

I thank my staff for their help in a long day, and I thank the American people for considering the arguments and for helping us to hopefully push this toward the reform where we all respect the Fourth Amendment and the Bill of Rights once again.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I relinquish the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

END OF AERIAL DRUG FUMIGATION IN COLOMBIA

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to speak briefly about a recent decision of the Government of Colombia to end the aerial fumigation of coca.

Since the beginning of Plan Colombia 15 years ago, the United States, at huge cost, has financed a fleet of aircraft, fuel, herbicide, and pilots to spray coca fields in Colombia. When this first began we were told that in 5 years the spraying, along with billions of dollars in U.S. military and other aid, would cut by half the flow of cocaine coming to the United States.

Fifteen years later, that goal remains elusive. While the cultivation of coca has been reduced, aerial fumigation was never the solution to this problem. It is prohibitively expensive and unsustainable by the Government of Colombia. It also defies common sense. One Colombian official told me the cost of aerial fumigation is approximately \$7,000 per hectare, while the cost to purchase the coca produced in one hectare is \$400. In other words, for one-fifteenth the cost of aerial fumigation you could buy the coca and burn it.

The process also ignores the reality of rural Colombia where most coca farmers are impoverished and have no comparable means of earning income. Absent viable economic alternatives they resort to the dangerous business of growing coca, often at the behest of the FARC rebels or other armed groups.

The active ingredient in the herbicide used in the fumigation is glyphosate, a common weed killer. It is used by farmers and gardeners in the United States and other countries, including Colombia.

But controversy has plagued the aerial fumigation since its inception. It is

no surprise that Monsanto, which manufactures the chemical, insists that glyphosate poses no threat to humans. But some Colombian farmers, whose homes are often located next to their fields, have claimed that they or their children suffered skin rashes, difficulty breathing, and other health problems after their property was sprayed. Others have complained that the herbicide has drifted into and destroyed licit food crops.

Scientists have studied glyphosate for many years and have differed about its safety. Some studies have concluded it is harmless. The Environmental Protection Agency says it has "low acute toxicity." Others have linked it to birth deformities in amphibians. Most recently, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, IARC, an affiliate of the World Health Organization, reported that glyphosate is "probably carcinogenic to humans," and that there is "limited evidence" that it can cause non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and lung cancer.

I have been concerned for years about aerial fumigation in Colombia. While I am no scientist, I have wondered how the people of my State would react to the repeated aerial spraying of a chemical herbicide in areas where they live, grow food, and raise animals. I have also noted the conflicting views in the scientific literature, and we are all aware of instances when manufacturers insisted that a product was safe only to discover years later—too late for some who were exposed—that it was not. And, of course, there have been times when companies knew of the risk and chose to either ignore it or cover it up, motivated by profit over the welfare of the public.

It is for these reasons that I have included a provision in the annual Department of State and foreign operations appropriations bill that requires the Secretary of State to certify that "the herbicides do not pose unreasonable risks or adverse effects to humans, including pregnant women and children, or the environment, including endemic species." Each year, the Secretary has made the certification.

The IARC study changes things. Although glyphosate remains controversial and Monsanto points out that the IARC study is not based on new field research, President Santos has responded in the only responsible way unless further research definitively contradicts it. It would simply be unconscionable for the Government of Colombia to ignore a study by the World Health Organization that a chemical sprayed over inhabited areas is potentially carcinogenic.

I commend President Santos for this decision. I am sure it was not an easy one, as it will inevitably be blamed for increases in coca cultivation. But anyone who thinks that spraying chemicals from the air is a solution to the illegal drug trade is deluding themselves. It is enormously expensive and not something U.S. taxpayers can or

should pay for indefinitely. It has already gone on for a decade and a half. And it does nothing to counter the economic incentive of coca farmers to support their families.

The Department of State reacted with the following statement:

Any decision about the future of aerial eradication in Colombia is a sovereign decision of the Colombian government, and we will respect that. The United States began eradication at the government's request and our collaboration has always been based on Colombia's willingness to deploy this useful tool. Given the recent suspension, we intend to redouble our efforts to use other tools such as enhanced manual eradication; interdiction (both land and maritime); and improved methods to investigate, dismantle, and prosecute criminal organizations, including through anti-money laundering programs. We will also continue our longer-term capacity building programs, especially those related to rule of law institutions, and continue to help Colombia increase its governmental presence in the countryside as we recognize those to be the real keys to permanent change.

That was the right response. President Santos has staked his legacy on negotiations to end the armed conflict in Colombia. After five decades of war that have uprooted millions of people and destroyed the lives of countless others, a peace agreement would finally make it possible to address the lawlessness, injustice, and poverty that are at the root of the conflict. The United States should support him.

TRIBUTE TO POLICE CHIEF MICHAEL SCHIRLING

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is with great appreciation and a touch of sadness that I note the pending retirement of Michael Schirling, who has served as police chief of the city of Burlington, VT, with great distinction for the last 7 years.

His youthful appearance belies the fact that Chief Schirling has been with the department for more than 25 years, first serving as an auxiliary officer while still attending the University of Vermont.

Chief Schirling has held many titles over those years: patrol officer, detective, investigator, director, commander, deputy chief, and finally chief. In other words, this Burlington native rose through the ranks. And throughout this impressive career, Chief Schirling has always sought a better way to do the job.

Earlier in his career, he co-founded the Vermont Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, which recognized the potential for abuse as the Internet came of age. The task force has been critical to the investigation and prosecution of high-technology crimes that target those who are most vulnerable.

After he took reins of the department, Chief Schirling grew concerned that officers were spending too much time on paperwork and data entry, taking precious time away from policing. In response he designed his own dispatch and records management software system. The Valcour system—