

Always in America, we have been able to come as protesters under the Constitution, but we recognize that law and order is the standard of this Nation.

As I pray for these families, I ask the Congresspersons to rise to the level of leaders and leadership to seek out unity. As I just spoke to the head of my police department, I extended my hand to be able to work together with community and police to bring us together because that is why we are a great Nation.

In Houston on Sunday, we will march and mourn for those fallen, but we will be praying for nonviolence in this Nation. What I will say, Mr. Speaker, is that the words that are ugly of those who want to divide us, I will not hear them and I will not listen to them. I will only embrace and bring us together.

I will tell the young people whose faces I saw last evening in Washington, who were an array of mosaic colors, backgrounds, and religions, that we love you and we thank you for this protest of nonviolence. We will stand against violent gun behavior, thugs, and terrorists. Americans want unity, respect, and human dignity for all.

BUILD UNITY

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, that which has occurred in Dallas, Texas, gives a sad meaning to the term "in the line of duty."

In the line of duty, there are husbands who will not return home. In the line of duty, peace officers will not return home. Although I don't know the gender of all of them, I want to make sure I cover them all; so let me say that, in the line of duty, there are peace officers who will not return home.

Those husbands and wives and children had every reason to believe that their loved ones would return home. They are in pain, and I want them to know that we suffer together. All of us in this country suffer whenever any one of us is taken by violence. Innocent people in this country are suffering. People of good will are suffering. Families are suffering.

My prayer is that, out of this adversity, we can build a unity that will afford us the opportunity to develop the harmony necessary for the people of the greatest Nation in the world to live together.

We have to span these chasms that divide us, and forgiveness is in order, but we must also make sure that justice is done. All who are associated with the dastardly deeds that occurred with reference to Dallas must be arrested, convicted, and must be prosecuted to the fullest extent that the law allows. There can be no exceptions.

The time has come now for those who are suffering to receive our prayers and

our sympathies, and I regret that "in the line of duty" has taken on a different meaning for them.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON S. 2943, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the Chair appoints the following conferees on S. 2943:

From the Committee on Armed Services, for consideration of the Senate bill and the House amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. THORNBERRY, FORBES, MILLER of Florida, WILSON of South Carolina, LOBIONDO, BISHOP of Utah, TURNER, KLINE, ROGERS of Alabama, FRANKS of Arizona, SHUSTER, CONAWAY, LAMBORN, WITTMAN, GIBSON, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Messrs. LANGEVIN, LARSEN of Washington, COOPER, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. TSONGAS, Messrs. GARAMENDI, JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. SPEIER, and Mr. PETERS.

From the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, for consideration of matters within the jurisdiction of that committee under clause 11 of rule X: Messrs. NUNES, POMPEO, and SCHIFF.

From the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for consideration of sections 571-74 and 578 of the Senate bill, and sections 571, 573, 1098E, and 3512 of the House amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. WALBERG, GUTHRIE, and SCOTT of Virginia.

From the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for consideration of sections 3112 and 3123 of the Senate bill, and sections 346, 601, 749, 1045, 1090, 1095, 1673, 3119A, and 3119C of the House amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. LATTA, JOHNSON of Ohio, and PALLONE.

From the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for consideration of sections 828, 1006, 1007, 1050, 1056, 1089, 1204, 1211, 1221-23, 1231, 1232, 1242, 1243, 1247, 1252, 1253, 1255-58, 1260, 1263, 1264, 1271-73, 1276, 1283, 1301, 1302, 1531-33, and 1662 of the Senate bill, and sections 926, 1011, 1013, 1083, 1084, 1098K, 1099B, 1099C, 1201, 1203, 1214, 1221-23, 1227, 1229, 1233, 1235, 1236, 1245, 1246, 1250, 1259A-59E, 1259J, 1259L, 1259P, 1259Q, 1259U, 1261, 1262, 1301-03, 1510, 1531-33, 1645, 1653, and 2804 of the House amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. ROYCE, ZELDIN, and ENGEL.

From the Committee on Homeland Security, for consideration of sections 564 and 1091 of the Senate bill, and sections 1097, 1869, 1869A, and 3510 of the House amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. MCCAUL, DONOVAN, and THOMPSON of Mississippi.

From the Committee on the Judiciary, for consideration of sections 829J,

829K, 944, 963, 1006, 1023-25, 1053, 1093, 1283, 3303, and 3304 of the Senate bill, and sections 598, 1090, 1098H, 1216, 1261, and 3608 of the House amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. GOODLATTE, ISSA, and CONYERS.

From the Committee on Natural Resources, for consideration of sections 601, 2825, subtitle D of title XXVIII, and section 2852 of the Senate bill, and sections 312, 601, 1090, 1098H, 2837, 2839, 2839A, subtitle E of title XXVIII, sections 2852, 2854, 2855, 2864-66, title XXX, sections 3508, 7005, and title LXXIII of the House amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. COOK, HARDY, and GRIJALVA.

From the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for consideration of sections 339, 703, 819, 821, 829H, 829I, 861, 944, 1048, 1054, 1097, 1103-07, 1109-13, 1121, 1124, 1131-33, 1135, and 1136 of the Senate bill, and sections 574, 603, 807, 821, 1048, 1088, 1095, 1098L, 1101, 1102, 1104-06, 1108-11, 1113, 1259C, and 1631 of the House amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. CHAFFETZ, RUSSELL, and CUMMINGS.

From the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, for consideration of section 874 of the Senate bill and sections 1605, 1673, and title XXXIII of the House amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. SMITH of Texas, WEBER of Texas, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

From the Committee on Small Business, for consideration of sections 818, 838, 874, and 898 of the Senate bill, and title XVIII of the House amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. CHABOT, KNIGHT, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

From the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for consideration of sections 541, 562, 601, 961, 3302-07, 3501, and 3502 of the Senate bill, and sections 343, 601, 731, 835, 1043, 1671, 3119C, 3501, 3504, 3509, 3512, and title XXXVI of the House amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. HUNTER, ROUZER, and SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

From the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, for consideration of sections 706, 755, and 1431 of the Senate bill, and sections 741, 1421, and 1864 of the House amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. ROE of Tennessee, BOST, and TAKANO.

From the Committee on Ways and Means, for consideration of section 1271 of the Senate bill, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. BRADY of Texas, REICHERT, and LEVIN.

There was no objection.

DEFENDING RELIGIOUS LIBERTIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the First

Amendment Defense Act and the importance of defending religious liberties in America. And I don't know that there has ever been a greater time for us to address this than right now. We have, unfortunately, become accustomed in this country of the news similar to what we woke up to this morning where we see one tragedy after another. Certainly racial tensions are extremely high in this country. Anger is high.

We face a number of other issues across this country, like greed and self-centeredness, a disregard for authority and personal property and the rule of law. We see corruption in so many different places, including our government at all levels, be it on the local level, the State, or here on the national level as well.

□ 1245

Things like immorality and abuse. And, yes, we hear a lot these days, especially days like today, a lot of people talking about gun violence. But, Mr. Speaker, I am convinced at the core of my being that we cannot address these type of issues by turning our backs on God and by kicking God out of the public square.

And, yet, we are seeing an increase of hostility in this country toward people of faith and the right that people have under the First Amendment to express those beliefs in the public square without fear of intimidation, without fear of being punished by our government.

Mr. Speaker, all of this concerns me greatly, and I know it concerns many people not only in the people's House, but all across our Nation. I think many people don't realize that, even according to the Scriptures, the institutions of family, as well as church and government, have been instituted by God. These are not creations of man. And I think many of us, Mr. Speaker, forget the reality of this.

In fact, the reason that government was created by God in the first place is because He knew that we, as human beings, need boundaries within which to live, and those boundaries actually comprise a civil society. And so we have government given to us as a great gift to enable us to have a tangible understanding of right and wrong and the boundaries within which to live, and if we get outside those boundaries, government is there for correction and to keep us within certain boundaries of behavior. That is what comprises a civil society.

But, of course, the problem of all of this, Mr. Speaker, is that we realize that government itself is comprised of human beings, and if human beings within government themselves are corrupt, then everyone suffers; and so it becomes extremely important for us to understand the purpose of government and why it exists and why it has such an influence on all of our lives.

On the other side, I guess, of the coin—perhaps not totally the other side, but certainly within the context

of this discussion—is, in fact, people of faith. Mr. Speaker, I have been involved in this battle personally for very closely, nearly 15 years, but I find these days people of faith are very much intimidated, scared to get involved. And there are all sorts of reasons for this. I hear all kinds of excuses, but some of the bigger excuses that I hear frequently is people say we have that separation of church and State. Of course, we know, Mr. Speaker, that that is not in the Constitution, and, yet, we have heard it over and over and over and over to the extent that many people today actually believe that there is a separation that prohibits people of faith from being involved, be it in government or in multiple other avenues and areas of our society.

And so that kind of erroneous thinking has an impact on something like the First Amendment and the right of the people to have belief and belief of conscience, and the right to exercise those beliefs publicly; but I also see, indeed, because of the growing hostility that is becoming more and more evident, that people are fearful of our government. People are fearful to stand up.

There are multiple examples, multiple examples. I had a radio program for 12 years and I dealt with this type of thing on a regular basis, but the examples go everywhere from a baker to photographers, some of whom have actually lost their businesses because they chose to stand on their First Amendment right to exercise their businesses according to the dictates of their faith, and they have ended up losing their businesses.

We have examples of valedictorians scared to offer a prayer or to express their beliefs in their valedictorian speech. We have workplace intimidation. We could go on and on and on, Mr. Speaker, a long time, talking about this, but the concern is highlighted by judicial leanings that we are seeing these days.

I think it is more important now than ever that we understand that the First Amendment is the first amendment. It is our first liberty. It is the foundation upon which so much else rests. If the First Amendment is altered or chipped away at continually, then I am fearful that our entire Nation will suffer massive consequences and change as a result.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to take a few moments to not only support the First Amendment Defense Act and the importance of defending religious liberties, but I think within that understanding, that context, now more than ever with the issues that we are watching, I want to kind of draw a word picture of why this is so important and why our Founders, why our Nation was actually established on these principles that we seem today so willingly to walk away from.

But we have, I believe, a moral obligation to defend our First Amendment

and to defend the rights of people to believe what they believe and to exercise those beliefs publicly without fear of intimidation, let alone punishment.

I go all the way back to begin with, Mr. Speaker, our very first President, George Washington. Many of us probably had to memorize portions of his Farewell Address, but, you know, I have tried to place myself in that context many times, and the reality is that many within our country, when Washington was stepping down, were fearful. We had never had another President in our country at that time, and George Washington had done a superb job. People were anxious of the thought of him leaving, and it had never happened. We had never passed the baton from one President to another at that time.

Washington, in his Farewell Address, Mr. Speaker, made this statement: "Of all the dispositions and habits that lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports."

Indispensable. Those are strong words: indispensable supports, religion and morality.

He went on, Mr. Speaker, and he said this—and I think a lot of people overlook this comment, but he said: "In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness."

In other words, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is totally fair to say that George Washington, in his Farewell Address, literally stated that you could not claim to be a patriot if you didn't understand the role of religion and morality in American culture and those indispensable pillars upon which our Nation rests. Amazing words that, unfortunately, we tend to overlook.

Well, George Washington did pass the baton, and for the first time in our Nation's history we had another leader. His name was John Adams. Many of us know a lot about John Adams and some of the things that he did and said, but probably one of the most famous quotes from Adams was this one, Mr. Speaker—and if this paper here represents the Constitution, it was Adams who said: "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

I think those are enormously significant words. I mean, we all know that our Constitution basically is a contract. It is a contract between our government and we, the people; and that contract says that our government is not going to be overly intrusive into our lives, that we will have limited government and maximum freedom. That is the contract. John Adams said that that contract, that Constitution, was written for a moral and religious people, that it is totally inadequate for the government of any other.

So, Mr. Speaker, I recall—it has been several years ago now—I was actually in a meeting with Governor Huckabee,

and he made a statement that for years now has just bubbled inside me, and it actually has become a changing moment in my life to understand what our Founders meant when they gave us the importance of religion and morality.

But let's suppose we have two towns, a town A and a town B. Let's just suppose, Mr. Speaker, that town A is what we may refer to as a secular town. It is a town that, for the most part, has ignored the role of religion and morality. They, more or less, have kicked God out of the public square.

What kind of behavior would we expect, Mr. Speaker, from town A here?

Well, if we ponder that and if we look historically at this type of scenario, we will find that this type of society, for the most part, has greater incidence of things like violence, robbery, crime, gang violence, broken families, and all these types of things seem to go on the rise.

Now, here is the important question, Mr. Speaker, that I think we have got to address when we are looking at something like this: What is the role of government toward town A?

Well, if you think about it, of necessity, government must be very much involved in town A because there are so many problems here. We need more law enforcement because we have got so much more crime. We need more judges because we have got all these different things that are happening here, and there are conflicts between one another. Of necessity, government must be very much involved in town A.

Now, let's go over here to town B. Let's just suppose town B is a town that, for the most part, has embraced a Judeo-Christian worldview, much like our Founders gave us. Many people here representing this House of Representatives probably grew up in a town B. I like to refer to this as a Mayberry type of a town. Not that everyone in town B is a person of faith or a religious person, but there is a certain worldview that is embraced in this town that embraces, that is accepted within this culture, this community, things like the Golden Rule, where we are going to treat one another the way we ourselves want to be treated.

Now, let's just say, for example, that this town B accepts certain values along those things. Now, what kind of behavior do we expect out of town B?

Well, not everyone over here is perfect by any means, but overall, many of us can go back and we can look 20, 30, 40, 50 years ago, the difference of life then compared to life now, when we did have more of a town B-type understanding in our country, and there was less crime. Families did stay together more. We didn't suffer with the same extent of issues like gang violence, drug and alcohol abuse, and these type of things.

So, Mr. Speaker, now the question is: What is the response of government to town B?

Well, it is not nearly as great. The reason being, Mr. Speaker, the primary

difference between these is what I believe our Founders gave us. In town B you have a group of people who are capable of self-governing their own lives with an authentic understanding of right and wrong because there is deeply held religious, moral convictions that dictate the conduct of these individuals. I believe it is totally fair to say that I believe our Founders gave us the indispensable pillars of religion and morality because they understood that it is only within this context that we can have limited government.

The role of government in this town is much less because you have self-governing people, and it is only within a context of self-governance that we are able to have limited government. Thereby, the understanding of the statement by John Adams that says our Constitution, that contract of limited government—John Adams said our Constitution was written for a moral and religious people; it is totally inadequate for a government of any other.

Mr. Speaker, it is my conviction, and I believe consistent with our Founders, to say that it is impossible to have limited government in a secular society. I don't know that that is even a possibility.

□ 1300

So we, as Members of this House and this governing body, be it Federal or on the State level or even local level, have a moral obligation to defend our First Amendment, because therein grows the roots of religion and morality that are absolutely essential to our system and form of government.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for us also to be reminded that we have a tremendous religious heritage in this country that has carried us faithfully since our founding that we must not depart from.

I remember coming across a statement a few years ago. In fact, this was in 1950. I would be curious to know, Mr. Speaker, how many of my colleagues were alive in 1950, but I would venture to say it is quite a number.

I came across a court ruling by the Supreme Court of the State of Florida. It was a decision that they made in 1950. In that decision, Mr. Speaker, the Florida Supreme Court actually made this statement. By the way, they were referring to our Founders. But that court in Florida said:

A people uneducated about the sovereignty of God, the ethics of Jesus, and the Ten Commandments, could never have evolved the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, or the Constitution.

They went on and said:

There is not one, solitary, fundamental principle of our democratic policy that did not stem directly from the basic moral concepts embodied in the Ten Commandments.

Mr. Speaker, I read that. In our lifetime, and that of many Representatives, a State supreme court was making a comment like that. I compare it to this. I cannot imagine any court in America making a decision with those

kinds of words. They would be ruled unconstitutional quicker than we could imagine. Yet, in our lifetime, we had State supreme courts making decisions such as this.

My, we have come a long, long way from understanding the role that religion and morality play in supporting our entire system of governance.

Mr. Speaker, as I begin to land the plane here and wind down, I am just reminded, of course, that many know that I have been a pastor for many years. So this whole issue is very, very close to me personally.

People of faith understand that they have a responsibility, according to the Scripture, to be salt and light in the world in which they live. Regardless of what country—anywhere in the world—we have a Biblical mandate to be salt and light in our world, and I take that very seriously.

So, when we see our First Amendment rights being challenged or chipped away, it is an alarming thing, because we have a responsibility, in accordance with our faith, to take a stand for those things which we believe, and to do so out loud.

Just from that perspective, Mr. Speaker, it is alarming. But the beautiful thing is, here in America, we are blessed to live in a nation where our system of government does not work without involvement from the people. Our whole system is reliant on the people of this great country to step up to the plate and engage it. That is the concept behind those powerful words, "we, the people." This is our country. It is our turf. It is we, the people.

So, we have a system of government that does not work unless we, the people, get involved in one capacity or another, whether it is voting or whether it is running for office or a million other things to be done in between. That is the way our system works.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just emphasize the importance that we have to maintain those principles that allow all of us, regardless of religious beliefs, regardless of those who have no religious beliefs, but also remembering those who do have religious beliefs, that this is a country where the First Amendment protects all of us. This is a country where the First Amendment Defense Act applies to all of us.

Mr. Speaker, I want to close with a quote. Right out these doors is Statuary Hall. Sometime back late one evening, I had some spare moments, and I came back over here to the Capitol and was walking alone. I was virtually all by myself here in these great Halls. I went into Statuary Hall, and I started reading and going to one statue after another. I went around reading about those individuals, and I came to one, James Garfield.

Mr. Speaker, many people don't know much about Garfield these days, but he is the only minister to ever be elected President of the United States of America.

I stood before that statue and I looked at him and, Mr. Speaker, I was

reminded of a statement. I actually have come to be a great admirer of Garfield. It seems to me that everything I have read from him has been powerful. He seemed to have a keen awareness and understanding of the role of what I am talking about today: the role of religion and morality in American society and culture and our entire system of government.

Garfield made this statement, Mr. Speaker, and I believe it is more applicable today than it has been in any day in which we have lived. Here is what he said:

“Now more than ever before, the people are responsible for the character of their Congress. If that body be ignorant, reckless and corrupt, it is because the people tolerate ignorance, recklessness and corruption. If it be intelligent, brave and pure, it is because the people demand these qualities to represent them in the national legislature.”

Then, he said this, Mr. Speaker:

“If the next centennial does not find us a great nation . . . it will be because those who represent the enterprise, the culture, and the morality of the nation do not aid in controlling the political forces.”

What a powerful statement.

Mr. Speaker, being reminded of that statement, I would ask us today: How can we, the people be involved, be it in the enterprise, the culture, or the morality of the Nation? How can we, as Garfield said, be involved in controlling the political forces if we do not have the First Amendment protections to do so? How can we be engaged if we continue to chip away at the right of people to believe what they believe and to exercise those beliefs within the public square without fear of intimidation or punishment?

Mr. Speaker, I believe now more than ever is the time for us not to chip away at our First Amendment rights, but to defend them and protect them and ensure that those rights are maintained for all Americans now and for the next generation and for as long as this Nation exist.

Mr. Speaker, as the First Amendment Defense Act comes before this body in the weeks to come, I hope and pray that we will stand behind it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

TRAGEDY IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LOUDERMILK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, might I ask how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 32 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much my friend, Mr. HICE, who preceded me.

It is a very sad day around the country. So much in the way of sympathy

and prayers for the victims' families in Dallas are greatly appreciated.

As someone who grew up looking forward to visits to the big city of Dallas, it is deeply troubling to see what has happened there. The Dallas police chief said that the suspect said he wanted to kill White people, especially White police officers.

I was listening in the cloakroom to a press conference going on now with some of our African American Members of Congress defending Black Lives Matter and discussing the unfairness in America for African Americans in this country.

I don't know the races of the officers that were shot. Apparently, the suspect said he wanted to shoot and kill White officers, but I know there are a lot of officers in Dallas of a lot of different races.

I had the opportunity, if you want to call it an opportunity, of trying a murder case for 10 weeks in Dallas. I worked with some incredible Dallas police officers. Because of my background, I continue to have great respect for law enforcement officers.

There was something that we had seen since the protest days of the sixties and seventies: calling police officers pigs and calling them all kinds of names. People—terrorists from those days that have now grown up and even teaching college—wanted to kill pigs, wanted to kill police officers back then. Back then it wasn't a race issue; it was just killing what they called pigs.

Having served 4 years in the Army after Vietnam, we weren't ever in combat in my 4 years, but we knew what it was to be spit at, to be ridiculed, and at times to be told not to wear your uniform off post because people hate you so much. So I have some empathy for what officers have gone through.

The evil and the hatred that brought about 9/11, killing thousands of precious lives, taking so many innocent lives here, had a result that I didn't expect: it brought America together. September 12, there on our town square in Tyler, Texas, people of all walks, age, race, gender—it didn't matter—came together. We sang together, we prayed together, and even all held hands together.

□ 1315

As I have said before, the thing I loved about that day was there was no—there were no hyphenated Americans on September 12 of 2001. We were Americans, without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, gender, age. None of that mattered. We were Americans. We had been attacked, and we were wanting to stand together.

In all our sympathy for those who died on 9/11, the day after, it felt good to be together. For about 3 months our churches were filled and people were asking God to bless America again, and it felt good to be together as Americans.

Nobody from organizations like Freedom from Religion dared show their

face that day because people across America were begging God for His protection, for His blessings, as He has through most of our Nation's history.

There is an article that has already come out today from the Federalist publication. It says:

“Five Takeaways From the Dallas Police Chief's Press Conference. Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings and Dallas Police Chief David Brown held a press conference Friday morning in the wake of the sniper shooting during a Black Lives Matter protest in downtown Dallas that killed at least five officers and injured seven more and two civilians.”

The five takeaways, they say, are, number 1: “Police Killed a Suspect With a Robot Carrying a Bomb.”

Number 2: “Gunman Said he Wanted to ‘Kill White People, White Officers.’”

Number 3: “Brown and Rawlings Were Unclear About Number of Suspect/s and their Descriptions.”

Number 4: “Brown said Police Don't Feel Support Most Days, but Need It Now.”

Number 5: “Brown and Rawlings Asked for Prayer.”

I appreciate my fellow Members of Congress feeling the need to have a press conference today and, again, to support the movement of Black Lives Matter and the injustices that have happened at the hands of police officers.

As I have said many times during my adult life, including especially during my days as a District Judge handling felony cases where humans are involved, there will be mistakes and wrongdoing. And no matter what profession, there will be people who do wrong.

But I have always taken solace in the fact—what I believe is the fact—that amongst law enforcement, those who would do wrong or who may be prejudiced in their motivation, the numbers are so much fewer percentage-wise than in the general population.

That is why over the last 7½ years it has grieved me greatly to see our President rebuff the opportunity to bring us together as a nation anytime an incident involved a police officer, his knee-jerk reactions repeatedly, whether it was saying that the police acted stupidly or jumping onto the bandwagon against police, when it turned out the police were in the right.

There have been instances where they were not, and there are some on video where it clearly appears they did terribly wrong and reacted terribly wrong. And when that happens, perpetrators, wrongdoers are to be punished without regard to race, creed, color, gender, national origin. That doesn't matter.

It seems, as long as we have groups like Black Lives Matter, who will just become unnerved and inflamed when a Democratic candidate for President says all lives matter and chastise him for saying all lives matter, to the point that he has to withdraw his belief that all lives matter and go back to saying,