

I rise today in full support of the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act. This bill provides very important humanitarian, development and economic assistance. Afghanistan is a country that has been torn apart by war for decades. The seeds of terrorism grow where there is despair and poverty.

Manmade disasters have been compounded by nature. Afghanistan has been suffering from a terrible drought, for example, for several years, adding to the already extreme misery in that country. So we must remain committed to Afghanistan's reconstruction. It is not only for humanitarian reasons, but it is also in the United States' security interests as well.

We also must make sure that our assistance to Afghanistan recognizes the suffering of Afghan women in particular and in the importance of reintegrating women into the civic life of the country.

I submitted an amendment in committee authored by my colleague, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) calling for resources to be sent to the Afghan Ministry of Women's Affairs to carry out its responsibilities for legal advocacy, education, vocational training and women's health programs. I want to thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) who is the vice chair of the Women's Caucus for her leadership and also for the bipartisan support of the committee's adoption.

I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and our ranking member, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), for crafting this very common-sense, yet, I believe far-reaching legislation. I urge support for the bill. The United States must remain engaged in helping support the nation-building efforts in Afghanistan.

Mr. HYDE. Madam Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Chairman, I rise in support of the bill. I commend the chairman of the committee and the ranking member for their work.

Last March I traveled to Afghanistan to meet with our troops there and to meet with government officials. I think Americans are rightly proud over the efforts of our servicemen and women. But one thing was absolutely clear; the battle in Afghanistan is far from over. We met with Interim Chairman Hamed Karzai, and he has struck a delicate balance in heading up the multi-ethnic Afghan administration. A Loya Jirga will soon be held to appoint a transitional authority there. The United States must stand firmly behind Chairman Karzai and the interim government.

This legislation that the chairman and the ranking member have directed to us, this will help us better do this. I had the opportunity to travel to Kabul and visit a local orphanage where I spoke with a little girl who told me she wanted to be a doctor when she grew

up. Now with the liberation of her country from the Taliban regime, this dream has a chance.

Madam Chairman, thanks to the work of our armed services and thanks to Chairman Karzai, there is a window of opportunity there. The battered Afghan people are desperate for a brighter future, for a unified country that they can believe in. But that window is closing. And suspicion, cynicism, and self-interest are filling the gap. There are too many characters looking to bring Afghanistan back into chaos. The other week our forces fired a missile from an unmanned Predator plane that just missed Hekmatyar. Hekmatyar has been plotting attacks against the interim government and against American troops.

The U.S. training of an Afghan national army formally started this week. Although this is a welcome development, it will take some time to develop this force into one that can provide security nationwide. Turkey will be assuming command of the international security assistance force. Now that is confined to the Afghan capital. It is critical that we encourage Turkey to expand its force outside of Kabul to counter the regional warlords.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Chairman, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), our good friend and distinguished colleague.

(Mr. CROWLEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Chairman, I am pleased to rise today in support of the Afghan Freedom Support Act. I thank the chairman and the ranking member for their work on this very, very important act.

The Afghanistan Freedom Support Act is a critical step towards the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Among its notable provisions, the bill calls for a significant amount of humanitarian assistance to help deliver food, medical care and basic supplies to the people of Afghanistan; provisions to promote counternarcotics efforts; the need to develop the agricultural sector, both as a step towards economic development and self-sufficiency, but also as a means of stemming poppy cultivation; the furtherance of a bond process which provides a framework for Afghanistan's political factions to decide their country's political future; and strong language on the provision of assistance to meet the educational, health and vocational needs of women.

I am also strongly supporting the measures required by the amendment introduced by my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS). While giving the President broad latitude to craft the most effective approach, this amendment would require the administration to develop a strategy to meet the immediate and long-term security needs of Afghanistan in order to promote the delivery of humanitarian assistance,

further the rule of law and support the formation of a representative government in Afghanistan.

Improved security is a necessary precondition for achievement of the U.S. pledge to help build a stable and peaceful Afghanistan. Since the current government led by Hamed Karzai is not able to provide security throughout the country outside of Kabul, in fact, other parts of the country seem like the Wild West, fighting between rival factions who are vying for regional control, human rights abuses and corruption, and the problems will continue to hinder the delivery of humanitarian aid, delay economic reconstruction and development, and undermine the delicate process by which factions are trying to create a stable, democratic, central government.

Uncontrolled violence also puts U.S. and allied soldiers throughout Afghanistan at risk. It is, therefore, critical for the administration and Congress to work together to find ways to improve security in Afghanistan. I believe the Lantos amendment provides a reasonable and speedy method for addressing this important issue, but once again I rise in support of the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act and I thank the chairman and ranking member again for their work on this important piece of legislation.

Mr. HYDE. Madam Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL).

(Mr. PAUL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAUL. Madam Chairman, I thank the chairman for yielding me time.

Madam Chairman, I rise in opposition to this bill. The President has not asked for this piece of legislation; he does not support it. We do not anticipate that it will be passed in the other body. But there is one good part of the bill, and that is the title, "Freedom Support." We all support freedom. It is just that this bill does not support freedom. Really, it undermines the liberties and the taxes of many Americans in order to pump another in \$1.2 billion into Afghanistan.

One of the moral justifications, maybe, for rebuilding Afghanistan is that it was the American bombs that helped to destroy Afghanistan in our routing of the Taliban. But there is a lot of shortcomings in this method. Nation-building does not work. I think this will fail. I do not think it will help us.

I do not think for a minute that this is much different than social engineering that we try here in the U.S. with a lot of duress and a lot of problems; and now we are going to do it over there where we really do not understand the social conditions that exist, and it is not like here. Some, especially those in that part of the world, will see this as neo-colonialism because we are over there for a lot of different reasons. And even in the bill it states one of the reasons. It says, "We are to design an

overall strategy to advance U.S. interests in Afghanistan."

Well, I wonder what that means? Over 10 years ago there was an explicit desire and a statement made by the administration that until we had a unified government in Afghanistan, we could not build a gas pipeline across northern Afghanistan. And that is in our interests. Does that mean this is one of the motivations?

I imagine a lot of people here in the Congress might say no, but that might be the ultimate outcome. It is said that this bill may cut down on the drug trade. But the Taliban was stronger against drugs than the Northern Alliance. Drug production is up since we've been involved this past year in Afghanistan.

Madam Chairman, I think it is important to state first off that while it is true that the administration has not actively opposed this legislation, it certainly has not asked for nor does it support the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act. It did not support the bill when we marked it up in the International Relations Committee, it did not support the bill after it was amended in Committee, and it does not support the bill today.

Madam Chairman, perhaps the "Afghanistan Freedom Support Act" should more accurately be renamed the "Afghanistan Territorial Expansion Act," because this legislation essentially treats that troubled nation like a new American territory. In fact, I wonder whether we give Guam, Puerto Rico, or other American territories anywhere near \$1.2 billion every few years—so maybe we just should consider full statehood for Afghanistan. This new State of Afghanistan even comes complete with an American governor, which the bill charitably calls a "coordinator." After all, we can't just give away such a huge sum without installing an American overseer to ensure we approve of all aspects of the fledgling Afghan government.

Madam Chairman, when we fill a nation's empty treasury, when we fund and train its military, when we arm it with our weapons, when we try to impose foreign standards and values within it, indeed when we attempt to impose a government and civil society of our own making upon it, we are nation-building. There is no other term for it. Whether Congress wants to recognize it or not, this is neo-colonialism. Afghanistan will be unable to sustain itself economically for a very long time to come, and during that time American taxpayers will pay the bills. This sad reality was inevitable from the moment we decided to invade it and replace its government, rather than use covert forces to eliminate the individuals truly responsible for September 11th. Perhaps the saddest truth is that Bin Laden remains alive and free even as we begin to sweep up the rubble from our bombs.

I am sure that supporters of this bill are well-intentioned, but judging from past experience this approach will fail to improve the lives of the average Afghan citizen. Though many will also attempt to claim that this bill is somehow about the attacks of 9/11, let's not fool ourselves: nation-building and social engineering are what this bill is about. Most of the problems it seeks to address predate the 9/11 attacks and those it purports to assist had nothing to do with those attacks.

If we are operating under the premise that global poverty itself poses a national security threat to the United States, then I am afraid we have an impossible task ahead of us.

As is often the case, much of the money authorized by this bill will go toward lucrative contracts with well-connected private firms and individuals. In short, when you look past all the talk about building civil society in Afghanistan and defending against terrorism, this bill is laden with the usual corporate welfare and hand-outs to special interests.

Among other harmful things, this legislation dramatically expands the drug war. Under the group we have installed in Afghanistan, opium production has skyrocketed. Now we are expected to go in and clean up the mess our allies have created. In addition, this bill will send some \$60 million to the United Nations, to help fund its own drug eradication program. I am sure most Americans agree that we already send the United Nations too much of our tax money, yet this bill commits us to sending even more.

The drug war has been a failure. Plan Colombia, an enormously expensive attempt to reduce drug production in that Andean nation, has actually resulted in a 25 percent increase in coca leaf and cocaine production. Does anyone still think our "war on drugs" there has been successful? Is it responsible to continue spending money on policies that do not work?

The bill also reflects a disturbing effort by the Washington elite to conduct experiments in social engineering in Afghanistan. It demands at least five times that the Afghans create a government that is "broad-based, multi-ethnic, gender-sensitive, and fully representative." We are imposing race and gender quotas on a foreign government that have been found inappropriate and in some cases even illegal in the United States. Is this an appropriate activity to be carried out with taxpayer funds?

Madam Chairman, the problem with nation-building and social-engineering, as experience tells us time and time again is that it simply doesn't work. We cannot build multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, gender-sensitive civil society and good governance in Afghanistan on a top-down basis from afar. What this bill represents is a commitment to deepening involvement in Afghanistan and a determination to impose a political system on that country based on a blueprint drawn up thousands of miles away by Washington elites. Does anyone actually believe that we can buy Afghan democracy with even the staggering sum of 1.2 billion dollars? A real democracy is the product of shared values and the willingness of a population to demand and support it. None of these things can be purchased by a foreign power. What is needed in Afghanistan is not just democracy, but freedom—the two are not the same.

Release of funds authorized by this legislation is dependent on the holding of a traditional Afghan assembly of tribal representatives—a "loya jirga"—as a first step toward democratization. It authorizes \$10 million dollars to finance this meeting. That this traditional meeting will produce anything like a truly representative body is already in question, as we heard earlier this month that seven out of 33 influential tribal leaders have already announced they will boycott the meeting. Additionally, press reports have indicated that the U.S. government itself was not too long ago

involved in an attempted assassination of a non-Taliban regional leader who happened to be opposed to the rule of the American-installed Hamid Karzai. More likely, this "loya jirga" will be a stage-managed showpiece, primarily convened to please Western donors. Is this any way to teach democracy?

Madam Chairman, some two decades ago the Soviet Union also invaded Afghanistan and attempted to impose upon the Afghan people a foreign political system. Some nine years and 15,000 Soviet lives later they retreated in disgrace, morally and financially bankrupt. During that time, we propped up the Afghan resistance with our weapons, money, and training, planting the seeds of the Taliban in the process. Now the former Soviet Union is gone, its armies long withdrawn from Afghanistan, and we're left cleaning up the mess—yet we won't be loved for it. No, we won't get respect or allegiance from the Afghans, especially now that our bombs have rained down upon them. We will pay the bills, however, Afghanistan will become a tragic ward of the American state, another example of an interventionist foreign policy that is supposed to serve our national interests and gain allies, yet which does neither.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Before yielding time, I would like to comment on the previous speaker's observations. It is very much in the U.S. national interests not to allow the Taliban and al Qaeda to reestablish their bases in Afghanistan. Unless I am mistaken, it is their activities that resulted in the deaths of 3,000 of our fellow citizens in New York and at the Pentagon. It is very much in the U.S. national interest to put an end to opium production in Afghanistan. It is very much in the U.S. national interest to have a stable, prosperous, and democratic society in that part of the world. And I believe the overwhelming majority of Members of this body and the American people see that as clearly as the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and I do.

Madam Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to my good friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Madam Chairman, I thank the ranking member for his kindness, I believe that is what it is when we are allowed to bring very important issues to this floor, as well as his leadership, and the chairman of the Committee on International Relations for leadership they have shown together in bringing us this legislation which is a combined work of both the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

The reason I say that is because echoing the words of the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), "This legislation is both long overdue and essential."

Having visited Afghanistan in March and visited our troops who were doing a very able and needed job, even in speaking to our military personnel, they applauded the desire of America to help rebuild this nation.