international law, the EP-3 is sovereign U.S. territory.

Earlier today, two U.S. diplomats were allowed to visit 24 U.S. crew members. The detained Americans looked healthy, but China has given no indication as to when they may be released. Among these are two Illinoisans, Senator Jeremy Randall of Poplar Grove, Illinois, and Sergeant Mitchell Pray of Geneseo, Illinois.

The Chinese Government is treating this like we are still in the Cold War, and we are not. Our concern is we do not want this to turn into another period of constant tension and struggle and a return to the Cold War era. But make no mistake, the United States is not a Nation to be trifled with, and our patience will only last so long. We need our crew back, we need our plane to normalized relations with China.

The best way to do that is for the Chinese Government not to underestimate the resolve of the American pilot, who, with a severely damaged aircraft and, in what we understand now was a rapid deployment of PRC fighter aircraft, was forced to make an emergency landing in the People's Republic of China.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that this Sino-American dictionary that is employed here should be content with the expression of regret. But I would appeal to the People's Republic of China that there is nothing in this incident that the United States of America should even begin to apologize for. Are we to throw out rules of international conduct? Are we to ignore the law of sovereignty regarding open airspace? Are we to sit by with muted complaint based on the damage to our aircraft?

Mr. Speaker, I think America speaks with one voice. I am concerned about my constituent, Brandon Funk of Show Low, Arizona, and 23 others, our men and women in uniform, being detained by the People's Republic of China.

Mr. Speaker, our President has been clear and unequivocal. In addressing the Communist Chinese regime, he has said simply, "Let our people go now and respect our place in the world." I support the President, as does this House, united with one voice, not a voice of Republicans or of Democrats, but one voice as Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I would appeal to the Chinese Government to understand what is at stake. They should not underestimate the resolve of the American people, and they should not mistake the genial nature of our new Commander-in-Chief or the gentility he brings to his job as a lack of resolve.

The People's Republic of China is placing in jeopardy its place among the community of nations, its status as an economic power, its opportunity to highlight and showcase some of the world's great events. There is a clear choice to be made.

There are a number of options available to our Nation. Mr. Speaker, I do not come here to try to abridge or in any way describe the actions our Commander-in-Chief can take, but they are numerous, with serious repercussions for the Chinese regime in Beijing.

Mr. Speaker, again I would ask the Chinese Government not to underestimate the United States of America. Secretary of State Powell struck the proper note yesterday when he offered regret over the EP-3.

The preceding speaker, the gentleman from Illinois, made it quite clear that the EP-3 surveillance plane is not a readily maneuverable craft. It does not reach supersonic speeds, with its propeller drive. Sadly, the Chinese Government chose to scramble fighter-aircraft, supersonic aircraft, in pursuit of this sovereign American plane over international airspace.

As our commander-in-chief in the Pacific noted over the weekend, it is dangerous to try and play bumper cars afloat. We should commend the skill of the American pilot, who, with a severely damaged aircraft and, in what we understand now was a rapid deployment of PRC fighter aircraft, was forced to make an emergency landing in the People's Republic of China.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the Sino-American dictionary that is employed here should be content with the expression of regret. But I would appeal to the People's Republic of China that there is nothing in this incident that the United States of America should even begin to apologize for. Are we to throw out rules of international conduct? Are we to ignore the law of sovereignty regarding open airspace? Are we to sit by with muted complaint based on the damage to our aircraft?

Mr. Speaker, I think America speaks with one voice. I am concerned about my constituent, Brandon Funk of Show Low, Arizona, completed his high school degree in 3½ years; such was his desire to serve America in the military. Mr. Speaker, to Brandon and the 23 others, I say, remain strong, because the Nation you serve will do likewise.

OUR SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN IN CHINA

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

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, politics should stop at the water's edge. We need to support our servicemen and women.

A TRIBUTE TO GEORGE MIKAN: MR. BASKETBALL

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

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a true Minnesota legend. George Mikan, who was acclaimed Mr. Basketball in 1950 for his remarkable achievements, became an icon of the National Basketball Association and with the former Minneapolis Lakers of the National Basketball Association has reached legendary status in the game of basketball and in life because of his hard work, integrity, leadership and character.

George Mikan will be honored at a nationally televised halftime ceremony during next Sunday's NBA game between the Los Angeles Lakers and the Minnesota Timberwolves. A life-sized bronze statue of George Mikan will be unveiled at the Target Center in Minneapolis. It will be a special moment for a truly special man who is most deserving of this recognition.

At 6 feet 10 inches tall, George Mikan was the first big man to display the agility, touch and skill to dominate basketball games. He was called the trunk of the NBA family tree and he helped the fledgling league draw record crowds in every city. Mikan's mere presence changed the rules of the game because he was so dominant. In fact, in an effort to stop George Mikan, the Mikan rule was invented which widened the lane underneath the basket.

With Mikan in the middle, the Minneapolis Lakers won six NBA championships in the late 1940s and early
1950s, including five of the first eight titles in the history of the NBA. On five separate occasions, George Mikan led the NBA in scoring. George Mikan is a charter member of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame and the Professional Basketball Hall of Fame. He was chosen one of the NBA’s 50 greatest players.

But, Mr. Speaker, George Mikan’s accomplishments outside basketball are just as impressive and reflect perhaps even greater determination. A successful attorney, business owner and civic leader, George Mikan was the first commissioner of the American Basketball Association. In that position, he once again helped revolutionize the game of basketball by implementing the three-point shot and other exciting changes. George Mikan has also overcome and triumphed over difficulty all his lifetime. Today, George is taking on a very imposing opponent, the disease of diabetes. Again, George Mikan is showing great courage and determination and is a true inspiration to us all.

The original Mr. Basketball continues to make us proud. Today we salute him for his public service, leadership, inspiration and courage. Mr. Speaker, George Mikan is a great American and a legendary basketball player. Please join me in honoring this outstanding Minnesotan for his many contributions to the game of basketball and his many accomplishments off the court as well. George Mikan is truly deserving of this special congressional recognition.

TRIBUTE TO LU PALMER, CELEBRATED RADIO AND PRINT JOURNALIST

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I would just add my voice to the accolades being given to George Mikan. He did his college basketball playing and attended DePaul University, which is in my congressional district. I can tell my friends from Minnesota that all of Chicago and Illinois are indeed proud of the accomplishments of George Mikan. As DuPage College at DePaul University salivate every time they hear his name. I join your comments.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this evening to pay tribute to one of our country’s most celebrated and most effective print and radio journalists, Mr. Latrell “Lu” Palmer who is retiring and will be featured at a retirement celebration on April 14 at the Reverend Johnnie Coleman Complex, 119th and Loomis in Chicago.

Lu Palmer was born in 1922 in Newport News, Virginia, and attended his schools there. He then went on to Virginia University and earned a bachelor’s degree in 1942. Later on, in 1947, he earned a master’s degree from Syracuse University and later on went to Iowa State University in 1955 where he completed the course work for a doctorate’s degree. Lu never wrote his dissertation so he ended up with what people called an ABCD, that is, all but the dissertation degree.

Lu Palmer then went on to have an outstanding career at the Chicago Daily Defender newspaper, the Chicago Courier, the Chicago American, the Chicago Daily News, and then established his own paper, the Black X Express, which he ran for several years. He also taught for 20 years, from 1970 to 1990 for the Association of American Colleges and Universities of the Midwest where he trained a large number of students to really understand urban life. Of course, Lu also worked at WBEE Radio and WYON Radio, was the editorial director for Congressman Ralph Metcalfe’s communication vehicles and served as a public relations person for Michael Reese Hospital. He established the Black Business Network, Chicago Black United Communities, CBUC, which he operated for several years, and BIPO, the Black Independent Political Organization. He established Menhelco, a mental health program for boys who were suffering from mental retardation which continues to operate.

As much of a journalist as Lu was, he was really noted more for his community action, community involvement, and was called upon to speak in colleges and universities and banquets all over the country, as a matter of fact. He generally could not keep up. Plus he was very selective and did not just accept speaking engagements. It had to be something that he called relevant and meaningful if he was to go. Lu was very actively involved in generating outrage when Mark Clark and Fred Hampton were killed by the Chicago police, and later on was probably the single most effective voice in the election of Harold Washington for mayor of the city of Chicago because Lu had a slogan and the slogan sort of said, “We shall see in ’83,” meaning that that is when the election was going to take place. Lu was called the drumbeat of the African community. Everybody listened to his radio and everybody pretty much waited for WVON to come on in the evenings from 10 to 12 so that they could listen to “On Target” and Lu Palmer.

Lu finally decided that it was time to hang them up. He is about 80 years old with diabetes and all the other things that would afflict one. But we would hope that he would put his memoirs together and that he would spend the rest of his life writing and putting in voice some renditions of that “We shall see in ’83.”

ON BEHALF OF THE 24 CREW MEMBERS HELD BY THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT

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

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, today I rise on behalf of the 24 crew members held by the Chinese government. These brave men and women are based at the Naval Air Station Whidbey in Oak Harbor in my district in Washington State.

I first want to call on Beijing to return our honorable service men and women home. Four days is long enough. No, 4 days is too long. Our service members need to be released immediately.

Second, I want to honor the families of these crew members, both around the country and in the Whidbey Island community of Oak Harbor where the Naval Air Station is based. Their concern over the crew members is matched only by their strength and their bravery.

So not for my sake and not for the sake of anyone in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, but for the sake of the mothers and the fathers, the sisters and the brothers, the sons and the daughters and the wives, it is time for the Chinese government to return the crew members to their families. It is time for the Chinese government to return the plane to the United States.

CONGRATULATING UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA WILDCATS ON THEIR OUTSTANDING BASKETBALL SEASON

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

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend and pay tribute to the University of Arizona Wildcats on their outstanding basketball season. This is truly a special team which should be lauded for their courage and for their effort in the face of very, very difficult circumstances, both on and off the court.

As a U of A alum, I closely followed their amazing story. The Wildcats’ victory in entering the Final Four perfectly captured their great season. In a rough and tumbly fight, in a contest that the Wall Street Journal described as “equal parts rugby and hoops, with a little WWF thrown in,” the Wildcats triumphed over a physically gifted University of Illinois squad. After the game, Illinois point guard Frank Williams said, “We gave them our best punch and they survived it.”

Indeed, the University of Arizona Wildcat basketball team this year suffered a lot of punches, many thrown in their direction. Toughest of all, head