

# B-1B RECORD FLIGHT AROUND THE EARTH

## HON. CHARLES W. STENHOLM

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 1995

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, in Texas several weeks ago, two B-1B bombers established new around-the-world records and made aviation history. I am proud to say this historic flight started and finished in Abilene, the city known as the star of Texas.

On Saturday, June 3, 1995, at Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene, TX, two B-1B's landed at 3:23 and 3:24 p.m. completing a historic, nonstop, around-the-world flight. This occurred in conjunction with Dyess Big Country Appreciation Day, symbolizing both the 10-year anniversary of the B-1B at Dyess and the base's appreciation of the local community. The landing, greeted by cheers and applause, reflects the closeness and cooperation of the Abilene and Dyess Air Force Base community. More importantly to the American people, this performance demonstrates the B-1B's unique ability to meet our Nation's present and future defense challenges.

When confirmed by the National Aeronautics Association, the planes will have officially made the fastest around-the-world flight using aerial refueling. This record-breaking event accomplished the practical purpose of demonstrating the long-range, power-projection capability of the B-1B.

I am pleased to describe this successful mission, termed "Coronet Bat." It challenged crews and maintainers to prepare for the launch of four B-1B's on June 2, at 3 a.m., with two scheduled to fly the unprecedented nonstop flight around the world. As planned, one B-1B recovered at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia, another at Lajes Field in the Azores, while the primary two B-1B's successfully circumnavigated the globe and returned to Dyess Air Force Base in 36.4 hours.

The flight routed B-1B crews over the North Atlantic, through the Strait of Gibraltar, across the Mediterranean Sea, south to the Indian Ocean, north over the Pacific Ocean to the Aleutian Islands, southeast of the western coast of the United States and back to the Lone Star State's Dyess Air Force Base. The successful completion of the Coronet Bat demonstrates the immense capability of the B-1B and reinforces its position as a vital contributor to our conventional bomber force.

Let me further emphasize the meticulous planning, requiring support across Air Force commands, that went into this highly successful mission. Global power missions, such as Coronet Bat, provide valuable training in peacetime for air crews and maintainers preparing for quick response to any major regional conflict. More importantly, this mission mirrored a realistic training scenario for war-time taskings by dropping practice bombs over the Pachino Range of Italy; in the Torishima Range, near Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Japan; and in the Utah Test and Training Range.

Further proving the B-1B's ability to respond rapidly and decisively around the globe, this B-1B team overcame major obstacles. They encountered monsoon related thunderstorms over the Indian Ocean and a tropical depression associated with tropical storm

Deanna near the Philippines. Crews received regular updates via satellite and radio throughout the flight to apprise them of upcoming weather. Together with onboard systems, the B-1B crews were able to avoid potential weather related problems.

A number of challenges were met by those people involved in this mission. It required a genuine team effort, designed to exercise the total force capabilities of our Nation's military. Lt. Col. Douglas Raaberg, who is the mission commander and 9th Bomb Squadron commander, credits maintainers, flyers and support personnel from all Air Force commands. He said, "it was a true Air Force team effort from the youngest airman on the flightline to the Thule Greenland radio operator who helped with radio telephone patches, to all those at the tanker units and staffs at different headquarters and wings." He further remarks, "It is global teamwork at its best."

The planes required only minor routine maintenance upon completion of this 36-hour flight. This is a real tribute to the durability of the B-1B. It reinforces the outstanding results of the recently completed congressionally mandated operational readiness assessment and highlights the Air Force plans for the B-1B conventional upgrade programs.

Mr. President, by meeting a number of different challenges over the years, the B-1B has earned justifiably the designation as the backbone of the heavy bomber force. This global power mission once again demonstrated the capability of the B-1B to deliver weapons to any spot in the world and return nonstop to the United States. In this period of budget constraints, I urge my colleagues to consider carefully how the B-1B is uniquely suited to meeting our Nation's present and future defense challenges before casting their votes on any defense measure affecting our heavy bomber force. The B-1B is an efficient and effective long-range bomber, and it should be funded as the centerpiece of American air power projection.

## 1995 MINI DEAF SPORTS FESTIVAL

## HON. MIKE WARD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 1995

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to call to the attention of our colleagues a very special upcoming event in my hometown of Louisville, KY. The week of July 21-29 is the date of the 13th Annual Mini Deaf Sports Festival. The Festival is a week long sports competition involving deaf/hard of hearing young people from throughout the country. The event helps to educate the public on the special challenges faced by deaf/hard of hearing individuals. It also teaches festival participants how to face those challenges and overcome them.

Under the leadership of committed people like Timothy Owens, the Executive Director of the Deaf Community Center of Louisville, the Sports Festival strives to make the most of each participant's talents in the context of sports. The confidence and social skills that are a byproduct of healthy competition give these youth the one thing that is essential to that future success—belief in themselves.

Those who have worked so hard to give this gift to our deaf children have recruited many

volunteers with the slogan, "Your Hands—Your Future." Their point is well taken. The futures of these young people directly depend on the hard work, dedication, and concern we show them how. It is a pleasure to lend my support to that cause, even in this small way, by recognizing and commending this effort to bring opportunity, hope, and a sense of belonging to these very special young people.

## BRAWLEY BUSINESSMAN HONORED BY NAVY SECRETARY

## HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 1995

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a remarkable accomplishment by a constituent in my district, Mr. Glen Huber, of Brawley, CA. Mr. Huber recently accepted the Navy Superior Public Service Award from Hon. Richard Danzig, Undersecretary of the Navy, for his exceptional service and outstanding dedication to U.S. Navy and its personnel. Undersecretary Danzig presented the award on behalf of the Secretary of the Navy, Hon. John Dalton.

Mr. Huber's many efforts to bring the Navy and civilian communities together were also honored earlier this month by the Navy League of the United States and their national convention held in St. Louis, MO. Mr. Huber's work on behalf of the annual Navy Desert Outing was particularly praised.

Founded in 1902, the 68,000-member Navy League is a civilian organization dedicated to highlighting the need for seapower to ensure national security and economic well-being. During the League's national convention, Mr. Huber was elected national vice president for Legislative Education. His responsibilities will involve keeping Navy League members advised of congressional activity, specifically as it pertains to maritime issues. In addition, Mr. Huber will be charged with the task of informing Congress and their staffs about the significance of seapower and other related matters.

Established in 1986, the Navy League Desert Outing provides Navy Leaguers the opportunity to observe the Navy's demonstration flight team, the Blue Angels, perform intricate and precisely-coordinated maneuvers during their practice sessions. Navy League participants also attend a formal dinner with the Blue Angels team. This dinner provides the Navy Leaguers the opportunity to meet the young pilots, while promoting constructive interaction between the military and the local community. The following morning, the participants attend a ranch-style breakfast in the desert which features the opportunity to view the Blue Angels during their practice session.

For the last several years, Mr. Huber has served as the co-chairman for the El Centro Naval Air Facility's [NAF] annual air show. This event not only features the precision-flying Blue Angels, but also offers an inside look at NAF El Centro with its various aircraft, displays and exhibits.

Mr. Speaker, in an age where the role and importance of our nation's armed forces is often shrouded by various trivial issues and concerns, it is heartening to see citizens, like Mr. Huber, exhibiting this type of patriotic behavior.