

law was of particular importance to him.

A generation of so many Americans, from sea to shining sea, will have work to do to upgrade America, to make sure all of our bridges, all of our roads, all of our highways, all of our water systems, all of our utility systems—which Mike would be most particularly proud about—as well as rural broadband and so many other areas. So many jobs, such a way to invest in the future. There are also a lot of clean energy projects coming to Florida and around our Nation to help boost solar, wind, nuclear, hydro, so many areas he cared deeply about. The CHIPS Act, which is bringing a record number of manufacturing starts in our Nation. In fact, we have seen a doubling, year over year, of new advanced manufacturing centers coming across the Nation.

The good news, Mr. Speaker, it takes thousands, hundreds of thousands of construction workers to help make these visions for our country a reality.

Mike always remembered our veterans. We have so many members of the AFL-CIO who served in the military. I remember getting to talk to him proudly about when we passed the PACT Act, helping so many veterans coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan, those facing terrible injuries from burn pits, and the veterans from Vietnam who still weren't getting their benefits, finally done in this critical landmark legislation to help our veterans.

Of course, he definitely had a smile as President Biden talked about these major laws and that they are going to provide good-paying union jobs. Of course, this is a fight now for the next generation.

I am going to miss him, Mr. Speaker, and I know so many of my colleagues will as well.

I also have some remarks from Representative WASSERMAN SCHULTZ that I will read into the RECORD:

Mr. Speaker, with a heavy heart, I rise to honor the remarkable life of the recently departed Florida AFL-CIO President Mike Williams.

Starting as an apprentice, he became an electrician, working the temporary service and construction jobs, and living paycheck to paycheck, like so many workers do.

Seeing the critical value of job protections and livable wages, he devoted his life to the labor movement, first as a rank-and-file member for 15 years, before becoming business manager of his Jacksonville Local IBEW 177.

Later he became president of the Florida Building Trades Council, and in 2009 Mike was elected President of the Florida AFL-CIO, where he served distinctively until his death.

A natural born leader, Mike revitalized Florida labor by fostering new alliances with community, immigrant, and faith-based groups.

Tall, with a contagious smile, he told it to you straight and always brought a worthy cause and compelling case for workers to the Capitol.

Direct and trustworthy, he was a man of standards whose shoes will be hard to fill.

Mike's empathy, dedication, and compassion will be sorely missed, but his legacy and impact must never be forgotten.

May his memory be a blessing.

Mr. Speaker, I had lunch with him just in April, when I was there for legislative session. We talked about how he was looking forward to doing his summer boating that he would do every year. He would go all the way up the East Coast and then through the Great Lakes, down the Mississippi, and back out around. Other times he would go to the Keys or to the Bahamas or to other areas.

I am deeply saddened that he lost his life doing something he loved, but he got to see so much and meant so much to so many folks on my team and throughout the State legislature and the Congress.

Mike, I pray for you, and I hope you rest in peace. God bless your family.

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

ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, we have a few issues that ought to be debated on the floor and brought to the attention of the news media to help them with articles that would educate the American public a little bit on issues of importance.

I haven't spoken on Ukraine lately, but I will point out that Congress has not received a briefing on what is going on in Ukraine since December. That is way too long to go on the first significant land war in Europe in over 70 years. I ask the Biden administration to send its officials over to allow Members of Congress to at least get their opinion as far as what is going on.

As I have said before, this war should not be that difficult to end. Ukraine has the second lowest birthrate in the world. The Ukrainians, who have such a shortage of young people, should be especially ready to end this war. The Russians also have a low birthrate, and even prior to the war a lot of young Russians were emigrating.

Over 2 years ago, before the war started, I was in San Diego, and in the San Diego sector the Border Patrol and the immigration folks told me during the prior 2 weeks or month or whatever, in that segment, only in the San Diego segment, the second largest nationality to be crossing into America was Russian. You have two countries with shortages of people. It should be ripe for reaching some sort of settlement.

I think the United States is perceived to be, maybe rightfully so, overly partisan in this war, but somehow we should be prodding the Israelis or Turks or French or somebody to reach a conclusion here, for one, on humanitarian terms. I mean, for whatever rea-

son, it is hard to find exact numbers of people who died in this war. I am old enough to remember the Vietnam war. They could give you the number of Americans who died right down to the individual digit, but for some reason you get wildly different numbers on the number of people who have died in this conflict.

However, either way, there are a significant number of people dying, and the Biden administration should be looking for a way to wrap it up. It wasn't that long ago that we seemed to have good relations with both of these countries. The longer it drags on, the more we drive Russia into the arms of China, which isn't in anybody's best interests, and it is a little frustrating that we are not getting a rationalization by the Biden administration why we wouldn't try to end this. The American press maybe ought to spend a little bit of time asking the Biden administration whether they feel there is any end to this war.

In any event, I call on the Biden administration to give us a new update in the auditorium, and I call on the press corps to start asking, is there any time when we are going to end this war.

The next issue I think I should bring up, because they keep talking about it on the news without giving us any new information, is the transgender situation. Usually when we talk about it, we talk about it with regard to biological men going into the women's locker room or biological men competing in women's sports.

However, I think a more significant question is: Why are there apparently more transgender people now than during the rest of my life? It seems to me the Europeans have reached the conclusion that one of the reasons for this wave of transgenderism is, people keep talking about it on TV and in academic settings. The more one talks about it, the more people begin to think that this is perhaps the route they should go.

I talked to someone about a month ago, 6 weeks ago, who, I guess I will call a recovering transgender, a woman, who now regrets it. She had the surgery, breasts removed at age 15, the whole ball of wax. It is not something that would have occurred to her, but she found something on the internet which informed her that maybe the reason she was unhappy is that she really was a boy. She went down the path. She went to the gender reassignment doctors, who apparently make a living on this. They talked her into the idea that, yes, the reason she was an unhappy little 13-year-old girl is because she was really a boy. She went through testosterone treatments, puberty blockers, and eventually even had her breasts cut out, which is a true tragedy, and now she regrets it.

□ 2000

I think the thing we ought to take out of it—and I have read this in another places, as well—people who are—

nobody should ever be mean or that sort of thing, but people who are overly solicitous or overly accepting of this transgender lifestyle wind up encouraging more people, other people to adapt this lifestyle.

Every study out there shows these people wind up very, very, very unhappy and miserable, and sometimes even wind up committing suicide. So I would hope that the American press corps would put a new narrative out there rather than just persuading people that this is all a positive development.

They ought to take about where people wind up who wind up going through the surgery. They ought to spend a little bit of time talking about why it appears there are so many more transgender people today than there were 30 years ago, and the answer is obvious. It is presented favorably as a lifestyle for a lot of young people, and when it is presented favorably, a number of young people get on the internet, read about it, decide to adapt this lifestyle, which is obviously only going to lead to misery and which does lead into misery.

I would ask the press corps to be a little bit more open-minded or publish a little bit more as to why we seem to have more transgenders than the pass. Is it like the Europeans have discovered, a matter of the more we talk about it the more we have people like this.

Maybe then we will realize that the goal should not be to have dramatic surgeries on young people's bodies. The goal should be on pushing this kind of to the side and not have so many people adapt the transgender lifestyle in the first place.

The next topic I am going to take up, which we haven't taken up this session, but I think should be taken up next session or sometime in the near future because it has such a big influence on America is that of the breakdown of the family and the lack of fathers in homes, which is bad, not only for the children, but it is bad for the father, as well.

In the 1960s, in which I think it was maybe the biggest domestic policy blunder in this country's history, under Lyndon Johnson, tons of money was aimed at families with children, but because the percent of poverty was determined by your income level as a practical matter, this money was conditioned upon not having a man in the household.

In other words, if you had mother and father both working in the household, by definition, they were not in poverty. But if father was somewhere else and mother was alone, say, with two or three kids, and mother did not have a job, she was considered in poverty.

This program said that if you are in poverty, or the programs, the Great Society, as it was called then—they should have called it the war on marriage—under the war on marriage, peo-

ple who did not get married were given free housing at the time. So then they dialed back a little, given a check. They were given free food. They could be given free education. They would be given free medical care and given all these free things.

Basically what they did is they set up the family without a dad as a self-contained unit. Only 7 percent of the births in the United States at the beginning of the sixties were born without a mother and a father in the home. Now, we are over 40 percent.

I think, well, there are parents of all backgrounds doing yeoman's work, doing a tremendous job raising their children, and we don't want to denigrate them at all.

But the statistics would show that whether you are looking at crime rates or educational achievement, depression, children, in general, are happier with both parents in the home because not everybody is up to raising kids in that environment.

You would have to be blind not to realize the reason we have gone from 7 percent to over 40 percent is the great society and all these programs in which to get benefits, or you do get benefits if both parents are not around, and almost always that means the man is not around.

Other programs like earned income tax credit, which was, I think, not a very good program thought up by the Republicans and Jack Kemp, were also conditioned upon getting the check. You don't want to have two parents working in the household.

I would hope that we would do a subcommittee or something on this problem, get back to the good old days where depression and youth suicide was less than it is today, drug use a fraction of what it is today and, in order to do that, we have to change the incentives that were put into place by Lyndon Johnson.

This, by the way, was known by the end of the 1960s. I hate to cite this study because it is so overcited, but Patrick Moynihan, by the late sixties, had pointed out what a disaster it was to have incentives in which the father wasn't in the home. So this is not new things I am talking about today.

We knew this was a mistake by 1967, by 1968, by 1969, but Congress, either because they did not have the will, or because there is a radical element that Black Lives Matter represents, in which an element, a Marxist element wants to get rid of what they call the western prescribed nuclear family, and this is certainly a way to do it, but, for whatever reason, we have not adequately changed incentives in the 1960s.

Made a little think to the right direction under Newt Gingrich and Bill Clinton in the 1990s, but since then it has all been downhill. I think we have to ask ourselves, was it a good idea to do all we could to set up the single parent as the sole parent in a child's life.

I realize this is little bit different than a divorce situation, a little bit

different than a widow situation, but there is no question there has been a dramatic decrease in the number of men in children's lives beginning in the 1960s.

I want to point to something else, too, about this issue that a lot of times people don't take into account. This is something that George Gilder, who was a great sociologist—he is still alive today—but he wrote a book called "Wealth and Poverty" in 1980. At the time Ronald Reagan was sworn in, the book received a lot of positive press at that time. It has now been forgotten.

What Gilder pointed out is not only are two parents important for the child but it is also important for the man because a lot of times the man's self-worth comes from—just like the woman's self-worth—comes from raising children. It is the most important thing in life.

As a result of all these welfare programs in the 1960s, you have a lot of families without men in the household; the man had no purpose. This is why I think you see so much crime lately, so much drug abuse, because I think a lot of these men who were supposed to get self-worth out of children have kind of been kicked out of their home. If they actually did try to work and support their family, they may be materially less well off, or their children would be materially less well off than if dad wasn't around at all.

Like I said, that goes for all the different benefits. There is a benefit called section 42 housing in which people taking advantage of section 42 housing, not only do you have to be in poverty to get it, but section 42 housing is frequently superior in quality to what people who are not on government programs get.

Because section 42 housing is usually very new housing because the government pays for so much of the housing or to build the housing, people build section 42 low-income housing nicer than regular old apartments that are being built now; but that would be an example of a bad program that has bad results.

The next topic that I would like to take up, the final topic, which I seem to address every week, but I think we should address again, because every one of these appropriation bills that comes before this place is subject to debate, either on this floor or in the Rules Committee, with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

This country has, for the last 50 years, at least with regard to universities—it looks like it is going to end or to a degree end because of a recent court decision. For 50 years, we have had programs designed to hire people or promote people or fire people or let people into colleges and universities or give businesses government contracts based on people's race and gender too.

There are two rationalizations for this, but the press never spends any time determining whether these rationalizations are right or wrong. One

rationalization is that certain groups of people were discriminated against all the way back to slavery days, and, more recently, Jim Crow, that sort of thing.

The other rationalization is that in a workplace setting, diversity is a good thing and that we should, therefore, force or mandate businesses to hire people based on where their ancestors came from 200 years ago.

First of all, the idea that we owe people something—when you look at the people who are beneficiaries of these programs, many of them do not have any ancestors who were in America prior to the institution of these programs.

If somebody, say, who is Black from Jamaica immigrates to the United States in 1965, after Jim Crow ended, well after slavery, is there any reason why that person should receive preference?

Recently, the Biden administration has tried to give preferences to what they call North African or Middle Eastern people. So if I come here from Egypt or Syria or Algeria today, and I am not even a citizen, according to the Biden administration, we should make sure—kind of weigh in on companies, universities I think they would like to weigh in on admissions, and make sure we give preferences to people from Algeria or Syria who are not even in this country yet.

I don't know why we don't have that debate. We also ought to have a debate whether we ought to add a new so-called minority group of North Africans and Middle Easterners.

With regard to diversity, I think we also have a problem. I guess the idea behind diversity is a pure racist would say that someone's view of the world or the way they tackle a job is going to be dependent upon where their great-great-great-great-grandparents came from.

Now, I reject that idea. The idea that if I were to—I am not—but the idea that if I had a great-grandparent who was born in Peru, I would have a different view of the world than my next-door neighbor whose great-grandparents were from Germany. That is kind of a racist thing on its face, but that is what the diversity argument boils down to, that we should look at people, not on their viewpoint today, not on their personal experiences to this point in life.

If we have two people who both grew up in Chevy Chase, Maryland, in houses next to each other, and one was one-quarter Mexican and one wasn't Mexican, that they would carry different viewpoints into the workplace, and it was important to get both viewpoints, even though, perhaps the person from Latin America had never been to a Latin American country in their life.

But the idea behind this program—and, by the way, you self-identify as to what your group is—the idea behind the program is it is important to get the viewpoint of somebody whose

grandfather or great-grandfather happened to be from a different country. Again, even though in the case, say, of a Latin American, people would not even know that that is true.

But this is a rationalization used for these rather high-handed programs that, as a practical matter, causes both the government people who are hiring and the businesses who do business with the government to hire based on ancestry.

□ 2015

I want to point out that I was actually talking to somebody from India today—of Indian ancestry. He wondered about this program because he was from India, and in India there are many different subgroups that sometimes don't get along. He thought the United States was alone in that we got along so well and it was such a wonderful thing we have going here, why in the world with us getting along so well would we try to duplicate countries like Nigeria or Sri Lanka or Iraq? Why would we try to duplicate what they are doing in other countries where the elections are contests between ethnic groups? These diversity, equity, and inclusion programs are designed to cause people not to view themselves as an American but view themselves as a Cuban American or a Mexican American or an Asian American or a Pacific Islander.

In other words, they are going to view themselves when they vote and at other times as a representative of where their ancestors came from perhaps even decades, if not, centuries ago.

I am afraid one of the reasons for these programs I ran across recently, I heard of someone who—I don't really like the phrase, but would today be considered by people who are proponents of these programs as a person of color—and this person, because they were from south of the border, their employer, once they asked them where their ancestry was—before I was in an elected position, the places that I worked, we never asked people where their ancestry was, but nowadays we ask them—and this large employer decided to hold breakout groups of people based on their ethnicity.

We are going to have the Black group meet over there and the Hispanic group meet over there and the Asian group meet over there, and what happened is the diversity consultant—an occupation which shouldn't exist in America, by the way—the diversity consultant tried to tell this person that they were put upon and how they should think because they had an ancestor from south of the border.

Now think how ridiculous that is. This person, who was just a fine, regular American never viewed themselves any different from anybody else, is being told because of where their ancestors came from, south of the border, that they ought to have certain beliefs, including certain political beliefs,

which I think is the reason why the Biden administration is pushing this sort of thing.

They want to tell people that if you are from Mexico or you are from Colombia or you are from Nigeria or you are from India that you are put upon and that you ought to have certain political beliefs.

It is better to cut this thing right away. We have a shortage of people, workers in this country. The idea that we have people going to college to be diversity experts is appalling. I am glad my colleagues again and again are trying to take these diversity, equity, and inclusion bureaucrats out of the Federal bureaucracy, but there are way too many of them in the bureaucracy of individual big businesses around the country. It is the wimps who run these big businesses who feel that they have to kowtow to the diversity lobby, the special interest group, and they are instituting these programs by themselves.

I think it is time we had a public discussion here as to whether this whole diversity, equity, inclusion thing makes any sense. I can go through topics that should be brought up by talk show hosts, by service clubs, what have you.

Should we identify people by where their ancestors came from? If they self-identify, should we be identifying people by where their great-grandmother or great-grandfather came from? That is an interesting question.

If we are going to give preferences based upon where your great-great-grandfather is from, should we see if there is any true diversity there before you say you should take my contract ahead of the other guy's contract or you should hire me ahead of the other guy? Tell us what you bring to the table because your great-great-grandmother was from Mexico. How do you think different than the other guy?

Let's have that discussion. We are not having that discussion.

Should you, again, be able to self-identify? If I am seven-eighths German and one-eighth Mexican, is it right that on the form I can put down that I am a Mexican and I should be able to say I bring the view of Mexican Americans to my engineering firm?

They can also talk about, in certain jobs, what is the benefit of diversity? If we are talking about an engineering job, is the way I engineer the building of a bridge any different because I am one-quarter Mexican? That doesn't make any sense, but that is the position of the people who push these programs.

Let's have a discussion on that. Another discussion is, before we get this divisiveness going on forever, how long is this going to happen? This began in earnest—I think under JOHN KENNEDY, but it really began in earnest under Lyndon Johnson in 1965 and at the time I am sure nobody in a million years dreamed that we would still have this stuff almost 67 years later.

Should we have a discussion? How long are we going to do this? Again, let's have a discussion. If part of this is supposed to be a way to make up for past sins, why are we giving benefits here to people who may not even be citizens yet? Why are we giving benefits to people who just moved here from Syria? Should that be considered a different sort of person subject to benefits?

Let's have a discussion there.

In any event, I hope as we write more and more about the Supreme Court case and preferences in college admissions, I hope people begin to ask some of these questions as to whether or not they make any sense at all whatsoever.

I leave here hoping that our news media and this Congress spend a little more time updating themselves on what is going on in Ukraine. I hope they spend a little bit more time wondering as to whether we have this transgender crisis even a little bit. Just because we talk about it, if we weren't talking about it so much, we would have a fraction of the number of transgenders in the first place.

I think we should spend some time looking at the premise that the diversity, equity, and inclusion is built upon and answering questions like, should we be adding Egyptians and Syrians to the mix? Should I be able to label myself a minority if I am one-quarter a minority? Should I be able to label myself picked upon if my parents have given me \$5 million?

These are questions that should be asked on the diversity level. I think we should be asking is it time to stop government programs which have resulted in an increase in fatherlessness from 7 to 40 percent, programs I think which hurt people, and particularly hurt men, have been around since the 1960s. There is no reason for these programs to continue forever.

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

WE HAVE MUCH TO GAIN FROM OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH BRAZIL, BUT WE STILL NEED TO ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. SANTOS) for 30 minutes.

Mr. SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to address an issue that we can no longer ignore.

The Chinese Communist Party has manifested all over South America, and, most importantly, overpowering the United States in every single one of those relationships.

Today, I will be talking about Brazil, the largest economy in South America, the 10th-largest economy in the world, and the 4th-largest food producer in the world.

We have much to gain from our relationship with Brazil, but we still need to act.

Now, the CCP has seized its opportunity to assert its dominance. China is the largest trading partner of Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Uruguay, and the second-largest trading partner for many other countries.

According to the American Enterprise Institute's China Global Investment Tracker, Chinese entities invested a total of \$148 billion in Latin America and the Caribbean countries between 2005 and 2022, with Brazil accounting for 44 percent of those investments, a total of \$66 billion.

Energy projects accounted for 62 percent of the investments and metal mining accounted for 21 percent.

The database also shows that the Chinese construction projects in Latin America and Caribbean countries were valued at \$68.6 billion over the same period, mainly in the energy, 50 percent, and transportation, which is another 30 percent—in those two respective sectors.

The CCP has metastasized to the extent that it influenced the 2022 Presidential elections in Brazil and successfully reinstated a convicted criminal into the Presidency.

We must remember that China has even gone so far as to support a veto of a 2019 U.S.-backed resolution in the United Nations calling for free and fair Presidential elections globally.

Luisa Inacio Lula da Silva, also known as Lula, is the current occupier of the Presidency as a direct result of the CCP's successful attempt to destabilize Brazil.

Let's be clear: The honest Lula, is a man deemed unelectable by the Brazilian courts due to his conviction for his involvement in one of the most significant political corruption scandals in Brazil's history, which subsequently led to the demise of the country's economy.

In doing so, he has weaponized the judicial system in Brazil to launch an assault like never before, prosecuting political opponents, silencing the media, and targeting everyday civilians.

Lula has shielded himself behind the nation's highest court, with his ally, Justice Alexandre de Moraes, granting his every wish.

You see, most Americans are quick to judge Brazil as a third-world country and pass up its value as an ally. This is only the beginning of the end for Brazil, our once great ally.

I want to make sure that the American people understand that value; however, being the first Brazilian American to serve in Congress, I hope and hold that Brazil will stand firm.

When Americans fought in World War II, Brazil was the only South American country to send troops; 50,000 men from Brazil fought alongside U.S. ally troops.

I present that fighting spirit on the House floor today, Mr. Speaker. I want to stress that Brazil's population yearns for a capitalist market similar to ours and appreciates our world-leading example for democracy.

Today, Brazilians suffer high inflation, arbitrary laws, and absolute devastation regarding infrastructure and healthcare.

I am calling on my colleagues to urge President Biden to suspend all foreign aid to Brazil until a review is conducted via the United Nations to assess the humanitarian crimes taking place under the power of Lula's tyrannical regime.

While we have an arrest warrant for Nicolas Maduro, the murderous Venezuelan dictator, it should come as no surprise that Lula parades him and hosts him with official visits legitimizing him while undermining us.

With this kind of egregious behavior as an elected official, it is only natural that we ask why Lula would align with some of the world's most monstrous dictators presently in the crosshairs of U.S. sanctions or conflicts.

□ 2030

Brazil is not the only country impacted by China's election interference. The Maduro regime has become reliant on China for disinformation campaigns and social control programs, including ID cards that serve as scorecards of Venezuelan citizens loyal to the regime.

When we examine who funds Venezuela, it is none other than China through their insidious and smoke-and-mirror charade toward world domination that the CCP has titled the Belt and Road Initiative, aka the BRI, a lending gambit that grants China's over 140 allied countries billions of dollars under the pretense of economic integration and interconnected development.

It is only a matter of time before Lula leads Brazil down the same path.

This is the perfect example of the kind of destabilization the CCP is known for, preying on countries via unsustainable and corrupt lending while ignoring global labor and environmental standards for their own economic gain.

The CCP will stop at nothing to reach their goal of world domination, and as time goes on, we have fewer opportunities to preserve Brazil's achievability and viability as our number one trade partner and ally.

Lula is nothing more than a repressive and destructive tyrant who aligns with underhanded puppeteers to make his case for power.

Lula is actively parroting CCP propaganda, saying we are prolonging the Ukraine-Russia conflict for commercial gain, undermining us at every single turn, not to mention the BRICS agreement created under Lula's direction by former impeached President Dilma Rousseff, whose main goal today is to undermine and replace the U.S. dollar as the global currency.

Mr. Speaker, as the first Brazilian American elected to this Chamber, I urge my colleagues to assist Brazil in restoring democracy and to stop legitimizing the Lula regime today. We must