

last October—just as the Congress was preparing to take its long recess—that the United States had decided to dispatch additional troops to Bosnia. The new deployment of an additional 5,000 troops was to be part of a new mission—the one we now call SFOR, or NATO stabilization force—and would last 18 months, through June 1998.

The extension of the U.S. mission in the region, of course, required a new cost estimate. Using actual costs to date, projected force levels for fiscal year 1997 and for fiscal year 1998, and expected operating costs, the Defense Department now says that total costs for the operation are expected to be \$6,512,000,000.

Mr. President, when Congress was first consulted about the Bosnia operation back in 1995, I asked whether or not the United States would be able to withdraw troops from IFOR in December 1996, as the administration said then, even if the mission clearly had not been successful. I had my doubts then that the stated goal—ending the fighting and raising an infrastructure capable of supporting a durable peace—would be achievable in 12 months' time. I foresaw a danger that conditions would remain so unsettled that it would then be argued that it would be folly—and waste—to withdraw on schedule.

My concerns and hesitations of October 1995 were only compounded by the October 1996 announcement that additional troops were being deployed to Bosnia, and compounded further in November 1996 when it became clear that the mission was being extended for an additional 18 months.

In my view, the handwriting has been on the wall for some time now.

As many in this Chamber will recall, I was one of the few Members of Congress, and the only Democrat, to vote against the initial deployment of troops in 1995. At that time, I questioned the projections regarding the duration and cost of the mission.

What I feared then has happened. The United States continues to be drawn deeper into a situation from which we appear unable to extricate ourselves. The war in Vietnam was called a quagmire. We referred to continued United States troop deployment in Somalia as mission creep. I fear that the Bosnia operation presents the same dilemma. There will continue to reasons to encourage continued U.S. military presence on the ground. Despite an original estimate of \$2 billion, that presence is now moving closer and closer to \$7 billion.

I recognize that the Bosnia mission has not been without some positive results. We can all be grateful that people are no longer dying en masse in Bosnia and that United States and troops from other nations are to be applauded for having largely succeeded in enforcing the military aspects of the Dayton accords. But successive delays in holding municipal elections and the lasting, and at-large, presence of in-

dicted war criminals are continuing signs that the progress of American troop presence is transitory at best.

At the heart of the conflict is that the strategic political goals of the warring factions remain unchanged. Peace in the region appears to be achievable, unfortunately, only at the point of NATO arms.

Mr. President, I now fear that, come next June, when the SFOR mission is expected to end, and after we will have invested \$6.5 billion, there is a real danger that we will be back at square one.

I hope that the lesson learned from Bosnia is that we should not make commitments of United States resources, be they military, humanitarian, or otherwise, without a candid assessment of the likely level and duration of the commitment. While it is clear that there were sound, military reasons for upping the financial projections for U.S. participation in both IFOR and SFOR, I can not believe that the original estimate was as candid of an assessment as we could have had, even that early in the process.

We are told that U.S. troops will finish their mission next June. But that begs a question: What certainty is there that even this promise will be kept? I fear, as I did when the United States first committed 20,000 ground troops, that there is no easy way out of this situation. The cost of U.S. involvement continues to rise. And troops, from my State and from throughout the Nation, continue to be deployed.

When will it end, Mr. President. When will it end?

At the very time we are straining hard to eliminate the Federal deficit, the dollars continue to pour out of our Treasury. The cost of this excursion goes on and on.●

HATTIE H. HARRIS, A CREDIT TO OUT COUNTRY AND OUR FLAG

● Mr. D'AMATO. Mr. President, one of our Nation's most outstanding citizens Mayor Hattie H. Harris will celebrate her 100th birthday April 25, 1997, God willing. For nearly one century Hattie's unimpeachable integrity, brilliant mind, and unconquerable spirit have dominated the scene in Rochester, NY. She courageously faces each challenge and perpetually accomplishes worthy humanitarian deeds. Hattie consistently demonstrates that eternal youth rules father time. Mayor Hattie's grueling schedule puts to shame some persons half her age.

Mayor Hattie's unswerving devotion to assisting mankind is a tribute to democracy's dream. She embraces every request to inspire mankind: whether it be delivering meals herself as chairperson of the 1995-6 Meals on Wheels Program, or awarding scholarships from the endowment in her name, Hattie is an exemplary humanitarian. She has received accolades and honors too numerous to list here. Suffice it to say that Hattie has done many good things

for good people and has been recognized for many of her efforts with awards, titles, honors, and tributes.

Hattie was born on April 25, 1897 in Rochester and has lived there all of her life. She had to leave school at the tender age of 11 and become a buttonhole maker to earn money and help support the family. As a child she never had a birthday party, her toys and clothes were second-hand. All her life she has done all she can so other children will get the chances she never did. She has endowments bearing her name at Monroe Community College, St. John Fisher College, Mary Cariola Children's Center, and Campership Fund for Needy Children.

Hattie is a wonderful human being whose outstanding lifelong humanitarian achievements deserve special recognition from each of us. Happy birthday Hattie Harris.●

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE CHARLES R. RICHEY

● Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I respectfully rise today and ask that we pay tribute to Judge Charles R. Richey.

Today the flags in front of the Thurgood Marshall Judiciary Building fly at half-mast in mourning for Judge Richey. Charles Richey was a great man and a superlative judge. We join in the loss with his wife, Mardelle, and his sons, Charles and William.

Judge Richey, despite his lofty status in the courts, always considered himself a man of the people and he consistently defied the labels of conservative and liberal. His public career began when he came to Washington as a legislative counsel to Representative Frances Payne Bolton from Ohio. Later he was appointed general counsel for the Maryland Public Service Commission during Spiro Agnew's last years as Governor. He was appointed to the Federal bench by President Nixon in 1971.

In 1979, the American Trial Lawyers Association voted Judge Richey Outstanding Federal Trial Judge. He was one of the busiest judges in the Washington U.S. District Court and ran a tight ship in the courtroom. He was a firm believer in swift justice and had the most up-to-date docket on the circuit.

Over the course of his career, Richey handed down many landmark decisions, including one he loved to recount—his 1976 ruling that called in the California tuna ships for violation of the Marine Mammal Protection Act. In that same year he also became the first judge to hold that employees who are sexually harassed by their superiors can file under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Ever willing to take on the Government on behalf of the little man, in 1981, Richey awarded \$6 million in back pay and \$10 million in future earnings for 324 women in the sex discrimination suit against the Government Printing Office, then the largest amount ever

awarded in a sex discrimination case. Perhaps the case most indicative of his feeling for the citizens though was his dismissal of charges against people camped in protest in Lafayette "Protest" Park. He said they were exercising their rights under the First Amendment.

Judge Richey's courtesy in the court was legendary. He used gender-neutral terms when discussing certain statutes mentioning only men. Despite his own strict Methodist upbringing, he gave witnesses options on oaths containing no religious references and dispensing with the Gideon Bible. One said of him, "Judge Richey is tough as shoe leather, but fair minded almost to a fault."

We shall all miss this man. He leaves behind an unparalleled judicial legacy and record of public service.

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, the American people are fed up with the IRS and its tactics. They are calling for change. Today I have taken a first step to help. I am joining as a cosponsor of S. 365, the Internal Revenue Service Accountability Act, which was introduced by my distinguished colleague from Georgia, Senator COVERDELL.

The IRS is in disarray from its top management all the way down to its field offices, and American taxpayers are paying the price for that disarray—a price in inefficiency, in inconvenience, in intrusiveness, and even in harassment. It is not fair for American taxpayers to fund an agency that is wasting their money and time. It is time to clean up the IRS. It is time for a change.

The IRS Accountability Act puts a tight rein on the IRS and its agents. It makes IRS agents personally accountable for their actions and subjects them to criminal prosecution if they abuse their authority by harassing taxpayers. The bill makes it a crime to release information from tax returns without proper authority. It restricts the ability of the IRS to conduct audits. It ensures that the IRS will abide by court decisions against it. And it ensures that taxpayers have a chance to correct any honest mistakes on their tax forms without incurring a penalty.

American taxpayers are honest, hard workers. They do not deserve an overzealous agency with its agents tormenting and harassing them. It is time to make the IRS more accountable for its actions.

This bill is an important first step toward protecting Americans from a Tax Code that is unfair, restrictive, punitive, and complicated. We need to do more. We need to completely overhaul our Tax Code to make it flatter, fairer, and simpler. We need to look at all options as we tackle this issue, but we must make sure that a new Tax Code eases the burden for families and busi-

nesses and encourages, rather than inhibits, growth, investment, and savings. That should be our top priority.

That is our task for the coming months and years. But until we can successfully meet that greater challenge, the very least we can do for the American taxpayer is to get the IRS cleaned up and off the taxpayers' backs.

The time has come for tax relief. The people of the United States have had enough. They want less government, less regulation, and less taxes. And they want less hassle and harassment from their Government. The IRS Accountability Act is a good start. As we approach tax day, April 15, it is only appropriate that we take a bold step toward fixing the IRS.

The time for change is now.

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF CENTRALIA, IL, MINING DISASTER

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to memorialize 111 miners from the town of Centralia, IL, who died nearly 50 years ago on March 25, 1947, in one of the worst coal mining disasters in U.S. history.

On that day, 142 men were working in mine No. 5 of the Centralia Coal Co. Only a few minutes remained before the end of their shift when there was an explosion in the mine. The blast raced through the tunnels beneath the town of Wamac on the southern edge of Centralia, leaving debris and poisonous fumes in its wake.

Thirty-one men managed to escape, but 111 of their coworkers were trapped 540 feet underground. For 4 days, rescuers worked to save them, but they could not reach the miners in time. In a tragic discovery, the searchers found notes next to some of the miners' bodies that they had written on scraps of paper and cardboard as they lay dying. "Tell Dad to quit the mine and take care of Mom," wrote one miner. "Tell baby and my loving boys good-bye and I am feeling weak. Lots of love." Together, the men left behind 99 widows and 76 children under the age of 18.

But the real tragedy for Centralia was that the disaster could have been prevented. As early as 1942—and continuing right up to the time of the explosion—State and Federal inspectors warned about dangerous conditions at the mine. In fact, when the blast occurred, the latest State and Federal reports were thumbtacked to a bulletin board outside the mine's wash house.

While the inspectors found numerous safety violations, they were particularly concerned about the combustible coal dust which was so thick that it would collect in the miners' shoes as they worked. The miners themselves knew how dangerous the dust could be, and more than a year before the disaster, four of them sent a letter to Illinois Gov. Dwight H. Green warning that it might explode one day. "This is a plea to you," they wrote, "to please save our lives, to please make the De-

partment of Mines and Minerals enforce the laws at the No. 5 mine, before we have a dust explosion."

But neither the governor nor Federal officials nor the Centralia Coal Co. took any significant action. Investigators later determined that one of the main causes of the explosion was the dust the miners had feared.

Three days after the disaster, Governor Green ordered State inspectors to close all unsafe coal mines. In Washington, Congress held hearings and launched an investigation. But for Centralia, IL, it was too late.

As we near the 50th anniversary of this disaster, our thoughts are with the people of Centralia and the families of those who lost their lives. We are reminded that too often, we react to disasters rather than taking steps to prevent them.

The greatest tribute we can give to the Centralia mine explosion victims is to ensure that critical worker safety and health protections are not weakened or destroyed. We must be vigilant in our efforts to make sure workers don't risk their lives simply by going to work.●

JUNETEENTH INDEPENDENCE DAY

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to pledge my support for the commemoration of June 19 as "Juneteenth Independence Day." This day marks a significant occurrence in American history, a day every American should reflect upon and remember.

Mr. President, June 19 is a day when all African-Americans were finally liberated from the bondage of slaveowners. Although President Lincoln signed the revolutionary Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1865, many slaves were still denied their lawful freedom. It was not until June 19, 1865, that all slaveowners officially recognized and abided by the dictates of the Emancipation Proclamation.

For too many years, African-Americans were denied basic rights and liberties that today all Americans enjoy. I stand here today, 132 years later, to express my view that this shameful aspect of American history should never be forgotten. For these reasons, I proudly endorse Senate Resolution 11. This significant legislative endeavor reminds every citizen of the unspeakable horrors to which many of our fellow Americans were subjected. It is my hope that every June 19 from this year forward will be celebrated as "Juneteenth Independence Day." It also is my hope that this day will serve as a reminder, of our past and a bridge all of us can use to overcome our differences and unite as Americans.

Mr. President, I believe commemoration of "Juneteenth Independence Day" warrants support from all members of the U.S. Senate. As a cosponsor of Senate Resolution 11, I urge my colleagues to join me in officially recognizing this important day.●