

Budgets and Requirements Office; the Chief of Naval Operations' Staff where he was assistant for aircraft procurement; research, design, test & evaluation; and ship construction appropriations; the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Financial Management; and as the director, Programming and Financial Management Division for the Chief of Navy Reserve. Many of my colleagues know Captain Panos from his service as the Navy's legislative affairs liaison for Reserve matters and anti-terrorism/force protection programs.

The U.S. Navy is a better Navy thanks in part to the talent and dedication of CAPT Kenneth J. Panos. While Captain Panos' retirement means the Navy will lose a fine officer, I am happy to report to this body that he has found a replacement. His oldest son, Michael, is currently a midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy. His youngest son, Robert, is a sophomore at Robinson Secondary School in Fairfax, Virginia. I know all of my colleagues join me in congratulating Ken, his hometown sweetheart and wife Karen, as well as Michael and Robert, on the completion of an outstanding military career.

#### ROMANIA

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise today to express solidarity with the people of Romania in the aftermath of the fatal floods that occurred earlier this month. As a consequence of the heavy rainfalls that occurred in Romania from July 1 to July 17, 2005, 24 people are reported to have lost their lives, and some 800 towns and villages suffered damage to road infrastructure, farmlands, and utilities.

The United States and Romania have a strong and continuing relationship. In April 2003, the Senate voted unanimously to bring Romania into NATO. It represented a vote of confidence in the Romanian people and I was honored to witness that expression of American support as chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations. Romania's commitment to the Alliance is evident in its active participation in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq. I am hopeful that Romania will be invited to join the European Union in the near future.

The United States and Romania cooperate closely in a number of areas. Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, Romania has been fully supportive of the global war on terrorism. Among other actions, it contributed transport aircraft and more than 400 troops to Afghanistan. In addition, Romania permitted the use of its territory—land, airspace and seaports—for the U.S.-led military action against Iraq, and dispatched non-combat troops to the region. Romania currently has approximately 900 troops in Iraq, and approximately 500 troops in Afghanistan.

I commend Romania for its consistent contribution to international

peace and stability. Since 1991, it has participated in United Nations peace-keeping operations in the Gulf, the former Soviet Union, Africa, and the Balkans. Just yesterday, the Department of State issued a press statement welcoming the decision by the Romanian cabinet to accept approximately 450 Uzbek asylum seekers on a temporary basis as part of the resettlement processing. The asylum seekers had sought initial refuge in the Kyrgyz Republic following the May violence in Uzbekistan. Romania stands as a role model in the international community for those who are committed in words and actions to the United Nation's principles.

#### CONGRESS' EFFORTS TO IMPROVE AGRICULTURE SECURITY

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I have come to the floor again to speak about the ability of the United States to prevent and respond to a terrorist attack on American agriculture, a topic that I believe deserves more attention from the Congress and the administration.

That is why I commend the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry for holding a hearing on agroterrorism last week. This was their first hearing on the subject, and I welcome their interest because I have been pursuing the passage of legislation on agriculture security for the past 3 years.

I first introduced agriculture security legislation, S. 2767, the Agriculture Security Preparedness Act, which was referred to the Agriculture Committee, in the 107th Congress. Unfortunately, it was not acted upon in that Congress. I reintroduced my legislation in the 108th Congress and again in the 109th. I am pleased that S. 573, the Agriculture Security Assistance Act, was included in S. 975, the Project Bioshield Act of 2005, and I thank the bill's chief sponsor, Senator LIEBERMAN, for that inclusion.

The strong potential for the American food supply system to be a target of terrorist attack and the severe repercussions such an attack would cause are widely accepted among experts. At the July 20 Agriculture Committee hearing, Mr. John Lewis, Deputy Assistant Director, Counterterrorism Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI, testified:

Most people do not equate terrorist attacks with agroterrorism. But the threat is real, and the impact could be devastating.

Another witness, Dr. Robert Brackett, Director, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, Food and Drug Administration, FDA, added:

A terrorist attack on the food supply could have both severe public health and economic consequences, while damaging the public's confidence in the food we eat.

According to the Department of Agriculture, USDA, the United States food and fiber system accounts for approximately 12 percent of our gross domestic product and employs 17 percent of the

U.S. workforce. Yet the infrastructure that composes this sector of the economy, which is central to American prosperity, is often not viewed as critical as power lines, bridges, or ports. We cannot underestimate our dependence on America's breadbasket.

On March 9, 2005, the same day I introduced my two agriculture security bills, S. 572, the Homeland Security Food and Agriculture Act, and S. 573, the Government Accountability Office, GAO, released a report I requested entitled, "Much is Being Done to Protect Agriculture from a Terrorist Attack, but Important Challenges Remain" (GAO-05-214). The GAO report reviews the current state of agriculture security in the United States and points to a number of key areas where improvement is necessary, such as the inability of USDA to deploy animal disease vaccines in 24 hours and the lack of foreign animal disease knowledge among USDA-certified veterinarians.

GAO also confirmed information I had received from the National Association of Agriculture Employees that the agricultural mission of Customs and Border Protection, CBP, was insufficiently prioritized. GAO found that the number of agricultural inspections at U.S. borders had declined by 3.4 million since the Department of Homeland Security, DHS, took over the border inspection responsibility from USDA.

In February 2005, I wrote to then-DHS Undersecretary for Border and Transportation Security Asa Hutchinson expressing my concern over the decline in border inspections because I know how important they are to the economy of Hawaii—home to more endangered species than any other State. In response, I received a commitment from DHS to hire additional agriculture specialists at CBP to ensure the agricultural mission does not go unmet.

Also noted in the GAO report were shortcomings in DHS's Federal coordination of national efforts to protect against agroterrorism. The Federal agencies involved in agriculture security—DHS, USDA, FBI, and FDA, to name a few—claim they are working closely with each other. However, one only need look at the June 2004 incident in Washington State, where 18 cattle developed chromium contamination, to see that there are communication gaps at the Federal level. Agroterrorism was suspected, yet neither USDA nor DHS were notified.

In May 2004, representatives from the FBI, FDA, and USDA gave a presentation at an agroterrorism conference in Kansas City, MO, on lessons learned from the Washington outbreak which included a slide stating that the following agencies should be contacted if agroterrorism is suspected: a State's Department of Agriculture, FDA, USDA, FBI, local law enforcement, and State and county public health officials.

Why was the Department of Homeland Security not on the list?