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Lankford: Let the American people see the video

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Washington, DC— Representative James Lankford (R-OK) spoke on the House floor today to call on the Administration to release the video footage of the September 11, 2012 attack on our embassy compound in Benghazi, Libya that claimed the lives of four Americans.

The following is the transcript of Rep. Lankford's floor speech:

“Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the past months since September 11, 2012, we have learned a great deal about what happened in Benghazi that fateful night when Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Glen Daughtry and Tyrone Woods were murdered in our facility. Their work to make the world safer and to build peaceful relationships was met with aggression and brutality. While we have some answers, I grow weary of asking many questions over and over again in hearings, letters and on this floor to get some very basic answers for the families and for the American people. Let me run some of those questions past us again.

“It was known in the State Department and at the highest levels that neither facility in Libya—the one in Tripoli or the one in Benghazi—met the minimum physical security standards set after our embassy was attacked in Kenya in 1998. Who made the decision to put so many American diplomats in those facilities that did not meet that standard? That same question was asked yesterday by a Senate committee intelligence report asking the same question, ‘Who made the decision to put people in facilities we knew did not meet the minimum security standards?’ The embassy had access to additional military personnel for security and training. They had been there before. The regional security officer and ambassador requested to keep the additional security on the ground.

“That request was denied in August of 2012, and in September of 2012, there was an attack on our facility. And we did not have the manpower to repel them. What was the reason for the decision to remove the existing security force from Libya and leave only a small security team there? In fact, the security force was so small that when the Ambassador traveled in Tripoli, it took the entire security team to travel with him. For long stretches during the day, the American diplomats were completely exposed. So exposed, that the diplomats asked the security forces to train them how to use a gun so they could defend themselves in the moments when they were left with no defense. In a country that’s just gone through a brutal, long civil war

and there was no strong central government or national police force, why were diplomats left to defend themselves in Tripoli?

“Multiple intelligence reports from the CIA, the Ambassador and regional security officer, all noted increasing violence in Benghazi in terrorist training camps nearby. There were more than 20 security incidents in that area in the previous month. Every other international facility in Benghazi closed in the previous year because of security risks. Their facility or personnel was attacked. They made the determination for one or two things: either increase security or pull out. They chose to pull out. We had the same option. But instead, we chose to stay and decrease our security.

“Who made that decision and what information did they use to make that decision? We have a joint operation called the Foreign Emergency Support Team to assist during and after State Department crisis. They never mobilized that night because no one ever sent them. Apparently they were too far away. They were stationed in the United States. Can someone tell why we have a foreign emergency support team, if they are not for events like this? What is required to mobilize that team? If they are too far away to make a difference, why are they stationed in America? We are not worried about our embassies in America being attacked. We spend millions of dollars training and equipping this team to apparently stand down during an emergency. Why?

“On September 11, our American embassy in Egypt was stormed about 6 o'clock local time. The mob climbed the walls, put up the Al Qaeda flag. I would assume it's an event that would warrant some sort of status change in our military preparedness, but no one from our State Department requested a status change or increased preparedness. So, when the country next door was attacked four hours later, the military was still not prepared. There are millions of questions about what happened that night. Were we overwhelmed by a highly organized military force? Was it a street protest that went violent like the

Administration first claimed? The Administration claims the attack was so overwhelming additional American security forces would not have made a difference. I know how we can resolve this issue. Release the video of that attack that night.

“For some reason the Administration cannot identify the killers that night because none of them have been brought to justice a year and a half later. I have an idea. If the Administration cannot identify them, show the world the video of the attack and let everyone see it and let the world help identify who that is. If there is bank robbery, the next day the video footage is on television so that everyone can figure out who that person is, and they can be brought to justice. That is standard practice for the FBI here. Why is the video of the attack in Benghazi being withheld? If you cannot figure out who attacked the compound, ask CNN or Fox News or the New York Times, they have all interviewed the people who attacked the compound. But the Administration cannot seem to find them. Many Americans have not even heard there is high-quality, multiple-angle video footage of that night, both on the ground and from the air in drones.

“There is only one reason why the Administration will not release the video. They do not want the American people to see what really happened that night and to see that two additional security personnel would have made a huge difference. We need to release the video. Allow the American people to see what really happened. Let’s get these questions answered. With that, I yield back.”

To view Rep. Lankford’s floor speech, please click [here](#).

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