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international law, the EP–3 is sovereign U.S. territory. Earlier this morning 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 Crandall 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 back 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 back, and we need to return to normalized relations with China.

As our commander-in-chief in the Pacific noted over the weekend, it is dangerous to try and play bumper cars aloft. We should commend the skill of the American pilot, who, with a severely damaged aircraft and, in what we understand now was a rapid descent of the EP–3 with a 300-foot fall, had the wherewithal to be able to land the aircraft, albeit in Chinese territory.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the Sino-American dictionary that is employed here should be content with the expression of regret. But Mr. Speaker, I would say 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 or we report a plane.” I support the President, as does this House, united in its belief that the PRC should not have entered the airspace.

Mr. Speaker, our President has been clear and unequivocal. Mr. Speaker, I come to the well of this House this afternoon to invoke the name of 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 or report a plane.” 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.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my wholehearted support for Brandon Funk of Show Low. Brandon Funk of Show Low 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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the situation developing in the People’s Republic of China with respect to our servicemen and women.

On April 1, one of our Navy’s EP–3s was involved in a midair collision with a Chinese fighter craft. Tragically, it seems that the life of the Chinese pilot was lost when his fighter crashed into the sea. Our plane was forced to make an emergency landing in the People’s Republic of China. What could simply have been an accident has now spiraled into an international incident because of the PRC’s silence and evasiveness.

Mr. Speaker, international law dictates that the PRC should not have entered our plane as it constitutes sovereign territory. This was ignored.

Even after offering our regrets for the loss of their pilot and explicitly offering our assistance in the search, the PRC chose to remain silent.

Mr. Speaker, we have offered our regrets. We have continually, over the past 8 years, time and again, shown patience with unreasonable demands put forth by the PRC. The time has come when we, as a House, should stand firm with the President and support his actions with respect to the PRC. No longer should we shrink at the prospect of standing for what is right.

Mr. Speaker, the Chinese still are in possession of our pilots. It is time that they must do what is right. The PRC must release our servicemen now, before they are perceived as hostages of a foreign nation, for that is what they will be if they are not returned in a form that truly honors the man who was, step by step, engaged in a timely dialogue in the future, it must take constructive actions now. It must return our plane and return our servicemen and women.

Mr. Speaker, politics should stop at the water’s edge. We need to support our President.

A TRIBUTE TO GEORGE MIKAN: MR. BASKETBALL

Mr. Speaker, the Gentleman from Arizona (Mr. Hayworth) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I come to the well of this House this afternoon to invoke the name of 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 or report a plane.” 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.

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Mr. Speaker, politics should stop at the water’s edge. We need to support our President.

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 performances at DePaul University 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 24-second shot clock was invented which narrowed the lane underneath the basket.

With Mikan in the middle, the Minneapolis Lakers won six NBA championships in the late 1940s and early...