

housing and other areas because of his race, even after serving his country loyally in the U.S. Army during World War II. Witnessing this bigotry had a profound impact on young Bill. After graduating from Columbia Law School in 1974, he entered the legal profession with a passion for serving the public interest and advocating for civil rights.

Bill Lee will bring a passion and commitment to the cause of civil rights and equal treatment under law for all Americans. He is a tremendous role model for all Americans who care about civil rights. Early in life, he recognized the importance of public service and he has dedicated his life to it.

On that point, I would like to take this opportunity to express my concern that many Americans, especially those with Asian names or of Asian heritage, may be less interested in becoming involved in public life as a result of a series of unfortunate and disparaging remarks made by some in the media and in public positions.

Such remarks and misperceptions appeal to the worst human instincts when we should be appealing to the best. A recent study by the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium documented an increase last year in hate crimes targeting Asian Pacific Americans.

This disturbing trend demonstrates that now is the time for these issues to be handled fairly, thoroughly and expeditiously, under strong new leadership by the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. ●

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS CONFERENCE REPORT

SECTION 8123

● Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I would like to enter into a colloquy with Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman TED STEVENS concerning section 8123 of the fiscal year 1998 Defense appropriations bill, H.R. 2266.

Is it the chairman's expectation that the Secretary of Defense will not exercise the authority in section 8123 with regard to specialty steel and other steel products encompassed in the following Harmonized System of Tariffs (HTS) numbers: 7208 (carbon steel); 7218 through 7223 (stainless steel); 7224 through 7229 (alloy steels, high speed tool steels and electrical steels); 7304 through 7306 (stainless steel pipe and tube); 7502 through 7508 (nickel-based alloys); 8105, 8108, 8109 (cobalt/titanium/zirconium-based alloys); 8211, 8215 (stainless steel flatware) unless the failure of the Secretary of Defense to exercise such waiver authority pursuant to section 8123 will trigger unilateral retaliatory sanctions by a foreign country?

Mr. STEVENS. The Senator is correct.

Mr. D'AMATO. I would like to associate myself with the comments of the senior Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. SPECTER, and underscore my similar

expectation that the Secretary of Defense will not exercise the authority in section 8123 with regard to the products enumerated by Senator SPECTER. ●

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE'S 28TH BOMB WING

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the men and women of Ellsworth Air Force Base's 28th Bomb Wing and join them in their celebration of the Air Force's and the bomb wing's 50th anniversary.

This is a wonderful time to reflect on the remarkable role the U.S. Air Force and the 28th Bomb Wing have played in our national security and to look toward the future at the growing importance air superiority will have in maintaining the peace around the world. These past five decades have provided countless successes and great memories for the men and women who piloted, maintained, and provided oversight to the numerous important missions of the U.S. Air Force. Our country owes all who have served a debt of gratitude.

The 28th Bomb Wing was born in August 1947 when the Strategic Air Command organized the wing at Rapid City Army Air Field, later renamed Ellsworth Air Force Base, SD. In 1949, the 28th participated in the first of a long line of historical missions when B-29's flew a 90-day show-of force mission during the Soviet blockade of Berlin. At the start of the cold war, the B-29's gave way to B-36 Peacemakers in 1950 as the 28th provided an umbrella of security for NATO countries.

The crews of the B-36 were dedicated to their missions—primarily reconnaissance and to gather photographic and electronic information. However, according to B-36 crew chief Bill Shoemaker, they did everything from drop haybales to stranded livestock during the terrible winters of 1949 and 1950 for Operation Haylifts; transport Thanksgiving turkeys to soldiers in Greenland; attend the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, and take a member of the royal family on a short flight. The ability to perform any job, and do it well, was the hallmark of the B-36 crew and a trait that has been reflected in the personnel of the 28th throughout the years.

Senior Master Sgt. Dave Sitch spent 6 of his 26 years of military service at Ellsworth Air Force Base as part of the 28th Bomb Wing—1951-55, 1974-76. "In the days of the '36 and as part of the 28th, that was the closest group I had ever been in. There was a lot of competition among the squadrons, but there was a lot of camaraderie too. We looked out for each other."

Jet technology changed the face of aeronautics, and the all-jet B-52 Stratofortress started replacing the Peacemakers in 1957. The 28th Bomb Wing played an important role in the Vietnam war, flying both bombers and

tankers for 9 years. Over the next 20 years, Ellsworth Air Force Base became a vital component of our country's defensive strategy as the 28th assumed the bomber role in the Strategic Projection Force. The B-52 mission expanded to include sea reconnaissance, surveillance, and conventional operations from forward bases, and Ellsworth Air Force Base's reach extended to a number of hot spots overseas.

Don Strachan spent 10 years as a member of the 28th Bomb Wing at Ellsworth Air Force Base. He recalls a time when the B-52's participated in an operation titled Airborne Alert, in which one-third of the entire B-52 fleet was expected to remain airborne at all times between 1957 and 1960. "Some of the wings couldn't handle it, but the 28th filled in. We never failed to meet our commitment. It was like family. We supported everyone extremely well. The esprit de corps was unmatched. There was a great deal of sharing among the crews. People would come in and observe our operations."

Strachan and Shoemaker recalled conducting maintenance on planes in desperately cold temperatures. While stationed with the B-36's in Greenland, Shoemaker recalled, "It was so cold, you couldn't do anything. We worked under the lights on ramps. It was so dark all the time." Strachan said maintenance crews worked in chill factors that were 100 degrees below zero. "Nothing stopped the 28th," said Strachan.

Fred Hurst spent six different stints totaling 19 years at Ellsworth Air Force Base as a member of the 28th Bomb Wing. For many years, he served as president of the 28th Bomb Wing Reunion Association and was recently succeeded in the position by Strachan. Hurst spent 30 years of military service, working in maintenance on B-29's, B-36's, and B-52's and retired from military service as a chief master sergeant. He retired last year as a civilian worker and advisor on B-1B operations. Hurst says the 28th Bomb Wing has always been admired for its professionalism and efficiency. "It is a good wing. It's been at the top for so many years as far as performance goes. It has a great safety record. Whenever someone had a problem, everyone and his brother tried to help him."

Mike Isaman spent a total of 15 years at Ellsworth Air Force Base over two stints. As a member of the 28th Bomb Wing, Isaman said teamwork was key to the success of any operation, as well as to the success of the Wing and the Base. "We were all friends. Everyone looked out after each other. It was a team. It worked together. They all stood together. We would do anything possible for other crews and squadrons."

The Air Force introduced the next generation of bombers, the B-1B Lancer, in 1987, and once again, the 28th took the lead in housing the sleek new bombers. Adding to its already storied combat experience, the wing deployed