PAYING TRIBUTE TO DALE SHERFEY

HON. SCOTT McINNIS
OF COLORADO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize an outstanding individual from Penrose, Colorado. Over the years, Dale Sherfey has distinguished himself as a businessman, a community leader, and a vital participant in maintaining civic responsibilities throughout the region. Dale’s achievements are impressive, and it is my honor to recognize several of those accomplishments today. Dale is a generous soul whose good deeds and actions certainly deserve the recognition he has recently received.

Dale is the owner and operator of a local feed store in Penrose, a successful business he has run for many years. He has carried on a long tradition of quality guidance and service to his many clients in the area, resulting in an operation dedicated to remaining true to high standards of honesty and integrity. His success in the industry has led to several honors including a recent tribute presented by the Colorado House of Representatives.

Throughout his success, Dale and wife Kathy, have remained active in their community. They have actively volunteered their time and energies to many local community organizations and Dale is frequently seen about the area lecturing to 4-H groups and farmers.

Mr. Speaker, Dale Sherfey’s achievements have also recently been rewarded by his community through the Penrose Chamber. The chamber named Dale the Penrose Chamber Distinguished Citizen of the Year, an award given to the highest ideals. Dale is a generous soul who has selflessly given of himself to directly benefit his community. It is now my honor to congratulate Dale on his most recent and well-deserved award from this organization by bringing his good deeds to the attention of this body of Congress, and this nation. Dale has been a model citizen for Penrose and Colorado and I extend my thanks for your efforts. Keep up the good work and good luck to you and your wife Kathy in your future endeavors.

CELEBRATING AS AFGHAN GIRLS RETURN TO SCHOOL

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the end of a five-year ban on girls attending school in Afghanistan.

On Saturday, for the first time since the oppressive Taliban regime usurped control of Afghanistan, young women will finally be able to return to the process of learning without fear of education. Prior to the 1994 war that propelled the Taliban to power, women in Afghanistan, and especially the capital of Kabul, were highly educated and employed.

Seventy percent of school teachers, 50 percent of civilian government workers and 40 percent of doctors in Kabul were women. And at Kabul University, females comprised half of the student body and 60 percent of the faculty.

In fact, the Afghan Constitution, which was ratified in 1964, had an equal rights provision for women contained within it. It is clear that in order for women in Afghanistan to regain a position of equality, quality education programs must be made available to the girls in Afghanistan.

I commend UNICEF and the Interim Afghan Government for the Back-to-School effort and look forward to seeing more than 1.5 million children on the school-house steps on Saturday.

NO—TO REVIVING MILITARY CONSCRIPTION

HON. RON PAUL
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce legislation expressing the sense of Congress that the United States government should not revive military conscription. Supporters of conscription have taken advantage of the events of September 11 to renew efforts to reinstate the military draft. However, reviving the draft may actually weaken America’s military.

Futhermore, a military draft violates the very principles of individual liberty this country was founded upon. It is no exaggeration to state that military conscription is better suited for a totalitarian government, such as the recently dethroned Taliban regime, than a free society.

Since military conscription ended over 30 years ago, voluntary armed services have successfully fulfilled the military needs of the United States. The recent success of the military campaign against terrorism again demonstrates the ability of the volunteer military to respond to threats to the lives, liberty, and property of the people of the United States.

A draft weakens the military by introducing tensions and rivalries between those who volunteer for military service and those who have been conscripted. This undermines the cohesiveness of military units, which is a vital element of military effectiveness. Conscripts are also unlikely to choose the military as a career; thus, a draft will do little to address problems with retention. With today’s high-tech military, retaining the most important personality issue and it seems counter-productive to adopt any policy that will not address this important issue.

If conscription helps promote an effective military, then why did General Vlasidov Putilin, Chief of the Russian General Staff, react to plans to end the military draft in Russia, by saying “This is the great dream of all servicemen, when our army will become completely professional.

Instead of reinstating a military draft, Congress should make military service attractive by finally living up to its responsibility to provide good benefits and pay to members of the services and our veterans. It is an outrage that American personnel and veterans are given a lower priority in the federal budget than spending to benefit politically powerful special interests. Until this is changed, we will never have a military which reflects our nation’s highest ideals.

Mr. Speaker, the most important reason to oppose reinstatement of a military draft is that conscription violates the very principles upon which this country was founded. The basic premise underlying conscription is that the individual belongs to the state, and that individual rights are granted by the state, and therefore politicians can abridge individual rights at will. In contrast, the philosophy which inspired America’s founders, expressed in the Declaration of Independence, is that individual rights are natural, God-given rights which cannot be abridged by the government. Forcing people into military service against their will thus directly contradicts the philosophy of the Founding Fathers.

A military draft also appears to contradict the constitutional prohibition of involuntary servitude.

During the War of 1812, Daniel Webster eloquently made the case that a military draft was unconstitutional: “Where is it written in the Constitutions, in what article or section is it contained that you may take children from their parents, and parents from their children, and compel them to fight the battles of any war, in which the folly or the wickedness of Government may engage it? Under what concealment has this power lain hidden, which now for the first time in the state, will a tremendous and baleful aspect, to trample down and destroy the dearest rights of personal liberty? Sir, I almost disdain to go to quotations and references to prove that such an abominable doctrine had no foundation in the Constitution of the country; enough for us to know that the instrument was intended as the basis of a free government, and that the power contended for is incompatible with any notion of personal liberty. An attempt to maintain this doctrine upon the provisions of the Constitution is an exercise of perverse ingenuity to extract slavery from the substance of a free government. It is an attempt to show, by proof and argument, that we ourselves are subjects of despotism, and that we have a right to chains and bondage, firmly secured to us and our children, by the provisions of our government.”

Another eloquent opponent of the draft was former President Ronald Reagan who in a 1979 column on conscription said: “... if the government can assume the right to conscript our children, to show that they belong to the state. If we buy that assumption then it is for the state—not for parents, the community, the religious institutions or teachers—to decide who shall have what values and who shall do what work, when, where and how in our society. That assumption destroys all of one. The Nazis thought it was a great idea.”

President Reagan and Daniel Webster are not the only prominent Americans to oppose