

Once again, the specter of a swap for Cuban spies being held in prison here has been raised. I would continue to encourage the administration to reject that notion, particularly when these Cuban spies are being held for participating in a murder conspiracy against other American citizens that were shot down over international water.

I would remind the administration that Cuba remains on the list of terrorist nations—nations that are specific enemies of this country and want to do harm to this country; a country that is harboring fugitives from U.S. justice, and a country where, just this week, peaceful dissidents in Cuba were attacked once again, according to reports from Cuba, by relatives of a political police captain on the island that attacked supporters of the peaceful group the Ladies in White.

Once again, I would urge, as I have done so many times, that the international community continue to denounce the atrocious human rights abuses on the island nation of Cuba.

#### FOREST SERVICE IN TOMBSTONE, ARIZONA

(Mr. SCHWEIKERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. How many of us have heard of a little town called Tombstone? It's popped up in movies, American folklore. Guess what? The Forest Service seems hell-bent on ending its existence. This town is older than my State. Its water rights are older than my State. Yet the Forest Service is restricting the town from 87 percent of its water supply because there's Forest Service land around Tombstone.

This picture isn't a picture of a bunch of cowboys out having fun. They're not allowed to take a little Bobcat up the mountainside to get the springs to fix their water, so you have to go up by hand up a mountainside to remove the boulders.

Is there an adult in the Forest Service who has a lick of sense?

#### REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF COLD SPRING OFFICER TOM DECKER

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to lend my voice to the chorus of Minnesotans that are grieving at the loss of one of our finest, Cold Spring Police Officer Tom Decker, who was senselessly murdered while responding to a call for help.

A 6-year veteran of the force and a father of four, Officer Decker exemplified what it means to serve and protect. He loved his job and the community that he served, and those he served admired and respected him in return. He was absolutely one of the good guys: a dedicated husband, father, and police officer.

So today, Mr. Speaker, let us honor Officer Decker's life and the incredible devotion he gave to his community. He was a hero. But more importantly, he was an incredible human being. He and his service will be absolutely and deeply missed. Let us all keep Officer Decker and his loved ones, fellow officers, and community in our prayers.

#### THE 147TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an important day in American history. Tomorrow, we will celebrate the 147th anniversary of the abolition of that regrettable institution of slavery. On 6 December 1865, the State of Georgia became the 27th State to ratify the 13th Amendment, marking the three-fourths supermajority necessary to amend the Constitution. The 13th Amendment accomplished something that the Emancipation Proclamation did not and perhaps could not do. It declared the non-existence of slavery in the whole of the "United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

The triumph of the 13th Amendment represents not just for African Americans but for all Americans should be celebrated every December 6.

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#### THE DAY SLAVERY OFFICIALLY ENDED (By James A. Wynn Jr.)

The movie "Lincoln" highlights the struggle over the passage and ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, the historic proviso that officially ended slavery in America. The triumph that the Thirteenth Amendment represents—not just for African-Americans but for all Americans—should be celebrated, and we should celebrate it tomorrow, December 6.

No amendment has a greater or simpler declarative force than the Thirteenth. It states uncompromisingly that "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude . . . shall exist within the United States." The amendment also empowered Congress to enact laws to enforce its substantive protections.

The significance of the Thirteenth Amendment cannot be overstated. Among other things, it extended the phrase "We the People" in the Preamble to the Constitution to all Americans, it ended the implicit sanctioning of slavery in the original Constitution and it made clear that abolishing slavery was the sovereign will of the people.

The U.S. Supreme Court, with its notorious 1857 Dred Scott decision, left no doubt that the phrase "We the People" in the Preamble did not include slaves. According to the court, African-Americans were not intended to be included in "We the People" because "[t]hey had for more than a century before been regarded as an inferior order . . . and so far inferior, that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and that the Negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit."

The Thirteenth Amendment repudiated and effectively overruled Dred Scott and all it stood for, making clear that neither African-Americans, nor anyone else, could "just-

ly and lawfully" be enslaved in this great country.

Further, the Thirteenth Amendment ended the original Constitution's implicit sanctioning of slavery. Although the word "slave" appears nowhere in the original Constitution, the document tacitly accepted slavery. For example, as a result of an infamous compromise between Northern and Southern states, Article I of the Constitution based political representation in the House of Representatives on the population of "free Persons" and three-fifths "of all other Persons" in each State.

Thus, despite the Declaration of Independence's majestic pronouncement that "all men are created equal," the original Constitution indicated otherwise. With the Thirteenth Amendment, the Constitution expressly rejected slavery.

Finally, the Thirteenth Amendment, "ratified by the Legislatures of three-fourths of the several states," as required by Article V of the Constitution, abolished slavery through the sovereign will of the people and the democratic process. By contrast, the Emancipation Proclamation, an 1863 declaration freeing slaves in Confederate territory, was a wartime measure issued unilaterally by Lincoln.

The Thirteenth Amendment has been the subject of far less litigation than the Fourteenth. As a result, it has suffered unjust obscurity. And to the extent we celebrate it at all, we do so on the wrong day, February 1—the anniversary of the day President Abraham Lincoln signed a joint resolution submitting the proposed amendment to the states for ratification.

Addressing a crowd outside the White House after he signed the joint resolution, Lincoln remarked that the occasion was one "of congratulation to the country and to the whole world." In 1948, President Harry Truman declared February 1 "National Freedom Day."

Yet despite the symbolic significance of Lincoln's act, the Thirteenth Amendment had no legal effect until the states adopted it. Indeed, Lincoln's signature was unnecessary, and no other proposed amendment has been submitted to a president for signature.

The Thirteenth Amendment was put to all 36 states, including those formerly part of the Confederacy. Georgia became the 27th state to ratify the amendment, on Dec. 6, 1865, marking the achievement of the three-fourths supermajority necessary to amend the Constitution. The Supreme Court has held that constitutional amendments take legal effect when ratified. Thus, Dec. 6, 1865, marks the arguably most significant, and yet perhaps most unrecognized, date in African-American history.

Sadly, Lincoln never lived to see the Thirteenth Amendment ratified: He was assassinated on April 15, 1865, nearly eight months before Georgia provided the decisive vote in favor of ratification. No doubt Lincoln would have celebrated the day our nation constitutionally enshrined an abhorrence of slavery, the evil institution against which Lincoln had fought so hard.

No longer should the Thirteenth Amendment rest in silence. We should begin our holiday season by celebrating on Thursday the 147th anniversary of the Thirteenth Amendment's ratification. It is a day not just for African-Americans, but for all Americans, to commemorate our bettering our Constitution by spelling out the truth that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. rightly called self-evident: "All men are created equal."