

easy work of writing a check, but always being willing to go back and spend time on the ground, often at great personal risk to his security and to his health, and was even willing to speak out against regimes that were not only enemies of the people of that country, but often of our own.

He was a hero to many of us who looked at the fact that many will look back through history and say, how did we allow 30,000 of God's children to die every day of hunger and preventable disease? Here was a man who not only made this town of Washington proud when he was with the then-Bullets, but all over the country inspired many to say, what can I give, what can I sacrifice, for those who are suffering or not having the blessings that we have?

And he did it all with a tremendous sense of humor. Mr. Bol spent his last few days in my district in Charlottesville, Virginia, at the University of Virginia, and we were honored to have him and so many of his loved ones in for the unfortunate and far too early passing of this great hero.

I hope today people will take a moment not only to say a prayer for him and his family and for all of those in Sudan who continue to suffer, but will take some inspiration from his legacy, of someone who came from very rough circumstances, got to the top of the world, and did nothing but look back to how he could help those less fortunate. He is an inspiration to all of those. He is a giant of a humanitarian. He has been a warrior for justice and fairness, and we honor him today.

AN NCO RECOGNIZES A FLAWED AFGHANISTAN STRATEGY

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

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, I want to share with the House words from George Will. It was a syndicated column that he wrote on the 20th of June of this year. The title is "An NCO recognizes a flawed Afghanistan strategy."

In receipt of a recent email from a noncommissioned officer serving in Afghanistan, he explains why the rules of engagement for U.S. troops are too prohibitive for coalition forces to achieve sustained tactical success.

Receiving mortar fire during an overnight mission, his unit called for a 155 millimeter howitzer illumination round to be fired to reveal the enemy's location. The request was rejected, and I quote, Madam Speaker, "on the grounds that it may cause collateral damage." The NCO says that the only thing that comes down from an illumination round is a cannister, and the likelihood of it hitting someone or something was akin to that of being struck by lightning.

I further read from this article: "Returning from a mission, his unit took casualties from an improvised explo-

sive device that the unit knew had been placed no more than an hour earlier."

I quote again: "There were villagers laughing at the U.S. casualties" and "two suspicious individuals were seen fleeing the scene and entering a home." U.S. forces are no longer allowed to search homes without Afghan National Security Forces personnel present. But when his unit asked the Afghan police to search the house, the police refused on grounds that the people in the house "are good people."

Madam Speaker, Afghanistan is a chaotic situation. As my friend Mr. MCGOVERN said, they have a corrupt government. There is not anything we can do to take a country that has never been a nation to make it a nation.

Madam Speaker, I, along with Congressman JEFF MILLER and Congressman DOUG LAMBORN, have asked the chairman and ranking member of the Armed Services Committee to hold classified hearings on what is called rules of engagement.

□ 1700

I wish I could read this entire article, but I can't because of time. But I want to read the close of George Will's column. And George Will is a conservative. "President Obama has counted on his 2011 run-up to re-election being smoothed by three developments in 2010—the health care legislation becoming popular after enactment, job creation accelerating briskly, and Afghanistan conditions improving significantly."

I further read: "The first two are not happening. He can decisively influence only the third, and only by adhering to his timetable for disentangling U.S. forces from this misadventure."

Madam Speaker, I am on the letter that Mr. MCGOVERN made reference to a while ago. I have Camp Lejeune Marine Base in my district and Cherry Point Marine Air Station. And we're wearing out our military. Madam Speaker, I hope the President will keep his word and have a timetable to get our troops out of Afghanistan.

With that, Madam Speaker, in closing, I would like to ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. I ask God to please in his arms hold the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. Madam Speaker, I ask God to bless the House and Senate, that we will do what is right in the eyes of God. And I ask God to give wisdom, strength, and courage to President Obama that he will do what is right in the eyes of God. And three times I will say please God, please God, please God, continue to bless America.

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

(Mr. WEINER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS FOR AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. I rise today because when it comes to Afghanistan, we are asking the wrong questions. And with the wrong questions come the wrong answers. Back in December, we asked, Should we send more troops to Afghanistan? We should have been asking, Will a greater military presence make America safer? Then we asked, How can we get millions of pounds of supplies to our troops scattered in remote areas of Afghanistan? We should have been asking, Could getting those supplies to the troops be fueling the very insurgency we are fighting, and is having thousands of U.S. troops stationed throughout Afghanistan making America safer? And now we are asking, Can a new commander in Afghanistan ensure we win the war there? We should have been asking, Is this war winnable, and will it make America safer?

We have to start asking the right questions. The first of these questions is, Where are the terrorists? We have put our blinders on and are so focused on the details of Afghanistan that we are missing the larger picture. The terrorists that we are fighting are no longer only in Afghanistan. They are operating in the ungoverned spaces of Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and even right here in the United States.

The Christmas Day bomber was from Nigeria. The Times Square bomber was Pakistani American. An increasing number of terror attacks are being plotted right here on American soil. Major Nidal Hasan, who killed 13 people at Fort Hood, Texas, was born in Virginia. An increasing number of extremists from around the world are being connected and motivated by "the virtual Afghanistan" through the Internet.

We are fighting an enemy without borders, and so we must have a strategy without borders. In a world of limited resources, the next question we need to ask is this: How can we best spend our precious tax dollars to make Americans safest? Unfortunately, right now we are allocating most of our resources to Afghanistan, where at most, only 50 to 100 al Qaeda are operating, according to CIA Director Leon Panetta. And every day we read a new report that the billions we are investing are simply flowing to drug lords, corrupt local officials, and even the Taliban.

According to a recent eye-opening report by Subcommittee Chairman Tierney, we learned that the U.S. military is funding a multibillion-dollar protection racket. A good portion of a

\$2.16 billion transportation contract is being paid to corrupt public officials, war lords, and the Taliban to get needed supplies to our troops. We are funding the very insurgency we are fighting. And we recently learned that at least \$3.18 billion in cash has been transferred out of Afghanistan since 2007, mostly to line the pockets of the nation's elite. On top of that, it has also been reported that those same Afghan elite are being shielded from attempts to investigate these cases of corruption.

We simply cannot afford to continue to send billions to Afghanistan only to see it end up in the hands of corrupt officials and the same insurgents we are fighting. We have got to start fighting smarter, not harder, and that starts with asking the right questions. A reassessment of our strategy in Afghanistan is due in December, and one question must be answered: Is this the best way to fight terrorism and keep Americans safe? I fear that with each report of Afghan corruption and each account of terrorism taking root worldwide, the answer to that question is becoming increasingly clear: no.

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

(Mr. CAO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. McDERMOTT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

tleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FORBES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. DEFazio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. McHENRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. FORTENBERRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

FINANCIAL REFORM BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, tonight I want to devote extra time to talking about the proposed financial reform bill and the conference committee report that is being worked on this moment that is likely to come before the House later this week. And I wanted to put the discussion tonight into a broader context in hopes that my colleagues will listen and consider the bill to be brought before us.

Let me begin with this statement: bankers hold a very privileged position in our society because in fact they hold the awesome power to create money. Their use of that power can advance our society, or their use of that power can harm us greatly. We are living through a period of great harm. And so we have to ask, When bankers are given power, how much power do we give them and what do we give them power to do?

As we are discussing this this evening, the Financial Services Committee is meeting to take out a proposal that had been a part of the bill that would tax the banks that have done so much harm to us as a society.

It is another example of too much power to too few, especially the few institutions that have hurt our entire Nation. So I rise tonight to offer comments on the so-called regulatory reform conference report, and I want to outline some principles that I hope Members and the American people will consider as this bill is debated later in the week.

One of the key principles that we should seek in trying to correct what is wrong is the type of power that we give to these institutions to create money. Will in fact the power to create money be more broadly distributed across our society, or will the bill concentrate power in the hands of those few banks that have too much power? Will in fact the power to create money and credit accumulation be redistributed to Main Street—to where all of us live—or remain closely held by about six Wall Street and Charlotte-based megabanks? And here are their names: CitiGroup, Goldman Sachs, HSBC, Wells Fargo, Bank of America, Morgan Stanley.

They have a whole lot more power than the people in my community in the financial realm. And why is that? Because chances are, if you talk to your relatives and neighbors, you will find that over half of the money that they are spending to pay for their mortgage or pay for their car loan doesn't go to a local financial institution in the town in which you live. It goes to a distant institution somewhere else that sucks money, sucks wealth, sucks power away from your community and places it somewhere else.

□ 1710

So this is a really threshold question. What does the bill do with the power to create money? It's shocking, but today, two-thirds of the financial assets of this country are held by those six institutions. Before the financial crisis of 2008, they only held a third of the power. Now they have two-thirds of the power. I say that's way too much. That's not a competitive financial system. That's what economists would call an oligopoly, very few having very much and taking it away from the rest of us. So this issue of banking power is critical, and Members, as they read this very long conference report, ought to say, To whom does this devolve power?

Another threshold question is whether the proposed bill will encourage prudent lending or will it allow greater moral hazard by the bill itself pretending to be reform but actually offering the easy money creation of a recent history led by the big banks. What do I mean by that? It used to be when America had a strong middle class, we had a financial system that allowed credit, the creation of money, to be broadly distributed across our country. Probably, to the people in the gallery and people listening on their televisions, you actually knew bankers in