

as the North Dakota Air National Guard's 119th Wing was awarded their 19th.

The 119th Wing, known as the Happy Hooligans, has received this prestigious recognition nearly constantly since 2006.

The Air Force Outstanding Unit Award is given to numbered units of the Active Duty Air Force, Air National Guard, and U.S. Air Force Reserve that have distinguished themselves by exceptionally meritorious service or outstanding achievement.

The mission of the 119th Wing is to provide trained and ready airmen, executing world class MQ-9 and reconnaissance kinetic and nonkinetic target intelligence production, and expeditionary support capabilities for the Nation and State.

Mr. Speaker, Aristotle said: "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."

Freedom-loving people around the world are grateful to the Happy Hooligans from Fargo for making excellence in defending liberty a habit.

Congratulations, Colonel Brit Hatley and Hooligans, and thank you for your outstanding service to the cause of freedom around the world.

DREAMERS

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

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to the American people to information that is being kept from them. So often the good will and good-heartedness of the American people is manipulated to achieve goals that sometimes are detrimental to our people and detrimental to our country as well.

Today, the American people are being told that there are young people who are here illegally, brought by their parents at an early age—they call them DREAMers—and that we must be concerned about them, as we are. Of course, we are concerned about them. Our sympathy is with young people anywhere who want a better life.

But what the American people are not being told is that there are 850,000 of these young people. That is being left out of the discussion. They are looking to be legalized. When they are legalized, that means they can apply for family reunification, which means that they then will receive government benefits and even more people will come in under their platform.

I suggest that we take a look to see what 850,000 more young people and the millions more who will come will do to the American people.

NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT APPRECIATION DAY

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day. But it isn't just a day for all of us; it should be every day. They are on the front lines protecting our families, our lives, our homes, and our values. We need to keep that in mind: to appreciate them every day.

When you see them in the community, they are not someone to be afraid of. They are our neighbors. They are doing the same things we are: raising their kids, sending their kids to school, going to the park, and enjoying life, just as we do.

With all of the misunderstanding about law enforcement these days, it is really disheartening to see what some of our law enforcement officers have to put up with in order to do a job to protect all of us.

Each year, we lose many officers. At least 125 were lost in the line of duty last year, including eight in my home State of California.

I want to tell them that we do appreciate them: from the California Highway Patrol that keeps an eye on our offices, the Capitol Hill Police here, our city police, our county sheriffs, all of them. We do appreciate them because we know they are on the front line and they are just like us. We want to honor them constantly for stepping forward to do a very difficult task that is sometimes misunderstood and unappreciated. The vast majority of us Americans and northern Californians do appreciate them. God bless them all and may they be safe.

□ 1700

NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT APPRECIATION DAY

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

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to our Nation's law enforcement men and women. The safety and security of our communities is the result of our law enforcement men and women, who wake up every single day to protect neighborhoods from criminals, fight crime, ensure justice, and keep the peace.

In 2017, 125 officers died in the line of duty. Their deaths are a sober reminder that our Nation's law enforcement officers face danger every day they carry out their duty to protect the American people. They run towards danger while everyone else is running away.

No matter what, they serve and protect. They serve and protect so that you and I may be free from harm.

Their diligent service does not go unnoticed, and today, on behalf of Mississippi's Fourth Congressional District, we thank them for their bravery, fortitude, and sacrifice.

So thank you to the men and women in blue. We are a safer nation because

of the bravery of you and your families. Thank you for choosing to live a life of service. Your sacrifice and heroism will never be forgotten. Happy Law Enforcement Appreciation Day, and God bless you.

PROTESTS IN IRAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GARRETT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BISHOP).

PAYING TRIBUTE TO TWO OAKLAND COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today on National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day with a heavy heart to pay tribute to two of Michigan's finest Oakland County sheriff's deputies and their legacy of service.

Oakland County Sheriff's Deputy Eric Overall, a 22-year-old veteran of the sheriff's department, was killed this past Thanksgiving while serving and protecting. Deputy Overall was pursuing a suspect who posed a threat to the public and died ensuring no one else's life was put in danger that day.

He is remembered by his friends and family as someone who lived by the mantra "never quit." Sonja Overall, the widow of Eric Overall, described her husband as a man of integrity who truly left his stamp on everyone's heart. His life and legacy will never be forgotten.

Now, just 5 days ago, the Oakland County Sheriff's Office suffered yet another tragedy. Oakland County Sheriff's Deputy David Hack, a 17-year veteran of the sheriff's office, was securing a car accident scene when he was critically struck by a passing car.

Deputy Hack is well known in the Rochester community, as he serves as the sheriff's liaison at Rochester Adams High School in Rochester Hills, Michigan.

He is currently in critical condition. I would like his family to know that all the students, educators, and staff at Adams High School and the Rochester community schools are praying for his recovery and his continued strength to keep fighting until he is fully recovered. Indeed, our entire Rochester community sends our prayers.

Please join me in a moment of silence for Deputy Hack's recovery and to honor the memory and mourn the loss of Deputy Eric Overall.

Mr. Speaker, on this National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day, I send my deepest condolences to their family, friends, Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard, and the entire Oakland County Sheriff's Office during this time of tragedy and loss.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, 39 years ago, a collective nightmare was foisted

upon the people of the nation of Iran, and so when roughly 2 weeks ago, while on recess, I became aware of the courage manifest in the action of the Iranian people in standing up to a brutal totalitarian regime, I immediately contacted our office and suggested that we secure this Special Order hour, and reached out to a number of my colleagues, several of whom join me today, to speak loudly and clearly on behalf of the United States and the nearly 6 million people represented by myself and the individuals who will speak here today in support of those who would stand up and risk their very existence for those most basic human rights, which we as Americans take, tragically, for granted.

As I stand in this well, Mr. Speaker, in cities that the bulk of Americans have never heard of, in Isfahan and Karaj and Tabriz and Mashhad and Tehran, indeed, tens of thousands stand in the face of a regime with a record of destroying not only freedom but life itself in the instance of those who would stand up and demand freedom, stand up and demand basic human rights and dignity.

Mr. Speaker, to put this into perspective, if you were to take the population of the nation of Iran circa 1979 and compare it to the population of the United States circa 1941 and then align the numbers of Americans killed in combat during the entire Second World War, it would proportionally be roughly equal to the number of people who have given their lives at the hands of the brutal Iranian regime inside the borders of Iran. Think about that for a moment. Roughly 60,000 during the coup d'etat revolution in 1979, about 12,500 from 1981 to 1984, almost 33,000 during the 1988 uprising. We don't know how many were murdered in 2009, when this Nation stood silent as Iranians, brave, took to the streets to demand self-determination and toleration; that a regime should not be able to dictate how one worships, who one marries, what one believes; that people should be given basic rights to self-determination.

Today, we know very little about what is going on in Iran except for the brave women and men who are confronting challenges that we, by virtue of the fortune of our birth as Americans, will hopefully never have to confront. We know that roughly 50 have been murdered; we know that roughly 3,000 are imprisoned.

This time, I will not be silent. I have spoken with Iranian Americans of all different facets from a number of different groups. I ask these Iranian Americans, as well as those resisting within Iran and Iranians disbursed across the globe, to set aside their political differences and join together for the common goal of deposing a regime that murders its own sons and daughters to a tune that is comparable to the total number of American combat deaths during the Second World War. Enough is enough.

Today, I stand beside an image of Habib Khabiri. Habib was the former captain of the Iranian national soccer team. He and 40 others were executed in 1984 at the Evin Prison for having the temerity to criticize their government. He was 29 years old. The evidence indicates that he was tortured before he was executed.

In fact, again, as we stated earlier, over 12,000 people were executed by the Islamic Republic Security Forces just from 1981 to 1984.

Next is a young woman who tragically became something of an international folk hero for those who were paying attention, in that she had the temerity to stand and protest during the Green Revolution in 2009, suggesting that the Iranian people had a right to self-determination, when she was publicly, on film, murdered in the streets, 26 years old. The United States remained silent. The second of three children from a middle class neighborhood, she had the courage to stand up and point out injustice when she saw it, and paid with her life. Indeed, the protesters with whom she marched shouted, "America, you are either with us or with the mullahs," and we did not respond.

Today, I am responding. This administration is responding.

The Iranians, with whom I have spoken across a diverse sect of opposition, do not want tanks and bombers and missiles, nor do I, having worn the uniform of this Nation, but while we can't rule out any particular alternatives, all they ask is a word of support; that when we act legislatively in this body and in the Chamber down the hallway, we have the follow-through to ensure that our actions are backed up; that unlike the 1990s, when the Iran Sanctions Act was passed, we don't let our so-called European allies turn a blind eye as their corporate entities continue to do business with the IRGC that uses the money generated through this business not only to murder their own citizens but to fund the likes of Hezbollah, and fast forward to current day, create instability, peril, death, and destruction literally across the entire region from the Mediterranean to the Khyber Pass.

There is no blind eye being turned this time.

Next we see Shekar Mohammadzadeh. A nurse, she was arrested, imprisoned, and tortured for rendering medical assistance to other Iranian brothers and sisters who were brutalized by the revolutionary guards in the streets of Iran. She was tortured viciously at Evin Prison, served a significant portion of a prison sentence, 7 of 15 years, before being executed along with nearly 33,000 others circa 1988.

Now, three names, three faces, three stories, probably 30 seconds to a minute on each. Let me put this into perspective, Mr. Speaker. If we were to take 5 minutes to show the pictures and speak briefly on every individual murdered by the mullah regime in

Iran, we would be here for over a year going 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

I don't stand here saber rattling, suggesting American military action. I stand here suggesting that what my Iranian-American friends and what people of Iranian dissent who are dissidents throughout the world have suggested to me is that if the American Government will stand up and say, "We stand with you against these mullahs," that is the support that they need to continue the movement to see that there is a regime change, which leads to self-determination and democracy in Iran and the lifting of a dark cloud of terror from across the globe.

Don't believe me? I was born in 1972, and I have grown up with the perpetual mention of Hezbollah. There are those who think that Hezbollah is something that has been around for a long time, but I point out today that Hezbollah is actually younger than the mullah regime; that, in fact, the mullah regime created Hezbollah; and Hezbollah has the unique distinction of being one of a very few terrorist entities that has actually killed human beings on every single inhabited continent on planet Earth.

No trade with Iran, no money to the IRGC; no money to the IRGC, no money to Hezbollah; no money to Hezbollah, we have self-determination in Lebanon, we have less of an oppressive interference in Iraq, we have more stability in Syria, and we have freedom in Iran. Enough is enough.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for standing with me today, and I ask the American people and my colleagues to take the time to inform themselves about places like Isfahan and Karaj and Tabriz and Mashhad, and to think about the women and men who have the courage to walk through the threshold of a door of a home where, when they leave, they know full well they may very well not come back.

The time is now, the cause is just, the mullah regime must go. Enough is enough.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CURTIS).

□ 1715

Mr. CURTIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman GARRETT for his leadership on this issue and for arranging this today.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few minutes to express my concern about the way the Government of Iran has trampled on the rights of its people to express their discontent with the current regime, which has resulted in at least 21 deaths and more than 450 arrests. It is, quite frankly, disturbing the way the Iranian Government has used its military might to show an unacceptable and a disproportionate amount of force to quell and to attempt to control protests.

Additionally, Iran's judiciary has disregarded the rights of protesters to express themselves and to peacefully assemble, by threatening harsh punishments. I have read reports that the

government has blocked the Internet and social media services which, I believe, constitutes a violation of fundamental rights of free speech.

People in Iran are suffering. Their economy is stagnant, and their wages aren't keeping up with the costs of living. People are hungry, and they have grown weary of a radical and a corrupt regime set on sponsoring terrorism and pursuing an ill-advised plan for nuclear capabilities rather than focusing on improving the lives and stability of the people and their nation.

The people of Iran were hopeful that Iran would see some relief from the sanctions and would see economic improvement after their government entered into a deal in 2015 regarding its nuclear program. But because of widespread corruption and failed economic policies of Iran's Government, as well as its failure to live up to its commitments to the international community, Iran's people have only continued to suffer from poverty, high unemployment, and inflation.

It should be no surprise to the leadership of Iran that its people are calling for change because of its failure and poor leadership that have led the people to protest.

Mr. Speaker, I stand with those protesters in Iran who have lost faith in their increasingly failed government. They deserve a country that ensures their freedom to express disapproval. They deserve a government with equality and justice, to improve the lives of Iranians.

Although Iran's Government may, by force, ultimately be successful in putting an end to these public protests, this dissatisfaction with the regime will continue. I hope that someday the people of Iran will see the freedom and the kind of leadership they seek and they deserve.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOH).

Mr. YOH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, Mr. GARRETT, for organizing this on this important topic.

Today, we passed several bills about Iran. One was H. Res. 676, calling out the Iranian regime to stop suppressing and oppressing their citizens who just want those things that are innate to all human beings on this planet, that we believe in as Americans, and that are those inalienable rights that come from our Creator: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The Iranian people are staging legitimate protests to condemn the Iranian regime for corruption of the economy and funding of terrorist organizations while neglecting the basic needs of the Iranian citizens, only to have their protests in opposition of the corruption by the Iranian regime be shut down and crushed through unwarranted bloodshedding and arrests.

If you look at the Iranian regime over the last 30 years since they took control of Iran, it has been nothing but bloodshed and mayhem. And if you

look at the conflicts that we have been involved in in the Middle East since the entry of Afghanistan and the Iraqi wars, if you look at our servicemen and -women who have been harmed in those battles or injured or died, 70 percent of those were caused by IEDs. Ninety percent of those IEDs were supported and produced by the Iranian regime.

The people of Iran stood up in 2009. The administration of the United States at that time refused to back the Iranian people who wanted those basic rights that we just talked about: freedoms and liberties.

Our Nation was founded on the idea that every individual is granted three basic rights: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And again, we, as Americans, believe in these inalienable rights. I find it appalling that the Iranian regime is using deadly force in order to deny the Iranian people their basic freedoms.

We are in the 21st century in the world, and you see a clear divide: the Western ideologies that believe in these God-given rights that we have, and then you see the regimes and dictatorships around the world that are suppressing the very innate abilities that we are all born with. They are trying to suppress these innate abilities. By doing that, they do it through intimidation, coercion, torture, death.

The leader of the IRGC came out in a statement, and it is in ED ROYCE's resolution that we voted on today, H. Res. 676, that said they will investigate it, they will bring it to an end, and they will quash these protests and it will be done with. So that is the intent of the Iranian regime, to bring this to an end through force because they fear free-thinking people.

We are so blessed in our country of having the ability to speak out, to be able to protest peacefully, to assemble peacefully; and that is something I think sometimes we, as Americans, take for granted. This is something that all you have to do is look at what is going on around the world to see a despotic regime that is afraid of empowering its people.

The Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, must be recognized for what he is: the dictator of an oppressive regime which once again showed the world its true colors by its horrific response to the peaceful and legitimate protests that began on December 28, that saw thousands in prisons, with the leaders being threatened with death, and over two dozen having been killed.

I want to send the message that we, the United States, support the rights of those brave Iranians who are peacefully protesting the oppressive Iranian regime; and they are peacefully protesting, again, for the right to pursue life, liberty, and happiness.

Again, I want to thank Mr. GARRETT for putting this on and thank him for allowing me to participate.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. GARRETT for organizing this Special Order today to shed light on what has been going on in Iran not just the last couple of weeks, but, really, since 1979.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out for the good people of Iran who are protesting against an oppressive regime that has imposed tyranny on them for nearly four decades. Scores of people have been arrested and some killed for daring to speak out against their government.

Mr. Speaker, they have good cause. For far too long, the authoritarian terrorists of Tehran have pursued an aggressive military buildup and a massive police state that oppresses its people.

Since the Iranian Revolution in 1979, their leaders have chosen global and regional conflict instead of promoting a healthy domestic economy and peaceful relations with their regional neighbors. I could spend a long time highlighting the litany of basic human rights violations of the regime as well, but the Iranian Government's malfeasance, public corruption, and betrayal to their citizenry needs to be brought to light on the world stage.

Mr. Speaker, as recently as last year, in the State Department's annual Country Reports on Terrorism, Iran was once again identified as the foremost state sponsor of terror. The crime and terror Iran spreads are conducted at the expense of ordinary Iranians whose taxes go everywhere but to themselves and their prosperity.

The unemployment rate is over 12 percent, according to the World Bank, and youth unemployment is staggeringly high. And all of this, despite Iran being rich in natural resources and having potential for having a great economy.

Two years ago, the U.S. entered a deal in hopes of encouraging a more peaceful Iran, not to mention passing along billions in direct cash payments to them.

Furthermore, if that wasn't enough, it has been recently reported that the Department of Justice, under President Obama, abandoned a massive international narcotics investigation against one of Iran's international terrorist clients, Hezbollah, just to not upset the Iranian regime during the negotiation of the nuclear deal.

That is right, Mr. Speaker. Hezbollah is not just in the global terror business; it is a transnational criminal organization that is a major global drug trafficker, including right here in the Western Hemisphere and Latin America.

For anyone who has not read the recent article in Politico Magazine, titled, "The Secret Backstory of How Obama Let Hezbollah Off the Hook," it is worth your time. You will learn how Hezbollah is operating throughout Latin America and, indeed, facilitating the transfer of drugs into this country.

Despite all of their contrition and dealmaking, the Iranian regime has

not changed. This perilous regime is still exporting and smuggling weapons to its clients in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. Hezbollah and Iran continue to threaten Israel, among other nations, and are still a destabilizing force throughout the Middle East.

After all of the Iranian regime's terror, crime, and corruption, do you think the Iranian people would have benefited from this?

Mr. Speaker, all you have to do is turn on the TV to see the Iranian people's answer, and it is obvious that they have had enough. This kind of tyranny does not belong anywhere, especially in the 21st century.

The everyday people in Iran want the same thing the average American wants: freedom to live without fear of their government, to live and work in peace, to be with their loved ones, and to worship as they see fit.

The good people of Iran are standing up to tyranny, and we should stand with them. I want those protesters seeking freedom from oppression to know that we are with them, that the American people are with them.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. GARRETT, again, for organizing this Special Order on this very important topic.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD).

Mr. BUDD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GARRETT) for organizing this in support of those protesters in Iran. It is the ongoing protests that started late last month in Iran that are significant not just for their people, but also for the world.

While these protests started because of a dire economic situation in Iran, with upwards of 40 percent of its youth unemployed, it has grown to be a nationwide movement that is about much more than just the economy.

Over the past couple of weeks, we have seen the Iranian people flood the streets in favor of fundamental freedoms, economic opportunity, and a government that represents their interests, not Hezbollah's. There are even reports of people chanting, "We don't want an Islamic Republic," or, "We will die, but we will take Iran back."

This has been a long time coming. A State Department report in 2016 found that Iran is the top state sponsor of terrorism in the whole world. Whether it is providing financial support to Hezbollah or providing arms to Islamic rebel groups in Yemen, the Iranian Government's priorities are obviously more focused on wreaking international havoc than they are on addressing the pressing issues within their own country.

And while we are talking about issues with Iran, the protesters are pleading for fundamental freedoms. For example, married women aren't even allowed to travel outside the country without permission from their husbands. They also risk being put in

jail or even to death if they take off their hijab in public.

But brave women throughout Iran have been unmasking themselves during the last couple of weeks in protest. To many in our country, this may seem insignificant, but videos of these women and their courage have been shared millions and millions of times around the globe.

Mr. Speaker, those who dislike President Trump have criticized his approach to foreign policy, but these same people fail to praise his strong defense for freedom when it comes to Iran.

As soon as the protests started, President Trump put out a statement that said the Iranian people are hungry for food and for freedom. He also said that it is time for a change, and I couldn't agree with him more.

This is the opposite of the Obama administration that preached moral authority and, yet, sided with the corrupt Iranian regime and the corrupt Iranian Government when anti-regime protesters took to the streets back in 2009.

So now that President Trump has proven his credibility on the global stage by siding with the protesters, the question is: Now, where do we go from here?

Well, Mr. Speaker, first we should increase the sanctions on the Iranian Government in response to their crack-down on protesters for freedom in recent weeks.

President Trump should also strongly consider pulling out of the nuclear deal that was struck by President Obama in 2015.

□ 1730

We have already seen the Iranian Government break parts of the agreement, and we should have a zero tolerance for these breaks because the consequences are just too grave.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Iran are bravely speaking out against their government and they are calling for change. For the United States to continue to be a shining example of freedom and liberty, we must continue to vocalize our support for these protesters in Iran and make sure that they know that we have their back.

Again, I thank my colleague, Mr. GARRETT from Virginia.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) for his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia for yielding.

I want the folks in Iran to know that the United States of America stands with the people of Iran. As a closed society, I doubt they will hear our words here tonight, but they should know that, in our hearts, in our prayers, and in our thoughts, we have the people of Iran and their best wishes in mind.

I have been here for 7 years in Congress, and during that 7 years, Iran

keeps coming up to the forefront; whether it is the Obama administration's failed Iranian nuclear deal, which is coming up for authorization—I think on the 19th of this month, the 15th, the 19th—or if it is the protests, and since I have been in Congress, this is the second round of uprising protest against the Government within Iran.

Now, the dichotomy is the Obama administration ignored the people in Iran. But the Trump administration has told the people in Iran: We stand with you against an oppressive government.

Iran keeps coming up even in a Politico magazine article. They had a well-sourced account of an alleged Obama administration scandal last month. This prompted review by the Department of Justice and interest by the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

The article alleges the Obama administration restrained classified efforts by the Drug Enforcement Administration to shut down an international criminal operation, Hezbollah. Now, Hezbollah, based in Lebanon, is a proxy of Iran. And when you hear Hezbollah, you might as well think Iran. They are one and the same.

So I am deeply troubled by the idea that President Obama's motivation was getting past by any means necessary his failed Iranian deal. He could not get anything in the way of that legacy.

Now, if this article is true, President Obama is more concerned about passing his agenda item opposed by Members of both parties and a majority of the American people than protecting the safety of the American people. We all know about the pallets of cash that were given to Iran. Now, they could have spent it on their economy. They could have paid down debt. They could have done anything, but I would bet that the largest state sponsor of terrorism, the country of Iran, used the bulk of that money to continue funding terrorist operations around the globe.

The number one recipient of Iranian help is Hezbollah. Now, let me bring you a little bit closer to home. In 2012, I authored a bill called Countering Iran in the Western Hemisphere Act of 2012, signed into law by President Obama, directing the State Department to actually do an in-depth study into the Iranian activities in the Western Hemisphere, specifically, South America.

They did a halfway limp-wristed report that even the 2014 GAO reported only 2 of the 12 requirements mandated in that law were fully addressed. The Obama administration acted in complete disregard to the law. Six others of my legislation were only partially addressed; four were not addressed at all. Meanwhile, the activity of Hezbollah in the Western Hemisphere continued, and it is continuing today.

There is an area in South America known as the tri-border region. It is where the borders of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay all come together. Some would even say it is a lawless act area.

It is controlled by elements of Hezbollah. And two acts of terror happened in Argentina, in Buenos Aires. The 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish cultural center in Buenos Aires was the single-largest loss of life from an act of terrorism in the Western Hemisphere prior to 9/11, believed to be hatched in the tri-border region by elements of Iran and Hezbollah.

It was sort of swept under the rug by the Argentine Government of Cristina Kirchner. But there was a brave individual, a special prosecutor named Alberto Nisman, who took this on his own to say: We know what happened at the AMIA. We know Iran was involved.

He set out to prove it. He compiled massive amounts of data. And the morning before he was scheduled to testify in front of the Argentine Congress about his findings, implicating the Kirchner regime for hiding some of this because they wanted to coddle up to Iran—they wanted Iran's help. They wanted to sell Iran nuclear technology, I believe. They wanted Iran's help with money.

The morning before Alberto Nisman was going to implicate the Kirchner regime for the AMIA bombing and hiding the facts from the Argentine people and the world with regard to Iran's activities in that AMIA bombing in 1994, Alberto Nisman was assassinated in his apartment, even though he had multiple security personnel guarding him. Shot behind the ear.

Now, the Kirchner regime tried to say that that was suicide. There was no gunpowder on his hands. And it has now been proven that it was not suicide, that it was an assassination, possibly by elements of Iran as well.

I say all that to let the folks listening tonight here in America and around the world know that Iran isn't just in the area in the Middle East known as Persia. They have elements, like Hezbollah, that are operating globally. Iran has said that they want to wipe the Big Satan and the Little Satan, Israel and the United States, off the map. They don't have our best interest at heart.

But as a free people here in the United States of America, I can tell you that we have the best interest of the Iranian people at heart. When we stand on this floor and we talk about the uprising, the protests that are going on in Iran now, we have the best interest of the Iranian people at heart, because we don't stand to benefit in any way for us standing up for freedom, for folks who want self-government, for folks who want less oppression, who want some say-so in their livelihood and how their government operates. That is what the Iranian people are talking about in these protests.

So, unfortunately, the Obama administration and the State Department did not take the Countering Iran in the Western Hemisphere Act very seriously. But Iran is here. They have opened cultural centers and embassies in Latin America. I don't know the

number right off, but they continue to be more involved here closer to home. There are no cultural ties, very limited economic ties between Iran and Latin America. So you have to question yourself as to why the Persians are here.

You have to be aware that Iran is the largest state sponsor of terrorism with billions—hundreds of billions of dollars that we released to them, pallet-loads of cash that could find their way into terrorist organizations that don't have America's interest at heart.

So I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia for giving us an opportunity tonight to focus on Iran; to focus on its proxy, Hezbollah; to focus on primarily the Iranian people in their quest for more freedom.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN) for his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 21 minutes remaining.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend, Mr. GARRETT for yielding.

It is important that we discuss what has been going on in Iran. I recall I was on Active Duty in the United States Army back when President Carter stood by and basically encouraged the taking out of the Shah of Iran. No prince according to his own conduct, but he made a statement welcoming the Ayatollah Khomeini back to Iran as what he called him, I believe it was a man of peace. He could not have been more wrong.

There has been less peace because the Ayatollah Khomeini took over a state government, a national government, and a powerful military than any time since World War II. They have been the largest state sponsor of terrorism. They have, we have been told, probably provided most of the IEDs that have killed and maimed Americans fighting for freedom in the Middle East, especially in Iraq.

They have worked to stir up trouble all over the Middle East, north Africa, and have created massive mayhem, and they are looking to do even more. And with the \$100 billion or more that President Obama sent to Iran, they have been able to make more IEDs to kill more Americans, create more havoc, and stir up more sentiment against the United States since that unconstitutional sending under a treaty that was never ratified was done by the last administration.

Some have blamed President Trump for the problems in Iran. That is a bit ridiculous. The problems are the radical Islamist leadership in Iran. In fact, the same people that would like to blame President Trump are some of the same ones who hailed the \$100 billion sent under a treaty that was never ratified that would be used to kill inno-

cent people around the world, including Americans.

The people of Iran are to be congratulated for saying: Enough is enough.

There is a great article from Commentary magazine titled: "What the Iran Protests Have Already Achieved."

Sohrab Ahmari says: "More than 1,700 arrests and at least two dozen deaths later, the Tehran regime seems to have suppressed Iran's latest mass uprising. Scattered protests and skirmishes continue nationwide, according to the citizen-journalists who, braving regime violence, continued to post footage on social media. But for now, the demonstrations don't seem to be growing in numbers or frequency. Yet outside observers tempted to write off the movement should recall that the 1979 Islamic Revolution that toppled the Shah began decades earlier. There were lulls through the years, which tempted President Carter at one point to describe the Shah's Iran as an 'island of stability' in the Middle East."

"Whatever the ultimate outcome, however, the protesters have already accomplished a great deal and shattered many myths in the West. Let's review their achievements:

"First, the Iran protests showed that the people are not rallying to the regime under the press of President Trump's hawkish rhetoric."

□ 1745

"Far from being 'swept up in a wave of nationalist fervor,' as The New York Times' Thomas Erdbrink reported a few weeks before the uprising, Iranians still detest their corrupt, repressive regime. As my colleague"—and this is the author, Mr. Ahmari, speaking—"Noah Rothman has noted on our podcasts, Americans have an almost religious conviction that world events revolve around the U.S. and specifically the White House. To be sure, America remains the most important Nation on the world stage. Yet the average Iranian doesn't wake up in the morning cursing Donald Trump for trying to undo the nuclear deal. More likely, he curses the fact that he can't even afford eggs to feed his children, and there are more proximate actors whom he blames for that: namely, the mullahs."

"Second, the uprising revealed, once and for all, that Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has been no moderate, and that the reformer versus hardliner distinction is meaningless. Ever since he came to power, Rouhani has been the subject of adulation among members of the Western foreign policy establishment. The media attached the 'moderate' and 'reformer' labels to Rouhani on the night of his first election, in June 2013, and refused to remove them even as evidence mounted that he was no such thing. There was Rouhani's leading role in the violent repression of the 1999 student uprising; his support for the post-2009 crackdown; his long record of anti-American rhetoric ('the

beautiful cry of “Death to America” unites our nation’); his decidedly immoderate cabinet; his work overseeing Iran’s campaign of assassinations targeting dissidents abroad; and much else of the kind.

“But now Iranians themselves are plainly telling the West that Rouhani is no moderate. Their slogans—‘Not Gaza; Not Lebanon; My Life Only for Iran’ and ‘Let Syria Be; Do Something for Me’—are a reminder that Tehran has continued to underwrite terror and bloodshed across the Middle East during the 4-plus years of Rouhani’s Presidency. The people have also been chanting, ‘Reformists; Hardliners; the Whole Game is Over.’ Let’s hope the same realization soon dawns in Washington and Brussels.

“Third, the protesters put the lie to the Obama administration’s claims about the 2015 nuclear deal. Remember when senior Obama officials reassured Americans that Iran would use the sanctions relief under Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to improve the lots of its people? Here is how Obama Treasury Secretary Jack Lew put it in an April 2015 address: ‘Many Americans, and many of our closest allies, are understandably concerned that Iran will use the money it receives as a result of sanctions relief to fund terrorism and support destabilizing proxies throughout the Middle East. We share those concerns, and we are committed to maintaining sanctions that address these activities, even after Iran takes the steps required to get relief from nuclear sanctions. But it is important to note that the connection between nuclear sanctions relief and Iran’s other malign activities is complicated, and most of the money Iran receives from sanctions relief will not be used to support those activities.’”

I would interject here he had absolutely, 100 percent, no basis for making such ridiculous statements.

“Two months later, Colin Kahl, a National Security Advisor to then-Vice President Joe Biden, told the Truman Center: ‘It is our assessment . . . that the Iranians are not going to spend the vast majority of the money on guns. Most of it will go to butter.’”

I would insert here he had no basis whatsoever for making such statements.

The article said: “Millions of jobless and impoverished Iranians now beg to differ. It turns out that the regime was happy to spend the JCPOA”—the Iran treaty that was never ratified—“funds on Hezbollah, Hamas, the Yemeni Houthis, and other nasties, even if that meant Iranians would go hungry. And those hungry people aren’t mistaken about the roots of their hunger. Iran remains the world’s top state sponsor of terror, according to the U.S. State Department. Deal opponents warned of this, only to be brushed aside by Obama and his media allies. The Trump administration now has an opportunity to correct course, by walking

away from Obama’s bad deal. The American people are under no obligation to finance Iran’s terrorist statecraft.

“The mullahs would have no one to blame but themselves. The Iranian people, defeated but unbowed, are sure to have another day.”

So, Mr. Speaker, let me just add here: God bless President Donald J. Trump for recognizing the Iranian treaty for the horrible deal it was and is to peace in our time. He paid for war, he paid for terrorism, and it is time to stop it.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT), who is my good friend, for speaking.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to participate in this message to the Iranian people tonight and also a message that we will deliver to the American people as well. To those brave souls who are now in the streets to oppose the mullah dictatorship that now governs Iran, we send you this message: We are with you. We are thinking of you. You are within our vision. We are siding with you against tyranny. Do not think you are alone. The American people, our hearts and our souls, are with you; and, yes, we are proud of our President for making sure the world knows that we are officially on the side of those people who are struggling in the streets of Tehran, as we speak, to make sure that the mullah dictatorship is overthrown and replaced by a democratic government.

These people have a right to democratic government just the same as anyone else. We talked about it in our Declaration of Independence. We talked about rights that are given by God to every individual, and that government only has those powers that are granted to it by the consent of the governed.

Yes, we had our own revolution. Remember, the French helped us in that revolution. The French helped us win our freedom. We owe that to people who have helped us win our freedom to side with people who are struggling in Iran today and against other radical Islamic dictatorships today to help them create a more democratic society.

In fact, as I look around in this Hall tonight, I see that there are only two pictures on the floor of the House. One is George Washington, and one is Marquis de Lafayette. Look into Lafayette’s eyes. This is a picture of a man who came to us 50 years after our revolution and was the ultimate American hero for helping us win our freedom. Are there tears in his eyes tonight? No. But there were tears in his eyes in the picture of Lafayette when we sided with the mullah regime during the last administration when we actually cut a deal with the mullahs keeping them in power, not giving any support to those who were struggling for democracy in order to give them \$1 billion to get

them to go along and sign up for a bogus arms treaty.

Now, this President of the United States today has left those policies behind. We are proud of this President for what he is doing, and we send this message to the American people: We will stand for freedom, and we will be safe. If we cower and we don’t support those people struggling for freedom throughout the world, we will not be safe.

Nowhere is that more evident than in the streets of Tehran tonight.

People of Iran, we are with you, just as the French were with us when we won our freedom. We will make this a better world, we will make it a safer world for all people who believe in any type of democratic, open government.

The mullah regime must be overthrown but by its own people, and we must be true to those patriots who established our own country by supporting those who are struggling for freedom in Iran.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I will conclude. If we were to spend 5 minutes on each of the individuals murdered by the Iranian regime since that regime took power some 39 years ago, we would be here 24/7 for over a year. If we were to name each country and spend 1 day where Iran and their proxies, such as Hezbollah, have taken human life, we would literally be here for months, 1 day per country.

Mr. YOHIO articulated basic concepts of natural law, that people are endowed by their Creator with fundamental rights to include the right to life, the right to freedom, and the right to pursue happiness.

Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. ROTHFUS, and Mr. ROHRABACHER spoke to the JCPOA, and the circumstances surrounding it, how our Nation turned its back on the multibillion-dollar criminal enterprise wholly subsidized by Iran that is Hezbollah, making a bad deal, ignoring trafficking of deadly narcotics throughout the world and, indeed, in our own country to get a worse deal.

I stand with my colleagues who renounce the JCPOA, and I would point out that it is my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, the broad bipartisan opposition to the JCPOA, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which I have referred to repeatedly, and only somewhat jokingly, as the “Joint Comprehensive Piece of Something, JCPOS.”

But if you want to see the JCPOA go away, the best way to do that is to empower the people of Iran to empower themselves, and that is why I thank my colleagues, one and all, for standing with me here today to speak loudly and clearly. Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that people watching at home will take to social media where the youth of Iran have fomented this revolution, that hashtags such as #freeiran, #iranprotests and #iran will pick up steam, that the world can communicate with those who risk their very lives to assert their basic, fundamental, and Creator-granted rights of

life, liberty, and the right to pursue happiness by showing them that we support them.

Mr. Speaker, I would point out that Mr. GOHMERT so articulately spoke to the role of Rouhani in Iran and the fawning Western media that speaks to his role as a moderate. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Rouhani, quite literally, represents the mullahs, and so, as such, that would be as if suggesting that Mr. Goering or Mr. Goebbels was a moderate Nazi. There is nothing moderate about the leadership of this regime.

So with this, I conclude: Americans have been killed by Iran or its proxies in this country, in Lebanon, in Iraq, in Kenya, and in Tanzania. People have given their lives at the hands of Iran in Australia, Argentina, Syria, Israel, Germany, the United Kingdom, in Tanzania, Malaysia, Afghanistan, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia. It is time for this to end. Enough is enough.

I would quote Edmund Burke: "All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing."

This time we will not stand idly by. Enough is enough.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

THE TAX SCAM AND THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Chair for the opportunity to talk about a couple of issues here on the floor of the House. I really have two things I want to talk about today. One is the incredible tax bill that was passed by the Congress and signed by the President just before Christmas, a tax bill that has profound effects on the American economy, most of them negative and bad, but also a tax—I will use the word "scam"—that will really—well, if you happen to be super-wealthy, it is terrific.

I guess, Mr. Speaker, the President, when he went to his Christmas party at Mar-a-Lago, spoke to his guests, most of whom I suspect were rather wealthy, and he said: I just made you a whole lot richer.

Indeed, he did. So we will talk about that in a little more detail.

I also want to talk about the ongoing Mueller investigation. On the floor of the House, from time to time, many of my colleagues from the Republican side come here to the floor, or on cable television, and attack Mueller, attack the FBI, and anybody else who happens to be standing nearby, in an effort to discredit the special counsel's investigation of what happened in the 2016 Presidential election.

It seems to me that here in America, since the very first days of our constitutional government, we have always said that we are a country of laws and that the laws dictate what we do.

□ 1800

We are not a country of individuals that dictate what happens but, rather, a country of laws. What is happening here in this effort to discredit the Mueller investigation is to move away from that nearly century and a half of profound importance in how people govern themselves not by the will of an emperor or the will of a king or even the will of a President, but we govern ourselves by the laws that are enacted by elected representatives: Senators, Members of the House of Representatives, in the case of the National Government, or legislatures, county commissioners, county supervisors, or city council members.

We are a country ruled by laws that are enacted by the citizens; however, the effort to discredit, to derail, to stop the investigation of the appropriate entity—in this case, the Department of Justice, acting through the special counsel—is contrary to the fundamental foundation of the way in which we govern ourselves. That is to say that that discrediting, that effort to stop the investigation of whether laws were broken, disobeyed, or not followed completely undermines the foundation of our government and our relationship as individuals.

None of us want to be subject to the whims of an individual like a king or an emperor or a President. We want them—in this case, the President—to act through the law, that is, to follow the law and, in this case, an agency within the executive branch, the Department of Justice, to carry out its responsibility to determine if the laws have been followed, if there has been a breach of law, if there has been some other element that is contrary to the rule of law. It is that simple.

So I would ask my Republican colleagues here in the House of Representatives and in the Senate and those who are constantly on cable television who are attempting to knock down the Mueller investigation, to discredit his investigation, to discredit the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other agencies of the Federal Government to slow down, to stand back, and to let the operation that is fundamental to our well-being, that operation of enforcing the law to occur and see where it goes, let the investigation play itself out and not get caught up in questions of whether the Steele dossier was the reason for the investigation. It was not.

Clearly, today, we have learned from Senator FEINSTEIN, whom I thank and whom all of us should thank, for making public the 10 hours of testimony from Fusion GPS available for all of us to see so that we can, as individuals, judge the validity of the charge that has been made that somehow the Steele investigation is all that this is about. It is not. It was not and is not. It is about information that came to the FBI from multiple sources, including counterintelligence information developed by our intelligence agencies.

That then led to the investigation and eventually to the establishment of a special counsel.

So take a deep breath. Let this process unfold. Let the facts lead the way. Let the development of those facts be done, and let us then judge the outcome of the investigation.

It seems to me that a lot of the heat that has been put on the FBI and the Mueller team comes from a fear that there is something to fear. So the question should be asked: What is it that you fear?

Why is it that you are doing so much to try to waylay, discredit, stop the investigation?

Is there something that you know that the American public should know?

Is there something that you fear that Mr. Mueller will find out about the 2016 Presidential campaign, about connections to Russia?

Do you know something that would cause you to so aggressively try to stop the investigation? Perhaps you do, in which case, come to the floor and share with us.

I will let it go at that. It just seems to me that we ought to recognize that we are a nation of laws. We are not a nation of a king or an emperor or of a President. We are a nation of laws in which the President's task is to faithfully carry out the Constitution and the laws. If you don't like the laws, come here and change them or go to the Supreme Court and get a ruling that somehow that law is not constitutional. That is the way we should do it.

So enough of that. I have taken a few moments to look at this profoundly important issue about the very nature of government in the United States.

Let me take up another issue, which I actually opened on for just a few moments, and that was tax policy.

I have stood here on the floor before, many times, and talked about the tax bill as it was being developed, and I raised the alarm that somehow this tax bill would not be good for American families and working men and women in America.

I always want to start this discussion with this placard. Those of you who have followed me on the floor may have seen it before, but I want to frame what I am concerned about. I want you to understand the scope of this discussion and why it is of concern. I found this to be an extremely useful way to frame my values and, I think, to frame the values of my colleagues in the Democratic Party.

What is it that we want to accomplish?

What is the value that we put forth?

What is our goal?

What are we trying to do with our public policy statements?

What did we attempt to do with our unanimous opposition to the tax bill that the House of Representatives and the Senate passed and the President signed?

This is the framework. If you would, this is the statement of values. It