

The effects on the security of employees, visitors and the Federal agencies alike could not be ignored in today's post-9/11 climate.

We are indebted to the contract security officers who continue to work to protect Federal workers, the visiting public and the work sites, as well as to their unions. As a result of the subcommittee's June hearing, we learned that an individual who had served 5 years in prison for money laundering and fraud was a de facto owner of a private security business despite Federal law barring felons from owning companies that do business with the Federal Government. In fact, it was the felon, not his wife, who came forward to defend the company after it failed to pay the 600 D.C.-based guards despite receipt of funds for payment from the FPS. His testimony concerning his operational control of the company was nothing short of a case study in evasion of existing law by taking advantage of obvious loopholes.

□ 1330

His company has, of course, since been dismissed. H.R. 3068, as amended, strengthens existing requirements and prohibits all proxy ownerships by felons, including control or operation by an individual who has been convicted of a felony.

H.R. 3068, as amended, reminds us that we must not lose sight of the mission of private contract guards who serve the Federal Government to guard Federal employees and sites as vital as nuclear plants and military posts against terrorism and crime. The example of unpaid contract guards and apparent misuse of Federal funds that had been directed to pay them demonstrated why these contractors must be required to have a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics. H.R. 3068, as amended, codifies this important requirement.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3068, introduced by Subcommittee Chairwoman NORTON, adds an additional level of security to our Federal buildings by prohibiting the Federal Protective Services from awarding contracts to convicted felons.

I would like to commend Chairwoman NORTON for her commitment to the security of Federal buildings, government employees and visitors. She probably has more than anybody else in the House.

The protection of the employees and visitors at Federal buildings remains a high priority. This legislation will increase the standards of safety and security for Federal properties across this country.

The Federal Protective Service serves as one of the first lines of defense for our Federal buildings. We entrust the security of Federal court-

houses and buildings and their employees and visitors to FPS personnel. From day-to-day security screening, to protection from riots and terrorist attacks, the FPS force plays a vital role in facilitating the work of the Federal Government.

The Federal Protective Service employs more than 1,000 trained employees and more than 15,000 contract security guards. H.R. 3068 prohibits FPS from contracting with security firms that are owned or operated by convicted felons. It's a very simple measure. The security of Federal buildings must be managed by those that have the best interests of the American people in mind.

This legislation will ensure the integrity of the forces protecting our Federal buildings, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3068.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is a fantastic idea, and again, I want to applaud Chairwoman NORTON for the work that she's done on this, again, to push it through.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his kind words to me and for his work with me on the committee.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3068. This bill represents an important step in ensuring the safety of Federal employees and all those who work in and visit our Federal buildings.

I thank the Delegate of the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), chair of the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, for bringing this issue to the attention of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and for quickly developing and advancing, in a bipartisan manner, a remedy.

On April 18, 2007, the committee held a hearing entitled "Proposals to Downsize the Federal Protective Service and Effects on the Protection of Federal Buildings". The hearing probed the Department of Homeland Security's plans to cut the presence of Federal Protective Service, FPS, officers nationally. The reliance on contract security guards to protect Federal buildings is a troubling trend.

H.R. 3068 prohibits the award of contracts to provide guard services under the contract security guard program of the FPS to any business that is owned, controlled, or operated by an individual who has been convicted of a felony. The bill directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to promulgate regulations within 6 months to implement the provisions of this act.

This bill offers a common sense way to ensure that security contracts that provide an essential service are awarded only to contractors who are "capable, responsible, and ethical" as required by the Federal Acquisition Regulations.

I support this bill and urge its passage.

Ms. NORTON. I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr.

BRADY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3068, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 33 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1500

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. JONES of Ohio) at 3 p.m.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING THE IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 200) expressing the sense of Congress regarding the immediate and unconditional release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 200

Whereas on August 15, 2007, Burma's ruling military junta, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), cancelled fuel subsidies resulting in the quintupling of the price of fuel which had an immediate and damaging impact on the living conditions of the Burmese people and Burma's already devastated economy;

Whereas on August 19, 2007, in reaction to this crippling measure, prominent student and democracy leaders peacefully took to the streets in Rangoon and elsewhere to protest the draconian action of the military junta in Rangoon; during the subsequent weeks, protests continued in Rangoon, and spread to other cities and towns throughout Burma, including Mandalay, Sittwe, Pakokku, Tounggok, Yehangyaung;

Whereas the growing numbers of protestors peacefully demanded democratic reforms and the release of 1991 Noble Peace Prize Winner Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience;

Whereas Buddhist monks actively participated and increasingly led these peaceful demonstrations, culminating in an estimated 100,000 people marching through Rangoon on September 24, 2007; in response to this largest protest since the 1988 demonstrations which were brutally crushed by the Burmese military by firing on unarmed civilians, the Burmese regime threatened to "take action", indicating the junta's willingness to significantly increase the level of violence used against the Burmese people;

Whereas on September 25, 2007, the Burmese junta imposed a 60-day (9pm-5am) curfew and a ban on gatherings of more than

five people and moved military forces into strategic locations:

Whereas on September 26, 2007, the Burmese military opened fire on protesting crowds who bravely continued to peacefully demand democratic reforms; the continuing vicious attacks on Buddhist monks and other peaceful protesters, who were simply demanding human rights, democracy, and freedom, led to the reported deaths of 200 people and hundreds of injured to date; democracy and human rights groups further estimate that over 2,000 individuals have been arrested, imprisoned, or tortured as part of this violent crackdown;

Whereas members of the international and Burmese media covering the protests, including a Japanese photojournalist, have also been killed, injured, or imprisoned by the Burmese Government;

Whereas the Burmese military junta tried to hide from the world community its indiscriminate attacks on peaceful protesters by severely restricting the use of the Internet, phone lines, and radio and television equipment, making it extremely difficult to gauge the full extent of the government's crackdown on Buddhist Monks and other peaceful demonstrators;

Whereas on September 27, 2007, the United Nations Security Council held an emergency session in response to the brutal crackdown and Special Envoy Ibrahim Gambari updated the Security Council on the situation in Burma; as a result of the Security Council meeting, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon ordered Special Envoy Gambari to visit the region; on September 30, 2007, Special Envoy Gambari arrived in Burma and was able to meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi;

Whereas the Burmese regime has mobilized all its resources, including armed soldiers stationed in all strategically important locations throughout the country, including religious centers, and has made it impossible for peaceful protesters to gather;

Whereas the rapid growth of spontaneous demonstrations into the largest Burmese protests in the last two decades should not come as a surprise given the human rights record of the regime over the past two decades;

Whereas the ruling military junta in Burma has one of the worst human rights records in the world and routinely violates the rights of Burmese citizens, including the systematic use of rape as a weapon of war, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detention, torture, as well as slave and child labor;

Whereas the Burmese regime has destroyed more than 3,000 ethnic villages, displaced approximately 2,000,000 Burmese people, more than 500,000 of which are internally displaced, and arrested approximately 1,300 individuals for expressing critical opinions of the government;

Whereas in 1990, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the military junta in Burma, which renamed itself the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) in 1997, nullified the victory of the National League for Democracy (NLD);

Whereas NLD leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was not allowed to assume the office of Prime Minister and was subsequently placed under house arrest;

Whereas Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was released in July 1995, yet once again placed under house arrest in September 2000;

Whereas following a second release, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and several of her followers were attacked by a government-sponsored mob on May 30, 2003, and she was then imprisoned at Insein Prison in Yangon;

Whereas on May 16, 2007, more than 50 world leaders sent a letter demanding the re-

lease of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, a demand repeated by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, 14 United Nations human rights experts, the European Union, the United States, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the foreign ministers of three ASEAN member states, yet on May 27, 2007, her detention was extended; and

Whereas for her non-violent struggle for democracy and human rights, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) condemns the despicable crackdown on peaceful protesters in the strongest possible terms and demands that the Burmese junta end its violent crackdown on dissent;

(2) demands that the People's Republic of China and other countries that provide political and economic support to Burma's military junta end such support until the Burmese regime's violent campaign against peaceful protest has ceased and the Burmese Government has fully met the political demands of the Burmese opposition;

(3) firmly insists that Burma's military regime begin a meaningful tripartite political dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the National League for Democracy, and ethnic nationalities toward national reconciliation, and the full restoration of democracy, freedom of assembly, freedom of movement, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and internationally recognized human rights for all Burmese citizens;

(4) demands the immediate and unconditional release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, detained Buddhist monks, and all other political prisoners and prisoners of conscience;

(5) calls on governments around the world, including the nations of the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to severely tighten their sanctions regimes against Burma, including through the imposition of import bans such as maintained by the United States, with the goal of denying the Burmese ruling junta with hard currency to continue its campaign of repression;

(6) calls on the United Nations Security Council to immediately pass a resolution imposing multilateral sanctions on Burma's military regime, including a complete arms embargo, and to take other appropriate action to respond to the growing threat the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) poses in Burma;

(7) calls on the United States Government to work with its global partners to bring to justice those Burmese military and government leaders who have ordered or participated in any massacre during or after the protests, or who may be guilty of crimes against humanity; and

(8) calls on the members of ASEAN to immediately suspend Burma's membership in such organization as a response to the violent crackdown on political protesters. SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the concurrent resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the images from Burma that have flashed across our television screens over the past two weeks have stirred the conscience of the entire civilized world. Buddhist monks draped in their simple crimson robes, peacefully gathering to press for change. Rangoon citizens pouring from their homes to join their holy men, their numbers swelling to over 100,000. Sandals hurriedly abandoned in the road as peaceful marchers were chased away by baton-wielding police. Soldiers firing automatic weapons into unarmed crowds. The charred body of a Buddhist monk, slain by the ruling junta, lying face down in a pool of dirty water stained crimson with his innocent blood.

These indelible images, Madam Speaker, will not soon fade, nor will the anguished cry to us made by the leader of the Burmese Democratic movement, Noble Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, and I quote her: "Use your liberty to promote ours."

So today, Madam Speaker, we use our liberty here in the Congress of the United States to condemn the violent crackdown on dissent in Burma. We use our liberty to call for the release of Aung San Suu Kyi, the imprisoned Buddhist monks, and all other Burmese prisoners of conscience. And today we use our liberty here in the Congress of the United States asking our friends in Asia and Europe to join us in using economic leverage to promote democratic change in Burma.

Since the last bloody crackdown in Burma 17 years ago, we in the United States have led the way in imposing tough economic sanctions against the ruling junta. Each year, I ask my colleagues to join me and my good friend PETER KING of New York in renewing import sanctions against Burma, and each year this Congress, under both Republican and Democratic control, has responded overwhelmingly to our request.

But Burma's elite will only feel the economic squeeze when other countries join us. The enormous flow of aid and trade from China to Burma, not to mention China's political support for the regime in the United Nations Security Council, must come to an abrupt end. The military packages for Burma offered by the world's largest democracy, India, must be removed from the table. And our friends in ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, who have begun to speak out for democratic change in Burma, must move beyond words and suspend Burma's membership in this very important regional organization.

Madam Speaker, when the generals run out of cash, change will come to

Burma. When military officials cannot send their children to be educated abroad, change will come to Burma. And when the Burmese officials are no longer welcome at the table of ASEAN, change will come to Burma.

And to those Burmese military officers who are on the fence deciding whether to join in the violent campaign of repression or to refuse orders to kill and torture your fellow citizens, I have a simple message: Do the right thing. As in Germany, as in Rwanda, as in Yugoslavia, those who commit war crimes will be brought to justice before an International Criminal Tribunal. Put yourself on the right side of history.

The crimes committed by this junta, Madam Speaker, stretch far beyond the atrocities of the past few days. This regime has systematically used rape as a means of war against ethnic minorities. Recently released satellite images show that it has burned and destroyed entire villages. And since the regime nullified the democratic elections in 1990 won by Aung San Suu Kyi, it has arbitrarily arrested and tortured dissidents, real and imagined, by the thousands.

Just a few days ago, the world caught a brief glimpse of Aung San Suu Kyi peaking out of the gate of her home, which has become her virtual prison. Today, we stand with Aung San Suu Kyi, this courageous woman, demanding her freedom, demanding the freedom of all those prisoners of conscience in Burma, and demanding far-reaching democratic change.

Change will not come overnight to Burma, but it will come, and it will be my great pleasure to join our distinguished Speaker, NANCY PELOSI, a true champion for human rights around the globe, in witnessing the inauguration of Aung San Suu Kyi as the true prime minister of a free Burma.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, let me thank Congressman KING for offering this very important resolution, and my good friend and colleague, Chairman LANTOS, for bringing this to the floor, as well as ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, who serves very admirably as the ranking member.

This is a very important and very timely resolution. Chairman LANTOS has been speaking out on behalf of Burma and human rights in Burma for years, and this today is another expression of our collective bipartisan support for the beleaguered pro-democracy activists in that country.

Madam Speaker, the shocking, unprovoked actions of Burma's brutal regime in recent days are part of a long history of repression by that country's dictators. The wanton bloodshed, Tiananmen Square-like, was just another serious manifestation of hate and cruelty by the junta in Rangoon.

Members will recall, that in 1988 Burmese military forces slaughtered sev-

eral thousand peaceful demonstrators, sending even more into hiding in the hills and border areas. The military regime took no heed of international criticism of these crimes and continued to suppress the most basic freedoms of its people.

When the National League for Democracy won control at the ballot box, the generals nullified that election and harassed, tortured and killed parliamentarians and pro-democracy activists. They also harassed, incarcerated and put under house arrest Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, one of the greatest people on Earth.

Meanwhile, in 1998, Madam Speaker, a 19-year-old student from my district, Michelle Keegan, traveled to Burma to commemorate in a peaceful way with other pro-democracy activists the 10th anniversary of those 1988 massacres. She and others were locked up, convicted and sentenced to 5 years imprisonment. Her only crime was to distribute pamphlets calling for democracy in Burma. As a matter of fact, it was a very small business card. Very small. They handed those out, and for that she got 5 years.

I travelled to the region at the time in an effort to help negotiate the release of these young people, including my constituent. I repeatedly was denied a visa to enter Burma, but from Bangkok remained in close contact with the U.S. Embassy in Rangoon, and others as we were pressing for the release of Ms. Keegan and the five other Americans.

Together, along with family members of the detainees and others, we made these dictators understand that the whole world, including the U.S. Congress and the American people, were watching and would somehow hold them accountable. In response to international pressure, the government soon released them and then expelled them from the country. She and those other Americans were the lucky ones. Others from other countries regrettably spent long periods of time in jail.

Sorry to say, the members of the junta in Rangoon are not people who readily listen to reason. This body has addressed the situation in Burma several times over the years. I chaired a hearing on human rights abuses in Burma in September of 1998, and we shed further light on these issues in February of 2006 at a hearing entitled "Human rights in Burma. Where are we now and what do we do next?"

Clearly we need to do more. Yes, we have sanctions. Chairman LANTOS is the prime sponsor of legislation imposing sanctions on Burma. But, unfortunately, the other countries, the ASEAN countries and other countries of the world, have not followed suit the way they ought to.

We need to be united in this effort. That is when we will get the junta to stand up and take notice, especially when the PRC does something other than enable and facilitate these abuses.

Madam Speaker, now as the courageous Burmese people again dare to

demonstrate peacefully for change in their society, the junta has once again unleashed the military, killing more of their people and imprisoning at least 700 Buddhist monks and 500 others. Former prisoners in Burmese jails have told us at hearings and at meetings of the torture, humiliation and deprivation that they experienced.

One called it the closest thing to hell on Earth that he could imagine. We have good reason to fear that those who are arrested in recent days, that they too now are spending time in hell.

So we have a duty, Madam Speaker, an obligation, to speak out in the face of these outrages. We need to call in the strongest way possible for the restoration of democracy and the restoration of human rights in Burma and the unconditional release of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Those with interests in Burma, especially the Chinese government, would like to turn a blind eye to these continuing abuses. China may be happy to have another egregious human rights abuser in the spotlight deflecting attention as it prepares to host the world for the Olympics amidst its own repression. But we must hold the Chinese accountable, as well, at home and abroad, and they need to step up to the plate and do what they can to stop this terrible repression in Burma.

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Madam Speaker, I wholeheartedly endorse this resolution. I ask my colleagues and the global community to act to end the suffering in Burma and bring about democratic reforms that the Burmese people so desperately desire.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the author of the resolution, the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand today in support of H. Con. Res. 200. Let me thank at the outset Mr. SMITH for the work he has done for so many years for the cause of human rights in so many countries, often at great risk to himself. I thank him for that, and we all admire him for his tenacity. I have a special regard for the chairman of the committee, Mr. LANTOS, who is cosponsoring this resolution with me and has been such an outspoken advocate of freedom and human rights in Burma for so many years. Even when it is not on the television screens and the eyes of the world are not watching, Mr. LANTOS has been there, dedicating himself to this issue; and I have been privileged to be able to work with him on this.

Madam Speaker, as terrible as the atrocities have been in Burma over the past 6 to 7 weeks, the fact is this is unfortunately merely an extension of the

type of tyrannical behavior which has characterized the junta in Burma for almost two decades now. This is a junta which tramples upon human rights. They use rape and torture and murder as an instrument of policy.

When we see the hundreds of innocent, freedom-loving people who have been murdered over the past several weeks, who have been tortured and arrested and abused, when we see the innocent Buddhist monks who have been shot down, when we see that communication into and out of Burma has been shut off by the junta, we can only assume the worst.

That is why it is incumbent upon the international community to speak with one voice, as we are speaking with one voice here in Congress. This is not a Republican or Democratic issue, or majority or minority issue. It is a world issue, an issue of human rights. For all of these years Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has been in prison or under house arrest and now imprisoned again, she has become a symbol of that fight. When we talk about symbols, often we forget these are real human beings who are paying the price for being symbols of freedom and justice and who are willing to put their lives and their freedom on the line.

That is why this resolution calls for her release and the release of all of the political prisoners and an end to the repressive actions of the Burmese junta. In saying this, as Mr. LANTOS and Mr. SMITH have said, yes, the United States has been at the forefront of this. But it is so important for neighboring countries now to step forward, especially China and India.

When we think of China, which is going to be hosting the Olympic Games and is trying to clean up its image in the eyes of the world, is attempting to project itself as a true country on the world scene, the fact is if China continues in any way to support Burma, to be silent in the face of what the junta is doing, it really puts a cloud and a tarnish over whatever image China is attempting to establish for itself. And that will be kept in mind by world governments as we approach the Olympic Games next year. So it is essential that China step forward and work with the world community, work with the United States, work with the United Nations, work with countries in the region to put pressure on the junta in Burma to ease, stop and, end its oppressive tactics.

As Mr. LANTOS said, we are also sending a very clear signal to the military leaders, the officers, in Burma who are part of this junta, telling them that the world will hold them responsible for what they do. The world will hold them accountable.

As Mr. LANTOS knows better than anyone in this House, we saw what happened when military leaders in Germany felt they could go forward and do what they were ordered to do and carry out those atrocities against innocent people. Nuremberg showed that is not

a permissible defense. Similarly, it will not be a permissible and acceptable defense for the military leaders in Burma who continue to carry out these atrocities. They just can't say, We were following orders.

So our message to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is that we stand with you. Our message to the Buddhist monks is we stand with you. Our message to the oppressed people of Burma is that we stand with you. And our message to the Government of China is we are watching what you are going to do as far as putting pressure on the junta. And our message to the military leaders in Burma is the world is watching you and will hold you accountable and will know what you did. You will face justice when this is over, depending on whether you did the right or you continued to carry out the atrocities ordered upon you.

So with that, I strongly urge the adoption of H. Con. Res. 200. I applaud the fact that the House of Representatives is speaking with one voice. We have put partisanship aside. We stand as one and have put differences aside. I thank Mr. LANTOS and Mr. SMITH for the leadership they have shown over the years. I urge adoption of the concurrent resolution.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER).

Mr. SOUDER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York, as well as Chairman LANTOS, for his leadership on this issue.

Fort Wayne, Indiana, my hometown, is estimated to have 2,000 or 3,000 people from Burma, the greatest number of refugees from Burma in the United States. Many are coming in directly. Many are coming through Washington and Los Angeles and heading to Indiana because of our job situation. It is important to note because as Americans become more internationally aware, just like in Iraq there are different groups, and in Afghanistan there are different groups, it is important to say "people of Burma" because the Mon and other subgroups were persecuted by the Burmese inside Burma.

What they all agree on is the current situation in Burma is intolerable. The violent suppression of Buddhist monks and the peaceful demonstrators in Burma, they want the immediate, unconditional release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who is their elected leader. They all know she is the elected leader. Regardless of the differences they have in their country, they elected a leadership and worked together, like what we are trying to do in Iraq and like what we are trying to do with the different tribes in Afghanistan. They chose a leader, and then the leader was locked up.

In 1990, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was rightfully elected, and the junta placed her under arrest. This has been going on for 18 years. She has been locked up for 12 of the 18 years since the election.

In Fort Wayne, I hear many stories as I talk to individuals who have

talked to their relatives who have lived in concentration camps, in effect, more refugee camps; but at times they felt both abused by the Thai Government that wants to move them back to Burma, by the Burmese Government that is trying to chase them out. They have been abused in the camps. They have been raped in the camps, and they have had their money stolen in the camps.

We have a huge challenge in America, and it is speaking to broader questions than just Burma, which is how to handle situations, because our area has also become in the top three of refugees from Darfur. One of the challenges we are having is Catholic Social Services has come to me and said we don't have the support system to handle, and the State Department has come back and said what do you want to do, leave the people in the refugee camps? They aren't doing well in the refugee camps.

We have to understand that we no longer live in an isolated world. What happens in Burma and the demonstrations you are seeing in Burma and the persecution of the people in Burma, the terrible tragedies in Darfur, what happens in Iraq and Afghanistan impacts all of us. It impacts us in our hometowns. If we are going to be the Nation that welcomes immigrants, there is only so much we can handle, and we need to put international pressure on some of these countries to handle their own regional problems. This resolution helps us move in that direction.

They have to have changes in Burma. It is not only unfair to the people who come to the United States; it is unfair to the people trapped in the camps. It is unfair to the monasteries being emptied out in Burma, and it is unfair to the people being persecuted throughout Burma. If we don't stand up and force some changes for human liberties in Burma, we are going to face another type of catastrophe like is happening in Darfur while the world watches.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, before yielding to our distinguished Speaker, I would like to say a word comparing our Speaker to the subject of this resolution, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

These are two extraordinary women of deep courage and commitment, but there is one profound difference in their political lives: when Members of this body elected NANCY PELOSI as Speaker of this House, she assumed that position. When the people of Burma elected Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to serve as their Prime Minister, she was subjected to onerous imprisonment and persecution for almost two decades.

It gives me a great deal of pleasure and pride to yield such time as she may consume to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, an indefatigable fighter for human rights and the champion of a fellow woman political leader, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and thank him for his leadership in bringing this resolution to the

floor. I thank him for mentioning my name in the same breath with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. You compliment me, Mr. Chairman. You and I know that the sacrifice she has been making for so many years is incomparable, really, in the world.

For many years, many of us, CHRIS SMITH, DANA ROHRABACHER, JOHN PORTER when he was here, worked on this issue for a very long time. JOHN PORTER and Chairman LANTOS co-chaired the Human Rights Caucus, and the issue of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and repression in Burma was and has been an important priority for them.

So today we are coming together again following this horrible crackdown in Burma, and I am pleased to rise in support of the resolution condemning that crackdown on the peaceful protesters in Burma and calling for the immediate release of Burma's democracy leader, a Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. I thank Mr. LANTOS for bringing this resolution to the floor.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi for many decades has been a leader on this issue. She won the last democratic election in 1990 and has spent the last decade under house arrest away from her husband and her two children. Who in the world could have the courage and strength that she has had? When her husband was ill and was in the United Kingdom for his treatment, she could not visit him. When he passed away, she could not attend his funeral. Imagine the personal sacrifice of this great leader. Imagine the turmoil within her. But she understood that the democracy for all of the people of Burma was more important than the personal needs that she had for her family. What greatness.

She has seen her supporters beaten, tortured and killed; and, yet, she has never responded with hatred and violence. All she ever asked for was peaceful dialogue.

Others have mentioned some of the provisions of the legislation, and I think it is important to continue to mention them: condemn the crackdown. Mr. KING particularly emphasized the role of China in all of this. And, yes, we should act in a bipartisan way, Mr. KING.

This resolution demands that the People's Republic of China and other countries that provide political and economic support for Burma's military junta end such support.

This resolution firmly insists that Burma's military regime begin a meaningful tripartite political dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the National League for Democracy, and ethnic nationalities; demands the immediate unconditional release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, detained monks and other political prisoners and prisoners of conscience; calls on governments around the world, including the nations of the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, to severely tighten their sanctions regime against Burma; calls on the United Nations Se-

curity Council to immediately pass a resolution imposing multilateral sanctions on Burma's military regime.

Of course, this cannot happen without China's cooperation on the Security Council. That is why their role is so important. It is also important because of the role they have played in propping up the junta. I am disappointed but not surprised that China is using its veto power at the United Nations Security Council to block the condemnation of the recent crackdown. For many years, the Chinese Government has helped prop up the Burmese, I think of them as thugs, but the Burmese regime, by blocking multilateral sanctions and providing substantial economic and military assistance to the Burmese Government.

China is Burma's largest trading partner, and it is estimated that China controls more than 60 percent of the Burmese economy and has provided close to \$3 billion in military aid since the early 1990s.

□ 1530

Simply said, the Burmese regime would not have the strength and power that it has absent the support of China. We're calling on China to use its influence to bring about a political negotiation with the pro-democracy activists. This is a golden opportunity for China to show that it can be a force for peace and stability in the world.

In the last few weeks, we all know that we've seen an extraordinary turn of events in Burma. This has been there for a long time. The repression has been there for a long time, but in these last few weeks, courageous people led by Buddhist monks have taken to the streets to stand up to a corrupt, illegitimate military regime that has repressed the country for nearly 20 years.

The ruthless crackdown is outrageous, and the international community must not stand by while peaceful protesters are arrested, beaten and murdered.

Let there be no doubt that the United States stands with the freedom-seeking people of Burma in their just cause.

President Bush is to be commended for supporting tougher sanctions on those responsible for the gross violations of human rights. We can and should go further in bringing diplomatic pressure to bear on the regime. I know we all look forward to working closely with the President on this as we go forward.

And so I again commend Aung San Suu Kyi as years ago, she called on individuals, organizations and governments to support Burma's democracy movement, and at that time, she said please use your liberty to promote ours.

Today, on the floor of the United States House of Representatives, we are doing just that. I commend Aung San Suu Kyi for her courage and her leadership. The people of Burma are rising up and demanding their country

back. The world must meet this challenge to our conscience.

I thank again Mr. LANTOS and Mr. SMITH and all of my colleagues, in a bipartisan way, in support of democracy in Burma.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, we have one remaining speaker. I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank Speaker of the House PELOSI. Over the years we have worked, along with Chairman LANTOS, on many human rights issues, and it has always been the people of Burma that were the most inspiring of those people that we sought to stand with over the years in these human rights causes that have unified us and Congressman SMITH and so many others in this body.

Chairman LANTOS again, of course, has provided such leadership. His life, of course, is exemplary of a person who holds such values as human rights and democracy and that we hold dear and affirm today.

Today, the Congress of the United States speaks with one voice. The people of Burma, we are on your side. Be courageous. You are not alone.

To the gangsters in uniform who have held the people of Burma in bondage for decades, you will be held accountable. Now is the time to join with the people of Burma. If, instead of joining them and trying to build a new Burma, that you bloody your hands even more, you will be held accountable. Your bank accounts will be frozen and you will be arrested for crimes against humanity if you leave your country.

And I can promise that those of us who hold dear human rights in this Congress will not rest until those actions are taken against you as individuals if you are committing these crimes against the people of Burma.

We call on those in the Burmese military, who take orders from the gangster regime that runs that country, we call on them to change sides. Now is the time for the Burmese military to join the people of Burma in creating a democratic and free society.

The military clique that gives orders to the military of Burma has no lawful authority. They are criminals. They are the criminals who have made deals with the government in China to steal Burma's natural resources and to impoverish the people of Burma in the process.

Let us not overlook the role of China in this crime. China has provided the military junta in Burma with over a billion and a half dollars of military aid over the last few years. It is the government of China that has enabled this monstrous dictatorship to hold 50 million people in bondage. It is China which has blocked the actions of the United Nations to stop the junta slaughter of Burmese monks and other peaceful demonstrators who, right as

we speak, are losing their lives in the cause of human freedom.

I ask my colleagues to support my efforts and others' efforts who have come here. We have several people who have already cosponsored a resolution to hold China accountable for what they are doing in Burma. This is only a taste of what we're going to experience around the world as China becomes a monstrous power in this planet. We have built up their economy. We have not only permitted them to become a powerful force in the world; we have subsidized the growth of power of this Chinese monster that now not only supports Burma, but is involved with the genocide in Darfur.

The United States should not be participating in an Olympics that is being hosted by a regime that commits genocide in Darfur and Burma.

Finally, let us today remember Aung San Suu Kyi. She represents not just the people of Burma, but she is the one who represents the higher aspirations and the higher ideals of humanity. She has suffered for many long decades peacefully in her home. Now, she has been taken from house arrest and sent to a prison. We do not know what fate she is suffering. We know that she is in the hands of murderers. We know she is in the hands of people who torture and would slaughter peaceful monks in the streets. So our hearts go out to her, and we keep her in our prayers, but we also suggest that if anything happens to Aung San Suu Kyi, the rise of anger will be heard not only from Washington but from around the world, for every decent and freedom-loving person will rise up. So those criminals who now slaughter the monks on the streets of Rangoon should understand that we are watching and the whole world is watching, and we speak with one voice.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to our distinguished colleague from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy in permitting me to speak on this resolution and for the leadership of his Foreign Affairs Committee in bringing this forward.

Madam Speaker, one of the most inspiring events of my life was being able to spend an afternoon with Aung San Suu Kyi in her compound in Burma with my son and daughter. Having a chance to meet this gentle woman, a clarion voice for democracy, for human rights, a strong and steadfast beacon for the 50 million people. Burma, a country that a generation ago was poised to be one of the bedrocks of that area in southeast Asia, a country that is rich in natural resources, with a gentle and sophisticated people have been taken over, as my colleagues have mentioned, by a gang of thugs. The Burmese have suffered untold privation, brutality by the regime as symbolized by their treatment of this gentle woman who was appropriately

awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. It is time for us not only to speak resolutely but for us to work behind the scenes and overtly with countries like China, India and Thailand that can, in fact, have a significant influence on the behavior of the government in Burma. We must work for the Asean countries and speak with one voice about the intolerable behavior that is being evidenced by this regime.

There are many areas that the United States is involved with internationally where there isn't a consensus, where Members on this floor will debate with themselves and disagree about the best path forward. Yet as it relates to Burma, I think there is no debate. There is no confusion. There is no division. We need to speak as one. We need to work to fashion that international consensus. We need to make sure that we use every resource possible to put the spotlight on the problem, and help save the Burmese people.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, we have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of our time and urge a strong "yes" vote for this resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, before yielding back our time, I would like to make mention of a visit I had yesterday afternoon from the ambassador of China on the subject of Burma.

We had a long and difficult discussion. The Chinese Ambassador outlined for me the various steps his government has taken in recent days to deal with the crisis in Burma. I pointed out to him that gestures are not enough, that with the enormous leverage China has over Burma, China must take serious, substantive measures to compel the Government of Burma to give back the freedom to its own people and her freedom to Aung San Suu Kyi, the legally elected leader of Burma.

I call on the Government of China, just a few months short of the opening of the Beijing Olympics, to do the right thing, to exert its enormous influence on behalf of the people of Darfur, on behalf of the people of Burma, and by inviting His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, for a dialogue in Beijing. Nothing would make the climate for the opening of the Beijing Olympics more positive and salutary than a serious dialogue between the Government of China and the Dalai Lama.

There have been so many negative developments from China's point of view in recent times: the selling of food, the selling of tooth paste, the selling of children's toys, all of them dangerous to consumers in this country. There is a deep concern here that China's insatiable appetite for raw materials closes their eyes and minds to human rights violations across the globe, from Darfur to Burma.

This is a glorious opportunity for the government in China to do the right thing, and to do the right thing vis-à-vis Burma is to put pressure on the military junta to ease up on the Burmese people and to give Aung San Suu

Kyi her right to live in freedom as the elected leader of the Burmese people.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 200, a resolution that condemns the Burmese Junta for their violent suppression of Buddhist Monks and other peaceful demonstrators in Burma and demands the immediate release of opposition leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. As a cosponsor of this resolution, I believe it is important for Congress to show its support for Burma's call for democracy.

In 1988, the Burmese military established rule through a military junta, and named themselves the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). This repressive regime arrested those who opposed them, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who is the leader of the legitimately elected political party, the National League of Democracy. SPDC, which has changed the country's name to Myanmar, has forcefully led the Burmese citizens ever since. According to the U.S. Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights, as well as private organizations, Burma's human rights record has worsened in recent years. These reports have cited government and military abuses of civilians that include killings, torture, rape, arbitrary arrests, and forced labor.

This past August, the SPDC ended fuel subsidies, which led to excessive costs for gas. The Burmese citizens, unhappy with yet another burden, held pro-democracy rallies and called for the transfer of power to Aung San Suu Kyi. These rallies were ended forcefully by the SPDC, but Buddhist Monks, nuns and students have continued to peacefully protest the regime. The SPDC has recently banned the assembly of citizens in public, as well as attacked, arrested and killed those involved in the protests.

Madam Speaker, the ongoing violence and repression of peaceful protests for democracy is a travesty. H. Con. Res. 200 shows our country's support for the Burmese citizens' right to challenge their regime. This resolution also demands the release of other political prisoners who are detained by the regime, and calls on the United Nations Security Council to take the appropriate action against the State Peace and Development Council. The United States has already imposed heavy sanctions on the SPDC for many years, but we must also call on other countries, including China and India, who benefit from Burma's natural gas exports, to keep the pressure on the SPDC to end this atrocity.

As a member of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, I will continue to work with my colleagues to keep pressure on the Burmese regime and express support for those citizens who peacefully congregate for a new government. Passing H. Con. Res. 200 is an important and necessary step for Congress to take as we work to achieve this goal.

Mr. MANZULLO. Madam Speaker, the horrendous massacre that is taking place in Burma is despicable and unconscionable. Now is the time for Members of this House to condemn the military junta and support human rights by supporting my good friend, Representative PETER KING's resolution on Burma.

On September 27, 2007 the military junta violated the sacred traditional sanctuary of Buddhist temples in mass coordinated predawn raids. More than 200 monks were arrested. What we know is that at least five

monks, eight civilian protestors, and a Japanese photographer were killed by the army. But how many more were gunned down or dragged off in the middle of the night by the junta may never be known.

This resolution not only calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi but also for a restoration of democracy and human rights that has eluded the people of Burma for so long. The Rangoon Massacre only makes our call for the return to democracy ever more urgent.

Burma was once the richest country in Southeast Asia and the world's largest rice exporter. However, as a result of decades of corruption and gross mismanagement, Burma is now an economic failure. Countless Burmese are regularly victimized by human traffickers as they seek a better life outside the country. The junta's decision in August to hike fuel prices further threatened the people's livelihood. This led to the largest street demonstrations in two decades. So, instead of listening to the will of the people, the generals have only made things worse by cracking down violently.

Aung San Suu Kyi is the daughter of Burma's George Washington. Ms. Suu Kyi is the living symbol of Burmese democracy, and this year she turns 62. How much longer must democracy and freedom be held hostage?

President Bush, in his recent speech before the United Nations General Assembly in New York, announced plans for new U.S. sanctions against the military regime in Burma. I join the President in calling on the U.N. to act more decisively in the face of the unprecedented demonstrations taking place in that country. Now is the time for the world community to stand up for human rights and democracy.

Who else will join the U.S. in raising their voice against this injustice? Singapore has issued a strong statement on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. I commend them for this. However, more needs to be done. Burma's neighbors can make a real difference by letting the junta know that their actions will not be tolerated. China, India, and Russia must act too because the world is watching.

The U.S. Congress must speak loudly and clearly. Let there be no mistake. As the senior Republican on the Asia Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I strongly and wholeheartedly urge passage of this resolution today. We must stand with the people of Burma; they have waited long enough and can wait no longer.

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to this legislation not because I do not sympathize with the plight of the oppressed people of Burma, particularly as demonstrated by the continued confinement of Aung San Suu Kyi. Any time a government represses its citizenry it is reprehensible. My objection to this legislation is twofold. First, the legislation calls on the United Nations Security Council to "take appropriate action" with regard to Burma and its internal conditions. This sounds like an open door for an outside military intervention under the auspices of the United Nations, which is something I do not support.

More importantly, perhaps, I am concerned that while going around the world criticizing admittedly abhorrent governmental actions abroad we are ignoring the very dangerous erosions of our own civil liberties and way of

life at home. Certainly it is objectionable that the Burmese government holds its own citizens in jails without trial. But what about the secret prisons that our own CIA operates around the globe that hold thousands of individuals indefinitely and without trial? Certainly it is objectionable that the government of Burma can declare Aung San Suu Kyi a political prisoner to be held in confinement. But what about the power that Congress has given the president to declare anyone around the world, including American citizens, "enemy combatants" subject to indefinite detention without trial? What about the "military commissions act" that may well subject Americans to military trial with secret evidence permitted and habeas corpus suspended?

So while I am by no means unsympathetic to the current situation in Burma, as an elected Member of the United States House of Representatives I strongly believe that we would do better to promote freedom around the world by paying better attention to our rapidly eroding freedom here at home. I urge my colleagues to consider their priorities more closely and to consider the much more effective approach of leading by example.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of H. Con. Res. 200, condemning the violent suppression of Buddhist monks and other peaceful demonstrators in Burma and calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. I want to congratulate my good friend and colleague, the distinguished Ranking Member of the House Committee on Homeland Security from New York, PETER KING, on this extremely timely resolution on the deteriorating human rights situation in Burma.

When this bill was first introduced in August, the main concern was for the well-being of the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize Winner Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and the overall deplorable human rights situation in Burma. Little did the members of Congress or the Committee know that only a few weeks later we would be witnessing this unrelenting brutality, as the Junta released its military personnel to crack down on the non-violent protesters and the Buddhist Monks. These actions set a new low even for this regime.

Even before this latest escalation, Burma's human rights record was abysmal. Systematic rapes as a means of war against ethnic minorities, the burning and destruction of their villages, the torture and arbitrary arrest of dissidents and trafficking in people and illicit drugs, are all hallmarks of this illegitimate regime. This unenviable record guarantees the military government a leading place among the world's worst human rights offenders. The Burmese regime has led this beautiful and resource-rich country down the spiraling path of degradation, instability, economic plunder and bankruptcy.

Prominent pro-democracy leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, has had various restrictions placed on her activities since the late 1980s. Her party, the National League for Democracy, won a landslide victory in 1990 in Burma's first multi-party elections for 30 years, but she has never been allowed to govern. In 1990, the ruling military junta placed the rightfully and lawfully elected Daw Aung San Suu Kyi under house arrest, where she has remained ever since. During her arrest, she was awarded the Sakharov

Prize for Freedom of Thought in 1990, and the Nobel Peace Prize the year after. Her sons Alexander and Kim accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on her behalf. Aung San Suu Kyi used the Nobel Peace Prize's 1.3 million USD prize money to establish a health and education trust for the Burmese people.

On August 15, in a sign of incredible courage, non-violent protesters, took spontaneously to the streets and protested the government's actions, demanding the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and a meaningful dialogue to national reconciliation and democracy. Thousands of Buddhist monks started leading protests on September 18, and were joined by Buddhist nuns on September 23. Undeterred by threats of military retaliation, on September 24, as many as 100,000 protesters led by monks marched in the largest protest Burma has seen in two decades.

In the wake of the protests, hundreds were arrested, beaten, and severely tortured. Peaceful monks were disrobed and severely abused, tortured and imprisoned. Over the past week, nearly 4,000 monks have been rounded up by the military. There are reports of hundreds if not thousands of bodies now littering the jungles near Burma's largest cities.

A United Nations Special Envoy has been in Burma since Saturday, but has yet to meet with the Senior Gen. Than Shwe. Instead of the meeting Gambari sought Monday, he was sent to a remote northern town for an academic conference on relations between the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, diplomats reported, speaking on the condition of anonymity. This circus show must stop. The Burmese military leaders need to stop parading these diplomats around, and real dialogue needs to start, so that we can bring an end to the unrelenting violence.

This resolution before us rightly calls on our government to continue its leadership role in the international community to move the U.N. Security Council to act swiftly on Burma, and shine a bright spotlight on the actions of those countries, such as the People's Republic of China, which collaborate with this despicable regime. They need to use their influence with the Burmese government to bring an immediate end to those despicable actions, and to force the regime to enter into a meaningful tripartite dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the National League of Democracy, and the ethnic groups.

I urge all Members of Congress to join me in supporting H. Con. Res. 200 and in sending the Burmese military regime and the international community a wakeup call. The United States will stand unwavering with the people of Burma, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and the National League of Democracy. It is essential that these violence ends and a peaceful resolution is reached. The Burmese people are yearning for democracy, and as the world's shining beacon of democracy, the United States must not let these protests be in vain. I call on Burma's military leaders to allow its people to freely elect its government and to call for the immediate and unconditional release of Nobel Prize Winner Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) that the House suspend the

rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 200, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1545

DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY IN IRAQ

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3087) to require the President, in coordination with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and other senior military leaders, to develop and transmit to Congress a comprehensive strategy for the redeployment of United States Armed Forces in Iraq, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3087

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (Public Law 107-243), enacted into law on October 16, 2002, authorized the President to use the Armed Forces as the President determined necessary and appropriate in order to defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by the Government of Iraq at that time.

(2) The Government of Iraq which was in power at the time the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 was enacted into law has been removed from power and its leader indicted, tried, convicted, and executed by the new freely-elected democratic Government of Iraq.

(3) The current Government of Iraq does not pose a threat to the United States or its interests.

(4) After more than four years of valiant efforts by members of the Armed Forces and United States civilians, the Government of Iraq must now be responsible for Iraq's future course.

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) nothing in this Act shall be construed as a recommendation by Congress that any particular contingency plan be exercised;

(2) it is necessary and prudent for the Department of Defense to undertake robust and comprehensive contingency planning;

(3) contingency planning for a redeployment of the Armed Forces from Iraq should address—

(A) ensuring appropriate protection for the Armed Forces in Iraq;

(B) providing appropriate protection in Iraq for United States civilians, contractors, third party nationals, and Iraqi nationals who have assisted the United States mission in Iraq;

(C) maintaining and enhancing the ability of the United States Government to eliminate and disrupt Al Qaeda and affiliated terrorist organizations; and

(D) preserving military equipment necessary to defend the national security interests of the United States; and

(4) contingency planning for a redeployment of the Armed Forces from Iraq should—

(A) describe a range of possible scenarios for such redeployment;

(B) outline multiple possible timetables for such redeployment; and

(C) describe the possible missions, and the associated projected number of members, of the Armed Forces which would remain in Iraq, including to—

(i) conduct United States military operations to protect vital United States national security interests;

(ii) conduct counterterrorism operations against Al Qaeda in Iraq and affiliated terrorist organizations;

(iii) protect the Armed Forces, United States diplomatic and military facilities, and United States civilians; and

(iv) support and equip Iraqi forces to take full responsibility for their own security.

SEC. 3. REPORTS AND CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFINGS ON THE STATUS OF PLANNING FOR THE REDEPLOYMENT OF THE ARMED FORCES FROM IRAQ.

(a) REPORTS REQUIRED.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 90 days thereafter, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the status of planning for the redeployment of the Armed Forces from Iraq. The initial report and each subsequent report required by this subsection shall be submitted in unclassified form, to the maximum extent possible, but may contain a classified annex, if necessary.

(b) CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFINGS REQUIRED.—Not later than 14 days after the submission of the initial report under subsection (a), the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff shall meet with the congressional defense committees to brief such committees on the matters contained in the report. Not later than 14 days after the submission of each subsequent report under subsection (a), appropriate senior officials of the Department of Defense shall meet with the congressional defense committees to brief such committees on the matters contained in the report.

(c) TERMINATION OF REPORTING AND BRIEFING REQUIREMENTS.—The requirement to submit reports under subsection (a) and the requirement to provide congressional briefings under subsection (b) shall terminate on the date on which the Secretary of Defense submits to the congressional defense committees a certification in writing that the Armed Forces are no longer primarily engaged in a combat mission in Iraq.

(d) CONGRESSIONAL DEFENSE COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term “congressional defense committees” has the meaning given the term in section 101 of title 10, United States Code.

SEC. 4. ARMED FORCES DEFINED.

In this Act, the term “Armed Forces” has the meaning given the term in section 101 of title 10, United States Code.

THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE.

Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 3087, a bill to require the Secretary of Defense to report to Congress on the status of planning for the redeployment of the Armed Forces from Iraq.

This bill is the rarest of creatures, a bipartisan compromise on one of the most significant issues facing our country today, the war in Iraq. This bill was marked up in the Armed Services Committee with the support of our ranking member, DUNCAN HUNTER of California. The committee took the excellent work of Representative NEIL ABERCROMBIE and Representative JOHN TANNER and built on it.

The committee adopted a comprehensive amendment developed by Mr. ABERCROMBIE and Representative MIKE TURNER, two of our leaders on our committee on the advancement of national defense. The bill, as amended, passed our committee 55-2.

I am proud of the work of our committee. I am glad it has been brought to the floor. The bill seeks to accomplish two primary goals. First, it affirms the critical need for comprehensive, well-thought-out planning for a redeployment of troops from Iraq, the kind of planning that, frankly, was not done for the post-war period in Iraq, the so-called phase 4 of the war before we invaded.

This will help Congress fulfill its duties to ensure that such a mistake is not repeated.

Second, it requires that the planning the Pentagon is doing for deployment from Iraq be shared with Congress, as it should. It lays out a clear statement on the need for appropriate, detailed contingency planning for our redeployment of troops from that country, including consideration of force protection for our military and civilian personnel, and the need to continue to protect our vital national security interests.

It requires by statute that the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff provide us with a report and briefing on redeployment planning from Iraq within 60 days of enactment, and that updated reports and briefings from senior Department of Defense officials continue to be provided on a quarterly basis thereafter. It will allow the Armed Services Committee to perform the oversight function, which is central to our purpose.

Time is not on our side. In my view, it's time to begin responsible redeployment of forces and a change of mission in Iraq. Members are on different places on Iraq, but we can agree that we must be engaged in serious planning for the redeployment of American forces.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TURNER. Madam Speaker, today Iraq remains the most important issue facing our Nation. The American people want congressional action in a bipartisan fashion. The rhetoric of the last 6 months has left the American people saddened that the work on this