

The Civil Air Patrol has been involved in air-borne and ground-based search and rescue for over half a century. Founded on December 1, 1941, to counter the threat of enemy submarines operating off the east coast, the Civil Air Patrol has evolved into a highly trained emergency response team of volunteer members, responding to needs of emergency preparedness agencies throughout the nation.

With more than 53,000 members, CAP manages the world's largest fleet of light, single-engine aircraft—totaling 530—which fly more than 85 percent of inland search and rescue missions.

The Civil Air Patrol also aggressively and heroically performs its other two missions mandated by the Congress: Aerospace Education and Cadet Programs. In fulfilling these missions, the CAP serves as an important liaison between today's planners of our Nation's air strength and tomorrow's pilots and air navigators.

Not only does the CAP fulfill all these missions, it also provides disaster relief services, and assists in humanitarian services and counterdrug efforts; CAP also performs many other missions in direct support of the U.S. Air Force. Many CAP members serve as aerospace education instructors, ground team members, and observers during search and rescue missions. They also serve as radio operators, mission coordinators, public affairs officers, and cadet mentors. To prepare volunteers to serve their communities, CAP provides training in 20 different specialty tracks, including technical instruction in flight operations, emergency services, and communications. In addition, members can participate in management and executive leadership training that complements Air Force professional development.

The Civil Air Patrol is structured around the core values of Integrity, Volunteer Service, Excellence, and Respect. The core values reflected in all CAP members exemplify the highest standards of personal and professional conduct.

I am proud to represent a number of squadrons, which make up the Civil Air Patrol Wing of Georgia, including: the Georgia State Legislative and the Georgia Wing Headquarters Composite Squadron which flies out of Dobbins Air Reserve Base; the Bartow-Etowah Composite Squadron; the Rome Composite Squadron; the Cobb County Composite Squadron; the West Georgia Composite Squadron; and the Gwinnett County Composite Squadron. I am proud to recognize all of them for their efforts, and I commend them for their generosity and concern for others. They reflect the commitment to voluntary community service essential in solving our nation's most pressing problems. By reaching out to those in need, they set an outstanding example to all Americans; especially our young people.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED GOVERNMENT OF COLOMBIA AND ITS EFFORTS TO COUNTER THREATS FROM U.S.-DESIGNATED FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

SPEECH OF

**HON. TAMMY BALDWIN**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 6, 2002*

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Res. 358. We are all deeply troubled by the ongoing civil war in Colombia. Efforts to attain a peace agreement have not been successful so far, but the recent setbacks to the peace process do not change the fundamental nature of the conflict and should not result in a rush to radically revise U.S. policy.

This conflict did not arise from drug trafficking. It is a forty-year-old conflict stemming from fundamental economic, political and social tensions in Colombia. All parties have been implicated in drug trafficking. And all parties have been responsible for serious and repeated human rights abuses. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (known by their Spanish acronym FARC), the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), and the National Liberation Army (ELN) have all contributed to the murder, kidnapping and extortion now endemic in Colombia. This Congress is clearly on record condemning these actions.

While Congress and the United States have condemned the revolutionaries, the paramilitaries and the Colombian government for human rights abuses, we have been very careful to avoid becoming entangled in the Colombian civil war. As a very large and geographically diverse country, military action in Colombia is quite difficult and could easily drag our nation into a quagmire like Vietnam. We have wisely recognized this risk and have limited military assistance to anti-narcotic activities.

In addition to limiting the use of U.S. military assistance to anti-drug efforts, Congress has taken numerous steps to try to break the links between the Colombian military and the paramilitary forces of the AUC. U.S. and Colombian non-governmental organizations have clearly and definitively documented significant and ongoing collaboration between the paramilitaries and the Colombian military. Paramilitary violence has increased even as the record of the Colombian military has improved. Most estimates indicated the paramilitaries commit more than 75% of the non-combatant killings.

The resolution under consideration by the House states that the "Colombian Government has made progress in its efforts to combat and capture members of illegal paramilitary organizations and taken positive steps to break links between individual members of the security forces and such organizations." Well, saying it does not make it so. This simply isn't the reality. A report last month from Human Rights Watch (HRW), Amnesty International (AI) and the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) concluded exactly the opposite. Their report noted that President Pastrana has "failed to take effective action to establish control over the security forces and break the per-

sistent ties to paramilitary groups." The report further noted that high-ranking officers "failed to take steps necessary to prevent killings by suspending security force members suspected of abuses, ensuring that their cases were handed over to civilian judicial authorities for investigation and prosecution, and pursuing and arresting paramilitary leaders." Despite our efforts, we have not seen any significant progress.

As part of the FY02 Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, signed by the President on January 10, 2002 (Public Law 107-115), the Secretary of State must certify that Colombia has met certain human rights conditions in order for aid to be released (Section 567). According to the HRW, AI and WOLA report, the conditions required for certification have not been met. I am very concerned that approval of this resolution by the House will be a signal to the Colombian Government and the U.S. Secretary of State that we believe these conditions have been met. I do not believe that they have been and certification should not take place at this time.

Rushing this resolution to the floor is unnecessary and a mistake. As my colleague from Massachusetts, Mr. Delahunt, has said, we need to have comprehensive hearings on Colombia. Using the war on terrorism to justify leaping into a forty-year-old civil war with little debate or consideration is the wrong thing to do. We must step back and evaluate our policy toward Colombia. The United States has become embroiled in civil wars in the past, and we've come to regret those actions. Let's not let that happen with Colombia.

TRIBUTE TO E. L. "BERT" POOSER

**HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 7, 2002*

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to E. L. "Bert" Pooser, of South Carolina, a renowned man and respected leader of hotel development and management throughout the southeastern United States.

Mr. Pooser grew up in Orangeburg, SC, during the 1940s where he learned the value and need of hard work at an early age. He invested in his first hotel at the age of 28. Since then, his hotel empire has expanded to 33 hotels throughout six southeastern States. Many in the industry consider him a hotel giant.

Currently, Mr. Pooser is president and CEO of Interstate Management and Investment Corporation (IMIC) hotels. Mr. Pooser's company includes 1,500 employees that handle all aspects of the business from sales and marketing, to a design and property management team. IMIC assets include Sheraton Hotels, Hampton Inns, Comfort Inns, and Quality Suites. Throughout IMIC's 20 years of existence, they have purchased or built nearly 40 hotels. This past year, Mr. Pooser's firm opened two more hotels in Myrtle Beach, SC.

Mr. Pooser has received numerous awards during his building career. The University of South Carolina's School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management has honored him as the Hospitality Leader of the Year. Today, at 63, Mr. Pooser has no plans for retirement anytime soon.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me today in honoring Mr. E. L. "Bert"