

benefit NATO. We need not question whether Romania will be a positive force within NATO. Romania has risked the lives of its soldiers for the benefit of the United States.

Participation in Operation Desert Storm—Romania contributed a military hospital company to the Allied Forces.

Participation in Afghanistan—Romania used its own airlift, a C-130, to transport a battalion of soldiers to Afghanistan. These forces have made two rotations. Romania is currently involved in the peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan.

Operation Iraqi Freedom—Romania mobilized its military police and a nuclear, biological, chemical detection team to work alongside U.S. forces in Iraq.

Currently 5,000 U.S. marines are based at Constanza, Romania. Our strategic threats are different today than they were 50 years ago. We are no longer endangered by Russia. Today, the greatest threat to NATO and its members is the threat of terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. As a result, the U.S. should consider whether it would be wise to reconfigure our forces overseas.

Our new threats are coming from the Middle East and southwest Asia. Romania and Bulgaria are halfway between Germany and the Middle East. Moving bases closer to the threat will allow the U.S. to mobilize faster and get to the fight sooner. We would also be welcome in Romania and Bulgaria. There is some question whether we are still welcome in Western Europe.

There are those who say NATO is dead or has no modern mission. That is simply not the case. The Soviet Union may no longer be a threat, but threats still exist. The end of the cold war may have erased the notion of warfighting where million-man armies face million-man armies on the European Continent. But, the end of the cold war unleashed despots willing to use the asymmetrical means of terrorism and WMD proliferation as methods of aggression and diplomatic blackmail.

NATO must adopt a new mission—combating terrorism and WMD proliferation both in Europe and globally. The threats that emerged from September 11 do not only affect the United States, these threats should be a concern to the entire NATO community. As we have seen, al-Qaeda cells were active in Germany, Spain, France, and Italy.

International terrorism on our shores was unknown to Americans prior to September 11. However, it was not uncommon in Europe. The other NATO members should unite behind America's interests to root out terrorism and stop WMD proliferation because the European members have been targets before and could be targets, again. This will require NATO to look not only within its borders, but NATO must also look beyond its borders. NATO members and Partnership for Peace participants stretch from the Pacific Ocean in the U.S. to bordering

on China in Kazakhstan. There are several countries just on the edges of NATO's borders who wish to terrorize those countries within NATO.

NATO has made a pledge to combat terrorism and WMD proliferation. The promise made by the NATO heads of state at the Prague summit to focus on terrorism and WMD proliferation is encouraging. Now, we need action. We should not let recent spats with France and Germany obstruct the implementation of this new mission. Moreover, France and Germany should not let their disagreements with the U.S. obstruct this new mission. Such actions benefit none.

For NATO to remain relevant, the European members must close the capabilities gap between U.S. and European forces. Many NATO members, including France and Germany, have reduced defense spending over the last decade. Such reductions leave the alliance vulnerable and make it difficult for NATO members to participate in operations with the U.S.

U.S. defense spending is dwarfing European defense spending. America's defense budget is greater than all other 18 NATO members combined. The \$48 billion dollar increase in U.S. defense spending from fiscal year 2002 to fiscal year 2003 is greater than what 12 of the other 18 members spend on defense.

Europe's leaders are world leaders. NATO members must make a greater investment in national security, NATO's longevity, and world security. We do not need them to spend as much as the U.S.; we need them to complement the U.S. and add value to NATO operations.

NATO should focus its spending on interoperability and communications improvements. The U.S. has committed billions to making it so all four branches of the military can be linked using the same communications devices. We are dedicated to interoperability within our own forces. It has not been easy and the job is not finished, but we have seen the fruits of this effort in Iraq and Afghanistan. Who would have imagined years ago that a B-52 pilot could talk with a Special Operations team on the ground to deliver close air support? This was possible because of interoperability.

NATO must focus on such interoperability. Not only must we ensure that a European tanker plane can refuel a U.S. fighter. We must ensure that 26 members, who speak many different languages, can share a common communications network and operate as one cohesive force, not 26 independent militaries. If this gap is not closed, no value will be added and we will have to question NATO's worth.

NATO must not be just an alliance based on military strength. NATO must be a diplomatic alliance. Military might alone is not the solution. First, we must use all diplomatic means to achieve peace. The united strength of NATO as a diplomatic force will also increase the security of NATO's members.

In the near future, NATO must make decisions to determine whether it will

be a vibrant alliance capable of protecting its members in the 21st century or whether it is a relic of the past. I know it can have a meaningful mission in the future—a mission focused on rooting out terrorism and stopping the spread of WMD. To do so, NATO members must increase defense spending and focus on modernization and interoperability. I am confident NATO's members want NATO to have a great role in shaping the 21st century. As a member of NATO, the U.S. should push for a strong alliance. By expanding NATO to include seven new members, we will take a key step in making NATO strong and viable for the 21st century. The Senate sent a strong message of support by approving the admission of Romania, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Slovenia, and Slovakia to NATO. The vote is good for the safety of the U.S., Europe, and the world.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

• Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred September 12, 2001, in Bridgeport, CT. A Brazilian waiter was attacked on the street by eight men who verbally accosted him because they believed him to be of Arab descent. The man was also physically attacked by the group and suffered a broken arm and several facial bruises.

I believe that Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well. •

ROSALIE ASLESEN RETIRES FROM SPEARFISH HIGH SCHOOL

• Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and honor Rosalie Aslesen on the occasion of her retirement as school librarian for Spearfish High School in Spearfish, SD.

A native of Spearfish, Rosalie graduated from Spearfish High School and received her bachelor of arts degree in theatre arts from Black Hills State University in Spearfish. After graduation, she served as a Red Cross volunteer, assisting troops in Korea in the 1960s, spending time living in Hawaii, Virginia, and Maryland before returning for a brief time to Spearfish. She

returned to Hawaii and obtained a master's degree in library science, before moving back to Spearfish with her husband Herb to take a job at Spearfish High School, where she has served as librarian since 1979.

Rosalie has earned the respect and admiration of all those who had the opportunity to work with her. Her friendly demeanor and wealth of knowledge helped her develop close friendships with various colleagues and students. In Rosalie's honor, her brother, William Vance, has donated an extensive collection of Library of America books to Spearfish High School. As a symbol of Rosalie's dedication to young people, these books will help educate future generations of young Americans.

Over the years, Rosalie has committed herself to helping Spearfish students learn more about their heritage and culture, about themselves and the world around them. She has worked hard to help students find the best in themselves. Thousands of students over the years have benefited from Rosalie's commitment to education and to the library sciences. From assisting students with research options for papers, to finding intricate details about the history of our world, Rosalie has served as a "human bookmark" in the book of life for countless young adults.

On the occasion of her retirement, I want to congratulate Rosalie Aslesen for her tireless dedication to Spearfish High School and her commitment to quality education. I also want to commend her for her valuable service to the community over the years. She has been very active in the United Church of Christ, has served on the board of the South Dakota Education Association, and has spent many years in the Spearfish Education Association, including the past 2 years as president. The lives of countless people have been enormously enhanced by Rosalie's service to South Dakota and her profession. Her achievements will serve as a model for other talented librarians throughout our State to emulate.

Mr. President, I wish Rosalie Aslesen the best on her retirement. ●

TRIBUTE TO REAR ADMIRAL WILLIAM W. COBB, JR., U.S. NAVY

● Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I would like to recognize one of the finest officers in the United States Navy, RADM William "Bill" Cobb, on the occasion of his retirement on May 15, 2003. Admiral Cobb will leave his current job as Program Executive Officers Ships after over 37 years of faithful and dedicated service to the Navy and our great Nation. During his time in Washington, he engaged the Congress on numerous issues vital to our national security. Today, it is my pleasure to recognize some of Bill's many accomplishments and commend him and his family for their service to the Navy and our Nation.

Admiral Cobb entered military service in 1968 after receiving a Bachelor of

Science degree in Engineering from the United States Naval Academy. He continued his education at the Naval Post Graduate School where he earned a Master's Degree in Operations Research in 1975. Admiral Cobb also attended the National Defense University's Industrial College of the Armed Forces, ICAF, in 1990; the Defense Systems Management College in 1992; the Executive Program, University of Michigan, Graduate Business School in 1994; and the Senior Executive Program in National and International Security at Harvard University in 2001.

As Executive Officer aboard USS *Jouett*, CG 29, Admiral Cobb shined as a leader. Even though *Jouett* started out last in every competitive category, Admiral Cobb's ability to motivate all levels of the chain-of-command catapulted the ship to the fleet's number one combatant in battle readiness. He later assumed duties as Commanding Office of USS *Coontz*, DDG 37, where his ship provided the initial response to a distress call after USS *Stark* was struck by an errant Iraqi cruise missile. During his tour as Commander of Naval Surface Warfare Center, Indian Head, Naval Ordnance Command, and Commander Naval Surface Warfare Center, NSWC, he was responsible for all of the Navy's In-Service Engineering Agents, ISEA.

Admiral Cobb also excelled in a variety of key staff assignments including Chief of Staff and Head, Fleet Introduction and Lifetime Support Division, AEGIS Program Office; a tour in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations as Head Readiness Sustainability Team, OP 090; and Chief, Cruise Missile Division, Plans and Policy Directorate, Commander Atlantic Fleet, where he planned all of the Tomahawk strikes for Desert Storm. As Program Executive Officer for Theater Surface Combatants, PEO TSC, he was responsible for the AEGIS shipbuilding program, the Navy's Theater Ballistic Missile Defense, TBMD, program, and introduction of the Cooperative Engagement Capability, CEC. On the international front, he headed shipbuilding programs with Spain and Japan, and worked with thirteen of our closest allies on the Standard Missile program. His tremendous effort significantly enhanced our allied forces' defenses against the growing tactical ballistic missile threat. Admiral Cobb was also responsible for the life-cycle support of several ship classes including Ticonderoga Cruisers, Arleigh Burke Guided Missile Destroyers, Spruance Destroyers and Oliver Hazard Perry Frigates.

In conjunction with the Secretary of the Navy's reorganization efforts, Admiral Cobb took on the significant task of reorganizing three major Program Offices into one. Program Executive Officer, PEO, Ships now has sole responsibility for life-cycle support for all 13 surface ship classes, the heart of our entire Navy. This new Program Office is responsible for the execution of

current and future shipbuilding programs that will carry the Navy well into the 21st century including the DDG 51 Arleigh Burke Class Destroyers, the LPD 17 San Antonio Class Amphibious Ships, the Navy's future destroyer DD(X), X, and the Littoral Combat Ship, LCS. The DD(X), and LCS programs, due in large part to Admiral Cobb's leadership, will revolutionize our Navy with the availability of more lethal and agile firepower than ever before seen in history.

Always an inspiration to those who served him, Admiral Cobb made it a point to recognize those Officers and Sailors who transformed his vision of the Navy into reality. His contribution to the success of our Navy goes well beyond the material changes he made in the programmatic world. Admiral Cobb made each sailor keenly aware of their importance to the Navy and the true appreciation that he held for their efforts. His unique ability to recognize talent and to foster camaraderie among those who served him had an enormous influence on countless junior sailors, and will continue to steer the course of our Navy well into the future.

On behalf of my esteemed colleagues, I offer the sincere congratulations of the United States Senate to Admiral Cobb, his wife Karen, son Bill II, Buddy, daughter Jeanne, and granddaughter Isabelle on a truly magnificent career. Admiral Cobb will be missed by our Navy and has the heartfelt appreciation of our entire Nation. We wish our friend the best of luck in his undoubtedly successful future and bid him "Fair Winds and Following Seas." ●

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

RETIREMENT OF CAPTAIN NICHOLAS PERUGINI

● Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I would like to express my appreciation and congratulations to Captain Nicholas Perugini of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, Commissioned Corps on the occasion of his retirement. For more than 26 years, Captain Perugini has dedicated himself to the protection of our Nation's oceans and maritime commerce through his exemplary work in NOAA's charting program. He has served aboard three hydrographic survey vessels and a shore-based field party. As commanding officer of the NOAA ship *Rude*, Nick was in charge of the survey investigation into the grounding of the Queen Elizabeth 2. He was also a member of NOAA teams that assisted in the recovery of the TWA flight 800 and John F. Kennedy Jr. crash sites which occurred off the East Coast of the United States. Captain Perugini's commitment and leadership during these sensitive projects are an example of public service at its best. Nick consistently put aside ego and personal glory to do what is best for the Nation.