

(Mrs. BACHMANN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

POLITICAL TURMOIL IN HONDURAS

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the people of Honduras. I rise in support of Honduran democratic institutions and legal authorities who refuse to be coerced into ignoring their Constitution and the rule of law and who refuse to have their future as a democratic nation and a democratic society hijacked. For months prior to June 28, Manuel Zelaya had engaged in a systematic campaign to subvert the Honduran Constitution in order to strengthen and extend his own rule.

Last November he tried to postpone the primaries for the upcoming presidential elections. This January he tried to stuff the Honduran Supreme Court with his personal buddies. Then this March Zelaya issued an executive decree, calling for a referendum that would ultimately allow for the extension of his presidential rule, all in direct contravention of the Constitution.

The Honduran Supreme Court, the administrative courts, the attorney general, the commissioner for human rights, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, and the Honduran National Congress all declared this referendum to be illegal; but that did not stop him. In fact, following the decision of the Organization of American States to open its doors to the Castro regime, Zelaya probably felt empowered, if not destined, to follow the tyrannical ways of the Castro brothers.

Zelaya continued to demonstrate a blatant disregard for the legislative and judicial branches of the Honduran Government and the sanctity of the Honduran Constitution. Consequently, he was charged with treason, abuse of authority and usurping of power. On June 26, the Honduran Supreme Court of Justice issued a warrant for Zelaya's arrest. While Zelaya's removal from office was in accordance with the Honduran Constitution and the rule of law, U.S. officials were among the first to rush to judgment and condemn Zelaya's removal. Joining arms with the likes of Hugo Chavez, Daniel Ortega, the Organization of American States, and the United Nations, the U.S. continues to lead the calls for Manuel Zelaya's return to power and, reportedly, for his immunity from prosecution for the political crimes with which he is charged.

The U.S. has suspended more than \$20 million in assistance to Honduras. U.S. leaders have now chosen to punish those who are working to preserve the idea of checks and balances in Honduras. They are revoking the visas of all current government officials, even

members of the judicial branch. In fact, the vice president of the supreme court has already had his visa taken away.

Sadly, the same officials who continue to call for direct engagement with the Iranian regime, irrespective of that regime's violence, torture and other actions against its own people, the same U.S. officials who recently reaffirmed Iran's so-called nuclear rights are the same ones who are now seeking to intimidate and strong-arm Hondurans into submission and very strongly into difficult humanitarian straits in the coming months.

In fact, as the U.S. increases the pressure on Honduras, the U.S. is making unilateral concessions to the regime in Syria and just eased sanctions on Damascus. This just days after the State Department submitted to Congress a report stating that Syria continues to pursue advanced missiles, and chemical, biological and nuclear weapons capabilities and continues to sponsor violent Islamic extremist groups like Hezbollah and Hamas.

We are at a critical juncture in our foreign policy. In the Western Hemisphere, the situation in Honduras has become the linchpin for the thwarting of ALBA leaders' anti-America and anti-freedom agenda.

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Yet, the approach adopted by the U.S. is one where enemies of freedom are emboldened and strengthened while democratic institutions and allies are undermined and weakened.

Let us hope for our Nation's security interests that the U.S. will see the danger in this approach and change course before it is too late. Let us hope that the U.S. leadership will heed the words of Ronald Reagan from March, 1978 when Reagan said, "Our fundamental aim in foreign policy must be to ensure our own survival and to protect those who also share our values. Under no circumstance should we have any illusions about the intentions of those who are enemies of freedom."

Mr. Speaker, let us send a clear signal to the enemies of freedom that we will not hedge, we will not waver, that we stand with the people of Honduras and the democratic institutions as they work to preserve their democracy against enemies foreign and domestic.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

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

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, we are here to discuss the health care reform proposal that is now being discussed in Washington, D.C., and really throughout the country.

We are going to use tonight's hour of our 30-Something Working Group to talk a little bit about what is in the bill—what is actually in the bill, not

what is being said on talk radio or from some Internet site that is basing their comments and their critiques of this bill on really things that don't exist. And we want to do that.

It is interesting that tonight the 30-Something Working Group will be articulating this, and then over the course of the rest of the week and into the fall, to discuss this critical piece of legislation for the American people because one of the previous speakers was talking a little bit, and it reminded me, as I heard some of the rhetoric, they were talking about health care savings plans and all of these accounts, a couple of things came to mind.

The origination of this 30-Something Working Group was the creation of then-Minority Leader PELOSI to discuss Social Security privatization. That is how this whole thing originated 4 or 5 years ago with Congressman MEEK, and then Congresswoman WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and I, and then later on CHRIS MURPHY from Connecticut. And we were discussing all of these issues, but one of the issues was Social Security privatization.

So before we get into this bill, I think it is critical for us to remember that our friends on the other side who are now so critical of what we're trying to do here were in charge of the House, of the Senate, of the White House. They had President Bush, they controlled the Senate, they had this Chamber—Tom DeLay was running the show—and they didn't do anything for health care costs. So I think it's important that that's out there. And if they wanted to pass some kind of comprehensive health care reform, they should have done it because we are still dealing with the problems that they failed to solve when they were in. And this is a problem facing millions of Americans, millions of small businesses that we need to help address. So that's why, as we talk today, this needs to be in context.

The Social Security privatization, I mention that because, let's imagine where our country would be today if our friends on the other side had their wish and privatized Social Security. Can you imagine where this country would be today if President Bush and Tom DeLay got their wish and privatized Social Security? I know in my district we're dealing with all kinds of pension issues—Delphi salary, Delphi hourly, UAW, steelworkers have all lost their jobs, their pensions in many cases are in jeopardy. Thank God for the PBGC to help cushion the blow. But can you imagine the cost to this country if the Republicans had been able to fully implement their economic agenda? They did the tax cuts, they did most of their economic agenda, but fortunately we were able to prevent privatized Social Security. So it's important for us to realize that as we begin to debunk some of these myths.

I would just like to suggest, Mr. Speaker, as we go through this, and I have encouraged my constituents and