

going to make are going to turn out to be brilliant. Some we are going to make are not going to be so good.

I would say this: This President, in my view, so far has made the right choices. He has done the right thing. He is pursuing the right way. This notion of how long we bomb versus how long before we put forces on the ground is an incredibly difficult decision. You can be assured every single mistake we accidentally make—and by the way, to our credit the Defense Department acknowledged today, like no other Defense Department would, I think, that, yes, there was an errant bomb, and it did take out some innocent people. What other great nation would acknowledge that?

That is going to happen. It is horrible that it will, but the President has a series of very tough choices. I want him to know that not only I, but we all wish him well, and as long as he is trying, as he is, to keep this coalition together, to keep it moving, I am willing to yield to his judgment in the prosecution of this war.

So I thank my friend for his kind comments, and I hope this puts it to rest. I am sure the gentleman on the House side who made the comments was probably told by staff, and I think it was kind of like a drive-by shooting because I have never had a cross word with this particular House Member, but I understand things got pretty hot in the House today. I think I was the first Democrat who came across his radar, and I think this would be called a political drive-by shooting—accidental, I hope—and it will get straightened out.

I am not criticizing or making light of what was said. I want the RECORD to be straight because it is important the world knows and the Nation knows we are behind the President and we are not at this point second-guessing his judgment, particularly about bombing.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO GENERAL CHARLES T. ROBERTSON, JR.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I wish to take this opportunity to recognize and say farewell to an outstanding Air Force officer, General Charles T. "Tony" Robertson, Jr., upon his retirement from the Air Force after more than 33 years of commissioned service. Over the years, many Members and staff have enjoyed the opportunity to meet with General Robertson on a variety of joint military issues and have

come to appreciate his many talents. Indeed, throughout his career, General Robertson has served with distinction, and it is my privilege today to recognize his many accomplishments and to commend him for the superb service he has provided the Air Force and our Nation.

General Robertson entered the Air Force in 1968 as a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy. After successfully completing pilot training, he served his Nation by flying 150 combat missions as a gunship pilot in Southeast Asia while stationed with the 18th Special Operations Squadron in South Vietnam. Lieutenant Robertson was then assigned to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, where he became a B-52 copilot, aircraft commander, instructor pilot, and flight examiner with the 17th Bombardment Wing. Moving on to Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, he first became Assistant to the Chief of Staff, then Aide and Executive Officer to the Vice Commander in Chief, Headquarters, Strategic Air Command. His next assignment was to Plattsburgh Air Force Base, New York, as an FB-111 Aircraft Commander, Flight Commander, and Assistant Operations Officer.

As a lieutenant colonel, he served as a Plans and Programming Officer in the Air Force Programs and Evaluation Directorate at the Pentagon before returning to Plattsburgh Air Force Base, in 1982, as Commander, 529th Bomb Squadron, and then as Assistant Deputy Commander for Maintenance, 380th Bombardment Wing. After completing studies at the National War College at Fort McNair in Washington D.C., he was promoted to colonel in 1985.

During that same year, Colonel Robertson returned to the Pentagon to serve as Executive Officer to the Air Force Vice Chief of Staff, Headquarters U.S. Air Force. He went on to become Commander of the 2nd Bombardment Wing, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, in 1987, then Commander of the 384th Bombardment Wing at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, in 1989. As Commander of the 384th, Colonel Robertson was honored as the Strategic Air Command Outstanding Wing Commander of the Year for 1989. Following his tour at McConnell, he returned to Offutt Air Force Base where he served as Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans and Resources, Headquarters Strategic Air Command, and was promoted to Brigadier General in 1991.

As a general officer, General Robertson excelled in a number of key assignments, including Director of Personnel Plans, Headquarters U.S. Air Force and then Vice Director of the Joint Staff, Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon; Vice Commander, Air Mobility Command, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois; Commander, 15th Air Force at Travis Air Force Base, California; and culmi-

nating with his current assignment as Commander in Chief, United States Transportation Command, USTRANSCOM, and Commander, Air Mobility Command, AMC.

Over his career, General Robertson demonstrated his skill as an aviator by safely accumulating over 4,700 hours of flight time in the AC-119K, B-1B, B-2, B-52, C-5, C-9, C-17, C-20B, C-21, C-37, C-130, C-141, EC-135, FB-111A, KC-10, KC-135, T-1, T-6, T-37, T-38, and T-39 aircraft.

As Commander in Chief, USTRANSCOM, General Robertson's leadership has been indispensable to the readiness of the Defense Transportation System to accomplish its mission, getting troops to the fight, sustaining the fight, and then bringing the troops back home when the fight is over. As a tireless "Total Force" advocate, his commitment to fully integrating guard and reserve forces into all aspects of the Command has reaped great dividends and great praise. Recognizing the essential role of our commercial transportation industry in supporting the USTRANSCOM mission, General Robertson lifted this partnership to unprecedented levels through such critical programs as the Civil Reserve Air Fleet, the Maritime Security Program, and the Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement. Following the terrorist bombing of Khobar Towers, and then again after the attack on the USS COLE, the global force protection programs he developed for his always "in-transit" forces were held as the model for others to emulate.

His factual and pointed testimonies before the Senate Armed Services Committee illustrated the professionalism and expertise which has enabled him to foster exceptional rapport with all members of the Senate and was a clear indication of his ability to work with the Congress in addressing the priorities of his Command. Finally, as evidence of his clear vision for the future, he diligently labored to ensure programs such as follow-on C-17 procurement, C-5 modernization, and airlift defensive systems were in-place to ensure the transformation of the mobility fleet to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

An exemplary officer of unmatched skill and talent, General Robertson personifies the Air Force core values of integrity, selfless service, and excellence in all things. I offer my congratulations to him, his wife, Brenda, and sons, Sean and Jason. The Congress and the country applaud the selfless commitment his entire family has made to the Nation in supporting his military career.

I know I speak for all of my colleagues in expressing my heartfelt appreciation to General Robertson. He is a credit to both the Air Force and the United States and I congratulate him on the completion of an outstanding