

public opinion into proper review, and that they would now do the proper environmental assessment.

Many of us have great reservations about the economic and environmental impact of increasing from 66 flights a year to over 2,200 training flights, some only 300 feet above the mountainous terrain, the impact that this would have on our very prosperous poultry industry and livestock industry. There are additional impacts, as well.

The Air Force also has conceded that it did not do a good enough job in communicating with the public, and indeed it did not, and that they will be, shortly, announcing meetings to occur in Pendleton County and presumably in Virginia, as well. Indeed, I will be meeting today with representatives of the Air Force to press this case.

The reality is, the best proposal would be one in which they either revisit the whole idea completely, or actually reject it and consider expanding the training flights they are doing in the existing training area where it has long been conducted.

□ 1245

So for these reasons, I hope that the Air Force will continue to look at this, to reevaluate. Certainly we have pushed off any effective date significantly. It does call for a fair environmental assessment. It does call for public opinion and public comment. Most importantly, it calls for a complete review and reconsideration of what I consider to be an ill-founded proposal, and I will work to see if we can get the Air Force to agree with that opinion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. Wolf] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

TAKING ISSUE WITH COMMENTS MADE BY FELLOW MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. EDWARDS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, in my 5 years at this House I have very rarely come to the well of this great body to criticize the comments of one of my colleagues. I have great respect for the bipartisan and diverse views of all Members of this House, and their right to express the views and concerns and ideas of the people they represent in their respective districts.

But once in a while, a Member of this House makes a comment that is so irresponsible and so outrageous that I simply cannot remain silent. Yesterday one of my colleagues from Texas, the gentleman from Texas, [Mr. PAUL] made a statement that I feel is so irre-

sponsible that in good conscience I simply cannot remain silent.

In his statement on C-SPAN's Washington Journal yesterday Mr. PAUL said this:

I fear and there are a lot of people in this country who fear they may be bombed by the Federal Government at another Waco. I mean, these people committed no crimes.

Mr. Speaker, it is astounding to me that a member of this Federal Government, a Member of this Congress, would say publicly that he fears being bombed by the Federal Government. My fear is that kind of statement made by a public official of this Congress simply expands the hysterical paranoia of those around this country who might be hiding in their closets thinking that the Federal Government is somehow going to bomb them in the sanctity of their private homes.

I think that is sheer lunacy, at best. At worst, it could create and engender the kind of hatred toward our Federal Government that leads to tragedies such as that we all sadly witnessed in Oklahoma City.

Second, as the Member of Congress who represents Waco and the Waco area, and as someone who watched and followed very carefully the proceedings and the tragedy of the Branch Davidian compound, I must say that I am astounded that the gentleman from Texas [Mr. PAUL], a Member of this House, would say, despite all of the facts on the table, would suggest that the Branch Davidians and David Koresh committed no crimes.

At best, that is flat wrong and denies the fact and reality. At worst, it is a misrepresentation intentionally of what was done there.

Let me say what the facts were. The facts were that David Koresh raped a 10-year-old girl. We heard that dramatic testimony of that girl, now 14, just a few months ago in the Halls of this House.

Fact: The Federal officials who went into that compound found 48 illegal machine guns and illegal hand grenades.

I would suggest to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. PAUL] that the possession of 48 illegal machine guns and illegal hand grenades, I would suggest rape, arson, and murder are a crime in the book of every American family, if it is not a crime in the book of the gentleman from Texas.

I think these statements, Mr. Speaker, deserve a response to the people of Waco, to the people of Mr. PAUL's district, and to the people of this country. I would like to hear him explain his comments that he lives in fear of the Federal Government bombing him, and I would like to hear him explain how, despite all of the clear facts, the facts that the Branch Davidians lit the fires that killed, tragically, those children near Waco, I would like to hear him explain away those facts.

Instead of saying, perhaps I made a misstatement, or I apologize for what I said, or I did not intend to say that,

when Mr. PAUL responded to my response yesterday in the Houston Chronicle he accused me of McCarthyism. Mr. Speaker, I hardly believe that saying that arson, rape, and murder is a crime in this country is anything close to McCarthyism. He went on to defend his contention that the Davidians had committed no crimes.

I would challenge the gentleman from Texas [Mr. PAUL], to meet with me in the well of this House during special orders and let us debate this. I believe good people of good will, both Republicans and Democrats alike, who look at the statements of the gentleman from Texas will see that they were irresponsible and dangerous to have been made by a public Member of this House.

SALUTE TO THE BIG 10 CHAMPION MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota Mr. RAMSTAD] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, it has been a long, hard winter in Minnesota, with record cold temperatures and snowdrifts so high they obscured barns and houses. But last night, the University of Minnesota men's basketball team warmed the heart of every Minnesotan as the Golden Gophers won their first Big 10 Conference Championship since 1982.

Minnesota, hats off to thee.

Today, we salute Coach Clem Haskins and his 1997 championship team as well as the assistant coaches, managers, training trainers, and the best fans anywhere in the Nation. We are Big 10 Champions and proud of it.

Mr. Speaker, last fall none of the experts picked our Golden Gophers to win the title, but they persevered. They won the close games. They personified teamwork. They fought back. They stuck to the game plan. They listened to their coach, Clem Haskins.

One night this week, Coach Haskins told the story on the local television news of running into a woman in his neighborhood grocery store. This woman was accompanied by her young son in a wheelchair. Clem could hardly speak as he recounted that woman's words to him in that grocery store: "Your basketball team has totally captured my son's attention," she said. "The Gophers have inspired my son to walk one day."

Fighting back tears, Coach Haskins told the reporter: "That's really what the world is all about, if you can give people some hope."

Coach Haskins, you and your team have given us hope, and a whole lot more.

Under Clem Haskins' guiding hand, this marvelous mix of young men has rewritten University of Minnesota basketball history:

The first Big 10 title in 15 years, only the third conference championship in the past 60 years;.

A school record for the number of victories in a single season, 25 wins, with three regular season games and the NCAA tournament remaining.

The school's highest national ranking ever, No. 2 in both major polls.

The best road record in memory.

Undefeated at home, in the "Barn", our beloved Williams Arena.

And, if justice prevails, a No. 1 seed in the NCAA tournament.

Coach Haskins, now in his 11th season at Minnesota, has mentored hundreds of true champions. Not all of them have won Big 10 titles, to be sure, but they have been winners in the classroom and they have been winners in our community.

Coach Haskins, who served as assistant coach of the 1996 men's Olympic basketball team, has assembled a very special group of young men in this championship season. They all deserve a tribute for the way they came together to surprise the experts and win the Big 10 title.

All Big 10 guard Bobby Jackson, who ranks among the big 10 leaders in steals, assists, scoring, free-throw percentage, field-goal percentage and rebounding.

Minnesota's other guard, Eric Harris, the defensive specialist and most improved player on offense, to be sure; Eric provided the steady leadership only a 3-year starter can.

Minnesota's own Sam Jacobson, a constituent of mine, one of the great natural talents, with the long, arching outside shots which broke open so many close games. And John Thomas, another native Minnesotan, of the inside force, whose key rebounds and clutch free-throws also won so many nail-biters this season.

The other big man in the middle, Courtney James, a major factor in this glorious title run, with his strong rebounding and scoring in the paint when we needed it the most.

But perhaps the team's greatest asset, Mr. Speaker, is its bench, the players who accept their backup roles and come through in the clutch: Quincy Lewis, with his amazing shooting touch; Trevor Winter of Slayton, MN, with his rebound and baseline jumper; sophomore Charles Thomas, a southpaw whose specialty is the 3-point bomb, and who always comes through when we need it the most; Miles Tarver, another sophomore whose leaping ability ruled the boards when the other players' legs had tired; freshman guard Russ Archambault, who provided fans with many thrills with his speed, ball handling, and his slashing style on the court; also Jason and Jermaine Stanford and Aaron Stauber, who work so hard every day.

Yes, Coach Haskins, you and your team have put Golden Gopher basketball back on the map. Congratulations, Minnesota, on winning the Big 10 Championship, and best of everything the rest of the way. Go, Gophers.

INTRUDER DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. PICKETT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PICKETT. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the Navy honors the retirement of an old friend, the A-6 Intruder. Attack Squadron 196 and Attack Squadron 75 will stand down the final two Intruder squadrons in simultaneous ceremonies at Whidbey Island, WA, and Virginia Beach, VA, respectively.

As the backbone of carrier attack aviation for the past 36 years, the A-6E Intruder stood ready to deliver its formidable payload in any weather, day or night. The A-6 put teeth in the term "carrier forward presence." It saw combat in Vietnam, Lebanon, Libya, in the waters of the Arabian Gulf, and over the shores of Kuwait and Iraq. It delivered iron bombs, laser-guided bombs, and every air-to-ground missile available in the Navy inventory for the past three decades.

The Intruder was never the prettiest plane on the flight deck, but it was always the hardest working. The pilots and bombardier/navigators who flew the Intruder affectionately referred to its Grumman ironworks origin. Some swore the aircraft was made of solid steel. Whether the shells and missiles it faced flew from Hanoi or Baghdad, many an A-6 returned to the carrier full of holes, but ready to see combat soon after a few steel patch jobs.

We also honor the thousands of Intruder maintainers, both past and present, who kept this 18-ton bombing machine flying day and night, at sea and ashore. Foreign terms such as fly-by-wire and heads-up display never passed the lips of these hardworking men and women. Metal, pulleys, oil, and hydraulic fluid kept this archetype of attack airborne.

Finally, let us remember the Intruder crews who never returned. In service to our Nation, they paid the ultimate price flying this machine that they loved. We miss them still, and will never forget them. From this day on, the Navy must continue to carry on the spirit of Intruder attack. Whenever the Navy rolls in hot, a bit of Intruder history rolls in with it.

EXERCISING COMITY ON THE FLOOR OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DELAY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I am a little out of breath because I had to run down to the floor. I witnessed, as I was watching my television, what was going on on the floor, a very unfortunate situation, and had I been here I would have probably attempted to take down the words of the gentleman from Texas [Mr. EDWARDS]. He was attacking another gentleman from Texas. I think it is really unfortunate.

Particularly if one Member is going to use the name of another Member, it is usually comity on the floor of the House to at least inform that Member that you are going to talk about him on the floor of the House, and give that Member the opportunity to respond to what is going on.

I feel that what is going on between the two gentlemen from Texas is unfortunate. I would hope that particularly on the eve of trying to bring comity to the House and the Members going to Hershey, PA so we can bring a little bit better discourse to the floor of the House, getting to know each other, that we would find it within the courtesy afforded to each Member to at least talk to the Member.

□ 1300

Now, I do not know, all I have seen is the reports in the press on this incident. But I would just hope, I see the gentleman from Texas is on the floor now. I appreciate him coming down to the floor of the House because I did inform him that I was about to talk about him. I just ask the gentleman from Texas to realize the tradition of the House and the courtesy of the House, to extend the courtesy to a Member, let him know that you are going to talk about him before you are going to come down to the floor.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DELAY. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's suggestion. I think the distinguished whip, for whom I have great respect, knows that in my history in the House, I have not been the type of Member that has gone out and taken gratuitous partisan shots. I am one who will attend the bipartisan retreat and am encouraging other Members to do that. I want to bring civility to this House. But I must in all honesty say to my friend from Texas that, as the Representative that covered or represented the people of the Waco area to whom the Branch Davidian tragedy is a very deep and personal issue, I simply could not sit back and quietly accept the statement that was made yesterday. And I found out about and saw the tape last night, the statement of the gentleman from Texas [Mr. PAUL], lives in fear that the Federal Government is going to bomb them similar to Waco and that these people committed no crime. I would welcome the opportunity to talk to Mr. PAUL and encourage a public debate on that.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I would just ask the gentleman, did the gentleman call Mr. PAUL to ask him about the context with which that statement was made? Or did the gentleman just go out and make statements based upon what he saw in the press? Or did the gentleman from Texas see the program on which the words were spoken by Mr. PAUL? The reason I am close to the Chamber is we were having lunch,