

energy and biobased energy to help solve the energy problems that we all know must be addressed by this country when we have 60-percent dependence on foreign sources of oil in this country.

There is a \$3.5 million appropriation in this 2005 appropriations conference report for the acquisition of the Walls of Jericho, which is located on the South Cumberland Plateau along the Tennessee border with Alabama. The Walls of Jericho is considered one of the most unique and biologically diverse areas in the Southeast United States.

We focused on the 164th Airlift Wing and the National Guard in Memphis, TN, and in west Tennessee, where, at the Memphis-Shelby County Airport, there was a land exchange agreement, with the tremendous help of a great corporation, FedEx, which is based in Tennessee. It involved the airport authority, FedEx, and the National Guard, and it allowed the 164th Airlift Wing to build its new facilities and allowed FedEx to expand its operations at the Memphis hub—a real win-win for our military, a real win-win for the region, and a real win-win for a tremendous company there that is serving us every day with our FedEx packages that we so vitally depend on today.

Education, I need to not be remiss by mentioning No Child Left Behind. It continues to provide historic new funding for Tennessee schools. We all saw recently where our math standings internationally in the United States are dismal. I will say something about that a little bit later if we have not completed our business here shortly. But if you look at one of the things we are doing, or you look at really any State—I use Tennessee as an example—Tennessee, for 2003, received \$3.4 million; and for 2004, \$3.68 million in Federal support.

People say the Federal Government is not doing enough in supporting education. The amount that Tennessee—Tennessee is a good example of a State—that is a 64-percent increase in K-12 education funds just from 2002. Just over that 2-year period, there was an increase in Federal funding for education of 64 percent.

With this increased funding, and the new high accountability standards with No Child Left Behind, Tennessee will be on the path of achieving academic excellence.

In closing, I do wish to express my gratitude to my fellow Tennesseans for allowing me the real honor to serve them as one of their two Senators here in Washington, DC. As I look back over the 108th Congress, I really do see a historic period in our legislative history. I look forward to continuing to work hard on the issues that matter most to Tennessee and that keep us moving this great Nation forward.

EDUCATION

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I will take this opportunity, while we are waiting

for paperwork, to follow up on something I just mentioned; and it is on the subject of education. It has to do with an announcement that most of us saw in the newspaper a couple days ago. The report came out last week. It is this: The United States, when you compare us to 28 other industrialized countries, and you look at math literacy for 15-year-olds, you would guess that we might be at the top. No. You would guess we might be No. 5. No. You would say: Well, the United States of America, we have to be No. 10. No. You would say, we have to be 15th out of those 29 when you compare us to other countries. The answer is no. Well, then you may say: Out of 29 countries surely we are 20th, being the most powerful Nation in the world and the most affluent Nation in the world. And the answer is no.

Out of 29 industrialized countries, for 15-year-olds—my youngest son is 17 years old, so he is 2 years older—we are 24th. I did not believe it when I first saw it, and I called my statistician friends, and they said: Yes, it is true. In fact, everybody agrees it is true. In its most recent round of testing, the Program for International Student Assessment finds that the United States falls behind—again, we are 24th out of 29—such countries as Finland, Korea, Canada, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Luxembourg, Poland, Hungary, Spain, and, yes, France.

Even more depressing than that, these dismal results are consistent with all the international comparisons. It is not just this one study, but it is consistent with all other international studies. American students lag far behind their industrialized counterparts in math, reading, and in science across the board. Contrary to the clamor of the education lobby, it is not money. We are spending the money. We are spending more money than any other country on education. In fact, we spend 30 to 80 percent more per pupil than any other industrialized nation.

Since 1960, the U.S. has spent nearly a trillion dollars on K-12 public education. The result, according to the report, current U.S. math scores fall below Latvia. Then we look to the future. We know, as we look to the future, it is going to be based on the information foundation of our economy today. And if we are going to be competitive, it is clear we are going to have to start, because if it is true for the eighth grade, it is true for the 15-year-olds, it is true for the twelfth grade. In all of these we are failing.

If we look to the future, when we talk about outsourcing jobs, when we talk about global competitiveness and our efficiency, none of that matters very much unless we have appropriate training and education for our young people today who are the workforce of tomorrow. It is an economic reality, and we are failing.

Although we just got through the campaign season, we are looking ahead. Fortunately, President Bush

said 4 years ago: My No. 1 priority is going to be education. Sure enough, working in a bipartisan way in this body, we passed a huge reform, No Child Left Behind. This Republican-led Congress, the President of the United States were absolutely committed to saying: The status quo is unsatisfactory. We believed that every single child has that right to learn. And it is our obligation, our responsibility—a lot of people say: No, it is not a Federal responsibility, it is everybody's responsibility—to support the reforms that help meet that goal of giving every child that opportunity to and the right to learn.

Three years ago we passed No Child Left Behind. It was landmark legislation. For the first time it holds America's public schools accountable for results. Students in grades 3 to 8 are now tested every year on basic reading and math skills. We have to be able to measure progress over time. Otherwise we will not know whether what we are doing in terms of getting better teachers, giving teachers better supplies and a better opportunity to teach, we are not going to know whether anything works unless we can measure—and the measurement is under way—and to get parents involved.

Now we are able, by holding both the schools and parents accountable. They are going to get more involved and they are more involved today. We have given them specific tools to be able to measure their own child's progress and their own child's school and, if necessary, to use public funds to secure additional tutoring, public funds that weren't there before, but to use those public funds if you need that additional tutoring.

We introduced that whole concept that if the school is failing, thus your child is going to fail; if the whole school is failing, to give that opportunity to maybe send your child, if that school is failing, to a better school. Maybe it is a school down the road. That is just 3 years ago. In 3 short years, these straightforward accountability measures are getting results.

According to a March study by the Council of Great Schools, the achievement gap in both math and reading between African Americans and Whites and Hispanics and Whites is getting narrower in both categories. The National Assessment of Education Progress reports that since 2000, math scores have increased nine points among fourth graders and five points among eighth graders. Math scores for low-income fourth graders have improved even more dramatically, showing a 14-point gain. Simply by raising those education standards, public schools are striving to reach them and are making progress.

The nonpartisan, Denver-based Education Commission of the States finds that not since the 1970s have States been so responsive to Federal education reform. One might say better

late than never, but that would fail to give proper credit where it is due. The President deserves great praise for his determination to put America's public schools back on track. After three decades of stalled progress, we are turning finally to fact-based scientific solutions so that all of America's children can learn and will learn.

There is a lot more to do. And as with our intelligence reform bill today, this is not the end. This is a start. We are going to continue to have appropriate reforms, strengthening programs that we act on here in this body.

In the next Congress, when it comes to education, we will do more to strengthen our schools and our school systems so every child has that opportunity to learn. As the President has set out, since we have already focused on K-12, we will begin to look at the college level and further at that secondary school level. We are committed to expanding opportunities for every American to acquire the education and skills they need to compete and succeed in an ever expanding and dynamic economy.

Our Founding Fathers, who are cited so frequently and appropriately on this floor, believed deeply that a successful democracy and a viable democracy requires an educated and engaged citizenry. I am confident that by adhering to high standards of achievement and accountability, we will produce an education system worthy of their great hopes.

DARFUR

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I want to comment on one last issue. It is an issue I have brought to the floor many times. The issue I speak of is the issue of the crisis a long way away from Tennessee which I just spoke to, a long way away from Washington, DC where we are tonight, and a long way away from education which I just spoke to and which affects our future so much. I want to speak to an issue that focuses on the continent of Africa and a region called Darfur.

A few weeks ago the Sudanese Government agreed once more to make peace with its southern region. While this is encouraging news, and the international community is hopeful, we must not overlook the crisis that is raging right now, as we speak, in Darfur.

Last night I had the opportunity, with several others, in a very casual environment to be with His Majesty the King of Jordan. And it was interesting. He had met with the President. And this was an informal gathering over dinner last night.

The very first issue he brought up to me was, are we making progress in Darfur, which is a part of Sudan. And my response was: Not as much as we need to.

He said: I agree.

He told me the story of how his country, Jordan, is addressing it in many

ways. And they have been so beneficial throughout the entire Middle East, whether it is in Iraq or all the way across to the country of Africa. He told me the story of a field hospital that his Government and his military have put in that region of Darfur.

Darfur is a region about the size of France which is in this country with Sudan, the western part of the country of Sudan. But just the Darfur region is about the size of France so it is a big area. He told me the story of a hospital he has put there and the trust that hospital is building.

For nearly 2 years now the Sudanese Government has waged war against the people of the Darfur region. Despite two United Nations Security Council resolutions, pressure from the international community and neighboring countries, the Government of Khartoum continues its genocidal campaign. In mid-November Khartoum ostensibly agreed to stop the attacks, but within hours of their agreement, the Sudanese police raided a camp in southern Darfur, destroying homes and driving out civilians. Such attacks still continue. Tens of thousands of innocent victims have died as a result of this government-condoned and, worse than that, government-sponsored violence. Eight million more have been displaced, have been moved out of their homes, have been moved out of their villages, have been transported miles and miles from home, family, and security. Entire villages have been burned to the ground. Women raped, children abducted, executed.

Special U.N. Envoy Jan Pronk warns that Darfur is on the brink of anarchy. We can't stand by as the people of Darfur suffer. We cannot allow another Rwanda. They are calling out to us. They are pleading for our help. The international community has a responsibility, a moral obligation to act, to respond, to act with solution.

In August, I had the opportunity to travel to Africa which I do at least once a year. I usually go to the southern Sudan, but on this trip I chose to go to that western region of Sudan, the Darfur region. But because of difficulties with getting into that country and the inability to get a visa, I started over in the country of Chad which is west of Sudan. And it is at that Chad-Sudanese border that refugees by the thousands are fleeing to get out of the crisis and these vicious attacks in the Darfur region.

What a wonderful opportunity it was for me to see refugee camps which had sprung up to give support to these refugees whose families have been fractured. They didn't know where their spouses were. They had lost their kids. Refugee camps where 5,000, 10,000, 15,000 or 20,000 refugees would come together in miserable conditions, but still people coming together, supported by outside groups.

One of the refugee camps we visited was in Touloum in Chad, and that is several hours northeast from the capital there in N'Djamena.

I was on the ground and met with the refugees and met with the community leaders. What I saw there was fairly appalling. Thousands of refugees are housed in dust-covered tents. Many more live in makeshift shelters of gathered wood and plastic sheeting.

I spoke with a gentleman named Asman Adam Abdallah. In Darfur, he had been a man of prominence, an officer of his tribe and a government official. He was from a small village in the Darfur region. It was a village called Jemeza, just north of the regional capital of El Fasher.

During the attack on his village he became separated from his family. He didn't know if they were still alive. I asked about his family and he said, "I don't know." He didn't know what would happen the next week. If you asked, Are you going to be able to go back to your village, he says, I don't know. I don't know about my wife. I don't know about my children.

He recounted witnessing 15 men of his village summarily murdered. It took him 18 days to travel from that Darfur region across the border into Chad and to reach the refugee camp of Touloum. Sudanese Government planes bombarded Asman and his fellow survivors as they trekked first to Tine, a town right at the border of the Sudan and Chad.

I talked to many refugees, and another one in the Touloum camp described how during a raid on her village, several soldiers grabbed a baby and they wanted to see what gender or sex the baby was. The soldiers began to argue back and forth, with the mother watching, whether to kill the baby boy. She overheard one soldier remarking, "But this child is so young." It appeared that the soldiers were under orders to kill all male children.

I heard another story of a mentally disabled 15-year-old boy who was thrown into a burning house, and these houses are really huts. He was thrown into that house to perish. I heard another story of a paralyzed man being burned alive in his hut. I heard stories of women who were raped in front of their own children.

I asked one refugee in Touloum what it would take for him to go home. He said to me, "I will go if you"—pointing to me—"will go with me and stay with me."

The Janjaweed attacks described to me were so vividly disturbing. You go from one camp to another camp, one little tent village to another one. The stories were exactly the same. You know it is not isolated. It is occurring all over the region. You know it is organized and it is purposeful. The Janjaweed are preceded by aerial attacks by the militia. It is preceded by aircraft flying over; they are government aircraft. In some cases, soldiers in government uniforms participate on the ground and make references to "orders from Khartoum." Survivors tell of racial slurs being hurled at them as the Janjaweed sweep through the villages