

The other one is to pursue a diplomatic settlement. It is not going to happen. Do you know that war in Bosnia has been going on for over a thousand years? It was going on before Columbus set sail for the New World. And never in the history of this country have we successfully intervened in a civil war, and that is exactly what is going on in Bosnia. We have never successfully intervened in the civil war of another country, and this will not be an exception.

I think the elements we have to look at before we commit any further money or troops or time to Bosnia really is three- and fourfold:

One, do we have a national security interest in Bosnia? The answer is no.

Number two, do we have a clear objective? When we went to Kuwait, we had a clear objective. Iraq had invaded Kuwait. We had a border. We know that one party had gone over a border that they were not supposed to go over. Do we have that kind of objective in Bosnia? The answer is no.

What is another objective? Are our allies facing a national security threat in Bosnia? The answer is no. Is there an economic threat to our country because of the civil war in Bosnia? The answer is no.

My opinion is, there is no clear objective in Bosnia. I think we have to take a look at what kind of commitment the President is willing to make.

First of all, the President relies on the United Nations. Mr. Speaker, take a look at this headline. And by the way, that number has gone up in the last couple of days. It says, "United Nations, for the 78th Time, Condemns the Serbs."

Folks, the United Nations is nothing more than a paper tiger. What is going to happen is, the United Nations is going to be put in there in a stronger and more forceful way and it is going to be the United States of America carrying that burden. It is going to be our young sons or daughters or grandsons and granddaughters that are going to be in Bosnia fighting a war that cannot be won.

What happens if we do find peace in Bosnia? The only way we can do it is to make a massive commitment of military ground troops, may be at least 100,000 troops. And the worst thing about it is, we are going to have to keep them there.

What happens if we do get that peace? How are we going to keep it? The only way we can keep it is a long-term military commitment, and this country is not prepared to make that kind of commitment with military ground troops in the country of Bosnia.

What do I suggest we do? I think it is fairly complicated, but rather simple on its face. One, lift the arms embargo on the Bosnian Moslems. Let them have a fair fight. What we have done is gotten engaged in a fight where we have tied the arms behind their back of one party in the fight and let the other one go at it.

We need to pull out of Bosnia.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the time. I urge that we pull immediately out of Bosnia and lift the arms embargo.

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

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

THE STATUS OF SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE AS REVEALED IN THEIR ANNUAL REPORTS

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

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Members who are showing their appreciation tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I want to share with you and our viewing public tonight on C-SPAN a little booklet, called The Status of Social Security and Medicare Programs: A Summary of the 1995 Annual Reports.

I want to tell you about this because I want to urge you, if you are a senior citizen, if you are some day going to be a senior citizen or hope to be a senior citizen, or if you are just a citizen of the United States, this is essentially an annual report on Social Security and Medicare.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the debate on Medicare has become so utterly politicized that it is difficult for the public and for average Americans to cut through the political rhetoric and the demagoguery and the posturing that is going on to be able to find out what the truth is and what the facts are; and I commend this to you, to read it.

It is only 14 pages. It is short, it is clear, and it lays out very clearly exactly what the facts are. It is written by the Medicare trustees and the Social Security trustees and it includes 3 members of the President's Cabinet.

It is not a Democratic piece, it is not a Republican piece; it is a nonpartisan piece. It is very well written and lays out clearly what the programs are. It is informative in that it does not just talk about recommendations and problems and all of that, but it also tells you exactly what the tax bases are, how much money is raised, where the money goes, how much is in the trust funds of each one, how long we can expect them to last, and if there are problems that ought to be addressed.

I want to read just a couple of quotes from this, because I think it is very instructive. Again, call your Representative: the switchboard at the Capitol here is area code 202; the switchboard people do not like it when I do this, but it is very important that you do this.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Louisiana will state his point of order.

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, is it proper for the Member to address the C-SPAN audience? Should not the Member address the Speaker of the House?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio is reminded to address his remarks to the Speaker.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I want to remind you, so that perhaps you could remind the public, that the switchboard number here at the Capitol is 202-224-3121; each citizen might call their Representative and ask for the summary of these annual reports.

I will say, and I am not suggesting that the gentleman from the other side of the aisle who made this point of order is a part of this, but I have got to tell you, the Democrats do not want you to read this report. They are trying to keep this report secret. They do not want you to see what is in this report.

Let me read a couple of things. It says,

The Board of Trustees are pleased to present the summary of the 1995 annual reports of the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds. In particular, we encourage current and future beneficiaries to consider what these reports mean for them as individual citizens. Based on the trustees' best estimates, the reports show,

And I am going to cut to the part about Medicare,

... the Medicare Trust Fund which pays in-patient hospital expenses will be able to pay benefits for only 7 years and it is severely out of financial balance in the long range.

Then it has a lot of stuff on the summary of the reports and explains the analysis and how they go through this.

I am just going to go to the back where it has a message from the trustees. It says,

This is the fifth set of trust fund reports on which we have reported as Public Trustees.

During the past 5 years there has been a trend of deterioration in the long-range financial condition of the Social Security and Medicare programs and an acceleration in the projected dates of exhaustion in the related trust funds.

Then they go on to say the most critical issue relates to the Medicare program.

Both the Hospital Insurance Trust Fund and the Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund show alarming financial results.

The Medicare program is clearly unsustainable in its present form. We had hoped for several years that comprehensive health care reform would include meaningful Medicare reforms. However, with the results of the last Congress, it is now clear that Medicare reforms need to be addressed urgently as a distinct legislative initiative.

The number is 202-224-3121. Mr. Speaker, I am asking that you advise the public that they can request this summary from their Representative and get a copy of it, because we have got to get out of the partisan rhetoric

of this if we are going to get a conclusion.

I see that the gentlewoman from Washington wanted to make a comment.

Mrs. SMITH of Washington. I wanted to ask you a question, how I got the number, but you happened to say how I got the number. If they want to call our offices, though, and find out or if I want to tell someone, is it better to use that number or our own office number?

Mr. HOKE. If they have the office number, it is better to use the office number.

Mrs. SMITH of Washington. If not, what number?

Mr. HOKE. It's 202-224-3121.

Mrs. SMITH of Washington. Thank you. Listening to you, what really excites me about this is that we are not to the end; in fact, we are just at the beginning. I look at all that has been coming up, and the proposals are clearly that there are ways to fix this system and there are ways to make it better.

Mr. HOKE. I see that my time has expired. Maybe we could talk about that in the next special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON from Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

TRIBUTE TO EAGLE SCOUT FROM MAINE

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

Mr. LONGLEY. Mr. Speaker, one of the great privileges of being a Member of this body is the opportunity to address this Chamber and to address remarks to the Speaker. I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to call attention to an outstanding young man from my district who last Saturday was awarded the rank of Eagle Scout.

What is significant about this award is out of the thousands of scouts who do achieve the rank of Eagle Scout, this is the fourth son of Charles Gaspar of North Berwick who has achieved that rank; his son John, again, the fourth of four brothers.

He has many accomplishments. Most recently he ranked first in his high school class. He is an accomplished chess player and he aspires to be a physician. Mr. Speaker, I certainly would want to state for the RECORD my pride in having this young man as a resident of my district.

NATIONAL LOBSTER MONTH

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to address to the Chair, and knowing the Chair's great interest in fine cuisine, that my district is the home of the

Maine lobster. The month of August is going to be Maine Lobster Month and I know that many Members who potentially may be taking vacations may have an interest in traveling to the rockbound coast of Maine to partake of this culinary delight.

We have over 6,500 licensed lobstermen in the State, over 400 dealers, and last year we produced nearly 40 million pounds of lobsters; almost 100 million dollars' worth of production that was distributed around the world.

Again, it is a great source of pride to me, Mr. Speaker, to represent the First District of the State of Maine and particularly the fishermen and the lobstermen in the State. Again, I compliment them on the great accomplishment of Maine Lobster Month in the month of August.

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

[Mr. OBERSTAR addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

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WE NEED TO LOOK AT MEDICARE MORE CLOSELY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYWORTH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Washington [Mrs. SMITH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I think that we need to talk more about Medicare, because I am finally beginning to have hope. I took the report, the task force report home, that yellow book that scared me so much, and I flew 7 hours with it and I read through it and I read each section. Surely enough, the President's trustees were right. Financially, it is trouble.

I think what has been exciting to me as a newcomer here, a freshman in this particular year, is that solutions are coming quickly. What really is clear is that the people suggest and the ones coming up here say that we should be clearly looking at fraud and abuse, we should be looking at paperwork and how much there is, and that if we would do those two things, it would be a good beginning to fixing the system. We are going to protect the system.

I have not heard one person on either side of the aisle say we are not going to have Medicare. It confirmed what I have been saying, which is I am not willing to have any person that is on Medicare now, any person relying on this vital program for their life, to wake up one day and have it gone by default, because we do nothing to preserve the system, or by taking it away from people we have made a commitment to.

So what we are seeing now is people getting out the rhetoric. There are a few people that stand up here each day and harp that it is going to be gone, but they are the minority in both par-

ties now. Most are saying, let's fix it, let's preserve it, let's make sure it is stronger and it is simpler.

The system is too tough for me, and my background is paperwork. So if my background is paperwork and I cannot figure out the paper, then how can someone else that is trying to manage after an illness? So that is just an exciting thing that I am seeing happening and a great hope for the system.

Mr. HOKE. Would the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. SMITH of Washington. I would be glad to yield.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I think that it is very important that we remind ourselves and each other and the Speaker that one of the criteria that we will follow in this is that every single person who is currently on Medicare has an absolute guarantee from the Republican Conference in this House, the majority of this House, that those people, if they choose to stay on the Medicare Program the way that it is designed today, that is a choice that they will be absolutely guaranteed to have, and that nobody, at least on this side of the aisle, nobody is suggesting anything other than that.

Mrs. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I think the exciting thing about that is that it is like a rainbow. We have had this system that everyone has known for nearly 10 years was going to be in financial trouble, and they kind of just shoved it to the side. The system just sat there and got internally financially worse.

Now what we are hearing about is something nobody talked about because they knew there were problems in the system, and that is choice for senior citizens.

Mr. HOKE. I think you are right and I think that is what is exciting. The place that we can look first in terms of having hope for being able to solve this problem, other than the fact that I hope that as Americans, we all just have a general positive sense of our ability to meet any challenge, under any circumstance, and meet it positively and with vigor and with dignity and know that we are going to succeed.

One of the places that we can look, and probably the place we ought to look first generally, is in the private sector. I know, as you know, what has happened in the private sector. We have gone from over double digit inflationary rates in health care down to about 4 percent in the past couple of years. We are running at 10.5 percent in the public sector inflation per year, at 4 percent in the private sector. Clearly, if we simply use that as our model, right there, that is actually less than the increase that we have budgeted in Medicare over the next 7 years.

Mrs. SMITH of Washington. What the gentleman from Ohio is saying, is let's look at what worked in the general medical to bring down the inflation rate for Medicare. You know what they did? They streamlined paperwork, they got rid of fraud, they dealt with giving individuals choice.