

has forcibly cut off 120,000 ethnic Armenians in the Republic of Artsakh. They are cut off from the outside world. Food has become scarce. They have to ration even basic items. Diapers and medicine supplies have become so low that Facebook pages are opening where residents are trying to find these items from their neighbors. Residents are separated from their families on the other side of the border in Armenia, including children who have been attending school or visiting families.

Azerbaijan has even gone so far as to cut off natural gas during the depth of winter. A humanitarian crisis is brewing, and we should act to prevent it.

Let's be clear about what this attempt is. It is an attempt by Azerbaijan to force Artsakh's ethnic Armenian population out of their homes by making life in Artsakh impossible. The tactic is blockade. The effect is civilian deprivation. The object is ethnic cleansing.

But don't take my word for it. Listen to Azerbaijani dictator Aliyev who made his intentions clear when this blockade unfolded by saying, "Whoever does not want to become our citizen . . . can leave." What does he mean? The ethnic Armenians are citizens. They are citizens of the Republic of Artsakh, but Aliyev doesn't recognize that citizenship and instead uses it as an excuse to say that he wants to ethnically cleanse these 120,000 people.

I am glad that Secretary Blinken earlier this week called on President Aliyev to end this blockade, but we know that dictators don't often respond to calls for justice. I urge the administration to put real weight behind these calls by making clear that there will be consequences to Azerbaijan by plunging the people of Artsakh into this humanitarian disaster, including sanctions if necessary.

The administration should enforce section 907 to stop all military assistance to Azerbaijan and to provide critical humanitarian aid to the people of Artsakh, actions that are long overdue.

Ever since I came to Congress almost 27 years ago, I have introduced and fought for a resolution to recognize the Armenian genocide, the first genocide of the 20th century. Back then it was not uncommon for Members of this body to minimize or even deny the systematic ethnic cleansing and murder of 1½ million Armenians, Greeks, or Syrians and others by the Ottoman Empire, but Armenian Americans and their allies did not give up. For decades, they spoke truth to power and turned the political tide until the Armenian genocide was recognized by this House and then by President Biden. It may have taken longer, but we got there.

This is a painful moment for the Armenian community. I am confident that the Armenian people will rise in strength. Armenians have outlived those who said there was no Armenian genocide, and they will outlive those who say there is no Artsakh.

I urge the Biden administration and all Members of this body to take a forceful stance against Azerbaijan's shameful attempts at ethnic cleansing of the Armenian population of Artsakh through this deadly blockade.

DEBT LIMIT CRISIS

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, we have already hit the debt limit. Republicans say they want to negotiate. We negotiate about spending all the time. What they really mean is that they want additional leverage by threatening this country with a default on our debt, which would cost us, according to Moody's Analytics, 6 million jobs, a 9 percent unemployment rate, \$15 trillion lost in our investment markets.

Already they are dillydallying with this debt limit. Their playing Russian roulette with our economy has already hurt our economy. As the chief Democrat on the Capital Markets Subcommittee, I am here to tell you that the cost of capital is higher and projects are not going forward because of the actions they have taken so far.

They want to negotiate? They want to negotiate going backward. They want to negotiate reducing Social Security benefits. They want spending cuts, but they won't specify what they want. If we are going to negotiate, let's negotiate going forward. Let's talk about increases in Social Security benefits, let's negotiate getting rid of the \$2 trillion of unjustified Trump tax cuts that went chiefly to corporations and the wealthy.

You want to negotiate? Fine, we will negotiate going forward, but ultimately we will end up with a clean debt limit. You can't just love your country when your guy is in the White House. You can't play Russian roulette just because you don't like the President and you think that President will take the political hit. We need to show the world that our governance in America is sound and that our economy is worthy of investment.

□ 1115

NEW IRAN SANCTIONS

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

Ms. PORTER. In Iran, a dangerous regime is harming its people, stripping them of their rights, and spreading lies to cover it up.

The world must know where we stand.

The Biden administration is leading the way, and I strongly support their newly announced sanctions on some of the world's worst human rights abusers.

These offenders are top-ranking officials in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the regime's right hand in repression. Sanctions also target the IRGC's business enterprise, which has been funding the regime's brutality for decades.

The U.S.' leadership was mimicked by the United Kingdom and European Union. I applaud this unified response from our allies. It is a clear rejection of Iran's violence and a demand for the Iranian people to be heard.

The struggles continue, and we must all remember that "Woman, Life, Freedom" is not just a chant. It is a call to action.

CLEAN SCHOOL BUS PROGRAM

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak up for California's children, our communities, and our environment.

The vast majority of American schoolbuses run on diesel, a major source of pollution that contributes to the climate crisis. As a result, bus emissions worsen our air quality with significant harm around schools, in residential areas, and within the passenger cabin. This is a serious problem for our environment and our children's health.

The bipartisan infrastructure law that I supported invests in a solution. The Clean School Bus program funds \$5 billion for the purchase of electric schoolbuses, improving the air for our kids and our communities.

Electric buses also improve discipline, reduce noise pollution, and give schools budget certainty. They can save school districts up to 80 percent on the cost of fuel, maintenance, and repairs.

However, the Clean School Bus program unfairly targets California. Even though our State has nearly 13 percent of schoolchildren and the second lowest busing rate in the country, ahead only of Mississippi, the law unfairly imposes a 10 percent State cap on the funds.

Even worse, to date, California has only gotten 7.33 percent of the Clean School Bus program funds. Our State leads the Nation in transitioning to electric vehicles and reducing emissions. We need our Federal Government to be a partner in these efforts. California wants to invest in clean buses to take children to school to learn and to grow, but we cannot do it alone.

If America is to be the global leader in transitioning to a clean energy economy, we need to give every State, including California, their fair share of financial support.

The \$69.5 million already invested in the Clean School Bus program in California provides some necessary help, but it is not nearly enough to support our densely populated working-class communities, some of which have the worst air quality in the Nation.

I have seen firsthand the tremendous interest in the Clean School Bus program when my office hosted grant workshops with school districts and Tribal communities to share information about these Federal resources for acquiring low- and zero-emission schoolbuses. To meet this moment, we need a coordinated effort from Federal, State, and local entities to make the change.

California needs a leader who will fight to remove unfair roadblocks, such

as arbitrary State caps that limit investment in clean technology. I will continue to push for a level playing field for California that invests our Federal tax dollars where the need is greatest and where they can do the most good.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 19 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HILL) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the Earth. We need only look to the rising Sun after days of gray skies and behold Your glory as it breaks through the clouds, and then we bear witness to the awe of Your creation. So may Your presence dawn on us this day and dispel the fear and hopelessness that has for so long cast its long shadow on our lives.

You reign forever. There is nothing that is not subject to Your judgment, not our own errant thoughts, our misdeeds, our adversaries, nor our inability to acknowledge our dependence on You. You rule the world with righteousness, and You judge the peoples with equity.

In light of Your justness and Your justice, may we order our lives. In You may the oppressed find refuge and the wavering a stronghold in times of trouble.

You have never forsaken those who trust You. Those who know You find strength in calling Your name.

And so we offer to You our prayers, our efforts, and our very selves this day in the strength of that sovereign name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

CALIFORNIA STORMS AND CENTRAL VALLEY FARMERS

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

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, over the last few weeks, California has experienced severe storms that brought much-needed water to our State. If you thought that meant water shortages in California were over, you would be wrong.

Since October of last year, California has flushed over 6.4 million acre-feet of water out to the ocean. That is 2 trillion gallons. This is extremely frustrating for the Central Valley farmers who are following their fields and the communities that are running out of water for daily use in their homes and businesses.

The pumps that are in place to deliver water to farms, homes, and businesses aren't allowed to run at their full capacity due to environmental regulations. If we had increased flexibility on these pumping regulations to account for real-time conditions, we could have captured 84,000 more acre-feet of water during the 2 weeks of storms.

Increasing flexibility in how we operate these pumps, as well as investing in critical water storage infrastructure and conveyance projects, will allow us to maximize what can be stored for these flow events and make us more resilient for drought.

Every drop of water is critical to my constituents in Central Valley.

END HUNGER NOW

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, in the decades-long fight to end hunger, last September's White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health was a major turning point.

I thank the Biden-Harris administration for convening antihunger and nutrition stakeholders from across America to come up with an ambitious yet achievable plan to end hunger and reduce diet-related illnesses by 2030. The national strategy put forward will serve as our guide.

Now, it is time to put plans into action. I am thrilled that the Biden-Har-

ris administration remains laser-focused on maintaining the momentum coming out of the conference.

We have already achieved big wins, like permanently expanding summer food benefits for families with kids and signing into law the Food Donation Improvement Act, a bill I championed to make it easier for businesses to donate food.

Our work is just beginning, and I urge every American to join us in creating a healthier, hunger-free future for all. I have more faith than ever that, working together, we can and will end hunger now.

STANDING WITH OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT

(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, last week, President Biden decided to second-guess law enforcement once again.

Last Monday, he asked why they, meaning the police, should "always shoot with deadly force." In the past, he has also told police officers to aim for the legs while criminals are charging at them. These comments show a complete lack of knowledge of policing and self-defense.

The fact is, criminals will sometimes violently resist arrest. In those instances, it is important for police officers to be able to defend themselves or others around them.

Any time a firearm is discharged, that is considered deadly force. Is the President suggesting cops never use their firearms, even in clear cases of self-defense or protecting others?

To sit on the sidelines and blame law enforcement, not criminals, for the outcomes of these deadly interactions encourages violence against police officers, excuses criminal behavior, and is very bad for recruiting new police officers.

The President should be standing with our law enforcement officers, not siding with or aiding and abetting criminals.

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

END EASY ACCESS TO UNREGULATED FIREARMS

(Mrs. MCBATH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MCBATH. Mr. Speaker, there have been 40 separate mass shootings since the year began. This weekend, 18 people were murdered within hours of each other.

That is it. That is all there is to say.

What do these mass murders all have in common? Easy access to unregulated firearms. That is the problem.

It cannot get any clearer. Without easy access to unregulated firearms,