

Ambassador Sanders said:

The security services need to regroup, re-approach, and address it as such, in order to begin to get off their heels on the defensive and get on an aggressive offense. This has not happened yet, and Boko Haram has not only succeeded in terrorizing 60,000 square miles of territory, but it is also evident that, with the late April 2014 attacks, that they have the ability to reach locations just 15 kilometers outside of Abuja, either with sleeper cells or with bombs getting past checkpoints.

Current Nigerian security services have never experienced anything like this, like what it is facing with Boko Haram. Boko Haram is executing asymmetrical warfare, and for the most part, this is outside of the framework of the security forces and their capability to effectively respond.

Among Ambassador Sanders' recommendations were additional material, especially mobile communications equipment, vehicles, technologically-based bomb detection equipment; improved control over their very porous borders; improved military planning, logistics, equipment and supplies, including sufficient spare parts and fuel; expanded small Special Forces units and a 24-7 counterterrorism center; establishing a satellite CT center closer to the northeast region, so information doesn't take so long to react to or to be analyzed; and more rapid response forces, or what we call mobile units, and probably more outposts.

Another expert at yesterday's hearing, Dr. Peter Pham, director, Africa Center, Atlantic Council, testified:

A comprehensive strategy is required to respond to the burgeoning threat posed by Boko Haram, including the promotion of specialized training for Nigerian security forces. Undoubtedly, the Nigerian security forces, both military and police, need that assistance in the fight. However, the need is less a matter of personnel and equipment than training, especially in intelligence and investigations.

□ 1330

Mr. Speaker, while some training has begun—and U.S. military personnel deserve high praise and thanks for their professionalism, skill, and commitment—much more needs to be done. Human rights vetting must be improved so that eligible soldiers are not wrongfully excluded and intelligence cooperation needs to be expanded.

Let me also express my gratitude to our Embassy personnel for also working overtime in trying to mitigate this threat and to do the work that the Embassy does so selflessly. They are doing a wonderful job, and I appreciate their work in hosting and helping with my trip there.

Finally, just let me say, nothing has galvanized global opinion and a sense of extreme urgency more than the abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls, and now other girls since. Some 20 more girls were just abducted by Boko Haram.

Despite escalating threats of terrorism, however, many Nigerians, including and especially the faith community—Catholics, Evangelicals, Muslims—have responded with extraor-

dinary courage, resiliency, resolve, and empathy for the victims, and they hope and they are working to ensure that Boko Haram—the whole country—is stopped.

Counterinsurgency training and intelligence capacity are among the highest priorities, and my hope is that more, not less, will be done going forward in order to mitigate this threat and to end the reign of terror that is being promoted by Boko Haram.

I yield back the balance of my time.

TERRORIST ACTIVITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, how much time is that?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. There are approximately 53 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend, CHRIS SMITH. It turns out that he and I were in Nigeria around the same time. And I am so grateful for his work. He cares so deeply about life, about freedom, about religious liberty, as much as or more than anybody I know in all of Congress. I am so grateful to him for his great work.

It is heartbreaking to see people killed, terrorized, kidnapped, sexually abused, abused in all kinds of other ways simply because of their faith. That is going on in Nigeria and all over the world right now.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. GOHMERT, thank you for your trip there and your concern, which has been throughout your entire career for human rights in general, but also for religious freedom.

This is a serious assault on religious freedom, forced Islamization. Again, those Muslims who do not agree with the extremism are also targeted, but Christians by and large.

At yesterday's hearing, Mr. Ogebe said that, of the 60 churches that have been destroyed, three mosques have been destroyed during that same time period. This is an attack on the Christian faith and it is a slaughter of Christians.

I want to thank you for your leadership on this.

Mr. GOHMERT. My friend brings up an interesting point. When I was there last week, a couple of the Christian pastors from Nigeria that were working with the victims, one of them pointed out to me that one of his groomsmen was a Muslim and they are still very, very close friends. Another, who is a Nigerian woman who has done extraordinary work in trying to help victims, particularly Christian victims, one of her sisters that she loves very much is Muslim.

The point that they were making is that Christians and moderate Muslims

have been able to live together for hundreds of years, even in Nigeria, but this radical Islam that has come in, especially in the north, is an abomination. It is antithetical to everything that Christians believe. As a result, they don't care how peace loving Christians may be; you either convert or they kill you.

Having visited with a couple of the three girls who escaped—there were a number of girls who were able to get off the truck during the night, and some others who escaped the school that night and were able to run into the woods in the dark. There were only five or six who actually were in captivity and were able to escape. I have met with three of them. A couple of them were talking about it, and apparently they were telling the girls, you either convert to Islam or your problems get worse—repeated sexual abuse, all kinds of other abuse. They would say: Just convert to Islam and your problems were over.

The trouble is, even when some of these girls at the threat of their very lives converted, which in and of itself is an abomination, their problems were not over. They were still being chided as potential sex slaves for the rest of their lives.

So it is something that ought to concern all peace-loving people everywhere. I have talked to Democrats, friends across the aisle. Republicans, I know, were upset with what is happening.

As I mentioned, these victims, I am not sure about the people my friend Mr. SMITH met with in Nigeria, but the people I met with had no idea that the U.S. Government cared at all because they don't follow Twitter. And if you don't follow Twitter, you don't know that they have been doing #bringbackourgirls and making themselves feel very good. It didn't help the victims one iota. They didn't know. As we are told in Christian churches all our lives, they won't care what you know until they know that you care, and Twitter doesn't seem to convey that.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Again, the great urgent needs for the Nigerian military are actionable intelligence and the capacity to know what is going on where, when, in real-time, and training. There needs to be a reevaluation of the vetting process, the Leahy amendment which I absolutely agree with; but when good troops and good soldiers and, especially, good officers are unnecessarily excluded because of a taint that may be ascribed to their unit rather than their individual performance, that needs to be relooked at so that we can train. There is a battalion that is being trained by the U.S., but there needs to be far more training in counterinsurgency.

I would say to my friend, I remember a trip to Darfur. The Nigeria military has been very robust in their peacekeeping. I remember I met with Major

Ajumbo in Darfur who had also been deployed to Sarajevo. I was very active in the terrible Balkan war. I went several times to places, including with FRANK WOLF, to Vukovar and other places that were under siege. When the peacekeepers got there, among them were the Nigerians. So peacekeeping is something they had been very generous in deploying their troops to try to help other countries deal with civil wars or wars of aggression and, of course, terrorist activity as we have seen in Darfur, but now that kind of training is not applicable to a counterinsurgency effort. That takes a very specialized type of skill set, and that needs to be ramped up exponentially if this horrific threat is to be mitigated and then eventually done away with.

Mr. GOHMERT. I think my friend and I both agree, we are not asking the United States to go to war in Nigeria.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Not at all.

Mr. GOHMERT. That is not necessary.

When you go back to Afghanistan, within 4 or 5 months, the Taliban was totally defeated without one American losing his or her life; and we helped them with the kind of thing the gentleman is talking about: training, aerial reconnaissance—we would drop a bomb every now and then where it was directed by our intelligence—all done without a single American life being lost.

Now, after the Taliban were routed, there were some CIA agents who were killed in one of the confinement areas, but that was after, basically, the Taliban had been routed.

So, as the gentleman points out, some training, but the first thing the gentleman named, actionable intelligence that they can act on. I notice that my friend didn't mention that we have got to provide more tweets in order to overcome Boko Haram. Actionable intelligence, give them training to help them do this.

We have done that in the Philippines. We have trained the Philippines to protect themselves; and they have come along so well, fighting radical Islam in the southern parts of the Philippines which, really, most people are not aware has been a real hotbed for this kind of radical Islamic activity. I think Khalid Sheikh Mohammed had been to the southern Philippines before 9/11. There are just these hotbeds, and the last thing we need is an area like Nigeria where they have been peace-loving and peacekeeping people, and now they are suffering from the abuses and the horrors of radical Islam.

We don't need to lose friends like that. And nothing breaks my heart more, traveling abroad, than to be constantly asked: Why do you appear to be helping our enemies and not helping your allies?

I don't know if the gentleman has heard that.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. There are so many very excellent points from my friend from Texas.

They don't want boots on the ground. The Nigerian military, Goodluck Jonathan, the President, what they need is this kind of specialized training, and they need it fast.

As we have seen in Baghdad—and the threat being posed now to Baghdad—and Fallujah, of course, several months ago and now in Mosul, a highly motivated and capable group of terrorists can do extraordinary damage unless you have people facing them down who have the kind of training and motivation that can meet and stop it.

Let me just say, too, Africa is now, you know, the Wahhabi sect and others, extremist elements, are trying to influence Africa to the detriment of moderate Muslims, as you have pointed out, who have gotten along and have been best of friends with the Christian community. Even in Nigeria, there have been bishops and imams who have traveled throughout the country. The country is roughly divided in half. It is the most populous country in all of Africa, about 180 million people, and a very, very important friend and ally of democracy and us. They are at risk because of these extremist elements.

We saw it in Somalia with al-Shabaab and the pain that that terrible organization has inflicted on Somalia. Then as they were being defeated—they are not defeated yet, but as their numbers were lessened, they went over to Nairobi and went into a market and killed large numbers of people and terrorized.

These people eat, sleep, and drink brutality and impose it on innocent people. They blow up children and women and men. As a matter of fact, one of the untold stories is how many of the schoolboys are just being summarily executed, particularly in the three northern states. They kidnap the girls, as you pointed out, sexually abuse them and do horrific things to them and kill some of them, but they just summarily execute the young men.

So there is a reign of terror that is underappreciated around the world with regard to Boko Haram. You and I and others have been raising this for years.

Our Ambassador Sanders yesterday talked about she was Ambassador in 2007–2010, U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, how she had raised so many issues.

In 2011, the U.N. headquarters in Abuja was firebombed by Boko Haram—in Abuja. There was an American there, and yet the Obama administration refused to designate Boko Haram a foreign terrorist organization.

I asked Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Johnnie Carson at a hearing in 2012 and then again a year later, why. This organization meets the test of a foreign terrorist organization, and why not, especially with the tools that are available through an FTO designation, trying to track the terror money and the means and financing for guns and the procurement of weapons, IEDs and the rest, and they just refused.

They named three individuals, but they would not do the FTO for the entire organization. A missed opportunity.

Again, like I said, on the day before my hearing in December, the administration announced Boko Haram as an FTO. We welcomed it. Everybody was glad, but we missed an opportunity for approximately 2 years or more for an FTO designation.

□ 1345

Mr. GOHMERT. If that FTO—foreign terrorist organization—designation had been made earlier on, some might ask, what difference does it make? Well, clearly it could have made a big difference, because if the emphasis had been placed earlier on at just how much of a terrorist organization Boko Haram is they may not have had the power they did to do what they did.

I don't know if my friend is aware, but in talking to these mothers and the three girls that had escaped, as they talked about that night the girls said—and I had not heard this before—but they painted a picture much like my friend had painted of other locations and what Boko Haram and other radical Islamists had done. They came to the school, and it is a bit shocking that their intel was not better, but they kept asking the girls at gunpoint: Where are the boys? Where are the boys? It was a girls school, and they are: Where are the boys? Where are the boys? Well, there are no boys, and they didn't believe them at first. They wanted the boys to do exactly what the gentleman said—they were going to pull the boys out and kill them.

I said: So was it because some radical Islamists do not think that women should be educated? And they said: No, no, the point was it was a Christian school, so if you are a young man they will kill you, because men or women, you should never be educated in a Christian school even if you are not taught about the Bible at all. If it is a Christian-run school, whether it discusses the Bible teachings of Jesus and all, still you should be killed if you are a young man and abused horribly if you are a young woman. So they didn't even know that there were no boys there and were disappointed when all they had were the girls to take off and abuse them.

But just a horrible humanitarian situation. As the gentleman points out—although I have been called an Islamophobe, xenophobe, all kinds of things by people that want to portray something we are not—I was amused at the reaction I saw over my shoulder in Kabul when there were a few of us that went to meet with some Northern Alliance leaders I met with a number of times. DANA ROHRBACHER first introduced me to some, had met others.

But we were going, and they weren't sure I was going to be able to get across the city to meet them, and I was determined, and I told the State Department: You see that gate out here at the Embassy? You are going to have

to take me down because I am getting in a car and I am going to see our allies. I was informed: We are not authorized to take down a Member of Congress. I said: Then you won't stop me. My friend Massoud is sending a car. Having lost his brother, his father-in-law, he knows about security, he will keep me safe, and I am going to meet him.

Well, they arranged for a car from the Embassy that was secured and we went. When we arrived at their compound and I got out of the car, I was surprised this big group of Northern Alliance leaders came rushing down, including General Dostum. But Massoud particularly, I really have high regard for him, came rushing out, they are rushing down the porch, and I notice my other friends from Congress are going: What's going on here, they are rushing to meet each other, are they going to hit each other or what is this?

We embraced when we saw each other. They are moderate Muslims. We disagree on religious beliefs, but they are the enemy of our enemy, and those people successfully defeated the Taliban, our enemy, they want to wipe our Nation off the Earth, and all the Northern Alliance want is to be left alone and let them run their own area. It can be done. Christians and moderate Muslims can live in peace, can embrace, can be in each other's weddings, as happens in Nigeria. But when it comes to radical Islam we have got to call it what it is.

I was a bit surprised to hear from some of the people from Chibok that they honestly believe that the governor is in cahoots with Boko Haram and, if not, is either sympathetic or very afraid of them. They also have grave concern that the principal of that school may have been complicit in assisting in having this happen. That could be an issue because they didn't have enough intel to know there were no boys there, so I am not sure. At least some of the parents were very concerned whether or not the principal may have been complicit. Perhaps the principal was just concerned for the principal's own life, who knows?

But they don't know that we care, and there are some very inexpensive things that will come back as "bread on the water" if we assist others in stopping radical Islam right where it is—as our friend George W. Bush used to say—where they get stopped somewhere else and not right outside or inside our own homes. That is not the place you want to be stopping them.

I am so grateful for the gentleman's heart and for his efforts.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I would just add, finally, that one of the big takeaways—and this was amplified yesterday by Ambassador Sanders—is that there is a huge psychological toll being imposed upon the victims, and that the PTSD experienced by the families, especially with the Chibok abduction, is enormous. The government of Nigeria,

obviously, needs to walk point on trying to ensure that psychological assistance, as well as the faith community, which can provide a tremendous benefit to those suffering trauma and the aftermaths of it, be given.

One of the things that Ambassador Sanders mentioned yesterday that I thought was a very good idea is that President Goodluck Jonathan ought to meet with the families of the Chibok girls. One of the things that George Bush did, and he actually did it in my district as well—not George but his wife, the First Lady, but he did it at the White House and other venues—they met with the survivors of 9/11 and let them know not only that the sympathy and the empathy for their plight was real and the harrowing loss that they endured, but that, as President of the United States, George W. Bush, and his wife, said: We are with you, we have got your back, we care about you.

So, respectfully, I would hope that the President, Goodluck Jonathan, would open his arms and meet with the Chibok family members, the parents who are in utter agony—who wouldn't be—at the loss of their daughters. Again, I met with one of those dads who lost two of his daughters to the abduction, doesn't know where they are, like the others, and this man, tears flowing down his face. In his case, he was one of the Muslims. There were a few Muslim girls, we don't know how many, at the school—it was mostly Christians, overwhelmingly Christian—but his two daughters were Muslim.

This trauma is real. We know from the work that the VA has done for years of posttraumatic stress disorder—PTSD—that those impacts are lifelong and they need to be addressed. When I sat, like you sat, across from some of those young victims, the lucky ones who were able to escape, this poor young 18-year-old girl that I met with was clearly broken and hurting beyond words, and yet she kept uttering and saying: But I care about my friends, what happened to my friends, where are my friends now? And tears welled up in her eyes several times.

So again, I do thank you.

There is one other idea to put on the table: The victims compensation fund. Nigeria does have significant oil wealth. While there are still huge numbers of poor people in Nigeria, there is also the idea that there are resources available. Certainly helping some people get their lives back together—when I went to the IDP camp—the internally displaced camp—in Jos last September I was struck by the destitute, the extreme poverty compounded by the exodus, and there are hundreds of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons, obviously in Nigeria but also in adjacent countries like Cameroon.

So a victims compensation fund would be at least an effort, a gesture, to help out, it would seem to me, those who are suffering from, again, loss of life, abductions, and now no place to

live too. It just gets worse and worse and worse.

I also heard harrowing stories of people who leave their homes and hide in the bush at night because Boko Haram at any night can just come knocking on the door, AK-47 in hand, ready to open fire. So the pervasive fear, especially in the three northern states, is bad and getting worse. And again, our former Ambassador yesterday said: This is a long war, and Nigeria needs to understand, and everyone who supports Nigeria, that it is not going to just end with one fell swoop. There needs to be a strategy that takes in a framework to account that this is a long and protracted war, but it has to start now.

Mr. GOHMERT. The gentleman met with fathers. I didn't meet with fathers. I asked a pastor: Why do we not hear more and see more of the fathers of the girls who were abducted, kidnapped, and being brutalized? I was aware, and some of them had talked about, some people choose to leave their homes to sleep so that Boko Haram doesn't invade their home at night.

But some of them were explaining—and these are all mothers of daughters who were kidnapped; she had two daughters kidnapped—but that it is an interesting thing, a deeply troubling thing about evil. Sometimes people who do evil, they intentionally do things that make the victims feel guilty when it is not their fault.

One of the things that counselors constantly have to deal with, and I know from having prosecuted abusive women, you are constantly having to tell them no one deserved this, no one deserved to be beaten or harmed like you were hurt, nobody. There is no excuse, it is not your fault.

There were times that, as a judge, after sentencing, children would feel guilty, and I would say: You have got to understand, please don't leave my courtroom thinking you did anything wrong.

One of the things that some of the fathers and some of the mothers, they were telling me, they feel so guilty about, that night in the middle of the night, they get word the school has been raided and the girls have been taken. Some of the parents went running and they went all the way to where the school was. They had nothing. They were empty-handed. One woman was so appalled that her daughter had been taken she ran out and a little boy had to say: Ma'am, take my shirt, take my shirt, that she wasn't properly clad. But they were so worried about the girls they didn't think of grabbing anything. They ran.

When they got to the area where some girls were being held all of the Boko Haram had AK-47s, they had machine guns, weapons. These people had empty hands. They were told you either walk away or we kill every one of you, and they would have. They had shown that over and over. They killed people and didn't think twice.

They are thinking, well, if we kill us all here then we have no chance of helping our daughters, but we have got to get them free. We will all be killed right here, so will this do any good?

Well, now they are saddled with the guilt of thinking, maybe if we had gone ahead and ran at them and they slaughtered all of us out there, maybe the world would have listened and our daughters would be safe now.

They have no reason to feel that kind of guilt, none. But this is the kind of insidious evil that Boko Haram is engaged in. It is a travesty to anyone who cares about life or liberty and should be deeply offensive even to moderate or semi-moderate Muslims. They ought to be joining us in this call for an end to the existence of Boko Haram, to the Taliban, to all those who are so pervasive with evil.

□ 1400

This is one of the girls that escaped. It breaks your heart when you start hearing her tell her story.

Unlikely Heroes is the name of the NGO helping these victims. They are helping families. I don't know if you have heard, but just this week, Unlikely Heroes said they are now being contacted like never before from victims who were too afraid and felt like nobody cared and what difference would it make, and now, they are stepping up.

We don't have to go to war for them, but we can help direct their efforts—give them the intel, give them what they need. Then, at some point, we need to help bring pressure on the Nigerian Government to make sure that the people of Nigeria benefit from the massive amount of wealth that is going somewhere.

I sure don't see where it is going in Nigeria, but it is going somewhere. It is not being kept by the oil companies. It is going to somewhere, to somebody in Nigeria, and the people of Nigeria need to begin to enjoy some of the wealth with which their land has been blessed, and I hope we see that in our lifetime as well.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I thank the gentleman for his compassion and for bringing these stories forward and for meeting with those families.

I did, too, hear of the false guilt—nevertheless, guilt—shared by some of the families, but what do you do when you are facedown with an AK-47 and you are holding a stick? That is basically what happened.

I have been to Abuja a number of times. I am the author, as you know, of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, America's landmark law in combating sex and labor trafficking, enacted in 2000.

I have been there a number of times, working with members of parliament—their congressmen and their senators—on trafficking legislation. They have a very, very well-written piece of legislation to combat the scourge of modern-day slavery and human trafficking.

There are many fine members of the House and Senate. Part of the problem has been the corruption in some places—in the military, in some cases—in parts of the government, and we have corruption here; so we know how insidious, as you pointed out, that can be, but when the military units that are deployed lack the skill base and the training to deal with a terrorist organization that is highly adept, coupled with the fact they don't have enough munitions, enough capabilities that any military going to war against this kind of threat need to have, it just so hampers their ability to carry on the fight. So that, too, has to change.

We are told something like \$6 billion in defense spending by the government is what is going on. It seems to me—and I said this at yesterday's hearing—perhaps they need an urgent supplemental—the way we would do here—to significantly upgrade their materiel.

That was one of the first things that Ambassador Sanders said yesterday. They have the money to buy this. They need to procure it—and do it yesterday—certainly, today—and not wait any longer—so that these troops are ready, capable and trained.

So I really appreciate your point. They do have a number of fine laws. Their legislature is functioning in many ways very well. There are gaps that particularly need to be addressed. Three northern states have some serious problems. So I do think we need to be a true ally and friend.

As Professor Pham said yesterday, we will keep our footprint very light. Nobody wants U.S. troops on the ground. That is very clear, but we need to help them help themselves, especially since the Nigerians have been so generous in deploying peacekeepers to troubled areas throughout Africa and, like I said, in places like the Balkans, in Bosnia.

Mr. GOHMERT. As my friend said, there is so much good in Nigeria.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. So much.

Mr. GOHMERT. We should not lose sight of that.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. So much good—the family, the faith community. I spent some time with a number of Catholics and evangelicals. They love God. They really want to do His will on Earth, as it is in Heaven, as we are admonished in the Lord's prayer, but they face many crippling challenges. On the sickness side, malaria is endemic. They have made major gains on the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

They have so many issues that they are trying to address and in comes this horrific Boko Haram organization, which has taken brutality to a new low. They are capable—and let's not kid ourselves. This is a gang, but it is a well-trained gang that is blood-thirsty.

We have seen it before. Look what happened in Liberia and Charles Taylor, who brutalized Sierra Leone and Liberia. Thankfully, he got a 50-year prison sentence by the special court of

Sierra Leone and now is in prison, but the pain that he unleashed through his terrorism—and he was the President of that country.

Here, you have a situation where a group of thugs, well trained, are unleashing hell upon wonderful people. Again, that is why we can be of help, especially in the area of intelligence and in the area of training—of course, on the humanitarian side, sharing best practices, especially psychological trauma type of interventions.

Mr. GOHMERT. As a child growing up in Mount Pleasant, Texas, my mother's first cousins, Gene and Mary Leigh Legg, and their children—Beth, Arnold Lloyd, and Linda Leigh—were missionaries to Nigeria. They would go to Nigeria for 3 years and then come back to Mount Pleasant for a year, and they would normally live close to my house. We were always close. We went to church together. We were at each other's houses all the time.

So I grew up vicariously learning the love of the Nigerian people that the Leggs had.

Mary Leigh later had a brain tumor. There was nothing that could be done. Since it was inoperable and they couldn't fix it and she was going to lose her life, she wanted to die there among the Nigerians that she had spent her adult life helping, but the Southern Baptist mission board said: no, we can't have a missionary dying out there in the field, you have got to come back to Texas.

So just a block or so from my house is where she was—we watched her—but she really wanted to die among the people she loved in Nigeria.

Gene later remarried. Jackie and Gene then were missionaries to Nigeria. Beth, Lloyd, and Linda Leigh never lost their love for Nigeria. Jackie and Gene are back in Henderson, Texas, but they still do anything they can for Nigerians.

So I have had the affinity. I have known of the love and the graciousness of the Nigerian people since my earliest memories. It also adds to the heartache when you see what the people are going through these days.

I hope and pray that the Nigerian leaders, the governors in the northeast area and principals of schools, if they are not complicit, they need to come out and make clear that they are an enemy of Boko Haram. Let consequences follow where they may because, when those leaders in those areas stand up and make clear that they do not stand with this kind of evil, then it will give great courage to others.

So I appreciate the gentleman so very much in his efforts around the world. There is much to be done.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. GOHMERT, I want to thank you, again, for your leadership and for taking the time to go to Lagos to meet with all the families and to, again, amplify the message that we must do more. There is more that we can do.

I was extraordinarily impressed with our people that are on the ground. They are totally can-do, both our Embassy, as well as our military people. They want to help. We have got to make sure that we are resourcing them sufficiently as well.

The Government of Nigeria and President Goodluck Jonathan need to listen to the international chorus—the U.K. is there, the French are trying to be helpful on the intelligence side as well—but they own the leadership of this. They need to step up to the plate. Again, I can't emphasize enough the specialized training that could really enable their troops to efficaciously combat Boko Haram.

It needs to be done so urgently and so comprehensively. They need a comprehensive strategy.

I thank my good friend.

Mr. GOHMERT. The former Attorney General of Nigeria has also weighed in and is really working hard to combat radical Islam, and so it is good to see both government officials and former government officials like that weigh in.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Again, I say—and you emphasized it with your lifelong love of the Nigerian people and your knowledge of them—I think most Americans would be very encouraged to know just how strongly faith-filled the Nigerian people are. Whether they be evangelical, Catholic, or Muslim, they take their faith seriously. They are very ethical people, great people, very good business people.

If infrastructure and roads and bridges and the like were to become even more accomplished throughout Nigeria—as Nigeria goes, so goes the rest of Africa, it is often said—they will be a great trading partner. They are already a huge trade partner of the U.S., but that will grow exponentially, going forward.

Again, I have always been impressed with the faith of so many Africans, in general, but the Nigerians' faith in God is extraordinary.

Mr. GOHMERT. There was a press conference we had with all these mothers and the three girls sitting in the back, but it was amazing to hear the comments of all of those Nigerians. All of their comments showed forth faith. It is amazing.

I doubt that I would have said the same things that I said there in a press conference here, but since this is a big group of people who were either committed Christians or Muslims that are moderate, peace-loving people, I pointed out to them that it was obvious Boko Haram means this for evil.

They mean to harm decent, innocent people just because they are Christians—some are moderate Muslims—but they meant it for evil.

This brought me back to a place a long way from my home in the U.S., but not so far from here in Nigeria—just northeast of here—a place called Egypt, where a brother ended up because his 11 other brothers sold him into slavery.

He cried. He wept. He was thrown into a pit. He was a slave. He couldn't understand why God had deserted him. He ended up being a slave and a servant and imprisoned.

Ultimately, he became the second most powerful man in all of Egypt. Because he was the second most powerful man, he was able to save Egypt during the famine that no one knew was coming, but God revealed to him, Joseph.

When his brothers finally realized who he was and began to weep, Joseph told them: you meant it for evil—because what they did was evil, but God used it for good.

Boko Haram means this for evil, but despite all the evil and all the suffering, God can still work this together for good.

I also looked in the camera there and I said: I have a message for Boko Haram. You think your hate for Christians is so powerful, no one can overcome it. Let me tell you, there is a stronger force than your hate, and that is the love of these parents for their children, that is the Christian love you find in Nigeria, and your hate will never be able, ultimately, to win the day over the stronger force of love.

I believe that with all my heart.

□ 1415

I believe that with all my heart, and I am looking forward to the day when love triumphs over the evil of Boko Haram.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Before you got here, I think, at least, I raised the issue of Habila Adamu. He was a man whom I met in an IDP camp in Jos in September of last year. He did tell the story about how Boko Haram broke into his house, dragged him outside, with a terrorist holding an AK-47 right to his nose area.

With his wife weeping, pleading with this man not to shoot her husband, he said: You convert or else I will shoot you.

He said: I am ready to meet my Lord.

So the trigger was pulled, and he blew his face away. You can see it on the other side that he has had some reconstructive surgery.

Not only was this man a living martyr because he survived it—they left him for dead because he was bleeding so profusely—but when I met him in Jos, he didn't have a scintilla—the slightest—of malice towards the gunmen. He said he prays for them. I mean, you are talking about Christian love overcoming a terrible hatred, the likes of which we can't even understand. When he testified here—because I invited him to come to Washington to testify before my subcommittee—you could have heard a pin drop. A lot of the press, including the Associated Press, led with his story.

That is transformative, I believe, to see someone who, almost like our Lord from the cross, says: Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do.

Here was this man who was a living martyr, and I couldn't have been more moved, inspired.

I saw him again on this most recent trip, and the joy that he radiates—he radiates Christ; you see it in his eyes when he speaks—was just extraordinary and humbling because none of us know and I don't know if I could ever react like that. I hope I never do. He had that peace that surpasses all understanding. He was there, and he could have died right that day.

Mr. GOHMERT. I thank the gentleman.

I want to finish by commenting on the comments of our President, particularly in the context of what has gone on in the world.

The story says that, at a White House event on Wednesday, where the President took questions from Tumblr users, President Obama addressed what he will be doing in the future, but he made these comments that I just feel like we have to address in light of what my friend Mr. SMITH and I have been talking about.

The President said:

I mean, the truth of the matter is that, for all the challenges we face and all the problems that we have, if you had to be—if you had to choose any moment to be born in human history, not knowing what your position was going to be, who you were going to be, you'd choose this time. The world is less violent than it has ever been. It is healthier than it has ever been. It is more tolerant than it has ever been. It is better fed than it's ever been. It is more educated than it's ever been.

With regard, though, to the less violent, one doesn't have to look too far to see the kinds of things that are going on in this world. The latest crime statistics indicate violent crime is up, though property crime has gone down.

Here is a story from January of this year from Reuters. This is Reuters. This is not a group that has ever been particularly kind to me. "Religious Violence Across World Hits 6-year High According to Pew Study."

The story says:

Violence and discrimination against religious groups by governments and rival faiths have reached new highs in all regions of the world except the Americas, according to a new Pew Research Center report.

Social hostility, such as attacks on minority faiths or pressure to conform to certain norms was strong in one-third of the 198 countries and territories surveyed in 2012, especially in the Middle East and North Africa, it said on Tuesday.

Although this story says, "except the Americas," we have commented numerous times here that, in recent years, it has come to be that there is really only one group in America that it is politically correct to be absolutely intolerant toward, and that is the Christian faith. It is okay to belittle the Christian faith. It is okay to belittle the position that marriage should be between a man and a woman.

It is the exact same position the President took when he was a Senator in order to become President because that was very important in his becoming President in 2008. He took the position—most people did—that marriage

was between a man and a woman, and it is a Christian position. I mean, it is in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. Jesus, himself, said that a man shall leave his mother and a woman leave her home, and the two will become one flesh, and what God has joined together let no man put asunder.

That is marriage, Biblical marriage. Anybody who retains the belief that Jesus had and that Moses conveyed as he got it from God was that it was between a man and a woman.

If you hold that position now, it has become widely accepted that, gee, you should lose your job, that you should lose money, that you should have the Nation turn in hatred upon you and your family. Heck, some people want you to go to jail. They want you prosecuted. They want the IRS—they want everybody—after you just because you believe the same thing that Senator Obama said he believed before he became President and that Jesus said was actually the law of God and that Moses said was the law of God. Yet, nowadays, if you take that Christian position, you are a hate monger, and we want to destroy you, which is in direct opposition to the quote that was so often stated during the Revolution. It was attributed to different people. I think more people attributed it to Voltaire:

I disagree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.

It used to be that on college campuses they would invite different people so they could get good arguments and good debates among the students. Now they don't want anybody who doesn't fit the cookie-cutter, liberal mode of whoever is in charge at the university. For heaven's sake, who would have ever dreamed at Brandeis University's founding that, when a Muslim woman stood up against the evils of radical Islam, she would be refused to be allowed to come to the university.

It is time we stand up for freedom, liberty here and everywhere.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

HOME RULE FOR THE NATION'S CAPITAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BENTIVOLIO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for 30 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I have come to the floor this afternoon to take the opportunity to fully inform Members—and, yes, also members of the public—of the actual rights of the people who live in the District of Columbia, who demand respect for their local laws the way every Member would demand respect for the local laws of her own jurisdiction, and yes, if necessary, to call out Members who violate their own principles of local

control of government against Federal interference.

I am very pleased that very few bills that trample on the local rights of the people who live in the Nation's Capital have been signed into law and that very few have gotten out of this House even recently. Part of that is because we stand up and fight, but we are at some disadvantage. The District of Columbia delegation consists of me, and we have no Senators. But no red-blooded American would sit down while somebody tramples over her local jurisdiction without getting up and saying something about it and, yes, without doing something about it.

I want to be fair to my colleagues because some of this, I think, has to do with simple ignorance. Some of it has to do with a blind spot. The blind spot is very troubling. The blind spot means that principles that easily soak into them with respect to every single district in the United States somehow haven't made it into their hearts or their heads when it comes to the District of Columbia. It troubles me, but I believe that, when Members think about their own principles, they will think before they simply jump into the jurisdiction of another Member's district.

Particularly when this happens repeatedly, we think that the constituents of the Member should be informed, and we try to inform the constituents. Indeed, we inform the entire State where the constituents are from. If a Member insists upon inserting herself into the affairs of another jurisdiction many miles from home, and if she needs to be called out, that is what we have to do.

Congress 40 years ago passed the Home Rule Act of the District of Columbia. It is too bad it took that long to pass. The culprits there were Democratic and Republican, and indeed, for much of the 20th century, whether they were Democrats or Republicans. The Democrats finally got understood, and the Home Rule Act of 1973 was passed. That act gave all local affairs of the District of Columbia to the local government—to the council and the Mayor of the District of Columbia. My job is to see to it that Members remember the Home Rule Act of 1973 and do not invade the local jurisdiction of our city, Washington, D.C.

I was a little troubled, although I see no real effect thus far, about a memorandum that came from David Mork—the Chief of Staff of Representative PETER ROSKAM, who is the chief deputy whip for the House GOP—inviting Members to insert special provisions, even of a partisan or an ideological nature, into the upcoming appropriations bills. We have checked, and, actually, we have seen very little of that so far. Our concern, of course, is with such inserts that affect the District of Columbia.

By the way, it is interesting that there would be a whole memo inviting Republicans to do so. They haven't

done so very much on the appropriations bills that have come through thus far, but I think that probably has a lot to do with how little policy the Republicans have been able to get through the Congress of the United States. So, when you are driven to appropriations bills for policy, you have been driven to a very low level for a lawmaker. The bait hasn't been much bitten, and I am pleased of that for the Nation. I simply want to say, if such ideological policies attached to appropriations are inappropriate for national appropriations, imagine how totally unsuitable they are for an appropriation that may affect the District of Columbia.

□ 1430

One may wonder, what is the District of Columbia local appropriations bill doing in the Congress of the United States?

Very good question. The District of Columbia wants budget autonomy—but we haven't quite gotten there yet, and I very much appreciate that we have had Republican and Democratic support for the proposition that the \$6 billion we raise in the District of Columbia is for us and us alone to say anything about.

Imagine, in a Tea Party Congress, how they would react if somebody had anything to do with their local funds.

Well, that is exactly how I am going to react. I am not going to stand for it. I am not going to stay quiet for it, and I am going to see that your constituents know you are meddling into somebody else's business, in violation of your own principles.

It continues to happen, but it happens at far less of a rate than it used to. When I first came to Congress, I used to have to stand on the House floor for hours at a time rebutting attempts to attach to the D.C. appropriation anti-local control amendments. Those are far, far fewer.

Appropriators don't like it. The appropriators simply want to get their appropriation bills done. But occasionally, some of these attachments will come through—to date, only one remains.

... Others come through as free-standing bills. And I appreciate that the Speaker doesn't often let those bills get to the floor.

But we feel quite insulted when a Member decides to introduce a bill to, essentially, erase what the local government has put into law. A favorite one of those issues that continues to apparently invite such meddlers is, of course, D.C.'s gun laws.

The District of Columbia has some of the strongest gun laws in the United States. After all, we are a big city. We are the capital of the United States. Foreign dignitaries routinely are in our streets. Every Cabinet official is routinely in our restaurants, and we don't need a lot of guns in a city like this.

We had an even stricter gun law. That was struck down by the Supreme