

happened. Today, more nations than ever have nuclear weapons. North Korea's powerful underground nuclear explosion last week reminded us that testing continues. And there are great fears that terrorists could get nuclear weapons through the black market. Tragically, the United States has not done enough to stop the threat.

The previous administration turned its back on arms control. It practically laughed at America's obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It refused to push for Senate ratification of the comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and it proceeded with plans for the United States to develop new nuclear weapons, which undermined our ability to deal with North Korea and Iran.

Mr. Speaker, we must do better. The United States must lead. We must lead a new global effort to make the world nuclear free. It's the moral thing to do, and it's also smart politics. If we are seen as leading the fight for non-proliferation and disarmament, we will be in a much better position to convince the world community to put peaceful pressure on North Korea and Iran to give up their nuclear ambitions.

President Obama is already moving the right direction. In his speech in Prague on April 5, he promised to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy. He announced the new diplomatic effort with Russia to reduce warheads. He promised to work for ratification of the Test Ban Treaty, and he said he would seek a new treaty to end the production of fissile materials for use in nuclear weapons. I welcome all of these policies.

In fact, 3 days before the press speech in Prague, I introduced Resolution 333, which is called No Nukes. It calls upon the United States to take a number of important actions to end the nuclear threat. It calls upon the United States to pursue multilateral negotiations to produce verifiable steps that every country should take to eliminate their nuclear weapons. It calls for the United States and Russia to work together to end the deployment of nuclear weapons that are currently operational and can be launched on short notice. It urges the President to declare that so long as the United States has nuclear weapons, we will not—and I say we will not—use them first. It calls for ending the previous administration's policy of preventative warfare and ending our development of new weapons of mass destruction, and it calls for a ban on weapons in outer space.

I've also introduced House Resolution 363, which describes my Smart Security Platform for the 21st Century, which includes several initiatives to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction. It calls for beefing up inspections and regional security arrangements to stop proliferation. And it advocates more funding for the programs designed to keep Russian weapons and

materials from falling into the wrong hands.

I urge my colleagues, please examine both of these resolutions and support them. There is no time to waste. The world is getting more dangerous every single minute. And if there is a nuclear attack, we won't be able to save our lives by ducking under our desks like we were taught in grade school.

Mr. Speaker, America must move aggressively to end the nuclear menace. It's the most important thing we can do for our country, and it is the most important thing we can do for our children and our grandchildren.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

STOP AWARDING NO-BID CONTRACTS TO PRIVATE COMPANIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, just moments ago I gave notice of my intent to offer a privileged resolution asking that the House Ethics Committee look into the relationship between earmarks and campaign contributions and the link between PMA, the PMA Group that is currently under investigation by the Justice Department.

Now, it has been raised several times that this privileged resolution is a blunt instrument and that the Ethics Committee is really not designed to deal with such a resolution. And let me be the first to concede that point. These resolutions that I've offered—this is the ninth one that was offered tonight—they are a blunt instrument. The Ethics Committee is not designed to deal with an investigation of this magnitude, but it's the only instrument we've got at this point. We are really out of other options.

Right now as it stands, when Members of Congress request earmarks, they have to sign a statement saying that they have no financial interest in the earmark that they are pursuing; in other words, that a family member doesn't work on or for the firm receiving the earmark. But to receive campaign contributions in close proximity to that earmark request is not considered financial interest by the House Committee on Ethics, and the guidance that they've issued to Members is that that does not necessarily constitute financial interest. Yet we know that there are numerous investigations going on outside of this body by the Justice Department that have to do with earmarks and campaign contributions.

So out of an abundance of caution, I would hope that this institution would

say we need to stay above this fray, that when you can—when a Member of Congress has the ability to award a no-bid contract to a private company, and then executives in that private company—and the lobbyists that are retained by them—can turn around and make sizable campaign contributions to that same Member who awarded the no-bid contract, we are going to have problems here and we're going to have investigations go on. And it will continue to represent a cloud over this body, a cloud that rains on Republicans and Democrats alike.

This is not a partisan resolution. This is not a partisan problem. No one party is above this. Both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party have Members who are requesting earmarks for companies who then turn around and make sizable—I'm sorry—individuals in those companies turn around and make sizable contributions back to those same Members. And it is unbelievable that we continue to allow that to happen.

Now, I have said before, and I will say again, that I will stop offering this resolution as soon as we have an agreement not to allow the awarding of no-bid contracts for private companies. As soon as the leadership—both the Republicans and Democrats—agree in this body to stop that practice, to not have Members of Congress have the ability to award no-bid contracts—in other words, to get earmarks for private companies—then I will stop offering this resolution. It is a blunt instrument. I recognize that. The Ethics Committee is not really meant to deal with issues of this magnitude, but as long as we continue this practice and allow this to happen, then this institution is going to be under a cloud, as it is now.

So, again, I've noticed this resolution tonight. I don't have to call it up later this week. I would prefer not to. I would prefer not to have another vote on this resolution. But as long as we continue the practice of allowing Members of this body to award no-bid contracts to companies, private companies, who can then turn around and have their executives and the lobbyists they retain make sizable contributions to those same Members, and as long as we allow that practice to continue, we're going to need to address it somehow; and this is the only forum, this is the only vehicle that we're allowed right now.

So I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that we can bring this resolution to some type of conclusion, that we won't have to offer a 10th next week or in some week to come, that we can actually deal with this meaningfully. This institution deserves far better than we are giving it.

I think when most of us were elected, we believed that we had a higher purpose than to come here and grovel for crumbs that fall from appropriators' tables, that we're here to debate the great issues of our time. And when you