

In fact, I know people who are making \$6 and \$7 an hour that work at airport security, and some of them actually have left to go work at McDonald's because it pays better. Instead, we should federalize airport workers and security workers at the airports. They should be paid a living wage, they should be paid health insurance, they should be paid other benefits, and they should be trained better so they are there for a long time and they will do their job.

Why should we continue this failed system of airline security, of airport security, all in the name of a conservative ideology? Mr. Speaker, it is time we believe in shared sacrifice. It is time we federalize the airport security people, that we build a tax system fair to all people, and that we take care of workers laid off and victimized by the events of September 11.

HONORING THE PHYSICALLY IMPAIRED AND THOSE THAT WORK WITH THEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, recently the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) took a Special Order honoring Rush Limbaugh, who is undergoing a hearing loss. Many people are unaware and/or indifferent to those who experience physical infirmities, including deafness and blindness. When celebrities become affected, however, attention is focused on the celebrity, as well as the infirmity or disability. Fanny Crosby, the beloved hymn composer, was visually impaired, as are entertainers Doc Watson and Ray Charles. Helen Keller overcame blindness as well as deafness.

Many are prone to dismiss deafness as a mere inconvenience when compared to other infirmities. I have a personal familiarity with the hearing impaired, Mr. Speaker. My mom has been legally deaf most of her adult life. My first cousin at the time of her retirement served as superintendent of the North Carolina School for the Deaf.

Several years ago, while motoring in North Carolina on a Sunday morning, I was listening to the Lutheran Hour on the automobile radio. The host, Dr. Ozzie Hoffmann, was discussing physical infirmities. He said if offered a choice of losing the sense of sight or the sense of hearing, most people would opt to retain their vision. The host of the program then presented an interesting aside. Blindness, he noted, removes the visually impaired from objects and things; deafness, he declared, removes the hearing impaired from people.

Oftentimes persons who have impaired hearing are mistakenly accused of being unfriendly or aloof, when the truth of the matter is their deafness, as

Dr. Hoffmann indicated years ago, has removed them from people. Their skills for communication, Mr. Speaker, have been adversely affected.

My mom was an outstanding parent and wife, despite having been deprived of normal hearing. Rush Limbaugh, hopefully, will not be removed from contact with his vast listening audience.

Finally, permit me to urge my colleagues in this House and in the other body as well to be consciously aware of difficulties encountered by those who are visually and hearing impaired. We who enjoy normal vision and hearing oftentimes take these luxuries for granted.

These are indeed luxuries which we should not embrace casually, and those who do not enjoy these luxuries deserve a tip of our hats for the extra effort they are required to expend to make it through life. Most of the blind and deaf people I know are upbeat, optimistic and rarely bitter as a result of their infirmities. They are indeed unsung heroes and thoroughly deserve our admiration and respect, as do the men and women who work with the visually and hearing impaired to make their lives more complete and more fulfilled.

ENFORCING AIRLINE SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, it has been 7 weeks since the attacks, and the House of Representatives has yet to consider one bill relating to aviation security enhancements. Not one.

Two weeks ago the Senate passed a bill 100 to zero, nothing passes the Senate 100 to zero of any substance, 100 to zero; yet this House has failed to take up that or any other measure, because of one item in disagreement: Who should provide the critical screening function for baggage, carry-on bags and individuals passing into the secure areas of the airport? Should it be the private sector, as the majority whip and the majority leader say, or should it be a Federal law enforcement-national security function provided by competent, well-paid, professional Federal law enforcement personnel, the same way we do INS, Customs, and even agriculture inspection? Those are Federal law enforcement agents.

But somehow, when it comes to the security of the public traveling on airplanes, no, they get second-class treatment. They get security on the cheap. The majority wants to maintain the status quo, which is failing them miserably.

Guess what? That same majority has not mandated that we put private security firms at the doors of the Capitol. If they feel so good about this and if they can provide such a great service, why

do they not do that? Because they are mindful of protecting themselves. But they do not care quite so much about the traveling public. They care more about their political sponsors.

Let us look at who the political sponsors are here. There are three foreign owned, hear that, foreign owned huge companies that do most of the private airport security in the United States; and one of them, Securicor of Europe, threatened last week to sue the United States Government if we usurp their function at the airports.

Let us look at how their subsidiary is doing in the U.S. Their subsidiary is Argenbright, one of the three largest security firms providing airport security to more than 40 major airports in the United States of American, including Boston's Logan, Washington's Dulles and others.

Well, they have got a few problems. They were criminally convicted just a year ago of hiring known felons, maintaining known felons on staff, falsifying documents as to the screening and training of the known felons that they had hired. At Dulles Airport, 84 percent of their workers are foreign national; but, they assure us, most of them are legal immigrants. "Most."

Most? This is extraordinary, and this is the system that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) want to perpetuate under pressure from these generous firms. They are generous. Their U.S. subsidiaries can contribute to campaigns, and they do, generously.

Now, let us talk about how they are going to resolve the problems. They do admit it is a little bit of a problem that they are hiring and maintaining known felons on staff; that FAA inspectors are able to get hand grenades, fully assembled guns and other things through the security; that many, many other lapses have been noted. Most notably, last weekend a gentleman was on a Southwest Airlines plane with a fully loaded gun in his briefcase which they had not noticed. They noticed, when he got up to altitude and told the pilot. It was nice of him to do that. But the security screening people from the private firm did not notice the gun.

Now, so what the majority says is well, look, we will make it better. We will have Federal regulations. Well, guess what? We have got Federal regulations now. They are ignoring them. They are ignoring them to the point where they are about to be criminally convicted, in terms of Argenbright, for the second time.

□ 1245

But not removed. But forbid we would remove them from doing this function and fail the American traveling public.

They say they will also mandate wages, not usually something the Republicans want to do. So they say they will mandate wages, they will mandate benefits, they will mandate, and the Federal Government will conduct

background checks since the private firms falsify the documents all the time, and then the Federal Government will either directly train or supervise the training by these firms because they falsify the documents about the training of these people, and the Federal Government will provide supervisors but it will be a private undertaking.

Now, wait a minute. Did they just describe a Rube Goldberg device or what? So the Federal Government is going to do all of these things, but we are going to maintain these private firms, so-called, in place because why? They are doing such a good job? No. Why? Why are we going to maintain them in place? This system that they are describing is so much less efficient than an all-Federal system like we do with Customs, INS, agriculture inspection, and like we do here at the United States Capitol to provide our screening security. Why do they want to give Americans security on the cheap? Change this system. Change it this week. Agree to what the Senate did 100 to zero.

AMERICANS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETRI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues are aware, trace elements of the anthrax bacillus were discovered in my office in the Longworth Office Building, along with the offices of two of my distinguished colleagues, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. BALDACCI) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT). Mr. Speaker, all of us have been busy, to say the least, since we received the call from leadership and security on Friday night, not only meeting with health officials, but security officials, and contacting constituents who came into contact with our office. It has been a busy time.

But I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to announce proudly that another attack on our national government has failed. As a Christian believer, I begin my remarks today by giving thanks to God, who I believe protected my family and my staff from this unseen menace. In our family, we often say that the safest place in the world is to be in the center of God's will, and we believe that we had his protection. As the Bible says, "It is good for me to be near God, I have made the sovereign Lord my refuge, I will tell of all your deeds," and thus I do so humbly today.

To the people we serve in Indiana, our message today is simple. They should be confident. My family and my staff are well and show no signs of infection. We have all been treated, as has virtually every individual that came into contact with our office. This incident should not, Mr. Speaker, be

cause for alarm but of encouragement. The system worked, thanks to the outstanding work of the Capitol Hill security, the CDC, and the Office of the Attending Physician, who I rise to commend today. We are requesting in all of our offices that anyone who visited our office from October 12 to October 17 see their physician and begin a prophylactic treatment of antibiotics over the next 60 days.

To the people who did this, whoever you are, you have failed again. You have failed to reach your target, and you have failed in a much more profound way, because by your actions you have steeled the resolve of every member of this national government whose duty it is to bring you to justice or to seal your fate.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, a word on behalf of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), the Speaker of the House, and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), the minority leader, whose decision to close the House offices and commence this environmental sweep was so deeply maligned by many in the national media and even by some of our own colleagues in the U.S. Senate. On behalf of my wife, my children, Michael, Charlotte and Audrey, the nine full-time staffers in my office, from my heart to the bipartisan leadership I say thank you. Thank you for putting my family and my staff's well-being ahead of any concern about public relations or image.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, these times have fallen on broad shoulders, men and women willing and able to make the tough choices and stand by them. So I say to the troops in the field, our investigators at home, the postal workers who find themselves on the front-line of this domestic terrorism, and to the public at large, be encouraged. God has indeed put strong men and women in leadership of this national government for such a time as this. As it is written, fear is useless. What is needed is trust.

Mr. Speaker, over this last weekend my family again learned that our national leadership and the leadership in both parties in this Congress is worthy of our trust in these difficult days, and I am grateful.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address remarks in debate to the Chair and not to others who may be following the proceedings.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 51 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PETRI) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

Mr. Tony Incashola, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Pablo, Montana, offered the following prayer:

God, Creator, I come before You today to ask that You look upon the Members of the House of Representatives and gift them with Your knowledge and wisdom. Creator, I pray for those who have gone before us, our ancestors and forefathers, who with their mighty words, deeds and sacrifices made this the great Nation it is. I especially ask You, Creator, to wrap Your loving arms around those whose lives have been forever altered by the tragic events of September 11. We truly are one Nation under God, and seek Your guidance in all decisions, small and large, that affect the diverse peoples of America.

We have reached a point in our history, Creator, where Your guidance and wisdom are of great importance. I ask Members of the House of Representatives to look to You for the path to follow so that justice and righteousness will be served. I implore You to listen to the prayers and needs of these men and women who have been chosen to lead this Nation. Give them the strength to make decisions, popular or not, to lead the United States of America into the 21st century. Now is the time for people of all races, colors, origins, and religions to come together to stand and show our strength as one. We must remember, as we move forward, that united we stand, one Nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

I ask this in Your name, God, Creator, and thank You for the many blessings You have already bestowed upon us. Thank you. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GREEN of Texas led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

TRIBUTE TO GUEST CHAPLAIN

(Mr. REHBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1