

generally receive lower pension benefits. These public service employees include secretaries, school cafeteria workers, teachers' aids, and others who receive low wages as government employees. The pension offset as applied to this group is punitive, unfairly harsh and bad policy.

Government pensions were tailored to reduce benefits that were equal to many combined private pension-Social Security policies in the private sector for upper level government workers. However, this was not true for lower income workers, such as employees who work as secretaries, school cafeteria workers, teachers' aids, and others who generally receive lower pension benefits.

To illustrate the harsh impact of the pension offset, consider a widow who retired from the Federal Government and receives a civil service annuity of \$550 monthly. The full widow's benefit is \$385. The current pension offset law reduces the widow's benefit to \$19 a month. Two-thirds of the \$550 civil service annuity is \$367, which is then subtracted from the \$385 widow's benefit, leaving only \$19. The retired worker receives \$569, \$550 plus \$19, per month.

Proponents of the pension offset claim that the offset is justified because survivor benefits were intended to be in lieu of pensions. However, were this logic followed across the board, then people with private pension benefits would be subject to the offset as well. But this is not the case.

While Social Security benefits of spouses or surviving spouses earning government pensions are reduced by \$2 for every \$3 earned, Social Security benefits of spouses and surviving spouses earning private pensions are not subject to the offset at all. If retirees on private pensions do not have Social Security benefits subject to offset, why should retirees who work in the public service system?

Mr. Speaker, the pension offset has created a problem that cries out for reform. It will cause tens of thousands of retired government employees, including many former paraprofessionals, custodians or lunch room workers, to live their retirement years at or near the poverty level.

My office has received numerous calls, all from widows who are just getting by and desperately need some relief from the pension offset. During the 105th Congress I introduced the Government Pension Offset Repeal bill, H.R. 273. Thanks to the grassroots support for it, it received 183 votes. Today we introduced this bill with 119 cosponsors already, and I look forward with my colleagues to gaining passage of this important reform legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BOEHLERT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

U.S. MILITARY ACTION TAKING PLACE IN SERBIA IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, U.S. military forces are now bombing a foreign nation halfway around the world. This cannot be a proud moment for America. The reason given for doing so is that Serbian leaders have not done what we have told them to do.

Serbia has not invaded another country but is involved in a nasty civil war, with both sides contributing to the violence. There is no American security interest involved in Serbia. Serbia has not threatened us nor used any force against any American citizen.

□ 1945

As bad as the violence is toward the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, our ability to police and stop all ethnic fighting around the world is quite limited and the efforts are not permitted under constitutional law. We do not even pretend to solve the problems of sub-Saharan Africa, Tibet, East Timor, Kurdistan, and many other places around the world where endless tragic circumstances prevail.

Our responsibility as U.S. Members of Congress is to preserve liberty here at home and uphold the rule of law. Meddling in the internal and dangerous affairs of a nation involved in civil war is illegal and dangerous. Congress has not given the President authority to wage war.

The House resolution regarding Kosovo was narrowly, reluctantly, and conditionally passed. It was a non-binding resolution and had no effect of law. Even if it did, the resolution dealt with sending troops as a peacekeeping force to Kosovo only if a peace agreement was signed. There was no mention of endorsing an act of war against Serbia. Besides, the resolution was not the proper procedure for granting war powers to a president.

The Senate resolution, now claimed to be congressional consent for the President to wage war, is not much better. It, too, was a sense of Congress resolution without the force of law. It implies the President can defer to NATO for authority to pursue a war effort.

Only Congress can decide the issue of war. Congress cannot transfer the constitutional war power to the President or to NATO or to the United Nations. The Senate resolution, however, specifically limits the use of force to air operations and missile strikes, but no war has ever been won with air power alone. The Milosevic problem will actually get worse with our attacks, and ground troops will likely follow.

It has been argued we are needed to stop the spread of war throughout the Balkans. Our presence will do the opposite, but it will certainly help the military-industrial complex. Peaceful and

cooperative relations with Russia, a desired goal, has now ended; and we have provoked the Russians into now becoming a much more active ally of Serbia.

U.S. and NATO policy against Serbia will certainly encourage the Kurds. Every argument for Kosovo's independence can be used by the Kurds for their long-sought-after independence. This surely will drive the Turks away from NATO.

Our determination to be involved in the dangerous civil war may well prompt a stronger Greek alliance with their friends in Serbia, further splitting NATO and offending the Turks, who are naturally inclined to be sympathetic to the Albanian Muslims. No good can come of our involvement in this Serbian civil war, no matter how glowing and humanitarian the terms used by our leaders.

Sympathy and compassion for the suffering and voluntary support for the oppressed is commendable. The use of force and acts of war to pick and choose between two sides fighting for hundreds of years cannot achieve peace. It can only spread the misery and suffering, weaken our defenses and undermine our national sovereignty.

Only when those who champion our war effort in Serbia are willing to volunteer for the front lines and offer their own lives for the cause will they gain credibility. Promoters of war never personalize it. It is always some other person or some other parent's child's life who will be sacrificed, not their own.

With new talk of reinstituting the military draft since many disillusioned military personnel are disgusted with the morale of our armed forces, all Americans should pay close attention as our leaders foolishly and carelessly rush our troops into a no-win war of which we should have no part.

TRIBUTE TO DOROTHY IRENE HEIGHT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, in light of this being Women's History Month, the Congresswoman from California (Ms. LEE) will be on the floor later this evening on a special order on women of color.

Because of a prior commitment, I will not be here at that time. But I would like to use a few minutes to offer a few words concerning a great woman of color of this century, Dorothy Irene Height, President and CEO Emeritus of the National Council of Negro Women.

Dorothy Height has spent half a century of ground-breaking service to her country to African American women. She is one of the great civil rights and women's rights leaders of our time. And I emphasize both of those great missions in speaking about Dr. Height.

Today is Dr. Dorothy Irene Height's 87th birthday. Mentored by her predecessor, the great Mary McLeod Bethune, Dorothy Height has spent a lifetime mentoring black women.

Today was no leisure day for Dorothy Height. As the day began, she was here in this House protesting the majority's census proposal that knowingly undercounts children and people of color. Dorothy Height has spent a lifetime keeping on top of issues of the day like the census.

There are so many landmarks in her extraordinary career, I will not attempt to list them. Let me name a few of the great ones. She is the first national female civil rights leader of the modern era. That was clear when 10 civil right leaders got together in 1963 and decided that there would be the first mass march on Washington for civil rights of the 20th century.

There were 10 leaders. Only one of them was a woman. My colleagues can imagine who the others were, leaders like the heads of the NAACP and Urban League. And there was that one great woman, Dorothy Height, the President of the National Council of Negro Women.

To cite another landmark, when women's rights burst on the scene, Mr. Speaker, Dorothy Height was one of the first leaders to understand that there must be no cleavage between women's rights and African American rights, between race and sex.

Inevitably there was some confusion about how blacks were to see this great new movement of half of the population. It took real leadership to come forward and clear up this confusion. Dorothy Height was among the foremost who forged unity. She even helped to make good feminists out of black men, who have ever since been in the forefront of women's rights.

All the while she has been carrying the great domestic issues of our time, Dorothy Height has carried an international portfolio. She indeed is recognized today as a world leader on matters of women of color.

I come to the floor this evening to salute Dorothy Irene Height, who has made the National Council of Negro Women one of America's great coalitions. Black women's groups of every variety are united under the umbrella of the Council. Together they work to improve the lives of African American women.

In celebrating women of color this evening, we would do well to begin with the life and times and work of Dorothy Irene Height.

U.S. IS EMBARKING ON VERY DANGEROUS AND WRONG COURSE IN KOSOVO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, last August we bombed Afghanistan and

Sudan, in bombing raids that most Americans have already forgotten. We rushed into that bombing without informing even the full Joint Chiefs of Staff and without congressional approval, and later found we had even bombed a medicine factory.

Last December we started bombing Iraq, once again bombing people that our own leaders tell us are not our enemies. Many press reports since then have confirmed that the White House rigged the UNSCOM report in a lame attempt to justify the Iraqi bombing.

Now we are going to drop bombs on Kosovo. We are spending billions and billions of hard-earned tax dollars in all these bombing campaigns. Yesterday I had a group of people in my office requesting \$100 million more for Alzheimer's research. I told those people to just try to get the President to stop bombing for part of one day.

We are dropping bombs and making enemies out of people who want to be our friends. And we are doing all this in places where there is absolutely no threat to our national security and no vital U.S. interest at stake.

The Christian Science Monitor said a few weeks ago that there are wars or military conflicts going on right now in 46 different places around the world. Many of these situations are just as bad or worse than Kosovo right now. There have been 2,000 people killed in Kosovo in the last year. As bad as this is, columnist Charles Krauthammer pointed out on television Sunday that more people were killed recently in Ethiopia in just one day.

If we intervene in every place where there are human rights violations, we will have to go into even more places than the 46 where the Christian Science Monitor found military conflicts. We seem to be following a CNN foreign policy, going heavily into whatever situation is being emphasized on the national news at the moment.

We should try to be friends with all nations. But we do not have the resources to become the world's policeman, and we will make more enemies than friends if we become the world's bully.

And we cannot hide behind NATO. Everyone knows that this bombing in Kosovo would not be done if the U.S. did not insist on it. NATO was set up as a defensive organization. Now it is being turned into an offensive one, attacking a non-member nation that has not threatened us or any other country.

We are intervening in a civil war. It is as if one of our own States was attempting to secede and our military attempted to keep it in and some other country started bombing us. The Kosovo bombings have been attempted to be justified on the basis that the fighting will spread. This is ridiculous. Milosevic may be a tyrant, but he is not attempting to nor does he have the resources to spread worldwide. It is ridiculous to try to equate this situation to when we were fighting world com-

munism. There is no similarity to Russia under Khrushchev or China under Mao Tse-Tung.

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger wrote a few days ago that U.S. intervention in Kosovo is a mistake. He said, "The proposed deployment in Kosovo does not deal with any threat to U.S. security as this concept has been traditionally conceived." He pointed out that "ethnic conflict has been endemic in the Balkans for centuries."

David Broder wrote in the Washington Post last week, "Sending in the military to impose a peace on people who have not settled ancient quarrels has to be the last resort, not the standard way of doing business."

This is a religious or ethnic conflict that we cannot resolve unless we stay for a very long time at a cost of many, many billions. The President promised we would be out of Bosnia by the end of 1996. This is now March of 1999, and we are still there. I was told by another Member of the House recently that we have now spent \$20 billion in Bosnia.

We are about to get into a very dangerous situation. This is an European problem. It is not something that we should risk American lives over. Young Americans may be killed. We should not be so eager or willing to send our troops into this situation. We cannot afford to spend all these billions just to show that the President is a great world statesman or to make sure that he goes down in history as a great world leader.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Thomas Friedman wrote recently in the New York Times these words:

Stop. Before we dive into sending American troops to sort out the Serbian-Albanian civil war in Kosovo, could we talk about this for a second? If ever there was a time for an honest reassessment of U.S. policy towards Bosnia and Kosovo, it is now. And what that reassessment would conclude is that we should redo the Dayton Accords, otherwise we are going to end up with U.S. troops in Bosnia and Kosovo forever, without solving either problem.

Mr. Friedman is right. We are embarking on a very dangerous and very wrong course.

HONORING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH AND WOMEN OF COLOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to participate in the celebration of Women's History Month and women of color. I applaud my distinguished colleague from California (Ms. LEE) who will later on this evening be conducting an hour discussion on this celebration.

For more than 10 years, the month of March has been dedicated to the celebration of women in American history. This month affords us the opportunity to appreciate the accomplishments of women and the role they have played