

that in addition to the moneys we need and have received, or will receive, for the investigation, let us put NASA and the space program and human space flight on the track it needs to be.

Let us not forget the dream that we would go to Mars, we would go to the moon, but most importantly, what we would do would enhance humanity with the research and understanding of these bright and outstanding men and women who are willing to give us the ultimate sacrifice.

Can we as Americans and the United States Congress do any less for them? Yes, these are ordinary people who have been chosen to do extraordinary things. These are the astronauts, the heroes next door. We cannot falter, we cannot stop or stumble. We must pay tribute to their legacy by exploring space more efficiently, more safely and with the resources we need to have.

HONORING BISHOP BORGESS HIGH SCHOOL AND ACADEMY

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

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, as our Nation's space program has touched the lives of all Americans with both triumph and tragedy, I rise today to honor the special bond of courage and discovery between our seven *Columbia* astronauts and Mr. Ronald Ferenczi's science class at Bishop Borgess High School, which is located in my district.

In conjunction with NASA's initiatives to foster a love of scientific knowledge and exploration amongst America's youth, Mr. Ronald Ferenczi's science class created a space experiment to study the effects of solar radiation on the T-4 virus, antibiotics and related drugs and materials. Then, to their delight and awe, the students' ingenious experiment was then chosen for inclusion on *Columbia*'s mission of discovery, and brimming with curiosity and pride, the students eagerly watched and awaited *Columbia*'s return, until . . .

Mr. Speaker, our Nation's space program, buoyed by courage and dedicated to discovery, echoes the journey of life, for cradled within our frail vessels, our lives constitute courageous voyages of discovery about our world and about ourselves; and as with every worthy journey of discovery, the road ahead is often hard and as often filled with triumph as it is with tragedy.

Consequently, how we cope and continue along our path of self-discovery is now and will always be our greatest trial and our greatest triumph because the courageous endurance of unfathomable suffering on the path to self-discovery is now and will always be the greatest moral measure of humanity.

In conclusion, then, to Mr. Ferenczi and his students at Bishop Borgess Academy whose names are Jason Bowens, Tangie Brooks, Evan Collins,

Christopher Hill, Lawrence Nelson, Melvin Packer, Ashleigh Roberts, Darryl Earthen, Arielle Williams, Kelsey Dean, Martez Mitchell and Pauline Smith, I offer my sincerest accolades on their accomplishment.

My deepest condolences on their suffering, and I join them in thanking *Columbia*'s fallen crew, not only for what they have taught us about space, but for what they have taught us about ourselves. May we honor their memory by continuing their voyage of discovery.

MAKING AMERICAN PEOPLE SAFER IN THEIR HOMES

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, Americans are nervous. The United States is on Orange Alert. The reports are that stores have sold out of duct tape, plastic sheeting, bottled water, minimal supplies for people to defend themselves against the unthinkable, chemical or biological attack, and to make themselves safe in their homes. Americans do not feel safe in their homes or here in the United States of America.

We are told by intelligence sources and the FBI that there are hundreds of al Qaeda operatives at large in the United States of America who they are either tracking or cannot find. Yesterday Osama bin Laden, their fanatical leader, gave a speech urging them to attack, suicide attacks against the United States of America.

Osama bin Laden. My colleagues remember him. Remember, the President wanted, dead or alive; we will get him; we will bring him to justice. The President is not allowed to mention his name anymore. It has been more than 10 months since the President has mentioned the name Osama bin Laden because his administration has failed miserably in finding and bringing him to justice. In all probability, he has been given safe haven by the intelligence services in Pakistan, and he, according to our intelligence services and his operatives, according to our FBI and others, presents the greatest threat to the security of Americans and the most immediate threat to the security of Americans.

There are other threats that are out there that are making people nervous. We have here a poster from a rally in Pyongyang a week ago Saturday. Now, Kim Jong-il, psychopathic leader and oppressor of the people of North Korea, he has thrown out the U.N. inspectors, thrown them out, and he is actively pursuing more, not a, more nuclear weapons. He already has them. He is actively building more missiles of longer range.

We were told today by Mr. Tenet he may have already achieved a missile that can reach the western United States and target my home State in addition to Alaska and Hawaii.

He has threatened preemptive strikes against the United States of America or, minimally, against our 36,000 troops who are trying to safeguard the people of South Korea from this fanatic. This is a poster from a rally a week ago Saturday, and it says here, Merciless Punishment to the American Empire, and it depicts the United States Capitol being blown up by a North Korean soldier.

But this is a back-burner issue with the Bush administration. It pales in the face of the real threat to America. Osama bin Laden? No. Saddam Hussein, who is in a box, without nuclear weapons, without the capability of delivering whatever chemical-biological weapons he might have had hidden and he is shuffling around his country, trying to keep them away from the inspectors who are on the ground in Iraq, unlike the inspectors who were thrown out of North Korea.

But the Bush administration says, Do not worry, we will get around to this someday, sometime, maybe later, through diplomacy. This could be settled through diplomacy, a maniac who has nuclear weapons and is encouraging rallies, showing the United States Capitol being blown up, someone who has the capability of actually doing that; we can solve that diplomatically, but somehow we cannot work through the U.N. and the inspectors in Iraq.

We have got Saddam Hussein in a box. Get more inspectors in there. Get the overflights going. Keep him in that box, work with our allies. Keep him in that box. Sooner or later, the inspectors will find and destroy his weapons just as they did in the 1990s. Yeah, he is playing games. Yeah, he is hiding stuff. He did that then. We found it. We destroyed it. We can do that again.

Is the United States so diminished in the eyes of this administration and others that we cannot contain a threat like Saddam Hussein and deal with extraordinary threats like this up front, and find and apprehend and bring to justice Osama bin Laden and his operatives? I think not.

I think the American people have real doubts about this rush to war and real doubts about the priorities that this administration is putting on the threats to our Nation and our country.

I hope the administration begins to deal more seriously with this problem and gets out there and finds Osama bin Laden, and I will support those efforts, and then continue to contain and defang Saddam Hussein. That would make the American people safer in their homes.

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

(Mr. TERRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. CARSON of Indiana addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

TRIBUTE TO FOUR BRAVE MEN OF U.S. ARMY'S 160TH SPECIAL OP- ERATIONS AVIATION REGIMENT

(Mr. COOPER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to four remarkable men, four brave men from the U.S. Army's 106th Special Operations Aviation Regiment who gave their lives recently while in service to our country.

On Thursday, January 30, 2003, the four-member crew was participating in training operations near Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan when their MH-60 Blackhawk helicopter crashed. The elite Night Stalker 160 SOAR unit, which is stationed at Fort Campbell near my home district in Tennessee, honored these four aviators at a memorial service last week. Chief Warrant Officer 3 Mark O'Steen, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Thomas Gibbons, Staff Sergeant Daniel Leon Kisling, Jr., and Sergeant Gregory Michael Frampton were remembered as deeply patriotic and devoted family men.

Their tragic loss will not be forgotten among family members, friends or fellow soldiers that they left behind, nor will it fade from the memories of those who live and work in Fort Campbell. Each of these men made the greatest sacrifice a soldier can make, to give his life for the cause of preserving our freedom.

I thank them for serving our country proudly and honorably.

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LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING DELTA BLACK BELT REGIONAL AUTHORITY

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

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight on behalf of the 635,000 citizens in my congressional district, which is one of the three poorest congressional districts in the United States of America. As we focus on this budget and all the pressing economic needs in our country, we ought to remember that there is a class of Americans whose needs often go unaddressed in this body and elsewhere. It is the millions of Americans who live in the Black Belt of the South, or the Delta Region of the South.

Just yesterday, I introduced legislation that I hope will crystallize attention on this problem that has gone for

too long without a voice. We have a Delta Regional Authority in this country that is very ably led by Pete Johnson of the State of Mississippi. I seek to expand that authority to create a Delta Black Belt Regional Authority, and I seek that this body make a commitment that would be unprecedented in terms of its investment of resources in the southern and central parts of this country.

This legislation, if enacted, would ask that \$100 million be appropriated in the first fiscal year to 552 counties and 14 States in this country of ours. I recognize that I come before this Congress asking that this commitment be made at a time when the priorities of the President are very different. Across the South we see economic development programs being cut. We see the enterprise communities and the empowerment zones that have been so critical in my State and so critical in the States of so many of my colleagues zeroed out, eliminated from funding. We see funding for rural hospitals cut back. Our priorities, I would submit, are firmly and fundamentally wrong on all these issues.

Too many people are losing their jobs. Too many companies are closing in the South. And I would submit that at this point we have two Souths. We have one that is prosperous, we have one that is growing, one that is in touch with the modern economy that we have. We have another one that is languishing; we have another one that has lagged behind. It is the second South that I represent in the seventh district of Alabama.

We need to make a commitment that when 40 percent of the people in various counties live in poverty, we need to make a commitment that when too many children in the South live in school districts that are underfunded, that we put their concerns at the top of our agenda. We can talk all we want about economic development, but until we find ways to grow the physical infrastructure of the South and, more importantly, capitalize and build the human infrastructure of the South, we will see two Souths. We will see the South that I represent lag behind.

When the President talks about compassionate conservatism, he does it with great eloquence. But his budget-makers need to meet his speech-makers. We need to make a commitment that we will put resources and that we will give these resources a chance to work in a part of our country that has gone ignored.

This legislation, and I have circulated "Dear Colleague" letters to many of the Members of the House, has a chance of passage if we remember two priorities: First of all, that this entire country is anchored and weighted down if the rural South continues to lag; and second of all, that no country can be strong when too many of the people who live in its borders are weak. No country can be strong when too many of the people who live in its bor-

ders are weak. There is too much weakness in the South tonight. There is too much poverty in the South tonight. And it is time that we make an unprecedented national commitment in this area.

This legislation would do one final thing. It would give local communities, through a constituent representation board that I would put in this legislation, it would give them an opportunity to control 20 percent of the funding that would be allocated to this new authority. It is important that the people who live on the ground, who do the work in our community and faith-based organizations have a chance to control and direct resources. It is important that they have an opportunity to control the way Federal funds are spent. Too many people are locked out of this process. Too many people are in situations where their voices go unheard as we think about how we spend economic development dollars.

So I speak tonight on behalf of the rural South. I speak on behalf of the millions of children who live in poverty in that region, and I call for a national commitment beyond any that we have made.

IN SUPPORT OF MIGUEL ESTRADA'S CONFIRMATION

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, the history of our Nation was forged in the balmy summer of 1787 in what was at the time the statehouse of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. There the geniuses who created the Constitution of the United States created three separate branches of government and a system of checks and balances within that government that would provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and ensure the blessings of liberty for not only themselves but we, their posterity.

Central to that balance of power, Mr. Speaker, was the notion of an independent judiciary, which, at the level of the Federal Court, would be governed by the appointment of the President of the United States. But again it was not without checks and balances, Mr. Speaker, because the Senate itself, under the Constitution, was given the authority to review the qualifications of individuals that the chief executive would appoint for the judiciary.

And so our Nation proceeded from the basement home of the Supreme Court, which is still in this building today, back when it met just off the House Chamber for one day a year, to the august building and the awesome legacy of the U.S. Supreme Court today. And yet, Mr. Speaker, somewhere along the way, about the time of my youth, our Supreme Court seems, as it has done at different times in its history, the Dred Scott case comes to mind, the Supreme Court seems to