Mr. Speaker, 11 years ago today, the worst attack in

American history on American soil occurred; more loss of life than

Pearl Harbor. It was a day that those of us who are alive and old

enough to know what was happening will never forget. It was a day of

commitment as well that we would do whatever was necessary to protect

our country, that we would do whatever was necessary to prevent future

such attacks from occurring.

I recall there in east Texas where I live, I was a judge at the time.

The day after, September 12, 2001, was an extraordinary day as well. It

was a day that I also will not forget. I had never seen communities

come together as we did across America on September 12, 2001, not in my

lifetime. In World War II, from history, I've read accounts about some

in America that felt like war with Germany was a bad idea, that we

ought to be nice to them. There were even people that were divided in

America back then. But the overall resolve was to protect democracy,

make democracy safe--``Make the World Safe for Democracy'' was the

slogan.

But we were so united on September 12, 2001. There in Tyler, Texas--

and I know it happened all over east Texas the same way--people came

together. It didn't matter what race anyone was. It didn't matter where

they came from, their national origin--man, woman, religious preference

didn't matter, we came together as one people. There were no hyphenated

Americans that day--no Anglo-Americans, African-Americans, Asian-

Americans. We were Americans. We stood united, and we wept together and

we prayed together and we held hands and sang together.

Here in Washington, D.C., once again today we sang ``God Bless

America'' without regard to party, without regard to House, Senate. I

think there was less mention of the word God today. I'm grateful for

Speaker Pelosi, who at the end of her remarks asked for God to bless

and comfort those who lost loved ones on 9/11 and asked that God would

still bless America. I'm grateful she did that. Other leaders did not.

Andy McCarthy--Andrew McCarthy--was the prosecutor of those who were

involved in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. He is a man that

understands the Constitution. He understands the law. He is a fantastic

prosecutor, a brilliant mind, and a great writer. And I won't read the

entire article, but it's an article worth noting from Andrew C.

McCarthy, entitled ``Remembering 9/11 . . . At Least for a Day.'' He

says:

And for those who do not understand--I'm saying this parenthetically,

it's not in the article--Islamic supremacism is not talking about all

of those who worship and follow Islam and Islamic teachings. We have

friends around the world who do not want to live under totalitarian,

radical Islamic supremacism, such as the Taliban, such as al Qaeda.

They don't want to live under that, and they're Muslims. They want to

live their lives. They want to worship in their own religion without

totalitarians telling them how they must.

Unfortunately, as in Afghanistan, those Muslim friends, and Pakistan,

for that matter, Iran and Iraq as well, there are Muslims who have

admired the United States until we abandoned them.

Going back to Andrew McCarthy's article:

I'll insert, parenthetically, there are terrorists who were captured,

some confined at Guantanamo Bay, some confined at other facilities, who

have been released and who have been found again on the battlefield

killing Americans. They were captured, prevented from enacting further

terrorism, and then released under some false notion that that would

win friends and influence people, only to have other Americans killed

by these same thugs.

Back to Andrew McCarthy's article. He says:

He says parenthetically:

That's an excerpt from Andrew McCarthy's article regarding today.

Mr. Speaker, it is tragic that around the world the United States has

had allies who trusted us, who put their security in our hands, even to

the extent of losing political power, losing political office, like

some of the Polish leaders who trusted America to help them with a

missile defense. It wasn't as much a defense against Russia; it was

concern for potential missiles in the Middle East that this Nation has

not done enough to stop. But those who staked their political careers

on the trustworthiness of the United States came up empty in Poland.

Mubarak had agreements with this administration, met with this

administration. Qadhafi had agreements with this administration, met

with them, talked. We had Senators from both sides of the aisle,

although one of our Republican Senators says he didn't send that

message. It wasn't his tweet, he says now, that he was meeting with

Qadhafi and that he was an interesting man.

But, regardless, we know that there were people from both sides of

the aisle that went and met with Qadhafi because Qadhafi, after

President Bush gave the order to invade Iraq, Qadhafi believed he was

next if he didn't do something and end his nuclear proliferation, so he

did. He became an ally, even though he was a murderer with blood on his

hands. He reached agreements. He promised he would not attack Americans

again. And, once again, someone who trusted agreement with the United

States came up short.

Some of our allies in other parts of the world and other countries

have to be wondering if they're next.

I visited with leaders in other countries who say the Chinese are

constantly coming around saying, Have you figured out yet that you

can't really trust the United States to keep their agreements? Hey, you

can trust us. Well, whenever you come around, including in Israel,

there are Chinese constantly there saying, When you figure out you

can't trust the United States, we're ready to be your friend, your

ally.

There should be no better ally in the world than the United States.

But we have different administrations, and different administrations

are better about keeping their words with allies than others.

The Northern Alliance in Afghanistan fought with us and for us to

defeat the Taliban by early 2002. Over the years, they have buried

family and friends who have been our cofighters against radical

Islamists in Afghanistan. We abandoned them. This administration did

not want to talk to them.

And I was told by some of the Northern Alliance leaders earlier this

year that one of the leaders of the Taliban that this administration

released for humanitarian purposes ended up announcing he's back

leading the Taliban as one of their leaders. And he announced on Afghan

national television that under shari'a law, if anyone in Afghanistan

had not been supportive of the Taliban in the past, they need to come

in and ask forgiveness and get the Taliban's protection, because, as

the leader said, told people who watched the national television

channel in Afghanistan, that everybody in the world knows the United

States has lost in Afghanistan.

So all they have to do is wait until 2014 when this President has

promised the United States will be out, and they'll be back in charge.

Certainly, President Karzai has enough fear of them that he is giving

them an awful lot of freedom and control in the area. Regardless of

what anyone may say or prove about President Karzai, he's not stupid.

He knows we won't be there to keep him protected. So it looks as if he

may be trying to placate the Taliban. Why wouldn't he? The United

States sure is.

I hear friends here on the floor talk about the lessons of Vietnam.

The lessons of Vietnam are not that it was an unwinnable war. That's

very clear. This came from one of the leaders at Hanoi Hilton as he

told Sam Johnson as the Americans left the Hanoi Hilton, including John

McCain. Sam says one of the most ruthless leaders was laughing, saying,

You stupid Americans. We had just carpet-bombed them for 2 weeks after

they'd walked out of the Paris peace talks. He said, You stupid

Americans. Don't you know, if you had just bombed us for one more week,

we would have had to have surrendered unconditionally?

To those who were sent to fight in Vietnam, this Nation owes an

apology for leaving them over there to fight without an order to win

and come home. That should be the lesson of Vietnam.

I was shocked to hear from the parents of one of the SEAL Team Six

members who was killed on the Chinook--Billy and Karen Vaughn were the

first ones to mention it. I'm embarrassed I didn't know--that two-

thirds of the Americans killed in Afghanistan have been killed under

President Obama as the Commander in Chief. I found that hard to

believe, so we got the numbers directly from the Department of Defense.

I've got a poster here. President Bush ordered Americans to war--or to

go fight in Afghanistan. We found out that's where the terrorists were

trained, where the plot was supposedly hatched to kill thousands of

American innocent victims.

So we have a list from the Department of Defense, from their own

Statistical Information Analysis Division. If you look at the number of

American deaths--of our fantastic men and women in Afghanistan--from

October of 2001 through the end of December of 2008, there were 625

American casualties, Americans killed--valiant, brave men and women of

our armed services killed in Afghanistan--every one of them a treasure.

But when we get down to the just over 3\1/2\ years since, in the war

that Candidate Obama called the ``good war''--a term I don't know of

anybody who has ever been in the military would use about a war, but he

called it the ``good war.'' Well, in President Obama's good war, though

he has been Commander in Chief less than half the time of President

Bush, it isn't two-thirds. Seventy percent of the American military men

and women who have been killed in Afghanistan have been killed under

the command of Commander in Chief Obama. It gets worse when you look at

the total wounded in action. During the 7 years and 3 months that

President Bush was President, or was Commander in Chief over the war in

Afghanistan, 2,638 precious American men and women were wounded.

When you visit our incredible men and women who have been wounded--

who have lost arms, legs, who are severely disabled--you end up walking

away being the one who is uplifted with the incredible, incredible

American spirit--with the spirit of our American men and women. They

are such a blessing but not to the extent, you would think, that anyone

in America would want to leave our military men and women in

Afghanistan without a clear purpose, without rules of engagement that

let them defend themselves. We'll be talking more about that in the

days to come.

In the just over 3 1/2 years that the Afghan war has been under the

command of Commander in Chief Obama--as compared to the 2,638 precious

American men and women who were wounded--during half the time,

approximately, this President has been in command, over 14,817, or 84

percent, of the men and women have been wounded in Afghanistan.

Now, we have fantastic leaders in Afghanistan--some of our Nation's

best--but when you get out into the field and you talk to the men and

women, sometimes you get a little different story. There is a poll that

came out last week indicating a massive lack of morale among our

military men and women in Afghanistan. How could there not be? They've

been told they're going to have to stay in Afghanistan. We're going to

be there for 2 more years or so. They don't have a clear mission. It's

basically to train people who may kill you during or after the

training. You're not allowed under the rules of engagement to properly

defend yourself. Then our men and women in our Armed Forces are

supposed to hope and pray that they're not one of the last ones killed

on the way out.

I would have thought people would have understood the lesson of

Vietnam, not that there are wars such as Vietnam or Afghanistan that

are not winnable. Vietnam was winnable. Afghanistan initially was won.

We took our eye off the ball. President Obama did inherit a terrible

situation in Afghanistan, and then he has more than doubled down on the

men and women who have been sacrificed--giving their lives, their arms,

their legs in service to this country. We should not allow those

precious men and women's lives to go without proper consideration.

So many in our military have stepped up and said, I will go. I will

defend America.

I called after 9/11. I was told I was too old. I said, I've got

friends that I was in the Army with years ago. They're still in.

They said, Yes, that's because they're still in.

If you had stayed in, you could still be in, but you're too old to go

back now.

Though I was too old to go back into the Army that I had served 4

years of my life in, I found another place of service, and I have to

speak on behalf of our men and women in our military. I have to beg,

Mr. Speaker, that our leaders in Washington, and in particular the

leader, the Commander in Chief, either give our military a proper

mission or get them out of Afghanistan. Give them proper rules of

engagement or get them out now. Don't make them sit around for 2 years

wondering if they're going to be the next one that leaves in a casket.

Let them win and come home or bring them home now. They can win.

They're that good.

With Pakistan, I kept talking to people that say most of the supplies

are coming from Pakistan to supply the Taliban. Then cut off the

supplies. We have the ability to do that; we just haven't had the will.

Develop the will and cut off the supplies to the Taliban--cut them

off--or bring our people home now. Don't let one more American lose an

arm, a leg, both arms, both legs, or come home as another death. Give

them the orders to defeat the Taliban. Come hell or high water, do it.

Do it now and then come home or bring them home now. We owe them that

much.

Is it any wonder the suicide rate is so high?

How are we treating our allies on this, the 11th anniversary of 9/11?

From the Israel media, Haaretz, comes this report today. I'll read it

verbatim.

Parenthetically, I will insert that this is the same President who

has told the Taliban, Look, we'll buy you offices in Qatar; we'll let

the rest of your murdering thugs out of confinement if you'll just sit

down and talk to us. Apparently, the President's schedule just doesn't

allow a meeting with what has been a phenomenal ally, a believer in the

value of life and liberty in Israel.

The article goes on:

More news today. This is from Mohammed Abu Zaid with the AP, dated

September 11, 2012:

Parenthetically, I will mention that we've seen in recent days that

this new government in Egypt that the United States has to bear partial

responsibility for being in place has now seen the return of

crucifixions in Egypt, the barbaric manner of killing people by making

them suffer as much as possible before they breathe their last, just as

Jesus, himself, did in laying down his life for others.

Also, it is remarkable that you have people who say, as they did with

the insulting cartoon depicting Mohammad or someone appearing to be

situated that way, as a violent person, and in response there were

riots and people were killed, which kind of seems to make it not a

cartoon but a prophecy.

Back to the article:

This would clearly be insulting, having sexual relations, it

questions his role as a messenger of God's words--of course that would

be insulting. It's ridiculous to have anything that resembles that,

just as it is absolutely ridiculous and despicable to demean

Christianity, to call it a hate group when it's bounded by Jesus, who

showed the ultimate love for all humanity. It's despicable when someone

burns a flag, but it's not illegal, it's not illegal to burn a Bible.

It's despicable, but it's not illegal.

Yet, personally, I anticipate, if history shows what the radicals

will do, they will follow the example. Unfortunately, there will be

more rioting. Somebody will tragically be killed by these cutthroats.

Then some will say, see, we need to change the law in America where you

can burn Bibles,

you can burn the flag, you can desecrate any religion--just not Islam.

Then the goal, as found in the archives after a search warrant,

showed one of the 10-year goals to be subjecting our Constitution to

sharia law. And that will be a box that can be checked off.

Back to the article:

How about the Christians in Egypt that are being barbarically killed

for their religious beliefs? Wouldn't it be nice if this administration

would condemn those activities and do what it takes to stop them?

And he's right.

But those freedoms exist in America. The old adage that was

attributed to Voltaire for most of the history since, including during

the revolution--I disagree with what you say, but I will defend to the

death your right to say it--used to mean something in this country.

Now, it's been subjected to ideological terms that would have it say

more, something on the order of, I disagree with what you say, so I

want you imprisoned, I want you to lose your business, I want you to

have no friends, I want to take all your money, I want to destroy your

life.

What a turn over the last 200-plus years from our Constitution's

establishment and writing in 1787. Of course, it took longer than that

to be ratified.

Eleven years after 9/11, what has gone wrong? You know, not only were

there mistakes in Vietnam under both Democratic and Republican

Presidents, our embassy was attacked in Tehran in 1979. Those of us at

Fort Benning, I didn't know of anybody that was dying to go, but I knew

an awful lot of people willing to go and die in defense of our country.

Under everybody's definition of international law, when you attack an

embassy, you have attacked, you have committed an act of war against

that country. If the host country cannot protect the embassy, then that

country who owns that embassy, that uses that embassy, has every right

to bring the full military power to bear to defend it.

I still carry the horrible realization, I believe, if we had defended

our embassy in 1979, thousands and thousands and thousands of precious

Americans would not have had to give their lives since.

Our embassy has been attacked in Egypt. If the government that the

Secretary of State has promised $2.5 billion--I don't know, some of it

may have already gone over there--if they're not going to be able to

defend our embassy, then we need to take action to defend it.

I also think it's time to revisit the Carter-era idea that we should

never take out government leaders. I think it's time to have this

debate again.

Which is more immoral: to go to war with a country where at the time

you go to war most of the people of that country like you and respect

you, and yet are going to die, many of them; or to take a position,

look, it's your country, you're free to establish whatever government

you want. But if you put in place a government that declares war on the

United States, that says we are the annihilation of the United States,

their way, their people, then we will take that government out and we

won't rebuild it. You'll be free to pick whatever kind of government

you want.

It's time to have the debate. Wouldn't that have been better in

Afghanistan rather than forcing a centralized government on a tribal

region that has since become so corrupt that the money that we have

spent, spent by the billions in Afghanistan, given to Afghanistan, has

made its way to other places besides the intended objects.

Talking to some of our soldiers over there who have trained farmers.

They said the billions that have been spent and sent to Afghanistan to

create farming projects had not, any of it, made it to the region where

they were training the farmers. It was wasted effort. So they would

travel around over there wondering, will they be the next IED death, or

will they be the next IED dismemberment?

The thing is, a good foreign policy says the enemy of our enemy is

our friend. A good foreign policy says we will not try to buy off the

bullies in the world to make them like us.

As I've said for years, you don't have to pay people to hate you;

they'll do it for free. Save that money. Use it to rebuild relations

with former allies that have been let down. But don't keep giving money

to people who hate us. We don't need to be nation building. We need to

let nations live in peace under their own discretion. But if they

declare war or set as a goal our annihilation, shouldn't we at least

talk about taking out the government rather than going to war with the

people?

I think it's time to have the debate again. There's too much death

and loss of life in Afghanistan. It's hard to believe 70 percent of

American lives lost in Afghanistan of our military have occurred under

Commander Obama. Eighty-four percent of all the wounded have been

wounded under the command of Commander Obama. It's time to talk about

these things whether the Presidential candidates want to talk about

them or not. We owe that to the people we have put in harm's way.

As this is the anniversary of 9/11, it's another opportunity for me

to recall the memory of Ross McGinnis. I hadn't gotten an email from

Tom asking me not to forget. He knows I will never forget his son. But

I went to his funeral at Arlington National Cemetery. I had become

friends since then with the McGinnises. I have been to all the funerals

of those who have died while in service in harm's way from my district.

I have been to too many of those such funerals.

But this wasn't a person from my district in east Texas. It was a guy

from Knox, Pennsylvania, a young man who graduated from high school and

gotten into trouble at the end. Ross's mom doesn't want me to forget

that. He was given a second chance. They let him graduate. He joined

the Army, and Ross found his niche. I haven't seen any pictures anybody

had of me during officer basic training at Fort Riley, Kansas, in 1974;

but I don't think I was smiling, if somebody has them. It was a

difficult time. It was hot, humid. But there are pictures of Ross going

through basic with other soldiers, and he's got a big old smile. He had

a beautiful smile. And the guys with him are not so smiling. There are

pictures of him after he got to Iraq, and the heat was obviously

wearing down his friends, fellow service members. But he has a big old

grin. His platoon sergeant told me that he was such a piece of

enthusiasm in their midst. He was uplifting to the other soldiers.

Ross was a gunner on a Humvee, and as it was going through a town,

whether shot or thrown, a grenade goes into the bed of the Humvee where

there were four of our soldiers, including Ross's platoon sergeant from

Long View, Texas, Cedric Thomas; a soldier from Tyler, my hometown,

Sean Lawson; and two other soldiers. And they said that Ross yelled,

Grenade, and he looked back, but Ross was the only one in a position to

jump out and save himself. But when he looked back and he saw each of

the four cringing in their corners, he obviously knew those four

soldiers were going to die. So instead of jumping out and saving his

own life and four soldiers being lost, he didn't jump out. He jumped

in. He covered the grenade. Took the full blow himself. Gave his life.

And four of our soldiers are alive today because of what Ross did.

Just as on the statue downstairs right below me, below where I stand,

the statue of Father Damien, the Catholic priest from Hawaii, on the

side of it is John 15:13, the words: Greater love has no one than this,

that he lay down his life for his friends.

Ross had a lot of love.

The accounts after 9/11 after those planes flew into buildings here

at the

Pentagon, there in New York, those incredible heroes on the fourth

flight that went down in a field in Pennsylvania, those heroes went

running in, willing to lay down their lives to save others, as Ross

did.

There at Arlington National Cemetery the Army chaplain did a

wonderful job. Taps was played. It always gets me. It got everybody

there. A 21-gun salute is an emotional thing at a funeral. And as

everyone stood to turn to go, Sergeant Thomas came up, knelt down

before the remains of Ross, put his hand on the remains of Ross

McGinnis, bowed his head in prayer. He was followed by two others that

Ross had saved. The fourth was still in Iraq. They put their hands on

Ross's remains, bowed at the knee, bowed in prayer. And it was obvious

what they were doing.

Whether it's on Memorial Day, Veterans Day, the 9/11 anniversary,

there cannot be too many occasions when we as a Nation stop and do what

those three soldiers did: thank those who have laid down their lives

for the rest of us, for our liberties; thank those who have sacrificed

life or limb or suffered terrible disability for us and our lives and

our liberty. And then, to thank God for people who are still willing to

lay down their lives for us.

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