

somehow, between Russia, Syria and the United States, we can find common ground where Assad will not have his weapons of mass destruction and will be put under international control.

But if this is possible, I believe it was only possible because there is a credible threat of U.S. military might, and that causes the equation of both the Russians and the Syrians to think about the United States.

And that's why I believe so strongly that if this falls apart, we need to strike in Syria to let Assad know that it is unacceptable to gas the civilian population. It is indeed a war crime.

Many of us today watched pictures of children foaming at the mouth and dying and shaking, and it's just something that will live with me for the rest of my life.

So I think what the President's proposing is balanced; it's moderate. I will vote "yes," and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DEMAND JUSTICE

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

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Speaker, the attacks of September 11, 2001, caused many Americans to appreciate the danger posed by Islamic-inspired terrorism. Following September 11, 2001, Americans from all walks of life resolved that we would bring swift and harsh justice to America's enemies.

The routing of al Qaeda and the Taliban following 9/11 showed that terrorists and those who harbor them would pay a steep price for their barbarism. Even when some targets, such as Osama bin Laden, remained illusive, America continued to press forward patiently until we finally exacted justice.

On September 11, 2012, 1 year ago today, four of our fellow citizens, including our Ambassador to Libya, were massacred by Islamic terrorists in Benghazi. The targeting of a diplomat breached recognized standards of civilized behavior that stretch back centuries.

And yet, one year later, justice has not been brought to our enemies in Benghazi. Have we lost our resolve?

Our enemies hide in plain sight, speaking with journalists and boasting of their crimes. The victims of the Benghazi attack deserve justice. The American people demand justice.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA WOMEN'S GYMNASTICS TEAM

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

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my alma mater, the great University of Florida, and our incredible women's gymnastic team, who

earned their first NCAA Super Six National Championship.

I'm very proud of our Lady Gators, as they proved that hard work, tireless dedication and passion lead to great things. I know that, under the direction of Coach Faehn, many of these young ladies will represent not just the Gator Nation, but our Nation, the United States of America, in the next Olympics.

Ladies, I commend you for your exceptional work ethic, your talent and drive in achieving this title. Congratulations, ladies.

And as we like to say back home in Gainesville, it's great to be a Florida Gator and part of the Gator Nation.

TODAY IS A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. VALADAO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, this is a day of remembrance. It is a solemn day. It is a day that brings back tragic memories for all of us. And then, in some ways, it brings great hope.

We all remember where we were on 9/11/2001. And I know there are some that say, I just can't take seeing what happened that day; I don't want to see any more video. And I would only submit, it is important not to forget.

To fly planes into buildings, use them as bombs, is an act of war, just as dropping bombs in Pearl Harbor was an act of war. Even though there were no boots on the ground at Pearl Harbor, even though there were no boots on the ground in New York City or Washington, D.C., using bombs, whether planes or missiles are personally set, they're acts of war.

I wasn't aware until this past weekend that there's only been one time when article 5 of our NATO alliance has been triggered. That article of the NATO alliance is a mandatory requirement, and it requires that when any signatory to NATO, any member of NATO is attacked in an act of war, then all other members of NATO must take it as if they've been attacked in an act of war and go to war against whoever attacked one of the NATO members.

The only time that's been triggered was 9/11 of 2001 when the United States was attacked. Because of the treaty, it's not a voluntary act on behalf of the member states of NATO. It doesn't require the request of the attacked country.

But it had gone without my notice, but the countries that were part of NATO immediately, that day, 9/11/2001, were instantly at war with whatever country attacked us. The problem was we didn't know who attacked us; and, as a result, it did end up eventually causing other countries to go with us into Afghanistan and Iraq.

Actually, within about 4 months of going into Afghanistan, with less than 500 special ops and intelligence individuals, the Taliban was defeated. And then came our mistake, where we added tens of thousands of American troops and allied troops and we became occupiers instead of those that defeated the Taliban, and left the country back in the hands of those who should have had it.

But 9/11 should truly evoke the emotions that we had that day, as people were trapped 1,000 feet or so above the street surface and had to make a decision, do I want to burn up in a horrible burning death, or do I jump to my death?

I think most all of us resolved that day, including those of us who were not in Congress, that it should be our job, as a Nation, to ensure that Americans were never put to a choice like that again, ever.

Actions we knew had to be taken, and authorization of use of military force was passed. In the haste to get it passed to give the President authority to go forward, it had far too much flexibility. So we have been able successfully to rein some of that in in the past months. More work has to be done.

But in the Middle East, the question is coming up in the last few days from leaders over there who did not wish to be identified publicly, but the questions were asked:

Do the people in your government not understand that on 9/11 you had radical Islamists, Muslim Brotherhood people, al Qaeda, trained by the Taliban, but Muslim Brotherhood at the core, that attacked you?

And you went to war, you said, against al Qaeda, the Taliban, and that the Muslim Brotherhood supports them. And you're at war with them.

And then do you not remember that that's who you've been at war with?

And this administration, the Obama administration, has said they're not engaged in a war on terror. They're only at war with al Qaeda. And they mistakenly thought al Qaeda was on the run. Well, if they were on the run, it was a run toward killing more people.

And these leaders in the Middle East have asked: If you could remember that, then why did you come into Egypt and demand the ouster of your ally, with whom you had agreements, with whom you were working, with whom you were making sure, as best that you could, and the Egyptian leader Mubarak could, that he would try to maintain as much peace with Israel as possible?

So you had all these agreements with him, just like you do with us.

And then Qadhafi was a bad man. But after 2003, when you invaded Iraq, it scared him so badly that he became your ally. You had many agreements with him, he and family members, particularly family members. I remember meeting his son here, who said he was