

the accidental bombing of its embassy to incite anti-American riots, threatening U.S. citizens; a regime that continues to sell weapons of mass destruction to rogue states inimical to U.S. interests.

We are acting against a regime that seeks democratic independence and a society rooted in the pursuit of life, liberty and happiness.

Doesn't any of this strike anyone as odd?

THE U.S. ARMY SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS

Mr. CLELAND. Mr. President, I rise today to express my continued support for the U.S. Army School of the Americas (SOA), located at Fort Benning, Georgia. Legislation has been introduced by my colleagues both in the House and the Senate which would close the School of the Americas, and last evening the House adopted an amendment to do so. Mr. President, I rise to support the School of the Americas and the vital mission it performs in encouraging diplomacy and democracy within the militaries located in the Americas.

The School of the Americas has been a key instrument of U.S. foreign policy in Latin and Southern America for over fifty years and is the single most important instrument of our National Security Strategy of engagement in the Southern Hemisphere.

The legislation opposing the School has been accompanied by a mountain of communications alleging that this School, operated by the U.S. Army and funded by taxpayers' dollars, is the cause of horrendous human rights abuses in Central and South America. In twelve separate investigations since 1989, the Department of Defense, the Army, the GAO and others have found nothing to suggest that the School either taught or inspired Latin Americans to commit such crimes. Yet, sponsors of these measures reproduce the critics' list of atrocities allegedly committed by a small number of graduates in order to transfer responsibility for these crimes to the backs of the School and the Army rather than to the individuals themselves.

The School is, and always has been, a U.S. Army training and education institution teaching the same tactics, techniques, and procedures taught at other U.S. Army schools and imparting the very same values that the Army teaches its own soldiers. These U.S. military personnel receive the same training as all graduates of our military schools. To suggest that terrorist activities are taught to students would suggest that we in fact teach terrorist activities to all of our own military personnel. This is assuredly not the case.

The School is commanded by a U.S. Army colonel whose chain of command includes the Commanding General of the U.S. Army Infantry Center and the Commanding General of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. The School also receives oversight and direction from the Commander-in-Chief

of U.S. Southern Command. The School's staff and faculty includes over 170 U.S. Army officers, noncommissioned officers, enlisted soldiers, and Department of the Army civilians. The School counts among its graduates over 1,500 U.S. military personnel including five general officers currently serving on active duty in our military.

I agree completely with critics of the School that "Human rights is not a partisan issue," and I further agree that, in the past there were indeed some shortcomings in the School's fulfillment of its mission to transmit all of the values we hold dear in our country. In that regard, today, the U.S. Army School of the Americas has the U.S. Army's premier human rights training program. The program has been expanded in recent years in consultation with the International Committee of the Red Cross and Mr. Steve Schneebaum, a noted human rights attorney and a member of the School's Board of Visitors. Every student and instructor at the School receives mandatory human rights instruction and the International Committee of the Red Cross teaches human rights each year during the School's Command and General Staff and Peace Operations courses. Last year, over 900 Latin American soldiers, civilians, and police received human rights instruction at the U.S. Army School of the Americas.

Latin America is currently undergoing an unparalleled transformation to democratic governance, civilian control of the military, and economic reform along free market principles. Almost every nation in Latin America has a democratically elected government. During this transition, the region's militaries have accepted structural cuts, reduced budgets, and curtailed influence in society. In many cases, their acceptance of this new reality has been encouraged and enhanced by the strategy of engagement of which the U.S. Army School of the Americas is an integral part. However, many Latin American democracies are fragile. True change does not occur in days, months, or even years. We must continue to engage Latin American governments, including their militaries. Marginalizing or ignoring the militaries of the region will not help in consolidating hard-won democracy but, instead, will have the opposite effect. Our efforts to engage the militaries of the region are more important and more relevant than ever. The U.S. Army School of the Americas is unique in this regard because it trains and educates large numbers of Latin American students who cannot be accommodated in other U.S. military service schools due to limited student spaces and the inability of other U.S. military schools to teach in Spanish.

Over the years, changes have been made to enhance the School's focus on human rights and diplomacy. Recently introduced courses such as Democratic Sustainment, Humanitarian Demining, International Peacekeeping Oper-

ations, Counternarcotics Operations, and Human Rights Train-the-Trainer, directly support shared security interests in the region, and are not offered elsewhere. Other proposed changes include placing the School under the jurisdiction of U.S. Southern Command and expanding the Board of Visitors to include congressional membership—both proposals which I strongly support.

By focusing on the negative, critics ignore the many recent positive contributions that U.S. Army School of the Americas graduates have made. In 1995, this nation helped broker a cease fire between Peru and Ecuador when a historical border dispute threatened to ignite into war. The key members of the delegations that put together that accord were U.S. Army School of the Americas graduates, from Peru, from Ecuador, and from the guarantor nations of the United States and Chile. In fact, the Commander of the U.S. contingent to the multinational peacekeeping force, who received special recognition from the State Department for "extraordinary contributions to U.S. diplomacy," was a 1986 graduate of the School's Command and General Staff course, and serves as the current Commandant of the School. More recently, in 1997, the President of Ecuador was removed from office, creating a constitutional crisis. Some of the people of Ecuador called for the military to take power, but their military refused. Many of the officers in the high command were U.S. Army School of the Americas graduates. Finally, less than four months ago, the President of Paraguay was impeached for misconduct. Once again, a constitutional crisis ensued. Once again, the military refused to take power. Once again many of the officers in that military were U.S. Army School of the Americas graduates, including one general officer who played a key role in the refusal.

I ask each of you to take a careful look at the U.S. Army School of the Americas as it exists today. Look to the future. As stated by the School's critics, "The contentious politics of U.S. foreign policy in Central America in the 1980s are over." I strongly urge you to continue your support of the Army School of the Americas and the U.S. Army.

REGULATORY FAIRNESS AND OPENNESS ACT

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I rise today to signify my support for the introduction of the Regulatory Fairness and Openness Act of 1999.

According to data compiled in the last five years, the State of Washington produces more than 230 food, feed and seed crops; ranks in the top five for the value of the commodities produced; leads the nation in the production of apples, spearmint oil, red raspberries, hops, edible peas and lentils, asparagus, sweet cherries, and

pears; is second in the nation in the production of winter wheat, potatoes, Concord grapes, and carrots; and contributes more than \$5 billion to the State's economy annually. Not only do all these facts signify the importance of the agriculture industry to the State of Washington and the nation, but highlight the importance of having the proper tools and chemicals necessary to produce one of the most abundant, economical, and safest food supplies in the world.

I agreed to be an original cosponsor the Regulatory Fairness and Openness Act of 1999 for many reasons, but the most significant reason comes down to common sense. I supported the passage of the Food Quality Protection Act in 1996 and still believe in the intent of the legislation. However, recent accounts from the agriculture industry cite concern about the practical application of reliable data and science to the process.

Just this week a 25-year-old apple farmer from Orondo, Washington visited my office to voice her concerns over the implementation of FQPA. Karen Simmons explained that with the current manner in which FQPA is being implemented, entire classes of pesticides are threatened with elimination. Should these tools of agriculture be lost, an orchard like Karen's faces possible extinction. Karen's story is not the first I've heard, as farmers from Washington have been invaluable in expressing their concerns to me over the future of their livelihood.

Karen's account mimics the thousands of reports my colleagues and I have heard from growers across this country. Karen, like many farmers, never follows the application suggestions prescribed by the chemicals she uses. Not only does she not follow these recommendations for practical purposes, but because of the cost incurred as well.

For example, one of the pesticides she utilizes recommends application up to twice a week, but Karen informed us that she rarely uses it that frequently. While Karen might not utilize this chemical often, it is imperative that she has it as a tool. Should this tool be eliminated altogether, Karen's crop is susceptible to infestation, thereby putting her entire orchard in jeopardy.

Unfortunately, in establishing the risk cup for chemicals, EPA has been using application recommendations, often referred to as default assumptions, and not taking into consideration actual usage. This approach is threatening the tools growers have at their disposal. That is why it is imperative that we incorporate into the implementation of FQPA a rulemaking process, allowing growers, chemical utilizers, and household pest producers the ability to divulge actual usage and to apply practical sense to the process. How could we suggest threatening the livelihood of the American farmer and others, while not providing for them an avenue to participate, comment and clarify?

Children's health is equally important, and, as several of my colleagues

have suggested, improper application of the FQPA to household pest controls could create a host of health hazards for children and the elderly. For example, there is a real threat that current FQPA implementation could eliminate the use of some household insecticides and repellants. As many of you know, children and the elderly are susceptible to disease, often carried by cockroaches and other insects. Improper control of these pests could equate to serious health hazards across the nation, a scenario none of us predicted with the passage of FQPA.

Again, I stress that the intent of the legislation is not to alter the importance or significance of human health, but to ensure that decisions regarding health risks are informed and not hasty, that the intent of the FQPA is carried out with the use of sound science and practical application, that a dose of common sense is applied, and that adequate time is available to make certain all decisions and tolerance standards are healthy and equitable.

Without question, the United States produces the most abundant, desirable, inexpensive, and safest food supplies in the world. The FQPA must be implemented in a fashion that not only takes into account these very facts, but continues to consider the needs, choices and health of the American consumer.

I thank my colleagues for their continuing interest in this issue, and look forward to working with everyone to pass the Regulatory Fairness and Openness Act of 1999.

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise today to speak for a moment about the Regulatory Fairness and Openness Act that I am pleased to cosponsor with a number of my colleagues who are concerned about the state of agriculture today. I want to thank Senator HAGEL and his staff for their work on this legislation which reflects the input of a number of agriculture groups, including the American Farm Bureau Federation.

When the Congress passed the Food Quality Protection Act in 1996, the idea was to update our pesticide laws so that our farmers could continue to provide the safest and most economical food supply in the world. FQPA eliminated the outdated zero-tolerance Delaney clause for pesticide residues and provided the EPA a framework to review and approve pesticides based on the best scientific evidence available about any health risks these chemicals may pose. What was not intended was to give the EPA the authority to embark on a course to eliminate pesticides based on unrealistic, worst-case scenarios while keeping important stakeholders in the dark.

Agriculture in my state of Oregon is incredibly diverse. We have everything from large wheat or nursery operations to small berry farms and hazelnut orchards. While implication of FQPA will surely have implications for program commodities like wheat and soybeans, it is the small speciality crops grown

in my state that I am most concerned will be the first to find what may be the only available crop protection tool arbitrarily axed by EPA. At a time when farms all across the country are in the grip of a price depression crisis, our farmers simply can't afford to take another hit—especially one from their own government.

Despite our hopes to the contrary, it has become apparent in recent months that legislation is needed to steer the Environmental Protection Agency back towards science-based review of pesticide tolerances under the Food Quality Protection Act. The Regulatory Fairness and Openness Act that we are introducing today requires the EPA to expose its decisionmaking process for public comment, identify areas where assumptions were made, expedite data collection procedures where needed, and streamline the process to get economically viable alternative products approved. The common-sense legislation is the result of consultation with more than 60 agriculture and pest control organizations.

Mr. President, the public has a right to know what processes are being used in the implementation of the FQPA and how the EPA is arriving at its decisions. Our farmers have a right to know that important crop protection chemicals will not be eliminated on a whim by a federal agency. I hope colleagues agree with me that this measure of regulatory relief is urgently needed, and I urge my colleagues to join me in support of the Regulatory Fairness and Openness Act.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Thursday, July 29, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,640,577,276,840.14 (Five trillion, six hundred forty billion, five hundred seventy-seven million, two hundred seventy-six thousand, eight hundred forty dollars and fourteen cents).

One year ago, July 29, 1998, the Federal debt stood at \$5,543,291,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred forty-three billion, two hundred ninety-one million).

Five years ago, July 29, 1994, the Federal debt stood at \$4,636,362,000,000 (Four trillion, six hundred thirty-six billion, three hundred sixty-two million).

Twenty-five years ago, July 29, 1974, the Federal debt stood at \$476,155,000,000 (Four hundred seventy-six billion, one hundred fifty-five million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,164,422,276,840.14 (Five trillion, one hundred sixty-four billion, four hundred twenty-two million, two hundred seventy-six thousand, eight hundred forty dollars and fourteen cents) during the past 25 years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi is recognized.