

to our seniors in this country, and seems to be fashioned in such a way as not only to provide some needed changes to the Medicare Program over the next 7 years, but to leave some money left over for a \$245 billion tax break, over half of which goes to the top 12 percent of income earners in America.

These messages were put forward in this Governor's race in Kentucky, and the voters reacted. The voters responded. In fact, just this weekend, the Republican National Committee chairman and other folks over there who tend to talk about how elections are going to come out were saying that this was a definite pickup for the Republicans. What, in fact, turned out to be a win for the Democratic nominee.

I rise to first of all congratulate our newly elected Governor, but also to point out that in a State that actually has had some problems with an FBI sting in the legislature that left 15 members, either present or former members at the time they were indicted, indicted and pled guilty or convicted of felonies, 15 members.

Now, the Democrats have been in control in Kentucky of the Governor's office, in both branches of the legislature for years and years, 24 years for the Governor, and many people blame the Democrats, even though, in fact, of the 15, 7 were Republicans. It was a very evenly split situation.

But, being the party that was in, it was natural to take that out on the Democrats. What we found was that in spite of that, in spite of that, because of the national issues that came into play toward the end of the election, the Democratic Party was successful.

Again, I rise to congratulate our newly elected Governor, Paul Patton, and yield back the balance of my time.

UNITED STATES TROOPS IN BOSNIA SERIOUS FOREIGN POLICY BLUNDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. CHABOT] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss a very important issue this evening, that being the President's plan to put United States troops into Bosnia.

Mr. Speaker, before we get into that, I would like to yield several minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Illinois [Mr. MANZULLO] to respond to some of the things that we have heard here this evening from the other side.

RESPONDING TO DEMOCRATIC RHETORIC

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. Our 1 hour tonight is on Bosnia, but I just cannot stand to sit here and listen to some of the rhetoric that has come from the other side of the aisle without responding to it.

No. 1, if anybody read this morning's Washington Times, they would have

seen an incredible quote by the Secretary of the Veterans' Administration, Mr. Brown, who admitted that under the Clinton budget plan, veterans would have suffered greater cuts than under the Republican plan that we have imposed. The Republican plan is more generous toward the veterans than the Democrats, and yet to listen to tonight's rhetoric, the Republicans are gutting and hurting and injuring the veterans that have fought so valiantly and have served so valiantly in the armed services. It is simply not true.

The Democrat budget that was set forth by the President has deeper cuts than those set forth by the Republican budget, and that is stated officially by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Mr. Brown.

No. 2, we have heard the rhetoric about the Republicans talking about taking over, taking the hands off the pension plan. I serve on the Joint Economic Committee, and we had a vote in this House about a month ago that said, we are on record as opposed to something called the economically targeted investments, the ETI, where the Clinton administration wanted to raid \$4 billion from the pension plan in order to put it in the pork projects, in public housing projects, and very questionable projects all over the place.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield? We have all kinds of time.

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I will not yield at this time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to hear what the gentleman has to say.

Mr. MANZULLO. So the Republicans had to fight back this incredible program, this incredible raid on the pension plans in this country called the economically targeted investments.

What were some of these investments? Well, we had teachers; pension plans in the eastern States losing millions of dollars on housing projects, and all over this country, one failure after the other, because there are \$4 billion of private pension plans that Democrats could not wait to get their hands on.

The third thing that I would like to address is the rhetoric over the so-called tax break. Mr. Speaker, the tax break is not for the rich in this country, but the CBO shows, and several organizations show, that when the tax, so-called tax break goes into effect, those taxpayers in the highest quintile, in other words, those earning in the upper 20 percent, will end up paying more taxes, and in addition, 75 percent of the capital gains taxes in this country are paid by those earning under \$75,000 a year. That is not high income, and 87 percent of those who will gain from the tax cut for children earn under \$75,000 a year.

I mean clearly, this is not high income, this is common sense, because we believe that the American people who have worked very hard for their

dollars know much better how to spend their money than the U.S. Congress, and I just had to clear that up.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, the purpose of this special order tonight was to take some time to discuss the President's plan where he is considering putting United States troops on the ground in Bosnia as part of a proposed peace package.

Mr. Speaker, I feel very strongly that this could be one of the most serious foreign policy blunders in memory. This House sent a very clear message to the White House within the past couple of weeks stating very clearly that it is our opinion that no troops should be sent into Bosnia on the ground without the President first coming to Congress and making his case to Congress and to the American people.

□ 2145

He clearly has not done that to date. This was a bipartisan vote. Three hundred fifteen Members of this House voted this way, versus 103 who supported the President on this particular effort. Half of the President's own party in this body voted that way. So it was a very strong message. At least to date the President apparently has chosen to disregard this very clear message from Congress.

That vote was only a first step. We are now considering taking much stronger action which we are going to discuss here this evening in which we feel that it may perhaps be the appropriate action for us to tell the President up front that we are not going to fund any venture on putting United States ground troops into Bosnia.

I spoke with Vice President GORE several weeks ago in this building along with several other Members of Congress. One of the things I asked the Vice President at that time is did they have any casualty estimates, how many casualties, how many Americans did they project will lose their lives if we put ground troops into Bosnia. They had no answer. They are looking into it. We have not heard word one back from the administration on this yet.

There are many things which have not been addressed yet by the administration. The American people are not in favor of this effort. These are the types of things that we are going to be discussing here this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my good friend, the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. FUNDERBURK].

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. CHABOT].

Mr. Speaker, I spent 6 years of my life living in the Balkans. I am a historian of southeastern Europe. The Turkish word for the Balkans means "mountains." That is what Bosnia and former Yugoslavia are all about geographically. We do not need an American Afghanistan.

The other thing we learn from a history of the Balkans and Bosnia-

Herzegovina is that centuries of ethnic strife and slights are alive and well today, irrationally. Part of the problem is that Orthodox Serbs still remember their defeat at the hands of the Ottoman Turks back in the 14th century and the 15th century and especially a battle in 1389, "The Field of Black Birds," where the Serbs were finally defeated. Many of the ethnic South Slav people were then converted to Islam by the conquering Turks, and the Orthodox Serbs who did not convert still consider the Muslims who were converted to be traitors to the South Slav nation.

So the world is faced with a place which was never a real country, with a real language or a real nation, that is, Bosnia-Herzegovina, this place being defended as something essential to America's security. What a joke. There was never a Bosnia nation, a Bosnia people, a Bosnia language. There are Orthodox Serbs, Muslims and Catholic Croats, all living together side by side in village after village during the past five centuries.

For Americans to presume that we understand the ethnic conflicts in the region and that we can easily pick out one side as the good guys and the other side as the bad guys is not very wise.

Of course, we stand with people anywhere who have been the victims of genocide and who have been attacked and killed by better-armed old Communist dictators, which is what the Serbian government is, and it is the strongest ally to the Bosnian Serbs. As a member of the CSCE, the Helinski Commission, and an advocate for human rights throughout eastern Europe, Russia, and the world, I deplore the legacy of the government in Belgrade, and I supported lifting the embargo and allowing the Bosnian Muslims to defend themselves.

The United States of America does not have any national interests, any strategic interests, any economic interest, any political interests or any other interests which would justify American soldiers dying in the mountains of Bosnia and Yugoslavia over an ethnic hatred dating back centuries.

In North Carolina, we know that Fort Bragg is getting ready to send American ground troops to Bosnia. We know preparations are under way, and we know that American soldiers like Michael New have already been commanded to wear the United Nations uniform and United Nations insignia in violation of their solemn oath to the Constitution of the U.S. in the area of the former Yugoslavia. We know that American soldiers sent to Bosnia could also well be asked to serve under U.N. command. If so, they will be violating their oath to the U.S. Constitution, and they will be killed needlessly in inhospitable terrain where the parties have been fighting for centuries and where the parties fight for their national survival, not caring who gets in the way. They will use any methods to survive, even when it means getting in

U.N. uniforms or gathering together around a hospital. Anything for their ethnic survival.

So President Clinton wants to have his Kuwait, and he wants to earn some macho credentials as military commander-in-chief. But he will not have his Kuwait in Bosnia. It will not be that easy. Thousands of American soldiers will lose their lives, and for what American national security interest? And the United Nations will no doubt be involved. What is the mission? What is the goal? What is the objective?

The people's house here in Washington, the House of Representatives, will not have been consulted by the President. Most Congressmen and most Americans think we should stay out of Bosnia, but the President seems hell-bent on going ahead. To date, this foreign policy has been a disaster, and now he wants to make matters worse. If we have learned any lesson—

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FUNDERBURK. I will not yield at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BILBRAY). The gentleman from Ohio controls the time.

Mr. CHABOT. I continue to yield to the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. FUNDERBURK. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, if we have learned any lesson from any previous military engagement, it is that we do not enter into a foreign conflict or war without the strong backing and support of the American people. Clinton does not have that backing for sending 20,000 American ground troops into Bosnia. We have to speak loud and we have to speak clear and we have to make sure the President hears the voice of the American people before it is too late.

I support America defending its national security, and I support a strong national defense, which is provided for in the Constitution. But in this case, in this place, I strongly object to United States soldiers being sent to Bosnia and to them being sent there without the support of the American people and the Congress.

Wake up, Mr. President, avoid a tragic mistake, and stay out of Bosnia.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentleman from North Carolina for his remarks. I think they are very insightful and I think he is right on point.

I represent the First District of Ohio. It is basically the city of Cincinnati. We have gotten a fair number of phone calls and letters. I have not gotten the first phone call yet of anybody who thinks that we should put United States ground troops into Bosnia. Not one phone call have I received yet.

I am going to yield to some of my fellow colleagues here in just a moment. I brought here a copy of an article which appeared in my hometown newspaper, the Cincinnati Enquirer. I just wanted to read a couple of paragraphs from this particular article.

The headline on this is "No Way." "Sending U.S. troops to Bosnia would be a disastrous blunder."

"It may throw a wet blanket on the United Nations' 50th birthday party, but someone besides Russian President Boris Yeltsin should ask some tough questions about the U.N. debacle in Bosnia."

"The echoes of Vietnam are unmistakable. Another war in which unsupported troops fight for unexplained goals in an ungrateful land. For all his recent rhetoric about rescuing NATO and performing a 'peacekeeping' role, Clinton still has not offered a reason why one American life—much less 20,000—should be risked for a shameful paper 'peace' that ratifies the rape and plunder of Bosnia."

It goes on. It says, "Sending U.S. troops into a flammable pit of ethnic hatred, where death has been a fact of life since 1992, will invite hostage taking and terrorism against our soldiers, to inflame American outrage against Clinton's policy. Somalia and the near loss of a U.S. flier in Bosnia should be fresh, painful reminders that it is sheer folly to gamble American blood in a game where our Nation has no cards to play."

"If that's not enough, Clinton can recall his own protests against Vietnam."

"Instead, he threatens to invoke his presidential war powers to send troops, even if Congress balks," and it goes on.

Clearly a very strong message from my hometown newspaper, the Cincinnati Enquirer, that we ought to stay out of Bosnia. I agree completely.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California [Mrs. SEASTRAND].

Mrs. SEASTRAND. I thank the gentleman from Ohio.

It was interesting that you noted that you had not received one phone call. On the central coast of California, which consists of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties, I can also say that I have not received one call, one fax, one letter or any comments at town hall meetings.

The message is loud and clear: Do not send our men and women to Bosnia.

I think it is important to note that perhaps it is for more than 2 years that the Clinton administration has failed to articulate any clear policy in Bosnia. If you were to listen to the President since his Presidency began, you would be astounded at what he has said, or perhaps what he has not said.

One day the United States is sending troops to Bosnia, the next day we might be; the day after that, we are probably not; then the next day we probably will send troops.

One day the President pushes for more air strikes. After a U.S. plane is shot down and United Nations personnel are taken hostage, the President decides that air strikes are a bad idea. One day we have to pressure the Serbs with decisive action. The next day, well, do not want to provoke the Serbs.

So I think that the American people understand that there is no clear policy of why men and women should be sent to Bosnia.

It is interesting to note, I have a quote here from an ex-State Department official, Mr. Steven Walker, who resigned from the State Department over United States policy on Bosnia. He had this to say, back in June, about the administration's policy:

The Bosnia policy has gotten consistently worse over the last 2 years. It's in more of a mess than it was before. The Clinton administration is still dealing with this on a day-to-day ad hoc basis. They wake up in the morning, they see what's in the newspapers, and they try and do whatever they can to get the pressure off the administration.

I believe it is a sad commentary, as Mr. Walker stated, on how the Clinton administration decides the Bosnia policy back then, and I wish the Clinton administration would read the newspapers today before getting and deciding on current policy. Because if they did, they would be aware of the fact that the public, the American people, do not support sending troops, our men and women, our young men and women, to Bosnia.

A recent New York Times poll found that 79 percent of Americans believe that President Clinton should get approval from Congress before sending troops to Bosnia.

A recent New York Times poll found that 79 percent of Americans believe that President Clinton should get approval from Congress before sending troops to Bosnia. It is going to be interesting in the debate in the next days to come of what leaves this House and what direction we will send to the President. I am going to do all I can to insist that he come before this Congress before he sends anybody to Bosnia.

Perhaps the Clinton administration would have come across the piece in the Washington Post with these words of wisdom, and I quote this article:

The first law of peacekeeping is that when you have a real peace, you don't need peacekeepers. The second law of peacekeeping is that where there is no peace, sending peacekeepers is a disaster. The third law of peacekeeping is that Americans make the best targets. From which follows one of the rare absolutes in foreign policy; never send peacekeepers—and certainly never send American peacekeepers—to police a continuing unsettled war.

I think we have learned our lessons in faraway places like Beirut, Somalia, and Vietnam. I remember Vietnam very well. I remember the men and the women that came back in body bags. I remember shedding many tears with relatives, friends who had their loved ones come back from that horrendous war. I remember how we had a no-win policy. We were just sending troops. We had no reason, no feeling of how we were going to bring our troops home. We had prisoners of war. It was a sad time.

I do not believe we want to do and see a Vietnam all over again. Before we

commit 25,000 of our sons and daughters to a mission, and the mom in me understands this very clearly, I have two children, before we send our sons and daughters to a mission that has no clear objective, no statement of our national security interest, no rules of engagement, no exit strategy, President Clinton has a moral obligation to ensure that these life-and-death questions are answered. American soldiers deserve to know that their combat missions and their potential sacrifices are underwritten by strong public understanding and support, and that does not exist today.

I firmly believe that the President and this administration should seek Congress' approval now before any ground troops are deployed to Bosnia. The American people deserve it. The men and women in our armed services definitely deserve it.

Mr. CHABOT. Reclaiming my time, I want to thank the gentlewoman from California for her remarks. I agree with her sentiments exactly.

It is interesting that that same Washington Post article that you mentioned here from Charles Krauthammer, I would like to read the last paragraph from this which I think is very good and right on point.

□ 2200

He says:

It is hard to think of a greater folly than trying to enforce a peace among unreconciled Balkan enemies. It is a folly that Clinton's fickle meanderings on Bosnia have backed us into, a folly that must be firmly rejected now before it is too late.

That is that same article, and I think his words should be heeded.

At this time I yield to the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF].

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, in the next few days a monumental decision will come before the U.S. Congress. Mr. Speaker, I will request the House to instruct our conferees on the Defense Appropriation Act, that is, H.R. 2126, to insist on the House-passed version restricting the use of funds for any deployment of United States Armed Forces in the former Yugoslavia without prior congressional authorization.

Last Monday, this House passed a nonbinding resolution stating the sense of Congress that the peace conference in Ohio should not include deployment of United States troops as a precondition to a peace settlement in Bosnia. That measure passed this House 315 to 103 with broad bipartisan support.

My motion to instruct will impress upon the conferees the importance of retaining the original House language. This is not a partisan issue. Almost identical language was placed in the 1994 Department of Defense appropriations bill passed by the Democrats very wisely last year. So we are not inventing anything new.

The question is, shall the United States commit troops to Bosnia? The President has the constitutional au-

thority to commit troops, but the Congress has the constitutional responsibility to decide whether or not to fund those troops. So there is a balance of constitutional authority here.

Before this momentous decision is made, there must be a full debate in this House. The President must come to Congress and explain what is the objective, what vital United States interests are threatened, what will our United States troops do to protect those vital United States interests, if any are found, and there have not been any related to the House yet. Will the troops at all times be under United States military control and United States military officers?

The United States troops are truly not needed in Bosnia. Perhaps the greatest injustice is that U.S. troops are really not needed to implement a peace settlement. This is not just my opinion. This is the declaration by the current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. When he testified to the Senate and the House last month, just last month, he stated that militarily U.S. troops are not necessary. He stated the Europeans were fully capable of carrying out this mission on their own.

As I say, the House has a constitutional responsibility to judge the validity and then authorize the funds or refuse to authorize the funds. President Clinton has stated he does not need congressional authority. He has not yet even agreed to come before the Congress to present his case.

Well, I have a deep concern about any ground troops in Bosnia, and I for one will not vote any money until those conditions are met, the President comes, lays out the plan, what are the vital interests and how do we protect those vital interests, if there are any. Until that time, I will not vote money for any adventure in Bosnia.

Mr. CHABOT. I would like to thank and compliment the gentleman from Washington for his leadership on this issue. He spoke out very eloquently this morning at the New Federalist group, which is a number of very committed freshmen who keep an eye on making sure we balance the budget and making the necessary cuts in certain areas that are necessary to do that.

He spoke up very eloquently as to why we should not put ground troops in Bosnia this morning, and then again at the Republican Conference, which is all Republican Members of Congress. The gentleman from Washington spoke up very eloquently there, as well, so I want to thank him for his leadership in this area and thank him for his comments this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. MANZULLO].

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I sit on the Committee on International Relations, and we have had a couple of very disturbing committee hearings in the past several weeks concerning certain administration officials who are attempting, in all earnestness and desire and sincerity and honesty on their

part, to explain to the United States Congress exactly what the policy, if any, of the President is with regard to Bosnia.

Let me take you back to a hearing that we had involving Secretary of Defense Perry, Secretary of State Christopher, and General Shalikashvili, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and I asked this question. I said, "Is there a plan to arm Bosnia?" And I said I would like a simple yes-or-no on it. And the answers that came from all three were very cautious, very guarded, really, because they really did not know the answer to it.

The reason I asked that question is as follows: If there is a plan to arm the Bosnians, then the presence of American troops in Bosnia-Herzegovina would be for the purpose of holding at bay the Serbs until military parity were reached. And none of the three really wanted to tackle that question, because they knew that it was a trap and it was a loaded question. I loaded it on purpose, because if there was a plan to arm the Serbians—and I doubt if our colleagues in England and France would agree to it, because both Mr. Major and Mr. Chirac have been opposed to it, and they are a vital part of NATO—then it was obvious that American troops would be in harm's way. They would be in the role of a referee, and can you imagine that type of a policy, as we sent peacemakers there for the purpose of holding one side at bay while the other side has the opportunity to arm itself.

So none of the three could really come up with a reasoned answer. The problem is that the Clinton administration is seemingly trying to make American troops fight the war that we are not allowing the Bosnians to fight for themselves.

The problem is there has been a consistent policy by the United Nations, the dual key policy of the U.N. having to go back, NATO having to go back to the U.N., et cetera, that says there is something wrong with allowing the Bosnians to arm themselves, and when the United States insisted on going along with this multilateral embargo, this means that it has placed itself on the side of the Serbs in this war.

So why not allow the Bosnians to arm themselves and let them fight their own war?

The second problem is we had another hearing involving Richard Holbrook, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, and he said it would take up to 100,000 troops in order to extricate the present U.N. troops. I said I do not understand that. I said if we simply served notice that the U.N. peacemakers are going to be withdrawn, I said, who is going to shoot at people who are withdrawing? And he could not answer that question.

I think the third thing that comes to my mind on this, Mr. Speaker, is the book that was written by former Secretary of Defense McNamara, who said it was a mistake and knew we could

not win the war, and yet stood by to see thousands and thousands, hundreds of thousands of American troops sent to Vietnam.

Now, can you imagine that, a high administration official, the Secretary of Defense, writing his memoirs in a book, making money on it 20 years after 50,000 young Americans have given their lives, saying that at the time he knew the troops were going there that he knew we could not win the war?

I do not want to see that happen again, and 20 years from now have the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Defense write a book and say:

Well, the President ordered those troops there; we knew we could not win the war, and yet we stood by because these are the directives of the President of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I tell you, we have no business fighting a war in Bosnia, and as former Ambassador and now Congressman FUNDERBURK so eloquently stated, it is centuries of conflict, going all the way back to the Bosnian tribes and the Croats and the different parties involved in that very precious area around there. We have no business being involved in a war over there. We have a business to try to bring about the peace, but not at the price of American blood.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois for taking the time this evening to share his thoughts with us, and I think you certainly put those remarks very eloquently, and we thank you.

You know, the one thing that keeps coming to mind to me in this whole situation is we have to remember we have got three groups of people that have essentially hated each other and fought with each other for hundreds of years in this area, and essentially what the President is suggesting is that we put our young American men and young American women in between these different groups who have been shooting at each other for all of these years. I think it is clear at some point that these people will turn their targets on these American troops. I think that is the last thing in the world we should do.

I have also heard the argument from those few people in this House that agree with the President on this issue—and I have to stress that, the few—that we now have a volunteer Army and these are voluntary young men and young women who knew what they were getting into when they signed up, so it is not quite as bad when we put them in harm's way. I strenuously disagree with that line of thinking, with that argument. I think it is only in those circumstances where the United States interests, vital interests, are at risk that those troops should be put at risk.

I have also heard the argument that since—yes, and I have heard a few of my Republican colleagues espouse this point of view—that, yes, you know, we

should not have done it, but now that the President has committed troops or is about to commit troops, that the United States might somehow lose prestige around the world if we stopped him at this point.

Again, I want to argue first of all that this is exactly the time to stop this President from making this very wrong move, because the troops are not there yet. It will be much more difficult once the troops are there, because then we are all going to rally around our troops and support them. This is the time to stop those young men and young women from losing their lives.

I have heard it argued that the U.S. might lose prestige around the world if we do not stick behind the President on this issue. I would argue that there is a much greater risk of us losing prestige around the world if this thing turns into the bloody debacle that just might occur, and that we all are so concerned about and trying to prevent.

At this time, I yield to my good friend, the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. BROWNBACK].

Mr. BROWNBACK. Thank you very much. To the gentleman from Ohio, I very much appreciate that. I appreciate the leadership of the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. CHABOT] on this issue he is taking on the Committee on International Relations and also here on the floor to be able to have this discussion taking place.

Mr. Speaker, today the Republican Conference voted overwhelmingly to support legislation introduced by our colleague, the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. HEFLEY], to prohibit the use of Department of Defense funds for deployment of United States ground troops into Bosnia without an express congressional authorization.

I think simply that the President must seek and receive congressional support for U.S. participation in this peacekeeping mission. More importantly, however, the President must make his case to the American people before a single United States soldier is deployed to Bosnia.

I would just like to raise a couple of questions I think the President needs to take to the American people. A number of questions already are raised here this evening, and raised quite well, but there are several others as well.

□ 2215

Take the case to the American people. The President has failed to answer so many questions about the peacekeeping operation, the American involvement in the operation, and most importantly, the justification for American involvement in the operation.

We heard earlier the statement, which I think is accurate, that if you have a peace there, you do not need peacekeepers, and if you do not have a peace there peacekeepers are not going to work. That just seems to make such fundamental sense.

I would like for the administration to explain how we intend to be perceived by the warring parties as neutral when we have bombed one of the warring parties and helped train one of the warring parties that are involved in this particular situation.

I would like to raise another question that came up earlier, actually even this year, and that was in regard to Haiti and the payment for the operation in Haiti. We have not talked yet this evening about the cost, the actual dollar cost of this operation, but what domestic programs is the President willing to cut, willing to reduce, to be paying for this operation in Bosnia? We have not talked dollar figures, because frankly, there are much more serious matters about the lives of our young men and women that are involved here. But if we have to get down to talking about dollars as well, Mr. President, where are you going to make the cuts to pay for this operation? I think that is a very legitimate point, as earlier this year we had to do a defense appropriation supplemental bill to pay for what the President's operation was that took place in Haiti. Where are we going to make those cuts?

The President has not explained to the American people to the point that they are able to believe that this is going to be a short-term peacekeeping operation, that there is not going to be a lot of bloodshed involved in this region of the world that has had bloodshed and hatred for centuries.

Finally, I would just raise a continued standard that I think we should look at with any operation like this. That is a simple one of, is the case sufficiently in front of us, is it sufficiently compelling, do we have a sufficient vital and strategic interest of the United States that I personally would go? Would I send my son to go, or my daughter to go into this operation? I would have to say a dramatic "absolutely not, in this case."

Mr. President, you have not made your case to the American people, you have not made your case to this Congress. Now we are talking about deploying troops before any of that takes place. That is wrong. Come to this Congress, come to the American people with your case, if it is so compelling that we can say with a good conscience, yes, I would go.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Kansas for his remarks this evening. I had mentioned earlier relative to the gentleman from the State of Washington [Mr. METCALF], that he had spoken up at the New Federalist meeting this morning. And I just wanted to make the point that the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. BROWNBACK] is the leader of that group, the head of that group, and has shown tremendous leadership in such issues as making sure we balance the budget, we stick to our guns and keep on top of things around here. I want to compliment him for that and his remarks here this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. GUTKNECHT].

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I almost feel after some of the remarks that have been made tonight that there is not really much to add to this discussion. But I think it is very important, and I want to congratulate the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. CHABOT] for having this special order tonight to talk about it, because I was one of those people who came of age, graduated from high school in 1969. I was fortunate enough to have a high enough draft number that I did not have to go to Vietnam, but a lot of my friends did.

I think sometimes we overutilize the Vietnam analogy, but I think there is one thing that is absolutely crystal clear in the comparison, and the analogy fits this particular discussion. We all saw what that war in Vietnam did to the American people, what it did to our society. It literally tore us apart.

The time to have this debate is now. The debate should not be going on a year from now, when we are bogged down in a no-win situation, when we have sent not 25,000 troops to that area of the world, but perhaps 50,000 or 100,000; because we can talk about 20,000 to 25,000 American troops today, but the truth of the matter is if we get bogged down in a guerrilla-type war in the mountains of the Balkans, it may well be that the generals will be saying, "What we really need are more troops, what we need are more air strikes, what we need are these things." We saw this all happen before.

The time to have this debate, not only in this Congress, not only on the floor of this House but in this country, is before we find ourselves in a situation where the answer to every question is, "We need more troops, we need more bombers, we need more air strikes, we need more materiel," and the potential for that, I think, is great.

The reason is that the whole policy that we are seeing evolve in that area of the world, and Mr. John Hillen, who is the defense policy analyst for the Heritage Foundation has really nailed it when he said that the peace plan we are talking about, the Clinton peace plan, is a classic example of putting the cart before the horse. Instead of making troop commitment that is tailored to support a known, specific, workable mission, Mr. Clinton made the commitment of 25,000 U.S. ground troops first, more than 2 years ago, without any peace plan at hand.

In fact, I think back then, between then and now, we have had something like 10 ceasefires and peace plans.

The U.S. military commitment only incidentally is related to the military conditions that may exist on the ground. This strategy is backwards, a formula for confusion and disarray, and Members of Congress are correct to question it now.

We should be having this debate before we make the commitment of

American forces. In fact, I have told some of the people in my district that we hear a lot about the Vietnam analogy. Perhaps an even better analogy is what the Soviets did in Afghanistan. They found themselves bogged down in some warfare that had been going on in those mountains for years and years and years, and they never did win that war. They only lost thousands of young Russian soldiers in that area of the world.

The truth of the matter is we are all becoming much more aware of where Bosnia and Herzegovina is, but if the truth actually be told, I think if you were to ask Americans to locate Bosnia on a world map or a world globe, I daresay that less than 25 percent of the American people can even find it on the map. To say that it is of some major national interest is to exaggerate in the 10th degree.

The truth of the matter is, Americans have no real interest in what is happening in Bosnia, and most of them have little knowledge of the history of that area, but some of us in Congress have been forced over the last several months to become more expert in what the history is there. The more you learn about it, the more you begin to realize that this is a situation that has been going on for years. As a matter of fact, they have been fighting over there since the Turks first invaded in 1389, and there has been one form of conflict going on in that particular region of the world basically ever since.

I think it sort of underscores American arrogance; that we can somehow, by sending 25,000 ground troops at a cost of over \$1.2 billion, somehow bring peace to a region that has been fighting that long is, I think, as I say, can only be described as arrogance.

When we talked, and many of the other points that needed to be made have been made tonight, but before we commit our troops anywhere in the world I think we have to have a clearly defined American interest, there needs to be a clearly defined mission statement of what it is we are trying to accomplish. We need to know the rules of engagement. Most importantly, I think we need to know, how will we know when it is time to come home? The truth of the matter is we have not had answers to any of those questions.

The interesting thing from my perspective, as a freshman Member of this body, is that many of the people that I would regard as hawks on national defense, many of the people that I think nonpolitical observers out in America would say, "These are the kinds of people who would be eager to commit American troops anywhere in the world, they are the hawks of this Congress," they are the ones who are the most dovish on this whole idea of Bosnia. The reason is they have asked those tough questions.

We have given the administration every opportunity to come up here to Capitol Hill, to talk about their plans, to explain exactly what they have in

mind, and with every opportunity that they have taken, if anything, the administration in selling their particular proposals to Congress, has lost ground. At every occasion the hawks of this Congress have, perhaps, been the most aggressive in saying that there is no American interest in that region of the world, there is no American mission. We do not seem to know what we are trying to do. There is no peace to keep.

As the gentlewoman from California [Mrs. SEASTRAND] said earlier, the quote from the Krauthammer piece that appeared in the Washington Post says that the greatest targets people can have in the world are Americans, not only to shoot at them in some kind of guerrilla warfare but also to take them hostage. We have already seen that happen in that region of the world.

So before we make this critical mistake, before we find ourselves bogged down in an unwinnable war, before we allow our sons and daughters to become the unwilling pawns in this unwinnable war that has been going on for over 600 years, we ought to have these questions answered. The American people ought to have them answered. I think Congress has a special responsibility, especially to those young kids who wear the American uniform, to make certain that we feel good about what exactly they are going to be asked to do before we ask them to do it.

I think this is a huge mistake. I think the President needs to sit down with the American people and with this Congress, answer these tough questions, before we get into a war like we had back in the 1960s and 1970s that literally tore this country apart. The time for the debate is now, not after the troops are sent. The time for the Congress to get these answers is today, not next week, not next month, and not after the troops are sent in.

I want to congratulate the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. CHABOT], for having this special order. I think we need to do more of this. I think we need to encourage the American people to become engaged in this, because I will just close, and I know the gentleman from California wants to share a few words, but a week and a half ago I spoke to some of the Legion commanders from my congressional district. One of the issues I talked about was Bosnia. I asked for some input from them. I have to tell you, the American Legion people who were at that meeting that day do not support the basic notion of sending group troops to that area of the world. Frankly, if you cannot sell the American Legion and some of the veterans' groups on the importance of this particular mission, then you cannot sell the American people.

This is a mistake. We have to do all we can in the next several weeks to prevent it from happening, because all of those kids that we would be asking to go into that particular region have parents, they have lives of their own,

and we cannot just offer them up on some altar just to protect the American ego. That is really, when you are talking about protecting American prestige, it seems to me that is too high a price when you are talking about real people, real kids who belong to real families, to send them into situations just to protect American prestige. In my opinion that is a huge mistake, and again, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding to me tonight. The gentleman from Ohio, again, is to be congratulated and thanked for having the special order.

Mr. CHABOT. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Minnesota for giving his talk and his points this evening. He happens to be one of the more articulate Members of this body. I think he did a tremendous job.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California [Mr. ROHRABACHER], who serves on the Committee on International Relations with me, and has shown tremendous leadership on that committee. Many of us, particularly the freshmen on that committee, listen very well when this gentleman, Mr. DANA ROHRABACHER from California, speaks.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I have heard the analysis and the comparisons between this proposed operation and what happened in Vietnam. I think that the more accurate comparison would be made to Beirut in 1983. In Beirut in 1983, President Reagan made his worst mistake, the worst mistake of his presidency, and sent 2,500 Marines into what was an absolute cauldron of turmoil and bloodshed. When it was over, there was a great deal of American bloodshed on the ground, and we retreated, and our prestige was never lower in that part of the world than when we had to retreat from having lost 240 Americans. That would be the worst blow to American prestige today, would be the introduction of troops and then to have some sort of cataclysmic event, and the resulting American public opinion shift that would force American troops to withdraw under fire, which would then leave us in a position around the world that would really diminish our influence. That is not what we want.

What happened in 1983 was possible because we were in the middle of the cold war. During the cold war, we granted the President of the United States, every President of the United States, a great deal of power in terms of commanding troops. After all, there was a hostile power that sought to destroy the United States and western democracies, communism, as centered and in power in Moscow.

During that time period we knew we had to meet the threat. We had to cut off maneuvers by this hostile power. It meant that the President had to have extraordinary, extraordinary authority that is extraordinary to the traditions of the United States.

The cold war is over. What happened in Beirut unfortunately happened because the President had that authority, and unfortunately, we sent our Marines to places where they should not have gone. The cold war is over, and today when the President makes these decisions, the American people expect that their elected representatives in Congress will scrutinize the decisions and play a part in deciding where the funds that we spend, our funds on national defense, where they will be spent in terms of these foreign commitments.

□ 2230

I am not talking about isolationism. This is far different than isolationism. The charge of isolationism is nothing more than an attempt to stifle debate, honest debate, on this issue.

What is being proposed in the Balkans is contrary to our national interests. That does not mean we are isolationists for pointing that out. Mr. Speaker, let us note this: Yes, there has been squabbling, there have been hard feelings and fighting going on in that part of the world between the various ethnic groups for many years, many hundreds of years. But the Balkans is not the only place in the world where there have been intractable problems between neighbors, and it is not the only place in the world where the United States may be called to intervene in some way in order to have a presence or exert some sort of force, or to exercise some kind of influence over events in those far-off reaches of the world.

The peace plan now being contemplated, which includes 25,000 American troops on the ground in the Balkans for at least a year, is an absolutely insane plan. It will not work. So on top of the 25,000 people that we are putting at risk, the plan itself, which I have looked over, seems to me to be a bad plan, even for those people who are negotiating right now and being pushed into that direction.

We have seen for 4 years and heard the screams of agony and horror from the Balkans for 4 years, and yet, those people that were the architects of America's response to this event in history are now the very same people who have presented us this plan of sending 25,000 Americans into this caldron.

Well, the fact is, their policy for 4 years has failed. Their policy was basically to label all of those involved in the fighting as morally equivalent to place an arms embargo on everyone, a pox on all of your houses, and in some way with this aloof decisionmaking that we would in some way be able to effect a peace in that area. It was a peace that saw many United Nations troops in the area.

I can still remember vividly a United Nations armored personnel carrier in the middle of April, armored column of United Nations troops being stopped by Serbians and Serbians going to the armored personnel carrier, opening the

door in front of heavily armed United Nations troops, hauling out the Vice President of Bosnia, and murdering him right in front of the United Nations troops. This was no coincidence. They understood what the policy was. They understood what the policy of the United States was. They understood what the policy of the United Nations was.

Over these last four years we have seen acts of aggression basically coming from Bosnia—excuse me, from Serbia in Bosnia and in Croatia in an attempt to grab land. It has not been a moral equivalency, because we have seen heavy artillery, heavy weapons, heavy tanks from Serbia committing acts of genocide and ethnic cleansing in neighboring countries. Yes, there have been some, there have been some murders and there have been some genocide and unfortunate acts committed by Bosnians as well as Croatians. But by and large there is no question that the aggression has been coming as part of an organized attempt by Serbia to grab land.

The peace that has been proposed now basically rewards the gangsters in Serbia who have been committing these horrendous acts against their neighbors. In fact, the peace plan in which 25,000 American lives will be at stake in order to enforce will not work without the goodwill of those very same people who have committed the most horrendous acts of genocide in that conflict.

Part of the peace plan, by the way, has been not only to send 25,000 Americans, but also to send 20,000 Russians, Russians, into the area as well. Thus, we will be relying on the goodwill of the Serbians, who have been murdering people, who have been committing acts of mass rape and genocide, we will depend on their goodwill not to get the United States into a conflict with Russian troops who are nearby. It is absolutely insane; it is a plan whose architects are the same architects who said we will have an arms embargo against the victims as well as against the aggressors.

Their plan for the last four years has brought heartache and misery and death to the Balkans. Because it left the aggressor, the Serbians with their heavy tanks and heavy artillery, outgunning, overwhelmingly outgunning the victims. And thus, they had an incentive to commit these horrendous acts, because they could get away with it with minimum loss.

I am not suggesting now that we should turn our backs on that aggression, but let me note I have been in that area several times, once just about a month ago. I was in Sarajevo, I was in Bosnia, I was in Croatia, I talked to people. The Bosnian people even now, after 4 years and for 4 years they have never asked for American troops. Even now they are not asking for American troops.

The people that are asking for American troops are those people who have

been the architects of the failed American policy for the last 4 years. The Bosnians have only asked for, as the Croatians, the ability to buy the weapons necessary to defend themselves.

This is not isolationism, to suggest that that is the strategy we should be following. If there is any American involvement in that area, and I will close with this thought, if indeed we decide to get involved in that area, besides lifting, just lifting the embargo, we should be using American air power. We have invested in aerospace technology, in smart bombs and planes that we could use or exercise our influence with the use of American might that would minimize the risk of the loss of American lives.

By lifting the arms embargo and using American air power, I believe we could force the Serbians aggressors back into Serbia and could bring peace in that way. Let those people bring peace to their own area. Instead, what we have before us is a plan that puts Americans at tremendous risk with very little chance of success.

The last time I saw this is when I sat in the White House in 1983, a member of President Reagan's staff, and I remember when the Marines were introduced into Lebanon. I ran from office to office asking, what are we doing? What is this all about? And I was told, and I was given a very convoluted plan, and I bet nobody has even heard of that peace plan now in Lebanon. But it was a plan that depended on, if we introduce American troops down there and we show up, we have a presence there, this is going to happen and that is going to happen and this is going to happen and the result was going to be peace in the Middle East. Not just peace in Lebanon, but peace in the Middle East. And that type of globalistic, just absolutely irrationalism, led to one of America's greatest humiliations and the loss of 240 marines and naval personnel.

Now, now, we hear about a plan to send 25,000 Americans to the Balkans and we say, what is this all about? Tell me, why? Why are we doing this? What is this all about? Nobody can give the answers except some nebulous plan of this, this and this, which will eventually lead to peace in the Balkans and peace in that part of the world. I have heard it before. We should not, we should not, give in to the notion that other people are going to solve this problem and will protect the lives of young Americans.

It did not happen in Beirut, it is up to us to take care of those young people who defend us. They march off to war or they march off to put themselves in harm's way and they salute and they are willing to do it because they know that we will do our very best in Congress and in the executive branch to make sure that they are not putting their lives on the line for something of little value or something that has little chance of success.

Today, we owe it to our defenders and we owe it to those young men and women to do everything we can to prevent them from being deployed to this area with a plan with so little chance of success.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman from California for his insightful remarks on this important issue. The gentleman from California mentions a scenario which I think is very similar, and that is American involvement in Lebanon, a different administration.

Some years ago, but as the gentleman from California mentions, we went in there with good motivations, trying to keep peace, a peace which really did not exist. The mission really was not clear. There was no real exit policy out of there. We had a suicide bomber who went into the marine barracks and over 200 United States marines lost their lives.

I think another situation which is somewhat analogous, more recently was in Somalia. We went into Somalia with the best of intentions, again, a different administration, to feed people, and then that humanitarian mission then turned into peacekeeping, and democracy-building, and putting ourselves in-between these warlords, and they ended up shooting at us. We had helicopters shot down, we had 18 Americans who lost their lives, we had an American who had his body dragged through the streets.

We want to prevent that from happening again. That is why we are here tonight, and I want to thank all of those who took part in this special order here this evening.

PROTECTING AMERICA'S PENSION BENEFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BILBRAY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from North Dakota [Mr. POMEROY] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, at the outset of my special order, let me express pretty substantial disappointment in the presenters that have occupied the last hour, filling this Chamber with rhetoric that often was not based in a single shred of fact.

Mr. Speaker, I think the people that follow the carryings on in this Chamber probably get mighty tired of just long, windy speeches after long, windy speeches. What might be kind of fun once in a while is to have some meaningful dialog, give and take. God forbid even an honest debate might break out here on the House floor, and we had that chance that evening. We had that chance in the hour that just passed, and repeatedly, as I asked for recognition to pose a question, simply a question or a clarification, or to straighten out a flat misstatement of fact, I was denied that opportunity.

Well, there are a couple of things I want to set straight at the outset of