

To “re-skin” this airplane costs \$26 million. Does it make sense to do that to 100 planes? Mr. President, \$26 million is an awful lot of money to fix one problem with one 41-year-old plane.

After you have replaced the skin of the aircraft, it is probably going to need new engines. That is not cheap. To put a new engine in 100, 125 tankers is going to cost \$3 billion. That is a lot of money for a 41-year-old airplane.

There are other parts that need to be replaced. It would be one thing if you could fix them all today, but it takes a long time to overhaul these tankers. Right now, we are overhauling four a year. At a certain point, it is just not worth dumping money into these old planes.

K-135s were first delivered to the Air Force in 1957. On average, they are 41-year-olds, and we are paying for it. They have been around longer than most of the people who are flying them. There is no question they must be replaced with new tankers; the only question is when.

I would love for us to be able to buy these new tankers today, but there is not enough money in the Air Force's procurement budget. So many of us in Congress have worked very hard to work out a more flexible approach, an approach that is used with commercial aircraft all the time.

In December, Congress approved, and the President signed, legislation to authorize the Air Force to negotiate with Boeing on a 10-year lease of 100 new 767 aircraft to use as air tankers. Congress has authorized the lease program for both the 767 and the 737 aircraft. My colleagues will recall that the bill to authorize these lease programs for the Air Force was approved by this Senate 96 to 4.

I also want to remind my colleagues what the Secretary of the Air Force, James Roche, wrote to me in a letter. I will quote:

The KC-135 fleet is the backbone of our Nation's Global Reach. But with an average age of over 41 years, coupled with the increasing expense required to maintain them, it is readily apparent that we must start replacing these critical assets. I strongly endorse beginning to upgrade this critical warfighting capability with new Boeing 767 tanker aircraft.

That is from Air Force Secretary James Roche.

My home State of Washington is home to the 92nd Air Refueling Wing. There are approximately 60 air refueling tankers that are based outside of Spokane, WA. I have been to Fairchild. I have visited personally with the families. I know the difficult missions these crews handle for each one of us every single day. And I know the men and women of the 92nd Air Refueling Wing need these aircraft.

The Senator from Arizona talks about leasing aircraft as if the lives of our men and women in uniform were not at stake. I remind my colleagues that we are talking about equipping young American pilots and the missions they support to go forward with the greatest opportunity to succeed.

Mr. President, I encourage the Senate, tomorrow, to table the McCain amendment.

I thank my colleagues, and I yield the floor.

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, the events of the past 11 months have forced every American to become more vigilant against the threats to our nation's security. I want to commend the chairman, Senator INOUE, and the ranking member, Senator STEVENS, for bringing to the floor a bill that responds to such threats by better protecting our Nation's citizens as well as our servicemen and women.

Even before the attacks of September 11th of last year, however, our Nation's military began to see that traditional notions of warfare and defense would have to evolve to meet new and ever more dangerous threats. The bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen, for example, made clear to us that our naval forces must be equipped with the most advanced surveillance and response vessels available.

It is for this reason that I have an amendment in support of the Navy's development and demonstration of the SeaLion craft. This vessel, designed for coastal area operations here in the United States and abroad, has already begun to prove itself capable of meeting the challenges faced by our Navy today, and well into the future.

Military operations in coastal areas involve significantly different challenges from deep water operations, such as reduced operational space and environmental clutter. Accordingly, surveillance, weapon systems and naval tactics designed for deep water operations are inadequate for the complex environmental and dimensional aspects of the coastal battle space. In such areas, small boats can effectively protect coastal installations, combat blue water navies, and hinder freedom of navigation for these navies and their supply ships.

The rapidly evolving nature of maritime warfare, the threat of terrorist activities against our naval forces abroad, and the need to protect our own ports here at home: each of these challenges require that the United States make a concerted effort to maintain a solid lead in the development of advanced technologies for coastal operations.

The SeaLion craft is perfectly positioned to support this role. It is a high speed, low-radar-signature vessel whose unique versatility lends itself to a broad spectrum of mission applications, from surveillance to interdiction to engagement. The SeaLion has already received strong endorsement from the Naval Sea Systems Command for its utility in special operations, and is poised for further evaluation as part of the Navy's Littoral Combat Ship platform.

This amendment would allow \$8 million of funds appropriated by the bill to be used for the continued development, demonstration and evaluation of the

SeaLion vessel. I ask for my colleagues' support.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### PLAYING CHESS WITH HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, if I may, while the ranking Republican member of the Appropriations Committee is completing an appointment outside the Chamber, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order for not to exceed 30 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

Mr. BYRD. I ask unanimous consent that my remarks appear at someplace in the RECORD other than in association with the Defense appropriations bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, in response to the terrorist acts of September 11, the Bush administration—like so many other administrations before it—has chosen to demonstrate its tough stand against something. In the case of the Bush administration, it is a tough stand against terrorism and its concern for the safety and well-being of the American people by boldly maneuvering the Federal chess pieces to create a new Department called Homeland Security.

It is an impressive move, Mr. President—this reorganization of the Government. Many say that it is the greatest reorganization during the past half century. I think it could very well be said that it is the greatest reorganization since the Founding Fathers reorganized the Government in 1787.

At that particular time, the 13 colonies—by then 13 States—had been under the operation of the Articles of Confederation. And many of those who served in the Senate in 1789 had been Members of the Congress under the Articles of Confederation and had been Members of the Continental Congress, which first met on September 5, 1774. The Framers of the U.S. Constitution reorganized our Government so that when their work product had been ratified by the States—the required number of nine for ratification—we then became the United States of America. We were no longer under the Articles of Confederation. That constituted a reorganization of our Government.

But I am talking about a reorganization that is being proposed today. I say that it is the most massive reorganization that has occurred since the Framers reorganized the Government