

in the village of Qarabagh. "After the explosions, the polling stations reopened and people rushed to vote," said Mohasmmad Sangar, 32, a used-car salesman there. "It was a great day today."

Nicholas Haysom, the United Nations' top election official here, said: "We know that the Taliban have made a very explicit and express threat to disrupt it. The failure to disrupt the elections will mean that they will have egg on their face after the elections."

While there were reports of disrupted voting in troubled places like Logar Province and neighboring Wardak, in Helmand Province in the south and Nangarhar Province in the east, at the same time voters were showing up in unexpectedly high numbers in other places, like Zabul, Uruzgan and Kandahar Provinces in the south, and Kunar Province in the northeast, despite strong insurgent presences in those areas.

In Uruzgan, election authorities had to open additional polling places to accommodate unexpected numbers, while in Daikundi they ran out of ballots in some remote districts and election authorities had to race new ones out to them. In northern Mazar-i-Sharif, voters were still lined up after dark.

Underwritten by \$100 million from the United Nations and foreign donors, the election was a huge enterprise, stretching across extremely forbidding terrain. Some 3,200 donkeys were pressed into service to deliver ballots to remote mountain villages, along with battalions of trucks and minibuses to 6,500 polling places in all. The American military pitched in with air transport of ballots to four regional distribution centers, and to two difficult-to-reach provinces.

Though many international observers left Afghanistan in the wake of attacks on foreigners, or found themselves confined to quarters in Kabul, years of expensive preparations and training of an army of some 70,000 Afghan election observers were expected to compensate, according to Western diplomats and Afghan election officials. "We have so many controls now, it's going to be much safer this time," said Noor Ahmad Noor, the spokesman for the Independent Election Commission.

The American ambassador, James B. Cunningham, called the elections a "really historic opportunity for the people of Afghanistan to move forward with something we've been trying to create together with them for several years now."

Still up in the air is the question of whether an American troop force will remain in Afghanistan after 2014. Mr. Karzai's refusal to sign a long-term security deal to allow that presence was a major point of tension between the American and Afghan govern-

ments. Each of the leading candidates has agreed to sign the deal once in office, though inauguration day may not take place until well into the year.

The election on Saturday was notable also for how many Afghan women were taking part. More female candidates than ever before are on provincial ballots, and two are running for vice president, the first time a woman was ever put up for national office here, which has generated a great deal of enthusiasm, especially in urban areas.

At the women's polling station in the Nadaria High School, in Kabul's Qala-e-Fatullah neighborhood, among those lining up to vote was a young mother, Parwash Naseri, 21. Although wearing the blue burqa that is traditional here, she was still willing to speak out through the privacy mesh covering her face.

She was voting, for the first time, for her children and for women's rights, she said, speaking in a whisper. "I believe in the right of women to take part just as men do, to get themselves educated and to work."

Mr. CASEY. I wish to highlight two quotes. The first is from a 21-year-old woman who is voting for the first time in this election:

She was voting, for the first time, for her children and for women's rights, she said, speaking in a whisper. "I believe in the right of women to take part just as men do, to get themselves educated and to work."

A remarkable inspiration from a 21-year-old woman voting for the first time in Afghanistan.

The second quotation is from a 60-year-old farmer who was asked by a reporter what it was like to vote under the threats that were either proximate—meaning something happening in almost real time or in the recent past—or just the overall threat posed by the Taliban and other extremists. This farmer said:

I left everything behind, my fears and my work, and came to use my vote. I want a change and a good government . . .

He goes on from there to describe what he hopes will happen. But just imagine that. He said:

I left everything behind, my fears and my work, and came to use my vote.

When I read that, I thought about something Thomas Jefferson said in a letter to John Adams when he was an older man. He was describing the fear of old age—not the kind of fear of reprisal if you were voting but the fear of

growing old. He talked about how he dealt with the fear of growing old in nautical terms. He said: "I steer my bark with hope in the head, leaving fear astern." That is all I thought about when I heard what the 60-year-old farmer said; that even though he had fears—the fear of death, the fear of reprisal against him, his family or people in his neighborhood—he was willing to say his right to vote was so important he was willing to leave those fears and his work behind so he could vote.

What a tremendous inspiration on a subject—the conflict in Afghanistan and all which comes from it that often is not the subject of positive commentary or inspiration. For once and all too infrequently, this is one of those occasions where we can be positive about a result.

We have more work to do to make sure the bilateral security agreement is signed, but we should draw some measure of inspiration from what happened in Afghanistan and the progress which has been made there.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:49 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, April 9, 2014, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate April 8, 2014:

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

FRANK G. KLOTZ, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY FOR NUCLEAR SECURITY.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NEIL GREGORY KORNZE, OF NEVADA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. PAUL J. SELVA