

competitive for all taxpayers so we can grow our economy and create jobs.

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ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE SECRET SERVICE AND THE GSA

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker. I was in Colombia, South America, this past week with the President for what was an outstanding discussion among 30 Presidents, including the President of the United States. The meeting reenforced our commitment to South America and Central America on business opportunities, small business opportunities, human rights, and the controlling of drug trafficking.

At the same time, we had to, in essence, listen and hear about a horrible action that occurred by members of the Secret Service. This does not undermine the Secret Service's long years of service for 147 years, but there must be accountability.

I do not think that we should cede any authority to the House Oversight Committee. This is a question of Homeland Security and national security, and we must begin to act immediately for a full investigation.

Finally, on the General Services Administration, it should be cleaned up and cleaned out. I know for a fact that is true because monies that are being spent on the Mickey Leland Federal Building—the contractor is Gilbane. They are adhering to no rules regarding small businesses, minority-owned businesses, diversity and workforce, nothing at all. They are overseen by the General Service Administration, which has done absolutely nothing to rein in companies like Gilbane that have done nothing as it relates to diversity of small business and are doing nothing to adhere to the American value that everybody must have an opportunity under Federal funding.

GSA, clean up your act.

SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, this past break that we were just on, I had an occasion to visit a great friend and ally in the Persian Gulf area. If we ever needed allies in that area because of Iran, we sure need them right now. I'm talking about the country of Bahrain.

Bahrain is a great friend, not only because they have been historically a friend of the United States, but we have the Fifth Fleet there, and the

Fifth Fleet is there to protect the interests of that part of the world as well as the United States of America. The Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf are right there, and the Fifth Fleet is there to guarantee that shipping of oil from that part of the world can get through. So Bahrain is extremely important to the United States, as well as being a friend and an ally. In addition to that, Bahrain is also a free trade agreement partner. We have a great free trade agreement with them, and they've been absolutely great as far as trade is concerned. I think we have a trade surplus with them.

The reason I've brought this up tonight, Mr. Speaker, is because I watch television, and I've seen where there has been a repressive government in Bahrain. There is no question there have been problems in the past. There has been overreaction by the police in certain instances in the past year, year and a half. As a result, there were people who were hurt severely when they were demonstrating in the streets of Bahrain. But the King and the Crown Prince have worked very hard to solve this problem.

One of the problems they have over there is the Iranian Government is working to try to undermine many of the countries in the Persian Gulf, and Bahrain is one of them; and there have been people coming from Iran into Bahrain to try to work with the demonstrators to undermine that government and overthrow it. People from Bahrain who are fairly radical have gone to Iran and Iraq to learn tactics to employ against the government there.

We have found that just recently there have been firebombings of homes of police. There have been firebombings of police in the streets. Some of them have burned to death. Just recently, at one of the homes of a policeman there who was gone, his wife and child were there and their house was firebombed.

The police have been ordered by the government, the King, and the Crown Prince to be very careful in how they react to the demonstrators. As a matter of fact, they don't use ammunition; they use tear gas to control the crowds. So there is no attempt right now to hurt the people there who are trying to hurt the police and the government.

I think it's important that we get the proper perspective on what's going on over there because this is one country that is extremely important to the United States because of energy that we get as well as trade and other things. If the Strait of Hormuz were to be closed down, if the Persian Gulf was closed down, if they sank some ships in there or if they put mines in the Strait of Hormuz or the Persian Gulf, the Fifth Fleet would have to go in and clean those out to make sure that commerce continued through the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. So Bahrain is extremely important.

Now I want to make a couple of points tonight that are extremely important.

First of all, the government and the police have made mistakes in the past; there is no question about that. Demonstrators, as I said before, have been infiltrated by outside radical elements. The demonstrators have used terrorist tactics, as I said, to try to destroy and undermine the government, and the Molotov cocktail is one of the things that they've been using. They've also been learning other things from the radicals that come in there or have been trained by the Iranians.

The government has attempted to solve the problems. As a matter of fact, the King appointed an outside commission, and this is the commission report: Report of the National Commission Charged with the Recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) Report. This is a huge report. It's not by the Government of Bahrain. It's by an outside group of people who were being fair and objective when they made these recommendations to the government. The King and the Crown Prince and the government are doing everything they can to implement these recommendations, and we need to applaud them for doing that.

They are reaching out to the demonstrators and the more radical elements to try to get them to the conference table to solve these problems. So far the demonstrators, supported in large part by these radical elements, will not come to the conference table and discuss these issues. The government is trying to reach out to them, but the demonstrators don't want to. That's something I think the world needs to know and the people in this country need to know. I hope our State Department is paying attention to this, because the State Department has a different view in many respects than what I found when I was there.

I want to stress very clearly tonight that the government has reached out to the demonstrators to discuss their grievances, but they can't get them to sit down with them. The government is reaching out, but the radical elements of the demonstrators are trying to make sure that the government continues to be undermined and stopped.

Let me just end by saying that we don't have a lot of friends in that part of the world. We have seen all kinds of problems in Libya. Libya is now in a state of confusion. If you look at Egypt right now, radical elements are trying to take over the Government of Egypt. That's the biggest country in that area. We see the problems in Syria. People are being killed, and we're trying to see a resolution of that problem through the mitigation of the United Nations and the former head of the United Nations.

But that entire area is in a state of flux, and we need all the friends that we can get. One of the best friends we have in the world, in my opinion, is Bahrain. Since they are our friend and the Fifth Fleet is there and since they are a great trading partner, I think

that we should make sure that the American people and the rest of the world know how important Bahrain is to this country and to the world.

Thirty-five to 40 percent of our energy comes through the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. If that area were to be bottled up, we would be in big trouble. Lights would go off. Energy would be curtailed. We would have electricity curtailed, and it would be bad for the industry and the commerce of this country. So the Fifth Fleet being there is extremely important.

Bahrain has been very supportive of our military, very supportive of our intelligence, very supportive of the Navy and the Fifth Fleet, and we need to make sure that that relationship continues for as many years as possible. The best way to do that is to make sure there is stability in the government, and the information that has been coming back through the State Department and others is that the Government of Bahrain has been repressive and that we ought to be putting pressure on them to make positive changes. They have made the changes. They are using tear gas only to stop the demonstrators.

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They have reached out to the demonstrators to get them to the conference table to support and change rules and regulations and laws there that will solve the problem. This, again, is a report, an independent report, by outside entities, experts, that came up with a very voluminous report on things that should be changed in Bahrain by the royal family and the government to make sure that everybody can live together in peace and that there will be stability in the region.

I want to stress one more time the demonstrators will not come to the conference table. So tonight I'd like to urge those who are demonstrating to take a step back, take a deep breath and reach out and take the hand of the government, sit down at the conference table and work things out because that's what they want to do. If they do that, I'm sure there will be peace and harmony in Bahrain, and it will be great for the United States of America because a great friend, a great ally and a great government over there will be secure and be able to protect our interests as well as other interests that are very important to the entire world.

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

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS: THE TRAYVON MARTIN CASE AND JUSTICE AND MOURNING THE PASSING OF JOHN PAYTON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Member may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands?

There was no objection.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. I would like to again thank the Democratic leader for giving us this time.

Mr. Speaker, tonight the Congressional Black Caucus will use the hour to speak on something that's always at the core of what we fight for and what we legislate for and what we legislate to end, and which is always at the root of much of what we come to the floor every Monday night to talk about, the persistence of inequality and injustice in our country.

It is fitting then that as we do so this evening we call to mind and honor a staunch champion for justice, attorney John Payton, who at the time of his death on March 22 was the sixth president of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

Tonight I'm joined by several of my colleagues, and I begin by yielding such time as she might consume to the former chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, a leader and one of our strongest fighters for justice and equality in this country, the gentlewoman from Oakland, California, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE.

Ms. LEE of California. Thank you very much. First let me just thank Congresswoman Dr. CHRISTENSEN for those very kind remarks, but also for your leadership on this issue and on so many issues and for anchoring these Special Orders week after week. It's so important that the points of view of the Congressional Black Caucus get out to the public, and you've been such a steady and consistent voice, and your presence here is deeply appreciated. Thank you very much.

Also, I just have to thank all of the members of the Congressional Black Caucus, Chairman CLEAVER, for continuing to beat the drum for justice. This past week, we lost a tireless advocate for justice, equality and opportunity, and I am deeply saddened by the passing of my friend and activist, John Payton.

John was a civil rights attorney and served as the president of the NAACP's Legal Defense and Educational Fund and was lead counsel for the University of Michigan in the 2003 landmark case concerning diversity in higher education. John was a California native, yet his legal victories touched those around the globe. At the center of his conviction was the belief that democracy at its core requires that all of the people be included in "we the people."

His life was really a testimony to this belief. He was the past president of the District of Columbia Bar Association and served in leadership roles with

a number of civil and human rights organizations, including the National Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights under Law and the Free South Africa Movement, and I was very privileged to be with John last year and his wife, my friend, Gay McDougall, in Geneva, Switzerland, as we worked through and I chaired a committee for the U.N. on minority political participation.

John will be deeply missed by so many. My thoughts and my prayers are with his wife, Gay McDougall, and all of his family and his friends. And as we remember John and the progress that we have made with his leadership, we know that the work for justice is far from over. The recent events in Florida are really a grim reminder of the long road ahead.

On February 26, 2012, Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old African American youth, was tragically gunned down while walking home from a local 7-Eleven store. The gunman, 38-year-old George Zimmerman, was not immediately charged with the murder and was released by the Sanford Police Department.

Sanford Police Chief Bill Lee said that there was not enough evidence to arrest George Zimmerman even though the killer followed the young male in his SUV and confronted the teen before the shooting. More than 40 days later, as a result of the outrage across the country, dedicated reporting from the media, advocacy from community and faith leaders and vocal parents and families and, of course, the facts, which spoke for themselves, the wheels of justice are finally beginning to turn. This is really an unfortunate and tragic defining moment that we must come to grips with. First we must, of course, seek justice for Trayvon and his family, especially in the wake of the circumstances surrounding his killing.

Secondly, we must make certain that this toxic and deadly mix of the power of guns, hate crimes, and racial profiling ends once and for all. Just recently, Bill Cosby said that there is a need to get guns off the street and that people should be taught to use every possible alternative before shooting someone. Yet, of course, there are those who continue to push for vigilante justice. With laws like stand-your-ground, Sanford really could be anywhere. It could be in my own community, and we have many, many of the same challenges as Sanford has.

Racial profiling is real. This young teenager was gunned down, of course, because of how he looked, because of the color of his skin. As the mother of two sons and the proud grandmother of two grandsons, these fears haunted me as I was raising my two sons and continue to haunt me each and every day. The reality is that many black parents live with these fears each and every day.

Again, Sanford could be anywhere. Hate crime must be enforced. Of course, Mr. Zimmerman was fixated and focused on young black males according to neighbors and press reports.