Mr. Speaker, several weeks ago, our Nation

received a very vivid reminder that Islamic terrorists are still at war

with our Nation and are bent on killing innocent American citizens. On

Christmas Day, an Islamic extremist attempted to blow up Northwest

Flight 253 as it was on its final approach from Amsterdam into Detroit

Metro Airport with a sophisticated bomb that was smuggled onto the

plane in his underwear. This terrorist had been radicalized by al Qaeda

on the Arabian Peninsula and trained in camps in Yemen.

Following his capture in Detroit, he was only questioned by FBI

agents for a total of 50 minutes. Then, after that initial questioning,

the bomber was sent to the University of Michigan Burn Center, which is

probably the best medical care in the entire world, all at taxpayer

expense. Then Attorney General Eric Holder had to decide how to

proceed.

Did Attorney General Holder and the Justice Department immediately

share the information that they had gathered, the intelligence, with

senior intelligence officials? No. Did Attorney General Holder declare

this terrorist an enemy combatant and turn him over to the military for

further questioning? No. Did Attorney General Holder have the FBI

continue the questioning in order to obtain more actionable

intelligence? No.

So what did Attorney General Holder have the FBI do? He instructed

them to give full Miranda rights to this terrorist, including the right

to remain silent, and gave him not one, not two, but actually three

taxpayer-funded attorneys. And guess what? After he lawyered up, he

shut up.

The Attorney General did this even though this terrorist had fresh,

firsthand knowledge of al Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula, even though

he had previously given actionable intelligence. And now we have made

it very difficult to obtain any further intelligence, intelligence that

could have led to the disruption of other planned terrorist attacks or

assistance in unwinding this terrorist network.

And we need to ask the question, ``Why?''

I believe that Attorney General Holder has built a culture within the

Justice Department that seems to put the rights of terrorists ahead of

the safety of our Nation. Let us remember that prior to becoming the

Attorney General, Eric Holder and his law firm represented many, many

terrorists pro bono; that is, for free. These terrorists were held in

the military justice system, and they argued for their transfer to the

civilian justice system, wanting to give them full constitutional

rights. As well, he has placed other attorneys who have also

represented terrorists held by our government into high-ranking

positions within the Justice Department.

The Attorney General, Mr. Speaker, has not answered questions as to

why senior intelligence officials were not consulted on how to proceed

or why this terrorist was not treated as an enemy combatant. Mr.

Speaker, it almost seems like Attorney General Holder has gone into the

Witness Protection Program with regard to the Christmas Day bomber. If

this Congress is to do its duty to provide appropriate oversight in the

handling of these issues, Attorney General Holder must answer these

questions.

Unfortunately, the lack of his consulting with intelligence officials

or senior national security officials is nothing new. Attorney General

Holder did not consult with senior military or intelligence officials

before deciding to try Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and other 9/11

conspirators in New York City. He did not consult with the police

commissioner or the mayor about security concerns before making that

decision. And now New York officials have finally come forward and

objected to this trial being held just a few blocks away from Ground

Zero because of

their security concerns and, of course, the cost that is associated as

well.

The administration is now looking for new locations to hold this

trial as well as budgeting $200 million for the first year alone to

cover security costs. So this decision not only makes us less secure

and gives a terrorist a platform from which to spew their hateful,

anti-American rhetoric, it will cost the United States taxpayers

hundreds of millions of dollars, all to extend a pre-9/11 mindset that

views terrorism as a criminal offense instead of illegal acts of war.

Mr. Speaker, I would respectfully offer some advice to President

Obama and Attorney General Holder: Hand over the Christmas Day bomber

to the military and intelligence officials and allow for an appropriate

interrogation that will yield additional intelligence that will protect

America, and keep Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and the other terrorists

slated for civilian trials in New York City or wherever they end up at,

keep them at Gitmo and try them before military commissions. Just over

a year ago, they were prepared to plead guilty before military

commissions, before Eric Holder made the decision to give them special

rights. We could have executed one of them by now.

I sincerely hope that the President and his Attorney General rethink

their current approach which, I believe, Mr. Speaker, is very dangerous

for America.