

budget, on schedule this year and that's the primary concern."

He pointed that out because that is the primary concern for what we are facing with getting appropriations bills done on time. That is the primary consideration in getting the National Defense Authorization Act conference report out of the House tomorrow so that it can get over to the Senate so that they can get it done on time.

If this gets done this year, Mr. Speaker, it will be the soonest it has been done in almost 30 years.

Why is this year the exception? This should be the rule. We should be getting these things done early, getting it done in time so that we can get an appropriations bill done prior to the end of the fiscal year. Those are obligations that this Nation has to make sure that we get that done on time.

□ 1930

The NDAA has some very important elements in it this year that are critical to our Nation's military readiness, critical to our getting the job done for our men and women in the military, and critical to making sure that we can counter the threats that we know are there from our adversaries. It accelerates U.S. efforts to field conventional prompt strike capability before fiscal year '22. Those things are critical. That strike capability is the deterrence for our members of the military. Those things absolutely must happen, and this bill lets us get that done.

It also focuses on rebuilding the nuclear deterrence of our Nation. Nuclear deterrence is the way we keep our adversaries at bay; and when they look at us and don't see a commitment there that is expressed in getting appropriations bills done on time and having ourselves in these continuing resolutions debacles year after year after year, they look at it as a vulnerability.

It also allows us to improve our missile defense. An aging missile defense, one that in comparison to upgrades by our adversaries, put us in a terrible strategic position.

Also enhancing our space warfighting. The disparity that we have in space operations with our adversaries is mind-boggling. The only way that we close that delta is to make the commitment and put the resources in place on time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to put in perspective where we are today and the waste that occurs with a continuing resolution.

I will conclude my remarks with the comments of Secretary Richard Spencer that he outlined on our behavior that this body has put in place since 2011. He actually came before the House Armed Services Committee and said this, he said:

We have put \$4 billion in a trash can, poured lighter fluid on it, and burned it. \$4 billion is enough to buy a squadron of F-35s, two Arleigh Burke-class destroyers, 3,000 Harpoon missiles. It is enough money to buy

us additional capacity that we need today in order to counter the threats that we find ourselves facing around the world. Instead, it's lost because of inefficacy in the ways of the continuing resolution.

Mr. Speaker, this is an entirely avoidable situation, one that Congress year after year after year finds itself in a position to address, yet chooses not to. It is not just a single continuing resolution. Last year we found ourselves in a situation of having four continuing resolutions that took us 6 months into the budget year and then finally coming up with an appropriations bill that finished the year with 6 months of funding that was supposed to take place over 12 months.

So, Mr. Speaker, not only did you miss out on the certainty with the first 6 months of funding that was done by continuing resolutions, but now you take 12 months' worth of money and try to pack it into 6 months, and we wonder why there is inefficiency there. We wonder why money is pushed out the door in ways that waste money.

The Secretary of the Navy pointed it out and showed us the ills of our ways, and what we can do to avoid this, what we can do to make sure that resources will get to the right place, get there on time, can be efficiently deployed where there is certainty in what our military needs to plan for the long-term needs that this Nation has left unaddressed, for the long-term needs of rebuilding readiness.

It hasn't happened, Mr. Speaker, and it is entirely avoidable. We have that full ability in our grasp to make sure this doesn't happen again.

Again, if we were to come up with the worst way to run a business and with the worst way to run a government, it would be a continuing resolution. It is avoidable.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues that when the National Defense Authorization Act conference report comes up before this body that they vote "yes," that we do that this year in the quickest timeframe we have done in nearly 30 years.

And that when the Defense Appropriation bill comes before this body—after the Senate puts together whatever they will put together—that we must get the defense of this Nation funded prior to the end of the budget year.

If we do that, then the 17 billion additional dollars that we put towards helping our soldiers, our sailors, our marines to do the job we ask them to do will be there. To deter our adversaries around the world, the resources in order to accomplish that will be there. To do anything less is a disservice to this Nation. To do anything less is a disservice to the men and women who serve in our military. To do anything less is disrespectful to their commitment to our Nation, and the commitment that their families make to this Nation.

We can do better. We must do better. And we have an opportunity in the weeks to come to do better.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to show the same kind of commitment for this Nation's military through no continuing resolutions and through passing appropriations bills for our defense on time. That same commitment should be shown by us as the commitment by our brave men and women in uniform.

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

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE UNIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GARRETT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia?

There was no objection.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to speak to two issues. One, is the dagger thrown at the heart of the right of Federal employees to organize. The second will be ICE raids that randomly rounded up residents of the District of Columbia without a warrant and without any cause.

Let me proceed first to the gang-up on Federal employees by the executive and Republicans in the House to undermine the rights of Federal unions to represent Federal employees.

We have seen Republicans for years try to weaken the rights of Federal employees. Certainly, we have seen them go at unions before. But this time, they have gone even further. The intention to destroy the right of a union to represent Federal employees is the clear intent of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

I shall explain why that intent is so obvious this evening. The American Federation of Government Employees had a rally today. Attending also were many other employee unions, but the AFGE led the rally because of the acute danger that the current work of the Republican House and the President present to the right to organize and to be represented.

Federal employees are represented in virtually every category of work by the AFGE. If we look at what the President and the House Republicans are doing, it is clear that they have declared war on their own Federal employees. They have done it by striking at the heart of the right to be represented by a Federal union.

I will explain how they have moved against that right, but, first, let me explain where that right comes from and why there is any such right at all.

You certainly don't have that kind of right in the business sector. You can't

go to the business sector and say: Hey, look, I have a right to have a union here.

You have to fight for it, and I might add, so do Federal unions have to fight for it. They have to get their cards and the Federal employee votes. But there is an important trade-off here. The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, recognizing that the Government did not want to allow Federal workers the right to strike—which is a constitutional right—designed a system which is indeed a trade-off. You will give up the right to strike, and, in return, you, Federal employees, will have the right to be represented by a union if you win a union election and the Federal Government will not oppose your right to organize.

That is very important because employers in the private sector, of course, do oppose. I don't mean to say that Federal agencies don't try their best to see that an agency doesn't get representation, but they cannot simply keep that from occurring. That is the trade-off from the Civil Service Reform Act.

One of the most important aspects of the right to represent Federal employees is to use official time-on-the-job to represent employees to settle matters with a Federal agency. That is the whole reason that this right was given in the first place. Even apart from a right to strike, if you have an employee who has a grievance, there has got to be some way to make sure that grievance is attended to.

Official time use, by another Federal employee operating as a volunteer, allows such matters to be settled in a peaceful way without a strike. What the official time means is, an employee says: With no pay, I agree to help other employees through the system to have their matter brought to the agency and somehow dealt with. They either win or they lose or they settle. Employees often don't understand the system. They don't use the system every day, so a volunteer works to help them use the official time.

Now, official time only means that that volunteer employee is given time from his or her work to represent this person. Does that mean the person doesn't have any work? It does not. It is a real sacrifice, Mr. Speaker. That person isn't given a lesser workload, that person has to find a way to get that done and to represent employees as well, or to trade off with another employee who will also represent employees.

Remember, this is to keep labor peace and to keep the Federal Government working so that there is a civilized way to settle a matter between the Federal employer and an employee.

But the AFGE has had to turn to the courts in order to get this right enforced.

Why in the world would that be necessary given the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978?

It is going to be necessary because what is being proposed in this House is in violation of that act.

I shall explain. Republicans today are so intent on destroying unions—understand, unions are not nearly as powerful as they once were decades ago—but Republicans are so intent on destroying unions that in the case of Federal employees, they are using the two branches of Government at once—remember, they control three—the two political branches of Government to destroy the representation of a union.

They control the executive, they control the House, they control the Senate. So they pull all stops, using all of their energy and all of their power against their own Federal workers.

I think of it as a two-fisted approach. One fist is pending on this House floor, as I speak. Indeed, it is due to come to the House floor in September. It is a bill I fought in committee along with many other members.

You can't just abolish official time to represent employees, because the Civil Service Reform Act gives them that right.

This is why I think that what the House does in this bill cannot stand, because what it does is to so reduce the amount of time, so-called official time, that you can help many employees get through the system. You are like a lawyer. The employee is fresh to the system, so he or she needs somebody to tell the employee how to get through the system.

But if there is so little time, while you are helping one employee who may be using up all the time that the House Republican bill would give, which is one-quarter of the time that is now being allowed.

Where did they get that figure from? Nowhere.

□ 1945

It is just a matter of not being able to wipe it all out, so let's wipe out almost all of it. It gives so little time to represent all those who need to go through the system with the help of a volunteer employee that I do not believe, for a moment, that this matter will stand. That is why I think the AFGE was right to go to court now. I will tell you in a moment why it has gone to court, even though this bill has not passed the House, as I speak.

Not only is so little time given that you couldn't possibly handle all of those who have issues or grievances—it is only a quarter of the time an employee has, that has been previously spent helping other employees to get through the process. There also is an enforcement mechanism in the House bill that is truly vicious.

If you go into overtime in helping another employee, you will do so at your own risk, because you will lose your pension credits if you devote more than the amount of time prescribed in this bill. That loss of pension credits is also without due process and arbitrary. That also is why I believe this bill

can't stand. But my Republican friends are so anxious to cripple Federal employee unions that they also have asked for the other fist, a Trump executive order.

If you look at this executive order, which is essentially the same thing as the pending bill, you can't help but ask: Why two fists on these Federal workers? Why get the President and the Republican House to promise to do the same thing? How many branches, how many arms of government do you need to try to stamp out the rights of Federal employees?

I believe I know why the House has turned to President Trump. The House bill is so extreme, so clearly illegal, in my judgment, that it will be difficult to get it through the Senate. So, the President, who obviously has control over the workforce, is being asked to do the same thing by executive order.

I don't believe he can do it. I don't believe he can just wipe out official time, if not all of it, so much of it, so that employees cannot be served. But the President may have preempted the House bill, that may come on the floor in September, by his executive order against official time.

If you play chess though, watch out, because he has hopped right into it. Now that he has signed an executive order, now that he has come forward with an executive order, he has allowed the AFGE to make a brilliant move.

Before the ink was dry on the executive order, the AFGE had gone to court, in a brilliant chess move. And I have no doubt that they will win in court because the flaws of the bill are so clear. I think courts will agree with AFGE. Had the Republicans tried to kill official time and the Senate or to get the same thing through an executive order, you have the same problem, even perhaps worse.

The executive order is a clear violation of the Civil Service Reform Act.

Understand why the act has worked for so many decades. It is because of labor peace, to use a word that is often used to describe why unions have been important in the Federal sector. You need labor peace. You don't need strikes or disruption by Federal employees.

But you have got to have a tradeoff. That tradeoff is adequate representation through a formal process. If that formal process is cut to smithereens and you leave a figment of it in place, don't think that the Federal courts will be fooled by that. This process has worked, but it won't if you make it impossible to do the job that the Civil Service Reform Act prescribes, and that is to represent Federal employees.

Now, the unions aren't fools. They recognize they can't depend on the House or the President. They also recognize there is an election coming up and they know that, at least as of the moment, the people are there to correct for issues either ignored in this House or by threats like the pending bill and the executive order on official time that threatens their rights.

The all-powerful Federal Government has absolutely nothing to lose by allowing its employees, who have so little authority, fair access to a process that does no more than allow them to be heard before all-powerful Federal agencies.

What could the largest employer in the world be afraid of?

It looks as if it is afraid of its own employees, ordinary citizens represented also by Members of the House and the Senate, who ask for no more than a process and, if I may say so, a fair process to be heard, a process that does not show anything like guaranteed winning, but it is at least a process.

Well, perhaps these employees are to be feared after all because today they showed up in great numbers. Remember, they showed up on the streets of Washington, D.C., but there are millions of them throughout the United States. They showed up in a fighting mood, fighting back.

I am pleased to come to the floor to represent the thousands of employees who showed up. I am simply one among hundreds of Members of the House who will always show up for workers when their rights are being threatened.

As it turns out, the American Federation of Government Employees represents both D.C. employees of the D.C. government and Federal employees of the Federal Government and I am proud to represent them all.

All that my Republican friends have done is raise their fighting spirit, which has already shown that our chances of taking back the House of Representatives have grown every single day.

The second issue I want to say a word about has to do with indiscriminate raids of the kind we have never had in the United States of America before. These are raids on residents. I have seen their effect here, so I will talk about these residents living in the District of Columbia.

When you hear of such raids and indiscriminate arrests, perhaps you will understand why cities like the District of Columbia have declared themselves to be sanctuary cities that protect, particularly, their immigrant residents from arbitrary action, recognizing that they will not be able and do not wish to protect them when, in fact, there is a right to take them back to where they came from. But that is not what I am talking about this evening.

In the District of Columbia, at least a dozen individuals were arrested last week when it is clear that they would not have been arrested had there been a warrant or had anything but racial profiling—racial and ethnic profiling, I might add—been used, a brazen act.

As it turns out, some of the people arrested were, for example, MS-13. So far as the numbers show, that is 37. Those are people for whom they had a warrant. Those are people for whom there is probable cause that they committed a crime. But that is 37 out of

132. They never could have gotten the rest of these residents without indiscriminate racial profiling.

What did they do?

First of all, they went to predominantly Latino D.C. neighborhoods, and they went there for a reason. They snatched what appeared to be anyone on the streets who looked like the people they wanted, based on race or appearance.

When you have, in the United States, police picking up people based on their appearance, you understand what a police state looks like. The reaction will be, I am sure, intimidation from going into the streets of your own city.

Now, ICE boasts that it went looking and found people who present a significant security threat, but they were only able to show 37 such people. When you round up citizens without a warrant and without probable cause based on what they look like, that is what you get: indiscriminate arrests, arrests based on appearance, arrests where you cannot possibly show a significant public safety threat.

I am not here to say that MS-13 or others who pose such a threat should not be arrested. I am here to say that breaking up families is an outrageous way to enforce a law and does not, in fact, do so.

The Washington field office was responsible for this roundup, and they have indicated the people whom they arrested.

I am not here on this floor this evening to defend—here I am reading from people they say they arrested—the El Salvadoran national identified as a high-ranking MS-13 member.

I am not here on this floor to defend a Bolivian national who has four prior convictions for rape and intercourse with a victim under 13. They are not what I am here talking about.

□ 2000

I am here talking about people who were in the streets minding their own business, with no criminal arrests, with no criminal background, with families at home waiting for them.

Yes, we have got to deport people from this country, even if they come in ways that we could otherwise understand. Deportation has to occur. It occurred in the last administration. Some were deported right at the border. I am not here making the case to open the borders wide open and let everybody in.

But the courts have already turned around the procedures now being employed, because every day you read in the papers and see on television how many families have been disunited, children and parents broken up, parents deported without their children. The authorities are still looking to unite hundreds of children with their parents. That just isn't what we do in the United States of America.

Since one of these roundups occurred here in the Nation's Capital, and the shame is that it would occur in the

Capital of the United States, I thought it was my responsibility to come to this floor to call it out and to indicate that these raids are one of the reasons why the District of Columbia will always be a sanctuary city—not a city for MS-13, not a city for those who should be deported, but a city for those who have a right to go through a lawful process.

We will not stand for residents to be rounded up in the streets. That means that each and every one of us could be rounded up in the streets based on what we look like. We will not have it. We will resist it.

There is a way to deport people. There is a way to make sure that you come into this country legally and to make sure that you are deported if you do not.

The wrong way to do it, the way that we cannot tolerate, is to go to police state tactics, unknown before in our country, and particularly police state tactics in the Capital of the United States, Washington, D.C.

So, Mr. Speaker, as the House prepares to go home later in the week, these are two issues I felt I had to put before this body. I would hope that we all would think of better ways to accomplish our ends.

If our problem is with Federal employees, let's deal with that problem and not try to nullify a statute that took into account our differences, the Civil Service Reform Act.

As for Hispanics and other immigrants being snatched off the streets, I would hope that I do not stand alone in saying tonight that that is not the American way. There are hundreds of jurisdictions that are with us as sanctuary cities to stand and say that that is not the American way. I am pleased that the courts of the United States have protected sanctuary cities just as these cities have protected residents from arbitrary treatment in the United States of America.

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

REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of both the Hellenic Caucus and the Congressional Hellenic-Israel Alliance, I rise tonight with my colleagues to provide an update on one of the United States' most strategic allies, the Republic of Cyprus.