but because the security companies, the airlines, the Air Transport Association, and many others designed to delay those rules for years because they knew the new system would be more expensive and would be a little bit better than what we have today, but would still not be as good as a uniform, Federalized system.

That is where we need to go to assure the traveling public, and then we have to look at all the other issues that relate to aviation and other modes of transportation.

BERLIN CONFERENCE ON TERRORISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BALLENGER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to come to the floor today to spend a few minutes providing a very preliminary report on the status of our worldwide coalition against terrorism.

Last week, I traveled to Berlin, Germany, to join leaders of our allied nations from around the world for the first international conference on terrorism since the attacks on New York and Washington. The conference included representatives from Great Britain, Germany, France, Belgium, Italy, Korea, Japan, Ireland, Israel, and even Jordan. I was privileged to lead a discussion with His Royal Highness, Prince Hassan of Jordan, and with Nobel Laureate David Trimble of the United Kingdom.

During our meetings with America's strongest allies around the world, I arrived at four basic conclusions about our allied response to these terrorist attacks.

Number one, my colleagues should be aware that all of our friends and partners, particularly the residents of Berlin, grieve with the people of the United States.

From the piles of flowers, cards, and candles stacked waist-high on the barricades just outside the American Embassy to the teary-eyed mayor of a small town who handed a condolence book signed by everyone in his village to our ambassador, the evidence of genuine sorrow for the people of the United States was overwhelming.

On Thursday, I met with my friend, Ambassador Dan Coates, formerly of this body and now our man in Berlin, as he showed me the thousands of drawings, cards, and letters sent to the people of the United States at the embassy, some simply were addressed in crayon to our ''Our Dear Friends.''

As the only American official at this conference, I was inundated with heartfelt expressions of condolence, and I felt the awkward gratitude of a citizen of a nation not accustomed to asking for help.

Secondly, I am pleased to report that our foreign policy initiatives immediately following the attack have been an unqualified success. President Bush has reversed many previous negative impressions of our country's leadership. In comment after comment, representatives from countries that had once ridiculed the United States foreign policy heaped praise on the patience and the strength of our President.

Additionally, Hoosiers can be proud of the great work of our ambassador, Dan Coates. He has been the very personification of grace under pressure. I learned Thursday that he and his wife, Marsha, arrived in Germany only 4 days before the terrorist attacks. Less than 1 week after his arrival, he stood to receive the sympathies of over 200,000 Germans who gathered in a candlelight vigil at the Brandenburg Gate. This is a tribute all Americans should know about.

Thirdly, the European political support for military action is firm but not permanent. Most of the participants of the conference openly spoke of the need for a strong retaliatory strike. As one diplomat said, the terrorists must ''learn that there is a steep price to be paid for such action.''

Most also noted, however, that support for military action might not last long. Representatives from Great Britain and Germany spoke of strong antiwar movements in many NATO countries, and predicted that, after recovering from the initial shock of the attacks, left-of-center governments in these countries would, again, face pressure to withdraw support for U.S. action.

America must act boldly and rapidly in insisting upon a military response before support from our allies dissipates.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, our allies are deeply skeptical about the depth of America's commitment in the Middle East. They must be reassured. Many of our friends in the Middle East told me privately that they believed the United States has been in retreat in the region since the early 1990s. The failure to respond forcefully to terrorist attacks on our North Africa embassies and the USS *Cole*, combined with the last administration's determination to pressure Israel into trading land for peace, has sent the message that U.S. resolve in the region is weakening.

Whatever action we initiate must involve the overwhelming and sustained use of force to demonstrate our unwavering support for stability and democracy in the region. Only this type of response will allay concerns among our friends and provide a clear warning to our enemies that America is in the Middle East to stay.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I told all of the assembled diplomats and parliamentarians at a banquet on Friday evening that it was altogether fitting that we were holding this conference in the city of Berlin.

When I first visited Berlin as a college student 25 years ago, the city was divided by a wall separating east from west. It was nearly universally accepted that this devastated city would remain divided, but the United States refused it abandon the dream of a reunified Berlin.

From President Kennedy's airlift to President Reagan's challenge that Gorbachev ''tear down this wall,'' America stood for peace and freedom in Berlin. Today our dream of a reunited Germany and a thriving and united Berlin is a reality. If Berlin could rise from the ashes of war and division, surrounded on all sides by hostile powers, perhaps the Middle East, too, can rise from a history of warfare and deep disunity to become a place where peace and freedom prosper.

OUR HOPE NOT BROKEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, recently I attended a candlelight vigil at the Deer Park High School on Long Island on behalf of those missing and lost on the attack on the World Trade Center.

Following that ceremony, I have had the privilege of meeting with the Szewczuk family. Jessica Szewczuk gave me a poem she wrote about the Trade Center attack. Her words are particularly poignant because her father is a New York firefighter, one of the countless heroes who has saved lives in the true spirit of America.

On behalf of all of those heroes, I would like to read Jessica's poem to my colleagues. She writes:

When the Twin Towers were hit
Everyone was in shock
People screaming and running
Not believing what was happening to us
We the nation of strength and teams
The nation that gives hope and dreams
The nation that was built with confidence and care.
The nation that will always be there
When this tragedy occurred everyone went mad
The city was in chaos, really bad
People said that everyone would be torn
They were right for we continue to mourn
This tragedy will be hard to mend
But never have we been so close
Everyone is everyone's friend
This terror that happened just brought us tighter
Boosted up our confidence and made our hearts brighter
We are all working as a team, we're all helping out
The city is slowly being fixed and there is less doubt
So there goes to show that whatever may be
Our people will always be confident and free
Nothing can ruin our foundation
No one can take apart this nation
No one can kill America's heart
Nothing can rip our bond apart
Our flesh and blood has built this great nation
Our hearts and mind have created America's foundation
So whatever happens and whatever goes on
America will always continue to be strong
Nothing can make us weak

Only help build our strength to the highest peak
No one can ever put us to defeat
For America's heart will always continue to beat.

I am privileged to represent the Szewczuk family in the United States Congress.

THE RURAL PROBLEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, in 1908, President Roosevelt charged the Country Life Commission with the task of solving the ''rural problem.'' He identified this problem as the fact that the social and economic institutions of this country are not keeping pace with the Nation as a whole.

□ 1245

Uttered almost 100 years ago, those words just as easily describe our situation in America today.

Many people are aware that there is indeed a farm crisis plaguing rural America. However, this crisis does not stop at the farm. Consider the crumbling infrastructure, lack of educational and employment opportunities, out-migration of our youth, inadequate health care facilities, and a growing digital divide. These are just a few of the struggles our rural communities must overcome.

Consider the following sobering statistics: of the 250 poorest counties in America, 244 are rural; 28 percent of the housing stock in rural America is considered physically deficient; rural workers are almost twice as likely to earn the minimum wage than their urban counterparts; 12 percent of rural workers earn the minimum wage, whereas only 7 percent of the urban workers earn the same. Because of this, the face of poverty in rural America is a working family. Two-thirds of the rural poor live in a family where at least one member is working.

These are serious problems that require our attention. In the light of these and other difficulties, it is not surprising that we are witnessing a great hollowing out in rural areas. Consider the recent statistics. The census says that people are leaving in large numbers from rural America. The growing gap between rural and urban America threatens to turn this into an irreversible gulf. We must take steps to close this gap before it is too late.

Tomorrow, I will join with my colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON), to offer an amendment to the farm bill that will seek to provide rural America with additional resources to address these pressing problems. The amendment will increase critical funding to three important areas.

First, it will provide almost $50 million annually for drinking water and wastewater facility infrastructure grants for small towns and rural areas. In a recent survey of its members, the National Association of Counties, which has endorsed this amendment, found that water infrastructure needs was the number one concern of its counties nationwide.

Rural and small non-metropolitan areas face particular needs and challenges in meeting their drinking and wastewater infrastructure needs. Water systems located in communities with less than 10,000 residents account for 94 percent of community water systems in this country. Many of them with low tax bases. The Environmental Protection Agency reported in 1997 that small communities, serving less than 3,300 residents, are in need of $37.2 billion through the year 2014 just to keep up with the current challenges. A sound infrastructure is a prerequisite for both quality of life and for economic development. We must not allow a disproportionate amount of infrastructure dollars to flow simply to urban areas.

Second, this amendment will provide almost $50 million annually to provide rural areas with strategic regional planning and implementation grants. Unlike our urban areas, rural communities often do not have the capacity to inventory their assets and to plan for their collective future. Just as our urban communities require careful planning, strategies and long-term thinking, so do our rural communities.

This important funding would enable rural communities to join together across county lines to have a marketing area where they could be competitive across jurisdictions so they can work together for the good of rural residents throughout the region. We must not consign our rural communities to a slow disappearance by doing nothing. We must help them increase their own capacity and draw upon their natural assets and to develop their future collectively.

Finally, this amendment provides $10 million per year for value-added agricultural development grants. If our agricultural producers are to innovate and survive, we must enable them to capture more of the profit in their own communities.

This amendment does not add new policy to the farm bill as passed out of the committee or change current policy in the bill. It simply seeks to build upon the work that the committee has already done by increasing resources available to the areas that the chairman and the ranking member of the committee have determined appropriate.

I am aware that some will say that I am taking away from farmers, but I submit to my colleagues that rural communities include farmers, their families, their neighbors, and communities. So I urge my colleagues to consider this rural amendment to the farm bill.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BALLENGER). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 51 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, source of life and constant guide to Your people, yesterday Members of this House stood at ground zero in New York City. Their stunned silence grieved the loss of over 5,000 lives; and hopefully, brief words of encouragement helped so many workers remove the dreadful consequences of evil which tried to crush the ordinary work-a-day world of America.

With Your power to save, strengthen this Congress and Your people across this Nation that we may realistically embrace both the loss and the mighty task of the future.

Throughout the history of New York and this Nation, You have blessed us, Lord, time and time again.

Whereas evil has no imagination and feeds only on itself, Your blessings of goodness spiral into a dynamic of creativity and help us to see signs of hope born of pain and standing in the midst of suffering.

May the vacuous space left by the World Trade Center open the minds and hearts of peoples of the world to deeper compassion and a new level of human understanding.

Already in the smoking crater of death, we witnessed apostles of self-sacrifice and dedicated service: police, firefighters, FEMA workers, public officials, and volunteers.

From the dust and twisted steel of Ground Zero, may the twin towers of liberty and unity lift all of us to a new dedication to perform our daily tasks well as true believers and builders on Your blessings, both now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.