

of the information, even more so. I never saw any information that the MEK disclosed that was in any material respect inaccurate as far as we knew. And I thought this was significant in many respects because within the U.S. Government there was a disagreement about how to deal with Iran and how much of the information that we knew about to make public. How much to share with the International Atomic Energy Agency. How much to talk about in public. I generally felt that more public discussion was useful because the threat of a nuclear weapons program in Iran was a very real one to me.

So I have to say I lost a lot of battles in the immediate administration about what to talk about publicly. I was not unhappy to see someone else making that information public so that the rest of the world could appreciate the progress the regime was making towards its long sought objective of nuclear weapons and how dangerous it was.

What I think was really striking came in the days after U.S. invasion of Iraq and part of our effort to overthrow Saddam Hussein's regime. I remember in particular one staff meeting that Secretary Powell had as the military action was under way when someone around the table said that the U.S. military had arrived at someplace called Camp Ashraf and had secured the location and was providing protection for the residents. Make sure they didn't suffer from reprisals.

I said to myself, I'm not going to listen anymore just to what's being said in the newspaper. I want to find out more about what the MEK is and why this group that seems to know so much about Iran's illicit nuclear weapons program is listed as a foreign terrorist organization.

So I did what you would expect. I asked around. I asked career civil servants and diplomats. I looked into the records. And I was stunned that the uniform response was that the MEK had been put on the list of terrorist organizations in the late 1990s in the hope that it would be a signal to the regime in Tehran of the bona fides days of the Clinton administration's desire to open active negotiations with the government of Iran. That that was the reason. Over and over again that was the reason.

So I asked for information about the MEK. And there were facts back in the late '70s and early '80s that were pretty unappetizing, but there was no having to deal with the regime of the Shah and its overthrow.

But nothing in nearly 20 years since then. Nothing that I saw during my time at the State Department that would justify listing the MEK as a foreign terrorist organization.

Then we came to find in late 2008 that Secretary Rice was given the opportunity whether to decide to de-list the MEK and she chose not to because she hoped that that would give the incoming Obama administration flexibility to deal with the government of Iran. It would be an occasion of continued interest in trying to deal with the regime.

Now, both of these decisions were political decisions. You can agree with them or disagree with them. I disagree with them. But they were political. They were not based on facts. They were not based on the criteria in the statute.

I think that does a disservice to the whole concept of having a list of foreign terrorist organizations. If you don't allow the facts to fall where they will, then the list itself is discredited.

I think this problem of politicization isn't limited to the FTO list. I felt one of the Bush Administration's worst mistakes was taking the government of North Korea off the list of state sponsors of terrorism. A government that to this day has never provided satisfaction to the government of Japan and South Korea for kidnapping their innocent civil-

ians and holding them in North Korea. And why was North Korea taken off the list of state sponsored terrorism? In hopes of negotiating with North Korea about its nuclear weapons program. You see a pattern here?

This is the State Department making decisions not intended by Congress but for political and diplomatic purposes.

Now, it's interesting in all of these cases the political and diplomatic purpose has not been achieved. You would think that would teach people something. But I'm not that much of an optimist.

But even worse, we had seen within the past weeks Secretary Clinton say that the conduct of the MEK in transferring residents from Ashraf to Camp Liberty would be a factor in deciding whether the MEK would stay on the list of foreign terrorist organizations.

Now we have all heard she's very busy, not busy enough, though, not busy enough that she couldn't make that point. Another fundamentally political point.

So if the original designation was bad and it was, and if the decision in 2008 to continue the listing was worse, this is worst of all. This isn't just political, this is using a humanitarian catastrophe to attempt to achieve political objectives.

Governor Rendell just asked what I think is a very pertinent question and providing some telling insights into why there is no good answer. Why does the State Department keep doing this? What is the rationale here?

I think the rationale emerges from what we know about the State Department's history dealing with this regime. They are convinced to this day that you can negotiate with this authoritarian regime.

I believe you cannot. But I believe what's going on here is that the State Department is fearful that if it does what it's supposed to do that the government in Tehran will cut off the last chance to negotiate a peaceful resolution to the nuclear weapons program. Now, I don't think there's any chance that we're going to get a satisfactory, diplomatic resolution anyway. But I think what's happening now is that the State Department knows it doesn't have a shred of evidence to continue this designation. If they did, and I'll steal this point from Louis Freeh who made it before, but not here, if there was information that justified the continuing listing of the MEK on the foreign terrorist list in Washington as we know it, it would have leaked out, we'd be reading about it. And the silence is deafening.

And it's because if the State Department can say to the regime in Tehran, we didn't take them off the list, that court made us do it, that they hope the regime will say, oh, it's okay, now we'll talk to you.

I just find that completely irresponsible. I'm perfectly content to say that if there are facts to justify a listing on the FTO list, list the organization. If the organization is on a list for political purposes, or it's taken off for political purposes, that's wrong. I don't personally know any reason why the MEK should be listed and I'll guarantee you neither does the State Department or it would have presented the evidence to the court.

So the issue here turns not just on this abuse of our legal process, not just on the humanitarian tragedy that we see unfolding in Ashraf, but on our country's ability to deal effectively with the growing threat of the ayatollahs in control of the world's most dangerous weapon. And every day that goes by that we take our eye off that eventuality is a day that makes the world much less safe.

It is time, if the State Department won't act, then the court should act. I think it will. And I think hopefully in a few months we'll be back here having a very different kind of conversation. Thank you very much.

JOHN CASSIDY TRIBUTE

**HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, April 27, 2012*

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of John Cassidy of Montrose, Colorado, who is celebrating his 30th anniversary as a volunteer for the Civil Air Patrol.

A man of wide-ranging experience and talents, John Cassidy served in the U.S. Navy before obtaining his bachelor's and master's degrees, and becoming a highly respected Montrose High School teacher. John was active in Habitat for Humanity where he helped with numerous projects, including his students in many home renovations.

As an aircraft owner, John looked for an additional way to serve the community, finding it when he joined the Civil Air Patrol (CAP). He is a superb mountain search and rescue pilot, flying countless missions searching for lost hikers, hunters, snowmobilers, and crashed aircraft.

During the course of his 30 years with the Civil Air Patrol, John has held every leadership position in the Montrose squadron, and is a role model for the hundreds of cadets who have known him. Many of those cadets have gone on to successful careers in law enforcement, the military (including USAFA, USMA and USNA), teaching, engineering, technical and medical fields.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize not just John's 30 years as a volunteer for the Civil Air Patrol, but all of the ways that John Cassidy has added to the quality of life for those who live and work in Montrose County.

TRIBUTE TO ED LEIGH McMILLAN

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, April 27, 2012*

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Mr. Ed Leigh McMillan II, of Brewton, a distinguished and much beloved South Alabama businessman who recently passed away at the age of 71.

A native of Brewton, Ed Leigh graduated from T.R. Miller High School before earning college degrees in forest management from North Carolina State University and in finance from the University of Alabama.

After college, he returned to Brewton to assume the position of first forester of the T.R. Miller Mill Company, a role that helped to launch his lifelong extensive forestry career.

He served as past president and past director of Cedar Creek Land & Timber Inc. in Brewton, which owns timberland in South Alabama; and as past corporate secretary and director of the T.R. Miller Mill Company overseeing their timberland in South Alabama and Florida. Additionally, he held the position of president of Neal Land & Timber Company Inc. in Blountstown, Florida, and served on the Board of Directors.

His vast business experience was not limited to timber, however. He was also general partner of McMillan, Ltd., of Brewton, which has holdings in oil and gas interests as well as timber in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi. Another role he enjoyed was that of