

RADIO FREE AFGHANISTAN ACT

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 2998) to authorize the establishment of Radio Free Afghanistan.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Radio Free Afghanistan Act".

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF RADIO FREE AFGHANISTAN.

(a) *REQUIREMENT OF A DETAILED PLAN.—Not later than 15 days after the date of enactment of this Act, RFE/RL, Incorporated, shall submit to the Broadcasting Board of Governors a report setting forth a detailed plan for the provision by RFE/RL, Incorporated, of surrogate broadcasting services in the Dari and Pashto languages to Afghanistan. Such broadcasting services shall be known as "Radio Free Afghanistan".*

(b) *GRANT AUTHORITY.—*

(1) *IN GENERAL.—Effective 15 days after the date of enactment of this Act, or the date on which the report required by subsection (a) is submitted, whichever is later, the Broadcasting Board of Governors is authorized to make grants to support Radio Free Afghanistan.*

(2) *SUPERSEDES EXISTING LIMITATION ON TOTAL ANNUAL GRANT AMOUNTS.—Grants made to RFE/RL, Incorporated, during the fiscal year 2002 for support of Radio Free Afghanistan may be made without regard to section 308(c) of the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994 (22 U.S.C. 6207(c)).*

(c) *AVAILABLE AUTHORITIES.—In addition to the authorities in this Act, the authorities applicable to carry out United States Government broadcasting activities under the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948, the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994, the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998, and other provisions of law consistent with such purpose may be used to carry out the grant authority of subsection (b).*

(d) *STANDARDS; OVERSIGHT.—Radio Free Afghanistan shall adhere to the same standards of professionalism and accountability, and shall be subject to the same oversight mechanisms, as other services of RFE/RL, Incorporated.*

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) *IN GENERAL.—In addition to such amounts as are otherwise available for such purposes, the following amounts are authorized to be appropriated to carry out United States Government broadcasting activities under the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948, the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994, the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998, and this Act, and to carry out other authorities in law consistent with such purposes:*

(1) *For "International Broadcasting Operations", \$8,000,000 for the fiscal year 2002.*

(2) *For "Broadcasting Capital Improvements", \$9,000,000 for the fiscal year 2002.*

(b) *AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Amounts appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) are authorized to remain available until expended.*

SEC. 4. REPEAL OF BAN ON UNITED STATES TRANSMITTER IN KUWAIT.

Section 226 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 (Public Law 103-236; 108 Stat. 423), is repealed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill authorizes the establishment of a new radio service for Afghanistan. The new service will be called Radio Free Afghanistan and will broadcast in the Dari and Pashtu languages. The legislation provides the Broadcasting Board of Governors with the authority to make a grant to Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty to carry out this new broadcast service.

As a result of the hard work of the bill's original sponsor, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), the subcommittee chairman, the House passed H.R. 2998 by a vote of 405 to 2 on November 7, 2001. The bill, as amended by the Senate, provides \$17 million for fiscal year 2002 for this purpose. I believe the House should concur with the Senate amendment, which makes the following changes to the original House bill:

One, the Senate amendment authorizes funds for fiscal 2002. The House bill was a 2-year authorization. Two, the Senate bill authorizes a total of \$17 million for Radio Free Afghanistan. The House bill authorized \$27.5 million over 2 years. Three, the Senate bill includes an adjustment to the statutory funding cap on Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty to accommodate the additional funds required for Radio Free Afghanistan.

All of these changes are acceptable to the committee, and I urge my colleagues to support this measure. Such broadcasting will support the transition in Afghanistan. Concurring in the Senate amendment to the bill will allow it to be sent to the White House for the President's signature.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would first like to commend my good friends and colleagues on the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN), for introducing this bill, and Chairman HYDE for his leadership in bringing the legislation to the floor of the House.

Mr. Speaker, much has changed in the 5 months since the attacks of September 11. Global alliances have shifted, and the world has united against the forces of barbarism and evil. The United States finds itself leading an unprecedented coalition against inter-

national terrorism. In short order, we have helped to liberate the people of Afghanistan from the repressive rule of the Taliban regime and their al Qaeda cohorts.

But the fog of war has not yet lifted from Afghanistan, and the war on terrorism is very far from being over. We are fighting a new kind of war which requires new tactics. Our military is adjusting to this asymmetrical warfare with elite forces using the newest U.S. technology and the smartest weapons.

But to win this war, we need more than smart bombs, we need smart diplomacy. We must have more agile tools to communicate our message more effectively. The terrorists use fear and intimidation, lies and half truth to manipulate young minds. International broadcasting and public diplomacy are critical to combating these terrorist tactics and broadening international understanding of the United States and the values that form the basis of our foreign policy.

We cannot win the information war and, hence, the war against terrorism, if we shortchange our public diplomacy. I was dismayed, Mr. Speaker, to see the cuts in funding for international broadcasting in the administration's budget. Not only are there insufficient funds to meet the world-wide programming needs for Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty, Voice of America, and Radio Free Asia; but the administration's budget does not request a single penny for Radio Free Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, it is in this context that I rise in support of H.R. 2998, the Radio Free Afghanistan Act of 2001. Radio Free Afghanistan could be an important element of our foreign policy arsenal, and passage of this legislation will hopefully encourage the administration to seek funding for this new and worthy initiative.

But the imperative of creating a Radio Free Afghanistan is just one example of the need to bolster funding for all areas of the U.S. diplomatic and public diplomacy arsenal. We must increase, not decrease, funds for the international broadcasting agencies.

We must also support the Agency for International Development, which strives to help the poor, the hungry, the illiterate, and the oppressed in Afghanistan and Albania and all across Africa. And we must support the thousands of men and women who represent this Nation in our embassies and consulates across the globe. These are the individuals and the institutions who are on the front lines of the new war we are fighting.

If we are to win this war, we must equip our diplomats with the best tools and the best training, boost or development assistance, and ensure that our international broadcasters are heard throughout the world. H.R. 2998 is an important step in the right direction, and I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation, which I authored; and I believe that the establishment of this Radio Free Afghanistan by Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty is essential for peace and essential for stability in the region. This approach is surrogate broadcasting operating as if Afghanistan had a free and vibrant press, which, unfortunately, it does not.

Now, I have been calling for Radio Free Afghanistan for several years now. I think it is fair to say that the previous administration had no interest in this type of aggressive broadcasting to Afghanistan. For 5 years, we have tried to introduce this concept. And now, finally, with the passage of this bill, the voices of freedom and democracy will fill the air in the region, offering an alternative to the hate radio that has been heard until now, because that hate radio is the methodology of Radio Shariat and other broadcasts; and it has had a very poisonous impact in Afghanistan.

I am convinced that if we had had Radio Free Afghanistan up and running for several years now, the terrorists would not have had the fertile ground they found in Afghanistan. The roots of democracy would have been established. They would not have been ripped out.

The concept behind Radio Free Afghanistan is to do what was done with Radio Free Europe in Poland and in Czechoslovakia and in other states. When we talk today with the leaders of Poland or the Czech Republic, they say that the hearts and minds of those people in those countries were turned by the opportunity to listen to free radio broadcasts from the West on a daily basis, which explained what was actually happening in their society. They were taught the concepts of tolerance, of democracy, and of political pluralism.

And, frankly, information is power. We have the opportunity to teach those same values with these radio broadcasts. We know in Eastern Europe these broadcasts were able to explain and put in context what they were hearing from the Soviet broadcasts, so that people had an alternative, so that people had a frame of reference and could judge the truth of those Soviet broadcasts. Well, that is what people need in Afghanistan and Pakistan today, a chance to judge the truthfulness of the Shariat broadcasts they have been hearing for the last 5 years.

Over time, we know from those leaders that we have talked to, that this was the most effective single thing that changed the attitudes of the average people in Eastern Europe. This legislation that we have today provides 8 hours of broadcasting a day, 4 in Pashtu, 4 in Dari, the two major dialects.

I believe that Afghanistan, for us in the United States, is at a critical point

in its history. And I say it is at a critical point because what media did exist there has been totally destroyed. The Taliban destroyed the wherewithal for people to communicate. Eighty-five percent of those people own radios, and it is an opportunity for them now to hear this message.

If the various factions in Afghanistan are going to be able to strike a longlasting governing accord, the free flow of accurate information will be critical. Otherwise, rumor and misinformation and hate broadcasts will kill that country's chance to develop stability. As I met with Afghanistan's interim leader, Chairman Karzai, the other week, he told me how excited he was about the impact these broadcasts are having on the country.

This legislation initially passed the House on November 7, 2001, by a near unanimous vote. It now returns to the House with an amendment from the other body. And although the Senate's amendment scales back the proposal slightly, I am happy to get this bill to the President's desk for his signature; and I look forward to working with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), who has done so much for public diplomacy, and with the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) to authorize Radio Free Afghanistan for fiscal year 2003 as well. That is something we need to do to build upon these crucial broadcasts.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

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Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE), the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking member, and I offer my appreciation to the author of this legislation, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), as well as the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN).

Before the end of the last session, I held a briefing on the treatment of children in Afghanistan. That issue may be different from what we are discussing today, but what I gleaned from that briefing and how children were being treated was also the desire for education, the desire to know a better life, the desire to be part of a better nation.

This legislation, Radio Free Afghanistan, now coming back from the Senate, is legislation that answers the question that we will not return to the previous behavior after the involvement with Russia where it was suggested that America did not stay to help build a nation. Now we can build from within by having a democratic tool, by having people listen to how a nation can be built. The interim government has said they want to ensure that they have a land that respects individuals, the rights of women, the

rights of children, the rights of families. Radio Free Afghanistan will be that vehicle to help them understand how they can structure their government.

We know now that President Musharraf is here in the United States from Pakistan, and we hope that this reach will also influence what is going on in his country, and the collective region will be in the business of ensuring that we have a nation that will stand up for the principles of a democratic economy and a democratic nation.

Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge the importance of this legislation. I am pursuing my interest in the treatment of Afghanistan children, but I do know if they have the tools to understand how they can better themselves as they grow and provide a nation based on democratic principles and principles of equality, we will have a friend in that region, along with many other friends.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) for his leadership. However we can move this legislation along for the President's desk, we will be better for it, and certainly the region will be a better place for all who live there.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2998.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 2998.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING CRASH OF TRANSPORTE AEREO MILITAR ECUATORIANO (TAME) FLIGHT 120 ON JANUARY 28, 2002

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 313) expressing the sense of Congress regarding the crash of Transporte Aereo Militar Ecuatoriano (TAME) Flight 120 on January 28, 2002.