

Just a few decades ago the thought of a Catholic President was outrageous and the thought of a Pope addressing a Joint Session of Congress was far-fetched, just about as far-fetched as a Black President of the United States, a woman President, or a Latino Pope from Latin America.

Over the decades, in fits and starts, marching forward, being pushed back, marching forward again arm in arm, we have spent more time listening to our better angels and their advice, taking us toward a brighter future as a Nation and less time listening to our darker influences who lament progress and seek to divide us from one another.

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I think, in this Capitol Building, in this Chamber, when the Pope speaks to us, we will see two paths in very sharp relief. Build a wall or build a bridge? Help our brother or turn our backs? Belittle our sister or share her heavy load? Incite distrust and division or foster unity to face our challenges because we are stronger together?

For this Catholic American, for this man who has sometimes struggled with the church and is not always welcome because of my support for women's health, a woman's right to a legal abortion, LGBT, I am so looking forward to the Pope's visit because I feel my Nation needs him more than ever before.

#### CHINA'S AGGRESSIVE SOUL

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there are five entities that have mischief and aggression on their minds—of course, ISIS, Iran, Russia, North Korea, and China.

Recently, while the President preached climate change in Alaska, three Chinese combat ships got closer to the Alaskan coast than ever before. Military experts say this was the first time Chinese ships were in that area, just the latest example of China expanding its military operation globally.

One expert said:

The Chinese Navy is taking on more and more of an expeditionary character . . . the Chinese Navy is going global.

He is correct. China has massively built up its military and uses it to project its power in Asia and other places. Like Russia's invasion of Ukraine, China is taking over territory while the United States just watches.

There has been a fivefold increase in China's military expenditures since 1997. It is stockpiling nuclear weapons. A recent Pentagon report revealed that China is upgrading its ballistic missile delivery systems with multiple independently targeted reentry vehicles, or MIRV, technology. What that means in layman's terms is they can send one missile with several nuclear warheads; one could hit New York, and one could hit Texas.

The Beijing Navy is taking control of disputed areas and intimidating other countries in the region who have rightful claims to the South China Sea. This is a poster, Mr. Speaker, of 1999—I know you can't see the background, but this is Beijing in the South China Sea area from Australia to almost Alaska and east and west Guam to Indonesia—1999 military might of the Chinese depicted here by planes, ships, and submarines and U.S. military might about the same in 1999.

What is it today? Let's look at the same map, superimposed with Chinese buildup since 1999. In 2015, you don't have to be real smart to understand the Chinese are building more airplanes, now aircraft carriers, more ships, and lots of nuclear submarines and conventional submarines. The United States, we are about the same with our military might in the area. That is today.

This ratio here is a missile that can be fired in this region.

Now, let's project just 5 years and see what the Chinese will have in 2020 in the same area, same region. United States, we are about the same—but, look, planes, nuclear carriers, now intercontinental ballistic missiles, more ships, more submarines, Chinese military might, 2020 and today or in 1999.

We should be concerned about Chinese aggressive tendencies. In December 2013, China also began a bold land-reclaiming project in the South China Sea in an effort to increase its influence. What does that mean? That means that the Chinese are going in the South China Sea and they are dredging areas and making islands in the South China Sea. On some of these islands, it intends to build runways. I wonder what for.

Not only does China claim these newly created lands, but it also claims exclusive maritime rights in vast surrounding areas in the South China Sea. This has rightfully rattled our allies in the region. Not only has China become an economic giant, but it is a military bully in the area.

China, of course, is a state-run communist country. There is no telling what China could do and what would happen to the global economy if China insists on controlling the sea lanes. Is China becoming like the Barbary pirates of old that used to control the Mediterranean? Is that what China is going to do in the South China Sea? Who knows.

Other countries in the area are looking for the United States to lead. They haven't forgotten what China did the last time China was an imperial power. For over 1,000 years, until the 20th century, China required other countries that wanted to trade in Asia to pay tribute to China. That meant kneeling down before the emperor and paying heavy taxes. It was an extortion plan.

Our friends in Asia don't want that to happen again. This is not a time to sit back and let the chips fall where

they may in Asia. The United States should care about what China is doing because China's brazen move toward colonization of the South China Sea shows that Beijing is determined to expand its military and economic influence in the entire area.

What is the United States going to do? Are we going to do the same as we did with Russia and just watch? The region and the world both are looking for the United States to lead. We should lead because that is the responsibility of the world's most important democracy.

This should concern the entire world, not just the South China Sea area. Also, these lack of resources should concern Americans.

And that is just the way it is.

#### END HUNGER NOW

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, supporting healthy families and strong communities starts with access to healthy food, but for many families, it is a struggle just to put food on the table. A growing body of research shows why we should all be concerned with hunger as a health issue.

For the 49 million Americans who struggle with food insecurity—or hunger—access to nutritious food and enough healthy food is a real challenge that can have serious negative health consequences far beyond just a growling stomach.

Hunger can exacerbate underlying medical conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and cancer and can result in life-threatening complications; not only that, hunger can result in more trips to the emergency room and more hospitalizations which only increases healthcare costs across the board.

A recent article in the Canadian Medical Association Journal found that households with low food security had 49 percent higher healthcare costs than those who didn't have to worry about where their next meal was coming from. Healthcare costs were an astonishing 121 percent higher for those with very low food security.

Similarly, a 2014 article in the journal Health Affairs reported that hospitals saw a 27 percent increase in hypoglycemia cases among low-income individuals at the end of the month as compared to the beginning of the month.

You might wonder why that is. The sad truth is that these cases of hypoglycemia—or low blood sugar—are likely more prevalent at the end of the month because this is when SNAP benefits run out for many individuals and their families.

When families don't have enough to eat, their health suffers. We hear time and time again that the current monthly SNAP benefit is inadequate. That families must scramble to cobble