

In the past few months, this nation has been rocked by the deaths of black men at the hands of police, and the fiery nationwide protests in response. The lost lives of Tamir Rice, Eric Garnet, Mike Brown, and so many others have only contributed to the painful perception that black life is devalued in America. Many pundits have observed these tragedies and the various responses to them as proof that race relations in this country have regressed.

There are currently more black men behind bars in 2015 than there were enslaved in 1850, and these sentencing disparities have far reaching consequences. Among democratic nations, the United States enforces some of the world's most restrictive disenfranchisement laws for felons, keeping millions of men and women from ever being able to fulfill their civic duty. We ask them to pay their debt to society, we require them to re-enter society as productive adults, yet we strip them of such a basic democratic freedom. Without question, these laws disproportionately affect African Americans, and Mr. Speaker, it is time for a change.

While the picture I have briefly painted may seem bleak, I remain encouraged by the resolve of so many Americans around the country. Nationwide protests by people of all backgrounds have forced local lawmakers to confront their policies and make sure that they reflect the communities they govern. But as we all know, there is a long road ahead. And as the conscious of the Congress, it is the responsibility of the Congressional Black Caucus, to ensure that this august chamber addresses these issues essential to the quality of life for all Americans.

WILL THE U.S. AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ALLOW IRAN TO DEVELOP A NUCLEAR WEAPON?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. STEWART) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, I am honored tonight to lead this Special Order on what is one of the most critical issues facing our Nation in generations. Now, I know that sounds dramatic and that it sounds like it is a statement that is just designed to capture people's attention, but it is actually true. This is a question that will define our safety and our security for generations to come.

The question we face and the issue that we want to address tonight is: Will the U.S. and the international community allow Iran to develop a nuclear weapon?

For generations, it has been the policy of Republican and Democratic administrations that we would not allow that to happen. It is critical to the security of our friends and allies in the region that we are successful in denying them this. It is critical to our own national security, to the interests at home, and to our interests abroad that we not allow Iran to nuclearize their weapons program. So we come to this question: Will we allow that to happen?

Tonight, I stand here, along with many of my colleagues, to express my great concern about what the President is doing and the state of the negotiations as they are now. Tomorrow, we get to hear from the Prime Minister of Israel. I look forward to hearing his comments. He certainly has, as they say, a dog in this fight, but so do we. Let me begin by telling you a little bit about my background.

I spent 14 years as a pilot in the Air Force. I flew the B-1. At one point, I was the pilot rep for the implementation of the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks, or START I and START II, implementing a treaty that we had with the former Soviet Union. This was a very interesting experience. I learned a lot from this. I certainly learned of the details and the necessity of following through with every tiny detail of these treaties and of implementing them. Our Russian counterparts could show up at our base at any time with only a few-hours' notice. They had access to the most highly sensitive areas. They would measure; they would observe; they would talk; they had incredibly sophisticated ways of verifying that we were complying with elements of the START Treaty, as we did with Russia.

These elements, in my opinion, are one of the keys to making sure that this treaty that the President is negotiating is successful, which brings us then to, really, one of our central questions, because I learned from my own experience that, for a treaty as sophisticated as this would have to be to be successful, there has to be a modicum of trust, an element of trust, between the two parties—a grain, a core of trust—where they both want the treaty to succeed. I don't know if we have that now.

I had the opportunity to address this concern with Secretary Kerry just last week. I asked him very simply: Can you name me a single example where the United States or our allies for generations have had a positive, constructive experience with Iran? Can you show me any example of how they have worked with us in a positive manner? He could not provide me with a single example.

Once again, this is one of the central questions that we have to address, so let's ask this question: Can we trust Iran? Let me explain to you why I think the answer to that is "no."

You see this map beside me. This indicates Iran's range of influence around the world, and it reaches, as you see, from North Korea, through central Asia, through the Middle East, through parts of Europe, to South America and to Mexico. Iran has been a state sponsor of terrorism for more than 30 years. They, by themselves, have developed an extensive military complex—the Defense Industries Organization, as they call it. The DIO is able to supply Iran with all of the materials that they need in order to carry out their terrorist activities around the world—all of the ammunition, all of the equipment, all of the weapons.

In fact, Iran is the primary supplier of the weapons and ammunition of two other officially recognized state sponsors of terror—Sudan and Syria. It is the primary sponsor of a number of listed foreign terrorist organizations, including Hezbollah and Hamas and numerous Shi'a militias in Iraq.

Iran has directed the terrorist activities of numerous of these Shi'a militias, and let me point out this fact: over the last dozen years or so, these Iranian-backed militias have been responsible for the deaths of hundreds of American soldiers working in the theater. Hundreds of American soldiers have lost their lives due to the direct activities of Iran.

As I mentioned, and as you can see on the map, they engage in narcotics trafficking and human smuggling in Mexico. In the tri-border area of Brazil and Argentina and Paraguay, Hezbollah has a safe haven for recruiting, training, and fundraising. Even Venezuela is, similarly, a safe haven. In India, they provide support for Syed Kalbe Jawad, who is recruiting Shi'a militias to fight in Iraq and Syria. They cooperate with North Korea in cyber warfare. The list of their interventions in a negative and a destructive way around the world is, indeed, very long.

□ 2015

They are a strategic ally of Russia and China. They provide port facilities. They are a strategic ally of North Korea. They have cooperated with North Korea to develop ballistic missiles.

So, once again, let me come back to my conversation with the Secretary of State, where I ask him: Can you give us a single example of a positive or constructive alliance or agreement or partnership that we have had with this Nation of Iran?

And the answer has, once again, been no.

Iranian leaders have stated their objective is to destroy Israel and, of course, the great Satan, the U.S. In fact, I can show you.

Look at this picture, and you may wonder what it is. It is not something taken from World War II or from another war. This actually happened last week, where Iran completed a successful exercise in a simulated attack on a U.S. aircraft carrier. Does that sound like the activity of a potential partner?

Hezbollah has stockpiled approximately 60,000 surface-to-surface rockets in Lebanon. Hamas has stockpiled approximately 10,000 surface-to-surface rockets in Gaza. Iran is, of course, the primary supplier of both of these, and their stated purpose is to destroy Israel, to wipe it off the map.

As the current Iranian President Rouhani said: "The Zionist regime has been a wound in the body of the Islamic world for years, and the wound should be removed."

The former President said, in 2012, that Iran has no roots in the Middle East and that it would be eliminated.

So let me conclude my part of this hour by emphasizing once again that Iran has demonstrated several generations now of destructive, war-like, deadly activities around the world designed to destroy Israel, designed to weaken or destroy the United States, killing American soldiers overseas, and this is the partner that we think we can trust with one of the most critical issues of our day. I hope the President realizes the danger that we would face if they prove not to be a reliable partner.

I will let others share in my time today. First, I would like to invite my friend, DENNIS ROSS from Florida, a member of the Financial Services Committee, to speak.

Mr. ROSS. I thank my good friend from Utah (Mr. STEWART).

Madam Speaker, on November 4, 1979, the American Embassy in Tehran was seized and Iranians held 50 American hostages for more than 444 days. Each year, on November 4, Iranians celebrate death to America day to commemorate the 1979 seizure of our Embassy. So while we are celebrating Thanksgiving, President's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, and Labor Day, for the last 35 years, Iran has been celebrating, once a year, death to America day. The party with whom we are negotiating nuclear capabilities celebrates death to America day.

In 1983, two car bombs exploded in Beirut, killing 300 United States marines. Iranian-backed Hezbollah militants claimed responsibility for this mass murder.

Make no mistake, Iran is the lead sponsor of radical Islamic terrorism throughout the world today, including sleeper cells in the United States.

As Mr. STEWART just pointed out, last week, Iran's Revolutionary Guard staged war games in the Strait of Hormuz. When they blew up that mock U.S. aircraft carrier, Iran's Supreme Leader, the Ayatollah Khamenei, proclaimed that "Americans are ready to be buried at the bottom of the water"—the supreme commander, leader of the party with whom we are negotiating a nuclear capabilities deal.

Madam Speaker, my point is that Iran has a ruthless track record of terrorizing the West, including the United States. Let's be perfectly clear: Iran wants to destroy America, as they claim every November 4, and as they demonstrated last week in the Strait of Hormuz. Iran is a nuclear threshold state.

Recently, just 2 weeks ago, I had the privilege of traveling to Israel and meeting with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. During my visit, the Prime Minister and I discussed in great detail the threat posed by Iran to Israel and the region. Iran openly declares its intention to destroy the State of Israel.

Today, Iran has the largest and most diverse missile arsenal in the Middle East. The missiles are capable of car-

rying nuclear and chemical weaponry within a range of 1,500 miles. With bared teeth, Iran, in conjunction with North Korea, is developing a longer range missile capable of reaching the United States. In just a few years, they will have that technology.

I am deeply concerned about the current round of negotiations between President Obama and Iran. The current deal coming out of the White House would allow Iran to develop nuclear weapons after 10 years. A long-term deal that allows Iran to develop nuclear capabilities only strengthens the hand of Iran and fortifies their determination to destroy Israel, dominate the Middle East, the Muslim world, and the entire globe, including the United States.

Iran says its nuclear program is entirely for peaceful purposes and not aimed at developing nuclear weapons. However, Madam Speaker, history is replete with examples that argue quite the opposite. Iran is not our friend. Iran should never be allowed to develop nuclear weapons.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to hearing Prime Minister Netanyahu detail his opposition to this agreement that would grant Iran a license to develop nuclear weapons.

President Obama cannot unilaterally implement this dangerous plan. Congress has the responsibility to prevent this foreign policy disaster from ever occurring. We must stand firmly with Israel. Unless Iran is willing to forgo its entire nuclear program, the United States should not ease sanctions and should allow Iran to become a nuclear state.

Mr. STEWART. Thank you, Mr. ROSS, for your comments tonight and for your defense of these concerns that we have.

I would ask the question, to emphasize something that you said, sir: Why is Iran building ICBMs?

As Charles Krauthammer pointed out in the last few days in an article, he said: You don't build ICBMs to deliver dynamite.

It is very clear what their intentions are, I would think. And although we will come back to this, I would like to follow up with one other point that you made. But before we do that, let me turn the time now to my friend, Mr. ROGER WILLIAMS from Texas. He also serves on the House Financial Services Committee.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, Israel's Prime Minister will make a direct appeal to the American people. His plea will not be made in front of cameras at a press conference. They will not be made from his home country 6,000 miles away. Tomorrow morning, Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu will stand right here behind me at this podium to address this Congress.

The Prime Minister will speak before us to directly petition Congress and the American people because, sadly, he has, like so many, lost faith in the

abilities of our Commander in Chief. The Prime Minister has lost faith in an administration whose foreign policy summarized the President's guiding advice: Don't do stupid stuff.

He no longer trusts this American President, whose aids slander his name to the press. He is skeptical about the State Department's trust above all else policy with Iran, whose leaders have publicly proclaimed their desire for Israel to be wiped off the map. He regrets the President's inability to outright condemn Hamas, a U.S.-designated terrorist organization, without blaming Israel in the same sentence.

Mr. Netanyahu has rightly questioned America's once unwavering commitment to his homeland, Israel—Israel, our partner, our ally, but most importantly, our friend.

Madam Speaker, we have responsibility—no, we have a commitment—to watch over and protect our greatest advocate in the Middle East. To my colleagues in this body that do not believe in the United States' moral obligation to watch over Israel, I remind them about the United States' strategic obligation. Israel's interests are closely aligned with ours. Israel benefits from a secure America, just as America benefits in having a secure, stable, and trustworthy ally in a very volatile, dangerous region.

Despite my personal beliefs that America has a moral obligation to ensure Israel's peace and prosperity, I cannot disregard the obvious strategic benefits our relationship has brought us. The Obama administration's inability to realize this twofold bond between the United States and Israel illustrates how out of touch they really are.

Mr. Prime Minister, I welcome you to the Chamber of the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. President, you and your supporters who refuse to meet with our friend, I must remind you of your foreign policy advice. Simply, you said: Don't do stupid stuff.

In God we trust.

Mr. STEWART. Thank you, Mr. WILLIAMS.

I can't let the moment pass without reemphasizing something you said: Don't do stupid stuff.

Is it stupid to trust Iran? Is it stupid to negotiate an agreement that is fatally flawed? And I have deep concerns about this agreement in that it is fatally flawed.

For example, and perhaps most glaringly, there is this provision that allows for a sunset. We are not precluding Iran from developing nuclear weapons. In the very best case scenario, we are simply delaying them from developing nuclear weapons.

How in the world is it within the interest of the United States or our allies in the region or others in the area, as well, to simply say we are going to stop you from developing nuclear weapons for 10 years, which is reportedly one of the provisions of this agreement?

That doesn't stop them. It delays them. It delays them only if it assumes that they adhere to the agreement, something that many of us are very skeptical about.

I could elaborate, but let me turn the time now to my friend, ROBERT PITTENGER from North Carolina. We came to Congress together. He is active in the foreign affairs community, and, I am proud to say, he is the chairman of the Congressional Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare.

Mr. PITTENGER.

Mr. PITTENGER. Thank you, my good friend, Congressman STEWART, for your leadership tonight on the very important timing of this, precluding the important meetings we will have this week.

Madam Speaker, I am here tonight to pay tribute and gratitude to Prime Minister Netanyahu for taking the time to come to the United States to express his grave concern over the perilous threat that he sees for the United States and for Israel.

Since 1948, with the inception of Israel, they have been a steadfast, loyal, democratic ally for the United States. They have stood strong as a surrogate on our behalf, fighting terrorism, Hamas, Hezbollah, and al Qaeda.

Being there in Israel last week, in the Golan Heights, I saw young men and women, 20 and 21 years old, in the tank division prepared for battle. They were courageous. Down in Gaza, the same type of commitment. They had the recognition of the realities of those missiles firing across, those missiles that are funded by Iran.

I met with the Prime Minister and I asked him the same question I asked him a year ago: Mr. Prime Minister, at such time that you need America, will America be there for you?

The best answer he could say was: Congressman, I hope so.

What a sad commentary on a relationship that we have with our most important ally in the Middle East.

The footprint of the terrorism of Iran is throughout the Middle East and, yes, throughout the world. They have been the primary funding agent for terrorism for the last 35 years. Every incident that you have seen in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon, Yemen and other parts has their hand of funding and commitment.

□ 2030

The Prime Minister understands the critical role that is played in addressing this threat. Like Winston Churchill, he is coming to America to awaken the world to this perilous threat, a threat that Winston Churchill saw, that he spoke of time and again. While the world allowed Germany to take Austria and Czechoslovakia, we deferred, we appeased, we thought nothing else would happen.

We have given concession after concession after concession to Iran, \$12 bil-

lion in repatriated oil profits have been remunerated back to Iran. We have fueled their economy, sustaining their economy, enabling them to go forward.

You know, in any negotiation—and I have been involved in many—you succeed with your adversary when you tighten the screws, not when you loosen them. We have had an inverse effect in this entire communication and dialogue with Iran.

What we have done has created an entity that is willing and able to continue this further negotiation because we have sustained their economy. Yes, the oil prices have come down, but what if we had kept the screws on them?

You know, the Soviet Union came to the table back in the late 1970s and the early 1980s and through the 1980s. Why did that happen? Because we had sustained economic pressure, sustained political pressure, sustained military pressure, sustained human rights pressure—we kept the pressure on.

We have relieved the pressure from Iran; and, as a result, we are faced with the consequences now where they have changed the entire narrative. The narrative in the beginning was: Should Iran have nuclear materials? Now, the narrative is: What level of nuclear materials should we allow Iran to have? That is how much we have lost in this process.

This is no time to be weak-kneed. This is a time to work with our allies in the Middle East. I have been and sat down with the Crown Prince in United Arab Emirates. I have sat down with the Emir in Qatar and with President el-Sisi. They all understand the gravity of terrorism. They all understand the issue of Iran. The world sees this threat. This is no time to appease; this is no time to defer.

This is the time to be strong. Ronald Reagan was strong. The world knew America was strong—yet he never fired a shot, and the Wall came down. When America is strong, the world is at peace. God help us to understand the gravity of this hour, the importance of the message that will come from Prime Minister Netanyahu.

Mr. STEWART. I thank Mr. PITTENGER for his remarks and for the great work that he does as the chairman of the Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare.

I have to interject here for just a moment something that others have alluded to as well, and that is this idea of a sunset provision. We have to recognize what a dramatic change in policy that is.

It is no longer our policy that we would not allow Iran to have nuclear weapons. It is simply our policy if that provision is agreed to that we would delay them from having nuclear weapons.

The sunset provision allows them to grow their economy. It lifts the sanctions. They can sell their oil. They can continue to finance terror operations around the world, all under the under-

standing that, in 10 years, they could resume their nuclear program. Again, that assumes that they don't cheat in the interim which is, in my opinion, likely that they will.

Let me ask this question: Why a sunset provision? Do you think the world is going to be more stable in 10 years than it is now? Will Iran become our trusted friend and ally over the next 10 years? Will they lose all of their regional ambitions? It will lead inevitably to a dangerous and chaotic and destabilizing arms race in the region.

Let me quote our own President. In an interview with *The Atlantic* about 3 years ago, he said: "It will not be tolerable to a number of States in that region for Iran to have a nuclear weapon and them not to have a nuclear weapon . . . and so the dangers of an Iran getting nuclear weapons that then leads to a free-for-all in the Middle East is something that I think would be very dangerous for the world."

Mr. President, I could not agree more, which is why it makes no sense for your agreement to contain anything close to a sunset provision that allows them to develop their nuclear weapons a few years down the road.

I would like to turn the time now to the gentleman from New Jersey, my friend TOM MACARTHUR. He serves on the House Committee on Armed Services, as well as the Committee on Natural Resources. He is one of the bright, young Members of the Congress.

Mr. MACARTHUR. Madam Speaker, I rise today with so many of my colleagues to not only reaffirm our friendship with the State of Israel, but to express my deep appreciation for it.

Our two countries share an unbreakable commitment to the democratic ideals of individual, religious, and economic freedom. Israel stands as a beacon of democracy in a region characterized by political repression. For that, she should be honored and protected.

Our friendship with Israel should not be a political talking point. It shouldn't be a friendship of convenience. We can't settle merely for maintaining the relationship between our two countries. We must strengthen it. Too often, we talk about the threats to Israel or what is in Israel's interest.

Madam Speaker, a threat to Israel is a threat to us. Israel's interest is our interest. As our closest ally in a highly unstable part of the world, Israel faces countless threats and challenges to her very existence. Without qualification or hesitation, the United States must stand by Israel's right to defend herself against terrorism and aggression by those who would do her harm.

The rise of the Islamic State and the growing instability in the region remind us that we cannot take our ally for granted. We must stand against a nuclear-capable Iran, as we have heard tonight, a very real and imminent threat that would jeopardize not only our ally, not only this region, but the freedom Israel deserves and the stability of the world.

The partnership between the United States and Israel is strong. Our shared history of cultural exchange and collaboration has enriched countless lives. Our open lines of trade have benefited not just Israel, but both of our great countries.

This is a friendship that will endure for generations, but we have to commit ourselves to it. If we continue our robust military aid and cooperation to Israel to ensure her security in the region, then the United States and Israel will continue to stand together as shining examples of democracy and freedom in the world.

Mr. STEWART. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my friend, Mr. MACARTHUR.

I now recognize another friend, someone who I have come to respect tremendously from the tireless work that she does on the House Committee on Armed Services and has become a leader among her peers here in Congress, the gentlelady from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI).

Mrs. WALORSKI. I thank the gentleman from Utah, and I commend those of my colleagues tonight who are here as well talking about the existential threat of a nuclear Iran.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my deepest concern over the growing threat of a nuclear Iran and the threat it poses to the rest of the world. Satellite images show that Iran's nuclear weapons can reach the eastern seaboard of the United States.

If Iran, the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism, achieves nuclear weapons capability, the effects would be catastrophic. While it is certain that a rogue Iran would target Israel as a one-bomb country, it is also certain that the U.S. is their target and final target.

News from last week's nuclear negotiations with Iran is troubling. Iran will be allowed the right to enrich, retain thousands of centrifuges—which they don't deserve—and build a plutonium reactor, which they should never have practical need of; yet during these talks, they continue to obstruct inspectors, who reported last week about the possible existence in Iran of undisclosed development of a nuclear payload for a missile.

What is more disturbing is that amidst of a hurting economy and harsh sanctions, Iran still managed to find a way to build, develop, and test their nuclear weapons capability.

Can you imagine the possibility of their capability if the current administration were to even lift those sanctions? One thing is very clear. We have made too many compromises since trying to broker a deal with Iran, and there have been too little consequences for their unwillingness to cooperate.

Past administrations were adamant that our position was zero enrichment and zero centrifuges. Under President Obama, this has been abandoned as being unrealistic. Negotiations began with an offer to end Iranian enrich-

ment. Now, today, the deal is a temporary arrangement that allows a strong, internationally authorized nuclear program.

If we lift sanctions and legitimize their nuclear developments, we are sending a signal to the rest of the world that a rogue state can disobey all rules, maintain their supply of illegal enrichment, and still get international leaders to approve an enrichment program.

A nuclear-armed Iran would dramatically change the balance of power in the Middle East and threaten freedom and peace for the rest of the world. They would clearly spark a nuclear arms race in the Middle East and destabilize the entire region.

Other nations, like Egypt, Turkey, and others will have no choice but to develop their own nuclear programs to protect their countries from the threat of Iran, not to mention that Iran will likely share their nuclear technology and know-how with extremist groups hostile to not only the United States, but also to our allies in the West.

If there is to be any hope of reaching a peaceful deal and if Iran wants prosperity and success for its own people, it must stop its pursuit of a nuclear weapon, sponsorship of terrorism, and human rights abuses.

If they truly want to move forward, they must give inspectors unfettered access to covert facilities. Iran has to cooperate and stop obstructing inspectors. Preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability is the surest way to prevent war and preserve peace.

As this unrest continues, the United States must maintain our rich partnership with our allies, including Israel, who is our closest ally in the Middle East. I welcome Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to the people's House tomorrow.

Mr. STEWART. Mrs. WALORSKI and the other speakers bring up many good points. Let me emphasize just a few of them if I could.

The New York Times reported just last week that the IAEA said Iran was still refusing to answer questions regarding its previous weapons program. Even in the midst of negotiating with the administration, they are still refusing to answer questions about their previous nuclear weapons program.

I think the administration, even now, has refused to release the full text of the deal. It has even been reported that there is an informal side deal that is something like a 30-plus page text.

These facts prevent observers, like myself and others, who are interested and concerned, from determining what constitutes cheating by the Iranians. There are so many other reasons that we are concerned about this.

Let me just mention one more very quickly. It was reported that Iran can still produce enough nuclear material to fuel a bomb in as little as 2 months. In as little as 2 months, they would be a breakout nation that would keep the

region—and, in fact, the entire world—on a knife's edge, wondering if they would make the decision to weaponize and to break out. Those are some of the concerns that we have.

Let me recognize my friend, the gentleman from Ohio, BRAD WENSTRUP. He is a past Army Reserve officer—thank you, sir, for your service. He is a doctor. He serves with me on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, as well as he serves on the Committee on Armed Services.

Dr. WENSTRUP.

□ 2045

Mr. WENSTRUP. Thank you, Congressman STEWART. I thank you for your service to our Nation in the Air Force and your service to our Nation here in Congress. I thank you for organizing this event here on the floor tonight.

As my colleagues have highlighted this evening, on the eve of Prime Minister Netanyahu's address to Congress, we stand with Israel and the Israeli people, shoulder to shoulder, in the face of growing Islamic extremism. The United States was the first country to recognize Israel upon its founding in the years after World War II.

Madam Speaker, it took us just 11 minutes to recognize the new nation cradled along the Mediterranean, in the land of Judea. Time and time again since then, Israel has been besieged, but our relationship has always stood firm, and that is because our friendship is built on the shared values of democracy, free enterprise, respect for life, and a commitment to a lasting peace.

Madam Speaker, I contend that when your very existence is in question and your neighbors vow to wipe you off the map, it is more than helpful to have a committed ally; it is necessary for your very survival.

Whether by the threat of terror tunnels and rocket barrages or the looming nuclear aspirations of Iran, now is not the time to turn away from our friend Israel.

In these challenging times, I am disappointed when I hear disparaging comments coming from our own government directed towards our friends in Israel. I am disappointed when an anonymous senior Obama administration official describes the Prime Minister with words I can't repeat in this Chamber.

I am disappointed when National Security Adviser Susan Rice calls the visit of our ally "destructive." I am disappointed when my colleagues publicly turn their back on our ally and boycott the Prime Minister's speech.

To them, I say: "Let us make it clear that we will never turn our backs on our steadfast friends in Israel, whose adherence to the democratic way must be admired by all friends of freedom." These aren't my words, Madam Speaker. These are the words of John F. Kennedy 56 years ago, and they still ring true today.

In stark contrast to the resolute JFK, the President is asking Congress

to stand silently to the side in his quest to negotiate with Iran. I cannot do that. In these perilous times, we can't afford silence. Iran's unhampered quest for a nuclear weapon and support for global terrorism threatens the stability of the Middle East, the security of our allies in the region, and the very existence of Israel.

Just last week, Iran conducted military drills to sink a replica Nimitz class aircraft carrier. While it made for some great propaganda film, I can't say it builds my confidence in Iran as negotiating in good faith. These hostile actions shouldn't be rewarded with further appeasement.

Madam Speaker, I daresay that this administration is more willing to negotiate with Iran than with Congress. If this administration was as firm in negotiating with Iran as with veto threats, we might actually stop Iran from getting the bomb.

We have a close ally in a dangerous region of the world and must stand strong. We are seeing too vividly the threat of radical Islam as its depravity sweeps across the Middle East. There is no more urgent of a time than right now for Congress to unequivocally stand with Israel.

Tomorrow, Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu will be in this very Chamber speaking to Congress. The subject matter is timely: the threat of a nuclear Iran. In recent years, I have heard the leaders of Ukraine and South Korea address Congress, and we will soon hear from leaders of Afghanistan and the Vatican as well.

I understand that President Ashraf Ghani of Afghanistan was invited in exactly the same manner as Prime Minister Netanyahu. It is curious as to why we don't hear the same roar of disapproval.

We know that a nuclear Iran would tilt the balance of power across the region and across the world, throwing weight to the ill intentioned and the evil terrorist actors. This is a message that bears repeating again and again, whether by me or by the Prime Minister of Israel or by anybody who recognizes the threat.

As steadfast allies in our commitment to freedom, democracy, and peace, I welcome Prime Minister Netanyahu tomorrow.

Mr. STEWART. Thank you, Dr. WENSTRUP.

So we conclude our time tonight. Do you sense, do you understand, those of you who are listening and watching, do you see that we have legitimate and deeply-held concerns about the direction that this administration is moving? There are so many questions. Can we trust Iran?

You have seen and heard example after example of how they have worked against our interests, how they have been a destructive influence in so many parts of the world.

We ask the question, as I asked Secretary Kerry last week: Can you give

me a single example of them partnering with us or any of our allies in any positive way? The answer was no.

Are we being true to our allies? Israel is our only friend and ally in a chaotic part of the world. They recognize and respect human rights, including minority rights, including the rights of women.

They have called this an existential threat. There is a reason they call Israel a one-bomb nation. That is all it would take to destroy their entire country. Could we allow ourselves to be put in a position where that might be their reality? Is this in agreement with our own national interest?

Remember the map that I showed you, North Korea, throughout Asia, the Middle East, Central and South America, even on our borders of Mexico.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I hope the President understands our concerns. I hope he isn't so determined to add a feather in his legacy cap that would conclude an agreement that endangers our allies or our own national interest.

I sit on the House Select Committee on Intelligence. I am reminded almost daily in the briefings that we have that we live in a dangerous and chaotic world. It is unpredictable. It is becoming more so. It is dark and chaotic.

As Abraham Lincoln said, we are the "last best hope of Earth." That was true when he said it. It is true when I taught my children that. It will still be true when my children teach my grandchildren, but it will only be true if we stand by those principles that allow us to secure our own freedom and to protect the interests of our allies to whom we have made meaningful and important promises.

With that, we conclude this time, asking the President to listen to our concerns and to address them as he moves forward with this critically important issue.

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

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. COMSTOCK). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 53 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 2130

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. FOXX) at 9 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 749, PASSENGER RAIL REFORM AND INVESTMENT ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MARCH 6, 2015, THROUGH MARCH 13, 2015

Mr. WOODALL, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-36) on the resolution (H. Res. 134) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 749) to reauthorize Federal support for passenger rail programs, and for other purposes, and providing for proceedings during the period from March 6, 2015, through March 13, 2015, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CRENSHAW (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of travel delays due to inclement weather.

Mr. TONKO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of attending a funeral.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker on Friday, February 27, 2015:

H.R. 33. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. WOODALL. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, March 3, 2015, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

614. A letter from the Chair, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Board's semiannual Monetary Policy Report, pursuant to Pub. L. 106-569; to the Committee on Financial Services.

615. A letter from the Deputy Director, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Head Start Program (RIN: 0970-AC46) received February 25, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

616. A letter from the Deputy Director, ODRM, CCHQ, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Patient Protection