

of our war-fighting capability. They include battlefield communications, precision weapons guidance, satellite control of over 120 military satellites, air combat training, and many other vital functions. The simple truth is that military access to the 1755 through 1850 megahertz frequency band is a matter of life and death.

Now, some have argued that the military should just move to another part of the frequency spectrum to carry on its functions. But let me be clear about this. The military did not just randomly decide to use these frequencies. The military uses this part of the frequency spectrum because the physical properties of these frequencies meet their unique operational requirements which cannot be compromised for any reason, but certainly not for something as trivial as advanced cell phones.

So, it is not just a simple matter of moving to another part of the frequency spectrum. We have to find frequencies that have comparable characteristics, which is something we have thus far failed to do.

But even if alternative frequencies are identified, the cost of modifying or replacing more than \$100 billion in equipment, not to mention the cost of retaining developing new tactics, is beyond comprehension. I therefore applaud the Secretary of Commerce's decision last week to no longer consider the majority of the 1755 through 1850 megahertz bands for reallocation. This was the right decision, but it could have gone further by permanently removing from consideration the entire 1755 through 1850 megahertz band. I remain very concerned that when we move beyond the current crisis the military will once again come under assault to relinquish these and other vital frequencies to the commercial sector.

So let the word go out to all concerned that we cannot and will not tolerate any attempt to restrict the military's access to the frequencies they need to carry on their missions. We have a solemn obligation to protect the people of the United States, and no argument from any special interest group will change that. So do not even think about asking for access to military frequencies. The answer is no and will stay no. Some of these huge giants should realize that.

MAINTAIN CONDITIONS OF UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE TO AZERBAIJAN IN CURRENT FORM

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor this evening to urge this Congress to maintain section 907 of the Freedom Support Act in its current form and oppose efforts to repeal this important provision of law.

Section 907 places reasonable conditions of U.S. assistance to the Govern-

ment of Azerbaijan until Azerbaijan has shown that it has taken demonstrable steps to cease all blockades and other offensive uses of force against Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that the administration is using the tragedies of September 11 and our Nation's war against terrorism as a way to convince Members of Congress of the need to waive these sanctions. Yesterday, members of the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on International Relations in both the House and the Senate received a letter from Secretary of State Colin Powell requesting "assistance in passing legislation that would provide a national security interest waiver from the restrictions of section 907." Secretary Powell continued by stating, "Removal of these restrictions will allow the United States to provide necessary military assistance that will enable Azerbaijan to counter terrorist organizations and elements operating within its borders. This type of assistance is a critical element of the United States fight against global terrorism."

Well, Mr. Speaker, this letter is unfortunate; and although I am not surprised, because the State Department has always opposed section 907, but it is particularly troubling to think that Secretary Powell would want to provide military assistance to Azerbaijan, a nation which has a history of aggression and blockades against Armenia and which continues to this day to make threats of renewed aggression against Nagorno Karabagh under the cover of the international war on terrorism.

Let me give some recent examples of these threats. Azerbaijani Defense Minister, Colonel General Abiev, was cited recently by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Caucasus Report as an advocate of renewed aggression against Nagorno Karabagh.

Radio Free Europe has also reported that Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Quliev has said that if Azerbaijan decides to liberate Karabagh from terrorists, then the international community would have no right to condemn that move as aggression.

Azerbaijani Parliamentarian Igbal-Agazadeh said that the time has come to start hostilities on the liberation of Azeri territories occupied by Armenia, a direct reference to a new war against Nagorno Karabagh.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, Azerbaijan does not share our understanding of this war on terrorism. The senior Azerbaijani leaders are telling us very plainly that they intend to use all of the means at their disposal, including apparently any and all military aid that we provide them in their antiterrorist war against the Armenian people.

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Taking any steps to weaken, waive, or repeal Section 907 will give Azerbaijan the green light and the means to renew its aggression against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh.

In his letter, Mr. Speaker, Secretary Powell says Section 907 must be repealed so the Azerbaijani government can fight terrorist organizations in its own country. What the Secretary does not say is that there are credible reports that the Azerbaijani government invited bin Laden and his network into its country.

Given this information, the United States Government should carefully review its relationship with Azerbaijan and not reward it with repeal of Section 907. At a minimum, I believe U.S. interests are best served by insisting Azerbaijan arrest and turn over those involved in the al-Qaeda cells operating there with the government's approval since the early to mid-1990s. These cells threaten all of us in the United States, but Armenia in particular is on the front line of this battle.

To date Azerbaijan has done nothing to warrant repeal of Section 907, including continuing its war rhetoric, rejecting U.S.-European calls for cooperation with Armenia, rejecting specific proposals by Armenia for economic and regional cooperation, and backing away from the commitments made by Azerbaijani President Geidar Aliyev during peace negotiations this year in Paris and in Key West earlier in year.

Given the ongoing sensitive peace negotiations, efforts to weaken or repeal Section 907 only serve to legitimize Azerbaijan's immoral blockade and would make its position at the negotiating table even more intransigent.

Moreover, repeal of Section 907 is no way to reward Armenia's solidarity with America's campaign against international terrorism. Armenia's early response to the World Trade Center attack was to first assist American staff at our U.S. Embassy in Armenia's capital to ensure the Embassy's security.

Armenia's President, speaking on behalf of the Collective Security Treaty of the post-Soviet Commonwealth of Independent States, called for joint action against international terrorism. Armenia currently holds the rotating presidency in this six-member defense grouping. Armenia has also offered and the U.S. has already used Armenia's airspace. In addition, Armenia has offered intelligence-sharing and other unspecified offers of support.

There is no reason to repeal Section 907, and it would be a big mistake at this time, Mr. Speaker. Now more than ever the Congress has to uphold the fundamental and enduring U.S. principles of justice, democracy, and human rights.

THE RHODE ISLAND VICTIMS OF THE WORLD TRADE CENTER DISASTER

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