

the legislation on the floor. They could do this now, but they refuse to, even though they have the power. Why won't they? Why won't they let us investigate? Why won't they let us have a vote?

America and the world is watching. They are wondering how long it will take for this Republican Congress to act. When will it be too much?

We have heard some Republican heroes like JOHN MCCAIN and others who have said this was the most horrific performance and that we must—must talk about this, and yet we don't. Why?

TIME TO REFLECT ON WHAT IT MEANS TO BE PATRIOTIC

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

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor because today is the birthday of my friend, my partner in the fight for justice and equality, Nelson Mandela.

During the height of the civil rights movement and the early days of the labor movement, you had to make a decision: Which side are you on?

So, Mr. Speaker, on this day, of all days, I cannot, I will not stay silent when our Nation, our democracy, and the American people are under attack. We fought too hard and too long to stand on the sidelines when so much is at stake.

When you see something that is not right, that is not just, you have to find a way to get in the way. You have to get in good trouble—necessary trouble.

Now is the time to wake up. It is time to be brave, bold, and courageous. During the American Revolution, people suffered and died for the dream of democracy, for the sacred right to vote, and for the ability to choose their representatives. Hundreds and thousands of men and women lost their lives to preserve our union and to defend our values.

What I saw on Monday was a shame, an embarrassment, and a disgrace to their legacy, their memory, and what they sacrificed. During times like these, I encourage every person to take some time and have what I call an executive session with themselves and their very souls. Because today, Mr. Speaker, each of us faces the question of what it means to be patriotic.

Ask yourself, do you stand with the American people or do you stand with a dictator? Do you stand with democracy or do you stand with a czar? Do you stand with friends and allies or do you stand with someone who approves violent attacks on the media, human rights advocates, and struggling democracies?

Mr. Speaker, the American House is on fire, it is burning, and if we are not mindful, if we are not watchful, this fire will consume us all.

The United States Constitution began with the words: "We, the People." You see, the Founding Fathers'

very first priority, the very first article was to outline the role and the responsibilities of the United States Congress in our system of checks and balances.

□ 1045

The people who elected us are sounding the alarms. Never before has our constitutional mandate been more important. Never before have the pillars of our democracy been under attack.

Mr. Speaker, each and every one of us swore an oath of office. Whether Democrat or Republican, we all have an equal mission, an obligation, and a mandate to uphold this promise.

Mr. Speaker, the time has come, and the question is simple: Will you show up for duty?

Congress must speak up, we must speak out, and, Mr. Speaker, we must act. If we fail to do so, history and the American voters will not be kind.

The threat is occurring in realtime on our watch, and the ball is in our court. The clock is ticking, and there is no time to waste.

PRESIDENT TRUMP AND RUSSIA

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

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, President Trump had a straightforward mission in Europe last week: stand with our NATO allies and stand up to Russia's Putin. Instead, President Trump squandered U.S. influence and abdicated our leadership by abusing and dividing our allies and fawning over a tyrant who actively seeks to undermine our democracy.

While Putin may not be dictating American policy, President Trump is seemingly pushing forward his agenda. Putin wants to restore Russia as a great global power at the expense of the United States. He wants to expand Russian influence over Europe by weakening NATO and the European Union. In Putin's mind, when the United States and Europe flounder, Russia is stronger.

If Putin was calling the shots, he would have encouraged President Trump to criticize NATO and raise doubts on whether we would defend our allies if they haven't paid their bills. He would invite President Trump to undermine the European Union, our largest trading partner and investor, by lauding Brexit, denouncing trade, supporting antidemocratic populists, and undermining Germany and Chancellor Merkel. And that is exactly what happened.

Rather than projecting unity, President Trump's participation at the NATO summit generated nonstop images of division. Substantive issues received little or no attention.

Putin is the biggest winner from any disunity in NATO. During the Cold War, American and NATO troops held the line in Europe, containing and defeating the Soviet Union.

I served in Germany for 5 years at that time and witnessed firsthand how we won the Cold War. But we didn't do it through military power alone. We won because NATO military strength helped create the space for democratic dissidents in Eastern Europe to come together and bring down Soviet rule from within. This was the success of America's strategy—pursued by Presidents from Roosevelt to Kennedy, to Reagan—of advancing American values.

For seven decades, the NATO alliance has ensured that America's strength and influence are magnified around the globe. Our alliance has extended the promise of peace, security, and prosperity to much of the democratic world, and it has maintained the inviolable promise of collective defense.

America needed its allies after we were attacked on 9/11, and our allies came through. They fought and died with us.

And threats to our collective security have not vanished in the 21st century. These shared security challenges should have been at the top of President Trump's agenda, but they weren't.

Since Putin's annexation of Crimea, NATO has found renewed purpose and effectiveness, stepping up exercises and establishing the enhanced forward presence in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland.

Additional measures may be necessary to continue to confront Russian aggression. This includes Secretary Mattis' 30-30 plan to establish the readiness of 30 land battalions, 30 air fighter squadrons, and 30 ships ready to deploy within 30 days of being put on alert; Poland's proposal to bring more U.S. troops to the country and setting up a joint armored division with 15,000 American troops, and as many as 250 tanks and armored vehicles; and completion of the European missile shield by 2020. None of this was discussed.

Contrary to President Trump's declarations, NATO members have been increasing defense spending since 2014: almost \$46 billion, the biggest buildup by U.S. allies in 25 years.

NATO is also expanding its training mission in Afghanistan and launching a new one in Iraq, showcasing NATO's ongoing commitment to the fight against terrorism. Yet President Trump chose to deride our most important allies.

With as much passion as President Trump questions our European allies as freeloaders, his actions suggest a desire for a cozy relationship with Putin's Russia. Russia is one of our most aggressive adversaries, working to rupture the relationship between the United States and our closest partners, weaken our influence in the Middle East, and pose an ongoing cyber threat.

Other than elevating Putin and failing to mention Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, what good did President Trump accomplish during this summit? I have no answer as to why he, unlike any of his Republican or

Democratic predecessors, is so unwilling to defend the interests of the United States and our allies against Russia. All that is clear is that, by embracing our adversaries and denigrating our allies, President Trump is inviting grave and historic consequences for the United States.

Mr. Speaker, today, I simply call on President Trump to unequivocally affirm the United States' commitment to our European allies and to condemn Russian aggression, meddling, and malign influence.

THE STALWART REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago this August, Russian tanks rolled across the border into the independent nation of Georgia. After 5 days of bloody fighting, with thousands of innocent Georgians displaced from their homes, the conflict ended with the Russians promising to pull back its forces.

I happened to be in Georgia 1 week after the Russian invasion and saw the tanks on the high ground and the destruction that the Russians made of Tbilisi. It is 10 years since that invasion and Moscow and its troops still occupy one-third of sovereign territory of the Republic of Georgia.

The Kremlin claims these Russian troops are in Georgia as peacekeepers. Are you kidding me? It is an invasion. They are a heavily armed battle group waiting to provoke Georgia into another fight. They have committed horrific human rights abuses against the Georgian people, often harassing civilians and denying Georgians the ability to move about their country freely.

The continued presence of Russian troops on Georgian soil presents a major violation of international law. America's response at the time was to condemn and issue sanctions against the Russians, but the Obama administration removed the punishing sanctions against Russia as part of its foolish reset with the Kremlin.

We now know this demonstration of weakness only encouraged further aggression from Russia, and it invaded a neighbor state in 2014. This time it seized and annexed Crimea from Ukraine, another independent sovereign state that Russia had sworn to respect. Then Russian tanks moved on and invaded eastern Ukraine and occupied part of that territory.

After 10 years of illegal occupation of Georgian territory, we need to do more to help our Georgian friends resist the Russian bear. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Georgia emerged as the beacon of hope in the region and hope for democracy. Georgia's faithful commitment to a strong democracy with free and fair elections serves as a shining example for other countries in Eastern Europe. Russia hoped to break

this beacon of hope 10 years ago, but Georgia has remained defiant.

As co-chair of the Congressional Georgia Caucus, I have long seen that major vulnerabilities remain that Russia could exploit. Georgia is a small country. It cannot afford to compete with the might of the Russian bear. That is why I have introduced the Georgia Support Act along with my caucus co-chair, Representative CONNOLLY from Virginia.

Through this important bill, we hope to significantly enhance Georgia's ability to combat and deter Putin's wicked activities. With our assistance, America can provide Georgia specific advantages that can make any new attempt by Russia a costly endeavor.

Also, with modern warfare extending to cyberspace, we can improve coordination to identify Russia's cyber attacks and build safeguards within. This means building up Georgia's ability to combat disinformation and propaganda from Russia.

As we have seen, Moscow is all over the world trying to undermine democracies by invading their elections, including our own. Working with Georgian partners, we can show Russia has been caught.

Additionally, this bill calls on President Trump to impose sanctions for serious human rights abuses in that occupied territory of Georgia. Not only will it help our Georgian friends on the front line of Russian aggression, but it sends a message to the Kremlin that America will and must stand up against that bad behavior and defend the international rule of law.

Czar Putin must be shown that his dream of rebuilding the Russian empire is not going to happen. We must show our freedom-loving friends around the globe that America will stand with them. The Georgian people have shown they will fight for freedom, even against overwhelming odds.

While the Kremlin believes that it has prevented Georgia's aspirations of joining the important organization of NATO by seizing territory, we can send a signal that that victory is hollow. Georgia is still on the path to greater integration with the West. Georgia must remain, with our help, free and prosperous. Russia will find itself isolated and full of regret for ever following Putin's foolish ambition of aggression in the region.

And that is just the way it is.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF PRESIDENT NELSON MANDELA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of South African President Nelson Mandela on what would have been his 100th birthday.

President Mandela, or "Mandiba" as he was affectionately called, was a rev-

olutionary and transformative leader, who forever changed the world through his steadfast dedication to freedom, equality, and human rights.

After spending 27 years in prison, Nelson Mandela became the first Black South African to be elected President in what was also the first free, multiracial, democratic election in South African history.

While President Mandela used his administration to dismantle apartheid, combat institutional racism, and begin the process of racial reconciliation in his country, his efforts also taught the world the power of one man having the fortitude to sacrifice his own ideals for a cause greater than himself.

To me, Nelson Mandela is more than a world-renowned hero. I had the distinct honor and privilege of calling him a friend. His leadership of the international antiapartheid movement encouraged me to take action here in the United States, where I served as the Los Angeles chair of the Free South Africa Movement, organized countless antiapartheid rallies in Los Angeles, led a sit-in at the South African Consulate General's office in Los Angeles, and was even arrested during a protest at the Embassy of South Africa in Washington, D.C. I was also a board member of and worked nationally with TransAfrica, one of the most prominent antiapartheid advocacy groups in the United States.

As a member of the California State Assembly at that time, I fought for the passage of Assembly Bill 134, which forced California to divest \$12 billion in State pension funds tied to the apartheid regime in South Africa.

In 1990, I chaired the committee in Los Angeles that brought over 90,000 people together in the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum to welcome Nelson Mandela into the United States, and I also traveled with the official U.S. delegation to South Africa in 1994 to attend his inauguration as President of South Africa.

In 1998, I was honored to welcome President Mandela to the United States once again, this time to receive the United States Congressional Gold Medal.

In honor of his 95th birthday in 2013, I organized an event here in Washington, D.C., called the Celebration of the Life, Legacy and Values of Nelson R. Mandela in Emancipation Hall of the United States Capitol Visitor Center. The celebration was attended by my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus, leaders from both the United States House and Senate, and representatives of national and international civil rights and humanitarian groups.

As we reflect on Nelson Mandela's memory today, let us remember what he once said: "What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."

Few embody this quote better than Nelson Mandela himself, and it is my