

# RECOGNIZING MR. LUTHER'S 3RD GRADE CLASS AT BEACHWOOD ELEMENTARY

• Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I would like to recognize a truly outstanding feat by a 3rd grade class in Fort Lewis, Washington. Mr. Chris Luther's 3rd grade class at Beachwood Elementary School has not missed a spelling word on their weekly spelling tests for 25 weeks. Nearly a month ago, as my colleagues may remember, I announced an "Innovation in Education Award" program to recognize the important role individuals and communities play in the education of America's students. This class and their teacher, Mr. Luther, are perfect examples of this principle in action.

This is a classroom of average kids, all with different backgrounds and abilities. Yet, Mr. Luther has found a way to encourage and tutor these students so they are all accomplishing equally praiseworthy work. The key has not been some magical formula rather, the success of these students comes from a concerted effort by Mr. Luther to boost their self-esteem, to enhance their memory skills, and to impress upon every child in the classroom that learning is important. Those strategies combined with the individual effort of each of his students has clearly paid off.

Mr. Luther's creativity to engage his students in learning extends far beyond spelling. Each year, he produces a "Math Relay" that involves some 2000 students from 88 local schools. This remarkable gathering combines physical activity and competition with math questions and answers. Not only does the size of the event speak highly of its success but, the fact that Mr. Luther handles the mind-boggling logistics of an event this size himself is further cause for recognizing this fine educator.

I applaud Mr. Luther's initiative, creativity and ability to encourage his students to succeed. It is the work of educators like Mr. Luther and the efforts of students like those in Mr. Luther's 3rd grade class who are making education work across America. That is why it is my pleasure to recognize Mr. Luther and his third grade class for their accomplishments and it is why I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting local educators.●

## THE TALIBAN'S ABUSE OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN AFGHANISTAN

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, yesterday, Senator BROWNBAC and I introduced a resolution, S. Res. 68, condemning the treatment of Afghan women and girls by the Taliban. I hope my colleagues will join us in condemning the systematic human rights violations that are being committed against women and girls in that war-torn nation.

The Taliban militia seized control of most of Afghanistan in 1996 and now

control about 90 percent of the country, including the capital, Kabul. This group imposes an extreme interpretation of Islam practiced nowhere else in the world on all individuals. It is especially repressive on women.

Before the Taliban assumed control of much of Afghanistan, women were highly involved in public life. They held positions in the government and worked as doctors, lawyers, nurses, and teachers. The picture could not be more different today. Today, under Taliban rule women in Afghanistan are denied even the most basic human rights: they cannot work outside the home, attend school, or even wear shoes that make noise when they walk. They must wear a head-to-toe covering called a burqa, which allows only a tiny opening to see and breathe through. Parents cannot teach their daughters to read, or take their little girls to be treated by male doctors. Mr. President, women have been stoned to death, beaten, and otherwise abused for "breaking" these harsh laws.

The Physicians for Human Rights recently conducted a study of 160 women in Afghanistan and their findings are horrific. One of those women, a 20 year-old woman interviewed in Kabul had the following story:

Eight months ago, my two-and-a-half year old daughter died from diarrhea. She was refused treatment by the first hospital that we took her to. The second hospital mistreated her [they refused to provide intravenous fluids and antibiotics because of their Hazara ethnicity, according to the respondent]. Her body was handed to me and her father in the middle of the night. With her body in my arms, we left the hospital. It was curfew time and we had a long way to get home. We had to spend the night inside a destroyed house among the rubble. In the morning we took my dead baby home but we had no money for her funeral.

The study found that 77 percent of women had poor access to health care in Kabul, while another 20 percent reported no access at all. Of those surveyed, 71 percent reported a decline in their physical condition over the last two years. In addition, there was also a significant decline in the mental health of the women surveyed. Of the participants, 81 percent reported a decline in their mental condition; 97 percent met the diagnostic criteria for depression; 86 percent showed symptoms of anxiety; 42 percent met the diagnostic criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder; and 21 percent reported having suicidal thoughts "extremely often" or "quite often." In addition, 53 percent of women described occasions in which they were seriously ill and unable to seek medical care. 28 percent of the Afghan women reported inadequate control over their own reproduction.

S. Res. 68 calls on the President of the United States to prevent a Taliban-led government of Afghanistan from taking a seat in the United Nations General Assembly, so long as these gross violations of human rights persist.

Our resolution also urges the Administration not to recognize any govern-

ment in Afghanistan which does not take actions to achieve the following goals: effective participation of women in all civil, economic, and social life; the right of women to work; the right of women and girls to an education without discrimination and the reopening of schools to women and girls at all levels of education; the freedom of movement of women and girls; equal access of women and girls to health care; equal access of women and girls to humanitarian aid.

Mr. President, I am shocked that women and girls in Afghanistan are suffering under these conditions as we approach the 21st Century. The United States has an obligation to take the lead in condemning these abuses.

I want to thank Senator BROWNBAC for joining me in introducing this legislation. He has been a strong voice for human rights and I know that he shares my passion for seeing an end to these abuses in Afghanistan.●

## RESOLUTION TO COMMEND SENATOR J. ROBERT KERREY

• Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I am pleased to join Senators DASCHLE and EDWARDS and the other cosponsors of this resolution commending our friend and colleague BOB KERREY on the 30th anniversary of the events giving rise to his receiving the Medal of Honor.

During my tenure as Secretary of the Navy, I had the honor and privilege of working with a great many brave men and women—citizens of all stripes who were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to serve their country. One especially courageous naval officer was Lieutenant (j.g.) JOSEPH ROBERT KERREY.

Thirty years ago last Sunday in Vietnam, BOB KERREY lead a SEAL team mission aimed at capturing certain Viet Cong leaders. While leading this dangerous mission, he was badly wounded as a grenade exploded at his feet. Despite suffering massive injuries from this explosion and being in a state of near-unconsciousness, Lieutenant KERREY did not give up. He continued to lead his men, ordering them to secure and defend an extraction site.

For his heroism in combat, Lieutenant KERREY was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. And just what is this award? It is the highest award for valor in action that can be bestowed upon a member of the armed forces.

The Medal of Honor was created in the days of the Civil War through legislation sponsored by Senator James Grimes, chairman of the Senate Naval Committee, with the support of Navy Secretary Gideon Wells and President Abraham Lincoln. At that time, although serving in the military was required of all men, it had become clear that some servicemen went "above and beyond the call of duty."

So, the first two hundred medals were presented to those who distinguished themselves in the Civil War by their gallantry in action and other

qualities. Less than thirty-five hundred medals have been authorized to date, and just 158 are living today.

One of those 158 living recipients is a colleague of ours here in the Senate—a colleague I will surely miss upon my retirement. I think all Senators, and indeed all Americans, ought to take this moment to recognize BOB KERREY's heroic action on that day in 1969, when he displayed immense bravery in the face of overwhelming adversity.

Today—thirty years later—BOB KERREY continues to exhibit the kind of dedication and honor that earned him the Medal of Honor. Just one example of Senator KERREY's distinction as a Senator is the countless hours he had devoted to curbing the politically popular entitlement programs that have contributed so greatly to our staggering national debt. Taking on this issue isn't the easiest thing for an elected official to do—it is a task fraught with political danger. But BOB KERREY knows that it's the right thing to do for our nation, and that is why he continues to persevere.

My colleagues here today will provide numerous other examples of BOB KERREY's accomplishments as a U.S. Senator. Given his heroism during my tenure as Navy Secretary, these accomplishments come as no surprise. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this resolution, and thank Senators DASCHLE and EDWARDS for their leadership in bringing it to the Senate floor.●

#### NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE ACT

● Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss yesterday's overwhelming Senate vote in favor of the National Missile Defense Act of 1999. I was pleased to join with many of my colleagues in support of this legislation that will help to ensure that the United States does everything it can to defend itself from the threat of limited ballistic missile launches, both accidental and intentional. This legislation, which makes it the policy of the United States to deploy an effective national missile defense when technologically possible, takes an important first step toward providing a significant defense for all citizens of the United States against limited ballistic missile attacks.

As most of my colleagues know, today, the United States faces a serious, credible, and growing threat from limited ballistic missiles that could potentially carry nuclear, biological or chemical payloads. This new threat is not from Russia, our partner in many important arms control agreements. Instead, this threat comes from the increasing proliferation of ballistic missile technology. In particular, certain rogue states pose the greatest threat as they continue to push for—and make great progress in acquiring—delivery systems that directly threaten the United States. I do not believe that the threat from these rogue states, most of

which have demonstrated a complete disregard for the well-being of their own citizens as they relentlessly pursue the acquisition of this ballistic missile technology, can be understated.

Mr. President, this new and emerging ballistic missile threat from rogue states was dramatically highlighted by the August 1998 Taepo Dong I missile launch in North Korea. This North Korean missile launch demonstrated important aspects of intercontinental missile development. Most importantly, the missile included multiple stage separation and the use of a third stage. This use of a third stage, in particular, was surprising to our intelligence community. Using a third stage gives this missile a potential range in excess of 5,500 kilometers, thus effectively making the Taepo Dong I an intercontinental ballistic missile.

Unfortunately, America's intelligence community did not expect the North Korean's to have the capability to make such a three stage missile. In fact, the most recent U.S. intelligence reports made prior to this Taepo Dong I launch claimed that no rogue state would have this capability for at least ten years.

Even before the North Koreans launched their Taepo Dong I missile last August, there were other disturbing reports that predicted the eminent ballistic missile threat to the United States. In July, the Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States, known as the Rumsfeld Commission, released its report. The Rumsfeld Commission was a bipartisan commission headed by former Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and other well respected members in the defense community. The Rumsfeld Commission warned of the growing ballistic missile threat that rogue states posed to the United States. The Rumsfeld Commission unanimously found that, "concerted efforts by a number of overtly or potentially hostile nations to acquire ballistic missiles with biological or nuclear payloads pose a growing threat to the United States, its deployed forces and its friends and allies."

The Commission reported further that, "The threat to the U.S. posed by these emerging capabilities is broader, more mature and evolving more rapidly than has been reported in estimates and reports by the Intelligence Community."

The launch of the Taepo Dong I missile and the findings of the Rumsfeld Commission are very troubling. It is clear that ballistic missile technology is progressing rapidly and proliferating just as rapidly and, consequently, the threat to the United States is real. It is no longer a perceived threat or a potential threat. It is not a threat that may come ten years down the road. This threat is tangible and it is here now. I believe that we have a moral responsibility to all Americans to do everything possible to defend the United States from this threat. Supporting

this legislation, in my opinion, is an important step in providing a solid defense for the United States against limited ballistic missile attacks.

Moreover, S.257 is a responsible way to address the threat that the United States faces. In contrast to previous legislative efforts, most of which micro managed this policy by setting a fixed date for deployment and by dictating the exact type of missile defense system to be deployed, this legislation more properly lays out broad U.S. policy. The bill simply—but clearly—calls for deployment of an effective system once the technology is possible. No date for deployment is set. No requirement for a specific type of ballistic missile defense is outlined. By not dictating such requirements, this legislation responsibly allows for flexibility for our military experts to develop and deploy the best possible missile defense system. This language helps ensure that the United State will not rush into deployment with a substandard system—at a cost of billions of taxpayer dollars—just to be able to say we've deployed a limited missile defense.

Instead, this legislation will help ensure that the United States has deployed a system that has been thoroughly tested and proven operationally effective. I fully support this flexible approach.

Mr. President, let me briefly address the issue of cost. A lot has been said about how the original draft of this legislation could have bypassed future deliberations about how much the Pentagon should spend on missile defense. In effect, many critics of this legislation believed this bill would simply be providing a blank check for all future missile defense development and deployment efforts. I don't believe that is the case. This legislation does not preclude such important funding deliberations. However, I was very glad to support the amendment that Senator COCHRAN offered yesterday to make it absolutely explicit that Congress will fully debate the cost implications of a missile defense system in all annual defense authorizations and appropriations proceedings in the future. I plan to fully weigh the costs and benefits of missile defense in comparison to all other defense programs and to assess all potential threats to the United States at the time of those deliberations.

Finally, I am also pleased that the bill now calls for the United States to continue working with the Russians to reduce nuclear weapons. I strongly supported the amendment offered by Senator LANDRIEU which added this policy statement to S. 257. The United States and Russia have made great progress in reducing nuclear weapons over the past decade and both countries need to continue to do so. I think this statement of policy calling for continued efforts to reduce nuclear weapons is extremely important. We need to make it clear to ourselves, to all American citizens, to