

San Diego: the general manager of the Glen Abbey Memorial Park; the regional president, western regional president of Service Corporation International, Richard Sells; and to Colonel Jesse Ugade, Brigadier General Robert Cardenas, Captain Tom Splitgerber, and David Brown, co-publisher and editor of the Veterans Journal of San Diego County, because they have devoted enormous hours in an attempt to find a solution for San Diego's veterans.

My bill would authorize the establishment of this satellite cemetery pilot project. It is not the ideal solution, but we have to wait for two decades to get that ideal solution for families who have served our Nation. With our limited Federal budget, families can in fact be helped by an innovative and creative effort to meet our national needs.

The Veterans Administration had a negative reaction when this first was broached to them. Any bureaucracy, it seems, does not look at innovative ideas with a very encouraging light.

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So I hope to get a bill passed by Congress which would direct the VA to do this. Certainly providing a final resting place for our brave veterans must be one of our top priorities. I hope my colleagues will support this bill to see how it works in San Diego because it might be useful in their own communities also.

BEWARE DOLLAR WEAKNESS

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

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I have for several years come to the House floor to express my concern for the value of the dollar. It has been, and is, my concern that we in the Congress have not met our responsibility in this regard. The constitutional mandate for Congress should only permit silver and gold to be used as legal tender and has been ignored for decades and has caused much economic pain for many innocent Americans. Instead of maintaining a sound dollar, Congress has by both default and deliberate action promoted a policy that systematically depreciates the dollar. The financial markets are keenly aware of the minute-by-minute fluctuations of all the fiat currencies and look to these swings in value for an investment advantage. This type of anticipation and speculation does not exist in a sound monetary system. But Congress should be interested in the dollar fluctuation not as an investment but because of our responsibility for maintaining a sound and stable currency, a requirement for sustained economic growth.

The consensus now is that the dollar is weakening and the hope is that the drop in its value will be neither too much nor occur too quickly; but no

matter what the spin is, a depreciating currency, one that is losing its value against goods, services, other currencies and gold, cannot be beneficial and may well be dangerous. A sharply dropping dollar, especially since it is the reserve currency of the world, can play havoc with the entire world economy.

Gold is history's oldest and most stable currency. Central bankers and politicians hate gold because it restrains spending and denies them the power to create money and credit out of thin air. Those who promote big government, whether to wage war and promote foreign expansionism or to finance the welfare state here at home, cherish this power.

History and economic law are on the side of the gold. Paper money always fails. Unfortunately, though, this occurs only after many innocent people have suffered the consequences of the fraud that paper money represents. Monetary inflation is a hidden tax levied more on the poor and those on fixed incomes than the wealthy, the bankers, or the corporations.

In the past 2 years, gold has been the strongest currency throughout the world in spite of persistent central banks selling designed to suppress the gold price in hopes of hiding the evil caused by the inflationary policies that all central bankers follow. This type of depreciation only works for short periods; economic law always rules over the astounding power and influence of central bankers.

That is what is starting to happen, and trust in the dollar is being lost. The value of the dollar this year is down 18 percent compared to gold. This drop in value should not be ignored by Congress. We should never have permitted this policy that was deliberately designed to undermine the value of the currency.

There are a lot of reasons the market is pushing down the value of the dollar at this time. But only one is foremost. Current world economic and political conditions lead to less trust in the dollar's value. Economic strength here at home is questionable and causes concerns. Our huge foreign debt is more than \$2 trillion, and our current account deficit is now 4 percent of GDP and growing. Financing this debt requires borrowing \$1.3 billion per day from overseas. But these problems are ancillary to the real reason that the dollar must go down in value. For nearly 7 years the U.S. has had the privilege of creating unlimited amounts of dollars with foreigners only too eager to accept them to satisfy our ravenous appetite for consumer items. The markets have yet to discount most of this monetary inflation. But they are doing so now; and for us to ignore what is happening, we do so at the Nation's peril. Price inflation and much higher interest rates are around the corner.

Misplaced confidence in a currency can lead money managers and investors astray, but eventually the piper

must be paid. Last year's record interest rate drop by the Federal Reserve was like pouring gasoline on a fire. Now the policy of the past decade is being recognized as being weak for the dollar; and trust and confidence in it is justifiably being questioned.

Trust in paper is difficult to measure and anticipate, but long-term value in gold is dependable and more reliably assessed. Printing money and creating artificial credit may temporarily lower interest rates, but it also causes the distortions of malinvestment, overcapacity, excessive debt and speculation. These conditions cause instability, and market forces eventually overrule the intentions of the central bankers. That is when the apparent benefits of the easy money disappear, such as we dramatically have seen with the crash of the dot-coms and the Enrons and many other stocks.

It is back to reality. This is serious business, and the correction that must come to adjust for the Federal Reserve's mischief of the past 30 years has only begun. Congress must soon consider significant changes in our monetary system.

Congress must soon consider significant changes in our monetary system if we hope to preserve a system of sound growth and wealth preservation. Paper money managed by the Federal Reserve System cannot accomplish this. In fact, it does the opposite.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

AMERICA SHOULD NOT INSTIGATE WAR AGAINST IRAQ

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, ever since the Gulf War ended in 1991, the U.S. has been spending about \$4 million a day enforcing a no-flight zone in Iraq, \$4 million a day. This has been a tremendous waste of money and manpower.

I believe almost all Americans would have preferred that this 12 or \$13 billion that has been spent over these years would have been spent in almost any other good way. Most Americans have not even noticed that we have been dropping bombs and still shooting at missile sites all these years in Iraq. I remember reading a front page lengthy story about a group of Iraqi boys we accidentally killed there.

Now there are some people here in Washington who seem to be clamoring for us to go to war against Iraq. I represent a very patriotic pro-military district in Tennessee. My people will strongly support our troops if we go to

war. But I can assure you that as I go around my district I hear no clamor or even a weak desire to go to war against Iraq.

Saudi Arabia had much more to do with the September 11 tragedies than Iraq did. I heard yesterday that one of the main financial backers of the terrorists is from Kuwait. Yet we are not talking about going to war against Saudi Arabia or Kuwait, nor should we. We have been too quick to get involved in ethnic or religious disputes around the world. We have been too quick to drop bombs on people who want to be our friends. We turned NATO from a defensive organization into an offensive one in Bosnia.

Chris Matthews on "Hard Ball" the other night said, "In the past we always had the world on our side because we did not go to war unless we were attacked."

He strongly questioned this eagerness to go to war against Iraq. He said in a recent column that the American people are being "herded into war." A war that he says will just lead to more hatred of the U.S.

David Ignatius, the nationally syndicated columnist for the New York Herald Tribune and The Washington Post wrote on March 15: "How can the United States sell a war against Iraq to skeptical Arabs and Europeans? A good start would be to level with them and admit there is no solid evidence linking Baghdad to Osama bin Laden's terrorists attacks against America."

The Joint Chiefs of Staff have questioned this eagerness to go to war against Iraq. Yesterday, William Raspberry, the very highly respected columnist for The Washington Post, in a nationally syndicated column repeated words he had written a dozen years ago. He wrote: "The prospect of a bloody war with no price worth the tens of thousands of American lives it would cost can make you a little nervous. I am getting a little nervous. It is not that I doubt the ability of America's fighting forces to take out a third-rate power like Saddam Hussein's Iraq. My doubts concern the purpose for doing so. Saddam is being described as a ruthless and power-mad tyrant bent on achieving political control of the Arab world. I do not question the description, but it does seem to me that most of the current saber rattling is coming from Washington, not Baghdad." And Mr. Raspberry continued: "I wrote those words a dozen years back when the first President Bush was contemplating the invasion of Iraq. Why are we rattling sabers now? The reason I recall my earlier doubts is that they are so much a carbon copy of my present ones." Mr. Raspberry says: "Maybe it was a mistake not to wipe out the last scrap of Iraq's military power back then, not to mow down the surrendering republican guard like shooting fish in a barrel. But surely the failure to do so then cannot justify a unilateral attack now."

Mr. Raspberry said: "We should not become the playground bully of the

word." In 1990, Saddam Hussein, who I am not praising or defending in any way, had invaded Kuwait and was threatening to go further.

We had to act and I voted for the original Gulf War. However, we later found out the Iraqi military strength had been greatly exaggerated. The so-called "elite" Praetorian Guards were surrendering to CNN camera crews or anybody who would take them. Hussein has been greatly weakened since then in almost every way. Let us not exaggerate his strength this time. If he starts to attack us, I will be the first to support a war effort, but please let us not provoke war. Let us not change the name of the Department of Defense into the War Department once again. We should not try to be the policemen of the world. We should try as hard as we can to reestablish our reputation as the most peace-loving Nation on the face of the Earth.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

(Ms. WATSON of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WATSON of California. Mr. Speaker, Medicare does not cover the cost of prescription drugs, and as a result, approximately 10 million medical recipients nationwide lack any prescription drug coverage. It is estimated by the Kaiser Foundation that seniors spend on average \$1,756 per year for prescription drugs.

Due to the extraordinary cost of prescription drugs, millions of seniors will, A, have to choose between proper medication and rent; B, have to choose between proper medication and groceries; or, C, have to suffer because of improper doses of unaffordable medicines.

Mr. Speaker, I challenge this Congress. How dare we. How dare we affect the quality of life for our seniors by withholding funding for prescription drugs. How dare we dismiss our seniors with a poorly funded mandate that will not cover their needs. How dare we allow our Medicare seniors to be squeezed by an industry lobby when life and death is on the line.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to honor our seniors, respect their age and wisdom and their contributions to America. Fully fund medical prescription drug coverage.

PERMANENT ESTATE TAX REPEAL

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the House of Representatives will consider a proposal by the Republican majority to permanently repeal the estate tax.

Now, we had a vigorous debate over the estate tax last year; and I along with many others supported a reform

of the estate tax that would lead to the exemption of 99½ percent of the estates in the United States of America. But to take and permanently repeal the tax as will be proposed tomorrow for the largest estates will be an extraordinarily expensive measure and add dramatically to the deficit of the United States and ultimately undermine the Social Security trust fund of the United States.

Permanent repeal would cost \$740 billion, B, billion dollars, over the next decade after 2012. But if we were to instead say, well, let us exempt the first \$5 million of everybody's estate, now that seems like a pretty reasonable step. We do not want people, for instance, in my district or in Oregon who own forestry, tree farms, to go out and prematurely harvest the trees so they have to pay their estates taxes. We do not want people to have to break up their small businesses so they can pay their estates taxes. Those things are well and good. We could do that. We could easily do that.

The current law will exempt by the year 2009 the first \$3.5 million of each estate. So let us just round that up to \$5 million. So if we did that, that would reserve \$400 billion in taxes or \$400 billion of money that would not be drained from the Social Security trust fund to help pay for the retirement of the baby boom.

Now, it is true that there would be some 4 or 500 estates a year worth more than \$5 million who would have to pay taxes to support the 53 million people on Social Security.

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I believe that they can afford that burden. Some say, well, we know they should not pay taxes twice. Well, guess what, most of them will not pay taxes twice. In fact, the way the current laws are set up, many of these estates have unrealized capital gains, and if those estates are exempt from taxation, not even the lower rate of capital gains will be paid.

The American working people have to pay day in, day out a substantial portion of their income to Social Security, day in, day out a substantial portion of their income in income taxes, but these people with the estates worth more than \$5 million would never, ever pay a penny in taxes. The unrealized capital gains would be rolled over into the estates, the estates would be tax-exempt, all at a cost of \$400 billion to the rest of the United States of America, the rest of the taxpayers in this country.

This is not fair. It is not fiscally prudent, and the Republican majority should be ashamed of pushing this through at this time of financial crisis. We are looking at a \$300 billion deficit this year. The Social Security lock box that they had us vote on seven times, which I voted for seven times, has been busted open and depleted. There is nothing, nothing going into it over the next 10 years, and for the next 10 years