

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the world witnessed the single worst performance by an American President on the world stage in world history. It was a culmination of the worst week an American President has ever had. As a citizen, I am shocked and embarrassed for our Nation.

Given evidence, indictments, and facts, the President was given the choice of taking America's side or taking President Putin's side. The President chose Putin. I believe the American people, our Armed Forces, our allies, our lawmakers, and the President's own Cabinet deserve an immediate apology from the President for his actions.

Having insulted and demeaned our closest military allies and trading partners, the President doubled down by insulting world leaders individually and in public, especially those who are most friendly to the United States. It was disgraceful.

The President even went as far as to say that Germany is totally controlled by Russia, a comment that makes the President quite literally the laughing stock of the world. To then go on and take President Putin's side in defending the Kremlin's attack on the United States—an attack which this Congress, our intelligence and law enforcement agencies, our allies, and the American people know in fact took place—was nothing short of treasonous.

The President has proven himself unable to separate his own personal interests from his current job as leader of the free world and has consistently, repeatedly, and now, in full view of the world, definitively put his own interests above those of the United States and the free world by siding with the petty, antidemocratic dictator of our international rival.

The campaign of repression and the straight-up murder of political and business rivals by President Putin is well established. It is not something any American leader can or should debate. Using foreign agents to murder people overseas is the Kremlin's MO, and the President seems to feel that is okay.

Let us not forget that Russia, on more than one occasion, has allowed paranoia, fear, and impunity to escalate to such a level that they have literally shot passenger airliners out of the sky, killing all on board.

Invading other countries and using the pretext of national security to expand the Russian empire is not only condoned by this President, apparently, in some ways, he is seeking to emulate Putin's behavior by using national security as a pretext for trade wars with our closest allies and for policies to take babies, toddlers, and other children from people lawfully seeking asylum in the United States.

Russia is not a government to be condoned; it is a government to be contained. Yet our President was unable to be critical of the dictator of our greatest rival in public—and God knows what he did in private.

Mr. Speaker, it is well established that I believe our current President is a threat to American democracy, which is why I was one of the first Members of Congress to sign on to Articles of Impeachment last year. I have already begun consulting with my colleagues about whether those Articles of Impeachment can be expanded and updated to include the betrayal witnessed by the American people in the world this week.

While it is already a full-time job, I will redouble my efforts to prevent the House of Representatives from taking actions to actively obstruct justice and undermine law enforcement and the FBI, while seeking to give the President cover and relief from a genuine, thorough investigation into the attack on our country by the Russians in 2016 and the attacks that are continuing to this day.

This body, the House, the institution that I love so much and have served for more than 25 years, cannot be sullied or diminished by this President or his inability to see the facts about the attack on the United States.

As a body, we must take action to relieve the President of his duties. Most Americans probably doubt that the House of Representatives is even up to the task of being fair, being honest, being impartial enough to call a spade a spade when it comes to Russian aggression.

But I call on my fellow Democrats and my fellow Members on the other side of the aisle: If you still believe in truth, if you believe in democracy, if you believe in the rule of law and our Constitution, you will join me in holding this President accountable for his actions, in holding Russia accountable for the attacks on the United States and her people, and will stand up to defend your country and not just your party or your own income and career.

This is a moment of destiny when the House as an institution must rise to the occasion. Mr. Speaker, the whole world is watching.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

#### CONDEMNING EVO MORALES' DEPLORABLE HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, following the Castro playbook, Evo Morales has taken systematic steps to curtail the basic rights of the people of Bolivia and solidify his legacy to maintain his evil grip on power.

Evo Morales has ruled Bolivia for over 12 years and expects to do so indefinitely. Two years ago, he imposed a constitutional referendum to eliminate presidential term limits so that he could run for yet another term, his fourth term, in 2019.

After a resounding "no" vote from the people of Bolivia, this thug turned to the courts, which he totally controls, to stomp on the will of the people. The courts sided with him—what a surprise—and went as far as declaring that Morales' indefinite reelection is a human right. What an insult that is to the Bolivian people and to all of us who cherish true democratic ideals.

Just like Castro, Evo Morales also continues to clamp down on the opposition, sending his national police to deploy repressive tactics and silence dissent brutally. Just last month, his henchmen killed a young student from the Public University in the city of El Alto, where students peacefully protested, calling for additional resources for their university.

The latest State Department human rights report states that Morales' power over the judicial system, the denial of a fair and timely public trial, and prosecutions of political opponents are at the top of his human rights abuses, his greatest hits.

It is no wonder that over 1,200 Bolivian political exiles are now living in Brazil, Peru, Paraguay, Spain, and here in our wonderful country, including my lovely south Florida community.

Mr. Speaker, Evo Morales' anti-imperialist rhetoric, expelling all of our agencies—DEA, USAID, and the U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia—and his coziness with rogue regimes are just further proof of the threat his regime poses for the stability and security of our allies in our hemisphere and beyond.

Using Bolivia's status as a nonpermanent member of the United Nations Security Council, Morales has sided with Syria and its abysmal human rights record; undermined our ally, the democratic Jewish State of Israel; and consistently attacked the United States and our efforts to uphold and promote the values of freedom and democracy in the region and around the world.

Simply put, Morales is no friend of democratic values, and just like the dictatorships in Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua, his regime has solidified control at the expense of the people and our own national security interests.

The Bolivian people need our help, Mr. Speaker, and we must start paying attention to what is happening right here in our own hemisphere.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF ROBERT TRAURIG

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I was saddened to hear of the passing of Robert Traurig, a revered leader who helped build south Florida and someone who Dexter and I proudly called a dear friend. Bob passed away recently, but he left an incredible legacy of legal brilliance and leadership in our community.

Founder of Greenberg Traurig in 1967, which is now one of the world's top and largest law firms, Bob was an expert zoning lawyer who helped develop Miami-Dade County into the metropolitan area that it is today.

Bob was influential in expanding Brickell Avenue and Coconut Grove, areas which I proudly represent and are central residential communities that also attract thousands of visitors every year. He also led efforts for the development of the Florida Grand Opera and Performing Arts Center Foundation, among many other enterprises.

Bob constantly fought for the best interests of his clients and our communities, and the mark he left on south Florida is evidence of his remarkable passion. Bob Traurig's work to develop Miami-Dade County, in addition to his charitable and philanthropic spirit, will become the lasting legacy of this dedicated leader.

Farewell, my friend.

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#### HONORING CONNIE KURTZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI) for 5 minutes.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Connie Kurtz, an LGBT rights activist who passed away recently at the age of 81.

Connie was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, where she met and fell in love with the woman who would become her wife, Ruthie Berman. Ruthie and Connie became a couple in 1974, long before same-sex couples were afforded equal rights.

Ruthie was a school counselor, and, in 1988, they found themselves at the forefront of the gay rights movement when they joined two other couples and sued the New York Department of Education for domestic partner benefits for same-sex couples. Their advocacy led to the city extending healthcare benefits to same-sex couples in 1994.

Ruthie and Connie's activism did not stop there. They continued to fight for LGBT rights, including rights for older LGBT Americans. They recognized the unique healthcare, social, emotional, and housing needs of our aging LGBT population, and they sought to help minimize these disparities.

I am honored to have introduced the Ruthie and Connie LGBT Elder Americans Act with my colleagues Congressman TED DEUTCH and Congressman CHARLIE CRIST. This legislation defines LGBT seniors as a vulnerable population, requires the Health and Human Services Assistant Secretary of Aging to collect data on the unique needs of this population, and provides grants for service organizations that are working to improve the health and long-term outcomes of the aging LGBT population.

Since Connie's passing, Ruthie has vowed to continue her activism. Ruthie said of her wife: "Connie took on responsibilities as an activist with the belief that her role had a beginning, a middle, and an end. Working to pass the Ruthie and Connie LGBT Elder Americans Act was Connie's last political action before she passed away on

May 27, 2018. I hope Congress will honor Connie by passing this law so, like Connie, all LGBT older adults can age with the dignity and respect they deserve. Let's make this happen."

Mr. Speaker, I couldn't agree with her more. Today, in honor of Connie's life, I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this legislation. Together, we can take another step toward equality for LGBT older Americans.

#### HONORING CORPORAL JOSEPH MACIEL

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Corporal Joseph Maciel of the Third Infantry Division, who died in the line of duty in Afghanistan on July 7.

Corporal Maciel was an excellent soldier who had served in the Army for 2 years in the Third ID. He had been stationed in Afghanistan since February of this year. His quality work ethic, positive attitude, and honorable service earned him a number of accolades, including the Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, and the Army Service Ribbon. He was highly respected by his fellow soldiers.

Corporal Maciel's passing occurred during an insider attack in Afghanistan in which two other soldiers were wounded. As our soldiers risk their lives in Afghanistan and other nations to spread the values of democracy, we must keep our soldiers and their families in our thoughts and prayers.

#### HONORING CAPTAIN MICHAEL MCFADDEN

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Captain Michael McFadden of the Savannah Fire Department, who lost his life in the line of duty earlier this year at 44 years of age.

A life dedicated to public service, Captain McFadden served in the United States Marine Corps for 8 years before joining the Savannah Fire Department. His high level of training and successful missions allowed him to rise through the ranks from master firefighter to, eventually, captain.

Captain McFadden collapsed suddenly one day with a heart problem. Unfortunately, firefighters are at high risk for severe cardiac problems because of their strenuous physical activity, emotional stress, exposure to pollutants, and smoke inhalation.

With more than a million firefighters across the U.S., I hope that everyone will keep these brave men and women in their thoughts as they go to work each day to keep us and our communities safe.

Captain McFadden's family will continue to be in our thoughts and prayers.

#### HONORING RONNIE THOMPSON

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of

Mr. Ronnie Wayne Thompson, who passed away Sunday, July 8, at the age of 71.

A lifetime resident of Savannah in Georgia's First Congressional District, Mr. Thompson is leaving a lasting legacy on the city. Mainly, he will be remembered for owning and operating the famous Mrs. Wilkes Boarding House restaurant, which serves some of the best home-style southern cooking in Savannah.

Founded by his grandmother-in-law, Mrs. Wilkes, Mr. Thompson did a seamless job of maintaining the quality of food and the southern atmosphere at the restaurant with which he worked for 40 years.

He was spotted often in downtown Savannah, enjoying coffee with friends, attending the St. Patrick's Day parade, and just generally making other people's days a little bit brighter.

He met his wife, Marcia, at the age of 12 on Tybee Island and spent a great deal of time there in his later years with his grandchildren.

A U.S. Marine Corps veteran, longtime Savannahian, small-business owner, husband, father, grandfather, and overall genuine person, Ronnie Thompson truly will be missed.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF TOM RHODES

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

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of regret that I cannot join family and friends of Jesse Thomas Rhodes, known as Tom, as he is laid to rest today.

Tom was, as he would often remind us, the first baby born on January 1, 1955, in Memphis, Tennessee. He is survived by his loving wife, Beth, and his children, Jessica and Robert.

Clarence Darrow once said: "Justice has nothing to do with what goes on in a courtroom; justice is what comes out of a courtroom."

Over the years, there has been many a lawyer in this great country who has dedicated his or her life to securing justice for their clients in courtrooms all across this land. Today, I pay tribute to those advocates and to Tom Rhodes, the lawyer.

Tom Rhodes was everything a lawyer should be. Tom Rhodes was a fierce advocate. Tom Rhodes was a compassionate counselor. Tom Rhodes was a consummate negotiator. Tom Rhodes communicated with a degree of clarity that always exposed the truth.

It was not his considerable courtroom presence, his skill as a lawyer, or the ferocity of his advocacy, however, that left such a lasting impression with most of the people with whom he crossed paths. Instead, it was his generosity and his infectious sense of humor that people will always remember.

He constantly made small gestures of kindness to total strangers. He went