

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

DO NOT GIVE IN TO FEAR, THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF TERRORISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk about terrorism from my perspective, both as a Member of the Congress and as a scientist.

It is very clear that the purpose of terrorism is an effort by a nongovernmental agency or group of individuals to disrupt the activities of legitimate governments and to do so by instilling fear in the citizens of that particular government. We have to recognize that that is the main purpose of terrorism. The cause may be hate, the cause may be a simple interest in vandalism, but the purpose is to disrupt and to cause fear.

There are various ways to respond to that. One, of course, is a military response, which this country is doing in response to terrorism. But equally important is to defeat terrorism by not letting the terrorists disrupt our country, by not letting them generate fear in our country, but rather by recognizing what their purpose is and to defeat them by not yielding to the terror and to the fear that they want to instill.

Obviously, when the terrorists attacked our Nation and killed roughly 6,000 people in a horrible, horrible attack on the New York World Trade Center, we as a Nation became very disturbed, as we have every right to be, and we are responding to that action militarily. But I am concerned about the response of fear that we also see, the fear of flying, the fear of going places, and the withdrawal into our homes. That is precisely what the terrorists want, and I encourage the citizens of our country to overcome that fear. Most of the Members of Congress fly every week as I do. I have found absolutely no reason to be fearful of flying. It is safer to fly today than it was before September 11, because the security is much better.

Our latest fear is anthrax. But it is very important to put these issues in perspective, and to look at them from the aspect of relative risk. Every day of the week, every day of the year, 120 people, on average, die in automobile accidents in this country. Very, very few people have died from anthrax; very, very few have died, until September 11, from terrorist activities. And so let us keep that in perspective.

We should be no more afraid to fly than we are afraid to get in our automobile and drive. We should be no more afraid of contracting anthrax than we

should be afraid of getting in our car and driving. In fact, the probability of incurring anthrax is far less than the probability of winning the Power Ball lottery, and we know that is very very small.

Now, why am I saying this? Am I not afraid of anthrax? Yes, I am, but I am not going to live my life in fear of contracting anthrax. It is very difficult to make biological weapons. It is even more difficult to disperse the biological material. In spite of the efforts made by the terrorists, very few people have been injured or have acquired the disease of anthrax. In spite of the efforts of the terrorists, it is simply very difficult to circulate enough biological material that actually causes someone to become ill, particularly to the point of death.

There are other fears we might have. I am more concerned, frankly, about chemical terrorism than about biological because it is easier to make and spread toxic chemicals and it is easier to kill a large number of people with it.

The main point, I want to make is that we should live our lives without fear. We should try to go about our normal paths but to be vigilant. Everyone in this Nation should be watching for terrorists who might be trying to do evil things. They should report these activities to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

□ 1700

Do not live your life in fear. Be vigilant but live a normal life and be grateful that you are living in the United States of America, the most wonderful Nation that has ever existed on this planet. Enjoy the blessings and benefits of this Nation. Do not succumb to what the terrorists want you to succumb to. Be brave, be bold, but be vigilant.

HOMELAND SECURITY TASK FORCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLAKE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the Homeland Security Task Force of which the leader on this side has convened and of which I serve as a member of that task force.

In preparing to meet with local municipal leaders and those agencies that are so critical in combatting any type of terrorist attack, I was encouraged on Monday when I convened a meeting in my district and met with 45 of those agencies. In speaking with them about the preparedness of cities and hospitals, schools, refineries, water agencies, postal services, I am convinced that we are prepared.

Of course, there are further resources that can be put in place for those city governments, and there is a critical

need for more training perhaps in small cities, where there is not a full-time person who can help in executing the plan that has been put in place, but in the State of California, the Governor has put a strategic plan in place to help the hospitals and to ensure that every hospital has a bioterrorism plan.

We have asked now for the sheriff's department and they have responded with a uniform plan that is in concert and coordinated with city block clubs and other organizations.

I am pleased to report to you that the water agencies have security on every front, especially in the State of California.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, we are ready. The connect is there; the coordination is there. The execution of those plans are there.

I would like to also inform my colleagues that FEMA has 28 Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces, eight of which are in California, and these task forces integrate the plan from the Federal down over to the State and then the local levels. So I will say that I am encouraged by this whole notion that the municipal leaders, the municipal emergency preparedness plan is in place, especially in California.

I would urge all Members, though they may or may not sit on the Homeland Security Task Force, that they meet with their municipal leaders to draw from them their plan and to see whether it is coordinated across all of the agencies. I will say that more than likely they have such a plan, because with FEMA having the Urban Search and Rescue Task Force, I am sure that all other States have put that in place.

Mr. Speaker, we are ready for any type of bioterrorism attacks from the Federal, State and local levels.

TRIBUTE TO KRISTOFOR STONESIFER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, on September 11 when America was attacked, nearly every American had the same response and that was that we needed to immediately defend our people and defend our Nation against this evil, and the Congress, including this House, immediately after that attack, authorized force, military force to accomplish that end.

Our military force are the airplanes and the aircraft carriers and the smart bombs and the weapons that we have, but that military force is nothing except for the men and women in our Armed Services, volunteers all, who fly those airplanes, who drive those ships, who leap out of airplanes with parachutes and are prepared to serve their country.

Last weekend, we lost our first two fine American young military personnel, and one of those fine soldiers was from my district. His name was