

then probation. Why? Because the judge decided that prison would severely impact Bruder.

Well, Mr. Speaker, isn't that the point?

Even evidence showed the defendant had no remorse and was smug at the trial.

I was a prosecutor and a judge in Texas for over 30 years. I met a lot of rape victims and learned that their lives were forever devastated by rapists.

Mr. Speaker, sexual assault is never the fault of the victim, contrary to what Judge Follett thinks. Judge Follett got it wrong, Mr. Speaker. He got it wrong in this case. It is time for him to pack his toothbrush and leave the bench.

And that is just the way it is.

INTRODUCING THE UNITED STATES-ISRAEL AGRICULTURE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP ACT

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

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the United States-Israel Agriculture Strategic Partnership Act, H.R. 2659, a bipartisan bill that permanently authorizes the U.S.-Israel Binational Agricultural Research and Development program, otherwise known as BARD, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary.

I thank my co-introducer, Congressman YOHO, as well as you, Mr. Speaker, for being a cosponsor, and many others in the Florida delegation.

I could wax ecstatic and poetic about BARD, but let me just say this: the program works. It inspires healthy competition of good ideas. It is beneficial to both countries and provides a fantastic return on investment; over \$440 million worth of benefits for the United States and \$300 million of benefits for Israel.

BARD is focused on urgent goals like increasing agricultural productivity, particularly in hot and dry climates.

BARD is training the next generation of innovators through ag science workshops and postdoctoral fellowships. It funds programs in over 25 States, including our great State of Florida. It strengthens our relationship with our best ally in the Middle East: Israel.

This is a forward-looking, common-sense, bipartisan bill supported by experts and advocates on both sides of the aisle.

MEMORIAL DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAST) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may

have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I rise on the heels of Memorial Day to discuss what we must learn from those we specifically remember on this and every Memorial Day going forward.

All among us, every single person in this Chamber, every single person that visits here, we all have those days of the year where the history that is buried down deep inside of us is stirred up for whatever reason that may be. For some of us maybe it is that we lost a loved one right around Christmas and now we can't get through the holidays without remembering that person each year and the ways in which that person touched our life.

Maybe for others it was right around your birthday when you lost a loved one or somebody passed, and on each year on the celebration of your own life, you find yourself remembering the loss of that life, the loss of that friend.

Maybe for you that history is buried down inside and gets stirred up because of a certain smell in the air that brings you back to a time and place in your life. It can be hearing a special song that had meaning and somehow connected that person to you.

For others, maybe it is driving past a certain restaurant or an intersection or a park that really weighs heavily on your heart.

I find those feelings each and every day as I look down at my wrist and I read these bracelets with the names of friends who left this world in the most honorable way that any person can: in defense of our Nation.

Men like Army Ranger Medic Jonathan Peney. On his fourth tour in Afghanistan, he died on June 1, 2010, from wounds that he sustained while giving medical aid to another wounded Ranger. He was only 22 years old. When I speak to his mother, I know just how much she misses him.

Or Army Sergeant Justin Allen. He was killed on July 18, 2010. I can remember the last thing that I said to him. I remember the mission vividly that we were on, and I remember the Rangers who spoke about him the next day on the flight line as we sent him home.

I remember Bradley Rappuhn and Andrew Nicol and the compound that we were assaulting when they passed.

You know, for me and many others across this Nation, the day that stands out above all for us is a day that is just a few days from now. It is Memorial Day, the day that America has specifically set aside to remember the men and women that relinquished their life while serving in the United States Armed Forces. And it rests as the day that is most heavy on our hearts.

This day is so heavy on my heart that, to my shame, one year I asked

my wife, Brianna, that she and our children, Magnum and Maverick, not accompany me to the cemetery that I was going to be speaking at that Memorial Day. I asked that she stay at home with our two little boys.

I made that request because I didn't want my little boys to have to see me in pain. And at that point in life, I just wasn't strong enough. I wasn't strong enough to tell them why their daddy had tears or was crying on that day.

And today I try to be more courageous, and I try to tell my boys why I have tears on that and every Memorial Day. And whenever I hear the slow solemn hum of taps, whether it is on Memorial Day or Veterans Day or in the presence of some newly fallen comrade or playing on a TV in the background, I have to pause and wipe my eyes and regain my composure.

Or when I hear that cold crack of a 21-gun salute, I do find myself too numb to the sound of gunfire to be startled by it, but it still reverberates to my core as though I was struck by the shots myself. That is the pain that I feel.

You know, those little boys of mine, they need to know that there were brave men and brave women who showed strength and courage and patriotism with every fiber of their being on their behalf so that they may live free. That they may live free.

Think about that. They served never thinking about personal gain or personal sacrifice, but thinking about their personal contribution to our Nation. And as we find ourselves on the heels of Memorial Day, I believe every Member of this House, every Member of Congress, must reflect on every tear shed across this Nation, every empty seat at every dinner table, every name etched onto a piece of stone that is for a son or daughter of America who gave everything for the freedom and the life of others.

We in this Chamber must think daily about all the men and women who have fought and died for this cause, this Nation that they loved more than their own breath.

I think about those that I knew personally, those that I have heard about. I think about those who came long before me. And I ask myself every single day: Would they be proud of the work that we do in this Chamber, how we represent our Nation and the values that they fought for that they gave their life for? Would they want us as a member of their team?

I used to tell folks that, to date, in our theaters of war, I have lost 67 close friends. That used to be true. But the reality is I no longer know how many friends I have lost. I have stopped counting. What I know is that we must live the way that they lived every day: without excuse, without regret. Full throttle, as one of my friends used to say.

For some of them, their blood has stained my own uniform. Some of them I lost simply being on the same mission. And some were on other missions

in other places around the world. And each year on Memorial Day and many other days, I think most often of one of my friends specifically, Ranger Sergeant First Class Lance Vogeler, who, after four tours in Iraq and eight tours in Afghanistan, made the ultimate sacrifice on October 1, 2010, while in battle just a few short days after my own injury.

I know that he is deeply missed by me and all of his friends, and certainly by his wife and his two children that he left behind. You know, I can remember him telling me about them one night as we were in Afghanistan and he and I sat against a fence in the dark of night waiting for a helicopter to come and pick us up. I can remember him telling me about his family. I wasn't there when he passed, but I am told that his last words were of his wife and of his children.

I think often if he would be proud of the way that this place conducts itself. He is the definition of a hero. He is exactly what Memorial Day honors. And knowing him, I know that none of us here can measure up, but I want to know that we honor him and every other hero who is remembered officially in just a few days with our actions in here each and every day. We owe it to men like him to fight to make America the strongest version of itself that it could ever be.

I want us to honor each of those close friends that I have lost in our theaters of war and every other who has traded their life for our freedom, for our America, with their own actions on each day.

As we approach Memorial Day, I always remember well a lot of things about those friends. I remember their smiles. And I remember the jokes that we would play on each other. I can remember hiding somebody's gear or adding a big rock into their pack without them knowing, just to weigh it down, make them sweat a little bit more. And I can remember where they were from. I can remember the time that we spent training together, shooting together, jumping out of aircraft together, roping from helicopters together, blowing things up together. I can remember their hobbies, and I can remember their plans for what they wanted to do whenever they returned home. I can remember the pictures that they themselves would carry in their breast pocket of the ones that they loved most, just like the one that I would carry of my wife, Brianna, and our one son that I had at that time. I can remember their lifesaving actions on the battlefield. I can remember their acts of valor, and I can remember the way that we each confidently put our lives in each other's hands.

□ 1230

I remember some who are no longer with us today who placed themselves in the line of fire to carry me from the battlefield that I not become a casualty of war. I can remember their loy-

alty and their determination and their grit, and, for some of them, I can remember their last breaths. I can remember saluting their casket with the most beautiful flag that I have ever seen draped gracefully across it, and I can remember seeing that flag folded and handed to those whose pictures they had been carrying. I can remember seeing the way that those family members would cling to that flag.

As I remember these moments, I want to see, more than anything, that the way we, here in the House of Representatives, conduct ourselves honors the way those who gave the last beat of their heart conducted themselves on our behalf. If statues of those men and women surrounded our floor here, would they look onto each of us each day and would they swell with pride over our service, or would their hearts sink? Would they turn away and be ashamed? Would they look on and be proud?

The goal of American heroes has always been country first, themselves second. They knew, those who gave on behalf of this place, that the establishment of this country, the maintenance of America, its safety, the protection of each and every citizen is not a product of chance. It is not a product of luck. It is not a product of indifference. So they stood between every American and evil with purpose and resolve regardless of what it was going to cost them.

They knew the job was never easy, it was never safe, it was always dangerous, and it was almost always deadly. While they may have disagreed on how to conduct a mission, I know they never wished for the failure of their comrade or, for that matter, the failure of any American ever. They certainly never wished for the failure of the leaders of our Nation.

My office is in the Rayburn House Office Building, and in one of our entrances is the name of each who has fallen in the war on terror listed year by year. All of those friends of mine are listed there. When I see them, I stop, and I think about them every single time. I wish that the name of every single American who has fallen well in defense of our Nation adorned each and every wall of this Chamber in here, as it does in my office building, that we would look on each time we speak on this floor and question ourselves as to whether our motives are as pure as their motives were.

Every American child, every adult, every man and woman has the limitless opportunities to enjoy their life, to become whatever it is in the world they want to be, to achieve whatever they have the courage to attempt and the determination and the fortitude to spend themselves in fully to accomplish. That limitless opportunity each citizen has and each of us in here in the House is afforded has been paid for with the blood and the spirit of men and women who traded their own life to fulfill an oath to our great Nation.

Their oath was the same that we as Members of Congress vow to fulfill: to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; to bear true faith and allegiance to the same; to take that obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion, so help us God.

And though we take that same oath, I know we do not always show the same commitment. Those heroes never thought about what was easy or popular to masses or what they would get out of their actions. It was not reelection on the line for them. It was their life on the line, and they gave it freely.

As I think about Memorial Day, I wish we could, daily, see every heroic name across our walls here and recall the harrowing stories of the Second World War and the over 400,000 U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine, Coastguardsman, and each and every Merchant Marine who fought and died in Europe and in the Pacific and in Africa for the freedom of the entire world from being ruled by an evil and intolerant empire. They died in places named Ardennes Forest and Midway and Guadalcanal.

I wish we thought about each vote we took and looked at the names of our over 36,000 servicemembers who would never return home from the frozen mud of Korea and think is that what they fought for at the Chosin Reservoir. I wish we could recount the names and the stories of the over 58,000 servicemembers who died in combat or while captured or who went through torture and starvation before giving their life or while missing as a part of the Vietnam war in places like Khe Sanh and Saigon.

I wish we saw the names of the servicemembers who put their country first and themselves second while serving in the Dominican Republic or Iran or El Salvador or Beirut or Grenada or Panama or the Persian Gulf as we thought about what we will say when we are given the chance to speak on this floor and if our words would be worth even one second of their life.

I wish we could think about the Delta operators or the Army Rangers or the Black Hawk pilots who gave it all in the dusty sands of Somalia, Medal of Honor recipients like Master Sergeant Gary Gordon and Sergeant First Class Randall Shughart, who volunteered to go into a situation that they knew would claim their life in order to save their fellow fighters. They were devoted to their duty, and their duty was to their brothers and to their country.

Or those who fought and died in Bosnia and Kosovo and on the USS Cole, and all those who fought in places that we may never know because of threats to us that we never even knew existed, we need to ask if they would give the last beat of their heart for the way in which we legislate our country.

Most personally for me, I would think deeply on the thousands of soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, coast-guardsmen who defended this country with the last beat of their heart in a place like Iraq or Afghanistan or Syria, would they be proud. These were the men and women who I served alongside, men and women who served selflessly and repeatedly year after year, knowing full well the hazards of their profession.

I couldn't be more proud than to have the few moments that I did with the best and the most honorable that our Nation has ever produced, who sacrificed their whole self because it was best for the men and women to their left and to their right in battle, because it was best for the freedom and the liberty and the security of every person. I don't know how to ever make the pain of their loss go away. I do know how to honor them. We do it with the way that we live each day going forward that they do not have the opportunity to live.

They would want every American to cherish the gift of freedom that they have been given by God, which was defended by those angels whose names are now etched in row after row of plain white markers in Arlington National Cemetery. They would want us all to live exactly as they lived: with no regrets, loving this country more than we loved ourselves, fighting as hard as they fought, never quitting, never giving up. We owe it to them to do so, to not ask ourselves what we can take for ourselves, but to ask what we, ourselves, can give.

I want my kids to grow up honoring these men and these women who have sacrificed. I want my young boys to know that they get to give me a hug or a smile, but there are men and women who are willing to risk never having one more of those from their own families, and I want them to live the way that those heroes lived. I want my children to know it is honorable to have the courage to mourn them, and I want them to have the resolve to not squander the opportunities which have been paid for with the selfless blood of every American warrior.

I get grief in my heart when I think of all those who have gone in defense of our flag, but I also think about each of the great warriors that they were, and I smile because there can be no more honorable way to leave this world than in a pile of brass while fighting for the greatest nation ever to be established on the face of this Earth.

We here need to think of the thousands who gave their lives selflessly, without expectation of anything in return, true selfless servants serving simply to do what was best for the United States of America. Some were infantrymen; some were mortarmen; some were engineers or tankers or something else. They were men and women who, through the ages, created the reputation and the legacy and the tradition that made me say: "That is what I

want to be. That is how I want to serve. That is how I want to help."

Here, we must learn from those who we think about most on Memorial Day. We need to look at them and their names and their lives and their stories and their sacrifice and demand the same thing out of ourselves. They pushed through the cold. They pushed through the snow. They pushed without adequate supplies. They fought back tanks. They always pushed forward in the face of bombarding artillery. They pushed so hard that their weapon would overheat. They pushed through trench foot. They did it with fixed bayonets, which they used to defend their own foxholes and then used them to carve our enemy out of their foxholes. They stayed in the fight when they were wounded, even though it would certainly mean a bitter end that was very far from home.

They did not stop because they were tired. They did not stop because they were exhausted or freezing or hungry. They did it even though they had to sleep on the ground or sleep in the field or sometimes never sleep at all. They only stopped when the job was done. They only stopped when the mission was accomplished. This is the grit with which Americans have always defended America.

We have taken that same oath in this House, and American heroes, they set the precedent for every generation about how to do that job. To do it for them was not just a job or a paycheck, it was a calling. It was a calling that few have the stomach to undertake and that, certainly, even fewer still are capable of ever doing. It requires uncommon characteristics such as courage and valor and selflessness.

Today those words are thrown around very lightly by many, but those we remember on Memorial Day have actually lived and breathed the definition of these characteristics.

They did it by flying aircraft or driving armored vehicles. They did it by setting sail with the most powerful fleet ever seen on our seas. They did it by yoking their bodies with a rifle or a pistol, by carrying hundreds of rounds of ammunition and hundreds of pounds of gear, wearing a helmet and explosives, carrying everything that they required to save the life of another servicemember as well as everything that they needed to survive for days or months on end.

They did it while being targeted by snipers, while having bombs or mortars or grenades hurled at them, while having an RPG fired at them. They did it while walking in fields of mines and improvised explosive devices. They did it by carrying that load for miles and days across mountains, across rolling hills, and through fields and forests and rivers.

They did it while carrying letters for their friends, which they promised to deliver to their family should anything ever happen to them. They did it while missing births and birthdays and ball

games and bath times and holidays and every other good time that they missed with their families. They did it in the face of mortal combat. They did it while holding both the lives of their friends and the lives of our enemies in their hands.

We honor those we remember who are not with us today by taking no charge more seriously than honoring their sacrifice with the lives that we now live. What those heroes have done in defense of our Nation can never be taken away from them. We must remember that so, too, what we do here in defense cannot be taken away by the years that pass if we endeavor to be warriors, willing to defend America at any and all costs.

Those we remember are a testament to the importance of the values and ideals sewn into the fabric of our Nation, the absolutes. And all I can say is: Thank God for men and women like that, for creating such patriots for us to revere as the standard by which all other Americans should serve America.

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

□ 1245

ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GALLAGHER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ), my friend.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, as a Floridian, I have to take a moment to share my gratitude to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAST) for the remarks he just shared.

During my occupancy of the rostrum, my own eyes welled with tears as I thought of the empty chairs at the table in my own district and all throughout the country as people, as families have made sacrifice and sent those to fight for us.

I can only be reminded, hearing the gentleman from Florida's remarks, that each and every day in this House we do fall short of that great patriotism that is reflected by our servicemen and -women: We could do better; we could be more worthy of the sacrifice; we could resist the influences of special interests more; we could make the tough decisions that are necessary; we could put America on a better footing forward.

It is my belief and my sincere hope, by hearing the words of my colleague, by raising our gaze to an even broader and more accepting patriotism, that we can do it. And I believe Mr. MAST will be one of the people that lead us in that regard.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Florida for those remarks. Mr. GAETZ represents the First District of Florida, a brother in arms,