

as a foreign terrorist organization. Radicals with ties to other terrorist groups were aboard the ships. The flotilla launch was marked by violent, anti-Semitic rallies. Flotilla participants spoke to al Jazeera of martyrdom and sang *intifada* songs. All this shows the grotesque hypocrisy of those who would portray the flotilla participants as somehow being harmless peace activists. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Madam Speaker, the response of the Israeli Government was extraordinarily restrained and responsible. Israeli troops boarded the ships in the flotilla carrying paint ball guns, but when the crew beat them with iron rods, stabbed and lynched them and threw one of them off the deck, they got the order to defend themselves with their side arms. This, too, was right. Every government permits its troops to defend themselves when they are attacked.

I call on President Obama to give Israel our government's full support and to make unmistakably clear our government's position that Israel, in its response to the Gaza flotilla, was fully in the right. Whether or not the Israeli Government decides to adjust the blockade, our government must make it perfectly clear to all that we will never permit an anti-Israel media campaign to isolate America's most faithful and trusted friend in the Middle East.

□ 1745

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

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE FIRST AMENDMENT OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Madam Speaker, I take these 5 minutes to speak on a subject that is of utmost importance but that does not regularly get discussed here on the floor, which is the First Amendment to the Constitution, that part of it which deals with freedom of speech—that is, with freedom of political speech.

Now, obviously, the First Amendment of the Constitution does not merely protect political speech, but in the decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, known as *Citizens United vs. Federal Election Commission*, the Supreme Court noted that the First Amendment has its fullest and most urgent application to speech uttered during a campaign for political office.

In other words, they said, if you look at the essence of the First Amendment protection, it goes, first and foremost,

to political speech. They had this in laying the premise for the decision that they came to because the Supreme Court realized that the First Amendment's protection for political speech had been under assault by various pieces of legislation passed by this body, not that it was done for evil purposes or intentionally to undercut the Constitution of the United States; rather, it was done in a good-faith effort to try and deal with political campaigns and with the position of money in political campaigns.

The Supreme Court decided back in the 1970s, in *Buckley vs. Valeo*, that money is speech, meaning that the money you have you can use as you see fit to further your speech. You can print pamphlets; you can buy a megaphone; you can buy a radio ad; you can buy a television ad; you can hire somebody to represent your interest to appear in an ad for you. In other words, the Supreme Court recognized that, in the way that we communicate, oftentimes, it takes the use of money to further that communication.

So they made a decision at that point in time that, by terms of the First Amendment, you could not stop one from using one's money to express one's point of view. Then they went to the point of asking, But how does that apply when you are giving money to a candidate?

In those instances, the Court said that the government might be able to put some restrictions on speech—that is the use of money—but only if it is for the purpose of avoiding the corruption of the process. That is the only basis upon which the government can put some limitations, or parameters, around political speech.

In the *Citizens United* case, they had to decide: As people individually and as associated with others—and the First Amendment talks about freedom of association—what are they allowed to do, permitted to do, protected under the First Amendment, when they expend funds to express a point of view during a period of time that is close to an election?

That is why the Court said that First Amendment freedoms are at their height when the speaker is addressing matters of public policy, politics and governance and has its fullest and most urgent application to speech uttered during a campaign for political office, because that is the point in time when you might have the most influence on your fellow citizens.

Now, what does this have to do with what we are doing here on the floor?

Well, there is a bill that has been introduced, called the DISCLOSE Act—Democracy is Strengthened by Casting Light on Spending in Elections Act. We are led to believe by the majority that all this does is promote disclosure. Yet, in fact, what it does under its very terms is chill political speech, so much so that the National Rifle Association came out with a large complaint about the bill, saying that it would have an

undue burden on its operations in expressing itself and would intimidate membership. Now, some people scoffed at it and said, Well, it's the National Rifle Association talking again.

But what happened?

We have found that the majority listening to the National Rifle Association has created a specific exemption for that group and for others similarly situated, but not for others. That is the crux of the question: Do we have a situation in which now we say not only too big to fail but, for some, too big to file?

It is an affront to the First Amendment, and my hope is that we will not bring this bill to the floor, because, of all things, we should be most protective of the speech of our fellow citizens when they engage in political debate.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEPENDENCE ON OIL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

DISCLOSURE

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to engage in a colloquy with my colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle, who will be along shortly, but before I launch into the issue of national security and of our dependence on oil, I would like to just address what my colleague from California was talking about, give an example of why disclosure is important, and would like to recognize the fact that it was the Republican Party mantra for nearly 20 years that the solution to campaign finance reform was disclosure. Now, apparently, they want to stand up and say they don't want disclosure after having, for 20 years, said they want disclosure.

Go figure.

The fact of the matter is, in California, in an election held just 2 weeks ago, disclosure under the State law has played a critical role in stopping Pacific Gas & Electric from ripping off the ratepayers of California and has played a critical role in stopping Mercury Insurance Company from doing the same to their customers.

The California law required disclosure. PG&E spent over \$40 million in, what I think, was blatant, false advertising, and at the bottom of each one of those ads, they had to read, "Paid for by Pacific Gas & Electric." Similarly, with Mercury Insurance Company, the public took one look at those ads, which they saw repeatedly, and said, Oh, that's who's behind it. Well, I'm a "no" vote.

Disclosure works, my Republican colleagues. It's what you wanted for more than 20 years, and now that you're about to get it, you don't want it. Well, I think not.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEPENDENCE ON OIL

Let me go to the subject at hand that we are to talk about this evening,