

Each time, I was impressed by the vitality, the sense of humor and the idealism of this man who devoted his life to public service from the day he entered politics at the age of 28, right up to his death a few weeks ago. Svend was a kind, wise and insightful friend, and I will miss him.

Today, I rise to offer my condolences to his wife, Anne, to his children and to other friends and family whom he left behind. I also, of course, rise to pay him tribute.

Svend's country is home to a proud political tradition. It stretches from the solidarity Danes showed when they protected their Jewish fellow citizens from the onslaught of the Holocaust to the foresight Denmark proved by becoming entirely energy independent.

Svend Auken was a real humanitarian and a visionary political thinker who was worthy of his proud heritage. As leader of the Social Democrats and as a long-serving minister for the environment and energy, Svend left a powerful mark on his country and on Europe, and he became an inspiration to leaders around the world who are struggling to confront common threats such as global warming.

As a leading Danish paper wrote, "The country's landscape, specked with the thousands of windmills that have become a symbol of Denmark, can be traced back to Auken's efforts." Svend deserves credit for his country's secure retirement system as well.

Svend's friendship wasn't just meaningful to me on a personal level; the relationships and respect he cultivated on both sides of our political aisle helped to cement the powerful friendship between America and its key NATO ally, Denmark.

As a Danish-American myself and as a Member of Congress, I have been proud to support and nurture this key alliance. I chair the Congressional Friends of Denmark Caucus, along with my friend HOWARD COBLE, and I meet frequently with visiting Danish leaders, whose inquisitive and analytical approach in meetings is always very notable.

Though Svend is gone, I know that the progress he made for his country and the friendship he helped sustain with ours will be among his lasting legacies. I also know that he lived a full, committed and creative life.

As Svend said when he announced his decision to continue serving despite his cancer, "The amount of time you have left to live, be it short or long, is life, itself, and you shouldn't squander it." Svend did not squander his life. I believe that Svend died secure in the knowledge that he made everything he could of the time he was given, and there is no better end than that.

I pay respect to a friend, a colleague, a great Danish leader, a great European leader, a great international citizen—Svend Auken.

U.S. PRESENCE IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, on June 25, 2009, I joined Congressman JIM MCGOVERN in offering an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act. The amendment would have required the Secretary of Defense to submit a report to Congress which outlines an exit strategy for our Armed Forces in Afghanistan.

During the floor debate that day, I, along with other Members, talked about the history of Afghanistan and about the difficulties that other nations have had there—from Alexander the Great to England and Russia. As just one measure of the hazardous conditions facing our troops in Afghanistan, 99 American servicemembers have been killed in Afghanistan since June 25, 2009—the day we debated the amendment.

While I regret that the amendment was not approved, I still believe it is critical for the current administration to clearly articulate benchmarks for success and an end point to its war strategy in Afghanistan.

Last week, on September 1, 2009, conservative columnist George Will wrote an op-ed, titled "Time to Get Out of Afghanistan." In it, he shares his insights on our Nation's current strategy in Afghanistan.

I submit the full text of this op-ed for the RECORD.

[From the Washington Post, Sept. 1, 2009]

TIME TO GET OUT OF AFGHANISTAN

(By George F. Will)

"Yesterday," reads the e-mail from Allen, a Marine in Afghanistan. "I gave blood because a Marine, while out on patrol, stepped on a [mine's] pressure plate and lost both legs." Then "another Marine with a bullet wound to the head was brought in. Both Marines died this morning."

"I'm sorry about the drama," writes Allen, an enthusiastic infantryman willing to die "so that each of you may grow old." He says: "I put everything in God's hands." And: "Semper Paratus!"

Allen and others of America's finest are also in Washington's hands. This city should keep faith with them by rapidly reversing the trajectory of America's involvement in Afghanistan, where, says the Dutch commander of coalition forces in a southern province, walking through the region is "like walking through the Old Testament."

U.S. strategy—protecting the population—is increasingly troop-intensive while Americans are increasingly impatient about "deteriorating" (says Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) conditions. The war already is nearly 50 percent longer than the combined U.S. involvements in two world wars, and NATO assistance is reluctant and often risible.

The U.S. strategy is "clear, hold and build." Clear? Taliban forces can evaporate and then return, confident that U.S. forces will forever be too few to hold gains. Hence nation-building would be impossible even if we knew how, and even if Afghanistan were not the second-worst place to try: The Brookings Institution ranks Somalia as the only nation with a weaker state.

Military historian Max Hastings says Kabul controls only about a third of the country—"control" is an elastic concept—and "our" Afghans may prove no more via-

ble than were 'our' Vietnamese, the Saigon regime." Just 4,000 Marines are contesting control of Helmand province, which is the size of West Virginia. The New York Times reports a Helmand official saying he has only "police officers who steal and a small group of Afghan soldiers who say they are here for 'vacation.'" Afghanistan's \$23 billion gross domestic product is the size of Boise's. Counterinsurgency doctrine teaches, not very helpfully, that development depends on security, and that security depends on development. Three-quarters of Afghanistan's poppy production for opium comes from Helmand. In what should be called Operation Sisypus, U.S. officials are urging farmers to grow other crops. Endive, perhaps?

Even though violence exploded across Iraq after, and partly because of, three elections, Afghanistan's recent elections were called "crucial." To what? They came, they went, they altered no fundamentals, all of which militate against American "success," whatever that might mean. Creation of an effective central government? Afghanistan has never had one. U.S. Ambassador Karl Eikenberry hopes for a "renewal of trust" of the Afghan people in the government, but the Economist describes President Hamid Karzai's government—his vice presidential running mate is a drug trafficker—as so "inept, corrupt and predatory" that people sometimes yearn for restoration of the warlords, "who were less venal and less brutal than Mr. Karzai's lot."

Mullen speaks of combating Afghanistan's "culture of poverty." But that took decades in just a few square miles of the South Bronx. Gen. Stanley McChrystal, the U.S. commander in Afghanistan, thinks jobs programs and local government services might entice many "accidental guerrillas" to leave the Taliban. But before launching New Deal 2.0 in Afghanistan, the Obama administration should ask itself: If U.S. forces are there to prevent reestablishment of al-Qaeda bases—evidently there are none now—must there be nation-building invasions of Somalia, Yemen and other sovereignty vacuums?

U.S. forces are being increased by 21,000, to 68,000, bringing the coalition total to 110,000. About 9,000 are from Britain, where support for the war is waning. Counterinsurgency theory concerning the time and the ratio of forces required to protect the population indicates that, nationwide, Afghanistan would need hundreds of thousands of coalition troops, perhaps for a decade or more. That is inconceivable.

So, instead, forces should be substantially reduced to serve a comprehensively revised policy: America should do only what can be done from offshore, using intelligence, drones, cruise missiles, airstrikes and small, potent Special Forces units, concentrating on the porous 1,500-mile border with Pakistan, a nation that actually matters.

Genius, said de Gaulle, recalling Bismarck's decision to halt German forces short of Paris in 1870, sometimes consists of knowing when to stop. Genius is not required to recognize that in Afghanistan, when means now, before more American valor, such as Allen's, is squandered.

□ 1945

I would like to highlight just a couple of Will's key points. He wrote, "The war already is nearly 50 percent longer than the combined U.S. involvement in two world wars, and NATO assistance is reluctant.

"The U.S. strategy is 'clear, hold and build.' Clear? Taliban forces can evaporate and then return, confident that U.S. forces will forever be too few to

hold gains. Hence nation-building would be impossible even if we knew how, and even if Afghanistan were not the second-worst place to try."

Will further states, "Counterinsurgency theory concerning the time and the ratio of forces required to protect the population indicates that, nationwide, Afghanistan would need hundreds of thousands of coalition troops, perhaps for a decade or more. That is inconceivable."

Madam Speaker, on this same morning this op-ed was published, the retired Marine general Chuck Krulak, the 31st commandant of the Marine Corps, responded by writing an e-mail to Will.

Madam Speaker, I submit the full text of the e-mail for the RECORD.

SEPTEMBER 1, 2009.

Subject: Afghanistan

SIR, I would imagine that your article, "Time to Get Out of Afghanistan" will result in some "incoming" on your Command Post. First and foremost, let me say that I am in total agreement with your assessment. Simply put, no desired end state has ever been clearly articulated and no strategy formulated that would lead us to achieve even an ill defined end state.

A few points:

1. The strategy of "clear, hold and build" would lead one to believe that the US and its Allies are capable of coordinating the elements of national power needed to affect such a strategy. Nothing could be further from the truth. Just getting DOS and DOD on the same page is difficult enough . . . getting NGO's and nation building expertise into the fight is simply a non-starter in a country as dysfunctional as Afghanistan.

2. Your point about troop strength required to "protect" the population and carry out effective counterinsurgency operations is spot on. Instead of a surge of 21,000 troops, McChrystal would need a surge of hundreds of thousands. Not only would our Nation not support such a surge but, MOST distressing, the Military could not support such a surge. Not only are our troops being run ragged but, equally important and totally off most people's radar screens, our equipment is being run ragged. At some point in time, the bill for that equipment will come due and it will be a very large bill.

3. Typical of the 21st Century fight, we are fighting ideas as well as warriors. You cannot defeat ideas with bullets . . . you must defeat them with better ideas. For many reasons such as the dysfunction found in the Karzai government, the tribal nature of the country, the abject poverty of the average citizen, the inextricable link to Pakistan, we have been unable to come up with better ideas. We are systematically destroying the poppy fields . . . the country's major source of revenue. At the same time, we are trying to encourage other agricultural efforts. This is one of our "better ideas"??? Sad as it is to say, we would do better to buy the poppy crop ourselves . . . ridding the world of a source of drugs and maintaining the Afghan economy.

4. What in Afghanistan is deemed in our Nation's vital interest? Seriously? Who is the enemy? Seriously? Is the enemy of the United States the Taliban? Is the enemy al Qaeda? We need to determine the answer to those questions immediately. One would think we would have answered them already but none of our actions to date would indicate that we have.

Finally, your recommendation is sound. I would put "hunter-killer teams" along the

borders and in suspected al Qaeda strongholds. I would support them with intelligence, logistics thru the use of parasail's, responsive airpower (need to be close), armed and unarmed (fitted with cameras, infrared, etc) drones, "reach back" capability for cruise missiles, and other capability as needed. The H-K Teams should be given minimal rules of engagement . . . when they identify the bad guys, they need to be empowered to take them out.

Again, don't be dismayed by the people who disagree with you. There are many retired and active duty military who feel you hit the bull's eye.

Semper Fidelis,

CHUCK KRULAK,
General, USMC (Ret),

31st Commandant of the Marine Corps.

In the e-mail General Krulak expressed his "total agreement" with Will's assessment and concluded, "There are many retired and active-duty military who feel you hit the bull's eye."

The general also wrote, "Simply put, no desired end state has ever been as clearly articulated and no strategy formulated that would lead us to achieve even an ill-defined end state. Instead of a surge of 21,000 troops, McChrystal would need a surge of hundreds of thousands. The military could not support such a surge. You cannot defeat ideas with bullets. You must defeat them with better ideas."

Madam Speaker, President Obama is in the midst of reviewing a report by the U.S. commander in Afghanistan, General Stanley McChrystal. It is expected that this review will determine whether or not the President decides to alter the number of U.S. troops to Afghanistan.

The men and women of our military who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan have done a magnificent job. Many have been deployed four and five times. Their desire to serve is greater than ever, but the stress placed on our all-volunteer forces and their families cannot continue forever. That's why it is so important for the current administration to articulate an end point to its war strategy rather than simply ordering another surge of troops.

With that, Madam Speaker, I close by asking God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God to please bless the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

And I close by asking God, please, God, please, God, please continue to bless America.

U.S. POLICY IN AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise to express my strong concern over U.S. policy in Afghanistan. I worry that we are getting sucked deeper and deeper into a war with no end. Our mission continues to grow and grow, with no clear sense of where we are ultimately going. It has been 8 long years.

We have lost too many brave men and women, and we have spent billions and billions of dollars.

The Government of Afghanistan, led by President Hamid Karzai, is incompetent and corrupt. The Afghan president has formed alliances with warlords and drug-lords who have no interest in a better Afghanistan. His military is not reliable and his police are a mess. By all accounts, forces close to Mr. Karzai stuffed ballot boxes in the most recent elections.

Madam Speaker, if this fraud had occurred in virtually every other country in the world, the condemnations from Congress and the administration would be loud and forceful.

After all the sacrifices our troops have made, after all the financial and development assistance, after all the training and military aid, is this the best that we can expect? Don't we deserve better? Don't the Afghan people deserve better?

At a very minimum, we must insist that any aid be contingent on a responsible Afghan government. Without that, then all our investments and good intentions could achieve very little that is sustainable.

The United States has an incredible and magnificent team assembled in Afghanistan. I had the pleasure of meeting many of them during a brief visit to the country over the recess. Both the military and State Department personnel are impressive. I only wish they were in place 8 years ago.

But even a brilliant team can't make up for the inadequacies of the current Afghan government. Our troops are exceptional. I had the privilege of eating dinner with many of them from Massachusetts. I am in awe of their courage and commitment and their patriotism. We owe them a policy that is worthy of their sacrifice. Everyone, Madam Speaker, from the President on down, agrees that a political solution is the only path for a successful, stable Afghanistan.

During consideration of the Department of Defense authorization bill a few months ago, I, along with my colleague, Walter Jones, offered an amendment that would have simply required the Secretary of Defense to report to Congress by the end of the year what our exit strategy for Afghanistan was. We are not asking for a date certain, we are not advocating an immediate withdrawal, but we wanted an answer to this fundamental question: At what point has our military contribution to the political solution in Afghanistan come to an end so that we can bring our troops home?

I don't believe that the United States should enter into a war without a clearly defined mission, and that means a mission with a beginning, a middle, a transition period and an end. Without that definition and clarity, we will continue to drift from year to year, from administration to administration. Madam Speaker, we need an exit strategy for Afghanistan.