

Returning to the book, "Funding the Enemy" shows: "With the vague intention of winning hearts and minds in Afghanistan, the U.S. Government has mismanaged billions of development and logistics dollars, bolstered the drug trade, and dumped untold millions into Taliban hands."

President Trump and Douglas Wissing clearly agree. Afghanistan is a failed policy.

Mr. Speaker, that is why Congressman JOHN GARAMENDI and I have introduced H.R. 1666, asking for a debate on Afghanistan and a new AUMF. You can vote against the bill, but the discussion is still needed. We are joined by at least 13 of our colleagues in support, and I hope more Members in both parties will join us. All we are asking for is a debate.

Mr. Speaker, the week before the Fourth of July, I handed a letter to Speaker RYAN asking for a debate, which I include in the RECORD.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 27, 2017.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker of the House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: First, let me commend you on your words regarding the need for Congress to find increased civility following the tragic shooting in Alexandria. Your words were very prophetic at this time in history.

Sir, respectfully, your recent response to my Afghanistan letter was very disappointing. At the time of my writing this, President Trump has decided to give troop level increase authority over to James Mattis. Now more than ever, it is time for a policy debate on the future in Afghanistan by the U.S. House of Representatives. The bill that I have introduced, H.R. 1666, would allow that debate.

Members of both parties are so frustrated by the 16 years we have spent in Afghanistan. Without further intervention by Congress, the loss of life and the waste of tax dollars in that country will continue. Sir, you have the authority as Speaker of the House to instruct the U.S. House committees to debate this conflict.

Let me close with a sentence from a recent email I received from the 31st Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Chuck Krulack: "[Afghanistan] is fragmented . . . tribal . . . controlled by war lords, economically a basket case, no real government outside of Kabul and that is questionable, a poorly organized and led Army (who will shoot at Americans as well as the 'enemy'), and no sense of what the country wants to be."

On behalf of all Americans who have died in Afghanistan, and the continued waste, fraud and abuse of money that persists, I respectfully ask how much longer will Congress do nothing? Please join in our effort to bring a debate to the House floor. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

WALTER B. JONES,
Member of Congress.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I said that if he doesn't read my letter, at least read the comments from the 31st Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, my friend and unofficial adviser, General Chuck Krulack. This is what I wanted PAUL RYAN to read, and I hope he did read it: "No one has ever con-

quered Afghanistan . . . and many have tried. We will join the list of nations that have tried and failed."

How prophetic is that, Mr. Speaker, that we will continue to go down this road and see this country spend and waste lives for absolutely nothing, known as Afghanistan?

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, this Saturday, my staff and I finished our 34th townhall in the home of one of America's greatest citizens: my mentor and my hero, Bob Dole. At every location we go, most often, several people ask me about the \$20 trillion of deficit this country has and our debt, the \$600 billion of deficit we have every year. Americans work too hard and there are too many worthwhile functions of government for the Federal Government to irresponsibly spend taxpayer dollars.

From the time I started thinking about running for office, it has been a priority of mine to help create a fiscally responsible plan to reduce our annual deficits and national debt. Yet again, this year, 70 percent of our budget is mandatory spending—70 percent of our budget is mandatory spending—and therefore is spent before the annual appropriations discussions even begin. If we hope to eliminate the deficit, we must address mandatory spending programs and be willing to engage in tough conversations.

This administration and Congress have taken steps to limit bureaucracy and rein in the size and scope of the Federal Government. In this spirit, we hope Congress stays true to this objective as we debate the upcoming budget in order to ensure that our limited taxpayer dollars are spent where they are most needed.

CLARK COUNTY, KANSAS

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring my colleagues up to date on my last visit to Clark County, Kansas.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues may remember that earlier this year wildfires consumed a vast sum of Clark County. The wildfires wrought havoc for many ranchers, farmers, families, and landowners in Clark County and across much of southwest Kansas, not to mention parts of Texas, Colorado, and Oklahoma. Besides the lives lost, including one in Kansas, thousands of livestock, 650,000 acres, and many family properties that had been passed down through generations burned in this disastrous blaze.

Through the perseverance of Kansans living in this region, a considerable amount of progress has been made since I visited right after the fires in March thanks to so many people throughout the country who donated hay as well as their personal services helping rebuild the hundreds of miles of fences that were burned down.

After visiting with the Giles family and the Grigsby family—both families impacted by the fires—their resilience, their strength, and their faith was made clear. These are the type of folks who are now working day in and day out to restore this section of the heartland.

I am delighted to see green rising in the pastures which was once scorched earth, burnt-to-the-ground grass. I am again reminded of the honor I have of working to represent some of the most hardworking Americans in the world: the Kansas agriculture, the Kansas farmers, and the Kansas ranchers.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Loving and gracious God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We pray for the needs of the Nation, the world, and all of creation. Bless those who seek to honor You and serve each other and all Americans in this House through their public service. May the words and deeds of this place reflect an earnest desire for justice, and may men and women in government build on the tradition of equity and truth that represents the noblest heritage of our Nation.

These July days are busy, and the work to be done in the people's House is complicated—and very important. Bless all Members with a surfeit of energy, wisdom, patience, and firm resolve to do their best work for the benefit of all Americans.

May Your blessing, O God, be with us this day and every day to come, and may all we do be done for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) come forward and