

the Journal for February 25; "yes" on passage of H.R. 514; and "yes" on passage of H.R. 707.

DON'T BLOW AWAY SOCIAL SECURITY

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 1999

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to an article printed in the March edition of the Labor Party Press, and ask that it be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for my colleagues' benefit:

"DON'T BLOW AWAY SOCIAL SECURITY"

There is no Social Security crisis. But if Democrats and Republicans get their way and privatize the system, there will be.

"It's weird," says economist Dean Baker of the Preamble Center, who has been studying and writing about Social Security reform. "We're all looking at the same numbers, and what the numbers say—even the pessimistic ones—is that we could take absolutely no action on Social Security for the next 34 years, and the program would continue to pay out all its benefits." And yet, politicians of both parties are all aflutter about the need to radically reform Social Security right away.

The picture they paint does sound grim. Mostly because people are living longer, today's workforce is supporting a greater and greater number of Social Security recipients. And the trend will probably continue. In 1995, there were nearly five people under 65 for every one person over retirement age. But by 2030, the ratio will be more like three workers for every retiree. And since Social Security is actually a pay-as-you-go system—current workers pay for current retirees—that spells trouble. (See "Social Security Basics" on page 4.) For the time being, we can supplement the shortfall by drawing from the extra pot of money the Social Security system has amassed (the Social Security Trust Fund). But then, in 2034, according to some projections, that fund will be depleted, and Social Security money will have to come from active workers alone. And, under the current formula, they would only be able to cover about 75 percent of the benefits retirees had been promised from Social Security.

President Clinton and members of Congress say "saving" Social Security is at the top of their agenda (after impeachment, of course). Many recipes have been written for rescuing Social Security. The most extreme plans involve privatization. Some people want the Social Security payroll withholding to go into our own "personal security account" that we can invest ourselves. Less radical plans would allow the Social Security Trust Fund to be invested in the stock market, where it would supposedly get a higher return than where it is invested now, in U.S. Treasury bonds.

President Clinton favors a combination of both ideas. He wants to invest part of the Social Security Fund (eventually up to 15 percent of it) in the stock market. He also proposes setting up voluntary new private accounts for middle- and low-income Americans—but outside the Social Security system.

At a time when the stock market is in the stratosphere, record numbers of Americans are investing, and the airwaves are full of experts advising the general public on how to get the best return, the idea of turning Social Security into a personal Wall Street investment portfolio is appealing to a lot of people.

But not everybody's sold on the idea. To begin with, many people question whether there even will be a Social Security shortfall. They argue that the Social Security hullabaloo is all based on some very gloomy economic projections made by Social Security trustees. In their reports, the trustees assume that over the next 75 years, the U.S. economy will grow at less than half the rate it has grown for the past 75 years. According to a report by the New York-based Century Foundation, an increase in annual economic growth of just .15 percentage points over the next 35 years would raise output by as much as the combined increase in the cost of both Social Security and Medicare. Meaning: Workers of the future may have no trouble supporting the growing ranks of the retired.

And yet, our politicians have managed to convince a majority of Americans that there really is a crisis at hand. Polls of younger Americans show that many believe they can expect little or no money from Social Security when they retire (unless, perhaps, the system is radically changed).

So who started this rush for a "solution" to the Social Security "crisis"? Follow the money. Wall Street could stand to gain \$240 billion in fees within the first 12 years of a privatized system, according to economist Christian Weller. That, he points out, is enough to give 20,000 fund managers an annual salary of \$1 million each. No wonder the financial industry has spent millions of dollars of late to promote the idea of Social Security privatization.

Economist Dean Baker believes there's a deeper motive behind the privatization push: "I think much of this is being driven by people who are just plain anti-government," he says. "And Social Security is the government's flagship social program."

It may be, says Baker, that some minor adjustments will need to be made to allow the Social Security system to continue in good health. (See the sidebar on "What We Should Do.") But privatizing the system and investing Social Security money in the stock market is not the way to go. In fact, he believes, it would take the "security" out of Social Security. Most of us would see our retirement incomes dramatically reduced.

HONORING GAIL WALLACE PETERSON ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. GARY A. CONDIT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 1999

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and honor the distinguished career of my good friend, Chief Gail Wallace "Pete" Peterson. On March 26th, Pete will step down after 16 years as the Chief of Police/Director of Public Safety for the City of Ceres and retire after 40 years in law enforcement.

Pete has accumulated a very impressive and broad range of experience. Rising through the ranks, Pete proved that setting high standards and meeting them on a daily basis is the key to success. I think we take for granted the role people like Pete play. As critical as the police chief is—particularly in small communities—Pete is more than just the head of law enforcement. He's a role model, a friend, and an excellent example.

I am proud to report Pete proved his commitment to leadership in bringing both police and fire services under one department to better serve the city. He has played an active role in supporting initiatives to enhance school

safety, prevent gang violence and provide a drug-free environment.

I appreciate Pete very much. He's been a good friend to me and he's been very good for the people of Ceres. It's hard to ask anyone for more than that. Under his watch the city met the challenge of developing community-oriented policing with an impressive list of new programs and initiatives including the city's first K-9 unit and motorcycle division. There are more police officers on the street thanks to his efforts. From the Explorer Scouts to the Bicycle Patrol program. Volunteers in Public Safety to working to increase traffic safety, Pete is responsible for several proactive programs to forge an effective bond with the public.

Outside the law enforcement arena, Pete is also a proven leader in a number of other areas including the Chamber of Commerce and Rotary. Pete is one of the invaluable people who always seem to be there for the community on a moment's notice.

I consider it an honor to call Pete my friend. He has served our community well and I wish him and his wife, Karen, much happiness as he begins his retirement. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the House of Representatives rise and join me in honoring Pete Peterson as he retires from a distinguished law enforcement career.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CLERGY FREEDOM OF CHOICE ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 1999

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Clergy Freedom of Choice Act. Under current law, clergy may opt out of Social Security within 2 years of ordination. My legislation extends this provision, to allow clergy to opt out at any time in their career.

For some clergy, they will choose to opt out for religious reasons, while others will do so because their particular denomination, sect or organization makes other arrangements for their retirement. It is important to note that this opt-out will only apply to income derived from pastoral duties.

I expect this legislation to be non-controversial, as it simply extends the current opt-out option for our religious leaders, providing them with a way to exercise their freedom of choice.

I ask my colleagues to join me in giving our pastors, priests, rabbis, and other clergy this choice.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRAINING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 1999

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, today, with the leadership of Congressman CHRISTOPHER SMITH and the bipartisan support of 48 of my colleagues, I sponsored the International Military Training Transparency and Accountability

Act. This legislation will ensure that the United States armed forces ceases to assist foreign militaries that do not share our respect for human rights.

Specifically, the bill prohibits the U.S. from providing military services or training to countries that are restricted by U.S. law from receiving International Military Education and Training (IMET) or other military assistance because of their strong record of human rights violations. This bill will also ensure that the Department of Defense cannot circumvent Congressional intent and find other methods in which to engage with foreign militaries that are notorious human rights abusers.

The Pentagon's relationship with the Indonesian military in recent years demonstrates the urgency and necessity of this legislation. In 1992, Congress banned U.S. taxpayer funded IMET training in the wake of the brutal Dili massacre, where over 270 peaceful demonstrators were shot down in an East Timor cemetery. This ban was enacted in an attempt to put an end to the egregious human rights abuses the Indonesian government committed against its own people and the people of East Timor.

Since 1975, the Indonesian government has engaged in a reign of terror in East Timor, implementing a policy of severe repression of the Timorese people. Since the onset of the occupation, over 200,000—one-third of the original population—have perished. Extra-judicial killings, kidnappings, tortures and imprisonments have become a way of life for those who challenge the authoritarian regime.

In 1997, I wrote Secretary of Defense William Cohen, requesting detailed information on the training of members of the Kopsassus, the elite, special forces division of the Indonesian military. The Kopassus is infamous for its role as the ruthless enforcer of Indonesian's illegal occupation of East Timor. Shortly thereafter, I received a response from the Pentagon describing the United States' continued training of the Indonesian military under another program—the Joint Combined Exchange and Training (JCET) program. While the JCET program is legal, it violated the spirit of Congressional efforts to ban any military assistance to the notoriously brutal and repressive Indonesian armed forces.

Under the auspices of the JCET program, U.S. Special Operations forces trained the Kopassus in sniper skills, marksmanship, and close quarter combat, all while the Kopassus continued to repress and terrorize the people of East Timor. In Spring, 1998, the Pentagon announced it would cease its military relationship with Indonesia indefinitely. Yet, the Pentagon's decision to end military exercises with the Indonesian forces should not have come voluntarily. It should be illegal for our armed services to engage in any manner with known human rights violators.

More important, this legislation will limit U.S. assistance to egregious violators of human rights. In Latin America, and in Africa—the U.S. continues to train and engage with forces that are well-known for their disregard for basic human dignity. The International Military Training Transparency and Accountability Act will clarify our stance on engagement with brutal military forces. We have a responsibility to ensure that our national security policy embodies the very democratic principles it seeks to defend.

NORTHERN IRELAND PEACE PROCESS—ST. PATRICK'S DAY, MARCH 1999

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 1999

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, as Saint Patrick's Day approaches once again, permit me to share some thoughts with my colleagues concerning the peace process in Ireland.

Ireland is at another critical crossroads in its search for a lasting peace and justice. The difficult struggle in the north of Ireland is of concern to millions of Americans, as well as the peace loving people all over the world.

Last year was an historic chapter in Irish history. The Good Friday accord was signed on April 3rd. The Irish people, both in the north and south, overwhelmingly endorsed that peace accord in a public referendum. The people in the north in May then elected, as part of the terms of the peace accord, a new Northern Ireland assembly to govern much of their own internal affairs.

Regrettably, as has so often been the case over the last several years, the issue of IRA arms "decommissioning" is still a major obstacle to further progress in the effort to bring about a permanent lasting peace and real concrete change to the north of Ireland. These are common goals which we, and most of the people in all of Ireland accept, and want desperately for their children and for future generations.

What is still lacking is the political will and leadership on the ground in the north, especially in the unionist community, to begin to bring about the much needed real change, genuine "power sharing" and an end to the unsatisfactory status quo of unionist domination.

The arms issue is once again being used as the old "unionist veto" which blocks progress and full implementation of the Good Friday peace accords.

In particular, the decommissioning issue is being used to block the creation of a new Northern Ireland cabinet level executive intended to help govern the north, as well as to help implement the new North/South bodies under the Good Friday accord. All of the steps needed to devolve that power sharing arrangement have been taken by Westminster, and now all we need is strong leadership from the Northern Ireland Secretary of State, the British government and the unionist leadership in the north to create the new executive.

The new cabinet executive must include the second major nationalist (Catholic) party Sinn Fein. It won that legitimate right through the ballot box and the democratic process to participate and govern the north, as well as to participate fully in the new North/South cross border bodies to govern the new Ireland.

Like it or not, the unionists must acknowledge that Sinn Fein has a legitimate democratic mandate, which under the terms of the accord, entitles them to two ministerial posts on the new Executive Cabinet to be formed.

The Good Friday Accord did not make the issue of IRA decommissioning a precondition to Sinn Fein's entry into government and the new institutions it established. It provides only for best efforts and the hopeful completion of the arms decommissioning process by the year 2000.

What is needed is not more calls for symbolic arms destruction gestures in the midst of a genuine cease-fire, but substantial power sharing as envisioned by the Good Friday accord.

The entire complex Good Friday accord and peace process will work only if everyone keeps their word and does not seek revenge on those portions of the agreement they now profess to dislike.

There can be no unilateral re-negotiations now of portions of the accord that some parties decide they don't want to honor, especially now that the day for power sharing is soon to be upon them.

Yet, sadly, the IRA arms issue is once again being used as a red herring to re-write and undo the Good Friday accord and to thwart the will of the Irish people who voted in massive numbers for the accord and for peaceful political change.

It is time to get on with it, and put an end to the unionist veto which for far too long has been used to maintain the unsatisfactory status quo which is in the north of Ireland today.

We all know far too well how political vacuums in the past have been filled in Northern Ireland. No one wants a return of violence on all sides.

Change must come on the ground. The nationalist community must be given equality and be given their rightful voice in the future of the new north. Many in the nationalist community have chosen Sinn Fein to represent them in the new government and no one has the right to try to undo that election.

We also need to see new and acceptable community policing in the north, and equal opportunity and a shared economic future.

Our House International Relations Committee will be holding full committee hearings on April 22nd on the need for new and acceptable policing in the north. We will be taking constructive testimony from witnesses from the north and the leading international human rights groups on the question of reform of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), and the compelling need for new and acceptable policing. The new police service must be both responsive and accountable as envisioned by the Good Friday accord.

We look forward to constructive ideas for meaningful police reform in the north to emerge from our hearings and examination of this vital question. More than 9000 witnesses and 2000 written submissions on this important issue have been presented to the Patten Commission which has been examining this issue in northern Ireland.

Our hearing efforts will add to that record and will consider police reform in other parts of the world, which have brought about change and improved public support for the police.

We must work together to bring about concrete meaningful change and reform in the north.

At a minimum, if the RUC is not disbanded, as many in the nationalist community are demanding based on years of harsh experience and great pain and suffering, we need real and concrete responses and a major change as soon as possible. At a minimum, there must be root and branch reforms of the RUC including such proposals as follows:

1. Bringing in new police leadership, starting at the very top, who will publicly apologize to all of the community for past policing abuses