun violence measures, leaving the tragedies of San Bernardino and Orlando unaddressed.

And then there was Zika, perhaps the most incredible failure of all. With an epidemic bearing down on us—an epidemic with disastrous human consequences, but with a prescribed course of action that could do much to prevent and mitigate the catastrophe—still, Congress refused to act.

Now we are back in session, facing daily headlines about the dangers posed by Zika. The number of Zika travel-related cases in the continental U.S. is increasing, the number of pregnant women infected is growing, and the number of babies being born—or worse, lost—with microcephaly or other Zika-related complications is rising. Increasing numbers of mosquito-borne cases have been reported in Puerto Rico and south Florida. I learned this week that five service members and retirees from Fort Bragg in North Carolina are being treated for Zika.

It has been more than 6 months since the President requested an emergency supplemental appropriation of \$1.9 billion from Congress to fund Zika preparedness, response, and prevention, as

well as critical research. The request was carefully and comprehensively documented and justified.

In the meantime, our local, State, and Federal public health agencies and authorities have continued to shift funds and reorder priorities in an attempt to get a handle on this public health emergency. Indeed, our own universities and other research centers have been shifting money around for months, as I learned at a conference I helped organize in North Carolina on June 7.

Researchers testified there as to the great promise of the work they are doing, but also as to the great efforts they have been required to make, in the face of inadequate and uncertain funding, to ensure that the work continues. I left that conference impressed and encouraged by the work that was going on. But I also left chagrined and angered at the way Congress, under Republican leadership, with no serious attempt at bipartisan cooperation, is letting these dedicated researchers and the entire country down.

The House and Senate Republican conference report contains only \$1.1 billion of the requested funds, but the larger problem is that it robs other critical public health priorities—notably, Ebola, but also disaster preparedness—in order to satisfy Republican budget ideologues.

Adding insult to injury, the Republican conference report also includes several misguided and dangerous policy riders. These poison pills would severely limit access to contraceptives in Puerto Rico, where thousands of cases of Zika have been recorded. It would take yet another shot at Planned Parenthood and would roll back certain clean water regulations, ostensibly to allow for the increased spraying of pesticides.

I recently met with Director Anthony S. Fauci of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, who explained the incredible lengths to which NIH and CDC have gone in order to protect the health of the American people. They have desperately cobbled together a budget, most recently taking money even from vital research into cancer, Alzheimer's, heart disease, and other diseases. Despite such extraordinary efforts, the CDC and NIH will run out of money after October 1.

Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that we honor the President's request of \$1.9 billion in a bill free of destructive offsets and ideological riders. It is crucial that Congress take action for the pregnant women in their first trimesters who are scared to leave their homes; for the children born with a range of disabilities, of which microcephaly is only the worst; for the service men and women stationed across the globe who are at particular risk; and for the 25 percent of Puerto Rico's population who will potentially contract this disease.

We can and we must as a country do better than this. Let's do the right

thing for our constituents, our country, and for the rest of the world by finally funding this public health emergency. We have long since run out of excuses. We can wait no longer.

#### OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S WAR ON POLICE

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, never has an American President been so willing to shoot first and ask questions later when a police officer uses deadly force in self-defense or to protect innocent lives. Never in American history has a President's legacy been a consistent disregard for the rule of law.

Time after time, after police shootings of African Americans, the Obama administration's knee-jerk, racially divisive strategy has been to paint a disturbingly false image of racial bias in police shootings that conflicts with a recent 2016 Harvard University study that found that police are 24 percent less likely to fire upon African Americans than Caucasian Americans.

For emphasis, let me repeat that. A 2016 Harvard University study by African American Professor Roland Fryer, Jr., found that police fire upon African Americans 24 percent less often than police fire upon Caucasian Americans.

On July 7, well before the facts of two police shootings of African Americans were known, President Obama, again, stoked racial prejudice flames by claiming that "Black folks are more vulnerable to these kinds of incidents." President Obama even defended subsequent, sometimes violent, protests as rather benign "expressions of outrage."

Shortly after the Obama administration attacked the motives of America's law enforcement officers and, perhaps, helped inspire even more violence against police, a Dallas sniper gunned down five police officers and injured many others during a Black Lives Matter protest. The shooter justified his murders by stating he was upset by police shootings, referenced Black Lives Matter, and stated that he wanted to kill White people, especially White police officers.

Three days later, after these horrific murders of police officers, President Obama reiterated his politically motivated, racial division narrative by blaming the attacks, in part, on a racial prejudice problem that police must fix because "that is what's going to ultimately help make the job of being a cop a lot safer."

Showing great hutzpah at the Dallas memorial ceremony for the slain officers, Obama, again, publicly blamed police racial bias as a contributing cause of police assassinations.

Mr. Speaker, when tearful Americans seek solace and unification, the Obama administration dishes out racism and antipolice profiling that helps inspire even more violence against police.

The result of the Obama administration's politics of racial division and hatred?

So far this year, as of September 2, firearms-related deaths of American law enforcement officers are up 56 percent.

The Obama administration's relationship with police has deteriorated so badly that William Johnson, the executive director of the National Association of Police Organizations, accuses Barack Obama of engaging in a "war on police," adding that the Obama administration's "continued appeasements at the Federal level with the Department of Justice, their appeasement of violent criminals, their refusal to condemn movements like Black Lives Matter actively calling for the death of police officers, that type of thing, all the while blaming police for the problems in this country, has led directly to the climate that has made Dallas possible."

Mr. Speaker, no one condones illegal shootings by police. Police who illegally use excessive force should be, and are, prosecuted criminally and civilly to the fullest extent of the law. But the Obama administration repeatedly pours gasoline on an open fire, rushing to antipolice judgment before the facts are known, and justice had, thereby helping to incite murders and assassinations of American police who dedicate their lives to our protection.

The solution, Mr. Speaker, is generating more respect for law and order and those who enforce it. That solution is absent in Obama administration pronouncements.

Mr. Speaker, I want the public to know that I stand with the rule of law. I stand with America's brave police officers who protect the rights and lives of all Americans. And I here and now publicly thank America's law enforcement officers for risking their lives to protect law-abiding Americans from crime and anarchy.

#### STUDENT LOAN DEBT

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, when I traveled around northwest Oregon last month, from town hall meetings to the grocery store, I spoke with Oregonians about the challenges they are facing and what keeps them up at night. Time after time, the conversation turned to the cost of higher education.

It is likely we have all spoken with parents trying to make ends meet who can't save for their young children's education and recent graduates who are worried about finding jobs that will cover their looming student loan payments. But we also hear from too many people who are trying to balance their current student loan debt with child care, housing, and other expenses. Many are getting by, but 1 month of unexpected unemployment or illness