

be very thoughtful in his approach. Obviously, on this point he has some disagreement with the product of our committee that was voted out 16 to 5 last Thursday.

But, here again, we have to do the most we can within the \$400 billion that the Budget Committee has given us to work with for providing a prescription drug benefit to our seniors as part of improving and strengthening the Medicare Program overall. We could have put more money into the asset test as he indicates he wants to do now with this amendment. We chose, as I indicated before, to help more people with the same amount of money by filling in the gap or, as some people would say, the donut hole.

We believe we should put as much effort as we can into taking care of that problem because, to help the very same people Senator BINGAMAN wants to help, we have put a lot of resources into the effort of prescription drugs for seniors, for those below 160 percent of poverty.

So, once again, I urge the amendment be defeated when we vote on it tomorrow.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. GRASSLEY. The first unanimous consent request is that the Senate proceed to a period for morning business.

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

COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS INDEPENDENT TASK FORCE ON BURMA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, the Council on Foreign Relations Independent Task Force on Burma today released a report entitled: "Burma: A Time for Change". I am pleased to have had an opportunity to serve as a member of the Task Force along with my colleagues, Senators LUGAR and FEINSTEIN, and Representative LANTOS.

The report describes the State Peace and Development Council's repressive rule in Burma, and makes a number of recommendations including: increased humanitarian assistance for the people of Burma through NGOs, and in consultation with the NLD and other groups representative of a multiethnic Burma; an import ban on goods produced in Burma, visa denials to leaders of the military regime and its political arms, and the freezing of assets abroad; U.S. leadership in urging the United Nations Security Council to adopt a resolution that demands the immediate

release of Suu Kyi and all other political prisoners, and to hold an emergency session to impose other sanctions on Burma; U.S. leadership in working with our allies and Burma's regional neighbors to bolster support for the struggle for freedom and the rule of law in Burma; no certification for Burma on narcotics cooperation as it has "failed demonstrably" to curtail drug production, drug trafficking and money laundering; and increased assistance to refugees fleeing Burma in Thailand, India, Bangladesh, and China.

I thank the council for the timeliness of the task force, and all the members for their participation.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the executive summary of the report be printed in the RECORD.

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

BURMA: A TIME FOR CHANGE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On May 30, 2003, the Burmese military regime orchestrated violent attacks by pro-government militia on Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of the National League for Democracy (NLD) and her supporters as they traveled outside Mandalay. At least four of her bodyguards were killed as well as a significant number of others. She has been held in custody since then. Following the attacks, the regime arrested more than 100 democracy activists, imprisoned at least a dozen, shut down NLD offices across the country, and closed schools and universities. This is the bloodiest confrontation between Burma's military rulers and democracy supporters since 1988, when the government suppressed a popular uprising against the regime and thousands were killed.

Burma has been ruled for more than 40 years by a succession of military regimes that have systematically impoverished a country once known for its high literacy rate, excellent universities, and abundant natural resources. Today, Burma is one of the most tightly controlled dictatorships in the world, lacking any freedom of speech, assembly, or the press; denying any due process of law; and perpetuating human rights abuses, such as forced labor, military rape of civilians, political imprisonment, torture, trafficking in persons, and use of child soldiers. Burma is also facing what the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has called a "silent emergency," a health crisis of epidemic proportions. HIV/AIDS is spreading rapidly, and malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy, maternal mortality, and malnutrition are pervasive. Government spending on health and education is miniscule.

Burma is a leading producer of opium and methamphetamine for the illegal drug trade, which is a major source of corruption within Burma. Four decades of military operations against insurgent ethnic nationalities as well as mass forced relocations have created one of the largest refugee populations in Asia. As many as two million people have fled Burma for political and economic reasons; inside Burma, hundred of thousands have been internally displaced. They lack access to food, health care, schools, and even clean water.

In August 1988, a popular uprising against the military regime was brutally suppressed and thousands were killed. In 1990, the regime held elections for a multi-party parliament in which the National League for

Democracy (NLD), led by Aung San Suu Kyi who was then under house arrest, won 82 percent of the seats. However, the elections were ignored by the junta and the elected parliamentary representatives never took office. The regime imprisoned hundreds of pro-democracy supporters, including elected members of parliament. Thousands more fled the country.

After the 1988 uprising, the United States imposed graduated sanctions on Burma, initially terminating economic aid, withdrawing trade preferences, imposing an arms embargo, and blocking loans the grants from international financial institutions. In 1997, based on a presidential finding that the Burmese government had committed large-scale repression and violence against the democratic opposition, the United States banned any new American investments in Burma.

In 2000, the United Nations, mandated by UN General Assembly resolutions, sent Special Envoy Razali Ismail to Rangoon to promote substantive political dialogue on transition to democratic government between Burmese government and the democratic opposition. Since then, Ambassador Razali has visited Rangoon nine times with no apparent progress toward establishing this dialogue. He is returning to Rangoon in early June.

In order to strengthen international efforts to install democratic government and end repression in Burma, the Task Force recommends that the United States take specific initiatives in four key areas:

Humanitarian assistance to address Burma's health crisis

In view of Burma's massive public health crisis, the United States should increase humanitarian assistance to Burma, provided that funds are given to international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) for basic human needs through a process that requires transparency, accountability, and consultation with the NLD and other groups representatives of a multiethnic Burma.

Although the United States should not generally provide humanitarian assistance directly to the Burmese government, the United States could provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Health if the Burmese government agrees to meet the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) standard that HIV/AIDS testing be voluntary and confidential.

The United States should work together with other donor governments, UN agencies, and if possible, the Burmese government State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) to establish certain minimal standards of independence for international NGOs operating in Burma, including clear guidelines for administrative operations, reporting, and other regulations involving duty-free entry privileges, memoranda of understanding and residency permits.

Promoting democracy, human rights, and the rule of law

In view of the recent government-sponsored attacks on members of the democratic opposition, resulting in a number of deaths, and the Burmese government's detention of Aung San Suu Kyi, the United States should urge the United Nations Security Council to adopt a resolution that demands the immediate release of Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners and condemns the Burmese government's egregious human rights abuses as well as its refusal to engage in substantive political dialogue with the democratic opposition. In addition, the United States should urge the Security Council to hold an emergency session on Burma to discuss imposing targeted sanctions, which could include denying visas to leaders of the military regime, the Union Solidarity Development Association (USDA) and their families, freezing their assets and imposing bans

both on new investment in Burma and on importing goods produced in Burma.

Because the Burmese military government has failed to address human rights abuses, including the unconditional release of all political prisoners, and to move forward in talks with the NLD and other pro-democracy groups toward establishing a democratic government, the United States should increase well-targeted sanctions, including an import ban on goods produced in Burma, and encourage the United Nations and other countries to join with the United States in adopting similar sanctions.

The United States should redouble its efforts with the governments of China, Japan and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, particularly Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia, to press the SPDC to work with the NLD and ethnic nationalities toward political transition in Burma. The United States, as a member of the SEAN Regional Forum, should urge ASEAN to consider seriously the cross-border effects of internal problems including illegal migration, health, trafficking, narcotics and other issues connected with the internal situation in Burma. The United States should also continue to coordinate closely with the European Union on policies toward Burma.

Until the SPDC makes substantial progress in improving human rights and engaging in substantive political dialogue with the democratic opposition, the United States should strongly discourage the government of Japan from forgiving outstanding debt from bilateral grants and loans except those that directly address basic human needs. Such aid should exclude infrastructure projects, such as dams and airport renovations, and also be limited to basic human needs. Moreover, the United States should encourage Japan to use its influence with ASEAN governments to urge them to become pro-active in support of democracy and human rights in Burma.

While maintaining its own sanctions on Burma, the United States, as one of the largest donors to the international financial institutions, should urge Asian investors to press the Burmese government to begin implementing the economic measures recommended by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank as one of the prerequisites for further investment. The United States should also urge China to use its influence to press the Burmese government to reform its economy and move towards democratic governance in order to promote stability in the region.

In order to develop capacity for future democratic governance and to rebuild technical competence in Burma, the United States should promote cultural, media and educational exchanges with the Burmese, provided that these opportunities are readily accessible to qualified candidates, including representatives of the political opposition. The selection process should include widespread publicity of exchange and fellowship opportunities, a joint selection committee comprised of Burmese civilian authorities (academics, intellectuals) and representatives of the U.S. Embassy in Rangoon who, after consulting broadly, make their selections based on the quality of candidates and their potential to contribute to Burma's future. In addition, the United States should provide increased funding for the American Center in Rangoon as well as for English language training and scholarship opportunities.

U.S. narcotics control policy toward Burma

The United States should not certify Burma at this time because it has "failed demonstrably" to curtail drug production,

drug trafficking and money laundering. In addition, the United States should not provide any counter-narcotics assistance to the Burmese government. Increased counter-narcotics cooperation should depend, at minimum, on significant steps by the Burmese government to curb methamphetamine production, to arrest leading traffickers, and to stop channeling drug money into the illicit economy.

IV. Refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons

The United States should strongly urge the Thai government to halt deportations of Burmese and protect the security of Burmese living in Thailand, regardless of their status. In addition, the United States should coordinate U.S. policy towards Thailand with donors, such as the governments of Norway, Denmark, Japan, and Canada.

The United States should provide increased humanitarian assistance, including cross-border assistance, for displaced Burmese along both sides of the Thai-Burma border as well as on Burmese's borders with India, Bangladesh, and China, as well as inside Burma. Support should be provided for clean water, sanitation services, primary health care, reproductive health, and health education for refugees and undocumented migrants living in refugee-like circumstances. Support of education, especially for women and children, is also critical.

The United States should urge greater access by international NGOs and UN agencies to northern Rakhine State provide humanitarian assistance and monitor abuses committed against Muslim communities and returned refugees.

SAVING FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Mr. HOLLINGS, Madam President, we are in trouble. The Federal Communications Commission, by a three to two vote, is prepared to bring about monopolistic control of the news, monopolistic control of the media, monopolistic control of entertainment. Public interest rules for cross ownership and market control are being abolished and no one points this out more cogently than Mortimer B. Zuckerman, Editor in Chief, in the June 23, 2003 edition of the U.S. News and World Report. The Congress will be compelled to act if we are to save freedom of speech in this country. To understand the issues I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD. I also commend to my colleagues the Columbia Journalism Review—www.cjr.org—of who owns what, listing the holdings of the five behemoths Viacom, News Corporation, AOL-Time Warner, Walt Disney Company and General Electric too much under the present rulings.

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

[From U.S. News & World Report, June 23, 2001]

A SURE-FIRE RECIPE FOR TROUBLE

(By Mortimer B. Zuckerman)

Three anonymous political appointees to the Federal Communications Commission have just delivered a body blow to American democracy. Large media companies are to be allowed to buy up more TV stations and newspapers, becoming more powerful and reaping a financial bonanza. Astonishingly,

the FCC has done this without public review, without analyzing its consequences, and without the American people getting a dime in return for their public airwaves. Under the FCC deal, big media companies must make no commitment to provide better news, or even unbiased news. Ditto with local news coverage and children's programming. In fact, the new rules dramatically worsen opportunities for local news coverage, for diversity of views, and for competition. "The public be damned!" was a robber baron's slogan from the Gilded Age. Seems to be just what the FCC is saying.

Consider the enormity of the changes. The commissioners removed the ban on broadcasting and newspaper cross-ownership. They raised the national cap on audience reach by station-group owners to 45 percent. They allowed ownership of two stations in more markets, and even three in a handful of markets. There's more, but you get the idea.

Monopolies. These FCC rules allow new merger possibilities without any public-interest review. The details are complicated, but basically, thanks to the FCC, one company now can own UHF TV stations in 199 of the nation's 210 TV markets, which is pretty much the equivalent of owning stations in every TV market in every state except California. That means a single company could influence the elections for 98 U.S. senators, 382 members of the House of Representatives, 49 governors, 49 state legislatures, and countless local races. Employing another strategy now allowed by the FCC, that same company could own VHF stations in every TV market in 38 states, with the power to influence elections in 76 U.S. senate races, 182 House races, 38 gubernatorial races, and 38 state legislatures, along with countless local races. There are other scenarios. But again, you get the idea.

Easing the rules on cross-ownership means that in many local markets one company could own its leading daily newspaper—and, often, its only newspaper—its top-rated TV station, the local cable company, and, as a bonus, five to eight radio stations. Previously, no TV and newspaper mergers were allowed in the same market, except when a firm was failing. Now the merger of the dominant newspaper and TV station could create local news monopolies in 200 markets serving 98 percent of all Americans.

What's going on? Several years ago, the FCC allowed one company to own as many radio stations as it wanted. The unintended result is the monopolization of many local markets and three national companies owning half the stations in America, delivering a homogenized product that neglects local news coverage. Small to midsize firms know that major networks will gobble up affiliates, cut local programming costs, and program centrally from their own stations. Independents will be squeezed out. "For Sale" signs are already going up. More consolidation, more news sharing, and fewer journalists add up to an enhanced danger of media corporations abusing market power to slant coverage in ways that fit their political and financial interests—and suppressing coverage that doesn't. One defense of this outrage that big media companies offer is the diversity of the Web. Well, yes. But does anyone really think the Internet is anything like an organized political or media power, much less a counterweight to a clique of billion-dollar media behemoths?

The good news is that the nation, finally, is waking up. The FCC has received hundreds of thousands of protests. Congressmen, both Democrats and Republicans, are alarmed. So are groups as diverse as Common Cause, the National Rifle Association, and the Screen Actors Guild. One of our more thoughtful conservative columnists, William Safire of