

HON. RON PAUL OF TEXAS BEFORE THE US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES July 20, 2005

The Republican Congress Wastes Billions Overseas Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this foreign relations authorization bill. Something has gone terribly wrong with our foreign policy when we feel we must take almost 21 billion dollars out of the pockets of the American taxpayer and ship it overseas. Imagine what the Founders of this country would say if they were among us to see this blatant disregard for the Constitution and for the founding principles of this country. This bill proceeds from the view that with enough money we can buy friends and influence foreign governments. But as history shows us, we cannot. The trillions of dollars we have shipped overseas as aid, and to influence and manipulate political affairs in sovereign countries, has not made life better for American citizens. It has made them much poorer without much to show for it, however. Now we have a Republican-controlled Congress and White House, and foreign spending soars. It was not that long ago when conservatives looked at such cavalier handling of US tax dollars with consternation. Now it seems that they are in a race with the Left to see who can spend more.

What is wrong with this bill? Let me just mention a few of the most egregious items. In the name of promoting "religious liberty" and "fighting anti-Semitism" this bill will funnel millions of dollars to the corrupt Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and its Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). This unaccountable international organization is at the forefront of the manipulation and meddling in the internal affairs of other sovereign states, and has repeatedly dishonored itself through politically-biased monitoring of foreign elections. The OSCE does not deserve a penny from the American taxpayer, but this bill will make sure that the lavishly paid bureaucrats that staff the organization will be able to maintain their standard of living - at our expense. With regard to religious liberty, privately funded voluntary organizations have been shown to be much more effective in promoting tolerance. This is mainly true because these are true grassroots organizations with a stake in their countries and communities, rather than unelected international bureaucrats imposing politically correct edicts from above.

This bill spends a total of four and a half billion dollars on various United Nations activities, UN peacekeeping, and US dues to various international organizations. Forcing the taxpayer to continue to underwrite these organizations, which do not operate in our best interests, is unconscionable.

This bill continues to fund organizations such as the National Endowment for Democracy, which as I have written before has very little to do with democracy. It is an organization that uses US tax money to actually subvert democracy, by showering funding on favored political parties or movements overseas. It underwrites color-coded “people’s revolutions” overseas that look more like pages out of Lenin’s writings on stealing power than genuine indigenous democratic movements. The NED used American taxpayer dollars to attempt to guarantee that certain candidates overseas are winners and others are losers in the electoral processes overseas. What kind of message do we think this sends to foreign states? The National Endowment for Democracy should receive no funding at all, but this bill continues to funnel tens of millions of dollars to that unaccountable organization.

I am also very concerned about several of the amendments to this legislation. First, the extremely misleading UN “reform” act was slipped into this bill even though it was already passed on the floor as a separate bill. As I have written about this terrible legislation, “it will give the United Nations unprecedented new authority to intervene in sovereign states.”

Another amendment will create a chilling “Active Response Corps,” to be made up of US government bureaucrats and members of “non-governmental organizations.” Its purpose will be to “stabilize” countries undergoing “democratic transition.” This means that as soon as the NED-funded “people’s revolutionaries” are able to seize power in the streets, US funded teams will be deployed to make sure they retain power. All in the name of democracy, of course.

Mr. Speaker, this is a shameful day for the US Congress. We are taking billions out of the pockets of Americans and sending the money overseas in violation of the Constitution. These are billions that will not be available for investment inside the United States: investment in infrastructure, roads, new businesses, education. These are billions that will not be available to American families, to take care of their children or senior relatives, or to give to their churches or favorite charities. We must not continue to spend money like there is no tomorrow. We are going broke, and bills like this are like a lead foot on the accelerator toward bankruptcy.