

First, it has now been more than 1 year since the President promised he would have our troops out of Bosnia. There is no vital U.S. interest there. There is no threat to our national security there. We should not send young American men and women to overseas battlefields unless there is a definite threat to our national security or a vital U.S. interest. The American people do not want us there.

I remember reading 3 or 4 years ago on the front page of the Washington Post that we had our troops in Haiti picking up garbage and settling domestic disputes. Now we have our military doing social work in Bosnia. U.S. soldiers should not be turned into international social workers.

We have spent many billions in Rwanda, Somalia, Haiti, and now Bosnia, trying to settle disputes that we cannot solve unless we continue pouring billions and billions and billions of dollars into those countries. These are billions that some day we will very much wish that we had back to help our own people.

INCREASE IN FUNDING FOR IRS IS UNFOUNDED

Mr. DUNCAN. Second, Mr. Speaker, a few days ago on the floor, I criticized on this floor as strongly as I could the Treasury-Postal appropriations bill for giving the Internal Revenue Service a \$538 million increase in funding. What I did not know then and could hardly believe when I found it out later was that in conference \$120 million more was added.

Many of us voted against this, but the Congress passed a \$650 million increase for the IRS just at the conclusion of hearings on the IRS showing horrible abuse of the American people by that agency.

The cover of this week's Newsweek Magazine really says it all: "Inside the IRS: Lawless, Abusive, and Out of Control." Those are not my words, Mr. Speaker, those are the words of Newsweek magazine. Newsweek says the IRS is lawless, abusive, and out of control.

Mr. Speaker, the people want us to do away with the IRS, or at least drastically simplify the Tax Code. They especially do not want us giving the IRS huge increases in funding. If this is done next year, there is at least a small but fast-growing group of us that will attempt as hard as we can to defeat any increase in funding for the IRS.

SPORTS SALARIES HAVE GONE BERSERK

Mr. DUNCAN. Third and last, Mr. Speaker, is something that makes almost everyone in this country feel underpaid, and that is the scandal of ridiculously lavish sports salaries. The sports world quite simply has gone berserk.

A 21-year-old basketball player that very few people have even heard of signed a contract a few days ago for \$123 million over the next 6 years. A couple of years ago my two sons and I were driving along and we heard that a baseball pitcher signed for \$18 million for 3 years.

I asked my sons, "Do you know how much \$6 million a year is?" The average person in my district makes between \$21,000 and \$22,000 a year. If a person averaged \$25,000 a year for 40 years he would make \$1 million. If a person is way above average and making \$50,000 a year he would make \$2 million over a 40-year career. A person would have to average \$150,000 a year for 40 years to make the \$6 million this pitcher now makes pitching a baseball one day out of every four. This is totally out of whack, Mr. Speaker.

An earlier speaker tonight discussed what he called a matter of fairness. Americans pride themselves on being fair. This is not fair at all, to pay even mediocre athletes several million dollars a year. No one can really earn or deserve some of these salaries, yet we are all helping pay these salaries through higher prices for everything.

I have always fought against higher taxes, but we really should greatly increase the taxes on all of these athletes, movie stars and CEO's who make over \$1 million a year, and lower taxes on middle-income people, even if only as a simple matter of fairness.

We also should begin a boycott of all of these major league sports teams who are paying these ridiculous salaries, and especially a boycott of all products with their nicknames on them because they take in so much money in this way.

I know we will not do this, Mr. Speaker, but if these salaries continue to escalate in such a crazy manner, the Congress should at least take action on the tax front. Already, mainly thanks to big government, the gap between the rich and the poor is growing rapidly. We need to recognize this problem and do everything we can to make sure that America once again becomes the fair Nation that it was in the past.

CONGRESS SHOULD NOT BE CAUGHT UNAWARES

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

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, sometimes we are caught unawares without any warning. Last month there was a commuter strike in San Francisco where over 270,000 commuters found themselves without a way to work and a way home, when the 60-day cooling-off period expired on a labor dispute out there and the San Francisco Bay area's commuter railroads were shut down.

About the same time here in Washington, afternoon commuters who were going home on VRE suddenly found that their trains were not leaving Union Station, and tens of thousands of them were stranded when dispatchers at Norfolk Southern called a wild-cat strike. Now, these were regional strikes, they were unforeseen but they caused a great deal of disruption.

What may be happening to our Nation that I think most of the Members

of this body are unaware of is another strike on the magnitude of the UPS strike. The gentleman from New York mentioned "Groundhog Day," where suddenly Bill Murray woke up and it was the same day all over again.

We could very well be facing that again later this month. The date: October 22. Amtrak is faced on that day with a possible national shutdown because of an impasse between the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way employees and themselves over wages and work rules.

What precipitated this latest crisis was a Presidential emergency board, actually ruling 232, recommending that Amtrak pay the union employees what amounts to \$25 million in wage increases, including some retroactive payments, and left another \$30 million in arbitration. If this pattern were to continue, if this Presidential emergency board ruling were applied to all 27,000 Amtrak employees, it would cost Amtrak an additional \$136 million. Amtrak, which as we all know is financially strapped, has simply taken the position that it cannot pay what it does not have, and it cannot pay these increases.

As I said, this 30-day cool-off period expires on October 22. That is one day after we return from recess. At that time, I fully expect that Congress will be in the middle of resolving a strike or taking steps to prevent a strike. If Amtrak is shut down, it will not be a commuter authority, it will not be like San Francisco or Virginia, it will be nationwide. It will not be thousands of commuters, it will be millions.

On the northeast corridor alone, think about this impact: Not only does Amtrak operate several hundred trains, but also commuter authorities in Boston, the MBTA operates over Amtrak territory; Connecticut DOT, Long Island Railroad, New Jersey Transit, SEPTA, Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority; MARC and VRE. We are talking about commuters all up and down the northeastern corridor being unable to get to and from work. We are also talking about 73 freight trains on the northeastern corridor alone that would not be able to get to and from their customers.

If this happens, the strike in San Francisco will pale by comparison and it will not be one city.

What can we do about this? I would urge the Members of this body to come together and push for reauthorization of the Amtrak bill, or to authorize the Amtrak bill that has been reported by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on which I am a member.

I would also urge labor not to take this position of a win-at-all-costs position. Unfortunately, they are holding up the authorization legislation this year because they are opposed to the same language in the bill that two years ago they wrote, language which would have been enacted as part of this year's tax bill and given Amtrak access

to funds. Now, these same unions are demanding a pay increase. They are now demanding that Amtrak pay this.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, we have got to start thinking about what we are going to do. If we do not, we will wake up October 22 or sometime thereafter faced with a national crisis, and the American people, and us, will be caught unawares.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD data in support of the topic of my special order this evening:

EFFECTS OF A 1 DAY STRIKE AGAINST AMTRAK

Amtrak either operates or allows access over its tracks to 10 commuter agencies serving communities in 12 states. A one day strike would strand or frustrate the communities of nearly 600,000 commuters.

Depending on the scope of the strike, all Amtrak trains could potentially cease operation. Amtrak's average daily ridership is 60,000 passengers. This would idle 253 trains, stop service to 510 communities, 130 of whom have no direct air service, and 113 of whom do not have intercity bus service.

Each day of the strike will likely cost \$3.8 million of lost revenue while costs will likely go up. In addition, Amtrak receives nearly \$200,000 each day in mail revenues which would likely be lost. Mail service would be delayed to 35 cities nationwide.

Freight train operations on Amtrak owned property would also be disrupted or canceled. On the Northeast Corridor alone, freight operators serve 308 customers, including such large industries as Chrysler, Proctor and Gamble, and Delco Battery. Twenty-seven of the 308 customers are listed as Fortune 500 companies. Amtrak is a vital link for all freight shippers and their customers along the Northeast Corridor. Each day approximately 73 freight trains use the Northeast Corridor and 2 daily trains serve 6 customers on the track Amtrak owns between Porter, Indiana and Kalamazoo, Michigan.

There is currently nearly 250 non rail-related construction sites on or near the Northeast Corridor. To access these sites, construction crews must cross Amtrak property each day to access job sites adjacent to the corridor. In the event of a strike, Amtrak could not safely allow access over its property potentially curtailing or idling work at these sites.

In addition, to the lost revenues, Amtrak expects that additional costs will be incurred from the securing of facilities and equipment. This cost will escalate with each day the system is idled.

The effects of the strike will linger for several months and be reflected in lost reservations and customer uncertainty. The strike will also damage customer loyalties enjoyed by commuter authorities. Even a short strike could be devastating to the Virginia Rail Express still reeling from service disruptions in June and July.

Once any portion of the railroad right of way that Amtrak owns or inspects has had a complete shutdown, it could be up to 24 hours before any train can operate again. This time is required to perform federally mandated safety inspections.

If a system shutdown lasts more than 2-3 days, condition such as rusty rails could keep the railroad shutdown for as much as 1½ days beyond resolution of the dispute. If a system shutdown lasts longer than 3 days, it will take as much as 1½ to 3 days before trains can operate again.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington, Mrs. LINDA SMITH, is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

WHITE HOUSE INTENTIONS AT KYOTO CONFERENCE

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

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the Clinton White House and its intentions at the Kyoto Conference regarding global warming. Most Americans are not aware that there will be a conference in Japan.

Protecting and preserving the environment is a goal shared by all Americans. We all want to drink clean water, we want to breath clean air, and we want to pass on a cleaner America to our children. We could get there by taking common sense steps to clean up our environment, by encouraging smarter partnerships between State and Federal governments, and by relying on sound science while resisting media scares, but we cannot get there by increasing regulations, increasing taxes, limiting freedom, slowing economic growth, and hurting our Nation's competitiveness. We cannot get there with policies that encourage abortions worldwide.

Sadly, the Clinton administration has embarked on the second path. They have promulgated clean air regulations that will strangle economic growth and affect every American family's lives.

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They have floated an energy tax that will hurt American consumers, proposing as much as a 60-cent increase in the cost of a gallon of gas. They have publicly supported policies that will lead to a worldwide assault on unborn children, and they may even sign off on a global warming treaty that will hurt our competitiveness at the expense of other nations, cost Americans thousands of jobs, all for a cause that makes, frankly, Chicken Little seem rational.

Today I want to focus on the Global Warming Treaty that will be discussed at the Kyoto conference later on this fall. Asthmatic children will be victimized by this treaty. Just look at what is going on today.

In order to stay in compliance with its provisions, the Environmental Protection Agency has embarked on a crusade to ban inhalers used by asthmatic children because they contain chlorofluorocarbons. Though CFC-powered inhalers account for less than 1½ percent of the world's CFC emissions and although these same inhalers are the best and cheapest way for inner city children to get relief from asthma, and I do not know if Members know, but inner city children are six times more likely to die from asthma attacks, these inner city children get relief by these cheap and good inhalers,

but the EPA wants to eliminate these products from the market.

Dozens of medical groups have petitioned to bring some common sense to the EPA, but those pleas, unfortunately, have fallen on deaf ears. The regulations will go forward, no matter what will happen to the children of this country and around the world, for that matter, because many countries follow the lead of the EPA.

But it is not just asthmatic children who will be victimized by this treaty. Unborn children will also be victimized. Just last week the Vice President, AL GORE, implied that overpopulation fosters global warming and suggested that expanding abortion programs in developing countries would help protect the environment.

According to Washington Times, the Vice President said, and I quote,

The Vice President, warning that the overpopulation fosters global warming, yesterday suggested expanding birth control and abortion programs in developing countries to help reduce the environmental threat.

Mr. Speaker, killing children is no way to protect the environment. Children will not be the only victims of this Global Warming Treaty. Our Nation's economic health is also at stake. At the Kyoto meeting the United States and other developed nations may enter into an agreement that will force them to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. That agreement, however, will let developing nations off the hook. In fact, developing nations such as China, South Korea, India, and many others, will not face any emissions reduction requirements. These nations will benefit at the expense of the United States and retroactivity of the developed world. The United States will be forced to raise taxes and impose harsh emissions restrictions and regulations, causing U.S. companies to ship jobs and factories overseas to those nations not bound by the Kyoto treaty.

Mr. Speaker, I think the real environmental disaster is this administration and its attitude towards our world's children and for America's working families.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2169, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998

Mr. DREIER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-314) on the resolution (H. Res. 263) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2169) making appropriations for the Department of Transportation and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.