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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PEASE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 18, 1999.

I hereby appoint the Honorable EDWARD A. PEASE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 19, 1999, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) for 5 minutes.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, we will later today vote on the conference report to H.R. 1141, the bill to further fund NATO's aggression in Yugoslavia. The President has requested \$7.9 billion but Congress has felt compelled to give him \$15 billion.

Congress does not endorse the war. We voted overwhelmingly against declaring war and yet we are giving the President twice the amount he requested to wage the war. It does not make any sense.

We are asking the President to seek reimbursement from NATO members since we have assumed the financial burden for fighting this war. This has tremendous appeal but cannot compensate for the shortsightedness of spending so much in the first place. The money may well never be recouped from our allies, and even if some of it is it only encourages a failed policy of military adventurism. If this policy works, the United States, at Congress' urging, becomes a hired gun for the international order, a modern day government mercenary. This is not constitutional and it is a bad precedent to set.

Reimbursement for the Persian Gulf War has helped to perpetuate that conflict now going on for nearly a decade. It is time to think about a more sensible foreign policy.

We should not encourage the senseless and immoral NATO aggression against Serbia. The funding of this war should not be approved, no matter what special interest appropriations have been attached to the initial request to gain support for this special spending measure.

Our bombing continues to complicate the mess we helped create in Yugoslavia. Just about everyone concedes that the war cannot be won without massive use of ground troops, which fortunately no one is willing to commit. So the senseless bombing continues while civilian casualties mount. And whom are we killing? It looks like we are killing as many innocent Albanians for whom we have gone to war as innocent Serbs.

Why are we killing anybody? There has been no aggression against the United States and no war has been de-

clared. It is time to stop this senseless bombing.

The U.S. has become the world's bully. In recent months we have bombed Serbia, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Sudan, Iraq and China; and in recent years, many others.

The fetish we have with bombing anybody who looks cross-eyed at us has preoccupied our leaders for several decades regardless of which party has been in power.

We may not be willing to admit it, but it is hardly the way to win friends and influence people. It is lousy diplomacy. It must stop. The only reason we get away with it is because we are the military and economic superpower, but that only leads to smoldering resentment and an unsustainable financial commitment that will in due time come to an end. Our superiority is not guaranteed to last.

NATO, through their daily briefings, has been anxious to reassure us that its cause is just. Yet NATO cannot refute the charge that the refugee problem was made much worse with the commencement of the bombing.

Yesterday it was reported in the Los Angeles Times by Paul Watson, in stark contrast to NATO's propaganda, that in Svetlje, Yugoslavia, 15,000 Albanians displaced by the bombing remain near their homes in north Kosovo, including hundreds of young military age men, quote, strolling along the dirt roads or lying on the grass on a sunny day. There were no concentration camps, no forced labor and no one serving as human shields according to an Albanian interviewed by the Los Angeles Times. Many admitted they left their homes because they were scared after the bombing started. Some of the Albanians said the only time they saw the Serb police was when they came to sell cigarettes to the Albanians.

We should not be in Yugoslavia for obvious constitutional and moral reasons, but the American people should

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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not believe the incessant propaganda that is put out by NATO on a daily basis. NATO's motives are surely suspect. I meet no one who can with a straight face claim that it was NATO's concern for the suffering of the refugees that prompted the bombing and demands by some to escalate the war with the introduction of ground troops.

Even with NATO's effort to justify its aggression, they rarely demonstrate a hit on a military target. All this fine star wars technology and we see reruns of strikes with perfect accuracy hitting infrastructures like bridges and buildings. I have yet to see one picture of a Serbian tank being hit, and I am sure if they had some classy film like that we would have seen it many times on the nightly television.

NATO must admit its mistake in entering this civil war. It violates the NATO treaty and the U.N. Charter, as well as the U.S. Constitution. The mission has failed. The policy is flawed. Innocent people are dying. It is costing a lot of money. It is undermining our national security and there are too many accidents.

I am sick and tired of hearing NATO's daily apologies.

There's nothing America can be proud of in this effort and if we don't quickly get out of it, it could very well escalate and the getting out made impossible. The surest and quickest way to do this is for Congress today to reject the funding for this war.

The only answer to senseless foreign intervention is a pro-American constitutional policy of non-intervention in the affairs of other nations; a policy of friendship and trade with those who are willing and neutrality with others who are involved in conflict. This is the only policy that makes sense and can give us the peace and prosperity all Americans desire.

KUDOS FOR BETTE MIDLER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, my goal in Congress is to help the Federal Government be a better partner with State and local governments, with business and private citizens, to do everything it can in promoting livable communities, because what our families really care about is that their children are safe when they go out the door to school in the morning, that families are economically secure and healthy.

There is a vital component to this livability movement that goes well beyond the crafting of Federal legislation. The most powerful livability champions out there make the message real. They are the folks who take the rhetoric one step farther and actually walk the talk. For the last 3 months I have been especially intrigued by one such person, Bette Midler, who first got my attention when she took to national syndicated television a few months back and confessed that if she

had not gone into entertainment she probably would have pursued a career as an urban planner, and she certainly has moved to the forefront in promoting livability with her personal advocacy and investment.

This was most apparent last week when she spearheaded the rescue of 112 pocket parks and community gardens in New York City from being sold for redevelopment. Had Miss Midler not stepped in, along with the Trust for Public Land and a group that she founded in 1994, the New York Restoration Project, a great number of New Yorkers would have lost the joy they have received from these gardens.

Over a third of a century ago, author Jane Jacobs captured in her book, *The Life and Death of Great American Cities*, the importance of places for people to congregate over sterile formal parks, planned with even the best of intentions, in ways that do not speak to people's needs for diversity and connection.

In threatening to auction these small gardens to the highest bidder, Mayor Giuliani not only added to the evidence that he does not get the revitalization taking place in New York City, that it needs to be about more than simply adding police officers on the corner, talking tough and bribing the New York Yankees to stay in New York City.

Revitalization is most effective when it brings people together. When people invest in their communities, they feel that they have ownership in the neighborhood, and this feeling of ownership is undoubtedly the most effective deterrent to crime and deterioration.

Community gardens take little enclaves that otherwise might be garbage dumps or staging areas for crime and turns them not just into green oasis but a place where people want to go. They define community pride, engagement and involvement.

Under the guise of providing money and housing opportunities, Giuliani proposed selling off for a couple million dollars these little neighborhood gems. Put aside for a moment that the amount of money is minuscule compared to the hundreds of millions of dollars Giuliani has talked about subsidizing for a few selected businesses. Also ignore for a moment that there are thousands of run-down, dilapidated buildings and vacant lots that would be prime candidates for redevelopment in New York City.

This case illustrates the strengths of partnership and why I for one do not trust any one single level of government on its own because there is clearly enough insensitivity and ineptitude to go around.

The public which has fought so hard to establish these footholds fortunately pushed back, and luckily the partners existed in New York City that make livable communities strong and vital. They provided not just money and interest but the spark that brought those pieces together.

Today the community gardens are safe, New York City is richer and hopefully politicians like Giuliani have learned a lesson. Sometimes that just means listening to the people about what makes communities and neighborhoods work.

Congress can certainly do its part by enacting legislation to make contributions to the public easier for things like scenic and conservation easement, agriculture and timberlands and wetland conservation. The public has learned, with the help of Miss Midler and others, that it can challenge city hall and win, which may be the most important lesson of all for livable communities.

ADDRESSING THE CONCERNS OF FOLKS BACK HOME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to represent a very diverse district in Illinois. I represent the south side of Chicago and the south suburbs in Cook and Will Counties, a lot of bedroom communities and farm towns, too. When one represents such a diverse district, they learn to listen to the concerns back home and try and respond to those concerns.

I have had one very common message that I hear in the city and in the suburbs and in the country in the diverse district that I represent, and that message is pretty simple. People back home want us to work together and find solutions to the challenges that we are facing.

I am proud to say that over the last 4½ years, we have listened and we have responded to those concerns to work to change how Washington works, to make Washington more responsive to the folks back home. I am proud to say that we accomplished some things we were told we could not do. We were told we could not balance the budget. We were told we could not balance the budget and lower taxes. We were told we could never reform our welfare system, but we did.

I am proud to say in the last 4½ years that we balanced the budget for the first time in 28 years, producing a projected \$2.8 trillion surplus of extra tax revenues. We lowered taxes for the middle class for the first time in 16 years and 3 million Illinois children now qualify for the \$500 per child tax credit back home in my State of Illinois. That is \$1.5 billion that will stay in Illinois rather than coming here to Washington.

We also reformed our welfare system, which was failing beyond imagination. We reformed our welfare system for the first time in a generation. As a result of our welfare reform, we have seen the welfare rolls in Illinois cut in half. We have balanced the budget. We lowered taxes for the middle class. We reformed