

Not once did they come home claiming a single square inch of some other country as a trophy of war.

The only land abroad we occupy is beneath the graves where our heroes rest.

The American spirit understands that free people who respect the dignity of the individual do not wage war upon their neighbors.

The American spirit has a warm heart that yearns for mutual understanding and peace among nations of the world.

And as deeply as we cherish our beliefs, we do not seek to compel others to share them.

It is one of the great attributes of this nation that we have been willing to take up the mantle to fight for freedom on behalf of others.

Even as I stand before you today, American forces are once again in harm's way—standing watch in Bosnia as that nation struggles toward peace.

And why are we there? Because the American spirit is committed to protect and preserve our friends from suppression in a turbulent world.

We have come to realize that we are, indeed, our brothers' keepers.

Just in the last decade, our world has undergone a massive realignment.

The Soviet empire has dissolved, and the major threat to world peace removed.

We live in a moment of hope, in a nation at peace. For the first time since the dawn of the nuclear age, no Russian missiles are pointed at our children.

Our economy is sound. And because free markets and democracy now are on the march throughout the world, more people than ever before have the opportunity to reach their God-given potential.

But our work is far from done. We must contain the world's most deadly weapons, extend the reach of democracy, and unite in opposing crimes against humanity.

We must keep our arms ready and our alliances strong because challenges of the future won't be any easier than those of the past.

As the American patriot Thomas Paine said:

"Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must . . . undergo the fatigue of supporting it . . . What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly."

Let it never be said that we Americans esteem too lightly our blessings of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

America can never fully repay her veterans, and we will never be able to express our feelings to our fallen soldiers. If there is a crown in heaven, then they are the stars.

But we must never forget how blessed we are in the modern world to live in a free society, nor forget the sacrifices of our friends, relatives, neighbors and countrymen who served us all when duty called.

Our veterans did not disappoint their nation when it needed their service. They, in turn, should not be disappointed in their times of need.

Our duty today is clear, for there are many who need us. Yet, even as America remembers Veterans Day, there are veterans who do seem forgotten.

Yes, some of the very ones who survived the atrocities of Bataan; stormed the beaches at Guadalcanal and Normandy; and fought in other campaigns of World War II.

Since then, their numbers have swelled from those who fought in Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and in numerous other conflicts.

There are veterans who have lost family and friends, and who face a lonely future. Many are homeless and in need of medical care.

They struggle with war related disabilities. They also struggle with bureaucratic red tape to get the benefits and health care they need.

The belief that sustained our troops in combat was as great as America herself.

Their heroism was prompted by faith in the fundamentals that have guided this nation from its beginnings—the idea that liberty must be protected, whatever the cost.

We must nurture and sustain those who distinguished their lives in the defense of freedom. We must provide a dignity befitting heroes . . . whatever the cost.

This Veterans Day we should remember our history as we prepare for our future, pray for peace as the poets and dreamers do, and on this day each year remember to be vigilant against threats to democracy and, most importantly, ratify our contract with American veterans.

We know that if the world is faced with the unfortunate occurrence of war, American men and women will be there to meet the challenges, defend our nation, and work toward peace.

America can and will change, both today and in the future. However, what must not change—not today, not tomorrow, not ever—is our recognition of the debt we owe to America's veterans for keeping the American way of life safe and free.

God bless America, and God bless those who love, guard and defend our precious freedom.

TRIBUTE TO EMBRY-RIDDLE UNIVERSITY

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, time magazine once referred to Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University as The Harvard of the Sky, a designation truly honoring both institutions. I say this because unsurpassed standards, values and public contributions constantly are reflected in achievements by those representing both schools.

On this occasion, however, my remarks are about Embry-Riddle, for it absolutely is one of our Nation's most intriguing centers of higher learning.

Recently, the New York Times featured the selection of Embry-Riddle for English and operational proficiency training of China's air traffic controllers.

ValuJet's crash in the Florida Everglades last May prompted the National Transportation Safety Board to name ERU alumnus, Greg Feith, as investigator-in-charge. The university's aviation safety role, through an extensive curriculum, real-situation training laboratories, research and issue guidance is unparalleled. Air Force Capt. Scott O'Grady's amazing survival in Bosnia had as a postscript: ERU graduate. So it is with White House Fellow, David A. Moore.

Although ERU graduates hold key positions throughout business and commerce, we find this especially prevalent among airlines and the aerospace and aircraft industry. Some are astronauts. NASA's Lt. Comdr. Susan Leigh Still, USN, who received her bachelor of science degree, is scheduled for a mission in space this spring.

The school is a major contributor of pilots to military and civilian aviation for two reasons. One is the level of academics in engineering, aerospace science, aviation and related disciplines. The other is due to ERU's own

air fleet, its own flight instruction, its own meteorology training, and its own aircraft and engine student maintenance programs. Under the critical eyes of certified instructors, undergraduates perform all engine and airframe maintenance. I understand there never has been a safety incident attributable to their work.

By invitation of the U.S. Army in Europe, Embry-Riddle now offers college classes to our servicemen deployed north of Croatia in support of Operation Joint Endeavor. This newest service adds to the university's extensive network of more than 100 education centers throughout the United States and Europe.

A late December item from the Kiplinger Washington Letter refers to global companies relying on associates who work in team settings or situations. Embry-Riddle student assignments routinely involve team involvement. They take it a step further—through distance learning.

For a particular assignment we might find one student in Daytona Beach serving with another located at the university's Prescott, AZ, campus, while a third comes from an extended campus overseas. A sophisticated networking system allows students to connect electronically with other institutions and class members around the world. In addition, identical courses are taught concurrently by a single instructor from either the Daytona or Prescott campuses as students from both locations interact.

ERU is ranked by U.S. News & World Report as one of the top 20 undergraduate engineering programs in our Nation. It has the largest engineering-physics program in America. Undergraduates last year won the national design competition for general aviation, an intensely challenging venture sponsored by NASA and the Federal Aviation Administration.

Quite often we hear the term, "student-athlete." At Embry-Riddle that designation has a real, rather than shallow, meaning. No better example is found than with this season's basketball team. Under the guidance of athletic director and coach Steve Ridder, a Kentucky native, not only does the team consistently win on the court, it also wins in the classroom.

For example, 11 of the squad's 17 members have a 3-point or better GPA. Of the five seniors this year, one has a 3.6 and another a 3.4 in aerospace engineering, one a 3.4 in engineering physics, one a 3.2 in aviation business, while the school's all-time leading scorer also carries a 3.2 in aviation business.

ERU President Steve Sliwa didn't arrive at the Daytona Beach, FL, campus via a traditional academic path. He brought an eclectic background to the university: aerospace engineer, entrepreneur, NASA division level manager, founder of a software firm and astute business administrator.

Those of us in Government should be particularly impressed with his most

recent capital construction program, a \$100 million, eight-project endeavor, on schedule and under budget.

Consider Dr. Sliwa's interests and experiences in computer and software technology, which have propelled Embry-Riddle onto the very apex of this science. Almost every facet of our life now depends on software. Yet, software is immature compared to other engineering disciplines. Official mandates for technological reliability and consumer protection simply do not exist.

Think about the countless applications of software: worldwide financial transfers; systems to fly airplanes, to operate medical equipment, to help vehicles function, and for a myriad of other daily tasks. What happens when such technology fails? The question is receiving increased attention at two universities. A consortium between Embry-Riddle and Carnegie Mellon has been established to address the issue of standards and methodologies to prevent future disasters due to unreliable or flawed software. The Department of Defense is keenly interested in their efforts.

ERU began in 1925 when a naive eastern Kentuckian, John Paul Riddle of Pikeville, and entrepreneur T. Higbee Embry of Cincinnati, OH, opened a school of aviation at Lunken Airport in Cincinnati, OH. Now moving into its eighth decade, the school gives new meaning to "cutting-edge" education.

From hands-on investigation of aircraft accidents—thanks to a unique outdoor laboratory featuring crashed planes—to design of computer systems and from leadership in national issues to redesign of roof flaps for NASCAR racing vehicles, ERU is indeed out in front.

Achievements as I have described don't happen without reasons. A most distinguished and forward-thinking faculty, visionary leadership and rare discipline combined with resourcefulness have propelled Embry-Riddle into what I believe is "tomorrow's institution of higher education today."

How fortunate for ERU students. How fortunate for America.

GIVING PRIORITY TO OUR FOOD PRODUCERS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, America's family farmers and ranchers deserve a high priority in the legislative agenda of this new Congress. The families who produce our daily food and help feed a hungry world, have not been on the center stage here in the Nation's Capitol. They deserve our attention and our concern.

The 7-year farm bill that was passed in the last session of Congress is an economic disaster in the making for rural America. All that needs to happen is for mother nature to bless us with abundant crops, and farm prices will once again fall. Under that new farm law, there is no safety net for our nation's farm and ranch families, who

provide the economic base of rural America.

That is why I could not support that legislation. That is why President Clinton was very reluctant about signing this bill into law. If you remember, he only did so because further delay of the farm bill would have created planning chaos for farmers as they prepared for and began their spring's work last year.

In the closing debates of the farm bill, I said that we would have to come back to this issue when farm prices fall as they inevitably do. Well, the glow of high grain prices has faded and the reality of increased production costs has come home to hundreds of thousands of farm families.

It is time to consider what responsibility we as a nation have to those who grow our daily food.

It was important that on the very first day for the introduction of legislation in the 105th session, that we paid attention to agriculture. It is not only the key economic sector in rural America, but also continues to be the single largest industry in our Nation.

I am pleased that the minority leader, Senator TOM DASCHLE, introduced two bills that day as part of his leadership package to deal directly with the problems facing our family farmers and ranchers. I am proud to be a cosponsor on both bills.

CATTLE PRICES AND MARKET CONCENTRATION

One of the most immediate problems facing rural America is the continuing low prices that our cattle producers are facing. While these low prices can be attributed to some extent to the periodic pricing cycle in cattle, we should not ignore some of the fundamental changes that have occurred within our Nation's livestock marketing system in recent times.

The Cattle Industry Improvement Act of 1997—S. 16—which I have cosponsored, begins addressing some of the underlying questions that face our farmers and ranchers as they market their livestock.

The bill will help bring the livestock pricing structure into the open daylight. It requires the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a price-reporting system in which slaughtering firms would have to report the prices paid and the terms of sale to the Department of Agriculture. Smaller slaughtering firms would be exempted, but would be encouraged to do voluntary reporting.

It also gives the Secretary of Agriculture additional rulemaking authority to foster improved competition among packers in buying cattle. This would strengthen the ability of the Secretary to take the proactive actions needed to ensure a healthy competitive environment in today's cattle-marketing structures. It underscores the very purposes for which the Packers and Stockyards Act was established.

Last year the USDA Advisory Committee on Market Concentration concluded that the price reporting and

price discovery system in the cattle market was a relic of days gone by. In fact, less than 2 percent of fed cattle go through terminal markets where prices for livestock are established through an open and competitive bidding process.

Essentially, cattle producers face a black hole when it comes to being able to accurately determine what is really happening in the marketplace. We need to give the Department of Agriculture the necessary tools to reach into this black hole and get accurate market information for our producers. Our price reporting system needs to be updated with the changes in the marketplace.

FOUR FIRMS CONTROL 80 PERCENT OF MARKET

The lack of solid market information on livestock is compounded by the concentration in the marketplace. Today, four firms control more than 80 percent of steer and heifer slaughter. In fact, three firms by themselves have over 80 percent of that slaughter. By any economic measure this is a very high level of concentration.

In contrast there are some 1.2 million farmers and ranchers across the country that produce our Nation's cattle. In other words more than 80 percent of the output of 1.2 million farmers and ranchers is funneled through only 4 firms. This is an enormous economic bottleneck.

Since 1980, the top four slaughtering firms have more than doubled their share of the market. They have moved from a 36-percent market share to an 82-percent market share.

When there is an underlying illness, symptoms of that illness often do not appear until the system comes under serious stress. The same is true in economic situations. We have a serious underlying economic disease in our livestock industry: a highly concentrated marketplace.

The symptoms have become more evident under the stress of the low end of the cattle price cycle. The lack of market power for our producers at the bottom rung should be self evident.

The USDA Advisory Committee on Concentration can best be summarized by a sentence from the minority report. The report stated:

The upper levels maintain profit margins of various sizes within the production cycles, and the lowest, least concentrated levels have become the primary shock absorbers for fluctuations in the commodity cycle.

Coming from a State in which cattle producers are primarily cow-calf operators, I can certainly attest to this statement. Our cow-calf operators have seen their prices cut in half. They have been taking the brunt of this pricing cycle.

A few weeks ago I received a copy of a newspaper article about Al and Gene Urlacher of New England, ND. These two brothers brought a week-old dairy bull calf to the auction sales ring. Three years ago that calf would have sold for \$175. What did they get?

They got a \$10 bid for this calf. It cost them \$8.55 in auction fees, so they