

You know, Mr. Chairman, there has been a lot said tonight about *Duncan Hunter*. I guess the only thing I can add is simply to repeat that this man served his country in Vietnam as an Army Ranger. He served 26 years in this House, part of the time in the majority, served as chairman of the Armed Services Committee, and has now served a total of 28 years in this Congress. His entire life has been about service to this country and the cause of human freedom, and I truly believe that future generations will have a greater hope to live in freedom because this man lived, and I salute him with all of my heart.

Mr. Chairman, I also support this bill. I only rise to associate some of my feelings with those expressed by *Terry Everett*, the ranking member of the Strategic Forces Subcommittee, when he was concerned that the amendments that he offered to raise and restore some of the missile defense cuts in the mark had not taken place.

He was especially concerned about the European site, the money that was cut there, that it sends a message to Poland and other places like that that are already in a very, very dangerous position politically and in such a delicate situation that they may in fact lose the project because of the message that we send to them.

I believe it is very important that we realize that the missile defense site in Poland is not just about missile defense, it is about devaluing an entire nuclear missile program in the hands of an Iranian nation.

Mr. Chairman, the very first purpose of this government is to defend its citizens in peace, and I believe one of the greatest threats to human peace in the world is a nuclear Iran.

In spite of what we have heard in the media, Iran continues to enrich uranium which could give them an atomic bomb in less than 3 years. The IAEA has reported that in the 9-month period between February and November of 2007, the number of centrifuges enriching uranium operating at its Natanz enrichment facility tripled from 1,000 to now approximately 3,000 centrifuges.

The Director of National Intelligence, Mike McConnell, earlier this year said to the Senate Intelligence Committee that he concurred with the Israeli intelligence report stating that this many centrifuges operating continuously would produce enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon in less than 2 years. We now know that Iran is increasing its number of operational centrifuges from 3,000 to 9,000. Moreover, Mr. Chairman, Iran is now beginning to manufacture its own centrifuge, the IR2, which improves on the advanced P2 centrifuge that was used in Pakistan to build its existing nuclear arsenal. It is capable of producing enriched uranium two to three times faster than the older models.

Mr. Chairman, some of the most dangerous and lethal weapons our soldiers are facing in Iraq right now are there because Iran gave it to them. Osama bin Laden said: It is our religious duty to gain nuclear weapons.

If Iran is allowed to proliferate nuclear weapons into the hands of terrorists, any sense or concept of peace that we have experienced in this country so far could be gone in a

blinding flash in the center of one of our major cities, maybe even in Washington, DC. And yet this majority has prevented us from voting on a military contingency plan to prevent Iran from gaining this deadly capability.

Mr. Chairman, very simply, the highway of history is littered with the dangers of strategic ambiguity, and I believe our best hope of preventing a nuclear Iran is to help them understand that we are prepared to do whatever is necessary, including a military contingency, if they continue to pursue their nuclear capability.

I hope that our children are not faced with the consequences of that strategic ambiguity. We need to be very, very clear. We need to vote on the amendment to improve this bill tomorrow.