

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

H. CON. RES. 28, DIRECTING THE PRESIDENT, PURSUANT TO SECTION 5(C) OF THE WAR POWERS RESOLUTION, TO REMOVE THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES FROM AFGHANISTAN

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 4, 2011

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I continue to have profound reservations about our troop commitments in Afghanistan. History suggests that we will not be successful in stabilizing Afghanistan with military force. No one has and I don't think anyone will.

I opposed the tripling of forces in the region and think that a rapid drawdown starting in July is absolutely essential. We should not, however, tie the hands of the administration and put the civilians in Afghanistan at risk by forcing a complete withdrawal of troops in 30 days. The forthcoming reduction in U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan must be significant and sizeable, but must be executed in an orderly fashion.

The reasons for a timely departure are many. Afghanistan today is one of the most corrupt countries in the world, ranked next to last out of 180 by Transparency International. If you have a culture of corruption, it's hard to plant seeds of positive growth. Economic development through roads and water make the difference between people being thug and doing whatever necessary to feed their families.

The United States and international donors simply cannot afford to bankroll 70% of Afghanistan's budget and to keep spending \$8 billion a month in taxpayer money. We spend in one day 20 times what the average Afghani will earn in an entire year. Yet for all that spending there is a dire need for the most basic of services. In the rural areas, 80% drink polluted water, only 10% have adequate sanitation.

It grows clearer by the day that the more heavy-handed we are and the stronger our military presence in Afghanistan, the more we unify the threats against our troops, the United States, and our allies.

Military efforts do little to address the Afghan people's grievances over their exclusion from the political process and do little for long-term stability throughout the region. We should focus on civilian efforts, working with Afghans to strengthen their ability to govern, support civil society, fight corruption, and help to rebuild their country. We cannot do this in 30 days, not even 30 weeks. That's why I oppose this resolution and instead support a significant—but thoughtful—drawdown in July.

ON THE PASSING OF STANLEY J. "BUD" GRANT

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 4, 2011

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember and commemorate the life of Stanley, J. "Bud" Grant who passed away suddenly last month but who in the course of his life worked to help those in need. I knew him as Bud Grant, the founder and President of the Friends of the Congressional Glaucoma Caucus Foundation as he worked to screen disadvantaged populations across the country for glaucoma and other eye diseases. My community, in the U.S. Virgin Islands, was one of the places where Bud took his army of mercy since 2001 to test and identify thousands who could not afford to seek those services on their own. People lined up for hours, waiting for a chance to get care for that most precious of human senses, eyesight.

Bud was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. He graduated from St. Francis College and attended Fordham University and the New York University School of Public Administration. A member of the "Greatest Generation," he served in the U.S. Marine Corps in the Pacific theater during the Second World War.

Prior to his work against glaucoma, Bud enjoyed a long career in pharmaceutical sales for Upjohn/Pharmacia. He worked on behalf of the Medical Society of the State of New York, the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Association, and Pharmacia Corporation and Covance Research Labs. He also served on the boards of Wagner College and New York Hospital Division of Queens.

On behalf of my family, staff and constituents in the U.S. Virgin Islands who were touched by Bud's work, I extend my condolences to Bud's family, especially his son Richard, who will continue the important work that his father began at the Glaucoma Caucus Foundation.

May Bud Grant rest in peace.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 4, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today our national debt is \$14,251,174,516,308.48.

On January 6, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$3,612,748,770,014.60 since then.

This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

PROTECTING NATIONAL SECURITY BY CUTTING THE MILITARY BUDGET

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 4, 2011

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, two things are very clear. One, we should over the next years adopt a plan for substantially reducing our national debt. Two, we cannot do that in a reasonable way without making substantial reductions in America's worldwide military footprint. For too long we have allowed the rest of the world to become dependent on us. As our wealthy allies cut their own military budgets, we are expected to increase ours. The recent Libyan situation illustrates the problem we have created for ourselves by encouraging this sense of dependence on the part of so many wealthy nations. America is thousands of miles away from Libya while many of our strongest and closest—and prosperous—allies are within hundreds of miles. But it fell to America to take the lead in the coalition effort against Libya and the reason for that, we were told, is that only America had the capability to do it. To the extent that it is true, it is a shortcoming that we must remedy. We must insist that our wealthy allies no longer expect us to shoulder so much of the burden. It is important that we recalibrate our military spending to more closely approximate our own genuine needs, and if we do not do that, there is no way to bring the budget deficit down in a responsible way.

Mr. Speaker, Winslow Wheeler is a thoughtful student of military spending and understands how America's genuine defense would be enhanced and not in any way threatened by a substantial scaling back of military expenditures. He wrote a very thoughtful article explaining this in the Wednesday, March 9 issue of the Hill, and because no issue is more important than getting the budget deficit down in a responsible way, I ask that that article be reprinted here.

THE DEFENSE BUDGET: IGNORANCE IS NOT BLISS

(By Winslow T. Wheeler)

Polling from Pew and Gallup reveals major public misconceptions about the defense budget. Fifty-eight percent of Americans know that Pentagon spending is larger than any other nation, but almost none know it is up to seven times that of China. Most had no idea the defense budget is larger than federal spending for education, Medicare or interest on the debt.

The scurrilous in Washington promote the misimpression of an under-funded Pentagon. They imply it is smaller than during the Cold War by saying it was at 8 percent of gross domestic product in the late 1960s, but only 4 percent of GDP now. Therefore, it's gone down and is now low, right?

Some use hyperventilated rhetoric to pressure for more defense dollars. Sadly, this category now must include Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who termed "catastrophic" the recommendations of the

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