

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

A NEW STRATEGY FOR A BETTER RESULT IN AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, the President has today been given a unique opportunity with the firing of General McChrystal. General McChrystal was the principal author and advocate of the surge of U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

His theory was that it would be a clear hold and transfer—that is, a transfer to the Afghan police, who do not exist, to the Afghan security forces, which are in a state of disarray, and to the Afghan Government, which does not exist meaningfully outside of the capital. He tested his theory in Marjah this spring.

The U.S. and allied forces performed admirably, with tremendous sacrifice and effort. They did, in fact, go into a very hostile area, and they did, in fact, at least temporarily, drive the Taliban and other dissident elements out or underground.

Then he said he was going to bring in government in a box, that it was ready to come in. Now, there wasn't, unfortunately, any government in a box. There is unbelievable corruption rife through the Karzai regime at the national level, through the police and through the security forces. They brought in some police who were not of the area, not of that tribe, and that didn't work out too well. They brought in security forces who refused to do their mission, and they brought in a few, again, government officials who had no local support. They have since left, and pretty much, Marjah has devolved to what it was.

Even before he was fired, General McChrystal admitted that this was going to take a lot longer and was going to be a lot harder than he thought, which means President Obama's dictate of beginning the withdrawal next year is a fantasy. That was part of the criticism that General McChrystal and his allies at the Pentagon put forward.

So there is really a choice here—to get into a very long-term, a very high-level engagement in Afghanistan at a cost of \$30 billion a year and with tremendous sacrifice by our troops on a strategy that has, thus far, not worked or to rethink that strategy, perhaps more along the lines of Vice President BIDEN's ideas, which were also derided by General McChrystal and by some of his colleagues. Actually, what Vice President BIDEN said was, look, mostly this is an internal issue. It's an inter- and intratribal fight. Yes, there are some radical Taliban elements, and there are some radical Pakistani Taliban elements and very few al Qaeda.

How about we guarantee that we will take care of any intervening forces—that is, terrorist forces—coming in from outside, in any number, with a smaller troop presence and with our technology? How about we let the Afghans work out their intertribal/intratribal conflicts that they have been carrying on about for 600 years, and we encourage them to do that and to adopt policies to help them meaningfully rebuild their country?

Instead, General McChrystal won the day, but now he is gone. Now, I understand that the President has said this does not mean a change in policy. I think that he should step back from that remark and should consult again with all of his best security advisers and with the Vice President, and he should look at the results so far and find out what those critical comments were which were mentioned in that article where, basically, the Pentagon is saying, hey, this is going to be years and years and a much bigger force, and maybe there will have to be a second surge into Afghanistan.

Starting to sound like Vietnam to anybody here?

With huge amounts of money, we prop up a government that has no relationship to the rest of the country. They have huge corruption. They don't have support in the countryside. That government falls, and another one comes in and another one. This echoes that failure.

So, in the strongest terms possible, I would urge the President to reconsider, to reconvene his advisers now that General McChrystal is gone, and to think very carefully about a much less expensive, much less troop-intensive strategy to bring about a better result in Afghanistan.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

JUDGE ROBERT CHATIGNY—UNQUALIFIED JUSTICE

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, sexual predators, sexual deviates, sexual criminals are the most despicable of all persons in our society. We can see, maybe, why somebody steals, and maybe we can see why people use drugs, but we as a society do not understand, nor should we, why a person would sexually violate somebody else. You see, when a sex offender commits a crime against another person, in many cases, that person loses their dignity. The predator tries to destroy their humanity, tries to destroy their soul.

I spent a lot of time at the courthouse—8 years—prosecuting cases. I saw a lot of those people. I tried death penalty cases and spent 20 years on the bench hearing everything from stealing to killing. During that time, I saw a lot of these victims of sexual predators come to the courthouse. Many of them during that time seemed, after the crimes were over, to have sort of lost their way. They tried. They tried to recover. They tried to recruit their dignity, but they didn't. I even had victims, years after those cases were over with, call me and try to get other bearings in their lives. Some, unfortunately, even committed suicide based upon those sexual crimes committed against them by sexual predators. Society needs to understand that these real people have real emotional problems.

But, Madam Speaker, there is a rogue judge loose who is out of touch with victims. He seems to be a judge who is very sympathetic to the criminal who commits sexual predator crimes. Let me give you some examples.

In the State of Connecticut, that State passed a version of Megan's Law which requires sexual offenders to register after they're convicted. This Federal judge said, Ah, that's unconstitutional because, as he said, "It stigmatizes the sex offenders." In other words, it hurts their little feelings that they have to register on a sexual database. It seems to me that he was a criminal sympathizer, but the United States Supreme Court unanimously overruled the Federal judge and said his actions were wrong; they were in violation of the Constitution and were in poor judgment.

The same judge consistently reduced the sentences of defendants who were connected to crimes regarding child pornography, and he made excuses for these offenders. He said, Well, it's not really their fault. They had bad childhoods.

You know, I was on the bench a long time. I heard a lot of excuses, and this was one of them.

He also said, Well, it wasn't really their fault. They had addictions.

This one I like the best. He said, Well, it's not really their fault because they had posttraumatic stress because of the fact they were being prosecuted and people knew about it.

Well, yeah. Of course. Hopefully, they had some kind of reaction in that they felt like they were being insulted by being prosecuted. It's kind of like those folks in California, the Menendez brothers, who killed their parents and then complained to the judge that they should get sympathy and compassion because they were now orphans. That's what the judge sort of says in these cases.

He also, in those types of cases, reduced the convictions of sex tourism. Those are the guys, the deviates, who get on the Internet and lure girls to have sex with them. He reduced those sentences, saying, Well, they're generally law-abiding citizens.