

understand, to protect colleagues on this side, particularly those on the Commerce Committee which has over-all jurisdiction.

Mr. DODD. If my colleague will yield, if there is no objection to the amendment being incorporated in the bill, this may be the one opportunity where we will be able to do something about these firefighters.

Mr. WARNER. I want to help you. I am going to vote with you. But I am dutybound, as you understand, to protect those on this side. I do not know what the chairman of the Commerce Committee, on your side, has said about this issue, but I do know members of the Commerce Committee, on this side, certainly must be protected—at least be given an opportunity to speak to this amendment if it is brought up for purposes of a rollcall vote.

Mr. DODD. Why don't we proceed this way, if we could: After the Senator from Minnesota has been heard, if I can offer the amendment, I would like to discuss it. In the meantime, we can have conversations. We have already had conversations with members of the Commerce Committee. If they are going to object to us voting on this prior to the cloture vote tomorrow, or allow us to have a voice vote on this, then so be it. But if not, then it could go through this evening. We ought to try to do it.

Is that all right?

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, that seems to me to be an orderly procedure.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that immediately following the statement of the Senator from Minnesota, we return to the Defense authorization bill and Senator DODD be recognized to offer an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. WARNER. Reserving the right to object, could that be 15 minutes?

Mr. LEVIN. Just to offer it.

Mr. WARNER. He wanted 15 minutes to offer it, which is fine. I have no objection, but I do want to get back to this question of amendments.

Mr. LEVIN. And that Senator DODD's speech be limited to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Minnesota.

THANKING SENATOR BYRD

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, before Senator BYRD leaves the Chamber, I also want to thank him for his service to the Senate and the country. I am annoyed with myself for not having thought that we should have as a part of the RECORD the difference between the language that came from the White House and the resolution that we passed. It is so important that that be part of the RECORD.

I say to my colleague that up until about 1 o'clock in the morning, I did

not think I could support it. I thought it was too broad, too open ended. I think Senator LEVIN did say this, but while you were busy on that appropriations bill, Senator LEVIN was one of the key Senators—along with staff—who really did yeomen's work to try to have that resolution focus on the September 11 attacks. It was entirely different wording.

But I thank you, Senator BYRD, for what you have done today in this Senate Chamber.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, will the Senator yield, just very quickly?

Mr. WELLSTONE. I am happy to yield.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Senator for his observations. I would be remiss if I did not likewise express my gratitude to Senator LEVIN and to Senator BIDEN and to other Senators who worked together to modify that language and to greatly improve the language over what it was when it was sent from the White House to the Senate.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank the Senator.

I also say to my colleague, I believe Senator KERRY from Massachusetts, and also the majority leader, Senator DASCHLE—all of them—

Mr. BYRD. Yes, absolutely.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Did yeomen work.

REFUGEE CRISIS IN AFGHANISTAN

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I want to talk about an amendment that I hope will be part of the Defense authorization bill. But as long as we are talking about the resolution for a moment, I want to borrow from a piece I just finished writing. I will not go through the whole piece, but that deals with the humanitarian catastrophe that is now taking place in Afghanistan. I think it is relevant to talk about this.

You have a situation on the ground that is unimaginable: 4 years of relentless drought, the worst in 3 decades, and the total failure of the Taliban government to administer to the country. Four million people have abandoned their homes in search of food in Pakistan, Iran, and elsewhere. Those left behind now eat meals of locust and animal fodder. This is in Afghanistan.

Five million people inside this country are threatened by famine, according to the United Nations. As President Bush made clear, we are waging a campaign against terrorists, not ordinary Afghans—I think that is an important distinction to make—who are some of the poorest and most beleaguered people on the planet and who were actually our allies during the cold war.

Any military action by our country must be targeted against those responsible for the terror acts and those harboring them. And we must plan such action to minimize the danger to innocent civilians who are on the edge of starvation.

Let me repeat that one more time. Any military action must be targeted against those who are responsible for the terror acts and those who have harbored them. And we must plan such action to minimize the danger to innocent civilians who are on the edge of starvation. And we must be prepared to address any humanitarian consequences of whatever action we take as soon as possible.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a piece that I just finished writing be printed in the RECORD.

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

U.S. MUST LEAD EFFORTS TO PREVENT REFUGEE CRISIS IN AFGHANISTAN

(By U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone, Chairman, Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, September 28, 2001)

The September 11 attacks in New York and Washington require our country to respond assertively and effectively against international terrorism. As the Administration reviews all its options, it must consider the humanitarian consequences of any military action against terrorist sites in Afghanistan, and take urgent steps now to address them.

Even before the world focused on it as a sanctuary for Osama bin Laden and other terrorists, Afghanistan was on the brink of a humanitarian catastrophe, the site of the greatest crisis in hunger and refugee displacement in the world. Now the worsening situation on the ground is almost unimaginable. After four years of relentless drought, the worst in three decades, and the total failure of the Taliban government in administering the country, four million people have abandoned their homes in search of food in Pakistan, Iran, Tajikistan and elsewhere, while those left behind eat meals of locusts and animal fodder. Five million people inside the country are threatened by famine, according to the United Nations.

As President Bush made clear, we are waging a campaign against terrorists, not ordinary Afghans, who are some of the poorest and most beleaguered people on the planet and were our allies during the Cold War. Any military action must thus be targeted against those responsible for the terror attacks and those harboring them; planned to minimize the danger to innocent civilians on the edge of starvation; and prepared to address any humanitarian consequences as soon as possible. Since it seems clear that a major international refugee influx will require a massive expansion of existing refugee camps, and creation of new ones, the U.S. and our U.N. Security Council allies should also be thinking now about how to protect those camps, including possibly using a U.N.-sanctioned military force drawn primarily from Arab nations.

Osama bin Laden is not a native of Afghanistan, but of Saudi Arabia. Most Afghans do not support bin Laden. Instead, ninety percent of the Afghan people are subsistence farmers struggling simply to grow enough food to stay alive. War widows, orphans, and thousands of others in the cities are dependent upon international aid to survive.

Now, anticipating military strikes by the U.S. hundreds of thousands of Afghan civilians are on the move, fleeing the cities for their native villages or for the borders. According to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, nearly 20,000 have gathered at one Pakistani border crossing alone. The U.N. says it is the most tense border point in the world, with thousands of people out in the open, exposed to scorching days and frigid