

government for troop rotations and medicine would be approved. Congressman Gaetz memorialized this attestation by letter, attached hereto as Exhibit "B."

Unfortunately, the *Chargé d'Affaires* representations have proven false. This office continued to receive reports from service members and their families that overflights were not occurring, that medicine was not being delivered, and that negotiations were stalling. This induced subsequent demands from this office to the government of Niger, through their *Chargé d'Affaires*, attached hereto as Exhibit "C."

CURRENT CONDITIONS OF U.S. TROOPS IN NIGER—LACK OF MEDICINE

The initial report detailed statements by several of the USAF public-health leaders at Air Base 101. We reported then that if additional supplies were not provided by May, several key medicines would be unavailable. This has now come to fruition. On May 2, 2024, one active-duty spouse wrote ["My husband specifically is on cholesterol medication for his heart and at this point in time he has run out of medication. I mailed him a medication refill . . . that is currently sitting in Germany because Niger still will not approve flights."] A copy of this spouse's correspondence is attached hereto as Exhibit "D." Lacking medicine has also been a concern expressed by other family members, with specificity (see below).

As stated by another service member in Niger:

Since two weeks ago we still have not received supplies, AB 101 is still short on blood and medications, here at 201 we are mission parts that should have been here months ago. They are struggling getting even MEdevac planes in for people that need to be seen at a higher level of care . . . Why are we still here?" (See Exhibit "E")

And another:

"The situation here at Air Base 101 and 201 (I'm here at 201) is a failure on the United States Government." We keep getting told "talks are good" well if they are going good, why have no planes come in for our replacements? . . . We have not a resupply mission here since March. The morale here is terrible and it needs to be fixed ASAP!" (Exhibit "F")

EXTORTION TO LEAVE

An FL-01 constituent and father of an active-duty service member in Niger relayed to this office that local officials are "extorting passengers in order for them to bring luggage through the airport." This account is confirmed by the spouse of a military contractor currently stationed in Niger, whose correspondence is attached as Exhibit "G."

RUSSIANS ON BASE

The initial report alleged that Russian troops were allowed onto U.S. installations in Niger. This is unprecedented and dangerous. Reuters has now confirmed this claim, see Exhibit "H." This continues to be a source of safety concern for our troops and their families.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Biden Administration must immediately resupply U.S. troops in Niger. Our service members, contractors and their families must not be allowed to be used as leverage by the government of Niger or anyone else during a military retrograde. Moreover, the Biden administration should not spasm into a hasty retrograde which would leave hundreds of millions of dollars in U.S. military material in the hands of terrorists, militants, or Russians. The Biden administration must fly in the needed water, medication supplies and troop rotations, under fighter escort if necessary. If this does not occur, the Biden administration has rendered

these brave Americans hostages of a hostile foreign regime.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, the link to the full report can be found here: <https://gaetz.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/gaetz.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/Part%20II%20Interim%20Report%20-%20Unwelcome%20in%20Niger.pdf>.

I rise to warn this body of the deteriorating conditions in the African country of Niger and to give rise to the concern of servicemembers and contractors.

More than a thousand of them right now are functionally being held hostage in Niger. They are being used as pawns during a negotiation that has left America at the bended knee of Third World criminals and thugs as our troops seek medicine, freshwater, and troop rotations.

How did we get here, with more than 1,100 Americans endangered right now in Niger? It started back in March 2023. Secretary of State Antony Blinken went to Niger and proclaimed that it was a model of resilience, a platform for great democracy. It would be where America would execute its Africa strategy.

One year later, almost to the day, there was a coup in Niger. Guess who overthrew the government that we said was the great model of resilience? The people we trained. We trained the coup leaders to go throw out the democratically elected Government of Niger.

I know this will surprise you, but after that occurred, they say they want our bases, which U.S. taxpayers have poured more than a billion dollars into, gone. They want our servicemembers gone.

I came to this floor after hearing from some of my constituents who are stationed in Niger. After the overthrow of the government, there weren't resupply flights. They said: Congressman, we are going to be out of medicine in May if we don't get this sorted out.

□ 1215

Three days after I filed part I of the report that I am supplementing today, the Biden administration announced that we will be leaving Niger—a welcome sign, I am sure—but the leaving didn't actually happen. We have people who are now more than 200 days into a 180-day rotation.

While the negotiation regarding retrograde and withdrawal are ongoing, the government in Niger is using the well-being and health of our servicemembers as leverage to get what they want out of our government. Our troops aren't getting medicine for malaria, cholesterol, blood pressure, and other chronic conditions.

I have received letters from the wives and fathers of the people who are in Niger now, and they say: We know that our family members are being extorted by the local governments. When they try to leave, it is hundreds of dollars to even bring a bag through the airport.

We know that Russians are behind the wire.

Do you know what a real U.S. President would do? They would say that C-130s are on their way to Niger today with the water, medicine, and food that our troops need, that they will have a full fighter pilot escort there.

If the Government of Niger or any other third-world thug tries to even turn on their air defense systems, we should show those leaders and those thugs what the target package looks like on their houses and their family members.

It should not be Americans who are suffering because President Biden and Secretary Blinken are so embarrassed that their strategy in Africa failed that they are willing to let Americans' conditions deteriorate.

They are willing to let our military spouses and family members wonder what is going to happen to their loved ones with their blood pressure rising and no blood pressure medication or be concerned about what will happen now that we are in May and there is not sufficient malaria medication. We should always keep our people's well-being at the forefront of our minds.

Today, we should be resupplying our troops in Niger, Africa, and we should dare these thugs and criminals to mess with us while we are doing that. This is a total embarrassment, and saving politicians and people like Biden and Blinken from embarrassment is not worth putting U.S. troops at risk.

I will stay on this. I will stay on our government and the Government of Niger to ensure that our military members and their families are appropriately treated, and their concerns are elevated to the highest levels of this House.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 17 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

Lord of the universe, look down upon Your people and grant us Your peace. From generation to generation, we have found ways to disparage and destroy one another, allowing racism, prejudice, and discrimination to color our judgment and enrage our worst selves.

You have warned us that there will be wars and rumors of wars, nation will rise against nation. Earthquakes, famines, pestilence, and persecution will threaten our freedoms and dismantle our security.

On this day of Holocaust remembrance, remind us that the insidious malice that crept into our culture and led to the horrific deaths of tens of millions, including Jews, Roma, Jehovah's Witnesses, gays, and the disabled, is an evil that is still at work today, pervading our communities.

The present turmoil reveals a pivotal moment where You call us to bear testimony to our faithfulness to You and to You alone. In the words of Elie Wiesel: "For the dead and the living, we must bear witness."

Grant us courage, and unite us under the values of dignity, respect, justice, and righteousness that when we reflect on history's extermination of entire peoples, we would affirm that never again means now.

In the strength of Your name we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. CARL) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CARL 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.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, May 3, 2024.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on May 3, 2024, at 9:35 a.m.

That the Senate passed S. 2181.

That the Senate passed S. 3126.

That the Senate passed S. 3249.

That the Senate passed S. 3285.

That the Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 34.

That the Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 35.

That the Senate agreed to Relative to the death of the Honorable Daniel Robert Graham, former United States Senator from the State of Florida S. Res. 668.

That the Senate agreed to Relative to the death of the Honorable David Hampton Pryor, former United States Senator from the State of Arkansas S. Res. 673.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 593.

That the Senate agreed to H. Con. Res. 89.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KEVIN F. MCCUMBER,
Acting Clerk.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, May 3, 2024.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on May 3, 2024, at 12:28 p.m., said to contain a message from the President on his objections to H.J. Res. 98 which he returns without his signature.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KEVIN F. MCCUMBER,
Acting Clerk of the House.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD RELATING TO "STANDARD FOR DETERMINING JOINT EMPLOYER STATUS"—VETO MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 118-135)

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following veto message from the President of the United States:

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.J. Res. 98, a resolution that would disapprove of the National Labor Relations Board's (NLRB) rule entitled "Standard for Determining Joint Employer Status."

Since day one, my Administration has fought to strengthen workers' right to organize and bargain for higher wages, better benefits, and safer working conditions. The NLRB's rule would prevent companies from evading their bargaining obligations or liability when they control a worker's working condition—even if they reserve such control or exercise it indirectly through a subcontractor or other intermediary. If multiple companies control the terms and conditions of employment, then the right to organize is rendered futile whenever the workers cannot bargain collectively with each of those employers.

Without the NLRB's rule, companies could more easily avoid liability simply by manipulating their corporate structure, like hiding behind subcontractors or staffing agencies. By

hampering the NLRB's efforts to promote the practice and procedure of collective bargaining, Republicans are siding with union-busting corporations over the needs of workers and their unions. I am proud to be the most pro-union, pro-worker President in American history. I make no apologies for my Administration protecting the right to organize and bargain collectively.

Therefore, I am vetoing this resolution.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.
THE WHITE HOUSE, May 3, 2024.

The SPEAKER. The objections of the President will be spread at large upon the Journal and the veto message and the joint resolution will be printed as a House document.

Mr. CARL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that further consideration of the veto message and the joint resolution, H.J. Res. 98, be postponed until the legislative day of May 7, 2024.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alabama?

There was no objection.

RECESS

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1600

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CLOUD) at 4 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

SECURING CHAIN OF COMMAND CONTINUITY ACT

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6972) to amend title 5, United States Code, to require an Executive agency whose head is a member of the National Security Council to notify the Executive Office of the President, the Comptroller General of the United States, and congressional leadership of such head becoming medically incapacitated within 24 hours, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows: