

## MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 3547. An act to extend the application of certain space launch liability provisions through 2014.

## A YEAR IN REVIEW

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WAGNER). 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. Madam Speaker, tonight, one of the things we did was to take up the National Defense Authorization Act. It was to extend the power of the President.

There were some good things in it. I applaud the inclusion of the conscience exception that would allow members of the military to do as members of the military have done throughout our history—be able to have, for example, a Bible on a desk, which are things that now have begun to result in persecution—and, actually, knocks against the military—things that our greatest Commander in the history of our country, George Washington, felt were noble things. Under this administration's watch, these things have now begun to result in persecution.

When you go back to the bill, the Authorization for Use of Military Force, that was passed on September 18, 2001, when the United States did not even know who had attacked us, it is incredible. I don't fault the legislature at the time, the Congress—the House and the Senate. Americans were scared. Churches and synagogues were packed all over America. I have never seen anything like it in my lifetime the way people especially flocked to churches and were praying fervently. Then after there was not another attack within 90 days, it was as if Americans began to say, Never mind, God. We don't have to worry about that because we haven't been attacked again.

The NDAA is basically added to the Authorization for Use of Military Force against September 11 terrorists. That is the name of it.

It says in section 2(a):

The President is authorized to use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons in order to prevent any future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations, organizations or persons.

Then it sets out War Powers Resolution requirements consistent with section 8(a):

(1) Of the War Powers Resolution, Congress declares this section as intended to constitute specific statutory authorization within the meaning of section 5(b) of the War Powers Resolution, 50 U.S.C. 1544(b).

It goes on and it is more extensive, and as I say, the NDAA actually modifies and extends things.

When that was passed, we didn't even know who had attacked us. I, obviously, was not here in Congress at the time, but we were afraid and concerned. We didn't know what was going to hit next, but it, perhaps, in retrospect, was a granting of more powers than should have been granted by the Congress because it is subject to being abused.

Fortunately, I don't consider it to have been abused by President Bush. Some blame him for Iraq. I wasn't here at the time, but I can't help but wonder when people supported the numerous successful efforts by President Bush at the United Nations in building a big coalition of countries to support our efforts to curtail Iraq's military efforts of not allowing U.N. inspectors to check on them. I don't blame the Democrats who voted for the authorization to go into Iraq, and I don't blame the Republicans, because Saddam Hussein gave every indication to the people who were in Congress at the time and to the President that he was up to no good. That was a long time ago.

Now we find that the President is using authorities that were granted, and this administration is using authority that was granted to do things like help rebels who we knew at the time in Libya had al Qaeda infused within them. We just didn't know how extensive, and many of us pointed that out. Now, this fall, we see that this administration has sent hundreds of tons of weapons to the Syrian rebels, and we find out that the Syrian rebels who are fighting a cruel dictator named Assad are engaging in more brutality, particularly against Christians, in the original roots where Christianity was born.

These are areas in which Apostle Paul established churches. It is the only city in the world that still speaks the original Aramaic that Jesus was believed to have spoken. This is an amazing place. This isn't just some trivial area in which a few Christians happen to be. This is right to the very founding of the Christian church. So many people came to America to have the freedom to worship without persecution. They fled Europe and fled other places so they could worship without persecution in a Christian church, and now this administration is using incredible powers that were bestowed on the President by Congress to help the wrong people.

I go back to a visit to the Middle East earlier this fall when allies basically were saying, We do not understand what you are doing. The Muslim Brotherhood is that which supports radical Islam, and it was the radical Islamists—the Muslim Brotherhood—that supported the 9/11 attacks. It was the Muslim Brotherhood that basically supported the training and all of the efforts the Taliban was doing. It is the

Muslim Brotherhood that was engaged in trying to take down Qadhafi, which, without American help, they may not have done. It was the Muslim Brotherhood that took control in Egypt and was persecuting Christians as the Coptic Christian Pope, the Egyptian Pope, verified himself in meetings with him this fall. Now, in Syria, you are backing the people who are at war with you? We don't understand.

So it appears that we have gone from being at war, as President Bush talked about, with anyone who has supported the terrorists—you are either with us or you are with them—to now, not only not being at war with those who are at war with us, but to helping them.

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As a Christian, to know that votes we have taken in Congress have helped enable this administration to provide weapons, weapons of war, to people who are brutalizing, raping, killing, seeing reports of the beheadings of Christians in Syria.

Though I greatly appreciate some of the things that were included in the NDAA, and in the past I have even helped work on bipartisan agreements, bicameral, with the Senate and the House, worked on an effort to rein in the President's authority to just indefinitely detain American citizens—and I think we had a great solution we worked together to get inserted, so I don't believe the President can do that any longer with the language now being used—I still can't continue to support what we are doing. I hope that we will have a bipartisan effort in the new year to actually end the authorization for use of military force against September 11 terrorists now that we seem to be helping those who are associated with the radical Islamist terrorists instead of being at war with them.

## HORIZON INDUSTRIES

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to stand here and congratulate the National Industries for the Blind, that is the NIB, on their 75th anniversary and the great work they do for Texas' First Congressional District.

NIB's mission is to "enhance opportunities for economic and personal independence of persons who are blind, primarily through creating, sustaining, and improving employment."

Unfortunately, 70 percent of working-age Americans who are blind are unemployed. However, the NIB is trying to reverse those upsetting trends by providing more employment opportunities for people who are blind through their more than 250 locations across the United States.

Horizon Industries, which is a division of the East Texas Lighthouse for the Blind, is located in Tyler, Texas, and currently employs 70 blind and visually impaired individuals. When I visit Horizon Industries, East Texas Lighthouse for the Blind, I am overwhelmed with amazement and appreciation for the dedication, the ability, the desire, and the outright help that