

result because their bravery and service deserves our recognition. That is why I was pleased to support the resolution honoring these gallant men and women, ensuring they are never forgotten. There will never be a way to predict and prevent all such acts of violence, but we can take comfort in knowing that we have the best and most valiant individuals standing on the frontline.

#### THE "MERCİ TRAIN" IN VERMONT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Vermonters needn't look far to see evidence of the deep French roots running through our State. From towns such as Montpelier and Isle La Motte, to the apt naming of Vert Mont, the Green Mountain State, generations of Vermonters were raised in homes where the native language was not English, but French. Deep ties to our neighbors to the north in Canada continue this rich culture in Vermont communities today.

It is no wonder then that I have such strong memories of stories about the "Merci Train" in Vermont. In the aftermath of World War II, Vermonters, like people across the country, rallied together to provide supplies for war-torn communities throughout France and Italy. Vermonters sent food and other gifts, through Burlington and Rutland, down to Boston, where they became part of "the Friendship Train," a convoy of rail cars that traveled through France as part of one of the more remarkable humanitarian efforts after World War II.

I well remember my mother and father bringing my older brother and my youngest sister and me to see it. As children, we may not have fully understood what it meant, but for years thereafter, I would go past it, being more and more aware. As a Montpelier native, I join with everybody else with in having pride having that the Merci Train was there.

The Merci Train was France's response, a year later, thanking Americans for their support. Filled with trinkets from French citizens, crafts made by school aged children, and other items, cars from the Merci Train traveled to each State. One arrived in Vermont on February 10, 1949. Its arrival was heralded by the playing of our national anthem, as well as the French revolutionary hymn "La Marseillaise" by the Montpelier High School Band. Its contents, sincere expressions of appreciation from French families, were unpacked and distributed to Vermonters.

While the Merci Train's freight represented the gratitude of a nation, the railroad car itself held the history of two World Wars. Displayed behind the Vermont Supreme Court in Montpelier for a number of years, the car originally served as a railroad boxcar to haul military cargo. Often referred to as "40 and 8s," in reference to their 40-

man or 8-horse capacities, the cars regularly transported American soldiers throughout Europe. Upon the car's arrival in Vermont, it was displayed temporarily behind Vermont's Supreme Court building, where it remained until the 1950s. Removed to the Vermont State Police headquarters, it faced deterioration. A movement in the 1980s—with the support of veterans, private companies, the Vermont National Guard, and "40 and 8" enthusiasts—led to the car's restoration. Today it remains preserved and on display at the Vermont National Guard Library and Museum, a fitting tribute to the strong ties between Vermont and France and another window into the fascinating history on which our great State is built.

I ask unanimous consent that the May 30 article from the Times Argus, "The Merci Train in Vermont," by Paul Heller, be printed in the RECORD. There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Times Argus, May 30, 2016]

#### THE MERCİ TRAIN IN VERMONT

(By Paul Heller)

Local radio celebrity Bob Bannon was master of ceremonies as 500 Vermonters gathered at the railroad station in Montpelier to receive a remarkable gift from the people of France.

The present was an antique boxcar filled with gifts from ordinary French citizens—a way of saying "thank you" or "Merci" for American assistance during and after World War II.

A similar gift had been presented to each of the 48 states with an additional one for Washington, D.C. The convoy had been dubbed the "Merci Train," and the old railroad cars known as "40 and 8s" were carried to their destinations by rail.

The one that arrived in Montpelier on February 10, 1949, had been delivered on an American railroad flatcar and was opened in a ceremony that had started with a "Vermont Welcomes France" breakfast. Later, at the train station, the Montpelier High School band played "The Star Spangled Banner" and "La Marseillaise." The Montpelier V.F.W. post provided a color guard carrying the flags of the U.S., France, and Canada.

Officially known as "Le Train de la Reconnaissance de Française," the "Merci Train" was a response to the U.S. railroad convoy a year earlier that had made a similar trip the other way.

That 1947 version was called "The Friendship Train" and had made stops at various large U.S. cities where the cars were filled with food and other gifts from ordinary Americans to offer relief to war-ravaged France and Italy. The Friendship Train was the inspiration of nationally syndicated columnist Drew Pearson, who led the humanitarian effort that put individual Americans in a direct charitable relationship with their counterparts in France.

It is estimated that relief supplies valued at \$40,000,000 were sent to France and Italy in this fashion. Although the Friendship Train did not come to Vermont for donations, the Burlington Free Press was careful to assert that the Green Mountain State was worthy of this gift from France.

Many Vermonters may feel that the Merci Train, bearing gifts from the French people for the people of Vermont, is entirely a one-

way transaction. They remember that the Friendship Train, which went from coast to coast picking up food gifts for the hungry people of Italy and France, did not come to Vermont.

Thus it might appear that Vermont is being thanked for something it didn't do. But while the train did not come here, some Vermonters made their contributions just the same. Food gifts from different parts of the state were sent through Burlington and Rutland down to Boston, where they made up part of the Friendship Train.

Of course, many Vermonters served in the armed forces to help secure an Allied victory in Europe. France, recognizing the sacrifices of all Americans to save their republic, gave a similar gift to each state in the union.

The Vermont car was unpacked and gifts distributed by Earl Newton, director of the Vermont Historical Society, who was sensitive to the need for equity. Vermont legislators took token gifts back to their towns and many items, when appropriate, were given to high school French classes.

The gifts were sincere expressions of appreciation such as small knickknacks that a French family might own. There were many pieces made by French schoolchildren who also included toys and dolls in the shipment.

Vermont Governor Gibson, reported the Burlington Free Press, accepted the car for Vermont and said "the gifts it contained were great in spiritual value and that the people of Vermont would accept them in that sense." He added, "the gifts would be accepted in a spirit of humility and friendship and that the people of Vermont would continue to march shoulder to shoulder with the people of France so that liberty, peace, and freedom might continue for all time."

Many of the gifts included letters and drawings from French schoolchildren, and they were clearly intended for children in the United States. The letters were often addressed, "Chers petits amies d'Amerique . . ." (Dear little friends of America). These gifts received in Montpelier were mostly sent to museums and schools throughout the state.

While the gifts were mostly sentimental tokens of friendship, it was the railroad car itself that was to prove to be the most unique and lasting legacy of the "Merci Train." The old railroad car, small by modern standards, was informally referred to as a "40 and 8."

Manuel Conley's history of the specialized cars noted, "During two wars they served France as dual purpose railroad boxcars hauling the military cargoes stenciled on their sides 'HOMMES 40 CHEVAUX 8'." A more precise colloquialism might have been "40 or 8" as the designation referred to the cars' capacity to carry 40 men or eight horses in an era when the horse-cavalry was an essential part of a military force.

During the First World War American doughboys were carried to the front in just such cars and veterans of the Great War had vivid memories of that unique mode of transport. According to Conley, Americans were alternately enchanted and disgusted, intrigued and infuriated by the little dual-purpose cars. Sometimes they were just confused.

In "The Doughboys: The story of the AEF," Laurence Stallings tells of one sergeant who reported to his leader: "I got all my 40 artillerymen in the boxcar, lieutenant. But if you try to pull eight of our horses in, somebody's gonna be trampled to death!"

Conley notes that the cars had been updated for their new purpose in the "Merci Train." "All had been repaired, freshly painted, and decorated with plaques bearing the coats of arms of the 40 provinces of France. Across their sides, upon tricolored

bands, was printed the name of the enterprise for which they stood: on one side "Train de la Reconnaissance Francaise" and on the other "Gratitude Train."

The French citizens embraced the idea of thanking America for its sacrifice and generosity and they scoured the countryside for 40 and 8s that could be reconditioned as gifts to each state in America.

"By the end of 1948 the boxcars were filled to capacity. The train carrying over two hundred and fifty tons of gratitude was pulled to the port of Le Havre for shipment to America." The cars were loaded on a freighter bound for Weehawken, New Jersey. Upon arrival, the cars, with a wheel base eight inches wider than standard U.S. tracks, were loaded on flatcars for delivery to their final destinations.

Vermont's Merci car first arrived in Vermont at Brattleboro on February 9, 1949 at 11 in the morning. It was received in Montpelier the following day at 8 a.m. with an official ceremony at 10 "with Gov. Gibson and other officials participating."

When Earl Newton unpacked the cargo, he compiled a detailed inventory on a legal pad. His original notes, in a file at the Vermont Historical Society, are still quite legible. A casual perusal of the list of gifts Mr. Newton distributed include 39 dolls, various decorated cloth wallets, stockings, thank-you cards, pencil drawings, watercolors, ornamental fans, toy cars, guns, pencil boxes, puppets, doilies, photographs, and painted ceramic souvenirs.

Antique French currency in the form of bank notes was included as well as a sampling of Confederate Bank notes from the U.S. Civil War. A representative sampling of some of the gifts may be seen at the Vermont Historical Society.

The most interesting item from the Merci Train is the old railroad car itself that was displayed on temporary rails behind the Supreme Court building at 111 State St. in Montpelier. It remained there until 1953, according to Vermont legislator John Finn, when it was transported to Redstone, then the headquarters of the Vermont State Police, to be used for storage.

With no shelter or maintenance, the car began to deteriorate, and the once brightly painted Provincial crests began to disappear in the harsh weather. When asked, a stingy Vermont Legislature would not appropriate \$10,000 for a shelter, and by 1968 the car had been moved to Steamtown, a Vermont railroad museum in Bellows Falls. Funds promised for restoration never materialized, and Finn noted it again was used for "a storage bin, rotting where it stood."

But then, Melvin Hilliker of St. Albans came across the old car at the train museum. Hilliker, a member of the American Legion, was also a member of a group of Legionnaires who were dedicated to the history of the "40 and 8s." He enlisted his cohorts to save Vermont's Merci Car by taking it to St. Albans for restoration. St. Albans, a famous old railroad town, seemed to be the perfect destination for the neglected relic.

Finn and company lobbied members of the Vermont Legislature for permission to take the car to St. Albans. For Finn, it was a relatively convenient task, as he had just been elected to represent St. Albans in the Vermont House.

After much cajoling, Steamtown released the historic boxcar. At first, moving it seemed an insurmountable problem, but the Miller Construction Company of Windsor generously moved it to the St. Albans CVRR roundhouse in June of 1983.

The "40 and 8" enthusiasts of St. Albans raised funds to restore the car, and with the assistance of the Vermont National Guard, it was moved to St. Albans' Switchyard Shopping Center for a rededication and display.

The history buffs who witnessed the dedication on June 7, 1984, undoubtedly believed the antique railroad car would rest at the Switchyard permanently. However, that was not to be. In just over 10 years time the members of the St. Albans American Legion realized they did not have the means to preserve the antique rail car and, in 1995, with the help of the Vermont Office of Historic Preservation, the old 40 and 8 was moved to the Military History Museum at Camp Johnson in Colchester. Under the aegis of the Vermont National Guard, the museum features the Merci Train car as the centerpiece of its World War One exhibit.

Lovingly restored and displayed, the old car may be boarded by visitors who can imagine what it must have been like to be an American doughboy carried to the front with 39 companions, and then what it looked like in 1949 when it pulled into Montpelier, laden with gifts from a thankful France.

While Vermonters have the good fortune of being able to visit their car from the Merci Train, residents of some of the other New England states are not as lucky.

A 1984 report indicated that the Connecticut car was destroyed by fire in the 1950s, the whereabouts of the Massachusetts car was unknown, and Maine's was in disrepair with most of the painted decorations removed. In 1999 the Rhode Island car was discovered in a junkyard, but now resides in The Museum of Work and Culture in Woonsocket.

In northern New England, New Hampshire (in Manchester) and Vermont have provided shelter for their 40 and 8s and preserved their legacy of sacrifice and gratitude. One may view the car at the Vermont National Guard Library and Museum, which is open Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. There is no charge for admission.

#### BUDGETARY REVISIONS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, section 251 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 establishes statutory limits on discretionary spending and allows for various adjustments to those limits, while sections 302 and 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 allow the chairman of the Budget Committee to establish and make revisions to allocations, aggregates, and levels consistent with those adjustments. The Senate will soon consider the conference report to accompany H.R. 2577, the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017. This conference report provides

funding to combat the Zika virus. For these efforts, the bill provides \$991 million in budget authority for fiscal year 2016 and \$39 million and \$382 million in outlays for fiscal year 2016 and fiscal year 2017, respectively. These figures include rescissions of emergency funds that provide a partial offset. This legislation includes language that would designate these provisions as emergency funding pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Deficit Control Act of 1985. The inclusion of these designations makes this spending eligible for an adjustment under the Congressional Budget Act.

The conference report to accompany H.R. 2577 also includes funding for military construction outside of the United States that is designated as overseas contingency operations funding pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(ii). These provisions provide \$172 million in budget authority and \$1 million in outlays for fiscal year 2017. The inclusion of the overseas contingency operations designations with these provisions makes this spending eligible for an adjustment under the Congressional Budget Act.

On May 26, 2016, I made adjustments to the budgetary aggregates and the Committee on Appropriation's allocations for fiscal years 2016 and 2017 to accommodate emergency spending found in S. amendment No. 3900 to combat the Zika virus that qualified for a cap adjustment under BBEDCA. The adjustments I make today take these prior adjustments into consideration and reflect the appropriate level for overall adjustments for considering this legislation.

As a result, I am decreasing the budgetary aggregate for fiscal year 2016 by \$107 million in budget authority and \$108 million in outlays. I am increasing the budgetary aggregate for fiscal year 2017 by \$172 million in budget authority and decreasing outlays by \$125 million. Further, I am revising the budget authority and outlay allocations to the Committee on Appropriations by reducing revised nonsecurity budget authority by \$107 million and outlays by \$108 million in fiscal year 2016. Finally, I am revising the budget authority and outlay allocations to the Committee on Appropriations by increasing revised security budget authority by \$172 million and reducing outlays by \$125 million in fiscal year 2017.

I ask unanimous consent that the accompanying tables, which provide details about the adjustment, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### REVISION TO BUDGETARY AGGREGATES

(Pursuant to Section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and S. Con. Res. 11, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016)

	\$s in millions	2016
Current Spending Aggregates:		
Budget Authority .....		3,070,927
Outlays .....		3,091,393