

where the yuan is the euro or the monetary means. They are trying to combine the people in Southeast Asia, which could make an economy of about 3 billion people. The European Union is now absorbing new European countries, plus they have a natural bond to the Islamic world based on their current immigration trends, and they could easily develop an economy of 1 billion people.

So if you look downstream, the very likely position for our economy could be third place, unless, unless, we change the environment here in America.

Last year we had a trade deficit of \$671 billion and a Federal deficit. If we are going to bring jobs back to America, we have to change the environment by making our country more competitive.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUHLMANN of New York). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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

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

SEEKING JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF SYRIAN OPPRESSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROSLEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROSLEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to call the attention of the Members to the important cause of defending the human rights of the Syrian people and holding the Syrian regime accountable for the most deplorable actions against its citizens.

Syria is an oppressor state in every sense. It brutally stifles its political dissidents and minority groups. It denies its ordinary citizens freedom of religion, of conscience and belief. It seeks to silence its people by preventing them from exercising their right of free speech. It discriminates against women, condoning violence and sexual assault against them.

The police continue to detain people arbitrarily, placing them in prisons and torturing them, using methods that seem to herald back to the return of the Middle Ages, stretching prisoners on racks or fracturing their spines on wheels.

Since 1963, Syria has ruled under emergency law, using the hollow excuse of Israel being a threat, and using that to suppress freedom, diversity of opinion, and equality between religions and between sexes.

About 600 Lebanese detainees have been languishing in Syrian jails since

1989. Those who have managed to escape bring harrowing stories with them that they have told to the international human rights community. They must be released immediately.

In an event that defies comprehension, in 1982, Rifaat al-Assad, the brother of then dictator Hafez al-Assad, turned his Soviet-made guns against the Syrian city of Hama. When the dust settled approximately a week later, the death toll of innocent civilians had reached 30,000 people.

The perpetrators of this massacre, including Rifaat al-Assad, who resides in Marbella, Spain, have received no punishment and live amid absolute luxury. Their comfortable lifestyle is an affront to the Syrian people and to all of humanity.

Another of the perpetrators to be held accountable is Ghazi Kanaan. He headed the military intelligence unit responsible for clearing the way for the massacre at Hama. He also later became the Syrian top intelligence man in Lebanon and reportedly built all of the intelligence units responsible for killing Lebanese Christians and imprisoning many other innocent Lebanese.

Bahjat Suleiman is the head of Unit 251 in the General Directorate of the Intelligence Services. Some of the crimes against the Syrian people were detailed in H. Con. Res. 18. This resolution, which I authored, was overwhelmingly adopted by my colleagues in the House, clearly illustrating our body's commitment to holding the Syrian dictatorship accountable for the systematic attacks against the Syrian population.

Inaction on our part is not an option. The cost of failing to address this grim reality sooner can be measured by the rising number of Syrian and Lebanese men and women that the Syrian Government has killed or tortured.

Today, the Syrian people, the dissidents and the peaceful opposition leaders, are poised to act. They are demanding that the Syrian Government release all prisoners of conscience and that it allow for the winds of reform to sweep through its corrupt system. U.S. policy must support the Syrian people, its dissidents, human rights activists, and pro-democracy advocates so that they, too, could free themselves from the shackles of tyrannical rule.

In that vein, I recently introduced the Lebanon and Syria Liberation Act that contains provisions calling for the establishment of a program of assistance to pro-democracy advocates and opposition groups in Syria and Lebanon. It also establishes a program to develop independent broadcasts into Syria and Lebanon to help promote freedom and democracy in both countries.

The act sends a message to the Syrian Government that the United States will not stand for its unacceptable behavior in violation of all moral and legal standards. This legislation, with its concrete measures to punish the Syrian regime, clearly demonstrates to

the Syrian people that America stands with them in their efforts to free themselves from the shackles of tyranny and to help them build an open society based on democratic values and principles.

We must honor the brave men and women of Syria by acting to defend their right to live as free men and women. We must begin by ensuring that the Syrian regime and its leaders are made to pay for their crimes against the Syrian people. We must support efforts to seek justice for the victims of Syrian oppression.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CONGRESSMAN PETER RODINO, JR.

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

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, May 7, I lost a friend, a constituent, and an inspiration. Many of you in this Chamber knew and worked with Peter Rodino, a former Congressman from Newark, New Jersey. For those who did not know him, you undoubtedly recall his service or have read about his life and illustrious career in public service.

Congressman Rodino is most well-known for the role he played in the impeachment hearings of President Richard Nixon. He demonstrated a dignified image of Congress at a time when cynicism characterized the public's view of our government. He upheld the integrity of this institution. He was himself a person of character.

Despite the important role that he played in the glamorous hearings, Congressman Rodino's real legacy is in the work that he did to further civil rights for all Americans. As the son of an Italian immigrant who grew up on the ethnically diverse streets of Newark, Congressman Rodino understood the importance of building bridges to unite ethnic communities.

He was determined to see women and Americans of all races and religions receive equal civil rights. In his role on the House Committee on the Judiciary, Congressman Rodino was instrumental in managing the Civil Rights Act of 1964 on the House floor, where it passed and was eventually signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson.

Congressman Rodino authored the Fair Employment Practices Amendment within the historic civil rights bill. He strived to advance the rights of women, immigrants, and disenfranchised ethnicities. He never forgot his own roots.

In 1971, Congressman Rodino passed legislation making Columbus Day a national holiday, providing millions of Italian Americans with a day to celebrate our proud heritage.

To establish an Italian American presence in Washington, Congressman Rodino worked to found the National Italian American Foundation, NIAF, and the Italian American Congressional Delegation. It is my honor to