

The disastrous nuclear deal with Iran is a very good example. It has not only failed to curtail the Iranian regime's plans to develop nuclear weapons, it has also resulted in a ransom payment of \$1.7 billion for four Americans who were being held illegally by Iran.

This display of weakness has only emboldened the largest state sponsor of international terrorism. It has provided Iran with over \$1 billion to fund terrorism, enhance its illegal ballistic missile development programs, and ramp up its aggression against U.S. military forces.

President Reagan warned us: "Weakness, after all, is a temptation—it tempts the pugnacious to assert themselves—but strength is a declaration that cannot be misunderstood. Strength is a condition that declares actions have consequences. Strength is a prudent warning to the belligerent that aggression need not go unanswered."

Whenever this administration pulls back, the belligerent have happily stepped in to fill the void. That is why we must reject this latest effort to relinquish U.S. leadership over the Internet.

The excessive hacking encouraged by the Governments of Russia, China, and others should not be rewarded. We must stand up to these dangerous actors and put the safety, security, and interests of the United States first. Simply put, Russia and China cannot be trusted with a larger role in the operation of the Internet. We have a duty to block the President's foolish and reckless Internet giveaway before it goes into effect October 1, 2016.

It will further cede more control to our adversaries and weaken America's influence on the international stage. Stopping this giveaway must be included in this year's spending bill. It is absolutely critical that Congress takes action.

SAN JACINTO RIVER WASTE PITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker and Members, I rise to announce that later today the Environmental Protection Agency will issue its final plan to clean up the San Jacinto River Waste Pits, a Superfund site in eastern Harris County, Texas.

The communities of eastern Harris County, especially Channelview and Highlands, have fought for a decade to ensure that toxic waste that was dumped alongside the San Jacinto River 50 years ago will be fully removed and permanently protect our children and our children's children from the dangers found at the site.

I thank the EPA and Region 6 for its hard work and diligence on this very important issue for our community. I would also like to thank the community members and local officials who have fought to clean up the site and ensure our community is made whole.

Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward to EPA's announcement today.

THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of my constituents to express my outrage about the White House's ransom payment to Iran.

On January 17, 2016, the Obama administration announced that it would give the Islamic Republic of Iran a total of \$1.7 billion to settle a 1979 arms deal. However, they failed to announce that, the day before, the administration had delivered an advance payment in cash of \$400 million in unmarked bills to Iran in exchange for four American hostages. In fact, the American people did not learn that the White House had made this secret ransom payment at all until this past August.

The Obama administration's decision to violate our Nation's own historic policy against ransom payments has established a frightening precedent for the future. The President's willingness to bend to Iran's demands and use unmarked bills demonstrates to the world a fundamental weakness that emboldens our enemies while ceding to the demands of state sponsors of terrorism.

American soldiers, diplomats, and citizens living and traveling abroad are less safe this year than they were last year. And global beliefs and perceptions of American leadership and intentions—among our allies and, more disastrously, among the bad actors in the world—have been forever altered.

Indeed, Iran is already celebrating its leverage over the United States. One commander of an Iranian Revolutionary Guard militia exulted that "taking this much money back was in return for the release of the American spies."

Since the January ransom payment, Iran has, unsurprisingly, arrested additional Americans. The American people deserve answers about why the President felt it was acceptable to give nearly \$2 billion to radical extremists supporting terrorism across the Middle East and beyond.

That is why this month I interrogated officials at a Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations hearing. My colleagues and I questioned the timing of the secret payment, the White House's insidious and foolish decision to use unmarked bills, and implications on terrorism in the region. But the administration refused to answer my simple questions that would give Americans the answers they deserve. Instead, officials said they could only share information behind closed doors.

I took them up on that offer, and I and my colleagues had that 2-hour-long, closed-door, classified meeting. After that briefing, I am now more certain than ever, Mr. Speaker, that the

Obama administration paid an irresponsible and dangerous ransom to Iran. Why is the Obama administration so desperate to cover up the details of its ransom payment from the American people?

The White House has made a reckless national security decision to bend entirely to the demands of Iran without assurances that Iran would not use this money for its military.

Keep in mind that the Iranian military blatantly funds Hezbollah and other terrorist organizations. Shockingly, the administration told me publicly that, even if they had received assurances from Iran, they wouldn't have trusted the country to keep its promises.

Why, then, would we have given \$400 million in unmarked bills to the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism? Why would the Obama administration accommodate and fund a foreign military that funds terrorism around the world?

Why didn't the White House write legally binding restrictions on the use of the money into the settlement agreement? Why did we agree to the settlement with a state sponsor of terrorism in the first place?

The entire \$1.7 billion was reportedly transferred to the Iranian military to fund a 90 percent increase in Iran's military budget. This is public information, and the Obama administration dismissively pretends that no one can use the Internet.

The Obama administration's gift to the Iranian military is a disgrace to America's allies in the Middle East, especially to Israel. It is a degradation of America's counterterrorism efforts and geopolitical leadership. It is a failure to protect Americans abroad and the new prisoners who have been detained in Iran.

As a member of this free Nation's assembly of the people, I will hold our President accountable for his deception and negligence and will work to reverse this dangerous precedent that this administration has made for the future of our country.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded not to engage in personalities toward the President.

MACADAMIA TREE HEALTH

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

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, when most people think of Hawaii, my home State, they immediately think of our beautiful beaches, mountains, vistas, and wonderful people and culture, and they dream about when they might come and visit our home State. This contributes, no doubt, to our tourism industry being the major driver of our economy in Hawaii.

But, along with our beautiful year-round climate comes a great opportunity for our agriculture industry. In fact, most people are not aware that

agriculture is the third largest industry in our State, accounting for over \$2.9 billion of our annual economy and at least 42,000 jobs, according to our State Department of Agriculture. So, like States all across the country, we are working within government and the private sector to diversify and strengthen our economy, specifically our agriculture sector.

However, one of the greatest threats that we are seeing in Hawaii and across the country to agriculture are invasive species. The macadamia felted coccid is one of more than 4,300 invasive species that threaten our agriculture industry. In Hawaii alone, the invasive species costs our local farmers, landowners, and ag industry millions of dollars every year and puts hundreds of our local small farms and thousands of local workers and the future of one of our most important crops at risk.

Just last month, I had the chance to visit multiple farms on Hawaii island in my district, an island that produces 80 percent of Hawaii's world-renowned macadamia nuts that are shipped and sold all around the world. I heard one story after another from our farmers about how this tiny, invasive insect is destroying farms and threatening livelihoods that really bring many of our communities together. At just one of these more than 620 macadamia growing farms in Hawaii, this insect destroyed 500,000 pounds of macadamia nuts in just 1 year.

Like most things, you can't fix a problem that you don't fully understand. Very little is known about this invasive pest—from its lifecycle to its seasonal pattern to its basic vulnerabilities—that directly impacts our ability to fight back. That is why I have introduced the macadamia tree health initiative today.

My bill would authorize much-needed research and development to combat the macadamia felted coccid and establish an area-wide integrated pest management plan in areas badly affected by this invasive pest. For years, these pest management plans have helped farmers across the country manage invasive pests in a sustainable, environmentally friendly, and cost-effective way.

My bill would build off this pattern of success by bringing together local stakeholders, researchers, and other key players as we search for comprehensive solutions to keep the macadamia felted coccid and other invasive species from destroying our local farms and this important part of our domestic agriculture industry.

In Hawaii, our macadamia nut industry employs thousands of people and is the economic lifeblood to many of our rural communities. Their jobs, their livelihood, and the vitality of our agriculture industry are at stake if we fail to act.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and empower our Nation's agriculture industry to fight back against these invasive harmful pests.

PERMANENT, FOREVER WARS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WAGNER). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I am now the only Republican remaining in Congress who voted against going to war in Iraq. For about 3 or 4 years, that was probably the most unpopular vote I ever cast. But slowly, slowly it became so that now probably it is the most popular vote I ever cast, because the American people do not want forever, permanent wars.

So, Madam Speaker, you can understand why I was very interested in two very recent columns that I read.

Adam Walinsky wrote in the September 21 Politico Magazine that he was a lifelong Democrat, former aid to John Kennedy, and former speechwriter for Robert Kennedy. He wrote, though, that he will be voting Republican in the Presidential race this year.

He said: "But today's Democrats have become the Party of War: a home for arms merchants, mercenaries, academic war planners, lobbyists for every foreign intervention, promoters of color revolutions, failed generals . . ."

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He added that "Our first answer to trouble or opposition of any kind seems always to be a military movement or action."

He wrote that Secretary Clinton, unlike the Kennedy brothers, has not sought peace, but "instead she has pushed America into successive invasions, successive efforts at 'regime change.'"

Perhaps worst of all, according to Walinsky, "Her shadow War Cabinet brims with the architects of war and disaster for the past decades, the neocons who led us to our present pass, in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Libya, Yemen, in Ukraine, unrepentant of all past errors, ready to resume it all with fresh trillions and fresh blood."

Also, in yesterday's Washington Times, Jed Babbin, a former Deputy Secretary of Defense in the administration of the first George Bush, said the second George Bush made a terrible mistake allowing the neocons to lead him into nation building in the Middle East after he had spoken so strongly against such nation building when he was running for President. Secretary Babbin wrote that Islam is incompatible with democracy, and Iraq and Afghanistan—and I suppose these other countries where we are still sending troops—will go back the way they always have been when we leave, whether we stay 6 more months or 60 more years.

George Will wrote that the neocons were magnificently misnamed and really were the most radical people in Washington. These neocons have caused many thousands of young Americans to be killed or maimed for life. They should be ashamed, but they seem to have no shame.

The American people, Madam Speaker, I repeat, do not want permanent, forever wars. They want to do whatever it takes to win wars, get them over with, and go back to days of peace and prosperity.

REMEMBERING BATTALION CHIEF MICHAEL FAHY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, yesterday there was an explosion in my district and yesterday New York City lost one of its bravest: FDNY Battalion Chief Michael Fahy, a 17-year veteran of the department and a father of three. He was a resident of Yonkers, New York, in my district, and a constituent of mine as well.

Fahy was responding to a house fire when the building exploded, taking Battalion Chief Fahy's life and wounding nine others, including another firefighter, seven NYPD officers, and one electrical worker. Thanks to these brave first responders, nobody else was hurt.

Every New Yorker mourns this loss today. Battalion Chief Fahy was a second-generation firefighter. His family's example is a reminder of the courage and dedication that the FDNY exemplifies.

We honor Battalion Chief Fahy and his family for their service and their sacrifice. I want to send along my personal prayers, thoughts, and condolences to his wife, his children, and the rest of his family. He may be gone, but he will never be forgotten. Today and forever more, we will mourn his loss.

HONORING LIEUTENANT COLONEL FRANCIS D. FAULCONER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a decorated World War II Army liaison, an accomplished radio and television broadcaster, and my beloved great uncle, retired Lieutenant Colonel Francis D. Faulconer.

Soon after graduating from Lafayette High School in Lexington, Kentucky, Frank Faulconer enlisted in the United States Army in 1943 and was deployed to Europe in the Liaison G3 section of the first United States Army. In this capacity, he traveled with Combat Command A of the 3rd Army Spearhead Division from Meaux, France, to Rottgen, Germany.

He earned five Bronze Stars for his service in Normandy, northern France; Rhineland, Central Europe; and the Ardennes. He additionally was awarded the Distinguished Service Award for helping to escort the reserve elements of the Combat Command, at night, from the rear to the forward elements of the battle line.

In 1946, Faulconer enrolled at the University of Kentucky under the GI