

the legislation on the floor. They could do this now, but they refuse to, even though they have the power. Why won't they? Why won't they let us investigate? Why won't they let us have a vote?

America and the world is watching. They are wondering how long it will take for this Republican Congress to act. When will it be too much?

We have heard some Republican heroes like JOHN MCCAIN and others who have said this was the most horrific performance and that we must—must talk about this, and yet we don't. Why?

TIME TO REFLECT ON WHAT IT MEANS TO BE PATRIOTIC

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

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor because today is the birthday of my friend, my partner in the fight for justice and equality, Nelson Mandela.

During the height of the civil rights movement and the early days of the labor movement, you had to make a decision: Which side are you on?

So, Mr. Speaker, on this day, of all days, I cannot, I will not stay silent when our Nation, our democracy, and the American people are under attack. We fought too hard and too long to stand on the sidelines when so much is at stake.

When you see something that is not right, that is not just, you have to find a way to get in the way. You have to get in good trouble—necessary trouble.

Now is the time to wake up. It is time to be brave, bold, and courageous. During the American Revolution, people suffered and died for the dream of democracy, for the sacred right to vote, and for the ability to choose their representatives. Hundreds and thousands of men and women lost their lives to preserve our union and to defend our values.

What I saw on Monday was a shame, an embarrassment, and a disgrace to their legacy, their memory, and what they sacrificed. During times like these, I encourage every person to take some time and have what I call an executive session with themselves and their very souls. Because today, Mr. Speaker, each of us faces the question of what it means to be patriotic.

Ask yourself, do you stand with the American people or do you stand with a dictator? Do you stand with democracy or do you stand with a czar? Do you stand with friends and allies or do you stand with someone who approves violent attacks on the media, human rights advocates, and struggling democracies?

Mr. Speaker, the American House is on fire, it is burning, and if we are not mindful, if we are not watchful, this fire will consume us all.

The United States Constitution began with the words: "We, the People." You see, the Founding Fathers'

very first priority, the very first article was to outline the role and the responsibilities of the United States Congress in our system of checks and balances.

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The people who elected us are sounding the alarms. Never before has our constitutional mandate been more important. Never before have the pillars of our democracy been under attack.

Mr. Speaker, each and every one of us swore an oath of office. Whether Democrat or Republican, we all have an equal mission, an obligation, and a mandate to uphold this promise.

Mr. Speaker, the time has come, and the question is simple: Will you show up for duty?

Congress must speak up, we must speak out, and, Mr. Speaker, we must act. If we fail to do so, history and the American voters will not be kind.

The threat is occurring in realtime on our watch, and the ball is in our court. The clock is ticking, and there is no time to waste.

PRESIDENT TRUMP AND RUSSIA

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

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, President Trump had a straightforward mission in Europe last week: stand with our NATO allies and stand up to Russia's Putin. Instead, President Trump squandered U.S. influence and abdicated our leadership by abusing and dividing our allies and fawning over a tyrant who actively seeks to undermine our democracy.

While Putin may not be dictating American policy, President Trump is seemingly pushing forward his agenda. Putin wants to restore Russia as a great global power at the expense of the United States. He wants to expand Russian influence over Europe by weakening NATO and the European Union. In Putin's mind, when the United States and Europe flounder, Russia is stronger.

If Putin was calling the shots, he would have encouraged President Trump to criticize NATO and raise doubts on whether we would defend our allies if they haven't paid their bills. He would invite President Trump to undermine the European Union, our largest trading partner and investor, by lauding Brexit, denouncing trade, supporting antidemocratic populists, and undermining Germany and Chancellor Merkel. And that is exactly what happened.

Rather than projecting unity, President Trump's participation at the NATO summit generated nonstop images of division. Substantive issues received little or no attention.

Putin is the biggest winner from any disunity in NATO. During the Cold War, American and NATO troops held the line in Europe, containing and defeating the Soviet Union.

I served in Germany for 5 years at that time and witnessed firsthand how we won the Cold War. But we didn't do it through military power alone. We won because NATO military strength helped create the space for democratic dissidents in Eastern Europe to come together and bring down Soviet rule from within. This was the success of America's strategy—pursued by Presidents from Roosevelt to Kennedy, to Reagan—of advancing American values.

For seven decades, the NATO alliance has ensured that America's strength and influence are magnified around the globe. Our alliance has extended the promise of peace, security, and prosperity to much of the democratic world, and it has maintained the inviolable promise of collective defense.

America needed its allies after we were attacked on 9/11, and our allies came through. They fought and died with us.

And threats to our collective security have not vanished in the 21st century. These shared security challenges should have been at the top of President Trump's agenda, but they weren't.

Since Putin's annexation of Crimea, NATO has found renewed purpose and effectiveness, stepping up exercises and establishing the enhanced forward presence in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland.

Additional measures may be necessary to continue to confront Russian aggression. This includes Secretary Mattis' 30-30 plan to establish the readiness of 30 land battalions, 30 air fighter squadrons, and 30 ships ready to deploy within 30 days of being put on alert; Poland's proposal to bring more U.S. troops to the country and setting up a joint armored division with 15,000 American troops, and as many as 250 tanks and armored vehicles; and completion of the European missile shield by 2020. None of this was discussed.

Contrary to President Trump's declarations, NATO members have been increasing defense spending since 2014: almost \$46 billion, the biggest buildup by U.S. allies in 25 years.

NATO is also expanding its training mission in Afghanistan and launching a new one in Iraq, showcasing NATO's ongoing commitment to the fight against terrorism. Yet President Trump chose to deride our most important allies.

With as much passion as President Trump questions our European allies as freeloaders, his actions suggest a desire for a cozy relationship with Putin's Russia. Russia is one of our most aggressive adversaries, working to rupture the relationship between the United States and our closest partners, weaken our influence in the Middle East, and pose an ongoing cyber threat.

Other than elevating Putin and failing to mention Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, what good did President Trump accomplish during this summit? I have no answer as to why he, unlike any of his Republican or