

As we honor his legacy, let us refuse what he refused. Let us walk where he walked: Toward justice, toward the oughtness that forever confronts us.

□ 1120

WHERE DO YOU STAND

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. GREEN of Texas was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.)

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, and still I rise.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today on this, the birth date of Dr. Martin Luther King, a man so great in the eyes of this country that we honor his birthday as a holiday, but it is more than a holiday. It is an opportunity for us to do some introspection, to examine some of the many things that are occurring within our country that should be addressed in a King-like fashion.

Dr. King had something that many other intellectuals of his time did not have. He was an intellectual. He had something that many of the persons who did speak up did not have; he had something called courage.

Many of the great intellectuals could expose and expound on some of the great issues of the time, but they didn't have the courage to take a stand, as Dr. King did, to go out into the public—into the streets, if you will—with protest—peaceful protest—to bring about a change in this country, and he did bring about a change.

So today, on his birthday, I want to honor Dr. King by speaking from one of his quotes. He had many quotes that are quite quotable, to be quite honest. It is difficult to single out just a few, but today I will mention a couple. But there is one that I will focus on, the third one. He, of course, is known for having said: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

Injustice in Minnesota is a threat to justice in every other State in the Union.

He didn't say that about Minnesota, but he was giving us the words to help us understand that what is happening in Minnesota, if it is an injustice, it can happen in your State. It can happen in Texas, my State. "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." I think that is probably one of his most-quoted quotes.

But then he also had one that is not quoted too often. This one is one that people don't like to associate with Dr. King because it speaks to his militancy, in a sense, but it also speaks to things that people don't want us to do. We have a State that has as its motto Live Free or Die.

Well, it is all right for a State to have that, but Dr. King's quote was: "A man who hasn't found something worth dying for isn't fit to live."

A man, a person, who has not found something worth dying for isn't fit to live. Very few people will cite Dr. King

for having said this. By the way, I paraphrase a lot of what I am saying in terms of his quotes.

"A man who hasn't found something worth dying for isn't fit to live."

But the one that I would like to quote today and say much about is his quote that deals with the ultimate measure. "The ultimate measure of a man . . ." is the way he put it, but I will be paraphrasing.

The ultimate measure—the ultimate measure of the person is not where the person stands in times of comfort—comfort, when all of your bills are paid and you are living the high life—not where the person stands in times of comfort and convenience—when everything is at your fingertips. You have at your fingertips all of the luxuries of life, all of the things that make life worth living.

The ultimate measure is not where the person stands in times of comfort and convenience, but, rather, where do you stand in times of challenge—challenge, when you have a reckless, ruthless, lawless President who is breaching the Constitution, who is doing things that we never expected to see in our lifetimes. Where do you stand when you have a President who is doing things within and without the country that we did not anticipate?

Dr. King says that the ultimate measure of the person is not where you stand in times of comfort and convenience, but where do you stand in times of challenge and controversy—controversy because what he is doing is being justified by many people who stand in the corridors of power. What he is doing is being justified by members of the clergy, who ordinarily would take the righteous stand. Where do you stand?

"The ultimate measure of a man . . ." Where do you stand in times of challenge and controversy?

Let's talk about this. Where do you stand when the President of the United States has replaced Congress with corporate America; when the President of the United States will consult corporate America before he consults Congress; and when the President of the United States goes into another country, Venezuela, bombs this country, and consults with corporate America but does not consult with the Congress of the United States of America? Where do you stand?

Well, here is where the Senate has taken a position. Here is where the Senate stands. Let's first read what the Senate has in S.J. Res. 90. This is a resolution brought before the Senate and has been voted on but was voted down.

Let's examine briefly an excerpt from the resolution.

The resolution reads: "A joint resolution to direct the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities within or against Venezuela that have not been authorized by Congress."

Remember, this is the President, who consulted with corporate America but not the Congress of the United States

of America. The Senate has this resolution, S.J. Res. 90.

It continues in the Findings. "Congress makes the following findings." I will read a portion of one.

This is what Congress finds. This is the United States Senate: "Congress has the sole power to declare war under Article I, Section 8, Clause 11 of the United States Constitution."

Congress, the sole power to declare war.

It goes on to say: "Congress has not yet declared war upon Venezuela or any person or organization within Venezuela. . . ."

Mr. Speaker, Congress not having declared war, a President who has declared that he visited with corporate America before taking kinetic activity in Venezuela, where do we stand?

Well, the Members of the Senate, 50 of them, stood with this resolution. I would stand with them. I stand with them now, 50 of them who stood for this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, 50 Members were antithetical to the resolution. When this occurs, the Vice President of the United States has a vote.

The Vice President of the United States voted with those who were antithetical to this resolution, S.J. Res. 90. You can research and pull up the entirety of it, and I beg that you would.

So where do you stand when the Senate of the United States of America cannot reclaim its power to declare war? And we ought to do it while we can. We are losing it.

□ 1130

The ultimate measure of the United States Senate—what is the ultimate measure of it when it has the opportunity to reclaim its power to declare war and it doesn't?

We are finding ourselves now with the National Guard being sent into various cities around the country, various States, without a request from the Governors, without a request from the mayors, without a request from the officials who are in a position to make that request, without a request from the people, we the people not making that request. I know that we the people don't make the request; the Governor makes the request. But the point is we the people put the Governor in place.

So we the people are not making the request by and through our official agent, Governors, but the President has decided he would do this. And he always concocts some fallacious, some fictitious means by which this should be done, and he does it. And, unfortunately, we have to ask: Where do the courts stand?

Some of the courts are yielding to the President's pressure. He has threatened judges. Where do we stand when the President is threatening judges? Where do we stand when the President has decided that there is no separation of powers, that he can determine when a judge is right or wrong and if that judge is wrong, that judge should be

impeached? Where do we stand when the Senate holds a hearing to discuss the impeachment of judges who differ with the President of the United States of America? It has been done. I saw it myself. Where do we stand?

Where do we stand when, after the President has sent the National Guard into various places, more turmoil has been committed as a result of the Guard being there than was being committed before they arrived? The President is the person who is creating the turmoil so that he can then say: I am justified in sending the National Guard.

Where do we stand when a woman seated in her vehicle, a woman, Ms. Renee Nicole Good, seated in her vehicle when she is approached by a member of the constabulary in a rather aggressive way—and I am being kind, because with that aggression was an insufficient amount of profanity, more than sufficient. It was really insufficient, not necessary, profanity.

Now, do we expect the constabulary to approach people and in this process swear at them, or do we expect them to be respectful, be respectful even when the person that the member of the constabulary is approaching is disrespectful? That is our job. We are to be respectful, notwithstanding the disrespect we have to suffer.

I was a judge. I remember having a man come before me in court and said some very unkind things with profanity. I could have held him in contempt. All I had to do was say: Mr. Bailiff, take this man over to a certain area and hold him until I finish the docket. I have to have a further discussion with him.

I could have held him in contempt, but I had heard enough of that case to know that he was right about the facts in the case; he was wrong in how he expressed himself. I never held that man in contempt. I had the black robe on. I had the power.

How you use power determines whether you are a person who should possess power, whether you are the person that should be armed with lethality such that you can change a person's family's history and remove a person from existence.

Where do we stand when officers approach a person such as Ms. Good was situated and when Ms. Good says to this person: Dude, in a sense, I am not mad at you. I am not mad at you. To the person approaching aggressively: I am not mad at you. And as she is saying these things—it has been said that these were her last words—another officer comes across, near her, in front of her, and this officer with a video camera has his weapon just with him. This officer, as she turns away, shoots her and then, as she is passing by, shoots again.

I assume the first shot hit her. I don't know whether it did or didn't. That is my assumption, so I am saying that. But we do know this: There were additional shots fired as she passed by

through her window—the window was not up; it was not elevated—through her window. We do know that she died. We do know because we have seen it.

Now, you can justify this if you would like, but you can't justify the Justice Department concluding that it would not cooperate with the local authorities with the investigation, not if you want transparency. Where do we stand when the Justice Department refuses to be transparent after we see what appears to be an injustice to many people? I am one of them. I believe that the killing of Ms. Renee Nicole Good was a grave, gross injustice. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. So where do we stand when this is happening? Where do we stand? Sent in armed persons, and they have now taken a life in a way that is quite questionable.

Well, where do we stand when the President now is saying that he is declaring martial law? Well, he is not declaring it currently. He is saying that he may have to, talking about martial law. He talked about that some time ago. Actually now he is talking about the Insurrection Act, the Insurrection Act. He is talking about the Insurrection Act. He has spoken of martial law on other occasions long ago, a while ago, but now the Insurrection Act. So that means he is going to send in the military, if he does it, and then the next thing after that could be martial law.

So are we going to just stand by and witness the President replace Congress with corporate America, decide that he will send in the National Guard, send it in to cities across the country without a request from the Governor of the State? When he decides that he is going to talk about now the Insurrection Act as his next tool, National Guard already in, using the Insurrection Act, bring in the military, the only thing left is martial law. He hasn't said that he will resort to martial law at this time, but I want to say this: I have been trying to warn you. I have been trying to warn the American people that this President is moving us toward a dictatorship. I was among the very first, if not the first, to say publicly that this was an authoritarian, among the first to say it. It is difficult to be a part of the avant-garde when you are trying to warn powerful people about something that is taking place.

□ 1140

I have been trying to warn you. I say it is difficult because Voltaire was right. It is dangerous to be right in affairs where established men are wrong. It is dangerous to be right. It is dangerous to be right when the establishment in this country refuses to acknowledge what is taking place.

Thank God for people associated with free speech for people. Thank God for the impeach and removal coalition, people who are willing to be a part of the avant-garde, who are willing to take the proper stand when they see

democracy at risk, when they see the President absolutely disregarding the separation of powers, absolutely disregarding the fact that the judiciary has the authority to render opinions about circumstances that have been brought before the judiciary.

There are some people who are standing up. I am proud to say that, here in the Congress of the United States of America, there are people who are taking a stand against this President's unconstitutional behavior. They are taking a stand.

I am proud to tell you that many Articles of Impeachment have been filed since the first was filed. Many have been filed, and I am on every one of them.

December 9, a stand was taken. Articles of Impeachment were filed. I am on those articles.

December 10, a stand was taken. Articles of Impeachment were filed. I am on those articles.

January 14, a stand was taken. I am on these Articles of Impeachment.

I do not require people to stand with me when I take a stand, because I sincerely believe, as I have said here at this microphone many times, on some issues it is better to stand alone than not stand at all. I don't lead by telling people you have to follow me. No, I am an example. If you think I am a good example, then you can embrace the example.

I am not out whipping people for votes. I am not going to demand that people do something that I think is appropriate. I lead by example, and I try to be a good example. I am not always a good example, so no one should claim that I claim perfection because I do not.

I do claim this: On these issues related to the Constitution, I refuse to stand by and see what is happening in my country as it devolves into what I perceive as a dictatorship. I refuse to stand by and see that and say nothing.

The truest and the ultimate measure of the person is not where you stand in times of comfort and convenience when you have all of these things happening that I have cited, but where do you stand in times of challenge and controversy when these things are happening—not when all is right with the world, but where you stand in times of challenge and controversy.

Do you stand with the President who is behaving in an unlawful fashion as it relates to the Constitution, or do you stand with the Constitution? Do you stand with the Constitution of the United States of America?

This is where we Members of Congress now have to make a decision. Are we going to stand with the reckless, ruthless, lawless President, or are we going to stand with the Constitution of the United States of America?

I am proud to tell you that when we filed the last Articles of Impeachment—and I have filed many. I plan to file more, just for edification purposes. I will say more about that at a later time.

When the last Articles of Impeachment were filed, it was H. Res. 939. With these Articles of Impeachment, there was a vote. I believe that we ought to take a stand. We ought to take a stand. These are times of challenge and controversy. We were elected to take a stand in times of challenge and controversy.

Yes, I know that it can put my career at risk. There are people trying to get me out of office, and they are doing a pretty good job. I never know what my next day will bring.

I do know this: I will have my record show that I fought all the way out. I didn't come to stay forever, but I did come to make a difference while here on the great issues of our time.

Where do we stand? On H. Res. 939, 140 persons voted for H. Res. 939, 140 Members of Congress, not one from the other side of the aisle—140, Members who hold high positions. I am not calling anybody out.

As a result, we have identified all of them in this document. This is my copy. But all 140 Members who voted for H. Res. 939 will receive a similar copy, and their names are all listed. Each person's name is going to be highlighted one time, and that one time will be the time that we will acknowledge this person as being in the document by highlighting the name. That will be given to that person. Each person will have his or her name highlighted on the page when no other names are highlighted but that one person's.

It is important now for me to read a bit from H. Res. 939. It reads: "Impeaching Donald John Trump, President of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors."

I have to pause a minute and say this. The President said just recently that "they will find a reason to impeach me." Mr. President, we don't have to find a reason. You are giving reasons. You are providing reasons on a daily basis almost. I said "almost."

On a daily basis, you are providing reasons for people to file Articles of Impeachment against you. The question is not whether the reasons are there. You are providing them. The question is, Mr. President, will we have the courage to bring you to justice?

This is the bar of justice for you, Mr. President. You will be brought before this bar of justice, the House of Representatives, where impeachment is the indictment that will bring you to justice.

So, it reads: "Impeaching Donald John Trump, President of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors."

It goes on to read: "Resolved, That Donald John Trump, President of the United States, is an abuser of Presidential power who, if left in office, will continue to promote the incitement of violence"—and he has a done a job—I almost said "a good job," but I hate to use "good" in this context. He has "engender[ed] invidious hate,

undermine[d] our democracy, and dissolve[d] our Republic, that he is impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors, and that the following Articles of Impeachment be exhibited to the United States Senate."

They were first exhibited to the House. The House took a vote. One hundred forty persons voted for the impeachment. We had another 47, I believe, who chose to vote "present."

For these 140, I have the courage to present to you this document in this fine piece of cover that has a very soft texture to it. We will present this to you. I want to read what it says above the patriotic 140.

□ 1150

It reads: Patriotism means to stand.

Where do you stand in times of challenging controversy? Remember Dr. King.

Patriotism means to stand by the country in times of challenging controversy.

That is what patriotism means: Stand by the country. Patriotism means to stand by the country. It does not mean to stand by the President.

Patriotism means to stand by the country. It does not mean to stand by the President.

Dr. King, today we honor your profound words in the ultimate measure of the man. As it was said at that time, the ultimate measure of the person is not where the person stands in times of comfort and convenience but where does a person stand in times of challenge and controversy.

The answer is from Theodore Roosevelt. I am a bipartisan guy. The answer is: Patriotism means to stand by the country. It does not mean to stand by the President.

This is Dr. King's birthday. I thought it most appropriate to pay tribute to the 140 patriotic Americans who took a stand.

For those who have concluded that there will not be impeachment: You are wrong.

It is the only solution available to prevent the next Donald Trump, the next would-be, from assuming the position that this Donald Trump has taken and imposed the kinds of horrific atrocities on society that this Donald Trump is the imposing.

We need to impeach right here and send it over to the Senate. The Senate would have a trial. Impeach, convict—conviction takes place in the Senate—and remove. The Senate has the power to do this. This is the solution.

I understand that the network television programs, for the most part—there are some exceptions, but for the most part, they stand with Donald Trump. Donald Trump does not want to be impeached. He as much as said so, and the networks don't want him impeached. They have said so. I have listened to many persons associated with the networks, and they said so. They don't want to see impeachment.

I differ with them. By the way, when you differ with them, they won't let

you say that. This is a free-speech country when people will allow you to speak broadly on their networks. So they are not going to let you do that. You won't see me on CNN. You won't see me on MSNBC, but you will hear from me here as long as I am allowed to speak because I just believe in speaking truth about power, not just speak truth to power, but speak truth about power.

Speak truth to power, you say: Power, there is a problem. Let's solve it.

Speak truth about power, you say: Power, there is a problem, and you are it.

That is just as I did from that seat right over to my right when the President was up at that podium and I told him he didn't have a mandate to cut Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security.

The networks are a status quo institution for the most part. They want to maintain things as they are. I am not a status quo Representative. I want to see change, positive change, change that can make a difference in the lives of people.

I tell you this, Mr. Speaker, if we don't speak up, stand up, and meet the ultimate measure of the person that Dr. King calls to our attention, it may be too late at some point within the next 3 years for us to do so. Because this President is showing us that he intends to become a dictator. To a certain extent, he is already, to a limited extent, a dictator.

So we have to take back our power to declare war while we can before it is too late. We have got to take back the authority in the Constitution to have a separation of powers while we can before it is too late. We have got to stand up to this President.

Dr. King, that is what you would have us do. I believe you would have us take a stand.

I believe that Dr. King would not sit silently by and witness what has taken place now and do it without taking a stand.

Not everybody has to take a stand to impeach. Some people decided that they would peacefully protest. I am a peaceful protester. I will stand by people who peacefully protest. I will not stand by people who do not peacefully protest. If you introduce violence, then you just lost me. I am not with you. It doesn't matter who you are, I am not with you.

The ultimate measure of the person in times of challenge and controversy is with the Constitution of the United States of America. That is where I am, and that is where I stand. I assure you as I stand here, I want you to know, Mr. Speaker, that we who believe that Dr. King should be commemorated ought to commemorate his life respectfully.

There is nothing wrong with commemorating his life by engaging in peaceful protest. There is nothing wrong with commemorating his life by

standing on the authority vested in the Constitution of the United States of America which is imparted to us. The words are without us they just become words. We give meaning to the Constitution.

So there is nothing wrong with taking that stand. Stand on the Constitution of the United States of America. Dr. King, I know that is what you would have us do.

That is what I encourage others to do.

I assure you, Dr. King, I am going to bring additional Articles of Impeachment to a vote on the floor of the House of Representatives.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHMIDT). Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President and to direct their remarks to the Chair.

□ 1200

MISGUIDED POLICY IN CALIFORNIA

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. KILEY of California was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.)

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, every so often there comes along a policy so misguided, so self-destructive, so just utterly stupid that it has catastrophic consequences before it is even adopted.

Such is the case with the newly proposed wealth tax in the State of California, a proposal that is the height of folly, the height of insanity. The proposal would seize the assets, 5 percent of the net worth of citizens of our State who are purported to have a net worth over a billion dollars. Of course, that will simply be the first line that is drawn, with inevitably lower net worth levels ensnared in the future.

This measure, which would be adopted this November and put into effect next year, has a peculiar provision in it stating that it would apply even to people who are no longer residents of the State at the time of its enactment. It would apply to anyone who was a resident of California up until January 1 of this year, even though it doesn't take effect until January 1 of next year.

Those who would be affected by it got word that this is coming. Guess what they did? They made sure that they were not here as of January 1 of this year. For example, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, the founders of Google, have relocated from California because one analysis suggests that under this proposal the government could seize \$60 billion from each of them.

There are reports now that already \$1 trillion in net worth has exited California simply in anticipation of this policy being adopted. They simply can't take the risk. One person with

knowledge of the affected individuals said that 80 to 90 percent of them either will leave the State or have left already, not to mention those who don't quite meet that threshold but know that they will be next, who have already left or are looking at an exit strategy.

The consequences of this growing exodus cannot be overstated when it comes to the future of our State. Number one, with all of these high-net-worth individuals leaving, they are, of course, taking all of the taxes that they pay with them, so the State Treasury no longer receives anything.

Now, obviously, this is a drain on the Treasury. It would be in any State, but in particular in California because of the unusual extent to which our State relies on the highest earners.

In some years, our State budget, our State income tax revenue gets 50 percent of its total revenues from the top 1 percent of earners. When you see those people leaving the State, it means that the house of cards that is our State's finances will come tumbling down.

We also should note the impact this is going to have on the startup community in California, which is so central to our State's identity, vitality, and economic prosperity and so central to what has made California such a vital part of the American economy and such a driving force in progress all around the world.

However, because this proposal would seize liquid assets, would demand 5 percent of an individual's net worth even though they are assessing assets of all kinds, what that would mean for a startup that has a very high paper value—based simply upon the way that startups receive their valuation, for example, based upon a multiple of an initial seed investment—then essentially you would have startups that would be forced to liquefy their assets or would simply not be able to pay this bill. Therefore, it would no longer be viable to be a startup in California. The entire ecosystem would cease to function as it does now.

It is worth mentioning, by the way, that this exodus has been an ongoing phenomenon in California. It is not just limited to those who are of a high net worth. For the sixth straight year, U-Haul has just ranked California as number one in the country in outbound U-Haul rentals, in people leaving the State. It is usually not the wealthiest people. It is people who simply can't afford to get by in California because of the inordinately high cost of living.

This proposed wealth tax would take this trend to an entirely new level in a way that would make it so California is a failed State, is no longer viable as a political entity. That is why we need to make sure that this provision does not pass. In addition, importantly, we need to make sure that the unconstitutional scheme whereby former residents would be ensnared is not allowed to even begin to be executed.

That is why I am working on legislation here in the House of Representatives, Federal legislation to preempt that provision, which I believe is unconstitutional under the Commerce Clause, but we need to have express preemption in law to make sure that at the very least people do not feel the need to leave in anticipation of this measure or a future such measure passing.

Now that we have discussed this absolutely insane proposal, I want to take a closer look at the California State budget as it now stands because this last week we got an announcement from the Governor that the State will be spending \$348.9 billion in the coming fiscal year.

Now, notably, that is a massive increase over what the State spent just last year, and it is nearly double what the budget was when Gavin Newsom became Governor in 2019. At the time Newsom was sworn in, our State budget was \$197.5 billion, already quite high. During his tenure, he has increased the budget to \$348.9 billion, in the process putting the State's finances in dire straits.

A columnist for the San Francisco Chronicle noted that Newsom's gift to his successor is a \$22 billion deficit. The State's nonpartisan legislative analyst came out with an absolutely scathing report, calling the State's financial situation and the Governor's budget "alarming." The report raised "serious concerns about the State's fiscal sustainability" and noted that the Governor's budget does not materially address those concerns.

This, by the way, isn't even to mention the massive around \$1 trillion—shortfall when it comes to funding the State's long-term liabilities, the unfunded liabilities that we have in the State.

Let's just look at this increase in the size of the budget. Remember, this wealth tax is being offered on the premise that we need even more revenue. Over the course of this Governor's tenure, California's budget has grown by 75.7 percent.

Now, you might say, well, maybe that is what other States are doing, too. Surely, other States have increased their budget. However, they have not increased their budget nearly as much as California has.

Florida, for example, has a \$78.6 billion budget. That is compared to \$349 billion in California. Over that same period, Florida's budget grew by 56 percent, Ohio's budget grew by 36 percent.

You might say, well, those are red States, what about comparing California to other blue States? Well, Massachusetts' budget grew by 44 percent, New York's budget grew by 37 percent, while California's budget grew by 75.7 percent during that time period.

Now, you might say, okay, we are spending more, but surely the people of California are getting something worthwhile in return for this massive increase in tax revenue, this massive