

the British Empire to its knees. Which is actually true, and we should learn from his example.

Indeed, Dr. King, a disciple of Gandhi, applied those strategies to the American civil rights movement to great success. And were it not for Dr. King and the other heroes who laid down their lives during the civil rights movement, I would not be standing here before you, and we wouldn't even be standing up or talking about The Daily Stormer, Breitbart, or Trump in defending immigrants and other vulnerable communities.

So we owe the civil rights movement a great debt. I want to follow in those footsteps.

So I read the headlines in Breitbart and I went back to look at what I actually said. You know what? I stand by it and I won't back down.

OCEAN ACIDIFICATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the alarming crisis that is ocean acidification. This is not only an environmental issue, but it is an economic issue as well, and one that greatly impacts my congressional district in south Florida.

South Florida's world-famous beaches, delicious seafood, incomparable fishing, boating, and sailing, and spectacular marine life are all dependent on a healthy ocean. However, our oceans are becoming more and more acidic as seawater absorbs increasing amounts of carbon pollution, causing what is known as ocean acidification.

This increased acidity makes it harder for corals, oysters, shrimp, lobster, and other sea animals to develop their shells or skeletons, which they rely on for survival to grow. These organisms are extremely important to the vitality of our ecosystem.

In addition, corals host a vast number of ocean species, protects coastlines from large waves and hurricanes, and attract visitors with its beauty.

Data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—NOAA—also suggests that tourism, recreation, and fishing related to south Florida's coral reefs alone generates more than \$4.4 billion in local sales and \$2 billion in local income.

Ocean Conservancy, which is a tremendous environmental advocacy group, has been a champion in raising awareness about the negative impact of ocean acidification. Recently, they premiered an outstanding documentary, a short film which highlighted two gentlemen who either work for or own ocean-dependent businesses that are located in my congressional district.

Dale Palomino, right over here, this fine-looking young man, he is the general manager and head chef at Captain's Tavern Restaurant and Seafood

Market, a family-owned business in Miami and one of my favorite places to dine with my husband, Dexter, and our grandkids.

And Captain Ray Rosher, right here, who owns and operates Miss Britt Charter Fishing and R&R Tackle in Conconut Grove, also located in my congressional district.

In addition, this film highlights ocean expert, Dr. Chris Langdon, a professor from my alma mater, the University of Miami—Go Canes. His research on coral reef ecosystems has allowed us to better understand the capacity and limitations of coral to adapt to a changing physical and chemical environment. Dr. Langdon has also been a leader in bringing stakeholders together to learn about the threats posed by ocean acidification to commercial and recreational fishing and tourism industries throughout Florida.

These two gentleman know a lot about the impact of ocean acidification on their business because saltwater recreational and commercial fishing combined support an estimated 175,000 jobs across our beautiful Sunshine State.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly astounding the amount of jobs and revenue that come out of ocean-related industries. Our country enjoys thousands of miles of coastlines with so many people benefiting from their environment and providing jobs and nutrients for their family. From the oyster hatcheries in the Pacific Northwest, to the lobster in Maine, and South to the reefs and fish in Florida, the real world implications of ocean acidification will spell trouble for these ocean-dependent jobs, which is why we must not wait until the tragedy truly unfolds.

My constituents and I are also blessed to live, to work, and to play in the paradise that is south Florida. Our kids and our grandkids, they want to enjoy the same positive experiences we have, but in order to do so, it is vital that we act now.

In Congress, we need to do a better job at listening to all stakeholders who are speaking out, and we need to continue to promote the valuable work of researchers, people like Dr. Langdon, the work that they are doing to ensure that these important marine research institutions and organizations have the resources they need.

My district is home to a community that cares deeply about the ocean, and it is because of the efforts of folks like these two gentlemen and Dr. Langdon of south Florida that I have learned more about the issues and what is at stake.

I remain committed to continue to work with my colleagues, with industry experts, with all stakeholders in tackling head-on these important issues and lead in mitigation and adaption solutions to the changing ocean around us and, indeed, across the globe.

RETURNING TO REGULAR ORDER

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we watched as Senator JOHN McCAIN returned to the Capitol after having been diagnosed with cancer and undergoing a serious operation. All of us are praying for his swift and full recovery.

In earlier days, as we all know, he faced danger with courage. He is doing the same again right now. When he spoke yesterday from the Senate floor, he talked about a time when legislators, Republicans and Democrats, despite their differences, worked together to make progress, albeit incremental, on major issues through discussion and compromise.

He lamented, as do I, the recent tendency to seek total partisan victory or nothing at all, something we see as much in the House as in the Senate.

Senator McCAIN said this: “We've been spinning our wheels on too many important issues because we keep trying to find a way to win without help from across the aisle.”

He concluded in that paragraph: “...we are getting nothing done.”

Instead, Senator McCAIN proposed legislators ought to return to regular order. Regular order, for those who aren't familiar with the day-to-day workings of Congress, simply means doing things in the proper way: drafting a bill in committee, holding open hearings, marking up with amendments, reporting it out, and then bringing it to the floor for amendment and debate before voting on it. This process, this regular order of business affords every member an opportunity, regardless of party or district, to have input and help shape the policy. That is the way it should be.

The product of such a process, as Senator McCAIN described it, would be “something that will be imperfect, full of compromises, and not very pleasing to implacable partisans on either side.” But he concluded it was one that “might provide workable solutions to problems Americans are struggling with today.”

Mr. Speaker, that is how our system is supposed to work.

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I started my career in this body in 1981. Shortly thereafter, I joined the Appropriations Committee. I like to tell people that I served on the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee, and there were 13 of us. The Democrats were in the majority, and there were eight Democrats and five Republicans. I used to tell people that you could take the 13 of us, throw us up in the air, have us come down in random seats, have a markup, and you would have been hard-pressed to identify which party each member represented. Today, lamentably, Mr. Speaker, it would take you about a minute to determine those differences.

Our Speaker said on October 29, 2015: “We will advance major legislation one issue at a time.” Mr. Speaker, we are about to consider a so-called minibus. The former chairman, my Republican friend, Mr. ROGERS, is seated here in this Chamber with us. He and I both recall a time when we considered one bill at a time. We brought it to the floor, we amended it, we debated it, and we voted on it one bill at a time.

That is what Speaker RYAN was referring to when he said: “We will advance major legislation one issue at a time.” Apparently, Mr. Speaker, that has become inconvenient or impossible, but it is not the regular order that we are pursuing.

Speaker RYAN went on to say: “We will not duck the tough issues. We will take them head on.” Mr. Speaker, we will adopt a rule that will duck the issue that will preclude full debate, and it deals with President Trump’s proposal to build a wall that many in his administration believe will be ineffective in accomplishing the objective that we all support, and that is keeping our country secure and making sure that those who come into this country are known to us and don’t sneak into the country.

But the wall will not work and we will not be able to debate that fully because it will be included in the rule. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that is ducking the issue. It will be deemed passed. We won’t vote on it. We will vote for the rule or against the rule, and the wall and \$1.6 billion will be deemed passed.

Mr. Speaker, that is not how our system is supposed to work. Neither side ought to let the perfect become the enemy of the good. Neither side can claim credit for all of the best ideas. That is why working together is imperative.

That was my experience when I served for 23 years on the Appropriations Committee. That is why regular order is so important. It protects the American people. It protects each Member who is here representing some 700,000 people, give or take. That is why regular order is so important. It facilitates dialogue and debate. It brings out every view and idea and provides the framework for compromise.

Compromise is the essence of democracy, and I suggest it is the essence of successful families, whether they be countries or Mom and Dad and kids. They come together and they agree, not because they get everything they want or the other side gets nothing they want, but because both sides compromise.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with Senator McCAIN: we need to return to regular order.

Speaker RYAN, as I have said, told us shortly after his elevation that he wants “the House to work its will.” Minibuses don’t allow that, omnibus don’t allow that, and, frankly, CRs don’t allow that.

The Speaker adopted, in principle, an open and transparent process. Sadly,

Mr. Speaker, we haven’t always seen that. But there is still an opportunity for the 115th Congress to reflect that vision.

That is what Senator McCAIN was talking about yesterday. He was appealing to the best of us, the American in us, not the partisan in us, not the confrontationalist in us, but the seeker of productive compromise in a democracy. The Congress and our country will be better if we return to regular order.

AFGHANISTAN IS THE GRAVEYARD OF EMPIRES

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, on July 18, I wrote to President Trump about my concern about the fact that he and Secretary of Defense Mattis are discussing how many more American troops must be sent to Afghanistan. Mr. Speaker, you being a marine, you know that I represent Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune and Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point. We have been there 16 years. Nothing has changed. In fact, it has gotten worse.

I would like to read just a few sentences from my letter. Again, this was delivered to the White House on July 18. I am going to read just sentences very quickly.

“Disappointed because after 16 years in Afghanistan, Congress deserves another vote on this conflict. Disappointed because almost \$1 trillion of taxpayers’ money has been spent with no direct goal or strategy. And most importantly, I am disappointed because we continue to lose American lives.

“Sir, I am writing today because you seem to have had a change of heart on this issue.”

I gave four examples of positions he has taken and tweets that he has sent out. I am just going to read two of them, Mr. Speaker.

“In August of 2011, you agreed with Ron Paul and said the U.S. was ‘wasting lives and money in Iraq and Afghanistan.’”

Another tweet: “The next year, you said on Twitter, ‘Do not allow our very stupid leaders to sign a deal that keeps us in Afghanistan through 2024—with all costs by USA. . . .’”

And the last I would like to read: “You also tweeted that year, ‘Let’s get out of Afghanistan. Our troops are being killed by the Afghans we train and we waste billions there. Nonsense! Rebuild the USA.’”

I further stated: “Mr. President, I agree with those remarks, and so does the 31st Commandant of the Marine Corps, my friend and unofficial adviser, General Chuck Krulak. As he said in a recent email to me, ‘No one has ever conquered Afghanistan . . . and many have tried. We will join the list of nations that have tried and failed.’”

I do not understand why this Congress and the leadership of this House

will not let us have another debate. I put a bill in with JOHN GARAMENDI, H.R. 1666, for the only reason that, after 16 years, we have not debated the future of Afghanistan.

A report was out last night that the Russians are sending sophisticated weapons to the Taliban in Afghanistan, who will be fighting and killing Americans. I continue to call on the House leadership to please let us meet our constitutional responsibility and debate.

I have said, with H.R. 1666, that JOHN GARAMENDI and I have put in, join us in forcing a debate on the House and then vote against us, but give us a debate.

I further said to the President: “Once you come to a consensus”—and this is raising the troop levels—“I suggest you publicly go before the American people and U.S. military to explain the benchmarks you choose for Afghanistan.”

Why are we going to send more Americans to fight and die in Afghanistan?

And also give the American people an idea of what we are trying to achieve. For 16 years, there are very few of the marines in my district who have been there three, four, and five times, and I will say to them, “What have we accomplished?” and they will say back to me, “Very little. Very little.” Yet we sit here in Congress and we fund billions of dollars. We will have a vote in 2 days to spend billions of dollars on Afghanistan, and there is very little accountability. This is not what this House needs to be doing, especially when we are sending our young men and women to give their life for this country.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD this letter to President Trump and ask President Trump to please stay strong in his beliefs and that it is a waste of money, life, and time to be in Afghanistan.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 18, 2017.

President DONALD J. TRUMP,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Many of us in the U.S. House of Representatives believe we have been denied our sacred duty to debate and declare war. You could say that I am disappointed by this. Disappointed because after 16 years in Afghanistan, Congress deserves another vote on this conflict. Disappointed because almost \$1 trillion of taxpayers’ money has been spent with no direct goal or strategy. And most importantly, I am disappointed because we continue to lose American lives.

Sir, I am writing today because you seem to have had a change of heart on this issue:

1. In August of 2011, you agreed with Ron Paul and said the U.S. was “wasting lives and money in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

2. In 2012, you referred to Afghanistan as a “complete waste,” and declared it was “time to come home.”

3. The next year, you said on Twitter, “Do not allow our very stupid leaders to sign a deal that keeps us in Afghanistan through 2024—with all costs by U.S.A. . . .”

4. You also tweeted that year, “Let’s get out of Afghanistan. Our troops are being killed by the Afghans we train and we waste billions there. Nonsense! Rebuild the USA.”