Let’s stop acting like the United States doesn’t matter. Let’s not say that because the U.N. isn’t perfect, we should cut our dues.

We are the world’s leading military and economic power, and there is much we can achieve on our own. But we cannot stop genocide in Darfur alone any more than we can stop the spread of HIV/AIDS without the cooperation of other nations.

We appeal to lead by example in the United Nations, in NATO, at the World Health Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the World Intellectual Property Organization. We can’t do that without paying what we owe.

This body has already voted for the funds to support United Nations peacekeeping and these international organizations. Senator Coburn’s amendment would cut those funds.

I also want to set the record straight on another misstatement of Senator Coburn’s. He said his amendment to the fiscal year 2008 State and Foreign Operations appropriations bill was unanimously passed and then dropped in conference. It was not dropped in conference.

His amendment would have withheld all U.S. contributions to international organizations. The House and Senate conferees did not support that. What emerged from conference was a 10 percent withholding of funds, still tens of billions of dollars, tied to audits, budget reports, and oversight. It also withheld 20 percent of the U.S. contribution to the U.N. Development Program.

Was it everything Senator Coburn wanted? No. Was it dropped in conference? No. The substance of his amendment was included in the conference agreement, and for the benefit of anyone who cares to read it, it is section 606 of Public Law 110-161.

I appeal with Senator Akaka and urge Senators to oppose the Coburn amendment.

Mr. President, I strongly join Senators Lugar and Bayh in the support of Judge Hamilton.

I yield back any time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Begich). All time is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of David F. Hamilton, of Indiana, to be U.S. circuit judge for the Seventh Circuit?

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays are as follows:

YEAS—59


NAYS—66


The result was announced—yeas 59, nays 39, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 350 Ex.]

YEA—59


NAYS—66


The result was announced—yeas 59, nays 39, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 350 Ex.]

YEA—59


NAYS—66


The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

Mr. COBURN. This is a straightforward amendment. You get to decide whether you want to continue to send money to an organization that is bankrupt, fraudulent, has peacekeeping troops that rape men, women, and children; has absolutely no transparency in spite of our law that demands it, or to pay for the courage and the support of people who do deserve it.

We always find a reason not to make the hard choice. I suspect we will find a good reason not to make the hard choice this time. But for $3.7 billion to help the people who help us and quit sending money that goes down the tube—half of everything we send to the United Nations gets wasted or defrauded—it is time for us to make the hard choice. That is what the amendment is about. There are a lot of reasons you can find to vote against it. It will take real courage to vote for it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii is recognized.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I urge our colleagues to reject the pending amendment. For one thing, it appears that the amendment could end up defunding caregiver assistance to many OEF/OIF veterans by significantly narrowing the eligibility criteria for caregiver assistance. While the amendment seeks to “pay for” the costs associated with this bill, I understand from CBO, however, that the amendment does not even accomplish what I believe the amendment’s author intends.

Every major veterans group supports the underlying bill because of what it means for all veterans—for women veterans, for homeless veterans, and for veterans of every era.

I urge a “no” vote on the amendment, followed by a vote to pass S. 1963.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. LE MIEX. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. KLOBUCHAR). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 32, nays 66, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 351 Leg.]