

or would be able to locate on a map, Benin, where she went in 2007. She was a teacher at a local school. She formed a girls' club to help empower the young women that were in this school.

It's hard to be a girl in that part of the world, according to Kate's cousin, Ms. Jacobs. And the girls started speaking about some of the issues they were facing, and they were starting to communicate that to Kate. Before long, the girls began to tell Kate about another person who worked for the Peace Corps but wasn't an American. He was a citizen of Benin who was paid by the Peace Corps to help work with the Peace Corps. His name was Constant Bio, and these girls had said that this person was sexually assaulting these young girls.

□ 2130

She had started hearing that he had been sleeping with some of the girls, he had gotten some of them pregnant, and some of them had been raped.

At the request of several teachers, Kate sent an email to the Peace Corps in Benin's capital recommending that this person be fired from the Peace Corps. She said, "Please believe me, I'm not someone who likes to create problems, but this has been weighing on me heavily." This was in an email that she sent that was found later and turned over to ABC News. "This man is not someone I want representing the Peace Corps to this community."

Bio's brother worked as a manager in the Peace Corps office, and she asked her role to be kept secret because she didn't want this criminal, this rapist of young girls, in this country, to know that she had reported him. But he found out about it anyway. And so when he found out about it, this is what happened: on March 11, 2009, the day after the Peace Corps authorities had fired this criminal, Bio, and just 2 months short of completing her 2-year commitment to the Peace Corps, Kate was found dead on her front porch with her throat slit.

The Puzey family says the Peace Corps was insensitive in its treatment of them until officials had learned about the ABC News report, and then they got more involved. Unfortunately, it was too late. Unfortunately, no one did anything or paid attention.

Before the news reported this murder, this homicide, the Puzey family believes and states that the Peace Corps did little to show compassion or interest. Kate's father Harry says this: She was my hero. I thought maybe a representative would come to the house to talk to us, or at least a letter in the mail. But that did not happen, because just a box showed up with my daughter's belongings that came by deliveryman. This is disrespectful, Mr. Speaker, to the life of this wonderful person and to her family.

Now the Peace Corps has changed some of their procedures, and we will get to that in just a minute.

The fifth example I want to talk about is Jill Hoxmeier. She was a

Peace Corps volunteer in Guyana, which is in South America. She was a volunteer, and she had created ways to help young women combat and understand the disease of HIV/AIDS and other functions and other diseases. She was teaching them life-skill courses and wanted to help build stronger relationships between the mothers there and their daughters.

In 2007, a year into her service, she was riding her bike home from work when she was assaulted, dragged in the bushes and sexually assaulted by a man who had been following her for some time. He choked her so hard she couldn't breathe or even scream.

She believes the Peace Corps needs to do more to help victims cut through the bureaucratic red tape and get the care they need. "It was too hard to navigate the problems that I had been going through all by myself." Once again, insensitivity, and nothing seemed to happen.

Jess and other victims who are members of the Peace Corps who have been victims have formed an organization, a support group, but it is going to be a group that is going to be active. They call it the First Response Action Group, and we will see more of them hopefully here on the Hill.

Today, I met with the Director of the Peace Corps, Aaron Williams, who happened to be in the Peace Corps years ago. He is now the director. I explained to him and talked to him about these issues and other cases that have come to light, and he and I discussed this problem. We are going to have, hopefully, a Foreign Affairs Committee hearing on this very issue, the Peace Corps and the relationship it has with its volunteers throughout the world, how to make them safe, how to take care of them once a crime is committed against them and how to take care of them after that crime has been committed against them.

The Peace Corps Director, Mr. Williams, assures me that they are going to develop a victim advocate program and hire a victim advocate. They are going to help these victims of crime get counseling services. They are going to help them medically, even after they have been discharged from the Peace Corps. Unfortunately, the Bureau of Labor has issues in dealing with these Peace Corps volunteers who are no longer in Peace Corps service who still have issues that they need to be taken care of, and the Peace Corps is going to work with the Department of Labor to work out this bureaucratic nonsense.

Every victim, he says, is going to have access to medical counseling and legal services; and when a crime is committed against an American in the Peace Corps overseas, the ambassador of that country is going to contact the highest ranking official in that country to let them know that America wants some results and wants to take care of the victim, but also wants the perpetrator held accountable.

One of the most important things that Director Williams has agreed to do is to set up a victims advocacy program, a victims advocacy advisory board made up of different groups like RAINN and other NGOs to give advice to the Peace Corps on how to take care of victims of crime. So we are not going to let this issue die. We are going to continue to promote and understand the Peace Corps.

But we want these wonderful people in the Peace Corps, who have in the past been harmed and had crimes committed against them, we want to rescue them as a nation. We want to take care of them, and the Director of the Peace Corps says we will go back and help those people. We want to take care of Peace Corps volunteers now that are being assaulted. Twenty-two a year, that is 22 too many. We don't want it to happen to anybody. But we want to take care of them, and we want to have procedures to make sure the Peace Corps is listening and takes care of victims of crime as well.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I spent most of my life at the court house in Houston. I was a prosecutor and criminal court judge for 30 years. I saw many of these victims of crime. Sexual assault, rape, to me is the worst crime that can be committed against a person. You can understand why people steal; you can understand some crimes. But that crime of sexual assault is a crime not of sex, but a crime of power; but it is also an attempt by the perpetrator to destroy the inner soul of the victim. We need to understand that, and we need to take these people, these victims, these wonderful volunteers of America, and take care of them.

We are doing a better job as a Nation in taking care of our wounded warriors in the military, another great group of ambassadors that represents the rest of us. They come home with all kinds of injuries, and we are finally taking care of them. We need to understand that these Peace Corps volunteers are just as precious and take care of them as well.

People cry "peace, peace," but there can be no peace as long as there is one American Peace Corps volunteer that has no peace.

And that's just the way it is.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair must remind members of the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and any manifestation of approval or disapproval of the proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

CALLING FOR PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO EASTER ISLAND CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) is

recognized for the time remaining before 10 p.m., which is roughly 22 minutes.

Mr. FALCOMA. Mr. Speaker, I generally don't come into the well to give speeches, and I realize our Nation is confronted with very serious issues in different regions of the world, for example, the current crisis in Egypt and the Middle East, our involvement in Afghanistan and Pakistan and Iraq, the problem of nuclear proliferation on the Korean peninsula, the global economic recession, and many other issues that are now before us.

This evening, however, Mr. Speaker, I want to share with my colleagues and the American people a particular issue that is now brewing in the Pacific region. It is the current crisis now happening between the Government of Chile and the people of Easter Island.

Mr. Speaker, Easter Island is a province of Chile, also known as Rapa Nui among its native people. Located some 3,800 miles east of Tahiti and some 2,300 miles from Santiago, Chile, Easter Island is one of the most isolated pieces of land on the entire planet, as you can see there with the arrow pointing. It is also the southeastern point of the Polynesian triangle, from the State of Hawaii north and as far south as New Zealand, with several other islands in between, including the Samoan Islands.

On Easter day in 1722, the Dutch explorer Jacob Roggeveen landed on the island and thus named it Easter Island. Today, Easter Island is best known throughout the world for its massive stone statues of ancient days. There are some 877 of these huge, humongous stone statues throughout the island.

□ 2140

They stand an average of some 13 feet in height with an average weight of some 13 tons. The largest statue measures nearly 72 feet in height and weighs approximately 145 to 165 tons.

Given that Easter Island is a remote location, many people throughout the world mistakenly considered the island to be uninhabited. However, Easter Island is a home with a population of roughly 5,000 people, but approximately half of those people are indigenous of Rapa Nui, or what was then known in ancient times, the island was known as Rapa Nui.

Mr. Speaker, Rapa Nui, the people of Easter Island are small in number, yet they carry a very vibrant culture dating back centuries before the arrival of Europeans. Their means of preparing food and living off of the land and their respect for family and nature are all ways of life dating back to the time when the first Polynesians settled the Pacific Islands on double-hulled canoes. Because all Polynesians are connected in this way, the people of Rapa Nui are very similar to that of other Polynesian people, such as the native Hawaiians, the Samoans, the Tongans, the Tahitians, and the Maoris of Aotearoa or New Zealand. For example, there's a strong connection between

the older and younger generation and therefore a deep sense of respect for elders.

This is an example of a photo that shows a young man wearing traditional body painting which is used for ritual celebrations. This practice, which is characteristic of the Rapa Nui people, was passed down to him from generation to generation. The link between the old and young is further perpetuated through the study of genealogy. In the same way that the American historians study the founding documents of this Nation, the Polynesian people, including the Rapa Nui people, treasure and study their genealogy, which goes back centuries before, again, the arrival of Europeans. The point I hope to make is that the people of Rapa Nui, Mr. Speaker, their culture is still vibrant, and this is not a mysterious, uninhabited island as it has been thought of for all these years.

Like many other islands in the Pacific, Easter Island has had its sovereignty determined by more powerful outside influences. In 1888, the Chilean Government signed a disputed treaty with the leaders of Rapa Nui, and the treaty was organized in two columns. One side, written in Spanish, reads like a deed of cession. The other column, a phonetic transliteration of the native language, which did not even have a written form at that time, reads as a treaty of friendship and protection.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, the poor people of Rapa Nui could not read nor do they understand the Spanish language, and therefore this so-called treaty of 1888 is highly questionable in terms of its substance. Decades after the signing of the treaty, in the early 1900s, the Chilean Government forced all the native people of Rapa Nui to live in one square mile on the island, thereby transferring the lands for shepherding, and all such lands were deemed as property of the state. The island was later annexed by Chile in 1933 and, again, without any consultation with the people of Rapa Nui or Easter Island. This annexation was considered *terra nullius*, which means "No Man's Land." On the contrary, Mr. Speaker, Rapa Nui was known as the "Te Pito te Henua" or "The navel of the Earth." And as far as the people of Rapa Nui are concerned, there were people living on the island before, during, and even after the arrival of Europeans.

Mr. Speaker, Chile's current relationship with Easter Island and the treatment of the native people posed many legal, policy, and human rights problems. With the annexation of Easter Island in 1933, the Government of Chile unilaterally developed and adopted laws regarding the ancestral lands of the people, and the enforcement of these laws continue to reflect the nature of Chile's initial treaty and subsequent annexation—disputed, unclear, and still highly questionable in terms of the rights of these native people to their ancestral lands.

The Chilean law, also known as the "Easter Island Law," is the current governing law for the property rights in Easter Island. This law provides for the authorization to grant land titles in favor of the people of Rapa Nui. It also prohibits transfers of real property to persons not of Rapa Nui ancestry. However, despite this clearly stated law, the administering authority on the island has conducted land transfers that directly contradict the law itself. To further emphasize how this action has disenfranchised the people of Rapa Nui, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that Chile continues to violate this law within the meager square mile of land called "Hanga Roa" that the native Rapa Nui people have been confined to since the early 1900s.

In addition to the serious land right disputes, there are several other issues that threaten the livelihood of the people of Rapa Nui. For instance, the people of Rapa Nui have no voice when it comes to residency and immigration to their own island. Each year, an increased number of Chilean nationals travel to and remain on Easter Island. Some roughly 50,000 tourists visit each year to see the ancient Moai statues. Despite the influx of tourists, Easter Island is also prohibited from having a television and Internet signal. The influx of travelers and residents have given way to massive unemployment among the native people, exploitation of natural resources, and increased pollution. Sustainability of natural resources is further threatened by foreign fishing boats which are allowed to fish around the island.

The parliament of Rapa Nui, clan leaders, and members have reached out to the Chilean Government through peaceful and diplomatic means to resolve the serious issues at hand. However, Chile has responded with efforts to create "task forces" and "working tables." Despite these efforts, the bottom line, Mr. Speaker, is that there are many commissions that have not resulted in concrete resolutions, and the people—who have patiently withstood this treatment for decades—are no longer willing to tolerate it.

In July and August of last year, the clans among the Rapa Nui people wrote several letters to the President of the Republic of Chile voicing their concerns. They called for an end to colonialism so the Rapa Nui people can return to the people they were. The people of Rapa Nui also wrote to the Governor of Easter Island requesting permission for a peaceful demonstration. In the same time period, the clans also began to peacefully reoccupy their ancestral lands as a means to call attention to the need for serious constructive dialogue with the Government of Chile.

Mr. Speaker, Chile somewhat has made an effort to solve these issues diplomatically. In August of last year, the Minister of Interior visited Rapa Nui to announce the creation of "working tables" to address these issues. The

project was given 60 days for its outcome. However, despite this attempt, the very same month a squadron of Chilean armed police, or “carabineros,” arrived on Easter Island, signaling the beginning of a 6-month-long violent conflict between the local inhabitants and the police forces that the Chilean Government sent to Easter Island.

On September 7, the troops forcibly evicted the Hito clan from the Hotel Hanga Roa grounds. The evictions that took place on September 7 are well documented. And I must say, Mr. Speaker, not a very pleasant experience in reading some of the experiences of some of these young people. For example, these four children, ages 9, 7, 5, and 3; Mr. Eddie Hito, the father. And the children stated, “My family was all sleeping at 5 in the morning when I heard a loud noise. Then 20 armed policemen entered into our room and held both my wife and I at gunpoint. I heard one officer radio that there were children, but his superior radioed back to proceed on with no mercy. In jail, they made us register all the children and forced us to sign forms.”

Another testimony. A nine-year old daughter said that when she awoke, police were aiming their guns at her and her younger brother. “They overturned my mattress where I was sleeping with my brother, making me hit my head. The police threw me from the bed. They pulled my arm and threw me outside into their truck.”

The mother stated, “The police didn’t even give me a chance to dress the children nor myself. In that little time I took the two little ones. And without shoes, we were rushed and thrown into the police trucks and taken to the jails.”

□ 2150

“Only 2 weeks prior to this, the police had come to the children’s school to present themselves as helpers and protectors. Now my kids are presented with the complete opposite. They see it as the police abusing their family. Now they don’t want to go back to school or even to leave their homes. They don’t want to go to school. They are worried. Every night they ask me if everything is locked up because they are afraid that the police will break in again and hurt them.”

Another testimony from Mr. Claudio Hito with his two children, ages 12 and 8 months. The mother made this statement:

“There were at least three policemen holding us at gunpoint. Claudio took the baby, and they still held us at gunpoint. My boy was at the other end of the room. The police were shining a light in his face and hitting his chest with their beating stick. They hit him until he woke up. He woke up disoriented and they ordered him to hurry up.

“The police physically threw us out, while threatening us. I had to change the baby in the police truck. I was

using my cell phone light to change her, and they started to yell at me to turn off my phone, so I had to use the little light that seeped through the doors. And through the crack in the door I saw tons of policemen gathered outside.”

After the September 7 incident of last year, more evictions were conducted. The picture here is showing a man with a forehead wound.

Susan Hito made this statement in terms with her children, the same thing, being physically abused and physically assaulted by the police. These natives, Rapa Nuians, were completely taken by surprise in terms of the action taken by the police forces of the Chilean Government.

Mr. Speaker, this past Thursday, last week, Senator DANIEL AKAKA and I issued a joint letter to the President of Chile, Mr. Sebastian Pinera, expressing our concern over the situation unfolding in Rapa Nui or Easter Island, citing the failure of the Ministry of the Interior to seriously consider the legitimate land ownership claims of the people of Rapa Nui; the criminal prosecutions of Rapa Nui political leaders for their involvement in peaceful demonstration; and the ongoing disproportionate use of force by Chilean Special Forces against the people of Rapa Nui.

Mr. Speaker, the point is this: This is the year 2011, and this type of treatment should not be happening. But unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, it is happening. As I stated before, Chile’s current relationship with Easter Island is disputed, unclear, and highly questionable. However, there is a choice to be made in how to address the many legal, policy and human rights issues that have stemmed from this unfortunate relationship.

I appeal to the Government of Chile to begin a dialogue for ways to help the Rapa Nui people achieve self-determination, economic self-sufficiency, and preservation of culture. We can learn, for example, how the Government of Nicaragua treated its people, the indigenous people of the Miskito tribe. We can learn from government-to-government relations how our own government has treated some 600 tribes here in the United States and in the same way that we ought to learn how we could better treat the people of Rapa Nui.

Mr. Speaker, just a few weeks ago, the President of the United States, Barack Obama, gave the State of the Union message in which he mentioned Chile twice. First of all, he mentioned the efforts of an American who owned a small company that helped develop a special machine that helped save the lives of these 33 Chileans who were stuck in the mines. This man used his skills to save a group of people whom he had never met. In fact, even to the time when these 33 Chileans came out of mine, he took off for the United States, never bothered wanting to be recognized. President Obama also mentioned that in an effort to strengthen

our ties with Latin America, he will visit three countries next month to discuss business relations and trade, one of which is Chile. This effort on the part of President Obama in Chile is geared towards strengthening our Nation’s relationship with Latin America, and particularly our bilateral relations with Chile.

I appeal to President Pinera to advocate for a more positive approach for partnership and dialogue with the indigenous people of Easter Island or Rapa Nui. The Rapa Nui people are in danger of being exterminated from their own lands.

Mr. Speaker, this seemingly peaceful island, which is known throughout the world for its mysterious moai stone statues, is no longer so peaceful. Let me conclude my remarks by making this special appeal, personal appeal to the Minister of Interior, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile and more especially to the Honorable President of Chile, His Excellency Sebastian Pinera, to address the problems affecting the people of Easter Island or Rapa Nui.

It is my honest belief that the indigenous people of Easter Island do not wish to do any harm against the some 17 million people living in Chile. In fact, there are only 2,500 Easter Islanders who remain on the island. Nor is there ever a possibility that the people of Easter Island will ever pose a threat to the military and strategic or national security interests of the Chilean Government or its people.

So, Mr. Speaker, I make this personal appeal to President Pinera. I ask for a true demonstration of his leadership and capacity to exercise fair judgment and above all show common decency towards the safety and welfare of probably the most helpless people who currently live on this planet, a people who centuries ago were among the greatest in the world as navigators and voyagers of the Pacific region, a people whom scientists today can still marvel at their ability to build statues cut from stones weighing hundreds of tons, a people who only ask to be treated as any other human being would like to be treated.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CRAWFORD (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of family medical reasons.

Mr. HANNA (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of inclement weather.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 366. An act to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958, and for other purposes.