

dangers now emanating from tehran and those fueled by Moscow during the Soviet era. Iran's regime is also based on a radical, all-encompassing and discredited ideology, and projects an aggressive, destabilizing international posture while suppressing the will of its own citizens. The good news may be that, like the totalitarian ideology before it, the extremist fundamentalism of the Iranian mullahs could best be attacked by the power of an idea called freedom.

There is currently no shortage of high-level American attention to Iran. My former colleagues in Congress are working to impose tougher economic pressure and bans on investment in Iran, while the Bush administration is working to marshal stronger international will to enforce the sanctions.

But the other part of the Iran equation must be to encourage the kind of peaceful revolution inside Iran that not only Americans desire, but that a majority of the Iranian people themselves want.

Military intervention is not a viable option. "Engagement" may seem like an appealing alternative. But the diplomatic history of the past 30 years provides a chronicle of successive setbacks suffered by the West while the regime continued its relentless march toward nuclearization while bankrolling terrorists and expanding its power and reach.

Current efforts at "engagement" have done nothing to advance the cause of freedom inside Iran. The regime has recently resorted to a crackdown on internal dissent and personal freedom, targeting everything from community organizations to the nation's burgeoning private banking system—pillars of civil society and a free market economy. Visiting Iranian-American scholars are detained on absurd, trumped-up charges and made to "confess" their "crimes" on television.

Like the captive peoples of the Soviet empire a generation ago, today's Iranians are receptive to ideas that challenge the ruling orthodoxy. Indeed, the popularity of America in Iran seems to rise the more the regime demonizes us.

One of the best assets working for reform is demographics—nearly 70 percent of Iran's 68 million citizens are under the age of 30. They are impatient for change, and they are the future.

America and our partners should work with and empower freedom-loving elements within Iran and among the Iranian Diaspora, broadcasting messages of democracy and providing support, moral and otherwise, to the brave dissidents. While we must avoid doing this with a heavy hand, lest our efforts backfire, there are ways we can help level the playing field and give the opposition a fighting chance.

Supporting the democratic opposition holds great promise for promoting the cause of freedom and democracy in Iran, particularly the group feared most by the regime: the Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK), for decades demonized by the regime for its efforts to encourage "soft" revolution.

Never has the old adage, "the enemy of my enemy is my friend," been more true than in the case of the MEK, whose members residing in Ashraf City, Iraq, are protected persons under the Geneva Convention. But, in a stark example of failed "engagement," the organization was placed on the list of foreign terrorist organizations by the Clinton administration as a way of placating the so-called "moderates" in Iran.

Attracting world attention in 2002, the MEK first revealed the existence of Iran's secret nuclear facility at Natanz. Today it is providing useful intelligence that is saving the lives of Coalition soldiers in Iraq. Thus, it comes as no surprise that the regime is

eager to use the next round of "engagement" with American officials to further isolate the MEK, as part of Iran's certain-to-be-unfulfilled pledge to reduce its influence in Iraq.

Two of my former congressional colleagues, Reps. Tom Tancredo (R-Colo.) and Bob Filner (D-Calif.), are leading a bipartisan effort to urge the State Department to remove the MEK from the terrorist list, where it was wrongly included in the first place.

Removing the MEK from the list represents one concrete step we could take to help the Iranian people forward on the long road to achieving freedom and real democracy in their country.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2007

Ms. CARSON. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, July 25, 2007, I was unable to vote on Roll #716, 717, 718 and 719. Had I been present, I would have voted YES on each of these measures.

FARM, NUTRITION, AND BIOENERGY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2419) to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2419, the Farm Bill Extension Act of 2007. The House Agriculture Committee has produced a comprehensive farm bill that represents true reform. Not only is the focus on getting vital benefits to family farmers and investing in America's producers; but it aims at stimulating rural economies, and securing renewable energy resources.

Chairman PETERSON has constructed an outstanding House Farm bill of which my colleagues on both sides of the aisle can be proud. H.R. 2419 protects family farmers and agriculture in America in a fiscally responsible way, and provides the freedom and the support that farmers need to compete and succeed at the business they know best—providing food, fiber and fuel for all Americans.

Furthermore, the 2007 Farm Bill addresses many of my grave concerns about improved access to socially disadvantaged, and more specifically black farmers by providing Mandatory funding of the 2501 Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Outreach Program. Allowing deserving claimants in Pigford v. Glickman an opportunity to have their cases heard with a fund created to redress civil rights abuses against Black Farmers is an important step to providing justice to these families.

This bill further makes major and timely reforms to the nutrition title, especially the Food

Stamp program which increases and indexes benefits for the 26 million Americans that participate in this program each month. The House Agriculture Committee has also taken into consideration the need for expanding senior farmer markets and school snack programs, so that our elderly and youth have access to the proper amounts of fruits and vegetables to lead healthier lives.

Mr. Chairman, I encourage passage of H.R. 2419 that will both extend and reform our nation's farm and nutrition programs into 2012. It is a well balanced approach to maintaining the gains we have made in prior legislation, and makes the necessary improvements to lead us into the future.

FARM, NUTRITION, AND BIOENERGY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2419) to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Chairman, today I rise in strong support of H.R. 2419, the Farm, Nutrition and Bioenergy Act of 2007, which would make historic investments in conservation, nutrition and renewable energy while maintaining a strong safety net for America's farmers and ranchers.

For the first time, this Farm Bill cracks down on farm subsidies and would redirect more than a half billion dollars to working family farmers and ranchers. The legislation would provide \$4.6 billion in funding for important conservation programs, which includes the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Farm Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP), and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP). As a member of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming, I am pleased that this bill would provide \$3.2 billion in funding for renewable energy research, development and production in rural America. This will expand the role of U.S. agriculture in our movement to greater energy independence.

In addition, this Farm Bill would provide more than \$1.5 billion in critical funding for specialty crop and organic growers in the United States. Under this bill, \$365 million in mandatory funding would expand the specialty crop block grant program. The block grants are provided to states, including Connecticut, to support projects in research, marketing, education, pest and disease management, production, and food safety. The legislation would also increase and expand the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program to schools in all 50 States, which will continue to encourage healthy diets to our Nation's children. More than 11,000 dairy farmers in the Northeast will benefit from the extension of the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program in the bill.

Hunger in America is a reality for more than 11 percent of households. To this end, the legislation would make a long overdue funding

increase for Food Stamps and nutrition programs by \$4 billion over the next five years. Among other things, the bill would reform the program by indexing asset limits and eliminate the current cap on childcare costs to help the working poor meet rising costs. This will benefit the estimated 210,000 individuals in Connecticut who receive food stamps every month.

The legislation before us today was a collective effort from members of the House Agriculture Committee who made new investments and important reforms in this Farm Bill. I would like to especially thank Agriculture Committee Chairman COLLIN PETERSON for his leadership in putting forward a comprehensive bill that meets the 21st century needs of the United States and enhances programs in Connecticut. I urge my colleagues to vote for a new direction in our Nation's agriculture policy.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2007

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 748, I was unavoidably absent. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea"; on rollcall No. 749, I would have voted "yea"; on rollcall No. 750, I would have voted "nay"; on rollcall No. 751, I would have voted "nay"; on rollcall No. 752, I would have voted "yea"; on rollcall No. 753, I would have voted "nay"; on rollcall No. 754, I would have voted "yea"; on rollcall No. 755, I would have voted "nay"; on rollcall No. 756, I would have voted "yea"; on rollcall No. 757, I would have voted "yea."

FARM, NUTRITION, AND BIOENERGY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2419) to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Chairman, today we vote on one of the most critical bills that will come to the floor during the 110th Congress. While essential to farmers and ranchers across the Nation, the Farm Bill also impacts each one of us. Its provisions directly affect school children in this Nation and others, seniors and families struggling to live on fixed incomes, wildlife and wilderness, and international farmers struggling to become viable participants in a global marketplace.

I applaud Chairman PETERSON and the Agriculture Committee for their tireless efforts to produce a compromise bill that dissolves partisan boundaries, and improves upon the 2002 Farm Bill authorization. The bill takes modest steps towards improving commodity programs, by preventing the most wealthy from exploiting this safety net meant for assisting ranchers and farmers whose livelihoods precariously

teeter at the mercy of climate and market fluctuation.

The committee's bill extends and modestly increases funding for effective conservation and food security programs. Conservation programs help farmers to manage their lands in a sustainable manner that positively impacts wildlife, watersheds, and open spaces. Nutrition programs included in the bill bolster the fruits and vegetables industry, by increasing fresh food supplements for schools, children, families, and seniors.

The 2007 Farm Bill also takes initial steps towards redistributing commodity programs to those who need them most. The bill's authorization of new funding for organic farmers, specialty crops, and farmer's markets will assist small farmers in meeting organic standards and in getting their products into local markets.

I applaud the committee for initiating this redistribution of commodity programs and taking unprecedented steps towards expanding funding, outreach, and technical assistance for socially disadvantaged, beginning, and minority farmers. The committee's effort in this area brings the issue of the 2002 Farm Bill's exceptional lack of support for socially disadvantaged, beginning, and minority farmers to light. While an improvement, the bill could do more to affect real change in this area.

One quarter of all farmers participate in commodity programs. Of these, just 10 percent receive 75 percent of all commodity subsidies. Congress must readjust the reach of the farm bill. Too many minority farmers lack access to USDA programs, too many farmworkers transitioning into farm owners lack access to federal safety nets that would help them get on their feet, and too many socially disadvantaged farmers lack access to the tools that would help them maneuver through the maze of commodity programs.

With the reauthorization of the Farm Bill, Congress has the opportunity to make monumental changes to the distribution of agricultural and conservation programs. The Kind amendment would have brought such monumental changes to our Nation's agricultural sector and to the world economy. By gradually removing depression-era subsidies that have turned from a safety net into a security blanket, the Kind amendment would have lowered the federal deficit and redirected money into nutrition, food insecurity, and conservation programs at rates much greater than those outlined in the Farm Bill we are voting on today. The Kind amendment would have almost tripled funding for outreach and technical assistance for socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers, and would have put a moratorium on foreclosures on farms owned by socially-disadvantaged farmers and ranchers while creating a commission to investigate the causes of foreclosure.

I am proud to have supported the Kind amendment and hope that such comprehensive reform will be possible in the future. Nevertheless, I am pleased that the Agriculture Committee has at least taken initial steps in the direction of reform, and I will vote in support of their 2007 Farm Bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2007

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, on July 26, 2007, I was unable to be present for all rollcall votes due to an unexpected delay.

If present, I would have voted accordingly on the following rollcall votes:

Roll No. 734—"aye."
Roll No. 735—"no."
Roll No. 736—"no."
Roll No. 737—"aye."
Roll No. 738—"aye."
Roll No. 739—"aye."
Roll No. 740—"aye."
Roll No. 741—"aye."
Roll No. 742—"aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM COLE

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2007

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably absent for rollcall vote No. 691, on agreeing to the Mica amendment to H.R. 3074. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1, IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 9/11 COMMISSION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2007

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of "H.R. 1 Implementing the 911 Commission Recommendations Conference Report." This report provides an opportunity to enhance the security and protection of our citizens and strengthens our homeland security policy. "Six years after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and three years after the bipartisan and independent 9/11 Commission delivered to the American people a roadmap for security that the Republican Congress had failed to pass into law, the Democratic Congress is about to deliver to the President a bill for his signature to make the American people safer. H.R. 1 will now provide a policy that will allow us to address the gaps that were created when the President decided to underfund many Homeland Security programs and initiatives.

This legislation, which was developed through bipartisan support, is a proactive step in making our country a safer place to live, work, and play. H.R. 1 makes the Nations security a top priority by significantly increasing the share of State homeland security grants provided on the basis of risk; requiring a significant increase in the number of maritime and air cargo containers scanned for weapons of mass destruction; significantly strengthening the Cooperative Threat reduction Program and creating a new National Bio-Surveillance Integration Center, which would support Federal