

□ 1045

What else does it do? It slashes clean water grant programs by \$300 million. In my community in Compton, California, we recently had a brown water crisis. It is still going on. There is brown water coming out of the faucets. We don't have to think too far back as to what happened in Flint, Michigan.

To think that we are having a vote this week that is going to cut \$300 million—money that is used to invest in America's water infrastructure—is appalling. When I heard about it this week, I thought it was important that the American people know about it. This is what should be on the front page of the newspapers. This is what the media should be reporting on, what is happening in this Congress and how the American people are put at risk when such cuts are happening to the very agencies that are put there to protect us, so that we ensure that we have clean air and clean water.

As somebody who serves as the chair of two environmental task forces here in Congress, we cannot allow this to continue to happen without raising our voices, calling our elected officials, calling our offices, and speaking out about what the American people want. And this is one: Clean air and clean water is a basic right that everybody is entitled to.

I believe this bill is going to take us backward. It is going to hurt us. And it really hurts our ability to make sure that we continue to look at things like climate change.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against this, and I urge the American people to have their voices heard.

POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, there are moments in history that require the deliberate and thoughtful response of the most powerful body in the world, the United States Congress, this House and the other House.

While Americans are preparing for recreation and fellowship with family members during this period of summer, when schoolchildren are out, as others are dealing with the excruciating heat, others dealing with the impact of climate change, gun violence, the need for putting back in the terrible cuts of the Republican budget on Medicare and Medicaid, and a number of other issues dealing with their communities and neighborhoods, and, I would say, frankly, keeping their children safe and recognizing the values of this Nation that include not snatching children away from family members, I get that and I understand the responsibility of this Congress to pass laws, to work together to ensure that the beauty of what America stands for, her values and her opportunities for so many others, is heard.

But I also think it is important because, as I have traveled in the last 24 hours, I saw Americans concerned about their Nation and wanting to be able to understand what transpired in Helsinki yesterday, Monday, July 16. As many have said, Republicans and Democrats, it was a disgraceful display of unpatriotic behavior. The tragedy of it is that it came from the Commander in Chief of this Nation.

As I read the Constitution, it says that executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States, and he shall hold his office for a period of time. His powers under section 2 include that the President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the militia of several States, when called into actual service. And, as well, it indicates that he shall appoint ambassadors.

That is translated into the President's responsibilities over the intelligence communities and many aspects of our defense. Also, the power of the President articulates the foreign policy of this Nation.

Yesterday, the display that was shown was that the foreign policy, and the patriotism, and the stature, and the leadership, and the Constitution of the United States became a footstool to a despot by the name of President Putin.

No one is against engagement, diplomacy, or resolving conflict, but President Putin stands very proudly as ex-KGB to have poisoned his own citizens, to have shot journalists, to have shot down an airplane over Ukraine with 300 innocent family members, children, and others, and, as well, has taken over a land of another country.

So here we stand with this picture to the world. As well, when posed a question of, who do you believe, the Commander in Chief, to the absolute dismay of those of us who have lived through 9/11 here in Congress, and who saw the loss of life in conflicts like Iraq and Afghanistan, were amazed that the sacred aspect of our work, and that is voting, was determined by the intelligence community of this Nation, that Russia invaded in our 2016 election and literally stole the election, and will continue to do so today, as emphasized by the Director of National Intelligence, Director Coats, and the intelligence community.

A report given by the Mueller investigation indicted 12 intelligence agents of Russia—not of any other country, not civilians, but intelligence agents, military—who had direct orders from President Putin. You would think that the President of the United States would forcefully say to the President: Stop it and stop it now.

That is a patriot. That is one who has the powers of the Presidency under Article II, section 2.

Yet this is what came about. President Trump was asked by a reporter: "You first. Just now, President Putin denied having anything to do with the election interference in 2016."

It is amazing how my time goes because I am talking about the President. But, in any event, let me conclude by saying that this document reports that the President said that he stands with Putin over the United States of America. Congress must demand the transcripts. We must have congressional hearings, Mr. Speaker. This is a serious matter.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 52 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Strengthen the constitutional commitments of the Members of this people's House in their work today. Guide and sustain them in Your wisdom and inspire all, especially those in leadership, with the insights needed to assist our Nation at this time.

Bless all who are responsible for the security and safety of our Nation in today's world. Grant them a surfeit of courage and resolve to execute their responsibilities with integrity and faithfulness.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Washington (Mr. KILMER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KILMER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

NATO COMMITMENT

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, The Washington Times correctly reported on the front page about the NATO conference that "President Trump's bare-knuckles diplomacy paid off."

"Mr. Trump declared that the U.S. remained committed to the military alliance."

The Brussels Declaration of July 11 itself confirmed: "We will share fairly the responsibilities of defending each other. Real progress has been made across NATO. . . . But even if we have turned a corner, we need to do more, and there will be further progress."

Today, I am grateful to welcome a delegation from Bulgaria as a valued NATO ally. Chairperson of the Foreign Policy Committee, Dzhema Grozdanova of the National Assembly, who also is chair of the Friendship group Bulgaria-USA, is leading a delegation of assembly members to Washington, coordinated by Ambassador Tihomir Stoytchev. It is inspiring to see young Bulgarians and Americans training together at the base at Novo Selo to establish peace through strength.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

LET THERE BE LIGHT

(Mr. KILMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, in 1961, in the face of a challenge from the Soviets, President Kennedy visited the University of Washington and said we are neither "warmongers nor appeasers. Neither hard nor soft. We are Americans, determined to defend the frontiers of freedom."

He pointed out the university's motto is: "Let there be light," and asked: "What more can be said today, regarding all the dark and tangled problems we face, than: Let there be light."

It is the unanimous view of the United States intelligence community that Russia used social media to influence our elections in 2016. After yesterday, Americans from all viewpoints called on Congress to stand up for our interests to protect our elections from Russian influence.

I offered the Honest Ads Act as an amendment to the bill we are voting on today. This bipartisan bill simply establishes the same disclosure requirements for online ads that currently apply to political ads on television and radio.

So today, Congress had the chance to stand up to Russia and pass the Honest Ads Act, but like the President a day ago, this body failed to act.

Mr. Speaker, Congress has a duty to defend the frontiers of freedom. So, let there be light. Let's pass the Honest Ads Act and shine a light on the darkest corners of our election systems so that Russia can never again use our news feeds to influence our elections.

INVESTING IN AMERICAN WORKERS

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I recently introduced the Skills Investment Act of 2018 with Congressman DEREK KILMER to allow American workers to invest in their own futures.

This bill would create lifelong learning accounts workers could use to pay for skills-based education, career-related learning, and professional development. In an ever-changing economy, I know that such accounts would be put to good use.

As co-chair of the bipartisan House Career and Technical Education Caucus, I fully support expanding access to skills-based educational opportunities and professional development.

The tax treatment of these savings accounts would be similar to a health savings account. Mid-career workers could contribute up to \$4,000 tax free each year, with a maximum contribution limit of \$10,000. Employers would receive a 25 percent tax credit for contributions to a worker's account. Workers of all ages can use the account at any time to learn skills to make them more competitive as the economy changes.

This bill is a commonsense approach to investing in the American worker. I encourage my colleagues to cosponsor it today.

SURRENDERING OUR VALUES

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, like many Americans, yesterday I watched and was dumbfounded by the words and the actions of the President of the United

States as he betrayed our principles and our national interests on the world stage.

Never before have we seen a President of the United States so quickly surrender our longstanding values and our national security interests to an adversary like Vladimir Putin. The President's pathetic performance was an embarrassment for the United States.

Just last week, of course, his own Justice Department indicted 12 Russian intelligence agents for the very act that he denied ever took place. When he had a chance to take sides between American interests and the American intelligence community, he wrapped his arms around Vladimir Putin, a KGB spy with a history of jamming his opponents and killing journalists. This is outrageous.

NORTH KOREA BRUTALIZES ITS PEOPLE

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, North Korea's nuclear program is perhaps the greatest threat to U.S. national security, but we must never forget the horrendous plight of the North Korean people.

Little Kim and his dynasty are guilty of some of the worst human rights abuses in human history. Freedom of religion and freedom of speech do not exist in North Korea. Christians are routinely arrested, tortured, imprisoned, and executed, their families sent to prison camps for "guilt by association."

Reports estimate that almost 130,000 political prisoners are suffering brutal conditions in highly secret work camps around North Korea. Systematic murder, torture, rape, forced abortions, starvation, and overwork are leading to countless deaths every day, and the Kim regime is giving no signs of relenting.

Despite any nuclear agreement, we must make it clear that the United States will never waiver in its support for basic human dignity of the North Korean people.

And that is just the way it is.

TRADE ADJUSTMENT AUTHORITY

(Mr. SCHNEIDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, President Trump's trade war is spiraling out of control and American workers and businesses are paying the price.

Back home in Illinois, already more than \$3.8 billion in exports have been targeted for retaliation. I have heard from numerous working companies hurting from this misguided approach. They are struggling with new, high costs and are now less able or less likely to hire or expand.