EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

THE 23RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRAGIC FALL OF SOUTH VIETNAM TO COMMUNISM

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 1998

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, today it seems fitting that with the 23rd anniversary of the fall of Saigon to Communism, special recognition of the memories, feelings, and introspections regarding April 30, 1975, are in order. We must pay special tribute and remember the sacrifices of our soldiers and our Vietnam Veterans who fought and died in the name of freedom and democracy.

Many Vietnamese experienced first hand the deprivation, humiliation, and fear associated with losing their country, their way of life, and their freedom. But all who left their Vietnamese homeland to come to the United States chose a life filled with uncertainty, change, and struggle over a life in their homeland under a Communist thumb.

While I am at home visiting with my constituents, I am disheartened by the stories of their experiences during that conflict. It is often difficult to fully appreciate the extent to which these diligent people have survived all manner of disasters and trauma and have gone on to lead civil and productive lives.

Mr. Speaker, we must continue to be vigilant to keep this memory alive in our hearts. We must tell the story of their brave sacrifices to our children and our children's children. We must ensure that the important cause that we fought for is not forgotten by future generations.

COMBATING TERRORISM: TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE; COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 1998

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, April 23, 1998, I testified before the Subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs, and Criminal Justice; Committee on Government Reform and Oversight. On this occasion, I discussed a series of reports, prepared at my request by the General Accounting Office (GAO). These reports detail the United States' substantial efforts to combat terrorism. I share my remarks with the Members of the House.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT, APRIL 23, 1998

Chairman Hastert, members of the subcommittee, it gives me great pleasure to appear before you today. I appreciate the opportunity not only to speak about an important issue to our nation but also to bring attention to a substantial body of work produced by the General Accounting Office (GAO). This ''work in progress''—to date, a series of four report—will eventually produce the most comprehensive overview of our nation's effort to combat terrorism. As Chairman Hastert knows all too well, this is a daunting task. Without his leadership and effort, we would have a far more vague picture of our government's activities. Let me briefly review these recent findings.

First, GAO released a July 1997 report entitled, ''Combating Terrorism: Status of DoD Efforts to Protect Its Forces Overseas.'' Dealing with Anti-terrorism, this report concluded that uniform security standards were necessary to assure the safety of Americans around the world.

Second, GAO released a September 1997 report entitled, ''Combating Terrorism: Federal Agencies' Efforts to Implement National Security Policy and Strategy.'' Focused on Counterterrorism—or those offensive measures for deterring, resolving, and managing terrorist acts—this second report represents the first comprehensive examination of federal activities to combat terrorism. It pointed out that more than 40 federal departments, agencies, and bureaus, are involved in this activity. It also outlined specific roles and responsibilities of federal agencies, as well as their respective capabilities.

GAO released its third report in December of 1997. Focused on total government-wide spending levels to combat terrorism, this product—and the process leading up to its publication—closely tracked with congressional interest in the subject. As many of you know, during floor consideration of the fiscal year (FY) 1998 Defense Authorization Bill, an amendment—my amendment—was accepted to require the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to disclose overall spending levels directed against terrorism. Known as Section 1051 and taken together with GAO's third report, enough evidence surfaced to offer both encouragement and concern. Although it seemed that a significant amount of resources were annually committed to combat terrorism, the following inefficiencies were exposed:

No regular government-wide collection and review of funding data existed;

No apparent government-wide priorities were established;

No assessment process existed to coordinate and focus government efforts; and

No government office or entity maintained the authority to enforce coordination.

As a result, the third report recommended that the National Security Council (NSC), OMB, the departments, and agency heads—such as the State Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)—build upon the new statutory requirement embodied in Section 1051. I am also pleased to report that this remains an annual obligation, requiring by March of each year an annual overview of government-wide efforts to combat terrorism around the globe.

Finally, at the request of Chairman Hastert and myself, GAO has recently released its fourth and latest product on the subject, entitled ''Combating Terrorism: Threat and Risk Assessments Can Help Prioritize and Target Investments.'' Again, enough evidence has been provided to question the federal government's level of funding. This last report—responsible for reviewing the implementation of the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici domestic response program—hopefully will assist with the establishment of consistent national standards and priorities.

THE THREAT

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee:

In your mind's eye, join me and imagine what it was like in 1995 for the Senior Airman at a remote location in a foreign land, relaxing after a long, hot, stressful day in the Arabian desert;

Imagine, too, what it was like in 1996 for the federal employee beginning the day in Oklahoma, pouring coffee, grabbing a breakfast snack, and preparing for morning briefings;

Imagine what it was like in 1993 for Americans—businesswomen, diplomats, tourists, visitors—milling innocently about in the heart of New York City, one of our nation's busiest locations;

Imagine, if you can, what it was like for these individuals before these three locations became infamous for the catastrophic events that followed. To a person, none expected anything but completion of an average day; yet all experienced a jolt, a shock, a sense of horror, as chaos and bedlam brought an abrupt halt to their respective routines.

The bombing victims at Khobar Towers in Saudia Arabia were trained military professionals in a foreign land. The bombing victims at the Oklahoma City Federal Building and the World Trade Center, were average American citizens—civilians—at home in their communities, totally unprepared for the violence they were forced to experience.

Despite the different circumstances, all three events share in common one unavoidable, tell-tale truth: Americans died brutally, without warning, unnecessarily, and in a manner that will almost certainly be imitated in the future. In 1995 and 1996, about one-fourth of all international terrorist acts were against U.S. targets; and although the number of terrorist incidents both worldwide and in the United States has declined in recent years, the level of violence and lethality of attacks has increased. Violent events in the past, may encourage further attempts to strike America in places such as our own yards, back home in our districts, and other places where attacks might be least expected. Enemies of the United States, I fear, have adopted effective methods and means to strike against America.

Surely, enemies to America—both foreign and domestic—recognize the military capabilities of the United States. It is hard to ignore our successes throughout history and around the globe; it is difficult not to marvel at our technological advancements; and it is nearly impossible to overlook our massive military might at sea, in the air, and on the ground. Our naval, air, ground, and Marine forces remain superior and unmatched in today's world.

Further, enemies to America—both foreign and domestic—almost certainly recognize

the capabilities of our domestic law enforcement and emergency response officials. The Federal Bureau of Investigations, or FBI, the U.S. Secret Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), U.S. Customs, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are highly respected worldwide. Their standards currently set those of the international community.

But what of the point at which the responsibilities of these two communities intersect? Do our domestic law enforcement capabilities effectively coordinate with those of the Department of Defense? In the case of another incident on American soil, are Defense Department officials prepared to effectively support local officials? Are existing programs—such as the Emergency Response Assistance program, the Rapid Response Information System, and the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici ''First Responder Training'' program—adequately funded to handle a future incident, particularly one involving a weapon of mass destruction (WMD) such as a biological or chemical agent, or nuclear device?

We better be sure.

Is the threat real? I believe wholeheartedly that it is.

Are we in danger of overstating the threat? I am not sure. But, let me share with you something about which there is no doubt. I implore you to consider two lists, one based on capabilities, the other based on alleged activities. I ask you first to consider the list of nations around the globe known to either possess or nearly possess the capability to produce chemical and biological weapons—you are, of course, familiar with the unclassified list: North Korea, China, India, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Russia. Second, I ask you to consider the group of nations singled out by the State Department for engaging in state-sponsored terrorism. Again, you are familiar with the list's membership: Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria. Finally, I ask you to look at the correlation between these lists and ask you to decide. Are you willing to risk the potential consequences of not being prepared?

THE RESPONSE

To properly prepare for potential terrorist acts we must set forth with a political commitment to attain both efficiency and adequate resource levels across the entire federal government.

The recent past offers a bit of optimism. A relatively high level of Congressional support has existed:

The 1994 National Defense Authorization Act expressed a sense of Congress that the President should strengthen federal interagency response planning for early detection and warning of—and response to—potential use of chemical or biological agents and weapons.

The Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1996 required the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Energy to submit to Congress a joint report on military and civil defense response plans.

The 1997 National Defense Authorization Act required the President to take immediate action to enhance the capability of the Federal Government to prevent and respond to terrorist incidents involving WMD and to provide enhanced support to improve both the response and deterrent capabilities of state and local emergency response agencies. More than $50 million in assistance was authorized.

And just this past year, the budget request for the Defense Department included $49.5 million for support of the domestic emergency preparedness program. The resulting 1998 authorization provided for this request as well as an additional $10 million for equipment for the Marine's Chemical-Biological Incident Response Force and $10 million to support development of a domestic/biological counter-terrorism mission for the National Guard.

But I am concerned about our nation's ability over the next few years to attain efficiency or to sustain such a commitment. The Defense Department rightly assumes a supportive role during a terrorist incident within the United States, leaving the Department of Justice the primary responsibility for response and coordination. Yet even a role supportive in nature has come at a great cost—in both manpower and dollars. Much of the highly specialized expertise resides in DoD; and most of the highly-trained individuals necessary for such tasks are also from the Department of Defense. Unfortunately—for them, for their families, and for our nation—these same individuals are often needed elsewhere, in overseas contingencies around the world. In these strict budgetary times, support and training assistance to domestic authorities is placing Defense personnel under a terrible strain.

This year's budgetary constraint is particularly tight and I have not received information to cause me to believe that anything might be different in the near future. This is not to say there aren't several matters to provide encouragement, such as the recent announcement to authorize 10 Rapid Assessment and Initial Detection (RAID) teams within the Guard and Reserve components. Indeed, the collocation of these teams with FEMA regional offices just might provide the necessary ''bridge'' between federal and state officials and spawn better coordination.

Yet, I am aware of the Defense Department's budgetary struggle to meet existing requirements and must assume that this new effort might also find itself at risk of receiving inadequate resources. We should look closely at this recommendation before committing a large sum of our precious—and increasingly scarce—financial resources. And we should recognize that this resource pool is declining further now that FEMA has recently decided to withdraw itself from any lead-agency role. Without its assistance, the Defense Department must now find additional, previously unanticipated budget authority over the next 4 years to support this requirement.

As the work of GAO has helped us discover, our approach may be fundamentally flawed: perhaps too many different federal agencies and local governments possess existing or emerging capabilities for responding to a WMD attack; uneven and nearly incompatible levels of expertise often exists; duplication and poor communication may complicate our effort; and public complacency may threaten to weaken our overall capability. To be sure, if I must leave only one message today, let it be this: coordination problems may exist; but these problems pale in comparison with the potential problems resulting from public complacency.

Mr. Chairman, there is a Chinese proverb that states, ''May you live in interesting times.'' We should be thankful that we do. We also live during challenging times. At a time of budget cuts, force drawdowns, streamlining, and reductions in military personnel endstrength levels, we are faced with a familiar threat that is growing in importance. To counter the terrorist threat—to provide as much safety to Americans at home and abroad—we may need to not only strengthen and reinforce existing capabilities but legislate additional resources. If we fail in this calling, we may face another day when—without warning—an innocent American again falls victim to such evil.

TRIBUTE TO BERNARD B. KERIK

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 1998

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention Bernard B. Kerik, who was officially sworn-in as Commissioner for the City of New York's Department of Corrections.

On December 23, 1997, Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani announced the appointment, effective January 1, 1998, of the Department of Correction's First Deputy Commissioner, Bernard B. Kerik, as Commissioner.

Mr. Kerik, as Commissioner, oversees an annual budget of approximately $792 million, a civilian and uniformed workforce of about 13,000 and an inmate population of some 133,000 admissions yearly in the Department's 16 jails, 15 court detention pens and four hospital prison wards. As First Deputy Commissioner, he was responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Department. He has been appointed by Mayor Giuliani to the position of First Deputy Commissioner January 24, 1995, Mr. Kerik served in prior positions with the Department as Executive Assistant to the Commissioner and as Director of the Investigations Division.

Prior to DOC, Mr. Kerik served with the New York City Police Department for eight years. After uniformed and plain clothes duty with anti-crime and narcotics units in Midtown South and Manhattan North commands, he was assigned to the U.S. Justice Department's New York Drug Enforcement (DEA) Task Force. There, he helped direct one of the most substantial narcotics investigations in the history of that office, resulting in the conviction of more than 60 members of the Cali Cartel. Mr. Kerik received 28 citations for meritorious and heroic service during his tenure with NYPD, including that Department's Medal of Valor.

Before joining NYPD, Mr. Kerik was the Warden of the Passaic County Jail, the largest county adult correctional facility in the State of New Jersey, responsible for the administrative direction of the 265 uniformed and civilian staff and an annual budget of $7.2 million. He also served as that Department's Training Officer, assistant commander of the Sheriff's Emergency Response Team, and commander of the Special Weapons and Operations Units.

Mr. Kerik spent nearly four years in various security assignments in Saudi Arabia, training Saudi and other nationals in physical security and police patrol operations. Before that, he served as an MP for three years in the U.S. Army, assigned to the 18th Airborne Corp where he trained Special Forces personnel at the John F. Kennedy Unconventional Warfare Center, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He was also a member of an all-Army martial arts team.

Mr. Kerik has a diverse background and education in international and domestic anti-terrorism, personal protective security and special weapons and operations. He has been commended for heroism by President Ronald Reagan and the Cities of Paterson and Passaic, New Jersey. He has received the DEA Administrator's Award, the Medal of Valor from the International Narcotic Enforcement Officers' Association, and a Special Achievement Award from the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for the City of New York.