NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5122) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2007 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes:

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this enormous defense authorization bill. At $512.9 billion, this defense authorization is $2.7 billion more than the president's request.

What concerns me most about this authorization, however, is that it seems to focus more on defending other nations than on defending the United States. U.S. troops are based in more than 100 countries overseas, in many cases guarding foreign borders and ports while our own borders and ports remain almost completely unguarded.

The hundreds of billions of dollars spent overseas by this bill will do very little to defend the United States against attack. In fact, our interventionist foreign policy that is funded to a good degree by this bill actually makes the United States less popular overseas and may even unintentionally make the United States more of a terrorist target. At any rate, it definitely makes us less secure.

This bill sends overseas hundreds of millions of dollars in foreign aid. For example, this bill will send almost $400 million as aid to Russia. Additionally, the bill will send $200 million to help build additional NATO bases overseas, even though the Cold War has been over for more than 15 years.

This legislation will send almost two billion American taxpayer dollars to Central and South America in the hopes that the production of drugs overseas will be curtailed. We do know that much of the money spent on Plan Colombia and similar programs over the past few years has not made much of a dent on drug cultivation, but that much of it is likely being skimmed off by corrupt leaders overseas. There must be a better—and less expensive—way to deal with this problem than sending this much money overseas.

The bill also opens the door for more military interventionism overseas, directing the Pentagon to report to Congress on any current or planned U.S. military activities in support of peacekeeping missions of U.N. or NATO forces in Sudan.

Mr. Chairman, as a Vietnam-era U.S. Air Force veteran, I am in favor of a strong defense of the United States. I believe we need to focus on our own homeland security rather than spending half a trillion dollars on policies and programs that will not make Americans more safe, but may well have the opposite effect. We need to re-focus our defense priorities on the United States, on our own borders and our ports.

HONORING CADET LIEUTENANT BRANDON J. ARCHULETA

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 15, 2006

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Brandon Jason Archuleta, a distinguished Class President of the United States Military Academy at West Point over four consecutive years, a forthcoming graduate, and my constituent from the great city of Montebello, California.

On Saturday, May 27, 2006, Cadet Lieutenant Brandon Jason Archuleta will complete his term at West Point Academy with a Bachelor of Sciences degree in American History and a commission as a Field Artillery Officer in the United States Army. As a freshman, or ''Plebe,'' at West Point, he was elected by 1200 of his peers as President for the Class of 2006. During his second year he was re-elected to a life-term representing his peers, while he continued to expand his academic accomplishments and his extracurricular involvement. He has received the National Defense Service Medal and the Air Assault badge, while his leadership has been profiled by both MSNBC and the New York Times.

Brandon's studies included research into comparative politics, political participation, legislative procedures, defense policy, international security, and the media. In his fourth year, Brandon focused his senior thesis on American Politics. His work highlighted Hispanic Members of Congress and analyzed how concerns over ethnicity impacted their voting behavior and representation. While preparing this thesis, Brandon visited the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), interviewed several members, and was invited to attend a Caucus meeting in Washington where he met Senator KERRY. His study makes a unique contribution to the West Point academic community, as one of the first known research efforts on Hispanic Members of the 109th Congress.

Brandon Archuleta was born on November 24, 1983, to Bob and Vera Archuleta. A lifelong Montebello resident, he attended La Merced Elementary and Intermediate schools, becoming heavily involved in the Student Councils at both schools. He became an Eagle Scout, played baseball for several years, and developed artistic skill in both band and drama. Brandon attended St. John Bosco Catholic High School in Bellflower, and remained involved in: the varsity football team, 3 terms as class president, swim team, campus ministry, and the school newspaper. Brandon graduated with honors from St. John Bosco in 2001, and was chosen to deliver their commencement speech on behalf of his graduating class.

Shortly after graduating, he traveled to New Jersey where he attended the United States Military Academy Preparatory School, followed by his appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point in 2002. As a Field Artillery Officer, Archuleta's first assignment will be with the 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, Georgia. After five years of preparation and training, Brandon is ready for another five year commitment as a commissioned officer in the United States Army.

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to personally acknowledge and commend Brandon Archuleta for his dedication to leadership and continuing service to our country. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Brandon on his many achievements, especially upon his West Point graduation, and honoring his exemplary service as a role model for America's youth. I wish him all the best for his future.

A TRIBUTE TO THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF FOLSOM DAM

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 15, 2006

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Folsom Dam, a one million acre-foot multiple-purpose reservoir near Sacramento, California, that was completed 50 years ago this month, in May 1956. Severe storms have hit the greater Sacramento metropolitan region a number of times in the last 50 years and without the Folsom Dam, Sacramento would undoubtedly have flooded and caused millions of dollars of damage to the region. As local, State, and Federal officials gather to ether to celebrate this significant achievement, I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in commemorating the 50th anniversary of the completion of the Folsom Dam.

Folsom Dam was initially authorized as a 355,000 acre-foot flood control unit, but in 1949 it was reauthorized as a 1,000,000 acre-foot multiple-use facility. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began building the dam in October 1948 and officially completed construction in May 1956. Even before the facility was completed, Folsom Dam was already storing water and was finished just in time to contain flows from a winter storm that filled the dam in a week. This first test of Folsom Dam proved that it would be able to successfully contain flows from severe storms and thereby prevent major flooding in Sacramento. Each year since 1956, Folsom Dam has prevented potential flooding from winter storms and spring snow melt.

After the dam's completion, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers transferred Folsom Dam to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for coordinated operation as an integral part of the Central Valley Project. Although its primary purpose is flood control, Folsom Dam stores water for irrigation and urban use as well as for electrical power generation, salinity control in the Bay-Delta, ecosystem restoration, and recreation. Directly below the dam is the Folsom Power Plant consisting of three generators that produce almost 200,000 kilowatts of clean, renewable electricity to meet the need of nearly 10 percent of the power used in Sacramento each year.

The largest demand for water stored at Folsom Lake has been from California's vast agricultural needs. The crops grown from water stored at Folsom include beans, almonds, apricots, asparagus, peaches, tomatoes, walnuts, and dozens of the other fruits and vegetables that drive the State's economy.

Moreover, Folsom Lake State Recreation Area ranks as the most popular lake in the California State Parks and Recreation system with more than 1 million visitors annually. At the lake, visitors can enjoy themselves with such activities as boating, fishing, hiking, cycling, running, camping, and picnicking.

For 50 years Folsom Dam has provided the residents of Sacramento with increased flood protection, recreation, water storage, and power. With proposed modifications to Folsom Dam in the pipeline, Californians will enjoy even greater flood protection in the years to come. Mr. Speaker, as residents of Sacramento gather to commemorate this significant milestone, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the 50th anniversary of Folsom Dam.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CHEERLEADERS OF VICTORIA MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL IN VICTORIA, TEXAS

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 15, 2006

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Cheerleaders of the Victoria Memorial High School in Victoria, Texas for their many recent accomplishments during the school year that is about to be completed.

Not only did these Cheerleaders win 1st place at the Universal Cheerleaders Association Regional Championship on December 11th, 2005, earning a bid to the National High School Cheerleading Championship in Orlando, Florida. They also won 1st place at the Universal Cheerleaders Association State Championship on January 29, 2006.

Moreover, they won 1st place at the Universal Cheerleaders Association National High School Cheerleading Championship in Orlando, Florida on February 12, 2006. The squad competed against 52 of the top cheerleading squads from across the Nation in the Small Varsity Division. The Memorial High School Cheerleading squad worked their way to the top spot in the Nation by placing among the top ten squads in the Nation since 2001.

In addition to their cheerleading duties, which include cheering at numerous athletic events held by their school and a rigorous practice schedule, each of these girls must maintain an overall grade average of 80 or above. They also participate in numerous community service activities, such as the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, The American Heart Association's Heart Walk, and Red Ribbon Week. Additionally, they work with elementary and middle schools, building and promoting school spirit.

I want to congratulate Amanda Dunn and Spencer Streetman, Co-Head Cheerleaders as well as the rest of the squad, including: Caitlin Klare, Shelley Frerich, Ashley Blackburn, Marlee Mize, Syndal Brown, Brittney Morris, Sheina Farooqui, Kelcey Newell, Jordan Payne, Stephanie Bess, Ashton Bland, and Kay Boles.

I also wish to commend Head Coach Denise Neel, Choreographer Missy DeLuna and Assistant Coaches Ricky Contreras, Lindsay Neel, Bennie Cunningham, and Sarah Jambers.

Again, Mr. Speaker, my heartfelt congratulations to all those associated with the Cheerleaders of the Victoria Memorial High School in Victoria, Texas on a job well done.