

day, for many of us stayed here the weekend before Thanksgiving to make a commitment to the American people. That was that we would get a budget and, yes, we would agree on a 7-year budget. But as Democrats and the President pressed forward, we made certain points that must be reemphasized. We said we would do so, protecting Medicare, Medicaid, student loans, food stamps, not hurt the environment, raise taxes, not raise taxes on millions of working men and women and their families by slashing the earned income tax credit, and thereby providing a huge tax cut for beneficiaries making over \$200,000. That, Mr. Speaker, was in the continuing resolution, no doubt. The language was as clear as black and white.

Now we come to a point where we are making accusations about the President's veto. He made it clear. We will work with you on a 7-year budget. But we understand the needs of Americans, education, Medicare reform, but handling and responding to the needs of Americans with health care, Medicaid, the environment. How many Americans have sent the Republicans here to dismantle the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act?

This is reflected in the VA-HUD bill that we saw today passed, even though it cuts VA facilities, veterans facilities by 62 percent. It cuts housing programs by 21 percent. It cuts the Environmental Protection Act by 21 percent. It cuts Superfund cleanups which in fact in my home communities in the 18th Congressional District, two neighborhoods now are facing the need to have environmental cleanup. That is cut by some 19 percent. Funds for elderly and disabled housing are each cut by 40 percent.

But the real irony, Mr. Speaker, is that just 8 days or so ago, this VA-HUD bill was recommitted to the conference committee with instructions to restore dollars for veterans health. In the shadow of Bosnia and on this famous day, December 7, 1995, reflecting on December 7, 1941, here we go again in rejecting the service that veterans have done. Just 8 days ago we recommitted it, but today we have the same Members who voted last time to recommit change their votes because they are more concerned with being in step with the majority than being in step with the American people.

Then in my own district of Houston, we find in the VA-HUD bill extraneous material dealing with public housing. Let me set the record clear. For this project, Allen Parkway Village, I am for providing housing, public housing for the 13,000 who are on the waiting list in Houston. I am for providing housing for seniors, working parents, affordable housing and, yes, public housing for those who need it. I am particularly for getting a master plan that will include the Houston Housing Authority, the city of Houston, the residents and all parties that have been involved.

A master plan sets the direction of how we should be able to compete and how we should be able to structure a housing development that will respond to all the needs of the people. Yes, I am for preservation that would preserve the concepts and the architectural design of an entity that has been noted as having historic value. But we have an extraneous language in the VA-HUD bill that does not relate to bringing people together in Houston. It relates to tearing us apart.

I am going to stand my ground, and that ground is to work with all the parties to ensure that we do have good housing in Houston in the Allen Parkway Village. It is for the elderly. We have it for those needing public housing. We have it for working families. We have a concept, a campus style concept that provides educational training, recreational services, job training so that those citizens in public housing can get out of public housing and become independent and move into other styles of housing.

It is important, Mr. Speaker, that just as the President has asked and the Democrats have committed to, we must work together on the budget, protecting the environment, protecting those who need Medicare and Medicaid, protecting those who need educational loans. And, yes, when we talk about public housing, we must work together because those of us who work together will get the right job done for all of America.

BOSNIA

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

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Mr. Speaker, I am here to talk about the tragedy of American troops being sent to Bosnia and the fact that the President has made a decision without consulting with the American people and without consulting with Congress.

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We are here for a purpose in the People's House. We were elected to represent the people. Article I, section 8 of the Constitution gives the Congress the authority and the power to raise funds for armies and for the Navy. The President, like he did with the Mexican bailout, has simply gone around the Congress and tried to circumvent us in this action.

It is obvious from the polls taken around the country, and it is obvious from the people who call into our office every day, that there is very little support for the President's action, yet he has gone ahead without the support of the people and without the support of the Congress, and I think there is a tragedy in the making.

Personality I lived 6 years of my life in the Balkans. I was a United States Ambassador to Romania, which borders

Yugoslavia. I traveled over into Yugoslavia, and the terrain in that area is mountainous. Winter is coming in the Balkans at this time. We have got tanks over there that are going to be messed up in the mush and the slog of winter. There are millions of land mines that have been planted by the Bosnia Serbs, and Croats, and Moslems.

And the President said he is sending American troops over there to keep the peace, and that we are going to impose and we are going to bring about a peace, and we are going to stop the genocide of these people. Well, if we go everywhere in the world simply because people were fighting and killing each other, we could be in Sudan, we could be in Northern Ireland, we could be in Afghanistan, we could be all over the world. This is an absurdity.

In 1386 they had a famous battle, the Battle of the Blackbirds in the former Serbia and Yugoslavia, and that is when the Serbs lost, and the Ottoman Turks came in, and they won, and many of the people converted or were forced to convert to Islam. Today the Serbs, who are Orthodox Christians, are still upset and they are still seeking revenge, and they are still fighting against those who became Moslems. So you see you have an ethnic strife that has been going on for 600 years, and we are supposed to send troops over there for 1 year, let them stand in place, get killed by land mines, get killed by radical Arab terrorists who are in the area, and then we exit after 1 year supposedly, and we will have established peace that has not been there for 600 years. Come on, Mr. President, give me a break, get real.

The cost in lives to America is something that we ought to be very careful about, and the cost in dollars. First of all, the President said he was only going to send 20,000 troops. That is what he told the American people. Now it is up to 37,000 troops. First he said it is only going to cost us \$2 billion. Now it is up to \$4 billion.

I mean we are up here to balance the budget, we are here to reduce the deficit, we are here to cut costs, and the President is getting money for a Mexican bailout, \$25 billion out of a slush fund. Now he wants to send \$4 billion, probably much more, to Bosnia, a place that is an artificial creation, it is not a member of NATO. We have NATO set up to defend members of NATO against the Soviet threat. What happened to the Soviet threat? So he said we have got to save NATO by going to Bosnia.

Are you ready for this? The President backed last week the Foreign Minister of Spain, Spain is not even part of the military aspect of NATO, he backed the Foreign Minister, Javier Solana, to be the new NATO military commander. Well, this is an anti-NATO guy who is a member of the Socialist Worker's Party, tried to establish communism in Spain, one of Fidel Castro's best friends. Now he is the head of NATO. We want to go save NATO under the NATO military command of Javier Solana. Give me a break.

The President apparently has pollsters who have told him, "What you've got to do is establish some leadership credentials, so go over there, and look presidential, act like command in chief, and the people will reward you for it." Not only that, they told him something, and if this is the way he is operating, and this is truly what is behind this, this is a very cynical way to manipulate the American people and to perhaps bring about the loss of lives and a lot of dollars. They said, you know, "It doesn't matter if the American people are opposed to this action, it does not matter if Congress is opposed to it. You put the troops in the field, and they will be forced to do the loyal thing and say they support the American troops."

That is the box he is putting us in, and I think he is making a tragic mistake, and I wish he would reconsider.

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

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

FOCUSING ON A POSITIVE FUTURE

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I wanted to thank the President of the United States. We had the great fortune of going to the White House the other evening for the Congressional Ball, and my mother, Frances Foley, was in town. I was able to take her to that great honor, and it was an evening of celebration, it was an evening of sharing the great bounty of this Nation in the people's home, the White House, and, yes, as a Republican, it was a great honor to be in the company of President Clinton and his wife.

The spirit that was alive in the house, the White House, that evening, was one that should be evident on this floor, one that should be evident in the debate about our budget for the Nation's future. He signed the veto message the other day, and the pen failed to write, and while many are making a joke about it, it does symbolize one thing: Our well is dry here in the Nation's Treasury. We are running on empty financially. It is time to step up to the plate and face the very important responsibility of Congress with the help of the President in balancing the budget with legitimate numbers, with legitimate dialog, with legitimate protections for our Nation's resources, but doing it in an honest and honorable and peaceful fashion, so that all Americans, regardless of party, can be proud of the actions of this Congress, that they have, in fact, done the people's work and they have done it professionally and respectfully.

I want to discuss another issue because from time to time Members of the House talk about public education as if it is a disaster, and they make unkind statements to public education. The teaching profession, teaching our children, is one of the most noble professions in our Nation.

There are problems in schools. There are problems on campuses. But they are not all related to schools and public education. They are related to a lot of external factors in our Nation.

I think about one of my counties, Palm Beach County, and I think of all the great things our school systems are doing. My father is a principal of an alternative school, a school of last resort for children with behavioral problems, drug addictions, truancy problems. He tells us often about the successful graduations of children that were otherwise thought of as not having a potential for passing anything, never mind high school, but they graduate; stories about young girls who become naval officers, who are the top of the naval class, who a few years earlier were counted out as derelicts, druggies, incompetent youth. The School of the Arts in Palm Beach County, allowing kids to express God-given talents in arts, and music, and dance, and theater, things that are not traditional, but they are learning something that they have a skill and an expertise in. Junior ROTC programs teaching children military leadership. They are enrolling dozens of people in my school community, and they are succeeding in educating our young people. The science, the math, the police academies that spring up around our communities that are successfully graduating children with an educational opportunity that allows them to go out, and get a job and become meaningful, taxpaying, productive citizens.

Palm Beach Garden High School; I visited the film school. We did interviews. They had tremendous technological equipment, learning to be little broadcasters. Someday they may be on the evening news.

These are things that are working in our school system that we need to magnify, talk about in a positive way, show that public education is working, show that teachers who are sacrificing in a job dealing with difficult students are doing so because they love this country, they love children, and they want to see the future of those children succeed.

Future Farmers of America programs, 4-H Clubs, all things that are working in public education that we all too often in Congress just say things are bad in public education, but it is time to stand up for the programs that work. It is time to talk about the one thing that we can make certain when we talk about the future direction of America is that children have a positive education, that they learn, that they are inspired, that they are told different things, learn to work on computers, learn to talk about children

who may not go to college, but in fact may work at McDonald's, may in fact become a store manager and a store owner, may work at Publix as a bag boy and rise to be a manager of that store; that it is within each of us that we can excel, that we can excel and be supportive of this great country of ours.

We have got to focus in this Congress about the very good things in our Nation and not always be talking about negativity, and disastrous consequences and evil, mean-spirited politics, because this Nation is the greatest Nation on Earth. God's gift to us has been one of being able to enunciate those positive things on this floor.

So let us respect teachers, let us respect public education, let us respect private schools, but education is everybody's future, it is our Nation's salvation, it is the elimination in the future of crime and dependency in our Nation.

So, I urge my colleagues to focus in the next year ahead, as we enter 1996, on positive education, positive future for our Nation, positive leadership for our children.

KEEP MEDICAID INTACT

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, today was National Medicaid Day, and myself, and Senator LAUTENBERG, and a number of other Members of Congress, participated in an event on the front lawn of the Capitol where we stressed the fact that the Medicaid changes that have been proposed by the Republican leadership will have a severely negative impact on the low-income people, be they seniors, children, the disabled, who now benefit from the Medicaid Program, which is the Federal program that guarantees health care for low-income people.

I was very pleased to see that yesterday when the President signed his veto and sent his veto message to Congress in reaction to the Republican leadership budget that he stressed the extreme impact, if you will, and the unacceptable changes in the Medicaid program that were set forth in that Republican budget. I am hopeful that during the negotiations that are taking place now over the budget where the President and the congressional leadership, particularly the Republican leadership, seek to come together on a compromise budget bill, that the bill will successfully keep Medicaid intact and guarantee health care coverage for those people that are currently covered by the Medicaid Program.

What I think is most important during these negotiations is that the Medicaid guarantee, the guarantee that has been around here now for 30 years, that low-income people have health care coverage, that those same eligible people be eligible in guaranteed health