

But critics claim the Joint Committee on Taxation's projections show the pro-family component is a much smaller part of the GOP tax cut over the longer term.

And opponents of the GOP plan claim much of the extra revenue loss would come from two items that primarily benefit upper-income families: a proposed cut in the tax rate for capital gains, or income from the sale of stocks, property and other assets; and new incentives for savers using individual retirement accounts (IRAs).

To understand why the cost of the GOP tax cut would rise in the years following 2002, consider the structure of the proposed capital gains tax cut. The reconciliation plan includes an "indexing" provision that would allow investors to subtract from their taxable income capital gains resulting directly from inflation beginning in 2001.

But in its first year, the indexing provision includes what analysts at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities decry as a "gimmick." It would allow taxpayers to consider assets they already hold as "new" assets eligible for indexing the following year if they pay taxes on their capital gains earned until that point.

The change would yield a one-time-only revenue increase of about \$10 billion in fiscal 2002, the year the budget is supposed to reach balance. But that revenue only represents taxes the Treasury would have claimed the following year. Over the long term, indexing is a big revenue loser, the liberal analysts said.

The Joint Committee's figures suggest revenue loss from all the capital gains tax cuts advocated by Republicans could cut Treasury revenue more than \$100 billion in the seven years after 2005, the liberal analysts said.

Similarly, revenue loss from GOP tax provisions aimed at widening participation in tax-favored IRAs would average about \$1.7 billion between 1996 and 2002, under the GOP reconciliation bill. But in the three years thereafter, revenue loss would snowball, averaging \$6.9 billion each year, the committee estimates.

One reason the IRA provisions might lose revenue at a faster rate after the seven-year budget period is that the GOP bill establishes "back-loaded" IRAs. People who open the new accounts would be taxed on initial contributions, but not on accumulated interest or withdrawals for retirement, new home purchases, education expenses and other uses. In traditional IRAs, the initial contribution is tax-deductible, but withdrawals are taxed.

Analysts expect the withdrawal rate for the new IRAs to increase after 2002, as cash builds up in the accounts and participants tap their tax-free gains for a multitude of uses, including retirement. The tax-free withdrawals cost the Treasury revenue it would have otherwise received if the IRAs were structured the traditional way.

Moreover, the bill gradually allows people with higher incomes to establish the accounts, with the top income level not allowed in until 2007, thus masking the total cost of the new IRAs in the long run.

The GOP plan also includes a four-year "rollover" provision that would allow money in traditional IRAs to be shifted into the new, backloaded accounts, provided the holder pays taxes immediately on current gains. That funnels extra income that would have been collected in the future into Treasury's coffers during the next seven years, thus lowering the apparent cost of the tax benefit.

Mr. THOMAS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming is recognized.

SENDING TROOPS TO BOSNIA

Mr. THOMAS. I rise, Mr. President, to talk about Bosnia, to talk about the thing that, I guess, is before all of us as American citizens—decisions, some of which, unfortunately, have apparently already been made, but the major decisions are still to be made.

I have thought a lot about this tragedy, as most of us have. Certainly, it has been before us almost nightly on TV, a great deal of discussion about it: some 43 months of war, over 200,000 people killed, a real human tragedy, of course. All of us feel badly about that. I have also had the opportunity to travel there recently. About a month ago, seven of us from the Senate had a chance to go there. I must tell you, I came back no more convinced that we have a role there with ground troops than I did before I left.

I think the idea of inserting 20,000 ground troops is a mistake. There are a number of questions that, I think, the answers to which lead to that conclusion. The basic one, of course, is: What is the national interest? I think that question needs to be asked in each of the kinds of commitments we make—major commitments, particularly of Armed Forces. What is our role throughout the world? There are many places in which there is unrest and tragedy, and there are a number of places in which there is civil war. Is it in our national interest to intercede in each of those, to send 10,000 troops, 20,000 troops? I do not know the answer. But I think not. I do not think it is in our national interest to be the policeman of the world in civil uprisings such as this.

I guess we have to ask ourselves, are we to police regional peace throughout the world wherever it is threatened? Do we have an obligation to secure regional peace throughout the world by sending our troops into these kinds of situations? What is the national interest? What kind of national interest does deserve military attention? I think this is the basic issue. All of the other things we talk about are pretty secondary to that. The President, of course, has not been able to lay out convincingly that interdiction and involvement of 20,000 or 25,000 U.S. troops is indeed in our national interest.

Let us examine some of the administration's concerns and arguments. They have been here in our Committee of Foreign Relations. We had a hearing with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State, as well as the Joint Chiefs of Staff. One of the arguments is that killing is morally wrong. Of course, we all agree with that. But then should we send troops wherever that occurs? Should we be involved each time killing occurs? I think we would be overwhelmed by the number of times that we would saddle up and go to Somalia, Haiti, Rwanda, and endless other places, if killing is in fact the issue of national interest that promotes the sending of 25,000 troops.

We hear that the conflict will expand. Frankly, I have to tell you that I do not believe that is nearly as imperative as it was 43 months ago. My impression, frankly, from being there—and I was only there 4 days, so I am not an expert by any means—as you would imagine, these people are very tired of fighting. They are looking for solutions themselves, as you would imagine they would be. The notion that this is going to expand now if we do not move 25,000 troops in I do not believe is a basis in fact.

We were there going down the street of Sarajevo, and they point out, almost with pride, that there is the bridge where the Grand Duke was shot before the start of World War I. Really, that adds very little to today's expansion of another war. But if you want to look at historic things, in that country, the guerrillas, during World War II, were never chased down. They never surrendered. In that country, in the mountains, these kinds of troops will go on forever, if they choose to. Another is that if we do not intercede at this level, we will then be isolationists in the world and we would be withdrawing from our role of leadership. I cannot imagine that argument, as involved as we are around the world, both in troops, commerce, and trade, and we are involved in all of the organizations that have to do with security, trade, and with the development of international relations. We are isolationists? Give me a break. That is hardly what our activities can be called.

It seems to me that the principal reason the President is pushing as hard as he is, is that 2 years ago, he indicated we would send 25,000 troops. Now it is 20,000. Why not 10,000? Why not 15,000? We spent 4 days there. The first day was with the Unified European Command. I must tell you, I was very proud, as always, of the American troops, who are training to be part of this undertaking. But at that time, they were talking about 25,000 American troops, talking about a total of 90,000 NATO troops, with another 15,000 already there—over 110,000 troops in this area. The Senator from South Carolina just spoke about the agreement. I guess I have to say that if the agreement is one that is agreed to by the warring parties—genuinely agreed to—then you could say, why do you need 90,000 troops to enforce it? If it is not agreed to, then the Secretary of Defense, and others, said we should not be there. You have to fight your way in. If you have to fight to make peace, then that is not our mission. That has been made clear that we will not be there. So there has to be an agreement that has genuine accord. We will see. I hope there is. I think the United States and the State Department have done a great job in bringing together these people to some kind of a peace agreement.

Why is it so important that we have to define the national interest? You hear a lot about being concerned, as we

should be, with putting troops in harm's way. Frankly, often troops are in harm's way. That is what troops are for. The issue is not harm's way; the issue is why they are there. If the troops are there with a bona fide national interest, then we try to avoid harm's way. But that is not the criteria. The cost. When you talk about \$1 billion, \$2 billion, I think we spent that much in Haiti. Can you imagine that this will cost less than Haiti? I do not believe so. Is it in the national interest to spend \$3 billion, \$4 billion? That is a question.

Maybe more important than anything was the lack of specific goals. In the hearing that I mentioned with the Joint Chiefs, the general said we will get the job done. I believe that. I believe our Armed Forces will get the job done. I ask, how will you know? What is the job that is to be done? Frankly, I do not think anyone knows precisely.

Pull out in 1 year? I have a hunch that is a little bit political, that the notion is that we know you cannot leave troops there very long.

What if you are not through in a year? How do you know you are through? What is it that signifies having the job done? We were very concerned when we talked to the command. What do you do in this zone? Do you have check points with half a dozen soldiers—I do not know—that are subject to raids by small bands? Do you put them in large groups and patrol? The notion was, if you are fired on, you get to fire back. That is right, the way it ought to be. It was also, if there is an attack, we should withdraw because we are not there to fight but to keep peace. If there is no peace we would not be there. Sort of a conundrum.

So, Mr. President, it seems to me that it is an almost unsolvable situation. I think we can be involved. I think people want us to be involved. I think we indeed have been involved. The question of 20,000 troops is quite a different matter. I have to say, in the time I was in Wyoming, I really did not find anyone who supported that idea.

So we have a situation of 43 months of war in the former Yugoslavia, more than 250,000 people killed, an ethnic war, a continuation of something that has gone on a very long time. The question is, do we place ourselves in the middle of this, between the Serbs?

One of the things that has happened, I believe, partly as a result of this body's taking action on lifting the arms embargo, is that we did tend to equalize the forces. Croats and Moslems got together in the federation which sort of leveled the playing field of the Serbs, and then NATO's airstrikes completed that job. You noticed a great change in what was happening.

So we are faced with an ancient ethnic and religious conflict. Frankly, it is hard to know who is on what side.

Another obstacle is to overcome how you handle the United States and Russia being there at the same time. Rus-

sians will not be under the control of the NATO but still want to be in a segment. The winter is certainly a worry. I know we can handle it, but nevertheless it is tough.

Mr. President, I do not believe there has been demonstrated—and quite frankly I do not believe there will be demonstrated—an indication that placement of these troops in the former Yugoslavia is in the international interests. I think that ought to be the criterion. That ought to be the measurement. In the next few weeks we will need to make that measurement.

All of us need to be involved whether we are in the Senate, whether we are citizens, whether we vote. This is a U.S. decision, and it will have to be made by all.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEBATE ABOUT BOSNIA

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, as we go into this very busy week, coming on the heels of the Thanksgiving break, I do not know of a time that we have had so many issues at the forefront that are so important to this country—not only the debate on the budget, how do we balance it, how do we stay on track to balance the budget in 2002 and how important that is to our children and grandchildren, the business of reforming welfare to make it work for people rather than lock them into certain circumstances, and now the situation as it is developing and unfolding in Bosnia.

There are a lot of folks, including some who are running for public office, by the way, who do not even know where Bosnia is. But the debate, I am sure, this week will boil down to be a three-pronged debate: Is it in our national interest to deploy troops as peacekeepers or peacemakers, and there is a difference; will there be a clear and concise mission with hardly any opening for mission creep, and that is kind of tough to define, and it is kind of tough to stop—we learned that in Somalia; and is there at some time certain a withdrawal plan or some avoidance to deal with maybe an endless mission.

One has to read the history of that part of the world to really understand it. I have been there, spent quite a lot of time on the Dalmatian coast in Croatia, and I will tell you that the passion and the love for their land runs as deep as their hatred of their trespassers.

In Bosnia, is it a holy war? One would like to think not. But I think it is part of the equation. An ethnic war? Of

course it is because of the ethnic cleansing that has been carried out. The carnage that has been thrust upon this country is almost unspeakable and unheard of.

Is it a civil war? Yes, it is a civil war. Is it a war that goes across borders? It is that, too. But it has been waged for generations. And just since our history or our recollection or our generation, 250,000 people have perished at the hands of those who would be in the business of ethnic cleansing. The atrocities are unspeakable, and they are there.

So we have to look at that situation as we try to define our responsibility in that equation. I give high marks to this President, my President—we only have one at a time—in bringing the warring parties together at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio, and the amount of resolve that was placed on this to come out of there with some kind of an agreement that would be good for everybody.

We have seen cease-fires, and we have seen agreements that were drawn up and concluded within Serbia and Croatia and in Bosnia, but they did not last very long. I am wondering how long this will last. Does everyone who is a party to that accord or that agreement that was signed at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio really, really agree on peace? Are their leaders really 100 percent dedicated to it? Is everyone ready to stop the fighting?

It would seem to me that after a while you would just get tired of killing one another. That has not been the case in this particular corner of the world. I would also ask, after the accord was signed in Ohio, what has been the part for the rest of the international community? Have they stepped forward? And how much pressure have they put on the parties, the three main parties in that part of the world to work out some sort of a peace? How heavy has the international pressure been? Has it been as intense as it has from this country? Because I happen to believe in the American way. I have always said our greatest trait as a people is most times our undoing because we are a caring people. No catastrophe happens around the world that we do not react in a very positive way to help people. We care. And also when we see the atrocities on our television screens every night during the nightly news, it moves our conscience. And we are a nation with a conscience. No person can stand to one side and not feel for those people who have been victims of unspeakable atrocities.

But those folks who have pledged troops into NATO as a peacekeeping force, how many of those people have really stepped up and said this is wrong, and how much pressure have they put on their folks that this must stop? If the Bosnian Moslems and the Serbians and the Croats do not think this peace agreement is in their best interests, then we would question,