of our war-fighting capability. They include battlefield communications, precision weapons guidance, satellite control of over 120 military satellites, air combat training, and many other vital functions. The simple truth is that military access to the 1755 through 1850 megahertz frequency band is a matter of life and death.

Now, some have argued that the military should just move to another part of the frequency spectrum to carry on its functions. But let me be clear about this. The military did not just randomly decide to use these frequencies. The military uses this part of the frequency spectrum because the physical properties of these frequencies meet their unique operational requirements which cannot be compromised for any reason, but certainly not for something as trivial as advanced cell phones.

So, it is not just a simple matter of moving to another part of the frequency spectrum. We have to find frequencies that have comparable characteristics, which is something we have thus far failed to do.

But even if alternative frequencies are identified, the cost of modifying or replacing more than $100 billion in equipment, not to mention the cost of retaining developing new tactics, is beyond comprehension. I therefore applaud the Secretary of Commerce's decision last week to no longer consider the majority of the 1755 through 1850 megahertz bands for reallocation. This was the right decision, but it could have gone further by permanently removing from consideration the entire 1755 through 1850 megahertz band. I remain very concerned that when we move beyond the current crisis the military will once again come under assault to relinquish these and other vital frequencies to the commercial sector.

So let the word go out to all concerned that we cannot and will not tolerate any attempt to restrict the military's access to the frequencies they need to carry on their missions. We have a solemn obligation to protect the people of the United States, and no argument from any special interest group will change that. So do not even think about asking for access to military frequencies. The answer is no and will stay no. Some of these huge giants should realize that.

MAINTAIN CONDITIONS OF UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE TO AZERBAIJAN IN CURRENT FORM

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor this evening to urge this Congress to maintain section 907 of the Freedom Support Act in its current form and oppose efforts to repeal this important provision of law.

Section 907 places reasonable conditions of U.S. assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan until Azerbaijan has shown that it has taken demonstrable steps to cease all blockades and other offensive uses of force against Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that the administration is using the tragedies of September 11 and our Nation's war against terrorism as a way to convince Members of Congress of the need to waive these sanctions. Yesterday, members of the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on International Relations in both the House and the Senate received a letter from Secretary of State Colin Powell requesting ''assistance in passing legislation that would provide a national security interest waiver from the restrictions of section 907.'' Secretary Powell continued by stating, ''Removal of these restrictions will allow the United States to provide necessary military assistance that will enable Azerbaijan to counter terrorist organizations and elements operating within its borders. This type of assistance is a critical element of the United States fight against global terrorism.''

Well, Mr. Speaker, this letter is unfortunate; and although I am not surprised, because the State Department has always opposed section 907, but it is particularly troubling to think that Secretary Powell would want to provide military assistance to Azerbaijan, a nation which has a history of aggression and blockades against Armenia and which continues to this day to make threats of renewed aggression against Nagorno Karabagh under the cover of the international war on terrorism.

Let me give some recent examples of these threats. Azerbaijani Defense Minister, Colonel General Abiev, was cited recently by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Caucasus Report as an advocate of renewed aggression against Nagorno Karabagh.

Radio Free Europe has also reported that Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Quliev has said that if Azerbaijan decides to liberate Karabagh from terrorists, then the international community would have no right to condemn that move as aggression.

Azerbaijani Parliamentarian Igbal-Agazadeh said that the time has come to start hostilities on the liberation of Azeri territories occupied by Armenia, a direct reference to a new war against Nagorno Karabagh.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, Azerbaijan does not share our understanding of this war on terrorism. The senior Azerbaijani leaders are telling us very plainly that they intend to use all of the means at their disposal, including apparently any and all military aid that we provide them in their antiterrorist war against the Armenian people.

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Taking any steps to weaken, waive, or repeal Section 907 will give Azerbaijan the green light and the means to renew its aggression against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh.

In his letter, Mr. Speaker, Secretary Powell says Section 907 must be repealed so the Azerbaijani government can fight terrorist organizations in its own country. What the Secretary does not say is that there are credible reports that the Azerbaijani government invited bin Laden and his network into its country.

Given this information, the United States Government should carefully review its relationship with Azerbaijan and not reward it with repeal of Section 907. At a minimum, I believe U.S. interests are best served by insisting Azerbaijan arrest and turn over those involved in the al-Qaeda cells operating there with the government's approval since the early to mid-1990s. These cells threaten all of us in the United States, but Armenia in particular is on the front line of this battle.

To date Azerbaijan has done nothing to warrant repeal of Section 907, including continuing its war rhetoric, rejecting U.S.-European calls for cooperation with Armenia, rejecting specific proposals by Armenia for economic and regional cooperation, and backing away from the commitments made by Azerbaijani President Geidar Aliyev during peace negotiations this year in Paris and in Key West earlier in year.

Given the ongoing sensitive peace negotiations, efforts to weaken or repeal Section 907 only serve to legitimize Azerbaijan's immoral blockade and would make its position at the negotiating table even more intransigent.

Moreover, repeal of Section 907 is no way to reward Armenia's solidarity with America's campaign against international terrorism. Armenia's early response to the World Trade Center attack was to first assist American staff at our U.S. Embassy in Armenia's capital to ensure the Embassy's security.

Armenia's President, speaking on behalf of the Collective Security Treaty of the post-Soviet Commonwealth of Independent States, called for joint action against international terrorism. Armenia currently holds the rotating presidency in this six-member defense grouping. Armenia has also offered and the U.S. has already used Armenia's airspace. In addition, Armenia has offered intelligence-sharing and other unspecified offers of support.

There is no reason to repeal Section 907, and it would be a big mistake at this time, Mr. Speaker. Now more than ever the Congress has to uphold the fundamental and enduring U.S. principles of justice, democracy, and human rights.

THE RHODE ISLAND VICTIMS OF THE WORLD TRADE CENTER DISASTER

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, 1 month ago a grave injustice was perpetrated on the American people. We were deeply saddened by the loss of several thousand brave Americans who will be missed terribly by their friends and families. In a community as close-knit as Rhode Island, our stinging loss was even more personal.

I would like to take this opportunity to remember seven men and women from our great State who we lost in this tragedy.

David Angell was a native of Rhode Island who rose to prominence in the television industry and was the executive producer of the popular show ''Frazier,'' a wonderful tribute to his talent and hard work. He was traveling with his wife, Lynn, back to California after vacationing in New England with his brother, Kenneth A. Angell, former auxiliary bishop for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence.

Carol Bouchard lived in my hometown of Warwick, and worked as an emergency services secretary at Kent County Memorial Hospital. I spoke to her husband of 2 years, who wants everyone to know what a wonderful woman Carol was.

She was traveling with her friend, Renee Newell from the City of Cranston, who was a customer service agent for American Airlines. Renee's husband of 10 years, Paul, would like people to know that she was not only a dedicated wife and mother, but also a proud airline employee. These two friends were combining a business trip for Renee with a brief vacation in Las Vegas.

Michael Gould was an employee of Cantor Fitzgerald on the 104th floor of the World Trade Center. He grew up in Newport, Rhode Island, where his mother still resides. After graduating from Villanova University in 1994, he went to work in the financial sector, first in New York and then in San Francisco. Michael had just returned to New York in June.

Amy Jarret, of North Smithfield, worked as a dedicated flight attendant for United Airlines. She began working there after she graduated from Villanova University. She was aboard the Boston to Los Angeles Flight 175.

Sean Nassaney of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, was 25 years old and already a sales manager for American Power Conversion. He graduated cum laude from Bryant College in 1998, spent a year in Australia, and then enrolled in the MBA program at Providence College. Sean and his girlfriend, Lynn Goodchild, were on United Flight 175 en route to Hawaii.

Mr. Speaker, these men and women are only a few of the victims of the tragedy that struck America 1 month ago. They will be sadly missed. Today, I want to honor and remember and celebrate their lives. As our Nation copes with the events of September 11, we should take comfort in the knowledge that the American principles of freedom and tolerance, democracy, will not be overcome by terrorism.

I offer my sincere condolences and support to the family and friends of David and Lynn Angell, Carol Bouchard, Sean Nassaney, Amy Jarret, Renee Newell, and Michael Gould, and to all of those who have lost loved ones in the tragedy of September 11. We remain confident, though, that together we will persevere.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MALONEY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

AMERICA'S SECURITY IN THE AIRLINE INDUSTRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, this evening several of us have come to the floor to talk about what many of us believe is the most pressing responsibility of the U.S. Congress right now; that is, our security, and particularly our security in our airline industry.

We believe that Congress should act very promptly; in fact, the other Chamber has passed a bill. But to date, although we are 30 days past September 11-plus, we still have not had a vote in this Chamber to increase how we deal with safety in our airlines. That is extremely disappointing, because we have had a lot of other votes here in the House in the last month, but we still have not dealt with some very, very huge holes in our airline security provisions.

Tonight, we are going to start by talking about perhaps one of the most glaring loopholes in our airline security system, and that is the loophole that unfortunately allows bags with explosive devices to go into the luggage compartments of airplanes.

The sad fact is that Congress needs to act and act promptly and aggressively to make sure that baggage that goes into the belly of an airplane is screened for explosive devices. The reason we need to act is that the airlines themselves have not provided a comprehensive 100 percent screening by any measure, any technology, even a visual inspection of the bags that go into the luggage compartment of our airlines. It is a glaring omission, and Congress needs to act.

We believe that we ought to this week include in our airline security package a provision that, by law, requires 100 percent of the bags, not just the carry-on bags, which are currently screened, but in fact the bags that go down the conveyer belt and go into the belly of our aircraft, to be screened. Right now only a small percentage, only a small percentage of those bags are screened by x-ray or other technology for explosive devices.

Mr. Speaker, I have to tell the Members, it is clear to me that the American public has an expectation that bombs are going to be kept out of the baggage that goes on the airplanes with them. That is a reasonable expectation, it is a commonsense expectation, but it is not being met by the airline industry. So the U.S. House of Representatives this week needs to pass a bill and a statute that will require that we use the technology to in fact do that screening.

The good news is that we have excellent technology that can do this. We have several types of machines that, with a very high degree of confidence, can determine whether there is an explosive device in the baggage before it gets on the airplane. We simply need a law that will in fact require that those machines be used universally. We have 100 percent coverage in this regard.

We have introduced or the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. STRICKLAND) and about 30 others of us have introduced a bill, the Baggage Screening Act, which will accomplish that. We hope that this bill, or the fundamentals of it, will be included in the airline security bill when it comes to the floor this week.

But there are a host of airline security issues, and I would like to yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), who has been showing leadership on this issue, for his comments.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

I, too, would like to join with my colleagues, and many other colleagues, in calling for greater security at our airlines.

September 11 was a tragic day in this Nation's history. Let us take a strong lesson that we need to join together and focus attention on the problem of airline security to reinstill confidence in our travelers, in the knowledge that when they board an aircraft they do so in safety, and that they will arrive safely to their destination.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of things that we can do to improve airline security, the most important of which, I think, as a first step, is that we federalize airline screeners.

We want people there who are totally focused on ensuring the utmost safety for those who are entering the airports and who are entering our airlines, who will be boarding our planes. We want people there that are motivated not by a company that is only motivated by profits, but are there, again, totally focused on security. Federalizing those employees is the best way to get us there.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues stated, we have dealt with a number of bills since September 11. We need now to take up this issue in legislation in improving our airline security.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for sharing those ideas.