Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address one of our Nation's

most difficult narcotics problems: Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has historically produced significant quantities of opium

which is refined into heroin. Afghanistan's opium crops accounted for

over 70 percent of the world's supply in the year 2000. According to

the DEA, about 50 percent of the heroin in the American market

originated in the Afghanistan-Pakistani border area in 1984.

We must learn from history and diligently work to prevent any Afghan

heroin from entering the American market. While Europe is the primary

destination for Afghan heroin today, we suspect that 7 to 10 percent of

the illegal crop ultimately reaches the streets of our congressional

districts.

Opium production in Afghanistan has resumed over the past 2 years.

With the fall of the Taliban, Afghan growers resumed cultivation

despite the renewal of the ban on poppy growth by the Karzai

government. This problem could grow far worse. Only 8 percent of

Afghanistan's cultivated land is presently used to grow opium poppies.

If we do not prevail over this problem, the remaining cultivated land

could easily accommodate more of this illegal crop.

These drugs are of great concern to all of us because they increase

the worldwide supply and have the potential to fund terrorists and

other destabilizing groups, and they subvert all of our efforts to

assist Afghanistan. The new Afghanistan cannot survive on an illegal

economy.

Drug proceeds are the source of a growing reservoir of illegal money

that funds international crime across the region; that sustains the

destabilizing activities of warlords; and that fosters local coercion

and terrorism. Just like the challenges faced south of our own borders

for decades, I am convinced that drug money and terrorist organizations

in Afghanistan and throughout that region are locked together like a

daisy chain. Our resolve to restore Afghanistan must include a broad,

comprehensive plan to eradicate poppy production, not only to help the

people of Afghanistan, but to cut off the funding of the terror

organizations that threaten our own security.

I recently returned from a trip to Libya, Iraq, Pakistan and

Afghanistan. We met with President Karzai and he reaffirmed my

conviction that he means business. He is serious about tackling the

heroin threat to his country. Together, we must prevent the

institutionalization of the heroin cartels. We must support democracy's

early days in post-Taliban Afghanistan. We must help them confront

those that still threaten to destabilize their society through both the

narcotics trade and terrorism. If we are to win the war in Afghanistan,

we must recognize that narcotics play a large part in funding the

radical anti-democratic elements.

We are pressing for increased coordination with the British on

counternarcotics; with the Germans on policing and police training; and

with the Italians on justice sector reform. In addition to the

traditional smuggling routes through Iran and Turkey, reports indicate

a continued movement of heroin shipments north from Afghanistan through

the central Asian states, Pakistan and India en route to international

markets.

Our strongest partners in these efforts must be those consumer

nations where the drugs are destined. The financial, resource, and

intelligence requirements to defeat the scourge are not our sole

responsibility. The administration must seek commitments from Europe

and elsewhere to share this burden, where they get 90 percent of the

heroin.

Let me give my colleagues an example of a successful international

operation. Operation Containment is an ongoing effort by the DEA. They

recently arrested 15 members of a heroin trafficking organization and

seized 7.4 tons of morphine base in Turkey. Morphine base can be

converted to heroin at a ratio of one to one with a chemical. This is

the largest seizure of morphine base ever made. To put the magnitude of

this seizure in perspective, the amount seized was more than four times

the total worldwide morphine base seizures made in 2000.

There are legitimate uses of the chemical acetic anhydride in

industry. Countries that produce this chemical must do their part by

restricting or controlling its sale and transportation to legitimate

consumers.

The Department of Defense has seen the magnitude of the transshipment

problem with three separate seizures by the U.S. Navy operating in the

Gulf region. The first seizure was made on December 15 when a motorized

dhow was apprehended in the Arabian Gulf. Two tons of narcotics were

seized, and three of the 15-man crew were identified as having possible

ties to al Qaeda. On December 18, two more dhows were intercepted.

Those seizures yielded drugs worth more than $10 million.

I am passionate about this subject. I have chaired a hearing on

Afghanistan just last week. Many of the members of my subcommittee have

visited the region. The administration must extract commitments from

the Europeans to pull their own weight. As leaders of the coalition of

Afghanistan and Iraq, the Department of Defense must be compelled to

address the growth, storage, processing, and transshipment of drugs in

the region. The bullets and bombs used against our own troops are

purchased with illicit funds. The Department of State and the DEA must

be resourced adequately to address and to assist Afghanistan in

reestablishing a viable criminal justice system so that their own poppy

ban can be effectively enforced.