

years through several strategic actions; there is no one operation that will rid the world of the evils of terrorism. But one thing is certain: freedom will prevail and we will not forget Master Sergeant Andrews and others like him to whom we owe our liberties.

VISION 2020 WORLD SIGHT DAY 2001

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, Vision 2020 World Sight Day 2001 is observed today, Thursday October 11, 2001, in cooperation with the World Health Organization, WHO, the 2020 Foundation of Tulsa, Oklahoma, Christian Blind Mission International, CBMI, and a partnership of 26 international organizations concerned with world blindness working together to eliminate avoidable blindness by the year 2020.

Forty-five million people living in our world today are totally blind. Eighty percent of this blindness could be prevented or cured with simple cost-effective nutrition, medicines and medical care. A child in our world goes blind every minute, most often due to a simple lack of Vitamin A. More than half of these precious children will die within 2 years of losing their sight.

The primary causes of blindness, malnutrition, disease, lack of medicines and medical care, are always linked to the grinding poverty so characteristic of developing nations around the globe. Millions of men, women and children needlessly live in a prison of darkness 24 hours a day. They desperately need the help of privileged nations to be set free.

The Vision 2020 program plans to eliminate most of the world's blindness by the year 2020. But with no intervention, the number of blind in this world will reach an estimated 100 million by the year 2020.

World Sight Day 2001 raises awareness that most blindness, associated misery, and several billion dollars in related costs can be prevented if we as a nation and a world intervene in time.

I commend the 2020 Foundation, Christian Blind Mission International and the other members of the 2020 Task Force for helping bring the gift of sight to the less fortunate around the world.

SIX SIMPLE STEPS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, an organization called Common Sense about Kids and Guns has developed a list of six gun safety tips that have been endorsed by a wide range of organizations from the National SAFE KIDS Campaign to the National Shooting Sport Foundation. Regardless of our differences of opinion on how to regulate firearms, I think we can all agree that these simple steps make a lot of sense.

All gun owners should unload and lock up their guns, lock and store ammunition separately and keep keys where kids are unable to find them. In

addition, parents should ask if guns are safely stored at places their kids visit or play, regularly talk with their kids about guns, and teach young children both not to touch guns and tell an adult if they find one.

The Centers for Disease Control's National Center for Health Statistics reports that firearm deaths of children and teens is dropping. However, ignoring firearms related child homicides, there were still 1,300 kids killed in gun-related accidents and suicides in 1999. That number remains far too high. Remembering the six simple steps proposed by Common Sense about Kids and Guns can help cut that number even more.

PREPARING FOR BIOTERRORISM IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my colleagues, Senator JOHN EDWARDS, and Senator CHUCK HAGEL, in supporting legislation to help South Dakotans prepare for possible bioterrorist attacks. The recent example of anthrax being reported in Florida has highlighted the importance of being prepared to combat bioterrorism in our communities.

Now this doesn't mean that everyone should run out and buy a gas mask. Successful attacks using germs and chemicals are relatively difficult to accomplish and rarely attempted.

However, the nature of such an attack makes just one successful act of bioterrorism unique and incredibly damaging. For example, most of the germs involved in bioterrorism, anthrax and smallpox to name a few, are so rare that many medical professionals haven't treated them before. Symptoms may not be visible for days or weeks, and these diseases can be spread easily among people.

In addition to threatening people, bioterrorism can also cripple our State's agriculture economy. We all saw this summer how the threat of foot-and-mouth disease in the United States can directly impact South Dakota's ag business.

The risk of an agriculture terrorist attack poses a serious threat to our economy as well as our abundant food supply. An agricultural terrorist could introduce a pathogen to a certain crop and decimate that crop's yield. A quickly-spreading animal disease intentionally introduced could cause economic ruin to States that depend on revenues from the livestock industry.

Earlier this week, the nonpartisan General Accounting Office, GAO, reported that coordination is fragmented between 40 Federal departments and agencies responsible for responding to a bioterrorist attack.

The GAO report also noted insufficient State and local planning for response to terrorist attacks. In addition, while spending on domestic pre-

paredness for terrorist attacks has risen 310 percent since 1998, only a portion of these funds were used to conduct research on and prepare for the public health and medical consequences of a bioterrorist attack.

To better address the needs of State and local communities in dealing with the threat of bioterrorism, I recently joined Senators EDWARDS and HAGEL on legislation called the Biological and Chemical Weapons Preparedness Act.

Our legislation provides \$1.6 billion in new resources for Federal, State, and local efforts, including \$450 million specifically for agricultural counterterrorism and food safety measures.

Too often, bioterrorism funding has been tied up in the bureaucracy of Washington, and I'm pleased that our legislation sends over one-third of these funds, \$555 million, directly to States and local governments through new block grants. Our legislation gives States and local communities the resources to study the problems unique to them and implement appropriate solutions.

Our legislation would accomplish six goals. First, we would provide training and equipment to State and local "first responders," such as emergency medical personnel, law enforcement officials, fire fighters, physicians, and nurses, to recognize and respond to biological and chemical attacks.

Second, our bill strengthens the local public health network through increased training, coordination, and additional specialized equipment.

Third, we protect food safety and the agricultural economy by providing assistance to States to better coordinate with law enforcement and public health officials, increase training and awareness among farmers and other agricultural stakeholders. Our measure would also give States the resources they need to establish emergency diagnostic facilities to work in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's facility to quickly diagnose animal diseases. Along with this assistance to States, the measure would provide additional funds for the USDA's counterterrorism efforts.

Fourth, the legislation assists local hospital emergency rooms with response training and biocontainment and decontamination capabilities.

Fifth, we address the need to develop and stockpile vaccines and antibiotics.

Finally, our Biological and Chemical Weapons Preparedness Act enhances disease surveillance between the Centers for Disease Control, CDC, and State and local public health services to provide electronic nationwide access to critical data, treatment guidelines, and alerts.

Our legislation has been referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, and there have already been a handful of hearings held so far. I anticipate a number of