

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we have a responsibility as Members of this House to assist those whose lives have been threatened by the downturn of the aviation industry and their jobs are on the line for possibly cuts and layoffs. The economic crisis is not just limited to the employees, though, of the major commercial carriers who feel the pinch of an industry-wide slowdown. It is affecting the sky caps that do not know whether or not they can count on checking bags at curbsides to make a living. The crisis is affecting counter agents. I talked with a young lady who is a mother of six, single parent, Latino, who is saying that she is being laid off because there are not enough people who are coming to purchase tickets to get on the planes. It is affecting the travel agents who fear for the future of their small businesses as bookings decline. A lot of those, Mr. Speaker, are women-owned businesses. It is the hotels that are near the airport, where the workers, the cleaning ladies, the cooks, and all others are affected by this displaced workers program.

We also have the tourist attractions. We know that tourism is \$6.7 trillion to this economy. If we do not have tourists coming to the various States coast to coast, workers will lose their jobs in the aftermath of this cowardly act of September 11.

It is the thousands of workers, including workers from Boeing and other aviation and engine manufacturers, who face massive layoffs as a result of this tragedy. It is essential for the administration and Congress to move aggressively in addressing the needs of America's workers. These men and women are hard-working individuals who are buying their homes, raising their families, and making significant contributions to the greater economy.

In the days and weeks ahead, we will face enormous financial pressures; and so will they, including credit card bills, mortgage payments, and utilities, tuition bills, medical bills, and other essential outlays. I would like to see the Congress take up an immediate package which would address the medical care needs, job retraining, and severance pay. The tragic incidents of September 11 have already touched and affected so many Americans, Mr. Speaker. We should do everything in our power to limit further damage to the American economy and, most importantly, to American families.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the 140,000 airline industry workers who have been or are expected to be laid off.

I am a cosponsor of Mr. GEPHARDT'S legislation, H.R. 2955, the Displaced Workers Assistance Act. I urge the House swift adoption of this or similar legislation. However, I also want to call attention to legislation I introduced in March, long before this crisis. My bill, H.R. 886, would eliminate Federal income taxation of unemployment benefits.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that 90 percent of all unemployment compensation claimants owe taxes on their benefits and that Federal taxation eats up 17 percent of their benefits. This is a form of taxation that is regressive and cruel, because it takes from those who need it most at a time when they are most in need.

The aviation sector is certainly the hardest hit due to the September 11 events. The effects are now rippling throughout the economy and have pushed an economy that was teetering on the brink of recession over the edge. My bill would not only relieve the economic hardship that airline workers will experience but also the hardship that workers in other parts of the economy will experience as the economic downturn continues.

While my tax cut is eligible to individuals who become unemployed regardless of their income, it would have the greatest benefit to low-income taxpayers who have to make the greatest adjustments to meet basic necessities such as rent, utilities, food, and clothing for themselves and their children.

Mr. Speaker, I urge swift adoption of H.R. 886, as a stand-alone bill, as part of an airline employee relief package, or in a broader economic stimulus package.

The terrorist attacks of September 11 not only caused tremendous physical destruction to lives and property but also dealt a body blow to our air carriers. Airlines hemorrhaged more than \$1 billion in the week following the attacks, when their planes were ordered by the Federal Government to be grounded. They continue to lose money because passengers are still hesitant to fly.

Airlines have taken painful steps to control their costs, including reducing flight schedules and laying off thousands of workers.

Congress acted swiftly and decisively to stabilize the financial situation of the airlines, by passing a \$15 billion package of grants and loan guarantees. I supported this legislation because I recognized that if it did not pass, American Airlines in my district could be forced to lay off even more workers and other airlines could be forced to file bankruptcy.

At the same time, I was troubled that the financial stabilization bill was an incomplete package that did not also provide relief for the heart and soul of our airlines—its workers.

Now that the airlines are already receiving their distributions in grant assistance, it is time to finish the job. We must ensure that there are adequate resources to provide airline workers with extended unemployment benefits, training opportunities, and continuation of health care coverage for them and their families.

Mr. Speaker, I urge expedited consideration of the Displaced Workers Assistance Act and my bill to eliminate Federal taxation of unemployment benefits.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I want to join my colleagues in voicing support for a legislative initiative to address the tremendous economic impact the September 11 bombings have had on employees working in the airline industry.

Our efforts to support the airline companies will hopefully be matched just as quickly this week by action on H.R. 2946, The Displaced Workers Relief Act authored by my friend, the gentleman from Florida, Mr. HASTINGS.

Finally, as we move forward with this effort let us be mindful of the efforts by some airlines, like Delta, to offer alternative employee leave programs. Our efforts here in the Congress should not supersede these programs, particularly where the airline's offer may be better for the employee.

America's 100,000 airline employees need immediate relief and we should act this week, Mr. Chairman, to make sure that they receive that relief. I urge my colleagues to support action for America's airline employees.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks, thousands of workers have lost their jobs.

Over the past 3 weeks, over 100,000 people have lost their jobs. Individuals who earn their living in the airline, hotel, tourism, and other related industries have been hit extremely hard. Many other industries have felt the pinch, too.

We all know that the Twin Towers provided jobs for thousands of analysts, brokers, and other financial workers, but it was also the source of jobs for janitors, window washers, cooks, and others. The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) represented over 500 of these workers.

These were not high paying jobs, and many of these individuals live paycheck to paycheck without large savings accounts. Now, their future remains in doubt.

Congress acted swiftly to help the airline industry but forgot about the airline employees.

Organized labor decried the bailout bill. They insisted that any bill passed should help all the workers who lost their jobs because of these disasters—not just the airline industry.

And they are right.

We should be extending and increasing unemployment benefits for workers. We should be increasing job training opportunities. And we should be increasing access to healthcare.

Our country's livelihood depends on these workers and we should do everything possible to assist them through these tough times.

Some of the proposals we have seen will help displaced workers, but we should do more by creating jobs by investing in infrastructure, helping small businesses, and supporting programs that help businesses invest in our communities.

If we pursue this course, jobs will be created and businesses will surely benefit.

We will never forget that thousands of lives were lost and many more were devastated because of these terrorist acts. But as Members of Congress we can help put these lives back together.

A NEW VISION FOR U.S.-RUSSIAN RELATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to lead a Special Order that we expect will involve a number of our colleagues who just returned last evening, as I did, from a whirlwind 5-day trip around the world

to try to deal with the issue of, not just the terrorism that occurred on September 11, but to improve and change our relations with Russia.

Mr. Speaker, this trip was not scheduled after September 11, but rather had been scheduled in August, when our Russian friends contacted me and asked me to bring over some ideas that I had to improve the relationship between our two countries and to give them some of the ideas I was working on as the basis for the upcoming Bush-Putin summit and to change direction in our relationship.

The preparation of a document entitled "A New Time, a New Beginning" was, in fact, the subject of that presentation; and the delegation that traveled with me that I had the pleasure of chairing, along with the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ), my good friend, as the cochair, was designed to present this document to the Russian leadership. We did that in a series of meetings in Moscow over 3 days.

We met with the representatives to the President of Russia; the Prime Minister of Russia; President Putin; leaders of the Duma; Deputy Speaker Sliaska; the chairman of the International Affairs Committee Yablako; Chairman Kulikov; and a number of the various leaders of the Russian Government. And every one of them was extremely excited about this new direction in our relationship.

The package, which will not be presented here in detail, that will occur several weeks from now, it is just for discussion purposes now, involves us in 11 specific areas with the Russians. Instead of focusing on the differences in defense and foreign policy, the new initiative focuses on cultural relations, economic relations, energy and natural resources, defense and security, environmental cooperation, health care, judicial and legal, local government, science and technology, space and aviation, and agriculture. I will include a summary of these documents now, to be made a part of the RECORD of this Special Order at this point in time in the presentation.

A NEW VISION FOR U.S.-RUSSIAN RELATIONS

Those of us who value the U.S.-Russian relationship have been on a roller-coaster ride for the past decade. During the heady days of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the following collapse of the Soviet Union, it appeared that our two countries would cooperate as never before. The world cheered when Presidents Bush and Yeltsin hailed a new "strategic partnership" between America and Russia.

There followed, however, a dark period—marked by misguided American policies and rampant Russian corruption. The Russian economy sagged as American aid—money meant for the Russian people—was siphoned off and stashed in Swiss banks and American real estate investment. At the same, NATO's war in Kosovo strained the already sinking bilateral relationship. What were the results of this increasingly bitter disenchantment? A more aggressive Russian foreign policy, in-

creased proliferation from Moscow to rogue states, and the final coup de grace: Russia and China announced last year a new "strategic partnership"—against the interests of America and the west.

Now is the time, with new leaders in Washington and Moscow, to improve the relationship for the long-term.

My interest in this relationship began when I was nineteen years old, when a college professor convinced me to switch my major to Russian Studies. Since that time, I have been fascinated with the Soviet Union and Russia—and have traveled there more than twenty-five times.

I began my travels when I was a member of my local County Council and was invited to travel to Moscow by the American Council of Young Political Leaders. I have continued to visit Russia since my election to Congress, as a member of the House Armed Services Committee and later as co-chairman of the Duma-Congress Study Group, the official interparliamentary exchange between the U.S. and Russia.

My interactions with leaders across Russia have taught me that the Russians are a proud people, historically aware, and mindful of Russia's unique global role. Increasingly, they are becoming aware of the limitless possibilities for U.S.-Russian cooperation on a host of issues.

This brief paper, then, is an effort to weave together a comprehensive program of U.S.-Russian cooperation across a wide-range of issues.

Too often, the focus of our bilateral relations has been on defense and security—precisely the issues on which our interests often collide. It would be more useful, as we move forward with a Russian policy for the 21st century to take a more holistic approach—one that takes into account Russia's myriad concerns as well as our own.

Therefore, in consultation with many of the leading experts on Russia, I propose a series of initiatives to engage Russia on issues like the environment, energy, economic development, health care—as well as defense and security. Some of these are new ideas, but many are not. Many of these initiatives are already underway, and need additional support to make even greater progress.

Such engagement is in the U.S. interest as well as Russia's. For if the U.S. and Russia are cooperating on issues across the board, Russia will be more likely to work closely with America on the national security issues that matter most to us—missile defense, the war against terrorism, and proliferation.

This is not, and will never be, a finished product. The contours of our bilateral relationship change daily with world events. Not will it likely be turned into a grand legislative proposal, although certainly parts of it may be. I hope only that it is a starting point for discussions between Russia and America on ways that we can forge a new relationship that will benefit both our countries.

For if we make a new American-Russian relationship, one based on common interests that benefit the citizens of both countries, than we will make great progress—not just for America and Russia alone, but for peace and stability across the globe.

A NEW TIME, A NEW BEGINNING

SUMMARY OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Cultural Development

Expand cultural ties outside the major cities.

Assist Russian regional museums generate tourism.

Provide for more Russian language and cultural studies in U.S. schools.

Economic Development

Help facilitate Russia's accession to the WTO and its acceptance of all WTO agreements.

Increase funding for OPIC and EX-IM Bank projects in Russia.

Work with Russia to improve intellectual property rights.

Energy/Natural Resources

Foster cooperative pilot projects, starting with oil and gas exploration in Timan Pechora.

Convene bilateral task force to discuss the energy ramifications of the war on terrorism.

Eliminate bureaucratic obstacles to joint cooperation on energy.

Defense and Security

Initiate new bilateral talks similar to the Ross-Mamedov talks on a Global Protection System.

Move forward with joint talks on a new nonproliferation regime.

Encourage progress on the RAMOS program and restructure the Nuclear Cities Initiative.

Environmental Cooperation

Develop a revolving fund to assure development of promising Russian technologies.

Expand debt for nature swaps.

Dramatically expand cooperation on marine science research.

Health Care

Increase emphasis on chronic diseases like cardiovascular and diabetes.

Develop more extensive physician exchange programs.

Augment existing cooperation between NIH and appropriate Russian research institutes.

Judicial Systems

Support expansion of jury trials into all Russian regions.

Expand Environmental Public Advocacy Centers into Russia.

Encourage a doubling of the number of legal clinics in Russia.

Local Governments

Propose ways to expand the tax base available to local governments.

Encourage political participation by increasing local partisan affiliations.

Encourage the gradual devolution of services to the local level.

Science and Technology

Increase cooperation in the area of nuclear fuel cycles.

Expand cooperative fusion research on nonpolluting energy solutions.

Involve Russian industry in embryonic U.S. nanotechnology efforts.

Space and Aeronautics

Utilize commercial joint ventures to enable Russia to meet its Space Station obligations.

Increase joint projects on space solar power, propulsion technology, and weather satellites.

Cooperate on mutually-beneficial planetary defense tracking technologies.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. This entire document, which we have briefed to the administration, and which I have given to Senator LEVIN and Senator LUGAR and have talked to Senator BIDEN about on the phone, will be presented to our colleagues in a formal

context after we have had a chance to make some modifications and changes. We have also presented this initiative to the White House, to the Vice President's staff, to the National Security Council, the Defense Department, and the State Department.

Truly, it was a landmark opportunity for us, a historic opportunity, to change the direction in our relationships with the Russians.

Mr. Speaker, the other activity that we did on this trip, which grew out of the September 11 incident, was to try to find a way to further support our President to build an international alliance that would work together on terrorism. To that end, we drafted a piece of legislation, had it translated into Russian, faxed it over in advance of our trip, and asked the leaders of the Duma, which is their congress, to consider passing an identical bill to one that we have passed in the House. This legislation calls for the creation of a joint task force on terrorism involving Members of the House and the Senate, the Duma, and the Federation Council.

Our Russian colleagues were very much supportive, indicated that they could pass such a measure in 3 weeks. At this point, Mr. Speaker, I will enter the actual resolution in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

H. CON. RES. —

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring).

SECTION 1. FINDINGS; DECLARATION OF POLICY.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) On September 11, 2001, acts of treacherous violence were committed against the United States and its citizens when terrorists hijacked and destroyed four civilian aircraft, crashing two of them into the towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, and a third into the Pentagon outside Washington, D.C.

(2) In the past, similar acts of violence have been committed against the Russian Federation and its citizens.

(3) Such acts continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of both the United States and the Russian Federation.

(b) DECLARATION OF POLICY.—Congress—

(1) condemns in the strongest possible terms the terrorists who planned and carried out the September 11, 2001, attacks against the United States, as well as their sponsors; and

(2) reaffirms the importance of joint efforts between the United States and the Russian Federation to provide the fullest possible level of cooperation on antiterrorism activities.

SEC. 2. UNITED STATES CONGRESS—RUSSIAN FEDERATION PARLIAMENT JOINT TASKFORCE ON ANTITERRORISM.

(a) NEGOTIATIONS.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives (in consultation with members of the Duma Congress Study Group) and the majority leader of the Senate shall seek to enter into negotiations with appropriate officials of the State Duma and the Federation Council of the Russian Federation for the establishment of a joint taskforce on antiterrorism.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—The joint taskforce shall consist of members of the House of Rep-

resentatives and the Senate and members of the State Duma and the Federation Council.

(c) DUTIES.—The joint taskforce shall provide for increased cooperation between the United States Congress and the Russian Federation Parliament on issues relating to antiterrorism.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that I hope our colleagues will support. The 11 members of our delegation will be the original bipartisan sponsors of this bill. We have not yet dropped it. But it will be, in fact, the first time that the parliaments and the governments, legislatures of Russia and the U.S., pass an identical bill, perhaps even on the same day, because they are 8 hours ahead of us, that calls for the creation of a joint task force to work together on terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, we thank our Russian friends for their condolences, we thank them for offering to allow our airplanes to use their airspace to assist us in intelligence, and we thank them for their support of our trip on the second leg of our journey to Rome.

In Rome, Mr. Speaker, we traveled for 30, 40 minutes outside of town under heavy security to visit the King of Afghanistan living in exile.

□ 2030

The king of Afghanistan was thrown out of that country in 1973. He has lived outside of Rome under heavy security since that time. We made a special visit to him to enlist his support in eventually returning to his native country to convene a cooperative effort with those leaders in the northern front, now called the Joint Task Force, or the Unified Front, to overturn the Taliban government, to remove Osama bin Laden, and to support the people of Afghanistan taking over their government.

Our meeting with the King lasted for 90 minutes. It was extremely constructive. Our colleagues will discuss it in more detail when they speak.

Following that meeting, we met for 90 minutes with approximately 10 or 12 leaders of the various military factions in Afghanistan who had flown in to meet with us and the King. We were convinced that this new effort is broad, it is across the spectrum in Afghanistan, and involves all the various tribes.

We are convinced that we should continue, as our President has said, to support this Unified Front with both money and any type of military support that they would require. In fact, we have prepared recommendations to present to President Bush, the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, the National Security advisor, on additional efforts that can assist this Unified Front to remove Osama bin Laden.

Following our trip to Rome and our meetings with the King and the Unified Front, we went on to Ankara, Turkey. On Sunday and Monday in Turkey we

met with leaders of their parliament, leaders of their government, and thanked them again for their outpouring of support for our people. We thanked them for their steadfast loyalty to America during very difficult times.

Turkey has been one of our strongest partners during good times and bad times. Turkey, a 99 percent Muslim nation, has no problem standing up with America and proudly performing any task that we ask them. In fact, Turkey has a unique position. They are best of friends, not just with the U.S., but also with Israel, with Russia, and with Pakistan.

In our meetings with the Turkish military and with the Turkish leadership, we came to the conclusion that we should put further emphasis on Turkey playing a lead role in helping us to remove Osama bin Laden and to remove the Taliban, assuming they continue to disagree with the President's request to turn bin Laden over.

Again, we make specific recommendations to the administration which are contained in a document that I will offer as part of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

The document referred to is as follows:

U.S.—RUSSIA—TURKEY PARTNERSHIP: ANTI-TERRORISM AND AFGHANISTAN

[A Bi-partisan Congressional Delegation led by Representative Curt Weldon: Russia-Italy-Turkey—September 26-October 1, 2001]

OVERVIEW

This Congressional delegation to Moscow was originally planned in August as part of the continuing dialogue of the Congress-Duma Study Group, chaired on the U.S. side by Chairman Weldon (R-PA). After the September 11 terrorist attack in New York and Washington, the delegation saw an opportunity to reinforce President Bush's coalition building effort and expanded its mission to consult with leaders in the region to gain information that could prove helpful to the Congress and Administration in furthering the war on terrorism. As a result additional stops were scheduled for Rome and Ankara. In addition to the original agenda in Moscow that sought to expand the basis of discussions with the Duma (atch 4, "A New Time, A New Beginning," an eleven point agenda), the delegation prepared and presented to the Russians proposed legislation (atch 5) on counter terrorism that the delegation hopes to see passed in both the Duma and Congress.

In Moscow, representatives of the Duma, Federation Council and executive branch officials were enthusiastic about both the 11-point program proposed for broadened Congress-Duma discussions, and the counter terrorism legislative proposal. All of the Russian officials encouraged the Delegation to pursue its fact-finding opportunity with the exiled Afghan King and United Front/Northern Alliance leadership in Rome.

The main objective of the counter terrorist, fact-finding portion of the trip was to explore recommendations by key allies that would enhance the understanding of Congress by seeking insights into the difficult challenges in the fight against terrorism, especially in Afghanistan. In Rome, the delegation had an in-depth discussion with Zaher

Shah and United Front field commanders from diverse areas of Afghanistan provided a detailed briefing on the current military situation. Turkish military and foreign policy leaders, as well as members of Parliament, gave the delegation poignant insights and their perspectives on defeating the Taliban and other terrorist forces.

FINDINGS

In all countries, there appeared to be unanimous support and approval for the President's efforts to build a strong coalition against terrorism and to put an end to Osama bin Laden (OBL) and the extremist Taliban regime. Russian and Turkish leaders supported the delegation's effort to meet with King Zaher Shah, whom they believe can be a unifying figure, as well as the United Front commanders. Both Russia and Turkey recommended that Afghan resistance forces conduct the bulk of the fighting and hunting bin Laden inside of Afghanistan with adequate support from America and our allies. Humanitarian support in areas controlled by the United Front is also a necessary component both during and after the current crisis.

In Rome, the resistance commanders, representing all groups and many regions of Afghanistan—north and south—expressed a willingness to work with the King as a symbol of unity and were confident that with adequate material support and limited air support that they could overturn Taliban rule in a rapid period of time. [There is less than two months before Winter sets in, when snow will prevent offensive actions in much of the country.] Most commanders believe they could root bin Laden and his terrorist forces out of their mountain bases.

Russian and Turkish experts expressed serious concern about instability in Pakistan. The consensus advice to the United States was against basing US forces inside of Pakistan or using Pakistan territory as a support base for military or humanitarian efforts. All parties reminded the delegation that Pakistan facilitated the creation of the Taliban and has been its primary political and military backer.

King Zaher Shah presented a three-part plan for peace in Afghanistan: (1) Conduct a loya jirga of tribal elders inside of Afghanistan; (2) Establish an interim coalition government, including any moderate Taliban, to serve for two years to begin post-war recovery, integrate returning refugees and to write with Constitution; (3) Conduct nationwide elections to choose leaders and to choose a form of government.

King Zaher Shah and the field commanders believe that the Taliban are weak and vulnerable. The Talibs have lost the support of the Afghan people due, in large part, to their brutal rule and the presence of international terrorists as their shock troops. The United Front commanders claim that the core of Taliban forces are some 10,000 international terrorists recruited by bin Laden and some 25,000 Pakistanis. They estimate the Taliban's Afghan troop strength at 40,000. The resistance claims 70,000 to 75,000 total anti-Taliban forces.

The resistance commanders also claim that many Afghan Pashtuns currently allied to the Taliban are in contact with the United Front and plan to switch sides when a coordinated offensive begins. They believe the Taliban could collapse rapidly. In order to begin the offensive before Winter sets in, the United Front requires an immediate infusion of ammunition and other supplies. Essential items include communications gear, long-range artillery, rockets, anti-tank

weapons and anti-aircraft capability. The Taliban is estimated to have approximately a dozen fighter aircraft, a limited number of attack helicopters and 20 battle tanks, which must be eliminated if the battle is to be won.

Zaher Shah expressed an openness to direct U.S. military support for the resistance in a timely manner. Turkish experts recommend that currently an emergency humanitarian aid program is desperately needed. And a much-needed infrastructure development program should be done in a way that would not overwhelm the Afghan people's ability to absorb it. The Under Secretary of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, Ugur Ziyal, said Turkey has accomplished effective programs using limited funding—unlike high-cost and high-overhead UN and USG programs—by working closely with the Afghan people.

Turkish officials expressed a frustration of often being ignored by the West, especially in dealing with their own terrorism problem, which has led to the deaths of over 30,000 citizens during the past two decades. However, Turkey considers the United States as a steadfast friend. As they already have modest humanitarian aid programs in United Front zones of Afghanistan, they would be willing to be a facilitator of US aid.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Avoid placing US forces in Pakistan.

Expedite US assistance to the Afghan United Front to conduct operations before winter begins. Be prepared to respond to possible rapid changes on the battlefield and in Kandahar and Kabul.

Support the return of King Zaher Shah to Afghanistan as a unifying figure between all ethnic groups and factions and to conduct a loya jirga.

After the Talibs/bin Laden are defeated, cost-effective developmental assistance—not bloated “nation building”—could go a long way. Turkish experts said \$10 to \$20 million of targeted aid would do tremendous good if a team of experts worked with indigenous Afghans.

Develop greater intelligence cooperation with Turkey. Utilize Turkish NGOs as conduits for some U.S. aid into Northern Alliance zones of Afghanistan.

Establish a Congress-to-Congress working group with Turkey.

Consider forgiveness of Turkey's FMF debt.

CODEL WELDON

Representatives: Curt Weldon, Solomon Ortiz, Bob Clement, Dana Rohrabacher, Clifford Stearns, Robert Cramer, Roscoe Bartlett, Nick Smith, Silvestre Reyes, Brian Kerns, Todd Platts.

Staff: Al Santoli, Office of Rep. Rohrabacher; Xenia Horczakivskyj, Office of Rep. Weldon; Doug Roach, Professional Staff Member, Committee on Armed Services.

KEY CONTACTS

Russia: Ambassador Vershbow, U.S. Ambassador to Russia; Lyubov Sliiska, 1st Dep. Speaker of the Duma; Andrey Kokoshin, Dep. Chairman of the Committee on Industry, Construction, Industries, and High Technologies (former National Security Advisor to President Yeltsin); Vladimir Lukhin, State Federation Council Chairman, Yablako, Former Chairman International Affairs Committee/Russia Ambassador to the United States; Konstantin Kosachev, Vice Chairman International Affairs Committee; Anatoly Savin, Kommeta Institute; Anatoly Kulikov, Chairman of the Terrorism Task Force, Russian Duma; Valkov, First Dep. Head of Pres. Putin's Advisory Committee;

Vladimir Andrianov, Sr. Advisor to Prime Minister; U.S.-Russia Business Council; American Chamber of Commerce; Moscow Petroleum Club.

Italy: Exiled King of Afghanistan, King Mohammad Zaher Shah (86); Prince Mir Wais Zaher (40), youngest son and “closest aid”; Mostapha Zaher, King's grandson. United Front/Northern Alliance Commanders: Malik Zarin (Konar Province); Haji Nasir (Nanghar Province); Haji Khaleq Ghor (Onazon and Farak Provinces); Commander Arif (Kandahar Province); General Awari (Shomali Plains, Kabul area, and Bagram Airfield, North of Kabul); Commander Kazeni (Parwan Province); Abdul Khalig (Kuman Province); Commander Jegdalak (Kabul Area); Commander Zaman (Nangahar Province); Yunis Kanoni, delegation spokesman (Panjer Valley).

Turkey: Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Ugur Ziyal, Undersecretary (DEPSEC equivalent), (Faruk Logoglu, new Turkish Ambassador to the USA). Turkish General Staff: LTGEN Koksal Karabay, Turkish Gen. Staff (TGS), Turkish Land Forces; LTGEN Turgut, TGS, Turkish Air Forces; MGEN Nusret Tasdeler; COL Kusu, briefer; Namik Tan, American Desk, Dept. Head.

MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR ZIYAL, UNDERSECRETARY OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TURKEY—OCT. 1, 2001

KEY POINTS

The Ambassador lived in Afghanistan in 1948–1952.

There is no “nation” of Afghanistan, just a collection of various groups/tribes/clans/warloads. They unite to confront foreigners. It is near impossible to assert central control, but the exiled-King could be a unifying symbol.

The Taliban originated in Pakistan. They were initially welcomed because they established order out of the chaos of the end of the war against the Soviet invasion they “bring out worst in humanity and Islam” they are “hardest on their own” who deviate from their hard line—viewed as heretics. They were supported by Arab Afghans—“radical Saudis pumped in millions”—and support was provided by other Gulf Arabs.

The Taliban “became force of evil.” OBL is a supreme organizer. He created a “senseless organization of terror.”

The OBL/Taliban network “recruits the young to brain wash them.” It is impossible to protect society against suicide bombers.

Turkey has a humanitarian (3 clinics) presence in Northern Alliance areas in Afghanistan.

Turkey had a school in Kabul, but couldn't agree with Taliban on a curriculum and the Turks left—“Taliban wouldn't listen to reason—they are fanatics.”

King is a figurehead. Authority lies with tribal leaders. There could be a role for him as an umbrella, interim leader. Tribal leaders will cooperate if they see it in their interest to do so. Groups change sides very easily—for various reasons: money, power, jealousy.

Rep Bartlett: (Referencing Turkish General Staff Brief: “There seems to be a bewildering array of terrorist groups. The US is focusing on the Taliban. How much of the “problem” is the Taliban?

Ambassador: OBL is 5 percent of the (terrorist) problem.

“US tends to personify issues, for example Saddam and Sadat.” Particular realities of each nation need to be addressed without regard to what leaders happen to be present at the time.

Is the King's three part plan realistic?

Ambassador: Yes. Local tribal leaders are the only real option, however. Forming a "Democracy is a tall order—until quality of life versus survival becomes the issue, Afghanistan leaping to a democracy is unlikely."

Rep Ortiz: Are you concerned about the survival of the Pakistani government?

Ambassador: "We are concerned."

On the Peace Process: "American policy has hurt American standing in the region—Arafat sees he made a mistake." We talk to both sides. With Barak, things were close. It is important that Israel be accepted—it would benefit regimes in the area. Saddam has gained ground just by giving lip service/propaganda. Everyone in the area is concerned, even the Omanis. Israeli responses to Palestinian attacks are disproportionate.

Recommended course of action:

The Northern Alliance first needs ammunition and U.S. military strikes against main Taliban armament (10 planes and 20 tanks).

"The U.S. needs to stay involved to raise the quality of life" Afghans need help to survive what the Taliban has done to them—large sums of money is not required if you employ Afghans to provide assistance to fellow Afghans. ("UN overhead very high").

"We would be willing to help."

Chairman Weldon: How much would it take—\$10 million—or \$20 million?

Ambassador: "That would go a long way if implemented locally—billions would be a disaster. It could not be absorbed—would only lead to corruption."

Need allies on the ground—United Front/Northern Alliance—"and they are willing." "They are willing because the Taliban is seen as destroying the country and way of life"

Ambassador felt that Taliban could fall within 30 days. "If allies of the Taliban see them losing, their allies will desert them."

Mr. Speaker, this document entitled "U.S.-Russia-Turkey Partnership: Anti-terrorism in Afghanistan" has a summary of our trip, the details of who we met with, the specific recommendations, and a call for action.

Mr. Speaker, we also need to understand as Americans that if and when we remove Osama bin Laden, that is not going to eliminate the terrorism problem in America. The government of Turkey identified at least a dozen other major terrorist groups that have killed over 30,000 innocent people in Turkey over the past 10 years.

We need to understand that Osama bin Laden is only one network, accounting for about 5 percent of the international terrorism in the world. We must understand that this is just a beginning. Removing the Taliban and Osama bin Laden, allowing the people of Afghanistan to take back their country, is only the first step in what President Bush has described as a long-term process.

We in the Congress went on this mission in full support of our President. At every stop, we reiterated the fact that we only have one President in America, one Secretary of State, and the 11 Members of Congress who traveled together were in total and complete unanimity that our President speaks for us. We are behind his leadership 100 percent.

I want to thank our colleagues for traveling. They were outstanding Members. I am going to ask each of them now to make comments about their thoughts on the trip. I will simply be here to monitor the time so everyone gets a chance to speak.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to our good friend and colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ), an outstanding senior Member of the Congress who has been in the House for 20 years, a senior member of the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his leadership. I think it was a great trip, a very productive trip. We were able to learn things that we were not used to talking about from countries like Turkey, Russia, some of the other countries who have had terrorist acts. For the United States, it was something new.

I think that individually I was able to learn a lot from Turkey. Turkey will continue to play a very, very important role in the defense of this country that is so dear to them. But we feel sometimes that we have neglected Turkey. They are proud citizens, they are proud soldiers. They have stood by our side during almost every conflict that we have been involved in.

One of the things that really impressed me was the relationship that our good chairman, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) has with the officials from Russia and the people of Russia.

We were received with open arms. Not only that, they stated that they were willing to work with us. This legislation that the chairman is talking about is very, very important, not only for the United States, but for the rest of the world. This is a cancer that has to be removed.

Bin Laden, even though we were able to dispose of him, to remove him from power, he has been able to train many young men to conduct the same terrorist acts that have been conducted all over the world. We just hope that the Muslim and Islamic leaders can explain to the rest of the world that this is not Islamic religion, this is not the teachings of the Muslim world; this is hatred, this is murder. Hopefully, we will be in a position to do better as a world, to be more understanding.

I know Muslims do not preach hate. They do not condone the killing. But I am so happy that I went on this trip, because this was really a fact-finding trip, Mr. Speaker. I want to say again, I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and colleague for his leadership and support as a co-leader of this delegation. We came away with some very special feelings, and he came away with some special symbols of our relationship. I

thank him for the cooperation that he has given me.

I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT), our next member of the delegation.

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I returned Monday from a very successful bipartisan congressional delegation that included meetings with the Russian Duma, the exiled king of Afghanistan, representatives of the United Front fighting the Taliban, and Turkish foreign and military affairs officials.

I want to praise my colleagues, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ), for chairing this trip. I also want to commend all of my colleagues for their hard work and dedication to these meetings. We had a real team working together, and I think because of our teamwork, we were very successful.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say also that this is not a battle between the East versus West, it is not a battle that is Muslim versus Christian. It comes down to a travesty that happened September 11 that hurt, injured, and lost the lives of many Americans.

But what I learned on this trip when we traveled to Russia and Italy and Turkey is that most of the world has experienced terrorism for a number of years. We have been immune from terrorism, but not anymore. Now we have to face up to our responsibilities, knowing that other countries have had to live with it for many years, and now we, as the superpower.

We are the only superpower now. It used to be the Soviet Union and the United States, so now it has come down to just the United States. It puts us in a position where we must act, and we will act. The United States and our allies will move against the terrorists. It probably is very soon.

But I have also learned from meeting with the other countries that they accept and are excited about the possibilities of the United States working with them to combat terrorism in the world. Because if we do not work together, we cannot solve the problem. Even if we knock out or even if we capture or even if we bring to justice Osama bin Laden, and even if the Taliban regime comes to an end very shortly, which very well could happen, that does not mean it is the end of terrorism, because there are many terrorist groups and organizations, some of which are even operating in the United States, many of which operate in other countries.

But if we work together, if we share our intelligence, if we understand one another, it does not have to happen. People can live in peace, and people do not have to live in fear. But we have to bring these people to justice, and we have to demonstrate to the world that we care about their fellow man.

We know that there are a lot of wonderful Muslims in our own country. They care about their faith, just like we Christians care about our faith. We do have a great country, and it was a great honor, I say to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Chairman WELDON), to be with him on this wonderful trip, which was a fact-finding trip.

As the gentleman mentioned a while ago, we are going to share this trip with the Secretary of State, with the Defense Department, with the national security agencies, and with a lot of entities, even our fellow Congressmen and U.S. Senators, for them to know what happened, how it happened, and that through our trip, and I really believe this, we are going to save a lot of lives. We are going to minimize the loss of life that could have occurred if we had not taken this trip.

God bless the gentleman and God bless this country.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT), our good friend and colleague.

To follow up, we met with the King for 90 minutes at his residence on Sunday, and following that we met for 90 minutes with a dozen or so members of the Unified Front. It was on Monday, the day after we left, that that group came together and publicly announced a solidarity.

We would like to think that our conversations with both of those groups helped to convince them that America was there to work with them as Afghanistani people take over their own country and take back their land from this terrorist operation, this Taliban organization, that does not abide by the rules of civilization, but rather, abides by some commitment to destroying and killing people.

We also said to them, Americans are good people. In fact, we are the largest supplier of humanitarian aid to the Afghan people even today; that assuming we can get rid of the Taliban and Osama bin Laden, and begin to clean up this terrorist network, we are prepared for the long haul to support efforts and endeavors to help them improve their health care, feed their people, take care of their housing and environmental problems; to work with them to join the community of nations.

I think, in fact, this trip did have a significant part of the success in allowing, the day after we left, the King and the opposition leaders to come together in a way that we have not seen up until now.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Michigan is another one of the vital leaders of the task force who was a leader on technology issues in the House. He played a critical role and was involved in both our discussions and in questions, and in engaging in

our meetings. We had some 19 meetings in each of our stops.

I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania very much.

Quite often, we in Congress get in partisan debates here, and are, in effect, sort of in a shell. But on this CODEL, 11 Members of Congress broke out of that shell and went on a CODEL to other parts of the world that was totally bipartisan, probably the most effective trip that I have ever taken.

For the record, I say to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON), allow me to read in the Members that went on that CODEL.

Of course, the chairman of the CODEL was the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON).

The cochairman was the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ), a Democrat.

Other Members were the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT), a Democrat; the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER), a Republican; the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS), a Republican; the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. CRAMER), a Democrat; the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BARTLETT), a Republican; myself, from Michigan; the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES), a Democrat; the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. KERNs), a Republican; and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PLATTS), a Republican.

Sometimes when legislators go and meet with legislators from other countries, the discussion back and forth is more frank than it is sometimes with the bureaucrats, with the diplomats, who have a more formal agenda. So some of the debate and the discussion and some of the criticism of the United States for things that it might have done in the past I think were more readily outcoming to end up not only with a frank discussion, but with actual friendship of these legislators in these other countries.

So I think some of the information that we have garnered is going to be the information that the State Department needs to have, as well as the President of the United States. I saw somewhat of a welcoming by these other countries that have experienced terrorism, that finally the United States is taking it seriously enough to help them do something.

□ 2045

Our briefings in Russia were excellent. Our briefings in Italy were excellent, but let me just read a couple paragraphs out of several good briefings that we had in Turkey. And they gave us several booklets on terror because they have been studying and putting up with terror for a long time.

I think it was about eight different terrorists groups. The PKK was one of

these groups and the introduction to this book on terrorism or the PKK says, this booklet provides a detailed account of some of the terrorist attacks perpetrated in Turkey by the PKK, which is the Kurdish acronym for the Kurdistan Workers Party, one of the most brutal terror organizations in the world, both in terms of number of the victims of its terror acts.

By the way, these acts have been committed, and they go on to say, as a result of the indiscriminate terrorist attack of the PKK, over 30,000 Turkish citizens have lost their lives since 1984, and among these were thousands of innocent victims that included women and children and the elderly and infants.

We learned that the terrorist organizations are organized throughout the world and the training of these terrorists often begins with orphans that are then taken in by the terrorist groups and started to be indoctrinated into the religion and they are indoctrinated and brainwashed, if you will, not just over a short time period but a longer time period. So what we are dealing with is individuals that have been so indoctrinated over their young lives that it is going to be very difficult to indoctrinate them the other way around.

So the question becomes not only what do we with bin Laden, what do we do with other terrorist leaders, what do we do with all these other individuals that have been so trained that their main goal in life is to get rid of the predicament they are in and cause these murders of people that have that same understanding of democracies that we have in the United States.

It is going to be a huge challenge, but one thing we gain from these meetings in other countries is that other countries are willing to help us. One of their questions was are we going to have the will power, the, if you will, intestinal fortitude in the United States to continue this fight against terrorism, not for just months but possibly for years, possibly for a generation if we are going to be successful because the total economic well-being of all of these citizens of the world depend, I think, on our success in this particular battle against terrorism.

And with that I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) for his leadership on this trip.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank our colleague and friend, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) for his comments, for his outstanding contribution on the trip, and for his involvement in the follow-up that is going to be necessary to implement the recommendations that we have, in fact, suggested.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES), my good friend on the other side of the

aisle and this was truly a bipartisan effort. We are good friends anyway, but when the plane took off the ground, we were all one group working together. This gentleman is the chairman of the Hispanic Caucus, representing all of our Hispanic Members in the House, and besides that, a senior member of the Committee on Armed Services, and someone who is a tireless advocate for defending our country, my good friend from El Paso, Texas.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) yielding the time, and Mr. Speaker, this is an important time for our country.

I as well as a number of our colleagues that had the privilege of traveling this weekend and going to Russia, going to Italy, and then winding up the trip in Turkey feel confident that this is one of the most important trips we have taken. This has the ability of redefining the way we look not just at our foreign policy but at the way we deal with the rest of the world.

I want to congratulate our chairman and very good friend Chairman WELDON for his vision and his leadership in putting together a comprehensive document that I hope we will use to define a new relationship between us and Russia.

I had the privilege of participating in a number of the discussions, and it was clear the respect that Chairman WELDON enjoys in Russia, but more than that, I considered it a great privilege to have been part of this trip because at every one of the places that we visited, starting with the visit to Moscow, one of the most poignant moments was driving by the American embassy and seeing huge piles of flowers and wreaths and notes from the citizens of Moscow offering their condolences to a country that lost a number of its citizens on that tragic day of September 11.

Moving on to Rome where we met with a very humble, I thought, king but a committed individual that is willing to do anything and everything, including, he told us, going to Afghanistan the next day. He said I will go back to Afghanistan tomorrow if it makes a difference to my people. A very humble individual that at that point discussed with us his three point plan. A three point plan that includes some very significant recommendations.

The ability to come together in a *loya jirga*, which is a meeting of the senior members of the Afghanistan leadership in Afghanistan, and he was willing to be there alongside with them, but more important, to put together a plan that they would elect a leader for an interim period of 2 years with the guarantee that they would have democratic elections so they would have a democratic government to lead the people.

Finishing out our trip, we visited in Ankara, Turkey, with our best ally in the region, a very tough neighborhood, a neighborhood that has seen repeatedly a tremendous amount of unrest, a very unstable region of the world, but yet a region of the world where we can always rely and count on the friendship, the support, the commitment of the Turks and the Turkish government. And what an important series of meetings and briefings we held there and listened to their recommendations that essentially, if the chairman will recall, they backed up what we heard from the ground commanders from Afghanistan, and that was we do not need to send American troops on the ground. All we need to do is support the Afghanistan's United Front versus the Northern Alliance that we refer to now. More importantly, the fact that if we do not need to risk American lives on the ground in Afghanistan, we should not do it.

Second, we should support the Afghanistan movement. The Northern Alliance, whether we call them the Northern Alliance or the United Front, as they prefer to be called, they know and they explained to us that they have the capability, they have the wherewithal to bring this to a conclusion and defeat the Taliban and its government and take care of Osama bin Laden in the process.

We all know and we have heard from a number of colleagues today that Osama bin Laden and the Taliban are a small part of the bigger challenge we face as we fight terrorism, but a fight worth taking on, a fight that we heard in Moscow, that we heard in Rome, and that we heard in Ankara that it is going to entail a tremendous amount of effort, a tremendous amount of commitment and, ultimately, the benefits will be a safer more prosperous world for everyone.

So I appreciate the opportunity to participate with the chairman on this trip; and more than that, I appreciate the gentleman's confidence and the confidence of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ) in including me in this delegation. I am very proud this evening, jet lag and all, I am proud to stand here before the American people and tell my colleagues that the kind of dedication and commitment we saw on behalf of our country with this delegation will bring us great results.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. I thank my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES). Besides his intellect, besides his aggressiveness and his common sense, his wit added much to the trip. He kept us all smiling as we went from city to city, plane to plane, nonstop, in trying to accomplish and did accomplish all of our objectives.

So it was great and the gentleman's humor added much to our trip. I thank him.

Mr. REYES. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the next member of the delegation who traveled is a senior Member of the House, someone who has earned the respect of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle. He is involved in a number of issues. This, I believe, was his first trip to Moscow; but he was as involved as any other Member and played a key role in helping us articulate our message to the leaders in each of the countries we visited, the gentleman from the State of Florida (Mr. STEARNS).

Mr. STEARNS. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and I am delighted to be here. I thought I would select this side of the aisle just to show what a bipartisan effort the gentleman created through his leadership on this very strategic and important trip that we took to Moscow and, of course, the outskirts of Rome to meet with the exiled king of Afghanistan, and then back into Turkey.

I think, as has been expressed by my other colleagues, Turkey has a key role to play here; and we can learn much from what Turkey has done to combat terrorism. More specifically, in the last 20 years, Turkey has had 30,000 people killed by terrorist acts. Certainly this is a menace in the country, but they have put together an entire program to combat terrorism. And we were briefed by the general staff of the Turkish army on what they had done to protect themselves and their country, and they made broad recommendations for the United States and all countries around this globe of ours to put into place what is necessary if we expect to control terrorism.

Turkey, as my colleagues know, is a land between Europe and Asia and is protected by the straits between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Turkey is quite simply one of the most important countries in the region. It is interesting to note that some of their neighbors are the most hostile, aggressive people: Syria, Iraq, Iran. Prior to that, of course, they were close to Russia, with Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. So it is a very difficult, tough neighborhood, and Turkey occupies a strategic position and is of utmost importance to us.

In fact, Incirlik is an Air Force Base we have there; and through the kindness and support of the Turkish government, we have our military planes there, which has a radius which covers all these countries. So it is extremely important to have the friendship of Turkey. I thought I would put into the record some of the recommendations they have suggested for us, and I hope President Bush will take note of some of these recommendations.

President Bush has done an outstanding job of bringing together consensus. The Prime Minister of England today, Tony Blair, gave an outstanding

speech, putting in perspective some of the things that we have to cope with as a free democracy, a civilized country, when we deal with terrorists.

The terrorist attacks of September 11 has shown that we need international consensus. There are four things that the Turkish government has recommended. First of all, believe it or not, there is not a common definition of what terrorism is throughout the world. Each country seems to have a little different definition for it. If we cannot define what it is, it is going to be hard to go after it. So the first thing we have to do is to define what terrorism is.

And the second thing the Turkey generals suggested is international law related to terrorism, specifically oriented to reciprocity, so that if we are trying to get a terrorist returned to the country where the crime occurred, there will be the ability to do so.

□ 2100

The third thing they said was to establish an international organization that would actually struggle day to day and work out strategic and tactical efforts to defeat terrorism. Today we have not established either in the European Union or in NATO or any community that encompasses all the countries and international organizations.

The last thing they say we should do is to publicize a list of active terrorist organizations and where they are. I think a lot of Americans would be extremely surprised to find that a lot of the cells of these terrorists organizations are in the free democracies. There are a lot of countries that we think they would try to extricate these cell organization, but indeed they are there. They are being harbored there, and perhaps some of these democratic countries do not know it. But in many cases if these terrorist organizations were listed and were discussed and publicized throughout the free world, the countries that are interested in democracy and freedom, they would try to make greater efforts to rid themselves of this menace.

I would conclude by also saying that the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Chairman WELDON) did an excellent job. My colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER), who came into Congress with me in 1988 did an exceptional job also. The gentleman from California, when he was able to set up some of these appointments and because of his long experience dealing with Turkey and also dealing with Afghanistan, and, in fact, having been over there many times on his own participating, he understood a lot about the nuances of this whole situation. It is nice to have his support.

I hope all my colleagues will read some of the recommendations of our report. I hope tonight the gentleman

from Pennsylvania will go through and perhaps touch on some of them. Considering the fact that Turkey has lost so much because of the embargo on Iraq, we might consider forgiveness of Turkey's IMF debt. That is something the gentleman might want to touch on. It will probably be anathema to many Members of Congress; but if you put into perspective some of the sacrifices that Turkey has made, I think there might be some way to help them, because their economy is starting to falter; and we do not need to have that country under that kind of economic stress when we are trying to deal with the terrorists in that area.

Mr. Speaker, I will conclude by saying it was an exceptional trip. I think we have made a difference. Every Member of Congress comes here for one reason and one reason only: he or she wants to make a difference, as small as that might be. Tonight, with this trip I think we just did that. I wanted to praise the chairman and I look forward to working with him on other issues.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank our friend and colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS), for his comments and for his outstanding contributions on our trip and in our meetings.

He mentioned a point that we will be following up on, that is, the fact that Turkey, which has been one of our most loyal allies, has approximately \$5 billion of foreign military sale debts, that we have sold them equipment to help defend our interests and their interests in the region.

Just by their involvement in Desert Storm where they immediately supported the U.S. President's position against Iraq in 1991, when that occurred, they cut off approximately 2 to \$3 billion of sales annually of products to Iraq, resulting in a \$30 billion net decrease in their economy. They did that because they are our friends. When our President asked them to respond, they did not hesitate. They immediately cut off contact with Iraq; and they immediately, even though it cost them billions of dollars, they immediately said we are going to stick with America because America stuck with us back at an earlier time when their sovereignty was being threatened.

So the comments of the gentleman about the need for us to consider forgiving that \$5 billion of debt, maybe over a period of time, maybe all at once, whatever it might be, I think is an outstanding recommendation and one that I would wholeheartedly support.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield?

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, maybe a forbearance or some type of policy, as you point out, where they are strategi-

cally located, and to give us an Air Force Base at that particular site, at Incirlik, and to allow us to have this full freedom with our Air Force is absolutely crucial to that area to protect it.

As I pointed out earlier, their neighbors are hostile and aggressive and their economy is faltering. A lot of the problems they are having is perhaps because of their loyalty to the United States. I think in times of crisis like this, where you have opportunity and danger, it is probably very important to consider how to help them so that their economy is strong and they can continue to support us without any kind of reservation. So some type of forbearance should be thought of by us here in Congress.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I agree with the gentleman and thank him for his comments. I would just add that as we found out that Turkey is a 99 percent Muslim state, yet it is 99 percent behind America and the allies in this effort.

That proves the point that President Bush and all of us have been making. This is not a war against Islam. This is not a war against Muslims. This is a war against a radical band of cowards who hide in the hills, right now hiding in the deep caverns of the mountains of Afghanistan because they know they have done wrong and they are afraid to show their faces. They are being hidden and kept their by the Taliban government that is just as bad as they are because they are harboring these terrorists that will not bring them forward.

Turkey is a critical player. I thank the gentleman for raising that point, and I thank him for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn to one of our junior members. When you first come to Congress you are not expected to play a pivotal role. You are expected to be involved and learn and try to sort out what is going on; but this gentleman has hit the ground running. He has been in the House less than a year. He comes from a very dynamic part of Pennsylvania. He jumped at the opportunity to play a role as we asked to have some younger Members in seniority go on the trip with us.

Two freshmen Members traveled on this trip with us. They were outstanding contributors. This gentleman, who should have a seat on the Committee on Armed Services because of his interest on defense and security issues and because of his commitment to America's security, was an outstanding contributor. He was involved in our discussions. He was articulate in asking questions, and he was credible in offering advice in each of our meetings.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to welcome the gentleman from the State of Pennsylvania (Mr. PLATTS).

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding time to

me and allowing me to share some thoughts. I especially want to thank the gentleman for organizing this delegation trip to Russia, to Rome, and to Turkey, and for including me as a freshman Member. From a personal sense, it provided an exceptional opportunity for me to become much more informed on a number of foreign affairs matters dealing with Russia, dealing with our challenges in Afghanistan, dealing with Turkey in a broad sense but also in a very specific sense.

Mr. Speaker, I felt in our nonstop visits throughout the three nations, I received a crash course in the issues of national security and foreign affairs. I also echo my thanks to the ranking Democratic Member, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ), for his welcoming me into the delegation, and, as a freshman Member, being given this opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, before a couple of comments on the stops, I would like to thank the Air Force and Navy personnel who were critical in making this trip happen. Our Navy liaisons were our escorts at all the stops, the Air Force personnel who assured our safe travel abroad and back, the State Department personnel who played critical roles in our meetings being facilitated. There is a tremendous team of public servants throughout the world doing great work on the Nation's behalf.

I took away from every meeting we had, whether it be with military officials, with civilian elected officials, with private citizens, every person started their conversation with us first with a deep expression of sympathy to our Nation and the loss of lives that we have encountered as a result of the attacks on September 11; and second, from the civilian and military leaders, a strong commitment of support in our war against terrorism, and a strong commitment of support to ensure that justice does prevail as we track down the murderers of our citizens on September 11.

As Americans we have united here at home in this battle against terrorism. Abroad our friends are uniting with us in defeating terrorism and bringing justice to bear against the culprits involved in these attacks.

When I look at the three sites of our stops, I will share some quick comments. In Moscow I came away greatly enthused that the good that we look for in all evil in talking about the attacks on September 11, making sure that we find the good; and one of the good is going to be our relationship with Moscow, specifically relating to joining together and fighting terrorism, and the opportunity to build a strong and lasting relationship with Russia on a whole host of issues: agriculture, energy, national security and defense issue, law and justice issues, environmental issues. The opportunity

is extremely important that we move forward and develop much further a relationship with Russia for the good of our Nation and our citizens and Russia and her citizens and the world in total.

From the elected members of the Duma we met with, I could see their sincere commitment in working with us and have our nations grow closer.

The final two stops, Rome, with the Afghan King, King Zahir Shah, his commitment to try to help his people, and to the courageous commitment of the military leaders that came to Rome to meet with the King and with us. Their commitment to return their nation to a nation where their citizens are safe, secure and living in peace, to have an open and free government, returned to that nation; and the King's three-part plan where he wants to lay out and have the tribal leaders come together to pick an interim leader for their state to go forward and replacing the vacuum that will be created when the Taliban government is removed, as it must be removed, for the sake of the Afghan people and for the sake of people around the world being free from the terrorist state that they are harboring in their country.

The Turkish vision was overwhelming. The knowledge that they shared in our visit Sunday and Monday morning, I came away very grateful that we have such a strong and loyal ally in that region, as was referenced by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS), how we need to better appreciate their loyalty and friendship in the issue of foreign military sales, and how we should look at forgiveness of that debt, and that is not something that they asked for.

In fact, when it was raised how we can help Turkey, the chairman of their Foreign Affairs Committee in the Grand National Assembly saying in a time of crisis, as we are in today, it would be inappropriate to ask for something in return for our support. We want to help as a friend because it is the right thing to do, not because we will get something for it. We Members brought up that issue as something that they deserve, not just for their support now, but for their loyalty as a great ally of us.

Mr. Speaker, the foreign minister, his insights, I think we need to give great weight; and we have recommended them in our report to the administration. Sometimes as Americans we think that we have all of the answers to the world's problems, and we forget that there are a lot of experts that we need to turn to. The foreign minister had a wealth of knowledge on Afghanistan and the relationships between the Northern Alliance, now the United Front, and Pakistan and how we can be effective in working with the citizens.

Mr. Speaker, a final comment relating to the war on terrorism and how it

applies to Afghanistan specifically, is that the King and the military leaders did not come to us and say, come in and save us and do their work. They came to us and said, help us liberate ourselves. They did not ask us to go into the country to rid them of the evil, but help them in doing it themselves. That is what America has been about, standing up on one's own two feet. That is what they are trying to do. They just need some assistance.

I conclude by saying it was a privilege of being included and being given the opportunity to garner such information and knowledge from this trip.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PLATTS) for his involvement and participation in the trip. He was a vital part of our delegation. He will be a continuing rising star in the Congress.

Mr. Speaker, it is now my honor to introduce another member of our delegation who played the most critical role in the Italian portion of our trip. The expertise of the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) on Afghanistan is broad and deep, and it did not start with the bombing of the World Trade Center. He has traveled to that region of the world on numerous occasions. He has interacted with the leadership of Afghanistan, those in exile and those trying to take back their country, and probably has as good a perspective as anyone in the Congress, if not on the Hill, on Afghanistan. I also appreciate the cooperation and support of his assistant, Al Santoli.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER).

□ 2115

Mr. ROHRBACHER. I thank the gentleman very much. We have a very special system of government and we have a very special group of people that live in the United States of America. We are a group of people who are not one race, but we are every race on the planet because we have people who have come here from every ethnic and racial group. We do not represent just one nationality, because we have people who have come here from Europe, from Asia, from Africa, from Spanish-speaking countries and from French-speaking countries.

We have Muslims and we have Buddhists and we have Christians and we have Catholics, and we have about every religion there is, but what ties us together as a people is a love of liberty and justice that was first discovered back about 225 years ago when our Founding Fathers saw that this was something that bound them together as a Nation, and that would be the unifying factor and established this government that we have. How government is made in our country and how policy is made is not just by passing

laws like this but, instead, there is a competition of ideas and a national debate that moves forward on any important issue.

What we just did with the leadership of the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) or should I say Chairman WELDON, not as chairman of our delegation but chairman in the Committee on Armed Services of a very important subcommittee, but what we did in this delegation is make sure that we became part of the national debate, first by educating ourselves firsthand as to what the people on the scene were experiencing and feeling, what was the information on the front lines, and to try to educate ourselves, and then to be articulate and to speak out on the issues as we see them.

That is what has happened. We are now part of that national debate. I really appreciate the leadership that the gentleman from Pennsylvania has provided on this and, by the way, many of the other issues that I have personally involved myself on. I find the gentleman from Pennsylvania got there first and the gentleman from Pennsylvania was providing some leadership when I just sort of jumped on.

I was very happy that on this trip I was able to contribute because I do have a long-term commitment to the people of Afghanistan. I worked with them while I was in the Reagan White House to help get them the weaponry they needed to defeat the Soviet Union. It was their defeat of Soviet troops in Afghanistan in the 1980s that permitted us in the United States to have an era, a 10-year period of prosperity and happiness and peace. The fact is we were spending \$100 billion a year less on military than we did during the Cold War. This, because the Afghan people were so brave. But we walked away from the Afghan people. We walked away and we let them sleep in the rubble. We did not even help them dig up the land mines we had given them to fight the Russians. If there was one, not demand, plea, by the Afghans that we met on this trip, the field commanders who are standing up against the terrorist Taliban regime, the one plea was, please, yes, help us defeat the Taliban by giving us the ammunition we need to do the fighting, but please don't walk away and leave us alone once the fighting has started. Help us build a country where our children can be healthy. Help us build a country where we can have an education system. Help us build a country where people can live decent lives. Don't walk away and abandon us like you did the last time we fought a battle that so benefited the United States as well as benefitting ourselves.

I heard that plea, I have heard that plea a long time before, but I am sure some of our fellow members of this CODEL had not heard that before. We did not do the right thing by Afghani-

stan, and it came back to hurt us. That was a mistake that we made. I will have to say that is not a partisan mistake. That was made by George W. Bush's father when George Bush, Sr. was President. There were some mistakes made. He made another mistake. One mistake he made is after the Gulf War, instead of finishing the job, he permitted his advisers to convince him not to finish off the Saddam Hussein regime. Well, I am afraid we are beginning to make some of these same mistakes again.

We have now the ability to get rid of this terrorist Taliban regime that has so brutalized the people of Afghanistan, and at the same time, has its fingerprints all over the atrocity that was committed in the death of thousands of our fellow citizens in New York on September 11, this murderous Taliban regime that has been a haven for terrorists, for bin Laden. It has been a regime that has permitted 60 percent of the world's heroin to be grown and distributed from within its borders, a regime that makes a mockery of all human rights and has murdered so many of their own people that their own people are terrorized.

That regime is not that much different than the regime of Saddam Hussein. We left Saddam Hussein in power and now there are those in our own State Department, perhaps some of the same people who advised George W.'s father to permit Saddam Hussein to remain, who are now advising George W. Bush to just demand that bin Laden be handed over and let the Taliban stay in power. That cannot happen. That would be making a lie out of George W.'s tremendous speech that he gave here just a week and a half ago.

Either we rid the world of the terrorist regime, the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, or no dictatorship and no terrorist will take our word and take it for granted that they cannot get away with their evil deeds in the future. We will be encouraging dictatorships and terrorist regimes in the future to believe that they can attack the United States, or harbor and help people who are attacking the United States and get away with it.

No, the Taliban must be overthrown. Bin Laden must die. We learned on this trip that we have the means to do this. We have the means to accomplish this end. We met with the king of Afghanistan who is one of the most beloved people in his country. Poor Commander Masood was assassinated a short time ago right before the attack on the World Trade Center. But the king, he is in his 80s, as we met him, it was clear that he has a very sharp mind, but what is more important is that he is surrounded by the most educated and aggressive young Afghans who are willing to come back and provide the expertise needed to govern that country. The king has promised a temporary

transitory regime, a regime that will be just a transition regime that after the overthrow of the Taliban would serve for only 2 years, as I am sure the gentleman has explained this already, and then after 2 years, would give way to some sort of a democratic process that would be put in place so that the Afghan people could control their own destiny through the ballot box.

With our help in rebuilding their country, we can bring a new era of peace to Afghanistan, and instead of being a springboard to destroy the stability of Central Asia and undermine democracy and freedom in Russia and to be a terrorist haven that would murder millions of Americans, or at least thousands of Americans, Afghanistan can become a civilized part of the world community. We have got that opportunity now. We cannot pass it up. Our State Department, I do not know what has gotten into people's heads. I cannot understand the incompetence of people who are still advocating the policy of keeping the Taliban in power.

By the way, we had incompetence as well with our intelligence community who permitted this attack to succeed in the first place. We need to clear out the executive level people in some of these agencies and departments. We need to make sure that we stand firm and that we send a message to the world, if you slaughter Americans, you will pay the price. It is not just rhetoric. We have got to make sure that those words mean something.

It has been my privilege to serve on this delegation with Chairman WELDON. Without Chairman WELDON'S leadership, we could not have, not only had the transportation but we could not have gotten the support we needed to have such a successful mission. Now we are back and we are part of the debate. It is what we are saying here tonight, and what we said out in our press conference today, and what we will say during our briefings to the senior members of this administration, will play a large role in making sure that the President chooses the right path, the path to long-term peace and tranquility which is the path of strength and courage and not deal-making with tyrants and terrorists.

I am very, very grateful to the gentleman from Pennsylvania. I know all of us learned a lot. I think we have accomplished a lot with this journey to Central Asia, to see our friends in Turkey who are standing with us so solidly and to talk to also those people in Russia who want to be our friends, and in the future, build a better future for both our peoples and for the whole world.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. I thank our friend and colleague for his comments, for his outstanding leadership, for his involvement on these issues long before September 11.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask our colleagues to read the text of the material

that is in this special order, the additions that we have supplied, and get a full sense of understanding of what 11 Members of Congress did over the past 5 days. We will be briefing the administration and our leadership, the Speaker and the minority leader and Members of the other body throughout the next several weeks.

Together, supporting our President, we can win, we can replace Osama bin Laden, we can remove the Taliban and allow the people of Afghanistan to regain control of their homeland.

NATIONAL SECURITY IN WAKE OF EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 11

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIBERI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to pass some comments on to a former employee, a former reporter here, who is facing some trying times as he sits in the hospital, Bob Cochran. Bob's son works here in the House. Bob, while I cannot speak to the TV audience, I know that if he were here today, all my colleagues would go up, pat him on the back and wish him our very best. He set a good record while he was here. Once again, he faces another challenge. I am sure that he will be successful.

This evening, Mr. Speaker, I want to visit with my colleagues at length about the Nation's security. Obviously that is the issue on everyone's mind since September 11 and the tragedy that we all witnessed on TV. There are a number of issues that I want to visit with Members about this evening. One of them is the description of the events and the battle that we face, given by even Tony Blair today or Rudy Giuliani yesterday when he spoke to the United Nations, the first time a mayor of New York City has spoken to the United Nations in I do not know how many years. And our brothers in thought and our brothers in capitalism and our brothers in democracy, the United Kingdom and Tony Blair and his speech and his remarks this evening, I want to go over a few of those remarks because I think they are very pertinent.

My analogy of the situation, of the challenge that we face, that our President is so ably leading us through at this time, is a battle that you can figure like it is against a cancer. You know that that cancer is there. We know the viciousness of cancer. I can tell you that some people, as time goes on, some people in our country are saying that, well, this is a perfect example, a perfect time for us to turn the other cheek, for us to kiss and make up, and to pretend that that cancer, that you do not have to eradicate it off your arm or eradicate it from your

body, that you can love it off your body, that you can pray it off your body.

I have no doubt, I am a Christian, I strongly believe in a supreme being, but I believe that our supreme being expects us to have some self-help, that our supreme being does not think that we think that we can discover a horrible cancer on our body and pray it off, or wish that it was not there and somehow it is going to disappear on its own. Or pat it with your hand and think that that cancer is going to turn friendly. Do not be mistaken. I do not think anybody on this floor is. I hope you are not. But do not be mistaken.

This bin Laden is the most vicious cancer that you have ever encountered. It is not a cancer that you can negotiate. The President of this country has made it very clear we will not negotiate with this cancer. It is a cancer that you have no choice but to eradicate, because if you do not, it will be a battle you wish you would not have lost. We cannot, as an American Nation, we cannot as a free world, any country in this free world, afford to lose this battle.

Do not be taken in by some of the peace protesters across the country who interestingly enough in this country have the right to protest and they are protesting against the action that we should take against bin Laden because of the viciousness that it may involve.

□ 2130

This is against bin Laden, whose very strike at the center of America was not to take American lives. That is not the intent of this cancer that is trying striking us. The intent of that cancer that is striking us, the intent of bin Laden and his followers out there, is to destroy a nation, to see the United States and all countries of democracy buckle at the knees, to take them down, as communism was taken down in Russia. That is what their goal is.

These protestors, who are so strong in their thought, ought to take just a moment to see how bin Laden and his followers treat women, for example, what they think about human rights, what they think about homosexuality, what they think about the ethnic issues and the all-men-are-created-equal type of philosophy. Take a look at the prevalence of class structure, of which bin Laden came from, and which bin Laden rules. It defies everything that these peace protestors believe in.

What he is seeking to do is to destroy the constitutional right that our country allows for people to have the freedom of speech, for people to go out and protest. But yet their vision seems to be shortsighted.

Then there are those who I have seen in the last few days who say, well, somehow we can love this thing off, or we can pray this thing away. Look, we

need all the prayers we can get and it will be a strong element of our success, and we need all the love we can gather throughout the world. There is no question about that. In fact, our country has given more foreign aid to Afghanistan than any country in the history of Afghanistan. Our country, of any country in the world, believes in the warmth and the prayer and the need to help other people not so privileged.

But that is not what this is about. This is about a horrible cancer that has attacked everybody in the free world; and, if we are not successful, then logically it will be successful.

Think about the last time you ever saw anybody say that they wanted cancer to be successful. Think about the last time you ever saw anybody that did not want us to have a battle against cancer be successful. We support cancer research through this country strongly; and, I am telling you, the battle we face now is as threatening to our society as cancer is to the human body.

I want to read a little from Tony Blair, some of the comments he made in his speech today. I think it is very appropriate. Let me just read just a couple of quotes. Again, I am quoting from Tony Blair. "There is no compromise possible with such people, no meeting of the minds, no point of understanding with such terror."

Think of the words that Tony Blair said today. Let me repeat them. "There is no compromise possible with such people, no meeting of the minds, no point of understanding with such terror. There is just one choice." And if there were any words I have heard, with the exception of the President's speech given right here on this House floor, these words would come in right behind it. "Defeat it, or be defeated by it." "Defeat it, or be defeated by it." And defeat it we must. That is exactly what Tony Blair said today.

If we do not beat it, it is going to beat us, and the results of it defeating us will be the end of the free world as we know it; the end of democracy, the end of the dreams of the multiple generations, the multiple generations in this country that built this country to the physical strength and to the moral strength that it has, and to the success that this country has. All of that, all of that success, all of that compassion, all of that love, all of that that our predecessors by the hundreds of thousands have laid their lives down for, all of that will be nil if we lose this battle. And that is what Tony Blair says.

He says there is no negotiation. He said, my analysis, you cannot negotiate with cancer. You cannot look at the cancer on your body and say I want to negotiate with it. It has no love, it has no compassion. It only has one goal. Cancer's goal is to destroy your body. That is all it is there for. It is not there to assist your body, it is not