

that these changes are of such magnitude that they require that our military in the twenty first century be fundamentally different than today's military. This view was compellingly articulated by the National Defense Panel, which was created by this body. And it was given the force of policy by Secretary Cohen in the Quadrennial Defense Review.

But how are we to know what this very different military should look like? Secretary Cohen and General Shelton, encouraged and supported by legislation we passed last year, established a process to answer that question. On the first of October, 1998, they charged the Commander in Chief of the United States Atlantic Command, Admiral Harold Gehman, to put in place a joint experimentation process to objectively determine which new technologies, organizations, and concepts of operation will most likely to future military superiority. Since that time Admiral Theman has done a superb job of establishing a process and beginning experiments toward that end. In June, 1999, Admiral Gehman began experiments to address how the U.S. military should be equipped and organized to effectively find and strike critical mobile enemy targets, such as ballistic missiles. Other experiments to address near, mid, and far term strategic and operational problems will follow. On the first of October of this year the Secretary and the Chairman increased the priority of the policy of transformation by redesignating the United States Atlantic Command as the United States Joint Forces Command. This change is more than simply a change in name. It underlines the increasing importance of increased jointness in meeting the security challenges of the twenty first century, increases the priority assigned to experimentation, and reflects the expanded role that the United States Joint Forces Command assumes in order to achieve that goal. I applaud Secretary Cohen and General Shelton for their commitment to transformation of the U.S. military and their courage to make the tough changes needed to get it done.

I am also pleased to see that their leadership is having a positive effect on our military Services' plans to transform themselves to meet the coming challenges. The U.S. Air Force has begun to reorganize its units into Air Expeditionary Forces to be more responsive to the need for air power by the warfighting commanders. And I note with great admiration that on October 12, 1999 General Eric Shinseki, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, announced his intention to begin to transform the U.S. Army from a heavy force designed largely for the Cold War to one that will be more effective against the threats that most now see as most likely and most dangerous.

The goal is to make the U.S. Army more strategically relevant by making it lighter, more deployable, more lethal, and more sustainable. General Shinseki plans to find technological solutions to these problems, and intends to create this year an experimentation process at Fort Lewis Washington in order to begin to construct this new force. He has said that he wants to eliminate the distinction between different types of Army units, and perhaps in time go to an all-wheeled fleet of combat vehicles, eliminating the tank as we have known it for almost a century. These are historic and very positive steps. But there is much progress that must still be made. For example, the Army and the Air Force must now implement their plans in concert with the other services, and with the Joint Forces Command.

Fundamental change is very difficult to effect, especially in organizations, like the Department of Defense, that are large and successful. Frankly, I am a little surprised that we have been able to achieve these changes in so short time. But organizations that don't change ultimately fail, and that is not an outcome we can accept. So we should not only applaud these moves, but support them, and encourage faster and more direct action. An excellent report by the Defense Science Board in August, 1999 suggests some things we can do to provide this support. The most important are encouraging the development of a DOD-wide strategy for transformation activities, and insisting on the establishment of processes to turn the results of experiments into real capabilities for our forces. And we must ensure that this effort is not hobbled by lack of resources. Perhaps most importantly, we must insist that no Service plan nor program be agreed to or resourced unless we are assured that it has passed through a rigorous joint assessment and is consistent with the joint warfighting needs of our military commanders.

I urge my colleagues to join me in complementing our senior leaders and to support their efforts to move to the next level of jointness as they grapple with the difficult task of building the most effective American military possible for the 21st century.

THE FREEDOM TO TRAVEL TO CUBA ACT OF 1999

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, any American who wants to travel to Iran, to North Korea, to Syria, to Serbia, to Vietnam, to just about anywhere, can do so, as long as that country gives them a visa. As far as the United States Government is concerned, they can travel there at their own risk.

Cuba, on the other hand, a country 90 miles away that poses about as much threat to the United States as a flea does to a buffalo, is off limits unless

you are a journalist, government official, or member of some other special group. If not, you can only get there by breaking the law, which an estimated 10-15,000 Americans did last year.

Of all the ridiculous, anachronistic, and self-defeating policies, this has got to be near the top of the list.

For forty years, administration after administration, and Congress after Congress, has stuck by this failed policy. Yet Fidel Castro is as firmly in control today as he was in 1959, and the Cuban people are no better for it.

This legislation attempts to put some sense into our policy toward Cuba. It would also protect one of the most fundamental rights that most Americans take for granted, the right to travel freely. I commend the senior Senator From Connecticut, Senator DODD, who has been such a strong and persistent advocate on this issue. I am proud to join him in cosponsoring this legislation, which is virtually identical to an amendment he and I sponsored earlier this year. That amendment came within 7 votes of passage.

Mr. President, in March of this year I traveled to Cuba with Senator JACK REED. We were able to go there because we are Members of Congress.

I came face to face with the absurdity of the current policy because I wanted my wife Marcelle to accompany me as she does on most foreign trips. A few days before we were to leave, I got a call from the State Department saying that they were not sure they could approve her travel to Cuba.

I cannot speak for other Senators, but I suspect that like me, they would also not react too kindly to a policy that gives the State Department the authority to prevent their wife, or their children, from traveling with them to a country with which we are not at war and which, according to the Defense Department and the vast majority of the American public, poses no threat to our security.

I wonder how many Senators realize that if they wanted to take a family member with them to Cuba, they would probably be prevented from doing so by United States law.

Actually, because the authors of the law knew that a blanket prohibition on travel by American citizens would be unconstitutional, they came up with a clever way of avoiding that problem but accomplishing the same result. Americans can travel to Cuba, they just cannot spend any money there.

Almost a decade has passed since the collapse of the former Soviet Union. Eight years have passed since the Russians cut their \$3 billion subsidy to Cuba. We now give hundreds of millions of dollars in aid to Russia.

Americans can travel to North Korea. There are no restrictions on the right of Americans to travel there, or to spend money there. Which country poses a greater threat to the United States? Obviously North Korea.

Americans can travel to Iran, and they can spend money there. The same goes for Sudan. These are countries that pose far greater threats to American interests than Cuba.

Our policy is hypocritical, inconsistent, and contrary to our values as a nation that believes in the free flow of people and ideas. It is impossible for anyone to make a rational argument that America should be able to travel freely to North Korea, or Iran, but not to Cuba. It can't be done.

We have been stuck with this absurd policy for years, even though virtually everyone knows, and says privately, that it makes absolutely no sense and is beneath the dignity of a great country.

It not only helps strengthen Fidel Castro's grip on Cuba, it hands a huge advantage to our European competitors who are building relationships and establishing a base for future investment in a post-Castro Cuba. When that will happen is anybody's guess. President Castro is no democrat, and he is not going to become one. But it is time we pursued a policy that is in our national interest.

Let me be clear. This legislation does not, I repeat does not, lift the U.S. embargo. It is narrowly worded so it does not do that. It only permits travelers to carry their personal belongings. We are not opening a floodgate for United States imports to Cuba.

The amendment limits what Americans can bring home from Cuba to the current level for government officials and other exempt categories, which is \$100.

It reaffirms the President's authority to prohibit travel in times of war, armed hostilities, or if there is imminent danger to the health or safety of Americans.

Those who want to prevent Americans from traveling to Cuba, who oppose this legislation, will argue that spending United States dollars there helps prop up the Castro Government. To some extent that is true. The government does run the economy. It also runs the schools and hospitals, maintains roads, and, like the United States Government, is responsible for the whole range of social services that benefit ordinary Cubans. Any money that goes into the Cuban economy supports those programs.

But there is also an informal economy in Cuba, because no one but the elite can survive on their meager government salary. So the income from tourism also fuels that informal sector, and it goes in to the pockets of ordinary Cubans.

It is also worth pointing out that while the average Cuban cannot survive on his or her government salary, you do not see the kind of abject poverty in Cuba that is so common elsewhere in Latin America. In Brazil, or Panama, or Mexico, or Peru, there are

children searching through garbage in the streets for scraps of food, next to gleaming high rise hotels with Mercedes limousines lined up outside.

In Cuba, almost everyone is poor. But they have access to the basics. The literacy rate is 95 percent. The life expectancy is about the same as in our country, even though the health system is very basic and focused on preventive care.

The point is that while there are obviously parts of the Cuban economy that we would prefer not to support—as there is in North Korea, China, or Sudan, or in any country whose government we disagree with, much of the Cuban Government's budget benefits ordinary Cubans. So when opponents of this legislation argue that we cannot allow Americans to travel to Cuba because the money they spend there would prop up Castro, remember what they are not saying: those same dollars also help the Cuban people.

It is also worth saying that as much as we want to see a democratic Cuba, President Castro's grip on power is not going to be weakened by keeping Americans from traveling to Cuba. History has proven that. He has been there for forty years, and as far as anyone can tell he is not going anywhere.

Mr. President, it is about time we injected some maturity into our relations with Cuba. Let's have a little more faith in the power of our ideas. Let's have the courage to admit that the cold war is over. Let's get the State Department out of the business of telling our wives, our children, and our constituents where they can travel and spend their own money—in a country that the Pentagon say poses no security threat to us.

This legislation will not end the embargo, but it will do far more to win the hearts and minds of the Cuban people than the outdated approach of those who continue to defend the status quo.

HIGH SPEED RAIL INVESTMENT ACT

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, let me begin by congratulating Senator LAUTENBERG for developing this important piece of legislation that recognizes the importance of rail in our overall transportation system as we approach the 21st Century.

I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the High Speed Rail Investment Act, which will provide Amtrak with much needed resources to pay for high speed rail corridors across the country. This legislation is crucial for the country, and for my home state of Massachusetts, and I am hopeful we can move it quickly through Congress.

This bill will give Amtrak the authority to sell \$10 billion in bonds over the next ten years to finance high speed rail. Instead of interest pay-

ments, the federal government would provide tax credits to bondholders. Amtrak would repay the principle on the bonds after 10 years, however, the payments would come primarily from required state matching funds. I know many states will gladly participate in this matching program, as their governors and state legislatures are eager to promote high speed rail. Amtrak would be authorized to invest this money solely for upgrading existing lines to high speed rail, constructing new high speed rail lines, purchasing high speed rail equipment, eliminating or improving grade crossings, and for capital upgrades to existing high speed rail corridors.

Let there be no mistake, this country needs to develop a comprehensive national transportation policy for the 21st Century. So far, Congress has failed to address this vital issue. What we have is an ad hoc, disjointed policy that focuses on roads and air to the detriment of rail. We need to look at all of these modes of transportation to alleviate congestion and delays on the ground and in the sky and to move people across this country efficiently. Failing to do this will hamper economic growth and harm the environment.

Despite rail's proven safety, efficiency and reliability in Europe and Japan, and also in the Northeast corridor here in the U.S., passenger rail is severely underfunded. We need to include rail into the transportation mix. We need more transportation choices and this bill helps to provide them.

In the Northeast corridor, Amtrak is well on its way to implementing high speed rail service. The high speed Acela service should start running from in January. This will be extremely helpful in my home state of Massachusetts, where airport and highway congestion often reach frustrating levels. The more miles that are traveled on Amtrak, the fewer trips taken on crowded highways and skyways.

But new service in the Northeast corridor is only the beginning. We need to establish rail as a primary mode of transportation along with air and highways. This bill will help us achieve that goal across the country and I am proud to be an original cosponsor of such an important piece of legislation.

THE TERROR OF GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the call to end gun violence has become all too commonplace during this session of Congress. It seems as if each day, another one of us comes to the floor to express our outrage. Last week, it was about workplace violence in Honolulu and Seattle—a total of nine dead. In September it was a church shooting in Texas—a total of seven dead. In August, gun shots were fired in a Jewish Community Center in Los Angeles—