

know now that the bomb that exploded at the Olympics consisted of three lengths of pipe packed with smokeless powder, an explosive substance that is completely unregulated by Federal law. This in itself is a scandal, and of course the perpetrators of the act are still at large.

We are not even safe in our homes. In upstate New York a 10-year-old girl opened a Christmas package left in her family mailbox. Instead of a gift, she was greeted with an explosion that burned over 27 percent of her body.

The bomb turned out to be a "message" from a disgruntled employee of her family. I would like to send a return message to domestic terrorists and I need your support. Unfortunately it often takes tragedies such as these to spur this House to action. I was shocked to discover 2 years ago that under current law possession of explosives is not a Federal felony. For years we said that certain people, for example a felon, should not be allowed to carry guns, and yet they can drive around in their car or keep at home 100 pounds of gun powder that is not even a crime and that nobody accounts for.

Bombers commit murder by remote control. They do not have to be in the same room as their victims or even in the same city. They never have to see the death and destruction that they cause, and their ruthless method of murder often kills random bystanders. It is no wonder that Americans are uneasy on the streets and their homes, in airplanes.

We need to act now against these particularly cold-blooded killers. We must not wait for another attention-grabbing attack. In recent years we have seen mail bomb attacks on a judge and civil rights activists in the South and a string of bombings at abortion clinics. How much more evidence do we need of the pressing need for stronger laws?

And do not think it cannot happen in your district. Two days ago, this week, a potentially deadly pipe bomb was discovered a few blocks away from my Rochester office and was just outside the headquarters of Eastman Kodak. Fortunately, no one was hurt. But perhaps next time we will not be so lucky.

We have got to keep explosive materials out of the wrong hands. My bill would require Federal permits for all explosive purchases and would mandate a nationwide background check for these permits. It also increases penalties for those who violate Federal explosives laws. Obtaining this permit is not a burdensome process. To receive a permit you only need to provide your name and address to the vendor and indicate the purpose of the purchase. This information would be invaluable to law enforcement officials who are investigating terrorism.

Such a process would allow us to screen out people who should not have access to these destructive materials, such as felons, fugitives and others who show a tendency to take out whatever

things they might have on their fellow Americans.

Moreover, my bill contains special provisions that requires every person who purchases more than 5 pounds of black or smokeless powder, and 5 pounds is enough for gun enthusiasts to have to make their own bullets that would make them hold a Federal permit. Criminal bombings have doubled since 1988. Think about that. This is almost becoming retribution of choice in the United States. They have doubled since 1988. One-third of those incidents involved black powder or smokeless powder.

Of course this is the part of the bill that will send our friends in the National Rifle Association through the roof. But under the current law, any purchase of less than 50 pounds of black powder is totally exempt from any kind of oversight. This is crazy. Fifty pounds of explosive powder can unleash substantial destruction. As every law enforcement official knows, bomb makers love that stuff. It is cheap, it is available, it is unregulated, and a little bit goes a long way. In fact it only takes a pound and a half to make a pipe bomb.

I would also like to point out these regulations will not harm legitimate sportsmen. As I pointed out a while ago, 5 pounds of black powder will reload 750 shotgun shells.

Each year, millions of pounds of explosives are purchased without any permit being required or no regulation, and we in Congress have a duty, I believe, and an obligation to protect the lives and property from bombings.

Last session, we passed my legislation to help protect innocent people from bombs made of plastic explosives such as the bomb used on PanAm flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. It is time we got tougher on terrorists here at home. Passing H.R. 85 will give law enforcement officials another tool in tracking down these homegrown terrorists. It must be done. Nobody knows who is going to be next.

FAREWELL TO REPRESENTATIVE FRANK TEJEDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Puerto Rico [Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to join with so many of our colleagues in honoring Frank Tejeda for all his years of dedication and service to this Congress, to our people, to our Nation. As we honor the memory of the great person that Frank Tejeda was, I cannot help but look back and think about moments that I had the opportunity to share with him.

Frank and I began service in the House 4 years ago. And as a matter of fact, Frank was one of the first Members that I met when I arrived in Washington. I will always remember the time when I was invited to participate

in a hearing at the Committee on Veterans' Affairs where issues related to Hispanic veterans were being discussed and particularly Puerto Rico.

During my opening statement I proceeded to narrate the glorious and distinguished history of Puerto Rico's 65th Infantry Regiment. Specifically, I made reference to the time when the 65th Infantry Regiment was asked to cover the withdrawal of thousands of marines during the Korean war. Frank, who was a member of the committee and a marine himself, recognized the valorous service of Puerto Rican veterans in all the major wars and conflicts that this Nation has been involved in during this century but then took exception to my comment on the withdrawal of the marines and he said, with a smile on his face, "but you know, CARLOS, we, the Marines, never were withdraw from battle."

As you see, I believe that this statement characterizes Frank's life. He never withdrew from anything. He never gave up. His life was an incredible story of triumph over adversity. He lived a life of hard work, hard work in his district, hard work in the military, hard work here in Congress, hard work wherever he went.

But most of all Frank understood the value of freedom and honesty and he was well aware of the dramatic cost of keeping our cherished and hard-fought liberties.

Frank, I was privileged to have you as my colleague, but most of all I was privileged to have you as my friend. We will miss you but your memory will be with all of us forever and an example for us to follow.

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

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

HELPING THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor first and foremost to thank Members for the way they responded to the President's remarks concerning the District yesterday. The President spoke, in his State of the Union speech, warmly of his own intention to assist the District, and partly in his words, "to renew this great capital city so that Washington, DC, is a great place to live, and is once again the proud face America shows to the world."

I appreciate as well the concerned words of Speaker GINGRICH, who devoted part of his own opening speech, upon being sworn in, to the District. The Speaker has in fact been very helpful to the District during the 104th Congress.

The President has put on the table a strong plan. First, it takes back \$5 billion in pension liability racked up by the Congress before home rule and off-loaded on the District. Second, it recognizes that the District is not a State and like every city in the United States cannot today bear State, county, and municipal functions all by itself, even if it becomes the most efficient government on the face of the Earth.

Last night the President offered words on an empowerment zone approach that he intends to spread to cities across the United States, including the District. It is a traditional approach that is already in use across the country. I am very grateful that he wants to include the District in this approach. I welcome it. But I welcome it only in combination with income tax relief in light of a bill I have introduced yesterday.

As the sole response to the crisis of the capital city, the empowerment approach is unacceptable to me and to the District. Why? The President's own plan, the President's strong plan—for pension and State cost relief—would take this much, represented by the orange color, off the table from what District taxpayers now pay. What that means is that 90 percent of what District taxpayers pay they would continue to pay. Strong as his plan is, it really is marginal in what it does to take away what a dwindling tax base would pay.

We are now at 1933 population levels. We do not have a State like New York and like Florida. We are losing, in the 1990's three times as many people as we lost in the 1980's.

Consider what our alternatives are. Commuter tax, massive infusions from the Federal Government and, finally, use of our own money through a tax cut. Commuter tax, thank you, Mr. Congress, you have taken that off the table. We are barred from a commuter tax, even though virtually all the jobs go to commuters. They come in and use the services of an insolvent city and do not leave one thin dime here. You took that off the table. Massive infusions from the Federal Government, you have taken off the table for everybody, even the capital of the United States. I am down to the only option I have left: Let us use our own money to pay what it takes to revive our own city.

The District of Columbia Economic Recovery Act is a bipartisan tax cut bill. I put it in only because we have no State. If we had a State, I would not do it. I would go to the State.

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Big cities get almost all of their revenue from State and Federal sources. D.C.'s revenue must come from a tax base that is disappearing with no way to recycle money back from those who leave.

Think about it. Even if you come from a small town, think about the

great cities in your State, New York City, L.A., Detroit, Atlanta, Seattle, Houston, Chicago, Newark, Nashville, Greenville, Charlotte, Richmond, and Baltimore. None of them support themselves. They are basically supported by their States.

If you did not have a State, what would you do? What do you expect the capital of the United States to do? An empowerment zone by itself does not address taxpayer drain. Even businesses in D.C. tell us that for every ten jobs we make in D.C., nine of them go to suburbanites. They say that is because we are losing our skilled work force, which is another way of saying losing our tax base. They say that an empowerment zone incentive will not help the District because business looks to the skilled work force, not to tax incentives when deciding whether or not to locate in a city.

This is not your average tax cut. It is not what we usually mean in this House. It is not about money saving; it is about life saving. We have to think outside the box. We have to understand that in essence, if not this, what?

You have a unique situation in the capital of the United States. You have a stateless city. It is insolvent. Its revenue is dwindling away with its tax base. The capital is trapped. Help us free ourselves.

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

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

SUPPORT MY BALANCED BUDGET SUBSTITUTE AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

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

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, very shortly in this House, probably within the next 3 or 4 weeks, the House leadership has scheduled a vote on the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. I have some concerns about whether this is even necessary.

I note with interest that the deficit has dropped in the last 4 years from \$300 billion a year to \$107 billion this year and it is coming down like that; that 4 years ago it was 4.7 percent of our gross domestic product, a hefty portion. Today it is 1.4 percent, the lowest point it has been since 1974, the lowest of any industrial democracy. So I question whether it is needed.

If it is needed, if people still seem to think it is, I have to offer the suggestion that you do not balance the budget by putting something in the Constitution that says in 7 years you have to have a balanced budget. You balance the budget the old-fashioned way, vote

by vote by vote, cut by cut by cut, each year through the appropriations process.

That is what has brought the deficit down, on a bipartisan basis, Democrats leading the charge sometimes, Republicans the other times. That is what has brought the deficit from being 4.7 percent of our economy down to here about 1.4 percent.

Now, having said that, if a constitutional amendment is necessary, I am greatly concerned because the argument I hear is that the Federal budget ought to balance its budget like every family, like every business and every State government has to. And that is a fair statement. There is a difference, though. If you forced every family, if you forced every business, and particularly if you forced every State government to include the language of this balanced budget amendment in their constitutions or in their bylaws or their operating procedure, this country would be belly up.

This balanced budget amendment does not do what every State, what every family and every business does, and that is to permit borrowing for capital expansion, for growth, for increasing in productivity. Because while 49 States have some form of capital budgeting in place, and incidentally operates under a balanced budget procedure, such as the State of West Virginia, which has a strict balanced budget requirement in its State constitution, while almost every State has a balanced budget requirement of some kind, there is a difference between the way that States operate and the way the Federal Government operates.

Every State borrows for the roads, the bridges, the water systems, the sewer systems, the infrastructure, the schools, the prisons, the things that are necessary for long-term growth. Every State has that kind of capital budget. Not so the Federal Government.

So that is why I would urge Members, if you feel you have to support a balanced budget amendment, I hope you will support my balanced budget substitute, my constitutional amendment to the Constitution, which would say that you balance the budget in the same amount of time, by the year 2002; that you have the same procedures, except that you can have capital budgeting; that is, you can have investment in physical infrastructure, the roads, the bridges, and so on, No. 1; and, No. 2, that Social Security is off budget.

I am fascinated that every Member in this House at some time or another has voted in favor of taking Social Security off budget. Well, if it was good enough last year, the year before, and the year before that, why is it not good enough this year, particularly if we are going to enact such a stiff proposal and put it into the Constitution?

So if you want the Federal budget to operate like every State, like every business and every family, then recognize the fact that every family knows