

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. MCGOVERN

Mr. *McGOVERN*. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 5 offered by Mr. *McGovern*:

In the item relating to ``**CHILD SURVIVAL AND HEALTH PROGRAMS FUND**`, after the first dollar amount insert ``(increased by \$75,000,000)``.

In the item relating to ``**ANDEAN COUNTERDRUG INITIATIVE**`, after the first dollar amount insert ``(reduced by \$40,000,000)``.

In the item relating to ``**FOREIGN MILITARY FINANCING PROGRAM**`, after the first dollar amount insert ``(reduced by \$35,000,000)``.

Mr. *McGOVERN*. Mr. Chairman, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. *Skelton*) and I are offering an amendment to make modest reductions in military aid for Colombia, and to transfer those funds to the Child Survival and Health Programs Fund for programs that combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and other infectious diseases.

H.R. 2800 provides \$4.3 billion in foreign military financing, of which \$110 million is slated to go to the Colombian military. Our amendment reduces that amount by \$35 million.

The Andean Counterdrug Initiative is fully funded at \$731 million, with at least \$159 million in military aid for the Colombian armed forces. Our amendment reduces that total by just \$40 million.

These are modest reductions but, if approved, they will send a powerful message that Congress believes respect for human rights is essential, that impunity for high-ranking

military officers who commit human rights abuses must end, and that Congress requires a more defined U.S. plan and exit strategy in Colombia.

This amendment will also do a great deal of good.

I commend the chairman and ranking member of the subcommittee for increasing funding for HIV/AIDS, but the total is still about \$1 billion less than the \$3 billion authorized, the amount the President recently promised to African leaders. Mr. Chairman, \$75 million is a modest amount, but every dollar counts in the fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and other diseases. \$75 million could ensure that 250,000 more people with HIV/AIDS could receive drug treatment for an entire year. Think of it. This amendment could literally save the lives of a quarter of a million people over the course of the next year.

Now, I know some of my colleagues are saying, but we cannot pull out of Colombia. Well, let me be perfectly clear. No one believes more strongly than I do that the United States must stay engaged in Colombia. I will never advocate that we walk away from Colombia. But I have serious questions about the direction of U.S. policy, the goals that have yet to be defined for our military involvement there, and how we define success or failure in Colombia.

The committee has stated that U.S. policy in Colombia stands at a crossroads, and I agree. In the past 4 years, we have sent over \$3.1 billion to Colombia, 80 percent in military and security assistance. On July 16, the Colombian government announced it will soon present "Plan Colombia-Phase II" and seek substantial U.S. aid increases for 2006 and beyond.

Meanwhile, coca production in the Andes has actually increased since Plan Colombia began, rising from 185,000 hectares in 2000 to 205,400 hectares in 2002, according to the State Department.

Colombia's small drop in coca production last year did not even bring its levels back down to where they were in 2000. And Colombia's decrease is offset by shifting production back to Bolivia and Peru. That does not seem to be progress to me.

Further, according to the Justice Department, the availability of cocaine in the United States actually increased in 2002. So let us not spin ourselves into thinking our policy is working.

Despite human rights conditions placed on U.S. military aid to Colombia, our aid continues to flow uninterrupted. We keep writing huge checks, even though every reputable human rights organization in the world concludes that the Colombian armed forces directly collaborate with paramilitary forces. These are the same paramilitary forces responsible for the majority of human rights abuses against civilians. These are the same paramilitary forces on the State Department's list of terrorist organizations. These are the same paramilitary forces that President Uribe's own hand-picked commission determined control at least 40 percent of the drug trade in Colombia and receive 80 percent of their funding from drug profits.

Meanwhile, over the past year, human rights crimes by official Colombian military police have increased, according to the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights in Colombia.

Regions where the Colombia military is most present and active are precisely the areas where official human rights abuses and political violence have most sharply escalated, according to the Colombian government's own Inspector General.

Colombia's Attorney General has dismissed prosecutors who are in charge of investigating the most serious cases of human rights crimes committed by high-ranking military officers, closing those cases, and ignoring others.

Instead, the Attorney General is opening new investigations against Catholic bishops, human rights defenders and community leaders. Impunity is not only alive and well in Colombia, it is better protected than ever.

Mr. Chairman, when the United States bankrolls a foreign military, then we have a special obligation not to be indifferent to its human rights record. We have a special responsibility because this is a reflection on us, but this Congress has been sending a very disturbing message to the Colombia military; namely, if you perform poorly, if you violate the human rights of your own people, do not worry, we will lower our standards on human rights.

We can do better. These modest reductions in military aid will not undercut Colombia's fight against the brutal FARC guerillas, but it could end up being the most significant message sent by this Congress in support of human rights and democracy. I urge my colleagues to support the McGovern-Skelton amendment.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I do rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment. The administration has requested \$731 million for the Andean Counterdrug Initiative, or ACI as it is called, in this fiscal year 2004. We have provided full funding for that request, and I think it is absolutely critical to sustaining our success in Colombia and to protecting Colombia's neighbors from a spillover effect.

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We have had this debate, Mr. Chairman, in past years and in past years we could not say with a great deal of confidence that we are having any real progress. But let me make one basic fact which I think is very, very clear, and that is that our efforts in Colombia are making a huge difference. As this chart shows here, by almost any measure, and this is from August to June of 2001 and 2002 to the year 2002 and 2003, by almost any measure the insurgents killed in action, up 28 percent. Insurgents captured, up 108 percent. Insurgents deserting, 106 percent. Terrorists attacks, down 47 percent. Tax on the economic infrastructure, down 54 percent. Murders, down 16 percent. This is all in the course of one year of time. So we have had a tremendous impact.

This administration that exists down there in Colombia today is one that is very committed to making a difference and making things happen. Poppy cultivation is spreading. As you can see, a very dramatic increase in the amount of thousands of hectares being sprayed and a resultant decline in the amount of cultivation of poppy. And similarly here, if we look at coca cultivation, even here, even a more dramatic increase over the last 3 years, and now we are beginning to see the results, for the first time ever a significant reduction in the amount of the actual coca production here and cultivation. These are the direct results, the direct results of the U.S. assisted eradication program.

We have also requested \$110 million, the President's request, for the foreign military financing for Colombia. This is not blanket military assistance for Colombia, but it is designed to improve the quality of very focused support for specialized units in the Colombian ministry.

Mr. Chairman, the former ambassador to Colombia has spoken very eloquently about this and very forcefully to us. She has told us that if we are ever going to be able to ratchet down, to change the mix of how aid in Colombia and eradication programs are working in Colombia, if we are ever going to get the United States out of there and allow the Colombians to do the job, the foreign military sales are absolutely important, critical, so that the Colombians can have not only the training but have the hardware that is required in order to do that.

The problems that face Colombia are very complex. They are economic. They are social. They are military, and they are very much linked, of course, to the social problem we have in this country of drug use and drug consumption.

There is not going to be any rapid or easy fix to this problem. We have discovered that over the years. But the nonexistent government presence and the law enforcement capability in lawless areas of the country are key to Colombia's social and economic problems, and we are making a big difference there. We have just been told by the Colombian ambassador to the United States, in virtually every single case there is now presence in each of the provinces and each of the counties, as we would call them

here, in this country of military and police presence, whereas scores had no presence just a couple of years ago. So we are making a huge difference there.

It is in our interests to support this request to Colombia. I cannot think of a worse time when we have a President in Colombia that is absolutely committed to making a difference and to protecting human rights. When we have an opportunity to make a real difference in this country, it would be the worst time for us to be cutting these funds.

Mr. Chairman, I would urge, strongly urge, even if the gentleman suggests that it is not a major cut in the amount of funding, it would be the wrong signal to be sending to the Columbian people who are very supportive of President Uribe in his efforts to destroy the FARC, his efforts to counterattack against the FARC and the paramilitary and to end the production of coca and opium in the area.

I urge defeat of this amendment.

?? [Begin Insert]

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I do rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment. The administration has requested \$731 million for the Andean Counterdrug Initiative, or ACI as it is called, in fiscal year 2004. We have provided full funding for that request, and I think it is absolutely critical to sustaining our success in Colombia and to protecting Colombia's neighbors from a spillover effect.

We have had this debate, Mr. Chairman, in past years. And in past years we could not say with a great deal of confidence that we were experiencing real progress. But let me state one basic fact which I think is very, very clear. Our efforts in Colombia are making a real difference. As this chart shows here, and this is from August to June of 2001 and 2002 to the year 2002 and 2003, by almost any measure the insurgents killed in action is up 28 percent. Insurgents captured, up 108 percent. Insurgents deserting, 106 percent. Terrorists attacks, down 47 percent. Tax on the economic infrastructure, down 54 percent. Murders, down 16 percent. This is all over the course of one year of time. We have seen a tremendous impact.

Colombian President Uribe's administration is one that is very committed to making a difference and making things happen. Poppy cultivation was spreading. As you can see, there have been a very dramatic increase in the number of hectares being eradicated and a resultant decline in the amount of cultivation of poppy. Similarly, if we look at coca cultivation, there is an even more dramatic increase over the last 3 years in eradication efforts. Now we are beginning to see the results. For the first time in 5 years, we see a significant reduction in the amount of the actual coca production and cultivation. These are the direct results, the direct results of the U.S. assisted eradication program.

The President also requested \$110 million, for foreign military financing assistance for Colombia. This is not blanket military assistance for Colombia, but it is designed to improve the quality of very focused support for specialized units in the Colombian military.

Mr. Chairman, the former U.S. ambassador to Colombia has spoken very eloquently about this and very forcefully to us about the President's regret. She has told us that if we are ever going to be able to ratchet down our assistance to Colombia, and if we are ever going to turn over the program to the Colombians and allow the Colombians to do the job, then the foreign military sales are absolutely important. It is critical so that Colombians can have not only the training but have the hardware that is required in order to be successful.

The problems that face Colombia are very complex. They are economic. They are social. They are law enforcement and they are very much linked.

There is not going to be any rapid or easy fix to this problem. We have discovered that over the years, the nonexistent government presence and the lack of law enforcement capability in lawless areas of the country are key to Colombia's social and economic problems. The U.S. assistance is helping to make a big difference. We have just been told by the Colombian ambassador to the United States, in virtually every single province there is now a military and police presence, whereas scores had no presence just a couple of years ago. Let me repeat, U.S. assistance is making a huge difference in Colombia.

It is in our interests to support the President's request to Colombia. I cannot think of a worse time to cut our assistance when we have a President in Colombia that is absolutely committed to making a difference and to protecting human rights. We have an opportunity to make a real difference in this country, therefore it would be the worst time for the Congress to be voting to cut these funds.

Mr. Chairman, even if the gentleman suggests that this is not a major cut to the level of funding, it would be the wrong signal to be sending to the Colombian people who are very supportive of President Uribe in his efforts to destroy the FARC, his efforts to counterattack against the FARC and the paramilitary and to end the production of coca and opium in the area.

I strongly urge defeat of this amendment.

?? [End Insert]

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, this bill provides \$574 million for Colombia. The amendment would cut \$75 million from that total. And the reason I support it, although I have great respect for the chairman's position, is because I have fundamental questions about the direction in which our Colombia policy is headed.

As my colleagues may know, the United States' commitment to Colombia has shifted in the last year from being exclusively focused on drugs towards an open-ended, long-term commitment to aid the Colombian government in its war against guerillas and terrorists.

The response to that shift in the United States' policy has been more violence directed at U.S. personnel, including kidnappings, hostages being taken and planes being shot down.

Next year marks the end of the original 5-year Plan Colombia, and as we near that time we find that coca production in the region has increased

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rather than decreased, violence continues unabated, more Colombians are internally displaced.

The human rights situation is worse. No viable alternative development scheme is in place, and drug dealing paramilitary organizations control much of the country.

Meanwhile, the amount of United States assistance to Colombia has increased every year to over half a billion requested next year. Plans underway in the administration will lead to an even broader commitment to Colombia to assist in this civil war in the name of fighting terrorism.

According to the GAO, the administration has not developed estimates of future program costs, defined their future roles in Colombia, identified a proposed end state, or determined how they plan to achieve it.

During the original debate on Plan Colombia, critics said we were descending a slippery slope. Well, we are hurtling down that slope with no end in sight. Last year, in the context of agreeing to broaden the authority for U.S. programs beyond drugs, the new government of Colombia agreed to adopt major reforms within the military and to significantly increase security expenditures from its own budget. While it appears that the Colombians increase their security budget in 2002 and 2003, the United States has no firm commitment that the increased level will continue in 2004 and beyond. In the meantime, the costs of simply maintaining the aircraft and equipment we already have there now exceeds \$230 million per year. The best you can say about reforms within the military is that they are a work in progress.

I support Colombia. I want to help Colombia. But we do not help Colombia by continuing an unbalanced policy, looking the other way on human rights problems and continue collusion with paramilitary organizations and paying the maintenance bill for their helicopters while failing to insist on a viable development scheme for rural areas.

Passage of this amendment will not cut off aid to Colombia. It will send a strong signal to the administration that they need to make some policy changes, clarify the length and terms of our commitment and present Congress with an exit strategy.

Mr. Chairman, I urge support of the McGovern amendment.

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I think anybody that has any knowledge at all recognizes drug abuse is the most dangerous threat that we have in our country today. We spend nearly \$11 billion inside the country to fight this drug disaster. Aid to Colombia is the most effective weapon we have against drug production, not drug use.

The estimated economic cost of illegal drug use in the United States has been over \$160 billion in the year 2000. The \$731 million provided in the Andean Drug Initiative in this appropriations bill is necessary and money well spent and these funds will save the U.S. money in the long term.

The previous speaker spoke of the number of people that were dying of AIDS and where the money could be of use to them. There is an estimated 4.7 million Americans age 12 and older in the year 2000 who needed treatment for illicit drug use and drug abuse problems. That accounts for 2.1 percent of the national population. If you could measure the cost per individual what drugs have cost us in this country, it is \$34,200 a year.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation estimates that 1.6 million people were arrested in the United States in 2001 for drug abuse violations. Nearly one in four persons were held in U.S. jails and prisons in 2000, 57 percent were imprisoned for drug offenses.

I think the statement that the war on drugs and Plan Colombia is not working is completely false. It was very slow in getting started and I blame this body right here for the first 2 years that we were ineffective because it was an argument about how the money should be spent, how it should be allotted as far as which helicopters and which aid. It is our fault here that it took so long to get going.

There was a statement made that the production of coca had increased. That is false. It has shrunk in the last year. In fact, it has been one of the most successful years that we have ever had in reducing the production of this coca in Colombia. Also, there were statements made about how horrible the paramilitary forces have been, and in the past they were terrible, but paramilitary forces within the last week have signed a peace agreement with the government.

If the ELN and FARC would do the same, the communist element that we are supposedly helping out by shrinking this budget would go away.

I would like to say that reducing drug production is what we need in this country most, and every penny that we spend on it is worth its effort, not only from North Carolina to Massachusetts but California to Missouri. Drugs are blind on who they affect, and the

effort we are putting forth in Colombia is probably the most effective way that we have of reducing drug use in this country.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I am extremely pleased to cosponsor this amendment with my friend and my colleague, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. *McGovern*). We have sponsored a number of amendments over the last several years to take dollars from the American military assistance to Colombia, and I do not do this action because I am unsympathetic to President Uribe and what he is trying to accomplish. I think he is sincerely working to break the stranglehold that drug cartels and insurgency groups have on his nation. But the message sent by cutting this funding, those messages need to reach the Colombian people, this administration and his administration.

It is true, Mr. Chairman, that more is asked of the American soldier that is sent to Colombia than Colombia asks of its own soldiers. This bothers me to no end.

[Time: 20:30]

The Colombian people need to take concerted and consistent steps to help provide for their long-term security. That means providing for a sustained financial base.

Our administration needs to come forward with a long-term strategy for American military involvement in Colombia. Many in this House are worried about the creeping nature of our expanding mission in Colombia, known as mission creep. We need to know what role the American troops will play and for what period of time.

Having this knowledge is even more critically important as we face a long-term commitment. Our troops have the possibility of continued work in North Korea, Liberia, not to mention Iraq. We do not have enough troops to go around the world wearing them out.

We need to increase our end strength, but we have needed to do that for a while. We also need to look carefully at all of our commitments and the decisions.

So I urge my colleagues to vote for this amendment. It does not eliminate all funding for Colombia, nor does it touch the critical programs like IMET, which is developing a more professional military in Colombia.

I said a moment ago that more is asked of the American soldier that is down there helping them fight the rebels than they ask of their own soldiers. Every soldier in the American Army has at least a high school education or its equivalent or they cannot join. If anyone has a high school education in Colombia, they are exempt from their military conscription. If they come from wealthy families, if they have a high school education, they do not have to serve; but Americans down there to train them and trying to help beat back the rebels are more highly educated and are putting themselves on the line, when they in Colombia do not ask the same as we ask of our soldiers who are there to help them.

Mr. Chairman, I resent this. I resent this very much. If they want our continued help, they should prove it by having a conscription law that cuts across all classes and all education. So I urge my colleagues to vote for this amendment. It will not injure the programs that are important whatsoever, and it will cause them in Colombia, as well as our administration, to take a good hard look at what is necessary to win in Colombia.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

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(Mr. *SOUDER* asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Chairman, one of the earlier speakers said this is just a signal. If it were so, it is a wrong signal, it is a wrong time; but it is not just a signal. It would actually deprive real dollars from people who are trying to fight narcoterrorists who are funded by our drug habits.

While 40 million and 35 million, a total of 75 million, may not seem like a lot here because we spend so much money, it is a significant percentage of this budget.

The previous speaker said that this has been mission creep. It has been exactly the reverse. It is mission reduction; and in fact, this request is substantially under the last request. In fact, there are fewer dollars being spent in this budget than the previous budget. In fact, more Colombians are repairing helicopters than in the past, more Colombians are spraying than in the past, more Colombians are on the ground. We now have specially trained antinarcotics units. The military have gone through human rights training and met those standards, in addition to the Colombian National Police.

We are achieving our goals on the ground, and this amendment would help devastate those goals at the very moment of their success.

We have had this debate for each of the last 3 years since President Clinton signed Plan Colombia into law. While there still may be two points of view this year, the facts clearly show that the debate should, in fact, be over. Thanks to the strong leadership of President Uribe, there can no longer be disagreement that the program is showing clear results. Just maintaining on the House floor that it is not working does not mean that it is not working. My colleagues can say things, but they cannot be true.

I have been to Colombia twice this year and have seen firsthand the signs of remarkable success in that nation. The Uribe government has taken control of areas previously held by narcoterrorist guerrillas. There are many towns in Colombia that are still under terrorist control, but the number is declining. There are now people moving back to their hometowns. There are mayors willing to run for office again because the ELN and the paramilitaries are in somewhat of a disarray, at least in somewhat retreat; and the FARC is somewhat divided. They still control a significant percentage of the country, but it is less than it was, and we are making progress.

You cannot plant alternative crops if you believe you are going to be killed by FARC and then killed by the paramilitaries. First you have some order. We are providing people with the chance and getting some order. If we continue at that rate, we can establish one of the oldest democracies in the Americas back to a free people.

This is not a civil war. Four percent of the people, that is almost not much more than the percentage in prisons in the United States, support the FARC or any of this. The people are overwhelmingly on the side of this government. This is the most popular government in modern history in Colombia.

The facts are so clear my colleagues do not need to take my word for it. I will instead let the editorial board of The Washington Post, hardly the most conservative group of commentators, tell my colleagues why now is not the time to lessen our support for this critical program to keep stability in our hemisphere and control the flow of hard drugs onto every American street.

On July 13, The Post editorialized as follows: "Some members of Congress and human rights groups protested that the attempt to bolster the Colombian army with equipment and training while sponsoring the aerial spraying of coca fields would embroil the United States in a Vietnam-like quagmire. The critics were wrong. Colombian coca and poppy production has been reduced substantially: according to a United Nations study, the acreage has dropped by 38 percent in 3 years."

The Washington Post editorial continued: "With the traffickers and their guerrilla allies on the defensive, violence is down, too. Homicides have fallen by a quarter and kidnappings by a third this year compared with last year. Colombia's economy is growing, and its President, Alvaro Uribe, leads the strongest and most popular government the country has had in decades. Though Plan Colombia still hasn't achieved many of its goals, there can be little question that the \$2.7 billion invested by the United States so far has gotten results."

Again, those were not the gentleman from Indiana's (Mr. *Souder*) arguments, but the conclusion of The Washington Post editorial board. It is now beyond serious dispute that Plan Colombia is working, that it is beginning to have a serious impact, and that it is at a critical point. No program is perfect, but the choice now is a clear one. Do we continue to make progress towards finishing the job, or do we withdraw and quit? There are many hard decisions in this body, but continuing a program that is now obviously succeeding against long and hard odds should not be one of them.

We also continue to have a moral obligation to the people of Colombia to help them solve deep problems of political, legal, and social order that are caused in significant part by Americans. In Cartagena earlier this month, I visited with Colombian soldiers who had been viciously attacked by narcoterrorist guerillas. They had lost limbs and yet stayed firm and resolute; some had lost lives, despite the fact that the groups who attacked them were funded in significant part by the drug habits of Americans.

From my hometown and the hometowns of the members of this country, I also visited the Nelson Mandela Village for people who have been displaced and terrorized in these hometowns; and in talking to these people, they want to go back home. They do not want to be terrorized. We are near the point in about half of those areas of stabilizing,

and they have moved and are at the point of moving back. How can we cut this program now when it is finally working? Even a small cut could be devastating to Colombia.

Ms. *DeLAURO*. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support for the McGovern-Skelton amendment to transfer \$75 million in military aid for Colombia to programs that combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and other infectious diseases.

I have serious concerns with our policy in Colombia and, in particular, with the ongoing human rights abuses. The number of people who have disappeared or been killed has risen from 14 to 20 per day in the last 2 years. Those newly displaced by political violence increased by 412,000 in 2002, and Colombia has the second largest population of internally displaced people in the world, trailing only the Sudan. More than 1,000 people are forced to leave their homes every single day.

What are we doing to hold the Colombian government accountable for these abuses? There is no evidence to show that Colombia's military officers involved in human rights abuses are being suspended for their actions. According to Human Rights Watch, they continue to remain on active duty and in command of their troops, and Colombian Army collaboration with paramilitaries raises serious questions about whether our involvement is making any difference at all and perhaps even enabling these abuses to continue.

It deeply worries me to see our expanding involvement in Colombia. At a time when we have forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, can we really afford to become enmeshed in another large scale conflict? Of course not. Yet just recently, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz said that the United States was considering transferring some military capabilities from Iraq to Colombia.

We are moving in a dangerous direction. Congress changed the law last year to allow U.S. counterdrug aid to support a "unified campaign" against drugs and against Colombia's guerrilla and paramilitary groups. Our mission has actually expanded. The number of U.S. military personnel on the ground in Colombia has tripled in the last 3 years, and the Colombia Government announced only a week ago that within four months it will unveil "Plan Colombia Phase II," counterinsurgency aid that will help wipe out more than 35,000 insurgents.

Mr. Chairman, this is precisely the same mission the Reagan administration adopted in El Salvador 20 years ago. It did not work then; it will not

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work now. And Colombia's over fifty times larger than El Salvador. We cannot fight Colombia's war and we should not.

Instead of funding a troubling conflict that we ought not to be so heavily involved with, we should focus those resources on fighting wars that we can win with the proper resources. The United Nations Joint Program on HIV/AIDS estimates that last year 2.4 million Africans died of AIDS-related illnesses, while nearly 30 million continue to live with the disease. Heavily affected countries in sub-Saharan Africa are struggling to provide care and treatment for over a third of their populations. In the Caribbean, an estimated 440,000 people are infected with HIV/AIDS, a number that is continuing to climb.

By focusing our resources in these areas, we can make a real difference in the fight to combat these diseases. That is where we should be redoubling our efforts, not in the murky forests of Colombia. This is a modest amendment in financial terms but not in what it could achieve.

I ask my colleagues to please support the McGovern-Skelton amendment.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

I come in very strong opposition to the McGovern amendment. I could not be any more opposed to any amendment that has been proposed in the House in some time. Let me discuss for my colleagues, some of them have been here, some of them have not been here during what has happened with the increase of illegal narcotics coming in from Colombia.

In 1992 and 1993, these charts are almost unbelievable. There is almost no cocaine coming in from Colombia, and there was zero heroin coming in from Colombia. Then appeared on the scene the Clinton administration which said, oh, we cannot harm the hairs on any guerrillas, we must protect human rights in Colombia and we must not do anything about drug trafficking there; we must not interfere in the civil conflict. We did nothing and tens of thousands died. Members of the legislature, members of the

judiciary, citizens by the thousands died in the civil war that had gone on there, and the atrocities increased.

The production of illegal narcotics increased, and the deadly narcotics came from Colombia. Here is the statistics: again, zero in 1993 and almost all of the deadly heroin coming into the United States, and this had some results. The results are absolutely incredible.

In the year 2000, 19,698, almost double from 1993, Americans died from drug-related deaths, more than homicides. We have a silent war going on in this country. So we sat down and we formed a plan, and it was opposed time and time again.

Former Congressman Gilman, who chaired the Committee on International Relations, brought forth a Plan Colombia and plans to try to bring in helicopters to go after this, to assist in training the Colombians and attacking drugs and terrorism; and it was shot down time and time again.

Finally, through the leadership of the gentleman from New York (Mr. *Hastert*), who was chair of the Subcommittee on Drug Oversight, and God, I think, had a hand in making him Speaker of the House, we were able to get Plan Colombia together.

The critics said we were wrong, The Washington Post said. The critics now say we are right. Plan Colombia and President Bush have put it into action to train the military down there, to stop the violence. The violence has stopped. The statistics we hear are old statistics. Twenty-five percent reduction in murders, 33 percent reduction in killing. We stopped some of the killing, and this amendment will again put us in the position of beginning the killing, beginning the destruction, not only in Colombia but on our streets and neighborhoods.

[Time: 20:45]

So we have a chance now to move Plan Colombia forward and we cannot destroy that chance through this amendment.

Plan Colombia, the progress is unbelievable. It benefitted 22,829 families in Colombia, supported 24,549 hectares of legal crops, it completed 349 community projects, established 33 legal service centers, constructed 19 oral trial courtrooms, trained 3,400 judges, and aided 774,000 internally displaced people. Those are the statistics. That is

the truth. That is what Plan Colombia has done, and we cannot take a step backward tonight.

It would be a disaster for those mothers and fathers that I have met with who have lost their children from the cocaine, the heroin that has come up from Colombia that we have not stopped. We have a chance tonight to move Plan Colombia forward or move it backward and allow the killing to continue in Colombia. Again, in the name of human rights, how many more people should die there? How many more people should die on the streets of my neighborhood in Florida or in the streets of New York? Rich, poor, all are affected by what is going on. What about the silent deaths by the tens of thousands in our country?

Tonight would be the worst step we could take in the history of this Congress relating to our work against illegal narcotics to pass this amendment, to take a step backward to where we were, and to do what did not work should not be allowed to again happen in the Congress of the United States. I oppose the amendment.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I have been following events in Colombia since 1957, and I would like to think that the money that we are spending there is well spent and will reach a useful conclusion. I wish I could say that, but after watching that government and that society, especially the economic elite of that society for a long time, I have reluctantly concluded that they simply do not have the will to do what is necessary to win their own battles. I think we have drifted little by little into a long-term sustained financial and political involvement with little expectation of real success.

Oh, I know, people say we have reduced this production here and reduced production there. Baloney. It is like a balloon. It just pops up somewhere else. I remember when one of the members of the Reagan administration's antidrug team came to me privately and told me in despairing terms what a tremendous waste he thought the money was that we were spending in our antidrug campaign in Latin America. And when he told me how little we actually intercepted at our borders, I was blown away, and that has not changed that much.

And so if I thought this money was going to accomplish any useful purpose, I would say, "Fine, provide it." But when I see the economic elite of that country still not making the sacrifices that are required in order to achieve the ends that we say we have, then I think we ought to look for a more useful place to put that money.

But I have a second question. My understanding is that the leadership of the Republican Party from the highest levels on down cares very deeply about our efforts in Colombia. So my question is, if that is the case, why are so many Members of the majority party watching "Seabiscuit" tonight? Why was this House shut down for a couple of hours to avoid votes on the House floor so that Members of the Republican leadership structure could enjoy a summer movie?

It seems to me if this issue is important enough for us to provide our money, then it is important enough for the people who believe in it the most and the people who brought about our investment in the program in the first place to be here on the floor defending it. And if they think it is more important to watch "Seabiscuit" than to deal with this program, then I think that says volumes about how useful even they think this money is.

So with all due respect to the cries of alarm, I have heard about our antidrug efforts around the world for years and years, those efforts cannot be successful unless they are coupled with a determination on the part of the recipient country to do whatever is necessary to win the battle against drugs. And when that will is absent or when it is weak, then Uncle Sam is simply being taken for Uncle Sucker.

So I would suggest my colleagues pay attention to this amendment. At least that money will be put someplace where it will do some good. And perhaps if this amendment passes tonight, in the future we will not have Members of the majority party running off to

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watch "Seabiscuit" when something that is supposedly important to the national security is on the floor of this House.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

I rise in strong support of the McGovern-Skelton amendment. This amendment transfers \$75 million from Colombian military assistance to global programs for HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. Now, this amendment signals to Colombia and the

world that this government is serious about the need to respect human rights, that it believes that we need to rethink our approach to the Colombian situation, and that we recognize that the HIV/AIDS pandemic is the greatest health and humanitarian crisis of our time.

Plan Colombia has failed. Coca production in the Andes has increased. Eradication programs are shifting production, not eliminating it, and they are exposing men, women, and children of the region to dangerous pesticides. At the same time, paramilitary organizations tied to the Colombian army we are supporting have engaged in gross human rights violations. Those same paramilitaries, according to the Washington Post and other sources, are major drug dealers themselves. The Post reports that paramilitaries control 40 percent, that is 40 percent of the Colombian drug trade. Human Rights Watch and other humanitarian organizations have reported that Colombian military officers alleged to have committed human rights abuses remain on duty.

We should be able to translate United States assistance into influence to promote the protection of human rights. That is not happening in Colombia, and civilians are paying the price. We are compelled to ask: What are we trying to do in Colombia and what is our exit strategy? How much will we spend on this program and what will it accomplish? The United States has a long and troubled history in Latin America, and we should end this chapter.

At the same time, this bill underfunds the President's \$3 billion HIV/AIDS initiative, so this amendment would help correct this imbalance that will cost lives. While the money that this amendment would transfer from the Colombian account is a modest sum by most standards, it can go a long way towards helping those individuals who are suffering and dying from HIV and AIDS and other opportunistic infections such as tuberculosis and malaria.

Now, with the cost of generic anti-retroviral drugs dropping to under \$300 a year, let me tell my colleagues what \$75 million would do. Seventy-five million dollars would allow another 250,000 HIV/AIDS infected individuals access to these lifesaving drugs. Seventy-five million dollars could also pay for approximately 7 million people to take the normal \$10 treatment course for tuberculosis, which is the leading killer of HIV and

AIDS patients. And with the cost of most malaria treatment courses ranging from \$2 to \$5, up to 15 million patients could be treated with just \$75 million.

Let me be clear, though, that as much good as this money can do, it can in no way overcome the nearly \$1 billion shortfall in spending for our global AIDS, TB, and malaria initiatives. Now, the President has promised \$3 billion, but it is obvious that this Congress must deliver on that. I would hope that the President would try very hard to find some way to make up the difference between the \$3 billion that we authorized back in May and the just over \$2 billion that we are now appropriating.

Thanks to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. *Kilpatrick*) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. *McGovern*) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. *Skelton*), with this amendment we have an opportunity to piece this money, and that is what we are doing, piecing this \$1 million together. But it is worth it.

It would be a travesty to underfund our first-year pledge of the 5 years, \$15 billion commitment we made so recently to fight global AIDS, particularly since the President spoke so much about it during his recent trip to Africa. Expectations have been raised, and we must deliver upon them or we risk further damage to our credibility.

This amendment improves our foreign policy in two directions. It helps correct a Colombian policy that has gone badly astray, and it transfers desperately needed funds to the most urgent humanitarian and health crisis of our time. It helps us, this House, deliver on the President's promise. So I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the leadership of the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. *McGovern*) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. *Skelton*) in bringing this amendment before us this evening. I also respect the commitment of the Speaker of this House to Colombia. Recently he talked of this initiative as saving the lives of American children. But, frankly, I get different information.

I identify with what the gentleman from North Carolina talked about a little while ago, where there are 4.7 million drug abusers in this country, where cocaine production is steady in the region. It may be shifted around a little bit, but in terms of the region itself the cocaine production has been steady for years. And, in fact, cocaine access in the

year 2002, the most recent I have available, those statistics suggest that as far as our young people are concerned, cocaine access and use is up.

I am concerned that the program in Colombia is not the most humane program, that not enough money is being invested in alternative development, manual eradication on the ground with aid to farmers. I am concerned that this package, over time, has not been balanced; that when you take all of the money into account, you are looking at approximately 80 percent that is going to be in police and military aid.

My choice, if we were dealing with this in an ideal world, would in fact be to transfer the money, as proposed under the amendment. That would result in tens of thousands of people being saved from infectious diseases. Not that we abandon Colombia, but that we are more focused in terms of what we do invest; investing in sadly underfunded programs for domestic treatment of drugs, increasing funding for the alternative development to help these small farmers switch crops, insisting, as my friend from Massachusetts has talked about, on the respect for human rights and the rule of law, and providing greater political and financial support for civilian democratic institutions.

But most of all, Mr. Chairman, if we are going to spend this money, for heaven sakes spend less of it on K Street. Do not spend so much on consultants, on contractors. I suspect that we can document that far more of this money ultimately is being spent in this country than is being spent on the ground in Colombia.

[Time: 21:00]

I think this amendment is a good first step. I welcome this debate this evening on the floor of the House, and I hope it takes us in a more productive direction.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment. I must admit, however, I do so with some ambivalence, for I share many of the concerns that have been articulated by the proponents. They are right about the balloon effect, because even as coca cultivation declines in Colombia, we are seeing an increase in Peru and Bolivia. I also share their concern about human rights abuses, about the relentless assault on labor leaders and human rights workers, and about military ties to the paramilitaries. It is reported in our own Department of State country reports. But it would be unfair not to

acknowledge that there have been sincere efforts made by the Uribe administration to address these issues and some progress has been made.

Furthermore, I believe that the Colombian people, particularly the economic elite, as has been alluded to earlier, should be doing more. Unfortunately, the conflict is being currently fought by poor Colombians and paid for to a substantial degree by American taxpayers as indicated by the ranking member of the full committee. And while I applaud the initiative of President Uribe to levy a war tax, that was a one-time event. There has to be a permanent revenue stream of new

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money generated by the Colombian people themselves. The percentage of GDP spent on the security forces is still much lower than in other Latin American countries which do not have to confront such a vicious internal conflict. I submit that a new permanent war tax paid by Colombians ought to be a condition of continued American assistance.

But I would suggest that it is not in our interest at this point in time to reduce aid to Colombia. It is important to note that President Uribe has made a firm commitment to fight illegal armed groups, all of them, not just the FARC and the ELN, but also the paramilitaries. And it cannot be denied that the Colombian military has been much more aggressive in dealing with these right-wing paramilitary groups since the Uribe administration has come to power. Many believe that this has resulted in a cease-fire and the beginning of a peace process with the largest faction, the so-called AUC. So now at least there is the possibility of a peace accord with this particular group. If there is a chance to remove one of the armed groups from this conflict, we must take it.

To cut aid just as this process is beginning would send a very bad signal, even if an unintentional one. In fact, we should be increasing aid substantially because it is in our national security interests to do so. Remember, the entire amount we spend on all of Latin America in a year is less than the amount we are spending in a single week in Iraq. Our aid should be more balanced, should be directed to help develop democratic institutions, support human rights and encourage social and economic development in our own hemisphere, especially in Colombia. For if we are ever going to do anything that will substantially and permanently reduce the flow of cocaine and heroin into the

streets of the United States, stability and healthy democratic institutions are essential. And peace is a prerequisite for that stability.

That is why I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment of my friend from Massachusetts.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

I rise in strong support of the McGovern-Skelton amendment, and I thank my colleagues for their outstanding leadership on this critical issue. This amendment, let us be clear what it does, cuts a modest amount, \$75 million in aid to Colombia's military, a military that our own State Department has certified is implicated in atrocities against the Colombian people. It redirects that aid to the fight against HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria. And after that \$75 million is diverted, still there is \$315.8 million in military aid and a total of \$574 million, over a half a billion dollars in overall aid that will still go to Colombia. So this is a very modest proposal.

To those who say we need to continue to fund Colombia's military at current levels because of the war on terror, I say you have not done your homework. A recent report prepared at the request of Colombia's President Uribe further documents the illicit ties between Colombia's military and the paramilitary forces in that country. This is a report prepared at the request of the President of Colombia. The paramilitaries and their organizations have been designated as terrorist organizations by the United States. They massacre civilians, and they ship drugs to the U.S. Instead of giving more money to a military known to collaborate with those the Bush administration calls terrorists, we should employ a different strategy, one that deprives a corrupt military and the terrorists with whom it collaborates of resources and American taxpayer dollars so that they cannot as easily continue their brutal abuse of the Colombian people. Why would any Member of this body want to make the mission of terrorists and criminals easier?

The McGovern-Skelton amendment would redirect \$75 million to the child survival and health account for programs that combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and other infectious diseases. These are programs that are proven to be effective in improving and saving lives. Instead of wasting American dollars on an initiative that has destroyed

lives and increased the suffering of innocent civilians in Colombia, I think our dollars would be better spent funding programs we know can save lives.

Our dollars are better spent on programs that work, as opposed to Plan Colombia which has failed. After 3 years and over 3 billion U.S. taxpayer dollars, Plan Colombia has failed miserably. It has failed to strengthen Colombia's democratic institutions. Known human rights offenders continue to go unpunished and operate with impunity. It has failed to reduce drug production, use, and availability. Though it may have reduced by some the production in Colombia, as a region, the Andean region actually produces more coca. It has cost the lives of Americans, contractors, even missionaries. Plan Colombia has made a bad situation in Colombia even worse and has not provided any measurable benefit to the American people.

Our aerial fumigation program in Colombia has caused untold environmental damage, poisoning and destroying legal crops, water sources, and harming the health of children and families. Trade unionists continue to be murdered. Last year, according to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, 85 percent of all trade union murders took place in Colombia. Aid to Colombia's military puts the blood of innocent civilians in that country on our hands. The number of people killed or disappeared per day, according to Amnesty International, increased from an average of 14 in 2000 to 20 in 2002. This is not what we should be calling progress. The number of people newly displaced by political violence increased 30 percent, from 317,340 in 2000 to 412,000 displaced people in 2002 alone, and nearly 3 million altogether since the violence has started.

I have been to Colombia. I love Colombia and the Colombian people. And I know that the way to help them is not by putting money and resources in the hands of those who are implicated in their abuse and their murder. Escalating a civil war and providing aid to a military still rife with corruption is illegal, it is immoral, and it is inexcusable. But today we are not debating an end to the U.S. military aid to Colombia. As I said, still over half a billion dollars will go there even with the McGovern-Skelton amendment. I urge support of that modest and sensible amendment.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

I rise in support of the McGovern-Skelton amendment to transfer a small amount of money for military funding for Colombia to increase funding for bilateral HIV/AIDS, TB, and other infectious diseases programs. This amendment says much about what we believe the priorities of our country should be in providing overseas assistance. Instead of providing more tax dollars to an ineffective drug eradication program and to the Colombian military, which is linked to human rights abuses, we should focus on alleviating the human rights tragedies that are the result of HIV/AIDS.

Aid to Colombia has failed to end the drug flow to America, and it has failed to protect human rights. Strong ties between the Colombian military and the paramilitary group AUC, which has been listed by the United States as a terrorist organization, are deeply disturbing, given the atrocious human rights abuses committed by the AUC. Most interestingly, The Washington Post recently published the findings of a report commissioned by President Uribe that showed the AUC, which frequently fights alongside the Colombian military, is a drug-trafficking organization. The report estimated that as much as 80 percent of the AUC's funding comes from drug trafficking. This means that the U.S. is funding a military that is working with a terrorist drug-trafficking organization in an effort to eradicate drugs. Does this not seem a little paradoxical?

The AUC's close relationship with the Colombian military is also disturbing because it implicates the United States in human rights abuses. How can the U.S. fund a military which has combined forces with a terrorist group responsible for torture, executions, and disappearances of innocent Colombian citizens? Until the Colombian government ceases its relationship with violent paramilitary groups that terrorize ordinary citizens, the United States must not directly fund it.

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Furthermore, the process in which the drug eradication program is conducted through fumigation is conflict-ridden. Fumigation seems to chase coca cultivation from one area to another. The State Department's international narcotics control strategy reports for 2000 and 2002 show that coca production in Colombia's neighbors, Peru and Bolivia, and other areas of Colombia totaled 184,900 hectares in 2000 and rose to 205,400 hectares by the end of 2002. In the end, coca production persists because it is the most

economically viable option for very poor peasant farmers in the area. Coca control initiatives must focus on alternative development assistance to small farmers so they are able to make the transition to legal crops. Effective development assistance coupled with manual eradication efforts is the only sustainable solution to the problem of coca cultivation.

Further, fumigation destroys the alternate development projects set up to sustain the lives of peasants. In the Putumayo village of La Isla, both a livestock and aquaculture project was destroyed, killing the chickens and the fish that represented economic opportunity for residents. Despite U.S. denials, fumigation affects health. It causes skin outbreaks and gastrointestinal disorders and respiratory ailments, particularly among young children, according to local physicians.

Ineffective and highly questionable funding of the Colombian military should not continue. U.S. taxpayer dollars should not be given to a military that is conducting human rights abuses against its own citizens. Instead, taxpayer dollars should be spent on worthy initiatives such as the HIV/AIDS programs that would genuinely benefit millions of suffering people.

The McGovern-Skelton amendment makes a modest step in that direction and it deserves a "yes" vote. I urge my colleagues join me in voting "yes" in support of the McGovern-Skelton amendment.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to be recorded as opposed to this amendment. I served on the Committee on Government Reform in my first term here and then have served on the Speaker's drug task force. I have been to Colombia, and I have met the new President of Colombia, who has been here several times. I think it would be a real mistake to cut down on our funds to Colombia when things are moving ahead and have progressed so much in the last 5 years.

I yield to the gentleman from Florida, whom I did travel to Colombia with.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman from Illinois for yielding. I also thank her for her leadership and for her work on the Committee on Government Reform.

I had the opportunity to chair the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources when some of the Plan Colombia was put together.

[Time: 21:15]

And in conclusion here, we know that in the past, not much was done to stem illegal narcotic production and trafficking or the violence in Colombia. We had a President in Colombia who tried to the Cumbayah and the peace in dealing with the terrorists and that did not work. We now have a President in Colombia who is committed to the tenets of Plan Colombia, which is a strong interdiction, which is demanding reforms in the military to cultivation of other alternative crops, to building the judiciary and the strength of the institutions of Colombia. We have a President of the United States who is committed to Plan Colombia. We have seen the results in the past where tens of thousands have died per year in Colombia and in the United States. And now we have an opportunity to move forward. Even the statistics of the Washington Post, which was a critic in the beginning of Plan Colombia, now says the critics were wrong. A 25 percent reduction in murders, a 33 percent reduction in killings. So we have a President here committed to the plan. We have a President in Colombia committed to the plan, and it is a working plan and people are not dying.

Finally, let me insert in the **RECORD** since 1993, the number of deaths provided to me today by ONDCP, Americans who died from drug-related deaths in this country, drug-induced deaths, 148,185 Americans, more than we have lost in any tragedy we can imagine of contemporary times, in the period from 1993 to 2000, not even a 10-year period. We have a chance to stop the death and the dying and the destruction of lives here. We have a chance to stop the death and destruction and lives being lost in our neighboring country Colombia; so it would be a step backward to pass this amendment proposed by the gentleman. I know he is well intended, but I strongly urge opposition to this.

Ms. *McCOLLUM*. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

I would like to speak in strong support of the McGovern-Skelton amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. *McGovern*).

Mr. *McGOVERN*. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Let me just go over a few facts here.

Fact: If the McGovern-Skelton amendment passes, we still have \$195.3 million in hard military aid for the Colombian military in this bill.

Fact: That \$195.3 million joins the \$120.5 million in the military aid under the Defense appropriations bill that passed this House on July 8.

So fact: If the McGovern-Skelton amendment is approved, this House will still provide a minimum of \$315.8 million in military aid to the Colombian military.

I want to say to my colleagues the important fact is not how much acreage is sprayed, it is how much coca is grown. And the fact is despite this policy coca production in the Andean region has increased since Plan Colombia was enacted in 2000. Those are not my statistics. Those are the statistics by the United States State Department.

Fact: While coca cultivation in Colombia dropped 15 percent last year, coca levels in Colombia are still higher than they were in 2000.

Fact: The modest drop in coca production in Colombia is completely offset by shifting coca cultivation back to Bolivia and Peru. Is that progress? Is that success? All of us want to protect our constituents from these illegal drugs, but the bottom line is this is not doing it.

Fact: U.S. counterdrug efforts in Colombia and the Andes have had absolutely no apparent impact on the availability or use of cocaine here in the United States. This is according to the January, 2003 National Drug Threat Assessment.

Fact: If we want to stop drug production abroad, then invest in drug treatment and prevention right here at home.

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. *Skelton*), the cosponsor of this amendment, raised, I think, a very important issue about the fact that more is being expected of our military personnel in Colombia than of the Colombian military personnel themselves. President Uribe has said that he has introduced a law to change the recruitment criteria so that people who have high school degrees or are from wealthy families in Colombia are not automatically exempt from serving in the military, but such a law has been introduced every year since the 1990s. President Uribe has not made it a priority. His priorities are

part of a national referendum this fall, and changing the recruitment law is not one of them. I mean we need to see a little action, not just talk.

The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. *Delahunt*) talked about how important it is that the government of Colombia is making progress in trying to work out a truce with the paramilitaries, but the fact of the matter is almost every human rights group in the world is concerned about what is happening because the Colombian government Peace Commissioner Luis Carlos Restrepo confirmed the fears of human rights advocates that paramilitaries involved in horrific crimes will get a free pass. I quote him: ``For those who have committed crimes against humanity, we are looking for punishment that is not jail

Another concern with the paramilitaries is that the demobilized paramilitaries could go straight into the peasant soldier program, thus in effect legalizing paramilitaries without screening out the worst offenders or even significant retraining. There is no clear end in sight, no exit strategy as we get more and more involved in Colombia.

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In November of 2001, there were 220 U.S. private contractors in Colombia carrying out military and counterdrug operations. Today there are 308. In November, 2001, we had 117 U.S. military presence in Colombia; today we have 358. The \$75 million that we seek to transfer, this modest amount, to the HIV/AIDS tuberculosis and malaria accounts I hope will be used in Colombia. I hope much of it will be used to help the people of Colombia who have suffered so much. Speakers on the other side have talked about all the important development initiatives that are going on there. I support those. I wish that more of our aid to Colombia was in the form of development assistance and not so much of it in the form of military aid.

Let me finally close by saying we talk a lot about human rights in this Chamber, and we talk about human rights in Iraq, we talk about human rights in Iran, we talk about human rights in China, every other place in the world. We need to talk about human rights in Colombia. And anybody who has been to Colombia who has been outside the U.S. embassy, who has been outside President Uribe's palace, who has been outside the U.S. military headquarters there will see firsthand that that country is experiencing a very difficult time right now, and it is not just because of the FARC guerillas which have

one of the most brutal records, but it is also because of the impunity that continues to exist in that country and the fact that the Colombian military still has yet to sever its ties with the paramilitaries. Vote for the McGovern-Skelton amendment.

?? [Begin Insert]

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to any attempts to cut funding for Andean Counterdrug Initiatives (ACI).

July 13 marked the third anniversary of Congressional approval of Plan Colombia. We need to reaffirm, not dismantle, our commitment to this program, to the people of Colombia, and to American citizens. I have led three congressional delegations to Colombia over the past five months. I can say firsthand that our significant investment is beginning to pay dividends. Together with the strong commitment of the Uribe Administration and historic levels of support from the Colombian people, U.S. involvement in Colombia is beginning to hit narco-terrorists where it hurts.

We are seeing tremendous results in illegal crop eradication, and Plan Colombia's efforts have produced record reductions in coca production and in the destruction of drug labs. Each week brings news of new seizures of cocaine and heroine--interdictions that are usually the result of U.S.-supplied intelligence. In fact, just three weeks ago during my most recent CODEL, Colombian officials seized over a ton of cocaine from a drug trafficking boat off the Carribean coast.

The Colombian government is reestablishing state presence in areas of the country that for decades lacked it. Criminals who have remained at bay for years are being captured and extradited to the United States for prosecution. During the first 11 months of President Uribe's tenure, 68 individuals have been extradited from Colombia to the United States.

Mr. Chairman, Plan Colombia is working. I have seen firsthand the devastation that drug production and trafficking has on Colombia. To those who question our investment, I would ask them to visit, as I have, Colombian soldiers who have lost their limbs or eyesight or sustained permanent disabilities in their battle to return peace to their nation--and keep drugs off American streets.

I would also ask them to visit Barrio Nelson Mandela, a USAID-sponsored facility for internally displaced people who have been forced from their homes by drug traffickers and guerillas. This facility showed me how our work on behalf of Colombia's millions of internally displaced people is offering men, women, and children a second chance at a violence-free, productive life.

My travels to Colombia have shown me just how critical U.S. assistance is to their government. With such promising results over the last 3 years, we need to sustain the momentum.

Of course obstacles remain, and progress is slower than we would like it to be. But now is not the time to turn our backs on this battle that is so intrinsically tied to our war on terrorism and the scourge of illegal drug use.

The Uribe Administration is committed to this war. But it needs United States assistance to improve mobility, intelligence, and training. Make no mistake: Colombia today is doing its share. Spending on security forces has increased under President Uribe from \$2.7 billion to over \$4 billion.

We simply cannot afford for President Uribe to fail to rid his country of the narco-terror threat. Nor would Colombians understand such a step if this amendment prevails.

The Administration requested \$731,000,000 for the Andean Counterdrug Initiative (ACI) for fiscal year 2004. Full funding of this request is critical to sustaining our success in Colombia and to protecting Colombia's neighbors from a spillover effect.

It's simple, Mr. Chairman: Now is not the time to turn our backs on the progress we are making against narco-terrorism in Colombia. We cannot win this war on drugs and drug-supported terrorism without the proper tools and resources. Vote ``no" on the McGovern amendments.

?? [End Insert]

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on amendment offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. *McGovern*).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. *McGOVERN*. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. *McGovern*) will be postponed.