

Sergeant Stephen began his career as a first responder when he was just 16 years old, following in his father's footsteps by joining the Calico Rock Fire Department.

As a soldier, Mike Stephen rose to the rank of sergeant first class. As a firefighter, Mike Stephen led the Pineville Volunteer Fire Department while he served as a sheriff's deputy. He instilled his values and dedication to public service and his family, all of whom served as volunteer firefighters. Whenever a call came to the Stephen home, the entire family responded.

As a career law enforcement officer, Sergeant Stephen served in the Mountain View Police Department, Arkansas Department of Corrections, and, ultimately, the Stone County Sheriff's Office. Beloved by his colleagues, Sergeant Stephen viewed public service as more than a job. He was always on call 24/7, ready to assist his community in any way. He advocated for first responders by testifying before the Arkansas General Assembly.

On Thursday, July 18, Sergeant Stephen responded to his final call. Early that morning, Sergeant Stephen responded to a domestic welfare call in Leslie, Arkansas. As Stephen performed his duties, shots were fired, and Stephen was struck fatally, as was the suspected shooter.

As Arkansas mourns the loss of Sergeant Mike Stephen, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending my condolences to the Stephen family and honoring the life of a true public servant who gave his life protecting the community he loved.

#### OUR COUNTRY'S ATTENTION IS FOCUSED ON THE MUELLER REPORT

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, today much of our country's attention is focused on the hearing happening across the street from where we stand. For weeks, pundits have been speculating: What else would the special counsel reveal? Where is that smoking gun or the viral moment?

These questions are understandable, but they also obscure a powerful tool already at this body's disposal as we consider whether or not to hold the President accountable: what we already know. And for that, we turn to the special counsel's report.

Volume I details a "sweeping and systematic" attack by the Russian Government on our democracy, an attack that our President still refuses to acknowledge. Volume II describes 11 different occasions—11—where the actions of the President may have obstructed justice.

The legal framework is pretty straightforward. In criminal cases, an individual must meet the so-called elements of an offense, essentially, a

checklist of actions, which, if each is proven, means that a crime was committed. What follows in the special counsel's report is an exhaustive detailing of facts uncovered and a thorough analysis as to whether the elements of obstruction of justice were met in those 11 instances.

The special counsel instructs, on page 9 of Volume II, that "three basic elements are common to the most relevant obstruction statutes: one, an obstructive act; two, a nexus between the obstructive act and an official proceeding; and three, a corrupt intent."

In a few of the occasions investigated, the special counsel indicates that the evidence is not sufficient to reach that standard. In several others, however, his analysis is crystal clear.

On page 84, the report begins to detail how the President directed White House Counsel Don McGahn to remove the special counsel. "Mueller has to go."

"Call me back when you do it."

The special counsel then applies the law:

One, an obstructive act: page 88, "Substantial evidence supports a conclusion that the President . . . directed McGahn to call Rosenstein to have the special counsel removed."

Two, a nexus: page 89, "Substantial evidence indicates that . . . the President knew his conduct was under investigation by a Federal prosecutor." In fact, the President had tweeted about it.

Three, corrupt intent: page 89, "Substantial evidence indicates that the President's attempts to remove the special counsel were linked . . . most immediately to reports that the President was being investigated for potential obstruction of justice."

Substantial evidence to show that all three elements of the offense are met: substantial evidence that the President obstructed justice; substantial evidence that the President of the United States committed a crime.

There are countless other troubling facts which the special counsel indicates may meet the obstruction threshold.

Page 91, just days after pressuring McGahn, President Trump directs his former campaign manager Corey Lewandowski to deliver a message to Attorney General Jeff Sessions to limit the scope of the Mueller investigation to future election interference alone.

Page 92, the President follows up with Lewandowski with the same request a month later.

Page 96, the President writes Chief of Staff Reince Priebus, "Did you get it?"—referring to Sessions' resignation. "Are you working on it?"—which leads Mr. Mueller to conclude, on page 97, that "taken together, the President's directives indicate that Sessions was being instructed to tell the special counsel to end the existing investigation into his campaign." And, the same page, that "substantial evidence indicates that the President's efforts to

have Sessions limit the scope of the special counsel's investigation . . . was intended to prevent further investigative scrutiny of the President's and his campaign's conduct."

These are the findings of the report, the facts as they were uncovered and applied to the relevant statutes of our criminal law. This is the information already in our hands today.

Summed up by Mr. Mueller's devastating conclusion: "Our investigation found multiple acts by the President that were capable of exerting undue influence over law enforcement investigations, including the Russian interference and obstruction investigations."

The special counsel has done his job. We must do ours.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

#### HONORING BOYD W. SORENSEN

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

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Boyd W. Sorenson of Waite Park for receiving France's highest distinction, the Legion of Honor, for his service during World War II.

As a fighter pilot in the U.S. Army Air Corps, he flew 89 missions in the European theater during World War II, assisting in the liberation of France.

Mr. Sorenson's service didn't end after World War II. In fact, Boyd went on to fly 72 missions during the Korean war.

Mr. Boyd is no stranger to recognition for his bravery. He has already been awarded the European African Middle Eastern Medal with three bronze stars, the Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Distinguished Flying Cross with two oak leaf clusters, and the Canadian Operational Service Medal with maple leaf cluster.

Boyd is a hero, and his actions helped further the cause of freedom we enjoy today. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. Sorenson for his service and congratulate him on another well-deserved award.

#### CONGRATULATING VIOLET HALVERSON

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Violet Halverson of Sartell, Minnesota. At 94 years old, Violet has just earned herself the silver medal in shuffleboard at the National Senior Games. The National Senior Games were created to promote healthy lifestyles for aging adults through education, fitness, and sport.

Violet began playing shuffleboard in the 1980s. Over the years since, she has participated in recreational leagues and competitions. When she heard about the National Senior Games, she knew she had to compete. Violet won gold her first year, and this year she takes home a silver.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Violet and can't wait to see how she performs next year.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO FOREST LAKE HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Forest Lake Area High School for being named a Green Ribbon School by the United States Department of Education. This award is given to schools that have recognized the environmental impact of their facility, promote health, and ensure high-quality environmental education programming that prepares students with sustainability skills.

Forest Lake Area High School is among only 35 schools, 14 districts, and 4 postsecondary institutions across the country to receive this award. I look forward to welcoming the honorees to Washington, D.C. in September for a ceremony to recognize their wonderful achievement.

Congratulations to Forest Lake Area High School for the Green Ribbon School award.

## THE GROWING RACIAL WEALTH GAP IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the crisis that is the growing racial wealth gap in the United States.

A recent report from the Institute for Policy Studies noted that the median wealth for Black families, adjusted for inflation, declined from \$7,323 to \$3,557 between the years 1983 and 2013.

Mr. Speaker, if these alarming trends continue, the average Black household is on track to own \$0 in wealth by the year 2053.

This stands in sharp contrast to the average wealth of White households, which increased by nearly \$14,000 during the same period, to an average of \$137,000 by the year 2053.

Zero dollars for the Black families, \$137,000 for the White families by the year 2053.

The wealth disparity between Black and White families persists across nearly all levels of income and education.

White middle-class households have almost eight times more wealth than a Black household in the same income bracket.

□ 1045

Mr. Speaker, even a 4-year degree cannot remedy these disparities. A 2014 census survey found that a Black family whose head of household has obtained a master's degree owns an average \$37,600 of wealth, compared to an average of \$181,220 in a comparable White household, a difference of nearly \$150,000.

Mr. Speaker, the racial gap in our Nation must be addressed, as it is a critical concern for all of our Nation.

The barriers between Black families and White families must be addressed. The barriers preventing Black families

from accumulating wealth drive up poverty rates and stifle America's economy.

This is not just a Black issue; this is an American issue.

The inability to secure your future no matter how hard you work runs contrary to our basic American principles. We must do more in this House of Representatives to alleviate this critical issue, this crisis, and we must continue to make our Nation, these United States of America, the land of opportunity for all of its citizens.

## BOYS &amp; GIRLS CLUB MISSOURI STATE YOUTH OF THE YEAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Boys & Girls Club 2019 Missouri State Youth of the Year, Ms. Jazzmine Jones.

Jazzmine is a member of the Boys & Girls Clubs of West Central Missouri's Cole Camp Site, where she serves as a junior staff member. In her position, she helps run programs and mentors the younger club kids.

Earlier this year, Jazzmine was named the Missouri State Youth of the Year at a 2-day event in Jefferson City, Missouri, marking the first time a student from the Boys & Girls Club of West Central Missouri was awarded this title.

Last week, on July 18, Jazzmine represented Missouri at the Boys & Girls Clubs of America Midwest Regional Youth of the Year competition. She made Missouri proud with her speech highlighting the importance of a healthy lifestyle, education, and the impact of one's actions.

I am so thankful to have such a talented young individual in Missouri's Fourth Congressional District working hard to be the best person that she can be and sharing her knowledge with younger kids as a mentor.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commanding Jazzmine for her hard work and dedication in using her actions to inspire others. I also want to wish her well in her future endeavors as she begins her freshman year at the University of Missouri.

Go, Tigers.

## FAYETTE OPTIMIST CLUB

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Optimist Club of Fayette, Missouri. This club, founded on December 13, 1968, celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. For half a century, they have helped to support youth, and cultivate an overall strong community in Fayette.

The Optimist Club relies on their dedicated volunteers to raise funds and complete projects that impact the lives of kids in their community.

The Optimists promote youth involvement in Fayette by hosting a summer recreation program, a youth appreciation banquet, and a fishing

derby every year, as well as numerous other activities that promote local programming for young people throughout the community.

It is organizations like the Optimist Club that create the backbone of our small towns and help preserve their treasured culture.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Optimist Club of Fayette, Missouri, for their hard work and dedication to the youth of the community for the last 50 years.

## COMO FIRE CHIEF RANDY WHITE

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Columbia, Missouri, Fire Chief Randy White on his retirement.

Since joining the department in 1998 as a firefighter, Chief White has dedicated his life to the safety of mid-Missouri families. He has saved countless lives and led his department to new heights.

During his time as fire chief, Randy's department became one of only 258 in the world to achieve accreditation through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International. His hard work and leadership have been a blessing to the Columbia Fire Department and a true role model for other departments to follow.

I join with many Missourians, families, and friends to wish Chief White a fulfilling retirement. I hope Randy enjoys the days he has worked so hard to earn and wish him continued health and happiness in this new phase of life.

## WE ARE A COUNTRY OF BRAVE AND BEAUTIFUL CITIZENS AND IMMIGRANTS

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

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, let me set the record straight. The way President Trump talks about women, minorities, immigrants, and pretty much every American who does not look like him is fueling hate in our great country.

Last week, in a series of tweets, President Trump attacked four Congresswomen, all of whom are American citizens and women of color. The President doubled down on his attacks and singled out one of my colleagues from Minnesota in a rally, during which the crowd chanted, "Send her back," which he seemed to relish.

Mr. Speaker, watching that clip made me sick to my stomach, and I am concerned about the direction President Trump is leading our country.

Mr. Speaker, President Trump appears to be encouraging Americans to assume patriotism by the color of one's skin and not the content of one's character. This is, in fact, the opposite of what American heroes like Congressman JOHN LEWIS, Dolores Huerta, Cesar Chavez, and Dr. King fought and bled for.

Mr. Speaker, make no mistake: our President is stoking the flames of hate and division in our great country.