

Even so, we look to our friends in United States for strength and a united vision for a better future. Americans expect to have a government that is accountable, and that respects and protects its people's rights. That is our great ambition, also, in the Gulf.

We know we risk much in calling for this. Some of my fellow activists have been tortured, sentenced to life imprisonment, even killed. But I believe that respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms is the way to attain peace, stability and prosperity in any nation; I have devoted my life to that ideal.

Criticizing war crimes and torture on Twitter, speaking to journalists about our dire situation in Bahrain and the Gulf, and writing this newspaper: For these actions, I now face a total of 18 years' imprisonment. I've already spent more than 10 months in jail, mostly in solitary confinement. One of the charges against me derives from my taking a stand against the war in Yemen—not only because it causes misery and tragic loss of life, but also because it fosters violence and terrorism across the region.

Does the Trump administration know that former Bahraini soldiers have left the country to join the Islamic State? Does Washington know that Bahrain allows no Shiite citizens in its military even though Shiites are a majority of the population? Does the White House know that the Bahraini Army is a sectarian force that publishes books endorsing the murder of Shiites who do not "repent"?

When I criticized the fostering of extremism in the Bahraini Army, I was tossed into prison for six months. Bahrain's king, Hamad bin Isaal-Khalifa, has just approved a constitutional amendment allowing military courts to try civilians on unspecified charges of "terrorism." It is a law so vague and sweeping that my act of criticism could now result in a military prosecution.

This same Bahraini military, newly empowered, will soon be awarded its new American-made jets to fly over Yemen.

Bahraini citizens recognize that the United States is a superpower, but that status should not depend solely on its military capacity. American power should also be built on respect for justice, equality and human rights—the core principles upon which the United States was founded. It is these values that should dictate American foreign policy, not the profit margin of Lockheed Martin, maker of those F-16s destined for Bahrain.

The Trump administration must review its relations with authoritarian regimes like Bahrain's. These problematic alliances cost the United States far more in the long term than any gain it makes from arms deals. Human rights and justice should be a consistent priority in American foreign policy, not applied in one case, ignored in another.

All our destinies are tied together. What will happen to Bahrain if everyone who supports peace, democracy and the rule of law is in jail? To whom will Bahrain's disenfranchised youth turn to for support and guidance? These are the questions the Trump administration must ask itself before it sends my jailers another batch of fighters.

I am realistic about what to expect. After all, President Trump recently played host in Washington to Saudi Arabia's deputy crown prince and Egypt's president for life without bringing up human rights. But I have faith in the American people and civil society, as well as the lawmakers who continue to challenge these shortsighted, morally unsound policies.

Meanwhile, my trial date kept being moved. First, it was set for April 16. But this was the day of Bahrain's Formula One Grand Prix, the biggest sports event in the country,

so that was embarrassing for the government. Then, my trial was rescheduled for May 3. But that happened to be World Press Freedom Day, so the authorities pushed the date back again, to this week.

My detention has entered its 11th month. My health has declined. I'm recovering from a painful surgical procedure, yet the authorities have made every part of my detention as difficult as possible. My lawyers have been obstructed from providing me the best possible defense. But what I have endured is a small fraction of what the people of Yemen have suffered, largely because of the military intervention of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and their allies.

For my part, I will not stand idly by. I urge Americans not to do so, either. They must all call for an end to the Trump administration's unconditional support for my country's misdeeds at home and abroad.

Nabeel Rajab is the president of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights and an advisory committee member for Human Rights Watch's Middle East and North Africa Division.

Mr. McGOVERN. Under Obama, the State Department repeatedly called on Bahrain to release Nabeel and drop the charges against him. It also tied the sale of F-16s to Bahrain to improvements in human rights.

In contrast, the new administration has lifted the hold on the F-16 sales and failed to call for Nabeel's release. When President Trump met with the King of Bahrain on May 21, he told him: We are going to have a very, very long-term relationship. I look forward to it very much—many of the same things common.

It was Trump's quote.

I am not sure what the President had in mind, but let's review what has happened in Bahrain this year. On January 5, the government restored arrest and investigation powers to its national security agency notorious for torturing detainees in 2011. This reverses one of the few security sector reforms outlined in the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry that the government carried out.

On January 15, Bahrain carried out its first execution since 2010, killing three men who were allegedly tortured into making false confessions.

On February 21, Bahrain's constitution was amended to allow military courts to try civilians.

On May 31, the government dissolved the secular opposition political party Wa'ad, and it was the last major opposition party still operating in the country after the al-Wefaq party was dissolved last summer.

On June 4, the government ordered al-Wasat, the country's only independent newspaper, to be suspended indefinitely.

Mr. Speaker, Bahrain is headed down an increasingly authoritarian path. It is closing off all avenues for peaceful dissent.

But the President of the United States does not get it. Could that have to do with the income he earned when the Bahraini Government held its National Day celebration at Trump International Hotel last December?

What I know is that appearances matter, and Bahrain is an increasingly

volatile dangerous place for our military personnel. We should not enable the Bahraini Government's repression. I call for the immediate and unconditional release of Nabeel Rajab and others jailed for their peaceful political views, and I urge the Trump administration to join me. I thank my colleagues for listening.

APPLAUDING THE WORK OF THE NATIONAL YOUNG FARMERS COALITION

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, last week, I met with members of the National Young Farmers Coalition. This nonprofit was founded just 8 years ago by three farmers in upstate New York. They gathered around a farmhouse table to talk about the challenges facing them and their peers: difficulty securing loans, access to affordable farmland, and student loan debt.

They decided that they and other young farmers needed to step up and fight for the future of farming as a united front. Across the country, other young farmers were also coming to the same realization, and the coalition was born.

It works in conjunction with farmers, consumers, organizations, and government to tackle the many challenges that young, independent, and sustainable farmers face in their first years of operating a farm business.

Young farmers include all people who are kicking off a career in agriculture. Typically, in their first 10 years of growing, this includes anyone from a first-year farm apprentice to someone pursuing a midlife career change to agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, rural America is struggling. But rural areas offer unique contributions to our Nation, often in the form of agriculture, raw materials, and naturally occurring commodities.

As more and more young people pursue fast-paced careers in cities and urban centers, the size and composition of populations in rural America is rapidly changing. American agriculture, in particular, is facing a crisis of attrition.

Two-thirds of our farmland is on the cusp of transition as farmers grow older and retire, and there are fewer young farmers positioned to manage this resource.

□ 1030

Farmers over the age of 65 outnumber farmers under the age of 35 by a margin of 6 to 1. The number of farmers under the age of 35 grew by only 1 percent from 2007 to 2012. In order to fix this problem, we must help incentivize more young people to pursue careers in agriculture.

That is why, together with Representatives JOE COURTNEY of Connecticut and JOHN FASO of New York, I

introduced the Young Farmers Success Act, which aims to accomplish this by adding farmers to the existing Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program.

After making 10 years of income-based student loan payments, a young farmer would see the balance of his or her student loans forgiven, just as other public servants who utilize this program currently do. It is my hope that the enactment of this legislation will lead to the continued enhancement of our Nation's farms.

Agriculture is the number one industry in Pennsylvania, Mr. Speaker, and as such, many of the rural communities in the State depend on agriculture in some form. Unfortunately, USDA released its first farm income forecast for 2017 and predicted that net farm income is expected to decline for the fourth consecutive year.

Declining farm income coupled with low commodity prices over the past few years have adversely impacted farmers and rural communities across the Nation. I have met with farmers in and outside my district who are facing tough decisions about the future of their farms.

As vice chair of the Agriculture Committee and chairman of the Nutrition Subcommittee, I know our Nation needs a robust agriculture sector so that we can continue to provide our Nation and nations across the world with nutritious food and fiber. In order to do so, we need to find ways to cultivate the next generation of farmers. Now, I believe that the Young Farmers Success Act does just that by taking away one of the barriers that can deter young and beginner farmers from entering into agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, our farmers feed this Nation. Farmers are stewards of the land and cornerstones of our rural communities. They provide the country with a safe and affordable food supply. But we need to do more to cultivate the future generation of farmers. They face tough odds by the very nature of the business, and this legislation will provide incentives for those who would like to pursue a future in the agriculture industry, which aids our national security and the long-term sustainability of our country.

Investing in our Nation's ability to put food on the table for our neighbors is not a partisan issue. I encourage every Member of this House to cosponsor this important legislation.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ST. CLOUD AREA ADAPTED SOFT-BALL TEAM

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

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the St. Cloud Area adapted softball team for winning the State championship earlier this month.

Coach Mike Bakken led the team to victory with the help of Tyrell Franck-

Ross, Dayton Wienjes, and Jordan Williams, who all played exceptionally well. While the individual accomplishments were important, it was a team effort, with all 16 players giving it their all and leaving everything they had on the field.

The tournament was intense, with St. Cloud coming from behind to win the first game. St. Cloud scored five runs in the top of the seventh to beat Chaska 17–14.

We are proud of all the players from around the State for their effort in the tournament, and we are especially proud of our St. Cloud Area team for their success and their hard work over this past season.

YOUNG LEADERS IN STEM

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two high school students from my district for being chosen to represent the great State of Minnesota in two prestigious science, technology, engineering, and math, more commonly called STEM-based, programs.

Alex Nutt, of Princeton High School, has been selected to participate in the Congress of Future Medical Leaders; and Michael Dehmer, of Buffalo High School, has been selected to participate in the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders.

These programs were specifically designed to inspire high school students who are at the top of their class and hope to pursue a science-based career. Once they have successfully completed their congress, Alex and Michael will continue to receive mentoring to help them successfully pursue their chosen careers.

The career paths that Alex Nutt and Michael Dehmer have chosen to pursue are not easy, but they are incredibly important to our country. In order for our Nation to remain both competitive and successful, it is vital that today's students take an active interest in STEM fields. That is why I am proud to honor both Alex and Michael and to thank the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists and the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists for working to ensure that the future of our Nation is bright.

MINNESOTA'S FUTURE

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate all the recent high school graduates in Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District on completing a major milestone in their young lives.

This milestone represents the beginning of the rest of your lives. And while we celebrate your achievement, we are also excited for your future, and there is so much to be excited about.

Many of you will go on to further your careers in education, travel and see the world. Some of you might go to medical school, and one of you might actually cure a disease. Some of you might run for public office, and one of you might even become the President of the United States.

You will be active in your communities. You will build families and be incredible assets to the great State of Minnesota. Your possibilities are limitless, and I hope you will always think big and never give up on your dreams.

We wish you the best of luck as you take the next step in your journey, and we look forward to watching you succeed and thrive.

I also want to thank your parents and the teachers of these wonderful scholars for guiding them along and helping them achieve this great goal. An education is the key that opens all of life's doors, and we thank you for handing these students the key.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF MARK J. SIZER

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and thank Stearns County Human Services Administrator Mark Sizer for his dedicated service to our community. After 40 years of public service and 23 years dedicated to Stearns County, Mark is heading into retirement.

Since he was appointed to the human services administrator position in 2011, Mark has dedicated himself to the many programs and employees in his department and to the cities of Stearns County. Under Mark's leadership, Stearns County has offered some of the best services and programs in Minnesota.

Stearns County is one of the largest and most densely populated counties in Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District, and we are fortunate to have had such a dedicated public servant and strong leadership at the helm of this incredibly important department.

Thank you for your service, Mark. I wish you a happy and relaxing retirement with those you love. You certainly deserve it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF EDWARD PLATH

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, the motto of the United States Coast Guard is Semper Paratus—"Always Ready"—and throughout its history, the members of our Coast Guard have stood ready to protect our homeland from all threats. I rise today to recognize the important work of our Coast Guard as well as its members throughout history, including those like Edward Plath.

Edward, like so many Americans of his day, answered the call to service at the onset of World War II. Despite being turned down by the Army over medical concerns, he soon joined the Coast Guard and served honorably in New Jersey, protecting the region's coastline and its vital ports from the ever-present danger of Nazi attack.

But for Edward, the Coast Guard during the war meant more than just duty