

global War on Terror.” This assertion is a convenient attempt to validate this new allusion without any supporting evidence. The government’s arbitrary use of inflammatory language and its efforts to rationalize Washington’s allocation of \$1.5 billion for Plan Colombia have failed to overcome its disappointing achievements in the War on Terror as Colombia had played no part in the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

For the past four years, the U.S. government has funded Plan Colombia as part of a patently ineffective War on Drugs. Even the head of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy John Walters, upon returning from a recent South American visit, reported that Washington’s anti-drug strategy has failed.

Despite SouthCom’s dubious reports of its strategy’s success, Plan Colombia’s failures are numerous. Colombia’s supply and the U.S.’ demand for drugs remain essentially unchanged. While U.S. armed forces are already overextended, SouthCom is now seeking to further involve U.S. military personnel in Colombia’s protracted civil war by requesting an increase from 400 to 800 military officers and from 400 to 600 private contractors allowed to be present in the country. Critics contend that the now militarized Plan Colombia has failed to effectively address the country’s armed forces’ proclivity for human rights violations. Additionally, in its own annual human rights report, the State Department has maintained that the U.S.-trained Colombian military continues to associate with illegal rightwing paramilitary groups—Colombia’s prime human rights violators. This subject is continually under-addressed in SouthCom’s public statements. Following in the footsteps of the U.S. Patriot Act, the Colombian Congress has passed anti-terror legislation that allows the military to arbitrarily conduct searches and tap the telephones of citizens without a warrant. U.S. support, along with high funding for Colombia, has contributed to a flawed domestic policy in the South American country. The latest attempts to recast the nation’s perpetual unrest as a terrorism problem that threatens U.S. national security not only represents little regard for the facts and a twisting of reality, but is simply the latest stage in the repeating of a foreign policy project that has never worked.

GUANTANAMO BAY—SOUTHCOM’S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WAR ON TERROR

SouthCom’s insistence that it is engaged in responsible security practices and upholds human rights values awaits final judgment, especially considering its jurisdiction over the terrorist detention center in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. Since its creation as a prison facility in 2002, Camp X-ray has faced consistent criticism from groups such as Amnesty International (AI) which claim U.S. officials have sanctioned illegal practices at the facility. Prisoner testimony and photographs have established that suspected al Qaeda detainees have been held without trial or proper legal representation and may have suffered some of the same torture tactics that took place at the now infamous Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. AI alleged in its report that “despite public commitments to the humane treatment of detainees, it subsequently has been revealed that the U.S. administration’s decision not to apply provisions of the Geneva Conventions to those being held in Guantanamo may have been motivated by a desire to apply harsher interrogation techniques than it perceived would be allowed under the Geneva Conventions.” Though SouthCom officers may be just one link in the chain of command, the detention facility is ultimately located within its re-

gion of responsibility. While SouthCom continues to lobby Congress for increased funding, Camp X-ray remains a glaring black mark that contrasts with SouthCom’s professed support for legal procedures and human rights practices.

FINDING THE CAUSES, NOT JUST THE TERRORISTS

In the tumultuous history of U.S.-Latin American relations, Washington has developed a strategy wherein various political and military means have been used to deal with a range of challenges and security threats posed by its southern neighbors. As the world leader in the war on Communism, the United States carried out regime change in Latin America with singular tenacity. This included the training of the Nicaraguan contras, the support of brutal dictatorships in Guatemala, the endorsement of General Augusto Pinochet’s repressive regime in Chile, and the backing of the particularly savage Argentina military junta after it came to power in 1976.

In an attempt to adapt to its post-9/11 anti-terrorism focus, the U.S. has amalgamated drug trafficking and “radical populism” into its terrorist fighting tactics. This has been particularly evident in its policy formulations regarding Colombia, Bolivia and Venezuela. While the previous eras, inspired first by the Cold War and then by the War on Drugs, turned out to be based on a very sketchy rationale, they were more solidly rooted than the current War on Terror. Domestic conflicts throughout Latin America do not arise out of thin air. The urgent social conditions and volatile political environs that went unacknowledged by the U.S. in previous decades account for the instability that the region is currently experiencing. The causative agents behind the new threat of terrorism are no different. As the Latin American Working Group argues in its report on terrorism, “while law enforcement action against terrorists is essential, the most sustainable way to combat broader support for terrorist activities is to address the conditions that foster it—poverty, lack of social and economic development, and undemocratic and repressive regimes that leave their citizens scant hope of bettering their lives, and hence open space for those offering extreme alternatives.”

THE SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

HON. JAMES A. LEACH

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 7, 2004

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my growing concern at the increasing levels of politically-motivated violence and the rising risks to peace in Sri Lanka.

As my colleagues may know, Sri Lanka (or Serendib, as it was known in older times) is a tear drop shaped island located about 20 miles off the southeastern coast of India. The population of about 20 million is roughly three-quarters Sinhalese and a little less than 20% Tamil. The island was occupied by the Portuguese in the 16th century, the Dutch in the 17th century, and then ceded to the British in 1802. Known as Ceylon it became independent in 1948; the name of the country was changed to Sri Lanka in 1972.

By way of background, tensions between the Sinhalese majority and minority Tamils, which had existed since independence, escalated dramatically in the early 1980s. Devastating anti-Tamil riots, as well as acts of re-

pression and discrimination by the majority Sinhalese, led to the rise of an armed Tamil insurgency. By the mid-1980s, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) emerged as the strongest Tamil separatist force. In a grim harbinger of the Tiger’s ruthless reliance on violence (which includes the use of “Black Tiger” suicide squads), the LTTE came to dominate the separatist movement by systematically eliminating all rivals for leadership. The LTTE is currently designated as a terrorist organization by the United States and several other countries.

Originally, LTTE sought an independent homeland for the Tamils, but it eventually dropped that demand and expressed a willingness to negotiate devolution of autonomy under a federal model of governance. Meanwhile, the human and financial toll of the rebellion has been enormous: some 64,000 people have been killed and roughly 800,000 displaced, with commensurate losses to the island’s economic growth and development.

In 2002, Norway brokered a ceasefire, which is still in effect today and also acted as a mediator in stalled peace talks. In April 2003, however, the LTTE pulled out of the talks, claiming that it was being marginalized. In late 2003, the situation was further complicated by a political struggle between Sri Lanka’s President Chandrika Kumaratunga and then Prime Minister Ranil Wickramasinghe. In April 2004, Kumaratunga’s party defeated Wickramasinghe in the general election and an ally of the President became the new prime minister. Although the new coalition government includes a hard-line party that is at best deeply skeptical of continued negotiations with the insurgents, the President has nevertheless remained committed to the peace process and invited Norway to approach the LTTE and to resume mediation.

Prospects for a resumption of dialogue between the government and the LTTE at this time, however, appear bleak.

In the first instance, the LTTE insists that the establishment of an interim administration over the “northeast”—modeled on the LTTE’s proposed Interim Self Governing Authority (ISGA) that would give it sweeping powers over law enforcement, tax collection, military affairs, administration of foreign aid and other matters currently in the domain of the central government (GSL)—is an essential precondition for the resumption of peace negotiations. While at one level this stance might be thought to simply represent a maximalist bargaining position, at another level it might be thought to cast serious doubt on the sincerity of the LTTE’s commitment to the peace process.

Even more concerning has been the LTTE’s assertion that it is entitled to act as the “sole representative” of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. In practical terms, the LTTE’s diktat means that Tamils who dare to advocate democratic change, independently contest elections and speak out against or actively oppose the Tigers will be targeted for assassination.

As noted earlier, this despicable practice of eliminating critics goes back almost to the group’s inception. It has once again become acute in the wake of an attempt by a senior LTTE commander named Colonel “Karuna” to break away from the organization. Beginning in March 2004, a new escalation of killings, attacks and abductions of the LTTE’s suspected

opponents began to take place on almost a daily basis. For its part, the LTTE reportedly suspects the GSL of assisting the Karuna faction. In any case, through mid-August 2004, according to human rights advocates, there have been more than 40 such murders.

As the Indian newspaper *The Hindu* editorialized on September 30, "It is time for all concerned to acknowledge that the LTTE has done nothing less than unleash a terrorist campaign amounting to a sub-guerrilla war against the very people it claims to represent. From the recruitment of children, which continues unabated despite international outrage, to the harassment of Muslims, the discrimination against eastern Tamils, and the killings of opponents, the LTTE demonstrates on a daily basis that its rule is by fear and terror."

In this troubling circumstance, it is clear that the international community needs to consider additional steps to put pressure on the LTTE to abandon its tactics of terror and prove that its days of violence are over.

It is remarkable, for example, that only four countries—the U.S., U.K., Australia, and India—have declared the LTTE to be sponsors of terrorism, frozen their assets and prohibited financial transactions with the Tigers. It is well reported that alongside a finely tuned propaganda campaign, the LTTE also run a sophisticated international fundraising campaign. The majority of financial support comes from the Tamil Diaspora in countries where there is no ban on transactions with the Tigers, including Switzerland, Canada, and the Scandinavian countries. It is my understanding that the LTTE's overseas financing includes investments in real estate, restaurants, stocks, and money market funds. Even film, food festivals, and cultural events may contribute to insurgent income. The U.S. Department of State also reports that expatriate Tamil communities in Europe have been tied to narcotics smuggling, another potential source of funding. In this context, surely the stark record of LTTE terrorism demands a firmer response from our friends and allies abroad.

Likewise, in view of the current stalemate in the peace process and the new campaign of violence by the LTTE, it is appropriate that the U.S. review the adequacy of current levels of security assistance to Colombo. In particular, in view of the mixed operational success of the armed forces of Sri Lanka, the Department of Defense and U.S. Pacific Command may want to consider increasing senior level military exchanges as well as boosting technical assistance. In this regard, I understand that in recent months senior officials with PACOM visited Sri Lanka, including the Jaffna peninsula.

Similarly, given the long and sordid track record of the Tigers—including continued abductions of child soldiers—as well as ongoing concerns about disappearances and other abuses in government controlled areas, it is also high time to place on the table an explicit inclusion of human rights and humanitarian considerations in either the current cease-fire agreement or in a separate understanding between the GSL and the LTTE. All parties must promptly take steps to end ongoing grave human rights abuses.

Finally, it is imperative that all parties take steps to work to rebuild trust and schedule the promised talks as soon as possible. In particular, it is incumbent on the LTTE to show that it is committed to a political solution and

to peace. Clearly, the ceasefire and a return to negotiations represent the best hope for Sri Lanka's future as a peaceful, prosperous, and unified nation. As the Department of State has made clear, the United States stands ready to implement commitments to aid in Sri Lanka's reconstruction, but this will only be possible through a continuation of the peace process.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO TROY BLEDSOE

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 7, 2004

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to Troy Bledsoe, a dedicated coach and athlete from Alamosa, Colorado. Troy was recently inducted in the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference Hall of Fame for his long history of dedication to athletics in Colorado, and I am honored to recognize his accomplishments before this body of Congress and this Nation.

Troy knows what it means to be an athlete because he was a multiple letter winner in football, basketball, and tennis at Hendrix College in 1949. Troy began his coaching career with 6 years of high school coaching in Arkansas before moving onto the college level. He led several basketball, golf, football, and volleyball teams to championship seasons at Fort Lewis College and the University of Denver. Troy was also the chairman of the Exercise Science Department at Fort Lewis, and the Director of Athletics for 18 years. Troy was instrumental in the creation of the Fort Lewis College Athletic Hall of Fame, of which he himself was inducted into in 1995. One of Troy's biggest legacies is the award bearing his name for the male and female senior student-athletes with the highest grade point averages that are presented at the all-sports banquets every spring.

Mr. Speaker, Troy Bledsoe is an energetic coach that encourages his athletes to work hard to achieve their dreams both on and off the athletic arena. He has demonstrated a love for coaching that resonates in his compassionate and selfless service to the Colorado athletic community. Troy's enthusiasm and commitment certainly deserve the recognition of this body of Congress and this Nation. Congratulations on your induction Troy, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF RULES CHANGE

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 7, 2004

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, today, I join in a bipartisan way, with my colleague Representative CHRISTOPHER SHAYS from Connecticut, Representative JOHN DINGELL, the distinguished Dean of the House, and my friends and colleagues Representatives ED CASE, MAX SANDLIN, and DENNIS CARDOZA to introduce a bill that addresses the serious security threats that are impacting our Nation. According to the recommendations of the 9/11

Commission, Congress must reorganize to provide more effective oversight of our Nation's intelligence and homeland security efforts. This bill effectively deals with the problems by doing the following things:

1. Creates a permanent standing Committee on Homeland Security—[According to the 9/11 Commission, leaders of the Department of Homeland Security now appear before 88 committees and subcommittee of Congress. This is "perhaps the single largest obstacle impeding the department's successful development." Currently, the Committee on Homeland Security is simply a Select Committee];

2. Creates a permanent standing Committee on Intelligence—[According to the 9/11 Commission, Congressional oversight for intelligence and counterterrorism is "dysfunctional" and the Intelligence Committee is simply a Select Committee];

3. Creates a 14th Appropriations Subcommittee on Intelligence—[According to the 9/11 Commission, the Intelligence Committee should have authorizing and appropriating authority].

Last week during markup of H.R. 10 in six committees, members and committees alike were uncertain of their jurisdiction over various parts of the bill. In fact, no single committee had overarching jurisdiction, so there was no mechanism to address the bill in its entirety. This proposed rules change will fix this problem. We cannot rely solely on the Executive Branch to solve our problems. We must not shirk our responsibilities as elected officials, and instead do everything in our power to prevent another tragedy from occurring. For these reasons, I am proud to introduce this important resolution.

COMMEMORATING NATIONAL LATINO AIDS AWARENESS DAY

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 7, 2004

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to recognize October 15 as National Latino AIDS Awareness Day. The theme for this year is "Abre los ojos: el VIH no tiene fronteras—Open Your Eyes: HIV Has No Boundaries." On this day, in over 150 cities throughout the United States, Latino leadership will honor the theme as they sponsor a variety of activities raising awareness of the state of AIDS among Latinos.

National Latino AIDS Awareness Day was first observed in 2003. Since then, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has reported that HIV infections among Latinos have risen 26 percent. Latinos in the United States are disproportionately affected by the virus and make up 20 percent of reported AIDS cases, even though Latinos are only 14 percent of the total United States population. As of 2002, the CDC also estimates that 28,364 Latinos are living with HIV and 76,052 are living with AIDS.

Statistics are important in order to understand the epidemic. However, we must also recognize the needs of the Latino communities confronted with the virus. Latinos face several obstacles and cultural barriers when it comes to accessing HIV prevention services. The lack of funding for culturally competent HIV