

Government. These men and women are made of the same mettle as the first responders who were on the scene September 11 in New York City and in Washington, D.C., but they need the tools to do their jobs. They have communication systems that are woefully inadequate for the jobs they need to do.

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Fire and police are unable to communicate on the same radios. Regrettably, the supplemental the administration just sent over does not address these needs. While it provides overall increases for homeland security, it contains no funds to provide interoperable communication equipment so that police, firefighters and emergency workers can talk to one another during an emergency.

I am hopeful that these concerns are addressed as the debate on the supplemental bill progresses. Our first responders must have enhanced communications equipment to respond adequately to emergencies. If police, firefighters and other first responders are unable to communicate with each other, lives will be lost due to lack of coordination; and that simply should not happen.

Let me also say that I am sympathetic to the needs of our big cities, especially those that have suffered from terrorist attacks in the past. We should work together to make certain that law enforcement and other first responders in those cities have the resources they need to respond to future threats and attacks.

At the same time, we should not neglect the needs of first responders in smaller communities. Let us not forget, the second largest act of terrorism committed in the United States soil occurred in Oklahoma City, which did not rank high on any list of targets that we have seen recently.

Quite simply, acts of terrorism, by either domestic or international sources can occur anywhere at any time, and our local first responders must have the tools necessary to respond.

In my district, preparing for potential attack also means recognizing the threat posed by agriterrorism or the use of disease or outbreak to cripple the agricultural industry. As we have seen with the outbreak of bovine TB, exotic Newcastle disease, the introduction of an organism that can be devastating to the industry and a threat to the Nation's food supply.

To further highlight the challenge facing our first responders, I want to focus on one of the local law enforcement agencies in my district, the sheriff's department in Stanislaus County.

I recently spoke with our sheriff, Les Weidman, who has got his hands full, not only dealing with the threat posed by future terrorist attacks but also trying to deal with the methamphetamine crisis in California's central valley. Like sheriffs across the country, Sheriff Weidman has seen a dramatic increase in meth labs in our area.

Sheriff Weidman recently held a news conference where he uncovered a link between drug production and terrorist groups. Mr. Speaker, this is a disturbing turn of events. He announced that millions of dollars of profits from drug deals had been diverted to Middle Eastern terrorist organizations. While his efforts are laudable, his small force of 450 officers is barely enough to do the job.

No matter how dedicated they are, without adequate tools they will not be able to get the job done alone. In fact, Sheriff Weidman recently told me that his department cannot afford the most basic protective gear for his deputies because of the cost. Only 35 out of the 450 officers that he has on duty have been issued protective kits against the use of chemical or biological weapons.

Addressing the threats posed by terrorism is a Federal issue with national implications, but dealing with the immediate effects of a terrorist attack will most likely be performed by local law enforcement officers and other first responders. What sort of message is the Federal Government sending to the local men and women on the front lines in our home districts if we cannot even provide them with the basic tools and resources necessary to carry out the most pressing national concern?

I would submit today that we are not doing nearly enough, Mr. Speaker. As we move forward this year and in this session of Congress, I hope we can work together to provide our law enforcement officials with the resources they need to protect our communities. This is not, nor should it be, a partisan issue.

I have been pleased to meet with a number of administration officials since taking office, and I am impressed with the level of commitment and dedication they place in protecting our homeland; but when local law enforcement officials tell me that communications capability is locally inadequate, it is clear to me that we must do more.

Working together, I am confident that we can, in fact, do this. If we mean what we say about providing homeland security for our Nation, we must start by providing support to our local first responders.

#### COMMENDATION FOR MEREDITH BROADBENT

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

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend a valuable member of my staff, a treasure who has served the Committee on Ways and Means for over 20 years. Meredith Broadbent, who serves as senior professional staff member to our Subcommittee on Trade, is a noted expert in all areas of trade policy but especially agriculture and textiles, two of the most complex areas. She has committed her career to

developing good trade policy, and she has been involved in every major trade initiative over the last 20 years.

Most recently, she was a key player in granting the President Trade Promotion Authority, according preferential trade benefits to the Caribbean, African and Andean countries, and extending permanent normal trade relations to China. Trade initiatives such as these are good for spurring U.S. economic growth but also to help foster a world that trades in freedom and lives in liberty and prosperity.

Ms. Broadbent's wise counsel, sound judgment, and thorough expertise will be truly missed. I am glad that she will continue to serve her country in the international trade arena as Assistant United States Trade Representative for Industry, Market Access and Telecommunications. She will be a tremendous asset to the Bush administration, and I wish her well.

Moreover, I know as chairman of the Subcommittee on Trade that I will still have the privilege of working with Meredith as our Assistant United States Trade Representative. God bless her.

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

(Mr. CUMMINGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### REMOVE COLOMBIA FROM THE SUPPLEMENTAL

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, we are facing the first supplemental spending request to fund the war in Iraq and its aftermath and to partially support critical needs for our own homeland security. I expect we will be taking up that debate as early as next week.

I believe it is important that this Congress is finally beginning to debate the costs and the consequences of this war and how it will affect our homeland security, something we have failed to do for the last 5 months.

However, as I read the fine print of the administration's request, I see additional military assistance for Colombia. What is Colombia doing in a supplemental for the war in Iraq? There is a request for \$34 million in military aid for Colombia in the section for the Department of Defense/operations and maintenance to "increase the operational tempo for the unified campaign against narcotics trafficking and terrorist activities."

There is another \$34 million in military aid for Colombia in the State Department section, and there is an unspecified amount for Colombia under the international assistance programs/international security assistance for