

abiding citizens of the western United States.

Friends, this is not about extremism, at least not from the standpoint of rural westerners. This is about what is reasonable and what is rational, not what is radical. Indeed, the radical talk comes not only from the Secretary of Interior but from the President of the United States, who, in his radio address last Saturday, used the most demagogic of terms to mischaracterize the plight of westerners.

Friends, what we seek is balance. Economic balance, environmental balance, and true conservation for the United States of America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. FOLEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. FOLEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

SAFETY IN OUR SKIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. MASCARA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, as a new Member of Congress I sought a seat on the important Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and was fortunate to be appointed to the committee in July by my Democratic colleagues. I pursued the committee because I believed that a strong transportation system is the first step to a positive and sound economic growth. In fact, many studies around the world have shown a strong correlation between infrastructure and economic development and sustained economic growth.

I was on the board of county commissioners in Washington County, Pennsylvania, and was a proud participant of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission, which played an integral role in developing seriously needed infrastructure projects in southwestern Pennsylvania. I am working with my colleagues on the committee, including the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER], the chairman, to promote vital transportation projects in my State, including the Mon-Fayette Expressway and other such programs around the country.

But, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the House on a matter which is of extreme importance to thousands of Americans who fly in this country everyday, safety in our skies. Safety is and should be the No. 1 concern of all who oversee the management of our Nation's air transportation services, the Federal Aviation Administration; namely, the FAA.

Recently, I had the opportunity to visit the air traffic control tower at Greater Pittsburgh International Airport, which is in the 20th Congressional

District. What at first was a tremendous opportunity to see the activities at such a busy FAA site and to meet the dedicated people who man the tower soon turned into an eye-opening experience. A very scary experience.

I was struck first by the age of some of the equipment, certainly not state-of-the-art by any stretch of the imagination. Although the airport is a new facility, with close to \$900 million in investment, some of the equipment in the tower is from the old Pittsburgh tower.

We have all heard recently of the problems experienced at several air traffic control towers around the country, such as power failures, equipment breakdowns, and computer outages. Unfortunately, while I was in the Pittsburgh tower observing the radar room, the system experienced a brief but serious power outage. The back-up system kicked in, but for several seconds the controllers lost visual contact on their monitors and scrambled to establish verbal contact with each plane in the sky to try to determine their altitude and their speed.

Mr. Speaker, while power problems are not new to air traffic controllers around the country, the Pittsburgh tower has experienced roughly six power interruptions of various lengths over the last few months. Unfortunately, I am told this is not an isolated problem.

I have sent a letter to Secretary of Transportation Pena requesting that Pittsburgh receive funding to install a UPS system, an uninterrupted power supply system, which would eliminate any visual suspension of radar. I will also work with my colleagues on the Transportation Committee, Mr. Speaker, to remedy other problems at air towers around the country. Remember, a problem at Los Angeles causes a problem in Chicago, which, in turn, forces backlogs in New York and Pittsburgh.

Though the system is in a partial fix mode for some of the problems experienced by the FAA system, we need a long-term solution to the problem. We know there is a problem with some major radar systems in this country and they still use, remember, vacuum tubes to keep their screens operating. Some towers actually are using new ground radar systems which have yet to be authorized, even after several years of testing and millions of dollars in cost. These pieces of equipment are used simply to detect fog on the ground.

I am pleased that the FAA Administrator, David Hinson, has recently restated his commitment to providing modern equipment and computers to the busiest air traffic centers in the Nation. This is a step in the right direction. We need to continue those efforts which will lead to increased public confidence in our air traffic controller system.

The FAA procurement system must be revamped and reformed. We must

work together, Congress, the FAA, and the airline industry. We must all work together to solve these problems, both Republicans and Democrats, on a bipartisan basis. The money is there. A 10-percent surcharge is assessed on all tickets purchased by airline passengers and is dedicated to the aviation trust fund. Funds amounting to approximately \$4 or \$5 billion are available, and I urge the Congress to correct the errors associated with the radar in the air traffic control system.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

DEATH OF YITZHAK RABIN A TRAGEDY FOR AMERICANS AS WELL AS ISRAELIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOX. Mr. Speaker, the death of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is a tragedy, not only for Israelis, but indeed for Americans and all those who strive for peace throughout the world.

The United States and Israel are partners in world affairs. As partners, we have built a foundation based on years of mutual respect and trust. Together, we share risks, rewards and losses as we strive to make this world a better, safer place.

One of the rewards came just a month ago when Israel and the Palestinians signed the second phase of the Oslo accord. That document was the direct result of the hard work and dedication to peace that was the hallmark of Prime Minister Rabin. Now, sadly, we must share the loss of having him taken from us so prematurely and so violently.

In the long run, I believe those who resort to violence will find that it accomplishes little. Often, it spurs people on to completion of the task at hand—in this case, peace in the Middle East. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said:

The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it * * *

Like others, I found the Prime Minister to be brilliant man whose compassionate nature was tempered by the fire of battle, tested by the trials of leadership and, ultimately, expanded by the promise of peace.

Prime Minister Rabin spent his life strengthening the State of Israel. He fought heroically in Israel's war of independence in 1948 and led Israel to victory in the Six-Day War in 1967. Yet despite his background on the battlefield, his vision of peace and security for Israel brought him to Washington 2