

should have signaled them to slow their freight train down. Instead, they barreled head on into a Metrolink commuter train, killing two people and injuring almost 200 more. We simply cannot tolerate any more of these preventable accidents.

Various investigators in the media have looked at these accidents. In Los Angeles, the KCBS station said in a report: "Apparently there was no warning, no audible alarms, no automatic breaking system on the Burlington Northern train in Southern California. It all came down to one yellow traffic light and only two pairs of eyes. If they had seen that yellow signal, they would have had time to stop and prevented the accident."

According to the Federal Railroad Administration, the number one cause of train accidents today, and there is one every 90 minutes in this country, Mr. Speaker, is human error. And most of that human error comes from fatigue. We know that. And yet this body has not acted.

The leading expert in this Congress on railroad safety is my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR). He has introduced in the past, and he will introduce again tomorrow, a bill which should have been enacted many, many years ago. This year it is called the Railroad Safety Reform Act of 2002. The gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) and I will introduce this tomorrow in this body.

The bill goes into fatigue of employees of railroads; it goes into how employees and witnesses ought to be protected against any intimidation by railroad owners. It talks about grade crossing safety and passenger service safety standards, rulemaking and enforcement, and talks about technology. Unfortunately, my colleagues, the technology on railroads in this Nation today, the freight railroad system specifically, goes back to the 1930s.

We have to do a better job of protecting both the employees and our constituents from railroad accidents in the future. We can regulate, as we do with the airline industry, hours of work, amount of rest that is needed, amount of warning before people have to go on in shifts. Today, there are no such schedules. People can be required to go to work with just 2 hours' notice. If they work less than 12, they only have 8 hours off the next day. If they work more than 12, they are only guaranteed 10 hours off. These rules do not even take into account travel time from the worker's home. So the folks who are driving these trains, who are working as conductors, can be dead tired, literally dead tired, with the rules that we have today.

If I may quote one more time, Mr. Speaker, from the KCBS-TV report. They interviewed several employees from trains that have had accidents, and they acknowledge that they are tired. Their eyes are open, but they are just not there. There was one time a

guy had fallen asleep and looked over and found his fellow conductor had also fallen asleep. Both of those in the locomotive were asleep at one time. One of the engineers says he averages 330 workdays a year.

My colleagues, we have to take these accidents seriously. Let us have this hearing. Let us mark up the bill of the gentleman from Minnesota and let us pass the Railroad Safety Reform Act of 2002.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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CHILDREN SHOULD NOT BE TREATED WITH CONTEMPT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SULLIVAN). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, we have initiated the debate on the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Act reauthorization. I want to pick up on a point that I made during the discussion of the rule, and that is that poor people are treated with great contempt in this Congress. During the discussions that preceded the preparation for the bill, there has been language that indicated that the poor are held in contempt. Children are treated with contempt. They make the mistake of assuming, speaking as if we are dealing with welfare mothers and women who are unworthy of being helped by the government. Actually most of the aid to families with dependent children is exactly what it says, it is aid to families with children. We are helping children, and to treat children with contempt is a great mistake in humanitarian terms, in national terms and even military terms.

It happens at this point in history there has been a lot of highlighting of the fact that poor children in certain countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan and a few of the Islamic nations are being nurtured and brought into schools called madrassahs, and being given three meals a day, taught to read and write, and they are taught to hate, and then shipped out to military camps which become part of the armies which are supposed to wage jihad against the West.

Recently in the New York City Times there was an article which shows that the right-wing Hindus in India are doing the same thing. They are taking poor children with nowhere else to go, and raising these children up as soldiers. Observing these manifestations in the world of Islam, I began to think about what happens in this country. It dawned on me if we examine the names that are on the Vietnam War Memorial Wall in Washington, and I challenge the Heritage Foundation or anyone else who has the staff to do it to challenge me, the majority who died for the country are poor people.

We know from the Civil War if you got drafted, you could pay for someone to take your place. In Korea and Vietnam, the majority also were poor people. Those were the foot soldiers. If we ever have a situation where we start drafting people again, those are going to be the foot soldiers again. Let us not treat our poor children with contempt. They are as vital to America as anyone else.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) makes an eloquent point, and I just want to follow up, and I heard the gentleman's comment earlier, it seems they are bragging that this promotes work. My understanding is that we should be promoting children, to have health care and good nutrition. I believe this bill is misdirected because it takes parents away from nurturing children. The gentleman is absolutely correct in saying that this bill does not emphasize the values of helping poor people who just want an opportunity.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, this is a program for children. The only able-bodied adults who get safety net benefits are farmers in America. I must mention that because of the fact that we have suddenly decided to become fiscally responsible in this bill. We do not have the money for the kind of day-care we need. Part of the money was spent on our farm bill where in order to be a participant, you can make as much as \$2.5 million a year. And we put a cap on the amount of taxpayer dollars that the farmers can receive of \$390,000. That is where the obscenity is in terms of the misapplication and misappropriation of taxpayers' dollars. To nurture children makes more sense. The costs are far lower.

If there is anybody in America that ought to be crowned as royalty, and we do not have royalty in America, but it would be the people who have been maimed and killed in all of our wars. They would be designated as the royal class, and we would find that the overwhelming would be poor people, the sons and daughters of poor families.