The Tibetans pose no threat to the People's Republic of China. But actions in trying to suppress, to eliminate, to destroy their religion, their culture, their music and their writings, that poses a threat to all, including those of us in the United States, the greatest democracy on Earth.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent a letter about Mr. Choephel to Vice President GORE signed by all Members of the Daschle delegation to China be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, February 11, 1997.

Hon. ALBERT GORE,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. VICE PRESIDENT: We learned recently that you plan to visit China this spring. We were in Beijing in November, where we met with President Jiang Zemin. Among the issues Senator Leahy raised with the President was the case of a Tibetan named Ngawang Choephel, a former Fulbright scholar at Middlebury College in Vermont where he studied and taught enthnomusicology. When he returned to Tibet in 1995 to make a video about transitional music and dance, he was detained on charges of spying and held incommunicado for 15 months. Last month, after a secret trial, he was sentenced to 18 years in prison.

Mr. Choephel sent many hours of video footage to India before he was detained, which we understand deals only with traditional music and dance. Other than referring to an alleged ''confession,'' the Chinese have never produced any evidence to support the charge that Mr. Choephel engaged in epsionage on behalf of the United States or anyone else. The State Department has urged the Chinese to release him.

We believe the Chinese government has made a tragic mistake. Over forty Members of Congress have signed letters to President Jiang and the Chinese Ambassador calling for Mr. Choepel's release. We urge you to stress the administration's view that Mr. Choephel should be released, and to ask President Jiang to personally look into this case.

Sincerely yours,
PATRICK LEAHY,
THOMAS A. DASCHLE,
DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
JOHN GLENN,
BYRON L. DORGAN,
DIRK KEMPTHORNE.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I urge all Senators to support this resolution.

I do not see others on the floor seeking recognition. Could I ask the Chair what the parliamentary situation is?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business with a limitation on speaking for 5 minutes except by unanimous consent. That time will expire at 3 p.m.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I see other Senators have come to the floor so I will yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BAUCUS. How many minutes do I have, Mr. President?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Five minutes.

Mr. BAUCUS. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. BAUCUS pertaining to the introduction of S. 415 are located in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

VETERANS SAY ''RATIFY THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION''

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I would like to say a few words today about the Chemical Weapons Convention [CWC], which has been submitted to the Senate for advice and consent.

Various aspects of this historic treaty are now being debated. However, I would maintain that one of the most important considerations for the Senate is how the CWC will affect our military forces in the field. Will it or will it not help reduce the threat of a poison gas attack against U.S. troops? As the Persian Gulf war demonstrated, this threat is real and must be addressed.

After reviewing the accord, I have concluded that the CWC will indeed help to protect U.S. fighting forces from chemical attack. But don't just take my word for it, consider the opinion of several respected veterans groups and military associations who have come out in favor of the CWC, including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Vietnam Veterans of America, the American Ex-Prisoners of War, AMVETS, the American G.I. Forum, the Korean War Veterans Association, the Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A., and the National Association of Black Veterans.

VFW Commander in Chief James E. Nier, in calling for Senate ratification of the CWC, said: ''This treaty will reduce world stockpiles of [chemical] weapons and will hopefully prevent our troops from being exposed to poison gases as we believe happened in the Gulf War.''

The Vietnam Veterans of America lists ratification of the CWC among its top legislative priorities, noting that the treaty would be ''a substantive step toward preventing chemical weapons exposure problems for veterans in the future similar to those experienced by Persian Gulf War veterans and the veterans of prior wars.''

As a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I can vouch for the fact that these groups are among the most unflinching supporters of American national security interests and would not support the CWC if they believed that it put America's fighting forces at greater risk.

Several of our Nation's best-known and most decorated veterans have spoken out in their own right in support of the CWC, including Gen. Colin Powell, Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, and Adm. Elmo Zumwalt.

In a hearing before the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee in January, General Schwarzkopf made no bones about his views on the matter. ''We don't need chemical weapons to fight our future warfares,'' he told the committee, adding ''By not ratifying the [CWC] we align ourselves with nations like Iran, Libya, and North Korea, and I'd just as soon not be associated with those thugs in this particular matter.''

Admiral Zumwalt, in an editorial in the Washington Post, stated that those who oppose the CWC ''do a grave disservice to America's men and women in uniform.'' ''Militarily,'' he wrote, ''this treaty will make us stronger.''

Those who now lead our troops have also registered their unequivocal support for the treaty. Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Shalikashvili testified last year that the CWC is ''clearly in our national interest'' and ''would reduce the probability that U.S. forces would encounter poison gas in future conflicts.'' The influential Reserve Officers Association of the United States, representing over 100,000 active-duty, Reserve, and retired military officers, declared in a February 19 resolution that ''ratification of the CWC will enable [the U.S.] to play a major role in the development and implementation of CWC policy, as well as providing strong moral leverage to help convince Russia of the desirability of ratifying the convention.''

Mr. President, even the treaty's supporters admit that the CWC is an imperfect treaty. However, all international agreements, by their very nature, involve some compromises. This particular treaty has been signed by 161 countries and involves the most comprehensive verification regime of any international arms control accord to date. Moreover, 68 countries have already ratified the CWC, which means that the treaty will come into effect on April 29 whether or not the United States ratifies it. In view of this, the only issue at hand is whether the United States is better off within the treaty regime, working with others to reduce the threat, or on the outside, with a handful of rogue states like Libya and North Korea.

Almost 6 years ago, then-President Bush foreswore the use of chemical weapons under any circumstances and began efforts, supported by Congress, to destroy our existing stockpiles of chemical arms. That remains U.S. policy. Doesn't it make sense, as long as we're destroying our own chemical weapons, to do everything we can to make sure that others follow suit? The CWC is our most effective tool for accomplishing this task.

Those who oppose the treaty have come up with no better alternative than to have us sit on our hands. Negotiating another treaty is out of the question—there is no international interest in a new treaty and, even if there were, such a treaty would take

years to negotiate. So why not embrace the strong treaty we have now and make the best use of it?

Failure to ratify this treaty will have serious negative consequences for the United States. We would cede our longstanding international leadership on multilateral arms control issues and lose influence over the way the CWC is implemented. And, ironically, the U.S. chemical industry, which strongly supports the treaty and which participated in the negotiations leading up to it, would be subject to trade restrictions that could cost it up to $600 million a year in sales.

However, the greatest consequence of failure to ratify the CWC would be that U.S. military forces would be placed at increased risk of poison gas attack.

In fiscal year 1997, the United States will spend over $800 million on chemical and biological weapons defenses. This is money well spent. Our troops must be prepared to deal with this horrible threat. However, it would be folly to spend these funds without doing something concrete to reduce the long-term threat posed by chemical weapons.

Mr. President, veterans groups and military associations have spoken with a clear voice. They want the scourge of chemical weapons eliminated and agree that the Chemical Weapons Convention advances this goal. Let's not ignore their pleas. Let's ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention as soon as possible so that we can get down to the business of rolling back chemical arms programs worldwide.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is now closed.

AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURES BY THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to the consideration of Senate Resolution 39, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 39) authorizing expenditures by the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Rules and Administration, with an amendment to strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following:

That (a) Senate Resolution 54, agreed to February 13, 1997, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''AUTHORIZATION OF ADDITIONAL FUNDS

''SEC. 24. (a) IN GENERAL.—A sum equal to not more than $4,350,000, for the period beginning on the date of adoption of this section and ending on December 31, 1997, shall be made available from the contingent fund of the Senate out of the Account for Expenses for Inquiries and Investigations for payment of salaries and other expenses of the Committee on Governmental Affairs under this resolution, of which amount not to exceed $375,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, as amended). The expenditures by the Committee on Governmental Affairs authorized by this section supplement those authorized in section 13 and may be expended solely for the purpose stated in this section.

''(b) PURPOSE OF ADDITIONAL FUNDS.—The additional funds authorized by this section are for the sole purpose of conducting an investigation of illegal activities in connection with 1996 Federal election campaigns.

''(c) REFERRAL TO SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS.—The Committee on Governmental Affairs shall refer any evidence of illegal activities involving any Member of the Senate revealed pursuant to the investigation authorized by subsection (b) to the Select Committee on Ethics.

''(d) FINAL REPORT.—The Committee on Governmental Affairs shall submit a final public report to the Senate no later than January 31, 1998, of the results of the investigation, study, and hearings conducted by the Committee pursuant to this section.''.

(b) Section 16(b) of Senate Resolution 54, agreed to February 13, 1997, is amended by—

(1) striking ''$1,339,109'' and inserting $1,789,109''; and

(2) striking ''$200,000'' and inserting $300,000''.

(c) The Committee on Rules and Administration shall continue to conduct hearings on campaign reform.

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, on Thursday of last week, the Rules Committee reported out an amendment to Senate Resolution 39, and it is my understanding that the present business is that pending amendment, which does amend, if decided by the Senate, rule 39.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I thank the Chair. We will now proceed to discuss the amendment as passed by the Rules Committee on Thursday of last week, the 6th of March.

Madam President, the responsibility of the Rules Committee is to entertain, from all committees of the U.S. Senate, their requests for funding. We have, in Senate Resolution 54, which has been adopted by the Senate, the budgets for all of the committees of the Senate for their fiscal year, which runs from March 1 through February 28.

The Committee on Governmental Affairs, in Senate Resolution 39, submitted their request for funding. In the initial consideration of Senate Resolution 39 by the Rules Committee, the committee determined that they would grant a portion of the funding request, and that is reflected in Senate Resolution 54.

The Governmental Affairs Committee still had, under Senate Resolution 39, the balance of their request, which was considered on the 6th of March by the Rules Committee. After a full debate—and certainly in the judgment of the chairman, myself, and actively participated in by Senators on both sides, as we had nearly 100 percent attendance at the committee hearing on both sides—the committee voted to provide $4.35 million for the Committee on Governmental affairs as a supplemental to the request as reported in Senate Resolution 54.

Now, how did we arrive at that figure? You can look at the request of the distinguished Senator from Ohio—indeed, a request that, by and large, was supported by most on that side of the aisle—that there be a definitive date for cutoff, and that date by the senior Senator from Ohio was December 31 of this calendar year, 1997.

If I took that and viewed it as a reduced period of time; namely, that the Governmental Affairs Committee could begin its work using the supplemental funds, March 15, from a practical standpoint, through December 31, 1997, it would appear to this Senator that we would have, by and large, given that committee the funding profile in dollars in proportion to the timing from which those funds may be expended.

The next question was the scope. I worked with other colleagues, primarily those on the Rules Committee, and I devised a formula, in consultation with the distinguished majority leader and others, whereby looking at the original Watergate resolution, we took from that the concept that we would allow the Governmental Affairs Committee to expend the supplemental budget for such investigations that they felt were illegal in connection with the 1996 Presidential election and congressional elections—not delineating between the House and Senate, but simply all Federal elections in calendar year 1996.

So it seems to me that the Rules Committee, in a fair manner, recognized the dollars that we needed, gave the Governmental Affairs Committee a scope of the investigation and illegal—illegal is a very broad scope. It goes beyond. And I will at a later time today put into the RECORD the definitions of illegal. But it goes beyond just criminal assertions of allegations of criminal violations. It goes beyond that. So it is a broad scope. Then the Rules Committee took from the proposal, which the senior Senator from Ohio will address momentarily, a termination date of December 31, 1997.

In addition to the Rules Committee, I think very importantly recognizing the essential need for the Senate of the United States to actively participate in determining what happened, certainly in 1996 in connection with the ever-increasing number of allegations—most