

AFGHANISTAN

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, as Congress begins next year to consider a range of policy choices in both domestic and foreign policy areas, I hope that at long last, we will decide that the war in Afghanistan must end.

That war has lasted 9 years and we are now engaged in nation building in a country with a government that I believe is both incompetent and corrupt.

We began the actions in Afghanistan to capture or kill the terrorist groups that had launched the 9/11 attack on our country.

Now, many years later, we are bogged down in a war in Afghanistan where our intelligence officials tell us there is only a minimal presence of the terrorist group al-Qaida. Some estimates put the number of al-Qaida operatives in Afghanistan at fewer than one hundred.

We are now engaged in fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan and, frankly, there are a number of foreign armies that have tried and failed in Afghanistan over many centuries.

I don't believe there is any chance of our ever controlling the tribal regions of Afghanistan.

Furthermore, we ought to be fighting terrorism where terrorists, are rather than where terrorists were. We know that al-Qaida has reconstituted training camps in Northern Pakistan, and we suspect that is where their leadership is. We know al-Qaida is in Somalia and Yemen and other places. But, we are bogged down fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan. And frankly, that is not where the terrorists are.

It is time for our country to understand that this is an effort that will continue to drain our treasury and will result in the deaths of more American troops, but will not result in our controlling the territory of Afghanistan. We will be stuck for a long period of time with a permanent military presence at great cost and we will be paying for Afghanistan's defense even while failing to control the tribal regions of Afghanistan.

Recognition of those facts ought to persuade us to begin withdrawing from Afghanistan as soon as possible and begin pursuing terrorists where terrorists are now, not where they were then.

 TRIBUTE TO GARY DIONNE

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, next month marks the retirement of Mr. Gary Dionne after 34 years in government service. Throughout this time, Gary has been both the consummate professional and a friendly presence in the halls here on Capitol Hill.

Mr. Dionne currently is the deputy director of the Office of Legislative Affairs for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and will be retiring from Federal service after fulfilling a career of dedicated support to the U.S. intelligence community and the National Security mission. A senior in-

telligence officer, Mr. Dionne has had a varied and distinguished career, having worked in different positions and capacities for the Department of Navy, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. For most of that time, Gary worked in the intelligence field where efforts and successes are not always rewarded publicly. I am glad we can do so here today.

Mr. Dionne, the son of Roland and Eva Dionne, a draftsman and consumer sales representative respectively, was raised in the small suburban town of Leominster, MA, a town known best as a hub for plastic factories but gained world-renowned fame as the originator of the plastic pink flamingo!

Following graduation from Leominster High School in 1975, Mr. Dionne enlisted in the U.S. Navy as a cryptologic technician radioman. Trained in Morse code and high frequency direction finding, Petty Officer Dionne supported U.S. Naval Intelligence while stationed in Augsburg, Germany, followed by a fleet assignment to the Command for Middle East Forces. As a member of the admiral's staff, Mr. Dionne provided intelligence support aboard the U.S.S. La Salle, U.S.S. Vreeland, U.S.S. Elmer Montgomery, U.S.S. Blandy, and the U.S.S. Aylwin.

Completing an enlistment with the U.S. Navy, Mr. Dionne subsequently joined the Central Intelligence Agency in 1981. Following training as a communications officer within the Office of Communications, Mr. Dionne supported intelligence activities in Central America and on back-to-back assignments to West Africa where he was promoted to Officer in Charge of the Telecommunications Unit. In this position he was responsible for the daily supervision of personnel and technical resources to maintain a multimillion-dollar communications facility.

After returning to CIA Headquarters, Mr. Dionne was assigned as deputy chief, headquarters operations branch, where he was responsible for VIP communications in domestic and foreign activities. This included communications support for the Director of Central Intelligence as well as support for Presidential and Cabinet members travel. Building on his technical background, he attended classes at George Mason University working toward a bachelor's degree in network management.

In 1994, Mr. Dionne assumed the responsibility of associate director, of the Agency Network Management Center where he had oversight responsibility for the daily health and welfare of the domestic telecommunications network. Mr. Dionne was then selected as chief of the resource management staff, operations group, where he managed the tactical and strategic direction for a multimillion-dollar telecommunications operational budget. This was an extremely rewarding assignment for Mr. Dionne where his ef-

forts directly supported for the agency's world-wide activities.

Mr. Dionne was selected to participate as a congressional fellow through the Government Affairs Institute at Georgetown University where he acquired a certificate in legislative studies. Mr. Dionne accepted a position on the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce staff and provided technical support to the Subcommittee on Communications, Technology and the Internet, as well as to the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. Mr. Dionne viewed his experience in Congress as an awe-inspiring, humbling experience where he witnessed truly remarkable people working the most difficult challenges on behalf of America.

In 2002, following his fellowship in Congress, Mr. Dionne returned to the CIA in the Office of Congressional Affairs where as a liaison officer, he managed congressional activities for the community management account and the directorate of operations. Following the tragedy of September 11, 2001, Mr. Dionne was identified as the responsible congressional liaison officer for all intelligence community engagements with the Congressional Joint Intelligence Committee as Congress conducted their review of the intelligence failures leading up to September 11. From there Mr. Dionne served as the congressional liaison to the National Counter Terrorism Center and to its predecessor, the Terrorist Threat Integration Center. In 2007, Mr. Dionne was selected in to his current assignment as the deputy director of the Office of Legislative Affairs, for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Throughout his career and travels around the world, Mr. Dionne is most grateful to have had the loving support of his wife Catherine who grew up in the same little factory town and whom he has known since they were in middle school together. He is so proud of his two daughters, Danielle, for serving as a 1st grade school teacher in Loudoun County, VA, and his daughter Antonia, for her ability to master Mandarin and who is presently working at the U.S.-China Policy Foundation in Washington, DC.

Mr. Dionne, thank you for your service to our country and good luck in all your future endeavors.

 YOUTH DRUG USE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, it is with great sadness and concern that I report that more and more kids are turning to drugs. Recently released annual studies that track drug use trends among youth and adults are indicating rapid increases in drug use among all age groups. The most recent National Survey on Drug Use and Health indicates drug use among people aged 12 and older increased by 9 percent since 2008. According to this survey, over 7 million people in the past year are estimated to have used drugs. Among these

numbers, it is estimated that over 4 million people have abused marijuana, which is well over half of all drug abusers in this survey.

Even more disturbing are the rapid increases in drug use among America's youth. New figures from the Monitoring the Future Study, which is conducted by the University of Michigan and surveys school age kids' drug use from 8th grade to 12th grade, have shot up significantly. The rapid increases are due to higher use rates of marijuana among all age groups. Among the youngest surveyed, marijuana use jumped to 16 percent from 14.5 percent in the past year. Marijuana use has increased so much among high school seniors that more are now smoking marijuana than tobacco in the past 30 days. According to this survey, more than one in three high school seniors have smoked marijuana in the past year. Also troubling are the increases in the use of ecstasy, heroin, and the ongoing high abuse rates of prescription and over-the-counter medicines. On top of all this, the survey also determined that accompanying the increased drug use was a decreased perception that drugs are harmful.

In my home State of Iowa, the Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy reports in their 2011 Drug Control Strategy that marijuana continues to be the most abused illegal drug in Iowa. According to this report, nearly two-thirds of all children in substance abuse treatment are there for marijuana use. It is reported that these are the highest rates of marijuana-using treatment clients in recent Iowa history. The 2008 Iowa youth survey also shows that over one in four Iowa 11th graders have used marijuana in the past year.

It is easy to read these numbers but not fully grasp the magnitude of what is happening in this country. Dr. Nora Volkow, the director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, states that the earlier teenagers start using marijuana the greater the risk they will have down the road. Dr. Volkow states, "Not only does marijuana affect learning, judgment, and motor skills, but research tells us that about 1 in 6 people who start using it as adolescents become addicted." The more we have young people turning to drugs the more they are putting their health and futures on the line. Not only do these numbers suggest more young people are putting themselves at risk, but they also show that the future of the country is at risk. These numbers are completely unacceptable and they illustrate that we are failing our kids.

How did we get to this point? The National Survey on Drug Use and Health stated that while their findings are disappointing, they were not unexpected. The survey reported that data from the past two years have shown that young people's attitudes about drugs and their risks have been "softening." This means that kids are more and more coming to the conclusion that drug use

really isn't as bad as it is made out to be. The Monitoring the Future Survey also indicates that young people's perceptions on drug use, especially the harms associated with marijuana use, are rapidly moving in a negative direction. The survey states, "Increases in youth drug use . . . are disappointing, and mixed messages about drug legalization—particularly of marijuana—may be contributing to the trend. Such messages only hinder the efforts of parents who are trying to prevent their kids from using drugs." Dr. Volkow also agrees that the debate over legalizing marijuana is contributing to the rising youth drug abuse rates. Dr. Volkow states, "We should examine the extent to which the debate over medical marijuana and marijuana legalization for adults is affecting teens' perceptions of risk."

The Obama administration also appears to agree with the above conclusions. The national drug czar, Gil Kerlikowski, who is Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy states, "The increases in youth drug use . . . are disappointing. And mixed messages about drug legalization, particularly marijuana legalization, may be to blame. Such messages certainly don't help parents who are trying to prevent young people from using drugs." I could not agree more with this statement. However, I can't help but feel that this administration is contributing to the problem and not the solution.

In October 2009, the Department of Justice issued a memorandum to all U.S. attorneys regarding the prosecution of individuals who use or sell marijuana for medical purposes in states that allow it. This new policy states that U.S. attorneys should not expend resources to prosecute individuals who are complying with State laws regarding selling, possession, and use of marijuana for medical purposes. These State laws are in direct conflict with long existing Federal laws. The memorandum also states that this new policy will not alter the Department's authority to enforce Federal law.

This confusing policy attempts to have it both ways. The DOJ is telling U.S. attorneys that they should not prosecute people in States that allow medical marijuana, but the policy does not prevent them from doing so. This policy is a departure from the long-standing DOJ position to prosecute individuals who violate Federal law notwithstanding State law. This policy is ill advised, misguided, and internally inconsistent. It also sends the wrong message that this administration is deciding which laws it would prefer to enforce rather than upholding and aggressively enforcing all existing laws.

Unfortunately, the mixed messages don't stop there. Just a few weeks ago, the Judiciary Committee took up the nomination of Michelle Leonhart to be Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration. Following her hearing, I asked a pretty straight for-

ward question, did she support efforts to decriminalize or legalize the use, production, or distribution of marijuana, for medical purposes or otherwise. I was disappointed when I received her response that simply stated, "I support the Administration in its clear and steadfast opposition to the legalization of marijuana." While I agree that the administration should be "clear and steadfast" in opposing the legalization of marijuana, her answers did not address the issue of decriminalization. In fact, it took a follow-up letter from me to Ms. Leonhart to clarify this response where she finally stated she was "concerned with any actions that would lead to increased use of abuse and therefore, do[es] not support decriminalizing the cultivation, distribution, and use of marijuana for any purpose other than legitimate research." While I appreciate this more detailed response, it raises questions as to why this more comprehensive answer wasn't part of her initial response to my question. It is this sort of inconsistent response to simple questions on drug use that is sending mixed messages to minors across the country regarding the legalization and decriminalization of marijuana.

We should not be getting mixed messages on marijuana use. The Obama administration should send a strong, unequivocal message to kids that marijuana use is harmful, rather than issuing inconsistent statements and new policies that endorse State efforts to legalize marijuana use in certain instances.

I have long supported a unified, and consistent antidrug message combined with grassroots community efforts to combat drug abuse in all forms. Kids need to constantly hear the message that drug use is harmful and not safe. They need to hear it from all sectors of the community whether it comes from home, school, or anywhere else. That is why I continually support local community antidrug coalitions. These coalitions are on the front lines in communities and are probably our best weapon in the fight against drug abuse. The people who comprise these coalitions care deeply about their communities and they should be supported in their efforts.

If the Obama administration truly believes that the rise in youth drug use is blamed in part on sending mixed messages about marijuana then they need to reconsider their own actions. We need to recognize the importance of sending strong and united messages about marijuana and drug use at large. We can start by being consistent with our own words and actions. Perhaps then we may be able to start to reverse the rising trends in youth drug use that have occurred since President Obama took office.

TROOP THANKSGIVING RECOGNITION

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I want to share with you a story of Thanksgiving that touched my heart. I am doing it just before Christmas to have you think about the effect of holidays on people away from home and especially troops stationed away from home and something you might do on a very small scale.

Two years ago, a barber in Cheyenne, WY, was cutting the hair of a young man from F. E. Warren Air Force Base and asked him what he was going to do for Thanksgiving. The airman guessed he would be spending it on the base. The barber, Glen Chavez said, Why don't you have Thanksgiving with my wife and I? Then Glen decided he better tell his wife. When he did she said, "Glen, I know you. It won't be just one and it won't be limited to a dozen. I'll help, but we need to find someplace bigger than our home." So Glen asked the Masonic Lodge if he could use their building. They said yes and Glen with the help of some friends fed 300 people from the base. Yes, the base serves a Thanksgiving dinner, but it is not the same if you eat it in the same mess hall you eat in every day. Chavez said he started the event to combat the loneliness that many members of the military feel when they are away from their families during the holidays.

The dinner was such a success that Glen decided to invite even more for the next year and to have more of the community involved. I am sure there is not a base and city anywhere that has the degree of cooperation and concern as Cheyenne and Warren Air Force Base. For example, people from the base help construct Habitat for Humanity homes. The school district built a new school on the base that also has kids attend who do not live on the base and have no military connection. The mix benefits everyone. Glen spent the year getting ready for this event speaking and enlisting the Chamber of Commerce and speaking at Lions, Rotary, and Kiwanis, to name a few.

So this year was the Second Annual Salute to our Troops. Steve Sears of Cheyenne Stitch donated T-shirts for the volunteers. The fire department cooked turkeys. They deep fried seven an hour for the 24 hours before the meal. A service club cooked 750 pounds of potatoes and mashed them. People from all over the community baked pies and cakes. Dozens of other volunteers helped out. Businesses donated door prizes. One prize was a 40-inch HD TV. This Thanksgiving they served over 500 people.

This year there was publicity to be sure all were invited. Posters went up all over the base and town. Some of that publicity made it to the blogosphere nationally. Glen got calls from 14 States commenting on the good idea and checking to see if they could duplicate it. Many who called told of personal difficulties, some with tragic endings, that this kind of an event can perhaps prevent.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for an article about the event from the Wyoming Tribune Eagle to be printed in the RECORD. I want to thank Glen Chavez, the barber, for his idea and his ability to turn a dream into reality. Thanks also to all who made the dinner and appreciation of our troops possible.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Wyoming Tribune-Eagle, Nov. 13, 2010]

TROOPS GET A BIG THANK-YOU

(By Josh Mitchell)

CHEYENNE—Daniel Fletcher with the Army National Guard has two families, and he felt fortunate to be with one of them on Thanksgiving.

The family he was with consisted of fellow soldiers and was some 500 members strong.

His other family is spread across the United States.

As Fletcher sat at a table surrounded by other soldiers at the Masonic Lodge, he reflected on the importance of being with loved ones on Thanksgiving.

"It means quite a bit," he said.

But Fletcher, 28, would have been alone on Thanksgiving had it not been for the outpouring of support from about 150 volunteers.

"I was going to sit at home and eat a TV dinner," Fletcher said.

The Second Annual Military Appreciation Free Thanksgiving Dinner hosted by Glen's Barber Shop of Cheyenne is an effort to show the gratitude owed to members of the armed services, organizer Glen Chavez said.

As Chavez looked across the dining room at families gathered around tables, he noted, "This is going to change Thanksgiving forever. Look at how awesome this is."

Chavez said he started the event to combat the loneliness that many members of the military feel when they are away from their families during the holidays.

The military serves the United States all year, and Chavez said it feels good to serve the soldiers for one day.

The support that Cheyenne shows for the military surprised Fletcher, who is from Poisson, Mont. He said when he returned from Iraq he didn't think he would be greeted with much respect, but now he sees that there is a lot of support for the soldiers.

Sue Mattingly is not a member of the military, but she still feels a camaraderie with the local soldiers. Mattingly broke down into tears as she talked about losing her dad this year.

After her loss, local soldiers were there for Mattingly, who is a cook at the bowling alley, where many of the soldiers spend time. "They're like a family to me," Mattingly said. "Even though I'm a civilian, I feel like I've known them all my life."

Being away from family while serving overseas is just part of being a soldier, Greg Wheeler with the Wyoming Air National Guard said.

"It is what it is," Wheeler said. "You don't join the military and expect to be home every holiday."

But Wheeler was fortunate to be sitting at a table with his wife, children, mom and dad this Thanksgiving.

Marvin Wolf of Cheyenne remembers spending a Thanksgiving in South Korea during the Korean War.

"We had turkey, shrimp and all the trimmings," Wolf said. Wolf agreed that spending Thanksgiving with fellow soldiers is like being with a big family.

This Thanksgiving, Wolf said he is thankful for being an American citizen and for all the opportunities that the United States has offered his family.

Life is all about love and family, Wolf said. "That's what brings us together," he said.

Jennifer Roberts, whose husband is in the Air Force, was enjoying the Thanksgiving meal with her three children. Her husband couldn't attend the dinner because he was scheduled to work on the base in Cheyenne.

But having him at the base here was better than a couple of years ago when he was in Iraq over the holidays.

Her daughter, Brooke Roberts, 12, said, she is grateful to have her dad home this year.

Jennifer Roberts said tears came to her eyes when she arrived at the military Thanksgiving dinner Thursday.

"It makes you feel at home," said Roberts, who is from North Carolina.

There were over 50 sponsors for the event. U.S. Sen. Mike Enzi, R-Wyo., also made an appearance.

Chavez said he wants Enzi to take the idea of the military Thanksgiving dinner back to Washington to make it a national event.

Volunteer Terri Clark said, "It's an honor to serve them. They serve us. So it's the least we can do."

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CARROLL COLLEGE FIGHTING SAINTS

• Mr. BAUCUS. Madam President, today I wish to recognize an outstanding championship college football team from my home State.

This past Saturday in Rome, GA the Carroll College Fighting Saints claimed another National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics national title with a hard fought 10 to 7 win over rival and fellow NAIA powerhouse the University of Sioux Falls Cougars. The win gives the Fighting Saints an unprecedented sixth national title in the past nine seasons. Coming into the game, Sioux Falls had won 42 games in a row. In fact, their last loss was to Carroll in the 2007 title game.

Carroll College is a private, Catholic college in my hometown of Helena, MT. Carroll boasts an enrollment of about 1,500 students and is known around the country for its award-winning academic and preprofessional programs. The school is particularly strong in premedical, engineering, and nursing programs.

The game Saturday was a hard-fought victory marked by key big plays on offense led by Saints quarterback Gary Wagner and a tough defense that shut down the Cougars high-powered offense. Wagner, a native of Havre, MT, was named the offensive player of the game and scored the Saints' only touchdown on an amazing 83-yard run. The winning points were provided by place kicker Tom Yaremko on a clutch 22 yard field goal in the fourth quarter.

I would like to congratulate head coach Mike Van Diest and his coaching staff, along with Athletic Director Bruce Parker and Doctor Tom Trebon, the president of Carroll College, for their hard work and dedication in