

"We sympathize with the oppressed and persecuted everywhere. We also realize that we have great problems at home, that one third of our population is ill-fed, ill-housed and ill-clad, and unless and until this situation is corrected, our democracy is in danger."

He then concluded: "I cannot help but feel that we should settle our own problems before we undertake to settle the problems of Asia, Africa, Australasia, South America and Europe. As Americans interested first in America, what is our present stake?"

This isolationist ode to only spending Americans' money solving Americans' domestic problems comes not from the current Iraqi reconstruction debates. They were the remarks of U.S. Senator Burton Wheeler, Democrat, Montana, in opposing the Roosevelt administration's lend-lease proposal with England.

Still, the crude crux of the matter, originally posited by Wheeler and later by his isolationist ilk from the debates over aid to Greece and Turkey through the Marshall Plan right up to today's debates over Iraqi reconstruction remains: What is in it for us? A bitterly ironic inquiry from baby boomer Democrats who once applauded JFK's inaugural challenge to "ask not what your country can do for you," but I digress.

What is in it for us is what is in it for everyone: a stable, democratic, and prosperous new ally in the war on terror serving for generations to come as a bulwark in the struggle for the survival of our Nation and world civilization.

True, some isolationists find the survival of freedom and civilization far less tactile goals than, say, a new road or free condoms, but the survival of freedom and civilization must suffice as our abiding cause in this time of national crisis.

Seriously, what is more presently pressing: erecting schoolchildren new classes or eradicating schoolchildren's killers? Where must we must urgently expend our resources: finishing the liberation of Iraq and standing tall at the front door of terrorism, or spending ever more money at home so when terrorists blow in our back door, they can admire our compassion as they kill us?

Right now, more than ever, we must resist all of isolationism's shortsighted and selfish special interest appeals, lest America asphyxiate upon its tissue of lies. And may God spare the souls of those who do partake of the isolationism's fools gold only to find its blood money, blood money borrowed at the collateral cost of future Americans killed.

This we will not do to our children. This we will not do to our civilization. This we will not do to ourselves. History is a harsh mistress, beautifully chaste in her truth, but brutally cruel in her treatment of fools who fail to learn her lessons. So while many today may not recall Senator Burton Wheeler's name and many presently reprise

his siren song of isolationism, for both, history will record and return an equally ignominious and indelible indictment. Or worse, for our contemporary isolationists.

After all, the isolationist Wheeler railed before 2,300 Americans were killed at Pearl Harbor. The new isolationists rail after 3,000 Americans were killed on 9-11.

Mr. Speaker, waging and winning the war on terror requires the arduous global eradication of terrorists through diplomatic, economic, and military operations, often including the concomitant tactics of rogue regime change and reconstruction, in tiered theaters of operations. To do so throughout this unsought struggle, we must mobilize our Nation's greatest resource: ourselves.

For while our path is clear, our road is hard. But we must trod it ever bravely to a better world for ourselves and our children. There is no turning back to await an ignoble death.

In his December 26, 1941, address to a joint session of Congress, Prime Minister Winston Churchill warned another shocked generation of Americans sucked into a world conflagration to firmly press on: "Some people may be startled or momentarily depressed when, like your President, I speak of a long and hard war. But our peoples would rather know the truth, somber though it be. And, after all, when we are doing the noblest work in the world, not only defending our hearths and homes but the cause of freedom in other lands . . . Sure I am that this day, now we are masters of our fate, that the task which has been set us is not above our strength, that its pangs and toils are not beyond our endurance. As long as we have faith in our cause and an unconquerable willpower, salvation will not be denied us."

Once again ambushed but unbowed, we heirs of Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill have again allied and formed a coalition of the willing to defeat the common enemies of our countries and our civilization, while much of the world stands mute or worse and seems blithely ambivalent to the arrival of the terrorists upon their doorsteps. But we cannot evade this crusade. We cannot wish the world away. Today's war on terror will yield either a bitter death or a better day. And thusly does our generation of Americans face our fiercest foe and our finest hour.

As Americans, we are honor bound to defend freedom for ourselves and all the world. And no one more ably embodied and expressed this grim acceptance of our sacred duty than our valiant wartime Commander in Chief, whom I quote: "There comes a time when you and I must see the cold, inexorable necessity of saying to these inhuman, unrestrained seekers of world conquest and permanent world domination by the sword: 'You seek to throw our children and our children's children into your form of terrorism and

slavery. You have now attacked our own safety. You shall go no further.'

"Normal practices of diplomacy, note writing, are of no possible use in dealing with international outlaws who . . . kill our citizens.

"One peaceful nation after another has met disaster because each refused to look the danger squarely in the eye until it actually had them by the throat.

"The United States will not make that fatal mistake . . ."

Our President continued: "I have no illusions about the gravity of this step. I have not taken it hurriedly or lightly. It is the result of months and months of constant thought and anxiety and prayer. In the protection of your Nation and mine, it cannot be avoided.

"The American people have faced other grave crises in their history, with American courage, and with American resolution. They will do no less today.

"They know the actualities of the attacks upon us. They know the necessities of a bold defense against these attacks. They know that the times call for clear heads and fearless hearts.

"And with that inner strength that comes to a free people conscious of their duty and conscious of the righteousness of what they do, they will, with Divine help and guidance, stand their ground against this latest assault upon their democracy, their sovereignty, and their freedom."

Those were the inspirational words our wartime President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, which he used to conclude his fireside chat on national defense. The date: September 11, 1941.

Be it September 11, 1941, or September 11, 2001, our Nation, founded as a revolutionary experiment in democracy and remaining so to this day, so too remains the primary target of all would-be world despots. Consequently, as every generation of Americans inherits the blessings and the burdens of our liberty, every generation of Americans has the right and responsibility to defend our Nation and civilization against every tyrant and terrorist who knows they cannot enslave and exterminate humanity so long as the United States and its people breathe and fight on against them.

Mr. Speaker, in this, our moment, such is our duty, we must accept. And it will be met, in this, our finest hour, until tomorrow where a finer, kinder day awaits. May God continue to grace and guard and bless our United States of America.

SUPPORTING ROAD MAP FOR DEMOCRACY IN BURMA CONFERENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PORTER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and support the

Road Map for Democracy in Burma Conference, which was held in Fort Wayne, Indiana, my hometown, on October 11 through 12, 2003. I had the distinct pleasure to address the conference and speak to some of the attendees. I pledged to them to insert this Road Map for Democracy in Burma into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, and let me explain why.

My colleagues are well aware of the military dictatorship currently ruling in Burma. In July of this year, the House passed the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, which imposes sanctions on Burma until the military gives up power and a new democratic Burma is established.

While the Burmese appreciate the support of the United States, they are working among themselves to organize a future democratic Burma. The conference in Fort Wayne brought together members of the democratically elected Burmese government-in-exile and various Burmese ethnic groups.

As the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER) recently explained in the last few minutes, the problems that we face in Iraq, Burma, in fact, is trying to address these in advance. They had a democratic government overthrown by the junta, and they are now trying to pull the different factions together to be prepared, when this junta collapses, with a balanced democratic government.

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Burma has long been plagued with ethnic tensions. The delicate balance among ethnic groups was shattered early in Burmese independence. Since the military takeover in the 1960s, many ethnic groups have been persecuted and harassed. In such an atmosphere, suspicion and mistrust have been the norm.

This conference was particularly significant, because so many of the Burmese ethnic groups were brought together to discuss Burma's future. The fact that the groups were able to meet in one room together is a noteworthy accomplishment. Compare this to the problems we had in Iraq. In my hometown we have 125 Iraqis who fled. There are Sunni, Shia and Kurds. Prior to the recent conflict in Iraq, when I wanted to meet with the different groups, they would not meet together. That was a pretty good forerunner of what was going to happen when we got into Iraq.

In fact, we have nearly 2,000 Burmese in Fort Wayne. When we tried to meet there, initially some of the ethnic divisions were a problem even in meeting with their United States Congressman from that district.

This conference, unlike what we are seeing in many places of the world, we see the Burmese and the different ethnic groups trying to pull together to address what kind of country should Burma be when democracy is restored. Cooperation among the groups at this conference is an important step towards a future democratic Burma.

The road to democracy is not easy for any country, and Burma is no exception. I believe that the resolution unanimously passed by the conference is a positive step in the right direction. Democracy in Burma will only be achieved if all Burmese work together. I encourage the groups to continue their dialogue and their work together.

I admire the courage and tenacity of all the Burmese people, and I will continue to work with them and do what I can to help them achieve their goal of a free and democratic Burma for all Burmese.

Mr. Speaker, I will insert in the RECORD following my remarks "The Full Road Map for Democracy," and I will just summarize a couple points.

In this Road Map for Democracy, they established a long-term goal. For example, number one is, "To fully realize that goal, the committee in charge of establishing a self-help, fund-raising body has been formed." Because, as they state right at the beginning, "The conference firmly believes that the objective of the struggle to abolish dictatorship and promote democracy in our country," Burma, "can successfully be achieved only through self-reliance." They understand that basic principle.

In the section "Future Plan for Inland and Overseas Democratic Struggles," they say, "In accordance with the belief of the Road Map for Democracy in Burma Conference held in Fort Wayne, that the elimination of the dictatorial system in Burma is the only way to successfully achieve genuine democracy and genuine national reconciliation among all ethnic nationalities, and that the only path that can lead to the realization of that goal is a correct road map from all of us."

Then they proceed to lay out who are some of the steering committees. Under "Solidarity of Nationalities of Burma," point Number 1 is, "There must be equality and self-determination for all ethnic nationalities," a major step that we do not see in many other nations around the world. They have detailed things on unity-building committees.

Under strengthening ethnic unity, for example, they say, "All nationalities should learn the language of at least one nationality other than their own," and "Ethnic nationalities should mutually respect each other."

For a strategy to end military dictatorship in Burma, they have things as diverse as, "Accept the leadership of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy," the elected president who has been held in exile.

Number 2 is, "Any political change not based on the results of the 1990 elections will not be accepted."

They also point out, "The unwavering political objective of this conference is democracy and the establishment of a federal union."

So they are very clear where they stand on the issue of democracy.

They have also, in conclusion, how to press the military regime in Burma by

international communities and the United Nations.

Point one was to step up economic sanctions against the military regime of Burma through the United Nations Security Council.

Two is to seek stronger pressure from the international community to secure the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners.

But they also have very explicit things in the resolutions. For example, to urge the Burmese expatriate communities to stop paying tax to SPDC, the military junta, embassies, and other specific things.

I commend this group and this conference for actually laying out a road map, having a plan of how to work together, how to build a country, so we do not see repeats of our struggles in Iraq, which are very important, which we must back up. We do not really have much option.

But, at the same time, to the degree we can to this in advance of a people getting their freedom back, this is what we need to do.

Mr. Speaker, I include the following for the RECORD:

[From the News Sentinel, Oct. 13, 2003]

PARTICIPANTS WORKED OUT SEVERAL KEY RESOLUTIONS

(By Kevin Kilbane)

They agreed any transition to democracy in Burma would begin with leader Aung San Suu Kyi, whom the ruling military dictatorship has kept under virtual house arrest for more than a decade.

Members of the various ethnic groups making up the Burmese refugee community agreed they all must be given political equality and the right of self-determination.

Most importantly, however, Burmese attending the two-day Road Map for Democracy in Burma conference this weekend in Fort Wayne agreed to work together.

"All arguments are settled," said U Peter Limbin of Bluffton, who was elected to the Burmese parliament in 1990. He and other pro-democracy officials elected then had to flee to escape government persecution.

About 300 Burmese gathered for the conference Saturday and Sunday at Neff Hall on the campus of Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne. Organizers held the event here because the 1,500 Burmese in Fort Wayne make up the largest Burmese community in the United States.

The conference drew representatives from Burmese pro-democracy groups around the world. People flew in from Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Thailand, said Zar Wint, 30, of Fort Wayne, who attended the conference.

"I feel like I am home again," Wint said as many different conversations swirled around him, all in Burmese.

Guests also included Sein Win, acting prime minister of the exiled democratic government.

Burmese pro-democracy groups have enjoyed support from the United States and European Union, Win said during a break Sunday. Trade sanctions and travel restrictions those nations have placed on the Burmese government apply pressure for change. But Burmese refugees must network more to increase the pressure on the regime to step down.

"We need more push," he said.

To develop such strategies, people attending the conference broke into six panels to

discuss key topics and propose future action. Discussion topics included how to replace the ruling military dictatorship and how to build solidarity among Burma's ethnic groups. Panels also debated how to fund the democratic movement and how to increase international and United Nations pressure on the ruling regime to step aside.

Some of the key resolutions passed included:

To lobby leaders of conference goers' current country of residence to increase pressure on Burma's military rulers to relinquish control.

To follow Aung San Suu Kyi (pronounced Ahn Sahn Sue She) once military dictators leave power. The 1991 Nobel Peace Prize laureate largely has been kept under house arrest since the government cracked down in 1988 on a student pro-democracy movement.

To unify pro-democracy groups' power by working through the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, the exile government based in Washington, D.C.

To more actively support prodemocracy movements inside Burma, which the current rulers have renamed Myanmar.

To recognize the equality and right to self-determination of all Burmese ethnic groups. Members of the Mon, Karen, Shan and Chin ethnic groups exhibited unprecedented cooperation when planning the conference.

The resolutions how to replace the ruling government and on ethnic solidarity generated the most emotional debate. All of the discussion took place in Burmese peppered with occasional English words or phrases—"U.S.-China dialogue," for example—when no Burmese equivalent existed.

The room where the presentation's took place, Neff Hall's auditorium, resembled an international hearing room. The red, gold and white flag of the Democratic Burmese Students Association and letters spelling out "Road Map for Democracy in Burma Conference" hung on a velvet curtain behind the long tables set up on stage for panel members. Portraits and posters of Aung San Suu Kyi hung on the sides and front of the stage.

Men in blue jeans, suits and ties or traditional skirtlike longis—and, occasionally, women in business or traditional attire—would stand to make a comment or propose an amendment. Listeners often clapped or cheered in response.

The proposed resolutions for following Aung San Suu Kyi and working for replacement of Burma's dictatorship drew the most enthusiastic cheers and applause.

The conference closed with an appearance by area U.S. Rep. Mark Souder, who pledged to get resolutions "in the hands of the right people" in Washington.

The "Roadmap for Democracy in Burma Conference" held in Fort Wayne, Indiana, 11-12 October 2003, unanimously passed the following resolutions:

The conference firmly believes that the objective of the struggle to abolish dictatorship and promote democracy in our country, Burma, can be successfully achieved only through self-reliance.

(1) To fully realize that goal, the committee in charge of establishing a self-help fund raising body has been formed.

(2) The term of the committee will be (12) months.

(3) The committee will draft and approve rules, regulations, and procedures which will extensively be global in nature.

(4) The committee, which will come into force immediately from the date it is formed, has been assigned to undertake self-funding programs.

Future Plan for Inland and Overseas Democratic Struggles

In accordance with the belief of the "Roadmap for Democracy in Burma Conference"

held in Fort Wayne that the elimination of the dictatorial system in Burma is the only way to successfully achieve genuine democracy and genuine national reconciliation among all the ethnic nationalities, and that the only path that can lead to the realization of that goal is the correct roadmap for all of us.

A concerted struggle must be waged both domestically and internationally through various means to remove the vicious SPDC military clique. After careful considerations of all issues, it is decided that: the force inside the country is the key force and the force inside the country is the deciding factor.

The key players who will be waging the deciding struggle are:

(a) The Committee Representing the People's Parliament and the National League for Democracy led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi;

(b) The "Veteran Politicians";

(c) United Nationalities League for Democracy and the ethnic nationalities; and

(d) Masses (students, monks, workers, farmers, etc.) from all strata.

To provide all-round support to the intensification and improvement of the "anti-dictatorship and people's liberation activities" of these key players is the most important requisite and vital responsibility of our forces outside the country.

The conference unanimously viewed that a work committee is needed to effectively perform responsibilities, and it was formed accordingly.

Solidarity of Nationalities of Burma

1. There must be equality and self-determination for all ethnic nationalities.

2. Like all other ethnic nationalities, Myanmar nationalities should also be sincere and decisive in standing as one racial group.

3. The other ethnic nationality groups should recognize that the Burmese military is not an organization that represents the Myanmar nationalities.

4. When choosing a name for the federal union of the future, it should be representative of all the ethnic nationalities in the country.

5. Unity Building Committee comprising representatives of all ethnic nationalities should be formed.

6. With a view to strengthen ethnic unity, all nationalities should learn the language of, at least one nationality other than their own.

7. Ethnic nationalities should mutually respect each other.

Strategy to End Military Dictatorship in Burma

The conference resolves to:

1. Accept the leadership of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy.

2. Any political change not based on the results of the 1990 elections will not be accepted.

3. To support and enhance the role of the Committee Representing People's Parliament.

4. To continue the struggle through all means to eliminate the dictatorship in Burma.

5. To secure victory through the revolutionary movement inside the country.

6. That the unwavering political objective of this conference is democracy and establishment of a federal union are:

7. To form ad hoc committee comprising individuals and organizations under the political leadership of the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma and the National Council the Union of Burma. The committee is to be formed with members of the Strategy Panel and to be expanded later.

8. To support and assist the just revolutionary war of the ethnic nationality groups.

Forward Actions Planned at the Conference

1. Myanmar democratic forces abroad are to stage demonstrations on December 10 (Human Rights Day) to display unity.

2. To urgently carry out organizational work in different regions (of the world).

3. To organize and encourage all the people of Myanmar and organizations to oppose the dictatorship in Burma and participate in the activities to liberate the people.

Press Against Military Regime in Burma by International Communities & United Nations

1. To step up economic sanctions against the military regime of Burma through the United Nations Security Council.

2. To seek stronger pressure from the international community to secure the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners.

3. To work toward the implementation of resolutions passed by the International Labor Organization at its conference in Year 2000.

4. To work toward the European Union to use stronger pressure mechanisms, including economic sanctions.

5. To request the United Nations Secretary General to fully implement the Burma resolutions passed by successive sessions of the United Nations General Assembly.

6. For the Burmese democratic forces worldwide to urge international governments and members of Parliament concerned to exert pressure on the Burmese military regime.

7. To collect information and prepare reports to increase the effectiveness of the visa ban on SPDC leaders and their close relatives, the freezing of their assets, and the ban of transfer of funds imposed by the United States and the European Union.

8. To urge Burmese expatriate communities to stop paying tax to SPDC Embassies.

9. To raise the awareness of the people of the world about the true condition in Burma through educational and lecture tours.

10. Believes that the nuclear reactor project being carried out jointly by the SPDC and Russia directly threatens regional security.

11. To work for the reversal of the ruling by the United States Department of Justice to suspend lawsuits against UNOCAL.

12. To prevent the SPDC from selling off land owned by the Burmese people in foreign countries where Burmese Embassies are located.

13. Proposed to the conference to form a Networking Committee so that Burmese democratic forces all over the world can coordinate their activities and work in unity.

THE INCREASING ECONOMIC DIVIDE AMONG AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, the corporate media does not talk about it too much, and we do not discuss it terribly much here in the Congress, but the United States of America is rapidly on its way to becoming three separate nations: An increasingly wealthy elite, a small number of people who have incredible wealth and incredible power; a middle class, the vast majority of our people, which is shrinking, where the average person is working longer hours for lower wages; and, at the bottom we