

I believe there is no reason other than the success of the concentrated bombing campaign, which has been led by Colonel Ed Rice, the 28th Air Expeditionary Wing commander and the commander at Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota.

The reason we have met with such considerable success over there is due to the air power we have been able to project. The B-1B Lancer is a huge part of that success.

Mr. Speaker, I would simply note for the RECORD that the B-1 bomber brings a tremendous number of assets and attributes to the campaign. It is the only supersonic bomber in the Air Force. The speed that it travels at allows it to integrate seamlessly into huge fighter strike packages.

In terms of range, the large fuel load allows it to fly from great distances and loiter for hours over the battlefield.

It is flexible. It can carry a wide variety of munitions. It can carry more weapons than any other aircraft in the Air Force inventory.

Its lethality: The B-1 has the largest payload of any U.S. bomber. It is the monster truck of the U.S. bomber fleet.

Its ability to deliver a large number of weapons is what makes it so valuable to warfighting. It can carry 84 500-pound "dumb" bombs and 24 2,000-pound precision munitions.

A single B-1 flying just one combat mission over Afghanistan is able to destroy 24 different targets. That is economy of force. Because of the B-1s' huge payload, fewer combat aircraft had to go into harm's way during this war on terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, the B-1 has had a remarkable combat history: In Desert Fox, its combat debut in Iraq in 1999, with the Allied force there and the effort that went forward. The B-1 created an unparalleled record in Kosovo that may be unsurpassed in history, in which it completed 100 of 100 combat missions and took off on time 100 percent of the time. Just seven B-1s dropped 20 percent of the bombs, over 2½ million pounds of munitions, during that conflict.

Now, currently in Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, B-1s are currently flying a large percentage of the bomber missions in Afghanistan and have destroyed a large percentage of the total targets. B-1s are dropping precision weapons and carpet bombing Taliban strongholds on a continuous basis. Mr. Speaker, the B-1 is playing a huge and important role in the war.

I would be remiss, too, Mr. Speaker, if I did not acknowledge the folks from South Dakota and my home State from Ellsworth Air Force Base who are doing a remarkable job in Afghanistan.

Ellsworth Air Force Base has deployed a large number of air crew members, maintenance, and support personnel to support the war on ter-

rorism. South Dakota soldiers and airmen prepare meals and load bombs. Airmen from South Dakota put themselves in harm's way.

The Ellsworth Air Force commander, as I said earlier, Colonel Rice, commands all B-1 and B-52 operations over Afghanistan. In the war on terrorism, the men and women of Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota, have shouldered a huge responsibility in an effort to make America safe against the evil that lurks in terrorist camps and caves throughout the world.

Air Force B-2, B-1, and B-52 bombers flew about 10 percent of the combat missions over Afghanistan, but dropped more than 80 percent of the tonnage expended, hitting 70 percent of the aim points identified, and damaged or destroyed about three-quarters of all the targets in this operation.

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to pay special tribute to the folks from South Dakota and Ellsworth Air Force Base, and to Commander Ed Rice, for the tremendous effort those folks have played in leading us to the successes we are seeing and the progress we are making in winning the war on terrorism.

I would also acknowledge the important role that the B-1 bomber has played in this very important mission. We would not be where we are today, Mr. Speaker, were the B-1 not the workhorse in Afghanistan.

I believe it is significant in light of the discussions we are currently having about military strategy and force structure as we head into the future that the B-1 bomber, in its role in Afghanistan, that we acknowledge the tremendous success, the tremendous assets and attributes that this particular plane and weapons systems is able to possess and bring to our military arsenal, and our ability to protect America and to keep it safe in this new century against the evils of terrorism and other threats that may be projected against the United States.

Mr. Speaker, today I would simply close by, again, acknowledging the men and women at Ellsworth Air Force Base, 28th Bomber Wing, and the B-1 as the workhorse of the bomber fleet we are using to win the war in Afghanistan.

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#### CONFERENCE COMMITTEE FAILS TO MEET TODAY TO FINISH WORK ON AIRLINE SECURITY LEGISLATION

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I was shocked to find out that the conferees on the House aviation security package have just canceled the conference at the behest of the House leadership for today.

That is extraordinary to me. It has been more than 2 months since the terrorist attacks, nearly 1 month since the Senate passed a bill 100 to 0, and next week is Thanksgiving, the busiest travel weekend of the year, at least historically in terms of aviation, although concerns about the system might crimp that a bit this year.

Yet, the conferees did not manage to work over the weekend. The conferees met yesterday for an hour and a half and did not manage to work late into the night. Today the conference is canceled. We hear that the Republicans are going to caucus with the White House but not include Democrats in the discussions. It sounds a little bit like a formula for disaster.

What is the system that they are defending? Here is the system that the Republican leadership is defending.

At Boston, part of a concourse, and this is yesterday, at Logan Airport was evacuated. Five hundred passengers were rescreened after an exit door was left unattended by the private security firm.

Chicago: A gentleman who boarded a flight in Miami was just randomly rechecked boarding a flight to Hong Kong in Chicago, having gone through screening, private screening, in Miami, and was found to have large cutting implements in his luggage; apparently innocent, he is a chef, but these are not allowed on the plane. We cannot even take our cuticle scissors. Yesterday he had something that more resembled meat cleavers.

Of course, there have been 24 major security violations prior to yesterday, and we are up to 26. Basically, they get about a 50 percent batting average; that is, every other day it seems like there are no known major security breaches in the screening system. However, before September 11, the private screening companies, over the last 5 years, averaged one security breach a day that was serious enough to be prosecuted or fined, one a day.

This is the largest private security firm in the United States of America, Argenbright Security, owned by Securicor of Europe. They have some problems. They were found last year to have committed felony criminal offenses. They had hired and maintained known felons on staff and falsified documents to the Federal Government.

Of course, they provide security at the largest airport in Texas, and they are being very ably defended by the majority whip and the majority leader: Let us keep these people in business, they are doing such a great job.

Guess what? They were just found to have violated their probation which they were put on last year for their criminal violations, and their probation has been extended another 5 years.

They are saying, well, we will more closely supervise people. What provides closer supervision than probation? I

guess if we started putting the CEOs in jail maybe we would get their attention. But right now I think that is the closest supervision they can provide, yet we are delaying the conference, delaying the bill, to defend the right of these pathetically failing companies to stay in business.

They say, well, we will have very strict Federal standards. We will set wages and benefits. The Federal Government will train the people, the Federal Government will supervise the people. They will be put in uniforms that look like Federal uniforms, but they will not be Federal uniforms. They will be made faux deputies; they will be deputized by the Federal Government but given no powers, and they will be given badges that look like Federal badges. They are going to do all of that.

What is the role left for these failing private security companies except to collect their ill-gotten gains, their profits? We will end up with more supervisors under that system because of all the promises they have had to make.

They say, we know it does not work very well, so we will put Federal supervisors at every screening point. We will put Federal supervisors at every conveyor belt. We will put Federal supervisors at every boarding gate.

By the time the Republicans finish defending the failing private security firms, they have created a Rube Goldberg that is twice as big as the Federal system would be if the solution had been adopted as was adopted 100 to 0 by the United States Senate more than a month ago.

But we cannot agree on that, and today we cannot even meet to discuss it. Last weekend they did not have time to stay in town and discuss it. Thanksgiving is looming very near in the future. They talk about not delivering a turkey bill. I will tell the Members what, the biggest turkey or the biggest bad April fool, out of date, will be if we do not give the American people a robust overhaul of this system before the busiest travel weekend of the year.

□ 1430

#### HONOR THE FALLEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I began last week with the help of my colleagues to read a growing list of over 3,000 individuals who perished on September 11, 2001. This list, provided by the Congressional Research Service, includes the names of many of the victims of the recent horrific attacks on our great Nation.

I stand before this House to pay my respects to our fallen brothers and sis-

ters; and I ask my colleagues again to join me today, and for as many days as it takes, in this ongoing effort to honor those individuals who lost their lives or are still missing.

Elena Ledesma; Alexis Leduc; Daniel John Lee; Dong Lee; Richard Y.C. Lee; Juanita Lee; Lorraine Lee; Myung-woo Lee; Yang-Der Lee; Kathryn Blair Lee; David Shufee Lee; Hyun-joon Paul Lee; Jong-min Lee; Stuart Soo-Jin Lee; Gary H. Lee; Stephen Lefkowitz; Adriana Legro; Edward J. Lehman; Eric Andrew Lehrfeld; David Ralph Leistman; David Prudencio Lemagne; Joseph A. Lenihan; John Joseph Lennon, Jr.; John Robinson Lenoir; Jorge Luis Leon; Matthew G. Leonard; Michael Lepore; Charles A. Lesperance; Jeffrey Earle LeVeen; John Dennis Levi; Neil D. Levin; Alisha Caren Levin; Robert M. Bob Levine; Shai Levinhar; Daniel C. Lewin; Jennifer Lewis; Kenneth Lewis; Adam J. Lewis; Margaret S. Lewis; Ye Wei Liang; Daniel F. Libretti; Ralph M. Licciardi; Edward Lichtschein; Steven B. Lillianthal; Carlos R. Lillo; Craig Lilore; Arnold A. Lim; Darya Lin; Weirong Lin; Tomas Gallegos Linares; Nickie Lindo; Thomas B. Linehan, Jr.; Robert T. Linnane; Alan Linton; Diane T. Lipari; Kenneth P. Lira; Francisco Liriano; Lorraine Lisi; Vincent M. Litto; Ming-Hao Liu; Joseph Livera; Alexandru Liviu; Nancy Liz.

Mr. Speaker, this is by no means the entire list, but I thank my colleagues who have already joined me in reading these names and putting them in our RECORD, and I ask my other colleagues to continue to step forward and to read these names, that we may write them down in the history books so they will be remembered as people, as family members, as opposed to numbers.

#### DENOUNCING THE TREATMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN AFGHANISTAN

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

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, again I rise to express my outrage to the American people about the brutal treatment directed against women and children by the Taliban regime.

The Women's Caucus, on which I serve as one of its Chairs, had the privilege of meeting with Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, Assistant Secretary Wolfowitz, and Tori Clarke, the assistant Deputy Secretary for public affairs at the Pentagon on Thursday to discuss the war on terrorism.

As the women of this House expressed their concern for the women and children of Afghanistan, we were at ease to know that our administration supports our concerns 110 percent.

We have vowed to work with the Secretary to ensure that women and children are benefactors of any aid packages to the region and that any attempts to return prosperity to Afghanistan includes the input of women-led NGOs and the Afghani people.

We also discussed the importance of informing the American people about how ridiculous the Taliban truly is. In order to do that, we must continue to bring attention to their treatment of women and children in the region.

Tonight I will focus on the children of Afghanistan, defenseless victims in this web of persecution. In addition to women, children have also been denied their most basic rights to health, education, family life, and all too often have themselves been targets.

Mr. Speaker, in addition, an increasing number of Afghan children are being drawn into war by the ruling Taliban. However, things have changed this week and we are hopeful for the better.

My heart goes out to the children of Afghanistan who will be left with the scars and mental anguish of having watched their mothers being beaten in the streets or executed. Sadly, Afghani children face more hardship than simply witnessing the abuse of their mothers.

The United Nations estimates that 2 million Afghan children are either refugees living in overcrowded shelters in neighboring countries or are internally displaced. About 25 percent of children inside Afghanistan die before age 5 years of diseases that could be cured by commonly-available medicine. This is as a result of women being denied or not receiving proper health care for themselves or their children.

The question must also be raised about who is carrying for the over-1 million orphaned children of Afghanistan. Already an extremely poor country and a poor nation, Afghanistan is experiencing its worst drought in living memory. The Afghan people are desperate for food, medicine, and shelter. With harsh Afghan winter coming on, the prices will only get worse.

Experts estimate that Afghanistan needs 1,500 tons of food relief daily. So far, the United States has only dropped about 1 percent of that need. Approximately 1.7 million children are at risk this winter from freezing and starvation. A significant increase in food, shelter, education and health care services is necessary to ward off starvation, disease and death.

We must ensure that more aid is directed to the region and increased donations are directed to the U.N. funds so that children in this war-torn nation can receive assistance before the harsh winter sets in.

Reports of children being recruited by the Taliban is also very disturbing. These reports indicate that there has been increased recruitment of children