

Black man for nonviolence more severely than White supremacists for violence.

Look, taking a knee may have started as a protest about racial inequality, about behavior by some in law enforcement discriminating against others in this country, but unarmed people of color are being killed simply for the color of their skin.

I think today taking a knee is becoming a broader sign of patriotism and respect for our country, for a country that can be even greater for every one of its citizens. It respects the lives lost for those in this country to fight for its ideals, which include nonviolent protests. It is a sign of love of country, a country with a promise that has to be for everyone regardless of the color of their skin.

I join so many now in the NFL and elsewhere in taking a knee for the America that we all aspire it to be.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President and to direct their remarks to the Chair.

□ 1015

APPLAUDING PRESIDENT TRUMP FOR HIS COMMENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud President Trump for his comments last week which criticized the few NFL players who have chosen to kneel in protest during our national anthem. The President is right to publicly object to this disrespect to our flag and Nation. While we can disagree on politics and policies, we should not denigrate our flag and our national anthem.

I must mention that most NFL players stood in respect for the flag. It is just a few who didn't, who gave them a bad name and the sport a bad name.

In response to President Trump's criticism, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell called the President's remarks divisive. I would respond to Mr. Goodell that it is you and your players who disrespect our flag and our national anthem who are being divisive. The President defending our flag is not divisive.

My father and thousands of other Americans fought under our flag in the jungles of Vietnam. Young men and women have died recently in service to our flag in Iraq and Afghanistan. In my house, we honored our flag not only because of my father's service, but because of the deep sense of patriotism my parents instilled in me.

My mother, Lala Suarez Mooney, was born and raised in Fidel Castro's Cuba, where she and other members of her family were thrown into jail for opposing Castro's Communist regime. When she was 20, my mother escaped Cuba

and fled to America with barely a penny to her name. My mom and millions of other immigrants leave the flags of these other countries—brutal dictatorships, Communist regimes, and other oppressive regimes—to come to America to live under our flag.

All Americans, whether you came as an immigrant or you were born here, you stay to live under this flag. If you don't like it, you don't have to stay. You can go. No one is making you stay. We love this flag.

Listening to my parents' inspiring stories, I knew from a young age that I absolutely believed in the American ideals of liberty as set forth by our Founding Fathers. It is with this same sense of honor and patriotism that I support President Trump in calling for all NFL players to honor our flag and remember what has made our country great.

For a few hours many Sundays, I usually enjoy time with our son watching our favorite football teams battle on the gridiron. We root for different teams. As a nation, we forget about our political and other differences and come together to enjoy the sport of football. By these few players wrongly deciding to turn the game into a political statement, we lose that moment of national unity and respect for our country.

Sports have always been a unifying factor and a chance for the Nation to come together. NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell, owners, coaches, and a few players are showing a lack of respect for our Nation and her military who gives them the freedom to play football. As the men and women of our armed services face challenges at home or abroad, we should put our differences aside and unite around our flag as a beacon of hope and understanding. I certainly respect anyone's right to protest peacefully and the right of an NFL team owner to discipline disorderly conduct or rude behavior.

Sadly, three NFL teams did not even leave the locker room to hear the playing of our national anthem. Just one person on those three teams, Pittsburgh Steeler Alejandro Villanueva, came out of the tunnel of the locker room. You can see other people standing back there in the tunnel. He came out of the tunnel of the locker room to honor our country.

Villanueva is a West Point graduate, former Army Ranger, and Bronze Star recipient. He knows the value of our flag. Sadly, instead of receiving the praise he deserved, many in the media attacked him. Even his coach, Mike Tomlin, said that when Alejandro Villanueva came out of that tunnel, he was "not respectful of our football team."

Not respectful of the team? Really, Coach? How about respect for the flag? How about our country which soldiers die for and the flag that allows you to play that football game? Unbelievable.

I hope all the young people out there look at Alejandro Villanueva as a bea-

con of honor and duty to his country above himself.

Professional athletes in this Nation, whether they like it or not, are an example for our young people. They should stop injecting anti-American politics into sports.

I applaud, again, President Trump for standing up for our flag and our national anthem. All NFL athletes should stand together and do the same.

PRIORITIZING PUERTO RICO

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. No, Mr. President, Puerto Rico is not doing well. We don't need to be reminded of the debt. We should remind ourselves of our responsibility to the 3.4 million people of the island nation of Puerto Rico. They are suffering greatly. Mr. Speaker, the people of Puerto Rico need our immediate and sustained help.

We all know that flooding, destruction, and complete elimination of the power grid for the whole island are among the consequences of Hurricane Maria, but this is no ordinary hurricane, and it hit at no ordinary time. Mr. Speaker, we need all hands on deck to make sure rescuing Puerto Rico becomes our number one priority.

Immediate needs must be met—fresh water, food, medicine, shelter, and fuel—but we need sustained investment and cooperation with the island's government and its people to make Puerto Rico livable again. Like a lot of Americans, I have watched with increasing horror and panic as the Governor of Puerto Rico, the mayor of San Juan, and ordinary Puerto Ricans have pleaded for more help.

The work of first responders and our military has been heroic, but the island needs more. One-third of the doctors—over 5,000—have left the island of Puerto Rico in the last 10 years. Hospitals have no doctors in some cases. Nurses, fuel, and medicine are running out at the hospitals that remain open. This is a public health crisis and should be declared a health emergency by the Federal Government.

Puerto Rico has been in an economic crisis for years. Five thousand people flee Puerto Rico every month—before two hurricanes hit—leaving behind many old, many young, the very poor, the very sick, and the very vulnerable. There is no food in supermarkets.

We need an airlift. We need an effort the scale of Dunkirk. We know the U.S. is capable. We can invade foreign countries with hundreds of thousands of troops, flawless communications, food, and security. We need the same effort now. We need the Federal Government to go all in to rescue Puerto Rico from a humanitarian crisis which is developing.

Welcome other nations if they want to help, Mr. President, like Cuba, that has offered doctors and other emergency assistance. But what I fear is

that the Federal Government is not stepping up as fully and as quickly as we must.

I remember, in this body, when the legislation to take over the Puerto Rican government and put in place a junta or control board was working its way through Congress—the PROMESA bill. What was the main selling point for the bill? Vote for PROMESA because it will not cost us a penny. So that is where this Congress and the Federal Government start from: not wanting to spend what needs to be spent or do what needs to be done.

We need to waive cost sharing that could charge—would charge—Puerto Rico for a percentage of the relief and rescue help they are receiving today. Puerto Rico is broke, and they cannot borrow because the government—our Federal Government—has said it cannot. This Congress has said it cannot. So they can't set their own budget and spending priorities, which have all been taken away from them.

So the U.S. Government should start by waiving those cost-sharing requirements and suspend the Jones Act permanently or for a substantial period—at least a decade—to help in the recovery. Since it was imposed on Puerto Rico, the Jones Act has cost the Puerto Rican consumers more than all the money owed to Wall Street and the debt, yet the President reminds us of the debt.

Let the ships flow as quickly and as cheaply from wherever they may come because this is an emergency. Let's be clear: with or without hurricanes, the electrical grid, the roads, ports, public safety, and public health system are close to collapsing. So this emergency can not just be treated by Congress, the President, FEMA, and other agencies as just another storm.

Mr. Speaker, I have asked the Speaker of the House and the Democratic leader to form a delegation and send Members to Puerto Rico so they can see for themselves how dire things are. I am leaving on Friday to go there, and I am hoping other Members will join me. I have family who needs help, so I am headed there to do what I can do. But, most importantly, I am committed to shining a spotlight on the people of Puerto Rico so that they are neither out of sight nor out of our minds. We need to make them the priority in this moment of great need and in this moment of national disaster.

MAKING CLEAN WATER A TOP PRIORITY

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

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city of St. Cloud for taking care of our community's drinking water.

St. Cloud's safe drinking water comes from the mighty Mississippi, and its pure form is thanks to projects like the Northwest Regional Treatment Sys-

tem, the Northeast Sump Manholes, as well as the Northeast St. Cloud Water Quality Project, the city's newest water purifying project. To put the effectiveness of these projects in perspective, the Northeast St. Cloud Water Quality Project stops 10,200 pounds of sediment and 20 pounds of phosphorus from entering the Mississippi every year.

Because of the commitment to the health and safety of the city's water supply, last month St. Cloud was awarded the Source Water Protection Award. It is an honor to represent a city that takes the health of its citizens so seriously. Congratulations to the city of St. Cloud and everyone responsible for the city's water supply.

A NATIONAL AWARD FOR A LOCAL BUS DRIVER

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate St. Cloud Metro Bus driver Todd DeZurik for his first place finish at the 2017 National Community Transit Roadeo, which was recently held in Detroit, Michigan. This competition gives drivers from all over the Nation the chance to take part in a little healthy competition and exhibit their talent by driving through a timed obstacle course that imitates real-life situations and difficult scenarios that can occur on the road.

Todd has participated in this competition before, taking third place last year and second place in 2012. This year was Todd's year, as he took first place against 82 other drivers.

Congratulations, Todd. I am glad to know we have skilled drivers like you on our roads safely transporting the members of our community. Keep up the great work.

A MINNESOTA SOLDIER, RETURNING HOME

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of Minnesota's finest military families who fought during our Nation's darkest hour. I would especially like to remember one family member who made the ultimate sacrifice and who, after more than a half century, will finally be returned and laid to rest in his beloved home State.

Quentin, Earl, and Harold Gifford all bravely served our Nation during World War II. While Earl and Harold made it home safely, Quentin, who served on the USS *Oklahoma*, died in the attack on Pearl Harbor.

For 75 years, Quentin remained in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, until this year, when his remains were finally identified. The identification of Quentin has brought relief and closure to his family, who never forgot the brother they lost. The Giffords are happy to have the chance to give Quentin the memorial he deserves.

Mr. Speaker, I speak for all Minnesotans when I say we are happy to finally welcome home a hero like Quentin.

2017 MINNESOTA FARM FAMILIES

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the hardworking folks from my district who have been selected as this year's Minnesota Farm Families.

The Minnesota Farm Families program is a longstanding tradition in our State, having taken place for the past 30 years. This program honors the families who have dedicated their lives to agriculture. They are chosen because of their exceptional contribution to advance Minnesota's agriculture industry.

This year, five families from my district were selected for their agricultural contributions to our State. They include Jim and Sally Myers from Anoka County, Rick and Marlene Schlichting from Benton County, Curt and Joni Hedtke from Carver County, the Bahnemann Family Stock Farm in Washington County, and the Kreitlow and Ford family from Wright County.

Farming is not just a profession for these families, it is a way of life. Their hard work and the hard work of families like them make agriculture one of the primary drivers of Minnesota's economy.

Congratulations to the 2017 Minnesota Farm Families. Thank you so much for everything you do.

□ 1030

DEFEND, DENOUNCE, AND ANNOUNCE

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and stand at the podium designated for Republicans, but I rise not as a Democrat or a Republican. I rise today, Mr. Speaker, not as a Liberal or a Conservative.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a proud American: a person who believes in his country, who salutes the flag, says the Pledge of Allegiance, and sings the national anthem.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to make comments that I never thought I would have to make in the well of the House of Congress. I rise today to defend, denounce, and announce.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to defend any mother who has been called a dog because her son engaged in peaceful protest. I rise, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to defend any son who is called the son of a dog because he engaged in peaceful protest. I rise, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to denounce these comments that have been made because they have brought discourse to a new low. Mr. Speaker, this is a level of indecency that is unbecoming of the Presidency.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to say to the world that this is not what America is all about: calling people SOBs. We know what a "B" is. It is a dog.

Mr. Speaker, I rise because my heart tells me that I must do something.

Mr. Speaker, I denounce the comments that were made, and I rise to announce that next week I will bring a privileged resolution before the Congress of the United States of America.