

The Departments of Commerce and Treasury will issue new regulations with regard to Iran, Libya and Sudan. The Departments of State and Treasury must review the pending applications for agricultural sales to Iran.

On January 5, policy changes were made to authorize case-by-case licensing of food and agricultural imports to Cuba. Congress would have to amend current law to change this policy, and it is my sincere hope that Congress will take up through the committee process and hopefully through action on this floor, a sincere and open debate as to whether or not our policy that we have toward Cuba should in fact be revised along the same lines of which we are talking of other countries.

So here today I take this minute, and I will soon yield back if I have any balance of time, to just say let us use this new policy to help our producers, in this case, move wheat, corn and rice and other commodities to our customers overseas, in whatever area is affected by these sanctions.

It is important for this body and for the administration to think long and hard before we impose unilateral sanctions. Unilateral trade sanctions have never proven effective. When we sanction, when we deny markets and our friends take those markets, it only hurts producers and workers in America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

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

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

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

PASSAGE OF EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING FOR FARM SERVICE AGENCY NEEDED NOW

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

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the long delay in passing the emergency supplemental funding for the Farm Service Agency lending programs and FSA staffing budget.

This is truly an emergency, in every sense of the word. Tracy Beckman, FSA Director in my state of Minnesota, has told me that he will be forced to lay off FSA employees because of the delay in passing the emergency supplemental. The demand for loans and other FSA services is skyrocketing because of the commercial banks' concern about declining farm incomes. Many producers are having a difficult time securing private sector operating loans. FSA has to step in to fill the gap with guaranteed and direct loans to producers. Demand for loans this year is up 75% from a year ago, the Secretary of Agriculture tells me.

Minnesota FSA will approve more loan applications by the end of the fiscal year than they have funding. If this supplemental is not approved, they will be unable to deliver the funds to farmers because their accounts have run dry. Planting season has arrived, and those farmers without operating loans are going to be left high and dry.

Mr. Speaker, now is the time to approve these truly emergency funds. We must not delay action on this matter because of disputes between Congress and the White House on other matters. The supplemental bill threatens to be bogged down with billions of non-emergency spending, and I worry that this may sink the ship.

The president requested \$6 billion to fund the air campaign against Yugoslavia. Some on the other side of the aisle want to pass as much as \$20 billion. The Senate majority leader suggested \$10 or \$11 billion. I do not understand how funds the Administration has not even requested could be remotely considered emergency spending. We must remember these are Social Security funds we are spending here. If we are going to continue to claim to be fiscally responsible, we must be honest with ourselves about what is emergency funding and what is desirable funding. What ever happened to not opening the Social Security lock box unless it is an absolute emergency?

I propose that we develop and pass in the shortest possible time frame a free standing emergency agriculture spending bill to provide critical guaranteed and direct operating loan funds that our farmers need to get into the field and the FSA staff to deliver those programs. These are truly emergency funding needs. We must move forward with a clean bill for agriculture now, and not hold hostage these funds for American farmers in a raid on the Social Security trust fund to benefit non-emergency defense spending.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from California (Mr. DOOLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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

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

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

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

APPROVAL OF FARM SERVICE AGENCY EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING NEEDED NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, it is springtime in America. Normally that means that there is great optimism, great excitement, particularly among our agriculture community. Our farmers know that now is the time to put the seed in the ground and prepare for the fall's harvest, to prepare to feed this country and a good portion of the rest of the world.

But, regrettably, it is a sad time in the farm community this year. Prices are low. We just had terrible disasters last year. We had a bad crop. The agriculture income is down some 28 percent.

As I traveled the First Congressional District that I am privileged to represent over the last few weeks to see the distress, the discouragement, the despair that exists in our agriculture community today, it is a terrible thing.

I rise today to once again ask the Speaker to move our agriculture emergency supplemental appropriations bill and provide the emergency loan money that this House and the Senate have both approved. It is absolutely unbelievable that the Speaker and the Republican leadership would hold America's farmers hostage as they are doing now. It is shameful.

Our farmers are good, honest, hard-working people. They had a farm bill forced upon them in 1996 that they knew was going to be a disaster, and it has been. The administration, as my distinguished colleague from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) just mentioned, made a great step forward yesterday by lifting sanctions on some of our markets, and that is going to be very helpful. But you do not get but one chance a

year to make a crop, and if our farmers are not provided loans and those loans are not provided almost immediately, within the next few weeks, they will not get a chance to make a crop this year. Many of them have already missed that opportunity.

You cannot wait until the middle of the summer to plant a crop. It will be too late. You have to plant it in April and May.

It is time for our farmers to put the seed in the ground. It is time for our Speaker and the Republican leadership to let this emergency supplemental bill be conferenced and give our farmers an even break.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished ranking member of the House Committee on Agriculture, a great friend of America's farmers and a great leader for America and for agriculture, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM).

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and would amplify a little more on what he has just said regarding the conference that should be going on between the House and the Senate regarding the emergency agriculture appropriation, a request sent here to this body 62 days ago from the Secretary of Agriculture, acknowledging that we were going to have some credit problems, that the amount budgeted for credit was not going to be sufficient, and, therefore, an emergency supplemental was going to be required.

Everyone knows this. The House Committee on Agriculture, both sides of the aisle, are in agreement that these monies are needed and must be forthcoming, but it is very frustrating when we have already had to have two stopgap proposals in order to just get us to the next point, that we have had to have the Secretary of Agriculture juggling various accounts just to continue to be able to provide the service in our various FSA offices.

But we are now kind of at the end of our rope. The Secretary this morning informed us that at the end of the close of business today there would no longer be the ability to accept applications for loans. This week we have averaged 150 applications per day. This is four times the normal demand for FSA loans.

It is really inexcusable that, for whatever reasons, the conferees have not been able to come up with an acceptable compromise that would allow the House to work its will. I know that there are budget considerations, and I remind everyone, including myself, when we are talking about expenditure of emergency funds, whether it be for agriculture, for Kosovo, or for any other purpose, for Central America, the emergency that has already been created there and which is also pending, something which needs to be taken care of, all of these dollars are Social Security Trust Fund dollars.

□ 1415

I see we have been joined by our friend from Michigan (Mr. SMITH), and

he and I and others have been working and trying to come up with proposals in which we might deal with the Social Security problem. I welcome his efforts there, and I appreciate his welcoming of mine.

But when we talk about this particular proposal today and the state of agriculture, we go into it with our eyes open. That is why the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) and I, and I believe the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) joined us in this, in support of the Blue Dog budget, if memory serves me correctly, and recognizing that there were going to be some additional needs, and we proposed to budget for them. The good news was that we had a majority of Democrat supporters, 26 Republican supporters; the bad news is it takes 218 votes to do it. I understand that.

But having said all of this, that gets us right back to what the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) was saying a moment ago. We have a crisis, it is really inexcusable, and it is one of the reasons the American people get so frustrated with all of us, because of our seeming inability to make timely decisions.

One of the decisions that could be is that we do not want to fund this. That would be one of the decisions. If a majority of the House say these are monies we should not expend, these are loans we should not make, therefore let us not approve it, I can accept that. Mr. Speaker, a 218-vote decision by this body saying these loans should not be made would be a perfectly logical, legitimate decision of this body to be made. But what is inexcusable is to not make the decision because somebody is not able to please somebody within somebody's conference or caucus, and that is what is going on. We would like to see this come forward, deal with it in an open and honest way.

I yield back now to the gentleman from Arkansas, and if there is any time additionally I will have a few other comments to be made.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from the great State of Texas. I now yield to our distinguished colleague, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON).

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for conducting this Special Order. I am delighted to see the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is joining us, as we work together on a budget on Social Security.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, if the gentlewoman would yield, I just want to say that I come in support of preserving American agriculture, because generally in this Congress, in this Nation, it is not a partisan issue. I say this with some emotion, because we have a serious challenge facing traditional agriculture in the United States.

Other countries are doing everything they can to protect their farmers. We have been somewhat carefree in saying we should go to a market system and

therefore, it is up to whatever the market might bear on American farmers. That is fine if the, if you will, playing field were level, but if other countries are going to subsidize their farmers to protect their farmers, that becomes an ultimate competitive disadvantage to our farmers, and then we have to be more aggressive in making sure that we preserve our agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleagues allowing me to interrupt.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments from the distinguished Member from the State of Michigan.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Again, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's leadership in this area and for providing this forum for us to urge the House and the leadership of the House to act.

I think we all recognize that there is an emergency. We all acknowledge that our farmers are very important to us. We all acknowledge that they provide the basics for life, food and fiber, and we know they are suffering. In fact, there is a farm resource center which is a national crisis line for farmers where they call to get help. However, when the farmers call, the line is busy because so many farmers are calling for help. And this Congress also shows a busy signal. We are not listening to our farmers.

I share the observations of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) who said there is a level of frustration and a belief that we are insensitive to their plight. I urge this Congress, I cannot beg any more severely than I know how, that our farmers are hurting, they are hurting. It will be too late to wait until they go out of business to help them. We want to help them to be viable farmers, vigorous, profitable people who can make a contribution.

Farmers do not want to be dependent on the United States; however, they would like to think that the government understands their value in this economy. They would like to think that their government has not turned their back on them. They would like to think that they can prosper in this robust economy, which they are not. All they are asking, all the President has asked is for \$1.1 billion to speak to the credit crisis, a credit crisis that will speak to the current need.

Now, I want to tell my colleagues there is a credit crisis even more severe than the current need, and later on I certainly will be considering again a credit provision in the legislation that would speak to some of the disadvantages written into the 1996 farm bill that denies people a second chance, denies that they might have been in a disastrous area, denies them having an opportunity for a direct operational loan, and also to amend the shared appreciation agreement. Those are structural things that we need to do.

But the emergency, the emergency is now, and in fact I was told earlier this morning this is the 62nd day, I say to

my colleagues, that this has been on the floor. The House passed it, the Senate passed it. We just cannot get together. So I want to urge Members of Congress who care about farmers, but if they do not care about farmers, just care about themselves, care about being able to have available food, quality food at an affordable price. These farmers provide that for us. The consumers are interdependent on the survivability of farm families and farm communities. We are one Nation, and food adds to our national security. So we should not be misled.

This is not something we can put under the rug; this is not something we can ignore. Everyday we ignore it, we ignore it at our peril. Certainly our farmers are going under, but we are tied to them, and to the extent we understand that, we would have a chorus of people crying out, saying help our farmers, because when we help our farmers, we help ourselves and we help our Nation.

Again, I say to the gentleman, I just appreciate his leadership and allowing us to cry out to say we really need this emergency supplemental and we need it now. We do not need it 2 months from now. Planting time is going on right now.

I can tell my colleagues, the census was taken recently, the farm census, and in 1997 they found out from a 5-year period in North Carolina, and North Carolina may be handling this crisis a little better than some, but over a 5-year period we were losing one farm per day. That has nothing to do with the suppression and the depression of prices. Add that to the mix.

Then we begin to understand the severity of the problem of big farmers, small farmers, family farmers, individual farmers, young farmers, old farmers, black farmers, minority farmers. All of them are suffering, and to the extent that we can understand that we are tied to their survival or the lack thereof, I think we would be incensed. There is a time when we should be outraged at something, and I am trying to build that outrage in this Congress that we ought to all join together and make sure we have an opportunity to respond.

This is truly a crisis; it is a crisis, it is an emergency. It is truly an emergency. We should treat it as an emergency. We do not just say it in words, we act it out. We say we love our farmers. Well, where is the proof of that? And if it is an emergency, why are we talking about an offset? Why are we putting this emergency behind all of the other emergencies? Now, truly our military and our national defense is an emergency, but I do think that farmers should, which was already on a schedule, should now be set aside for this. We can do both. We have the capacity to respond to both of those. We are not limited. The only thing we are limited by is our political will. The only thing we are limited by is our vision of how we are so tied together.

So I cannot urge my colleagues strongly enough that this is indeed a serious matter and we are all tied to this. Not just those of us who live in rural areas, but our national security is tied to our ability for our farmers to grow and produce very basic food and fiber that they do so well, not only for this country but much of the world.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina, not only for her remarks but for her great leadership as the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Government Operations of the Committee on Agriculture.

I now yield to the distinguished gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY).

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I would echo the comments so ably made in the course of this Special Order about the crisis in agriculture. The crisis is a deep, threatening crisis that will in North Dakota cause more families to leave their farms in search of other work than we have seen in many, many years. I have with me just some photocopies of auction bills.

We are seeing an awful lot of these auction bills, and for those not from farm country, they may not realize that each of these represents the end of a family tradition, heritage, history. Farms that have been in the land and under constant cultivation for more than the last 100 years, farms continuously held by families since the prairie on the Northern Plains was broken, now going under because of inadequate prices, because of a farm program that is not working anywhere near what was promised when it was passed in the 104th Congress. As a result, as a result of the loss of profitability in agriculture, we do not just have people selling out, we have other people knocking on the door of their banks for credit and being turned away.

Now, the funds that are at issue for agriculture lending, that we so critically need in this supplemental appropriation, are required because they are available to guarantee credit privately offered through banks to farmers, as per the Federal programs to provide that kind of credit guarantee, keep the credit available for farmers, or funds directly lent by the farm service agency itself, the lender of last resort for farmers. Well, believe me, this is the last resort, and that is why they are calling, calling to the tune of 150 a week.

In fact, the statistics from the U.S. Department of Agriculture are that they have received more than 8,000 loan applications since the supplemental request for additional loan money was sent up to Congress on February 26, 62 days ago.

Our new Speaker, DENNIS HASTERT, is from Illinois. He knows agriculture. They have an awful lot of agriculture in Illinois. He knows one thing, that between now and February 26 when this first request came up, that has been

planting season, a very critical time in a farmer's year. You go to the bank and get the loan, the operating loan. With that loan you buy seed, fertilizer, gas for the tractor. You go and put in the crop, but you can only put in the crop if you get the essential operating capital for the beginning of the crop year. What happens if Congress continues to wait, if Speaker Hastert continues to fail to lead, to bring this bill to the floor so we can get the money out there, is the window will close.

I represent North Dakota. It has one of the latest planting periods in the country because of our northern location, and yet even in North Dakota we are seeing the window come perilously close to shutting altogether because we have failed to act on this supplemental.

□ 1430

I cannot think of a more heedless, tone-deaf signal for the Congress to send to the farmers of this country than to dilly-dally around, play politics, wring our hands so piously during our trips back to the district during the weekend about our concern for farmers, but fail to pass the essential operating loan money they need until after the period has passed and they can no longer get their crops in the ground.

That would really be the limit. Unfortunately, we are reaching the edge of that limit by Congress' failure to bring up the agriculture appropriations supplemental. We are putting farmers, individual families that have farmed for generations, in the circumstance where, even as the clock is tolling relative to making essential spring planting decisions, they do not even know whether they will have the financing capital.

I cannot think of a more cruel hoax to play for farmers, dangling the prospect out there that we will be there to help them, but then somehow getting too politically distracted in our own internal partisan warfare that seems to have taken on its own reality, irrespective of the real needs of this country and the people we represent.

I ask the gentleman from Illinois (Speaker HASTERT), I hope the gentleman is listening, because he owes this body more, he owes our Nation's farmers more. When the gentleman fails to lead, others take over. The way others are running this place, they are not responding to the very real needs of the American people that we represent, and in this case, the needs of the American farmer, farmers that the Speaker knows very well because of his long, distinguished representation of the State of Illinois.

I cannot for the life of me understand what is going on in the Speaker's mind to let this situation linger and to leave our farmers in this kind of predicament.

I have now heard that they are seriously considering bringing funding for the Kosovo campaign to the floor without addressing the needs of our farms.

I think that, without question, the NATO involvement, the expense of U.S. participation in the NATO involvement is a legitimate exercise and obviously requires additional financial support, appropriately passed on an emergency basis.

But this crisis halfway around the world is no more important in the scheme of things to our country than the crisis right here at home on our farms. To leave the plight of our farmers behind as we respond to situations across the world would be the absolute height of foolishness.

I would implore majority leadership to think again and not address Kosovo without addressing our farmers. On April 26 of this year we sent a letter to the Speaker, signed by almost 30 members of both political parties, urging the action on the agriculture supplemental appropriations.

This is a bipartisan appeal from farm country, Mr. Speaker, so that the Speaker might be able to bring up the appropriations so desperately needed by our farmers. Do not leave our farmers out, even while we respond to situations halfway across the world.

I would be happy to entertain a dialogue with the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY), a further discussion on the critical need facing our farmers and why Congress has to act now.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from North Dakota, and I appreciate the comments he just made. Certainly all of us that represent major agriculture-producing areas are mystified by the actions of the Speaker and the Republican leaders on this matter, and hopefully very soon this will be resolved. It is so irresponsible for us to leave America's farmers twisting in the wind while we play partisan politics.

Mr. POMEROY. If the gentleman will yield further, Mr. Speaker, these loan applications have been mounting in the FSA offices in counties across North Dakota. Farmers turn away from their banker, come in to FSA, put in the application, and they evaluate whether the application is creditworthy or not. We cannot make loans that are not creditworthy, but so often the case is they are creditworthy loans that should be financed if the loan money was available.

We now have stockpiled, in other words, applications filed that cannot be funded, \$45 million worth of loan requests. If the gentleman wants to calculate how many farmers are waiting, holding their breath, not knowing whether they will be in the field or selling out in just a month, we just have to figure how many loans, how many farmers can be served by \$45 million.

Farming is an expensive business, but there are a whole lot of operating loans represented in that size of capital, and that is just North Dakota alone. Across the country, they reckon that this \$1.1 billion in additional lending authority that funding the agri-

culture supplemental will make available will be literally thousands, thousands of family farmers that are either reduced to auction sales, or on with the business of farming, the business that is their profession, the business that has been their family's heritage. That is really what it all comes down to.

Sometimes I think that we get so wrapped up, and in fact, the venal partisanship of this place has absolutely taken over our ability to see reality anymore, and we spend all our time thinking about how we can jam the other side and utterly quit thinking about what ought to be job one for us, and that is serving the interests of the people that elected us to these offices.

There is nothing Republican or Democrat about a farmer being able to get the loan money they need to get in the field. There is not a Republican ideology or a Democrat ideology on this loan request, this funding request sent up by Secretary Glickman in February that would make this funding available for these farm loans.

Why in the world one would take the plight of family farmers and put them in the middle of this vicious, disgusting, unworthy partisan contest is beyond me.

But I will tell the Members this, the gentleman from Illinois (Speaker HASTERT) owes us better. He is the Speaker. He is the leader of this Chamber. He is the leader of the Republican Party, not the majority whip. It is time for this Speaker to stand up and be counted. It is time for this Speaker to lead, and to lead on behalf of the farmers that are in his State of Illinois and in my State of North Dakota and the gentleman's State of Arkansas and all across this country.

Until he does that, every day the planting deadlines are passing for some farmers in more southern latitudes than North Dakota, and if we do not act soon, it is going to be too late for all of us.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman from North Dakota knows, I am a farmer myself. There is not a more frustrating time than in the springtime when you cannot get in the field. To be in a position where you have the weather to plant but you cannot plant because you have not got a production loan is the most frustrating situation that a farmer can be in.

I think that for us to allow them to twist in the wind, not be responsive, not fulfill the obligation that this body has to react and take care of the business of the country is highly irresponsible.

As it was just mentioned by our colleague, the gentleman from Texas, it is no wonder that the American people question how responsible the Congress is, because we do things like this.

Mr. POMEROY. If the gentleman will continue to yield, Mr. Speaker, I wish some of the Members that have worked so hard to keep this from coming to the floor would have their own paychecks in the same kind of uncertainty that we have placed these farmers.

I wish they would get up in the morning, sit at the breakfast table drinking coffee with their wives, not knowing whether or not they would be able to get a crop in the field in a few weeks, whether or not they would have their job, whether or not they would be able to provide for their family.

Maybe then some of these Members that are working so hard to ignore the plight of our farmers in favor of partisan games, if they had the same kinds of uncertainties our farmers were dealing with, they would not be quite so cavalier.

Because what we are doing to people is absolutely cruel. We have got people that will not know, they cannot know today whether or not they will be able to keep this farm going, the farm that has not just been their life's work, but was their daddy's before that and their granddaddy's before that; literally generations of family tradition resulting in the livelihood for these farmers, the way they provide for their families and put shoes on their kids' feet, and they do not even know whether they will be able to keep at it one more growing season because this Congress is playing party politics instead of kicking out the loan money as requested by Secretary Glickman. I simply do not understand it.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Dakota, and yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM).

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, it sounds like we might have been a little critical of the Speaker and the leadership in the House today. We have. I always believe if we are going to be critical, we ought to offer a suggestion of what should be done. Let me make one observation of what I think should be done. It should have been done today, but we cannot do it today. We are out until next Tuesday.

Next Tuesday, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the Speaker would see fit to bring the Kosovo \$6 billion emergency request from the administration to the floor of the House. It is an emergency, and a legitimate one.

I would like to see the Speaker bring the Central American emergency funds in that same package. I would like to see the Speaker include the agricultural fund in that same package, and give this body an opportunity to vote on those as emergency spending, which they are, under the Rules of the House which we agreed to in the 1997 budget agreement.

There is an additional request now for defense funds that I am supportive of, but not as an emergency. I think they ought to be considered in the due process of the appropriations process for this year, but if we see fit, because there might be a need to do it now, do it now, but do not affect the caps. Allow those to be counted against the caps, whether we do it next Tuesday or not.

That would be just my personal suggestion to the leadership of what could

be done that would resolve this issue, and do it in the way in which it ought to be done. Any other spending other than those associated with the agriculture request should not be declared an emergency.

I would again point out that those of us who supported the Blue Dog budget, the majority of Democrats, we budget for this. This is not something that will break the budget, as envisioned by the Blue Dog and a majority of the Democrats in this House.

That is a suggestion. I hope the Speaker does it next Tuesday, because if we do, hopefully at that point can move quickly and before the end of next week we can resolve this question and avoid further inconveniencing so many family farmers that will be inconvenienced because we have been unable to deal in a rational way with this situation.

If I might, just for a moment, switch subjects and talk about another very important happening this week for agriculture, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) and I about a year ago requested a meeting with the Vice President of the United States to express our concern of the implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act, something that deals with the technology that is used by our farmers and ranchers that allows us to always say to the American people and to the world that, are we not blessed to live in a country that has the most abundant food supply, the best quality of food, the safest food supply to our people at the lowest cost of any other country in the world? And we do this because of the utilization of technology.

In our visit with the Vice President, we pointed out that there were some at EPA that were interpreting the law as passed by the Congress in ways that was going to be very detrimental to production agriculture. He agreed, and for the last year we have seen continuous improvement. We have seen EPA and USDA begin to work together, which the Vice President suggested should be done.

It is amazing to me that we would have to have a Vice President of the United States instructing two agencies of the United States government to work together. But he did, they did, they are, and it is working.

There was a track committee put together, a committee of about 54 men and women, producers, chemical companies, environmentalists, consumers, all who have a vested interest in seeing that these decisions are made based on sound science and in the best interests of consumers. This committee has been working until last week, when for some strange reason the environmental community and the consumer community decided to pull out of the discussion.

I encourage them to come back to the table, come back to the table and continue to do as they were doing over the last year, working in a constructive way in order that we might in fact continue to have this most abundant, safe food supply.

Please, do not be, as some are accusing you of, of saying because you cannot have your way, I am going to take my bat and ball and go home. Please come back to the table. Please come back to the discussions, and let us make sure that all decisions, though, are based on sound science, not on an individual interpretation of what is good and bad.

There are those among us who believe that pesticides, those things that kill insects, should not be used because if used improperly, they will kill humans. Everyone agrees to that. But everyone does not agree that we ought to eliminate pesticides, because if we would eliminate the technology, we would not have the best-fed Nation. In fact, we would have a starving world in a very short period of time.

One of the things the Vice President instructed us all to do is to have these discussions in the open, in sunshine, in transparency, as the word is called. Let everyone present their views.

This seems to be what is bugging some folks in the environmental community. They do not want to have to honestly debate their views with others in the scientific community who may have a different view.

□ 1445

I know the gentleman from Arkansas has been a real leader in this effort, for which I have commended him. I was glad to work with him all of last year, and I know he shares this frustration. But it is something that we need to talk about over and over and as openly as we can to make sure that more of the American people understand we cannot have this abundant food supply without using technology.

Both the gentleman from Arkansas and I are farmers in real life. We do not wish to use any product that will do harm to ourselves, our families, those who work for us, and certainly not to those who consume the products which we produce. It is in our best interest that we use sound science.

We were making great progress. I do not understand why some now decide that they do not want to even play anymore, but I hope that they will reconsider that decision. If not, then I certainly hope that the process will go forward without them. But if it goes forward without them, it will not work nearly as smoothly and good for the Nation as a whole as if they come back to the table and work together.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman once again and thank him for his leadership and the great wisdom he brings to this body and the always thoughtful suggestions and effort that he makes.

I would like now to read a statement from our colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE). He says: "I rise today to highlight the long delay in passing the emergency supplemental funding for the Farm Service Agency lending programs and FSA staffing budget.

"This is truly an emergency in every sense of the word. Tracy Beckman, FSA Director in the State of Minnesota, has told me that he will be forced to lay off FSA employees because of the delay in passing the emergency supplemental. The demand for loans and other FSA services is skyrocketing because of the commercial banks' concern about declining farm incomes. Many producers are having a difficult time securing private sector operating loans. FSA has to step in to fill the gap with guaranteed and direct loans to producers. Demands for loans this year is up 75 percent from a year ago, the Secretary of Agriculture tells me.

"Minnesota FSA will approve more loan applications by the end of the fiscal year than they have funding. If this supplemental is not approved, they will be unable to deliver the funds to the farmers because their accounts can have run dry. Planting season has arrived, and those farmers without operating loans are going to be left high and dry.

"Mr. Speaker, now is the time to approve these truly emergency funds. We must not delay action on this matter because of disputes between Congress and the White House on other matters. The supplemental bill threatens to be bogged down with millions of non-emergency spending, and I worry that this may sink the ship.

"The President requested \$6 billion to fund the air campaign against Yugoslavia. Some on the other side of the aisle want to pass as much as \$20 billion. The Senate majority leader suggested \$10 or \$11 billion. I do not understand how funds the administration has not even requested could be remotely considered emergency spending. We must remember these are Social Security funds that we are spending. If we are going to continue to claim to be fiscally responsible, we must be honest with ourselves about what is emergency funding and what is desirable funding. Whatever happened to not opening the Social Security lock box unless it is an absolute emergency?

"I propose that we develop and pass in the shortest possible time frame a freestanding emergency agriculture spending bill to provide critical guaranteed and direct operating loans that our farmers need to get into the field and the FSA staff to deliver these programs. These are truly emergency funding needs. We must move forward with a clean bill for agriculture now, and not hold hostage these funds for America's farmers in a raid on the Social Security Trust Fund to benefit nonemergency defense spending."

That is the statement from our distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. DAVID MINGE), and I know that he has great concern for America's farmers and for the future of American agriculture.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would just once again make the plea to the Speaker to let this legislation move forward

and treat America's farmers fairly. America's farmers are very resilient. They have great capacity for hard work to overcome obstacles and to achieve greatness. There has never been a producer of anything in this world that is as successful as the American farmer. They have done such an outstanding job that we take them for granted. They are the golden goose of America's economy and we should be very careful how we take care of it.

In conclusion, I would also want to thank Secretary Dan Glickman at the Department of Agriculture for the great job he has done in every possible way to deal with this emergency situation and, at the same time, make available as many funds as he can to serve this program. I think it is a shameful thing that we have allowed partisan politics to bring us to this point, and I urge the Speaker to allow this legislation to move forward.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC OPTIONS WITH
REGARD TO YUGOSLAVIA

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me. I addressed the House earlier. I had about 15 minutes of things to say and lacked the conciseness and brevity to put it into a 5-minute speech. I guess the next thing to the capacity to brevity is to have a good friend who is willing to yield time.

If I may inquire as to the level of generosity of my friend, how much time is remaining, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOSELLA). The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) has approximately 20 minutes remaining.

Mr. SHERMAN. If I can inquire of the Chair, is it necessary that Mr. Berry remain standing through my speech or can that be waived through unanimous consent?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is necessary for the gentleman to remain on his feet.

Mr. SHERMAN. Well, then, perhaps brevity is called for, and I thank the gentleman. I did not realize the imposition involved.

Mr. Speaker, earlier today I stated that we have to reflect on the votes of yesterday, where by a 2-to-1 majority we voted against a unilateral withdrawal. But this was not a ringing endorsement of our current military or diplomatic strategy with regard to Yugoslavia nor is it a call for the introduction of NATO ground troops; rather, it is important that we come up with additional options. I have a few that I believe deserve to be considered, and I thank the gentleman from Arkansas for giving me the opportunity to present them to this House.

The first of these involves training, though not necessarily arming the Albanians, both those who are citizens of Albania and wish to fight for their brethren and the Kosovar refugees who have escaped from Kosovo.

Now, there are objections to this strategy. They point out that there is

an arms embargo with regard to the nation of Yugoslavia. But this arms embargo would not be violated if we simply provided training while Americans retained custody of the weapons.

Second, the idea of just arming the Kosovars with the idea that we would just open up a box and distribute rifles does not create an army capable of defeating Milosevic. In fact, the KLA already has plenty of rifles from a variety of sources.

Now, I am not saying that the time has come to turn over custody of artillery and tanks to the Albanians. But if Milosevic knew that we were training an Albanian force to use heavy weapons, then he would know that he was up against not only the NATO air armada, not only a ragtag band of lightly armed KLA guerillas, but would also know that soon we would be able to unleash a force of heavily armed Albanians.

Second, I think it is important that we look at our diplomatic strategy and posturing. At this point we seem too tied to the intense vilification of Milosevic. And it is indeed tempting, for he is indeed evil. But let us keep in mind that we have to do business with evil men.

The Government of China sent its emissary to this Capitol just a few weeks ago. That government is responsible for more deaths than all the Albanians that have ever been alive anywhere since the days of the ancient Eridians. Saddam Hussein, a man with much blood on his hands, has not been deposed by the United States and we have had to reach an accommodation with him. Those who say that our objective should be to remove Milosevic should contemplate the casualties involved in sending American ground troops not only into Kosovo but into Serbia.

Mr. Speaker, our colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CURT WELDON), is leading a group to Vienna, and we should praise those efforts, because he is going to reach out to members of the Russian Duma in an effort to enlist Russian support for a negotiated peace. We should remember that negotiation involves give and take.

All too often we focus on the results of World War II. Glorious as they were, they are not typical. In fact, only one of our foreign wars ended with the unconditional surrender of our adversary. And for us to expect an unconditional surrender of Serbia, whether it is the unconditional surrender of its Kosovo province and all parts of it, or whether it is the surrender of that government and the occupation of all of Serbia, this should not be the expected result nor is it the necessary result.

I would suggest, and I have suggested this not only to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) but several others who are traveling with him, that we propose to the Russians that there be two zones in Kosovo and two separate peacekeeping forces. One zone would be along the border between

Kosovo and Serbia and Kosovo and Montenegro and would be patrolled exclusively by Russian peacekeepers.

This area Serbia would know they would retain rights with regard to. And this area should include the ancient battlefield of Kosovo Polyea, the famous monastery to the south of Pristina, the City of Pec, which was the original site of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and other lands of critical significance to the Serb nation.

The remaining, I would suspect 70 to 80 percent of Kosovo, would be subject to NATO occupation, a NATO peacekeeping force, and in this area the Albanian Kosovars would live in security and could return from their refugee status.

If we propose this, Milosevic then has a reason to deal. Because instead of proposing that he lose all rights in Kosovo, we are proposing that he retains rights that he might otherwise lose if he continues to battle us and our Albanian allies in the year to come.

At the same time, we should work toward any acceptable peace. And an acceptable peace is one that is workable, and where the Kosovars are able to return to Kosovo, or any reasonable part thereof, to live in peace and security and, knowing the generosity of the American and European people, with the aid and trade concessions they need to live prosperous as well as secure lives.

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Mr. HILL of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BERRY. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. HILL of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, when I am home traveling in my district and talking to farmers in southern Indiana about this farm crisis that we are in, they always tell me that they do not want any handouts. What they do tell me is they want access to credit.

I think it is just common sense to provide farmers access to enough credit so they can plant their crops, market their products, and pay their bills. It does not make any sense to me that this has not been a higher priority for this Congress. Every day families across the country are losing their farms. I am especially concerned that this crisis is taking a hard toll on our next generation of farmers.

I think it is important that the American people understand how great the need is in rural America for this emergency money. The situation in my home State of Indiana is not encouraging. For one thing, many of our loan programs in Indiana are exhausted, or close to it anyway. Our direct operating loan money is, for the most part, exhausted. We are completely all out of guaranteed farm ownership loans. We are short nearly \$800,000 for beginning and non-beginning direct farm ownership loans.

On March 23, the House of Representatives passed a supplemental appropriations bill that included much needed emergency credit for farmers across this country. I was one of the few Members of my own party to vote for the bill. Two days later, the Senate passed the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations bill and asked for a conference committee to come together to work out the differences of the House and Senate bills.

It was only on April 22, almost a month later, that the House leadership agreed to send the emergency bill to conference committee and appoint conferees. In the meantime, farmers in Indiana and all across this country have been waiting for this emergency money.

Many farmers have not been able to begin spring planting, while others have been forced to sell the family farm. While the farmers have been waiting, Secretary of Agriculture Glickman has been transferring money from different USDA accounts in an attempt to give the States more access to credit for farmers.

Without the supplemental appropriations to restore to these accounts we have been borrowing from, we are facing layoffs and furloughs at FSA offices. We have had even to borrow money from FSA salary accounts. As a last resort, more and more farmers are being forced to appeal to their local FSA offices for financial assistance, and demand for farm loans has increased by 62 percent over the last year.

So today I urge the leadership to act on the supplemental bill that this body passed over a month ago. I am truly concerned about Hoosier farmers. It is difficult for me to see this many farmers in need of access to credit. Indiana farmers need our help.

Every weekend I go back to Indiana to visit with my constituents, and many times my constituents are farmers. I have a lot of them in my district. And each time that I go back, I ask these farmers whether or not, in their view, they believe that a young man or woman in this country can on their own become a farmer, and each and every time all the farmers say no.

Now, there have been many speakers before me talking about the farm crisis, but this is a farm tragedy, to think that a young man or woman in this country could not fulfill their dream of becoming a farmer. I know of no other business, no other industry where this is true.

So today is the day we must start to begin to help the family farmer.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Indiana for his comments in support of America's farmers and his leadership in this area.

TRAVEL-TOURISM WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RYAN). Under the Speaker's announced

policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague today. I know how proud his mother must be as he ascends in the chair of the United States Congress in his first term. I am sure the people of Wisconsin are indeed fortunate and proud to have him representing them. And I salute him as he leads this Chamber today during our Special Orders.

Our Special Order today is designed to highlight Travel and Tourism Week, May 2 through May 8. Wednesday, May 5, is Tourist Appreciation Day; and in honor of this day there is a reception being held in the Longworth cafeteria from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Why are we focusing on travel and tourism today? Well, my colleagues, it is vitally important to the economic mission, if you will, of all Floridians and all Americans. We have a lot to boast about when we think of the great resources around our country that people from all over the world come to each and every day. And some of us take those, frankly, for granted.

So I wanted to illuminate some of the things that are occurring in Florida's 16th District, talk about some of the revenues derived from tourism, and talk also as well about some of the significant sites in my district. Florida's 16th Congressional District has over \$1 billion in travel expenditures annually. Over 16,000 people are employed in the travel business in the 16th District, earning a total of \$236 million.

Restaurants, one of which I started, in 1980 I started the Lettuce Patch Restaurant, a small family restaurant, with my parents, and we began to develop a network of friends and customers. Well, 1999 has been designated the Year of the Restaurant by the Commerce Department.

Nationwide, international travelers spend more than \$97 billion dining out in restaurants around America. Restaurants are the leading source of travel industry jobs in the United States. 47.8 million foreign travelers visited the United States in 1997, 47.8 million foreign visitors, a tremendous impact on both employment, economic opportunity, and job development. In fact, the restaurants have been leading the way in providing substantial jobs for those that are moving from welfare to work.

In fact, my first job in life was in a restaurant. I was a dishwasher in a small restaurant in Lake Worth, Florida. I obviously had to attend that job on a regular schedule basis. I learned the value of hard work, and I realized how hard it was to manage a small business. I learned what the impact of regulation was on taxes, on, if you will, customer preference.

So I got a huge experience at the age of 14 in my first job as a dishwasher, which then led me to start my own business, started the restaurant, as I

said. And I said earlier it was 1980. It was actually 1975. But it taught me an entrepreneurial spirit. So the restaurant industry is, of course, alive and well and thriving throughout America's cities.

Projections for 1999. Travel and tourism contributes a total of \$70 billion in Federal, State, and local tax revenue. \$70 billion in Federal, State, and local tax revenue. Travel and tourism will represent 12 percent of the gross domestic product of the United States.

The United States' travel and tourism will have a trade surplus of \$24.7 billion. Travel and tourism will support more than 7 million people in direct jobs and nearly \$128 billion in payroll each year. Let me repeat that. Travel and tourism will support more than 7 million people in direct jobs and nearly 128 billion in payroll dollars each year. Travel and tourism was the United States' leading service export and third largest export overall.

Now, when we talk about travel and tourism, we do not just talk about restaurants, we talk about transportation. In 1997, airline passenger traffic increased 4.6 percent to top 605 million passenger miles. Amtrak passenger traffic grew to reach 5.2 billion passenger miles.

Now, one of the things I like to boast about and why I am proud of the 16th District is the vast array of assets that we have to entice people to come to Florida. One is significant because it is a national park. It is the Everglades National Park, managed by our National Park Service.

The Everglades National Park is the largest remaining subtropical wilderness in the continental United States, and has extensive fresh and salt water areas, open everglades prairies and mangrove forests. It has abundant wildlife, includes rare and colorful birds. And this is the only place in the world where alligators and crocodiles exist side-by-side.

The park is 1,506,539 acres or 606,688 hectares in size. It is a World Heritage site, an international biosphere reserve, and a wetland of international significance.

Now, obviously, people come from around the world to see Everglades National Park. But it also has a dual purpose. It not only is a national park, it is also the reservoir for water to supply South Floridians with the vital need of fresh, clean, clear drinking water. The park acts as an ecosystem. It is a natural refuge, as I mentioned, for birds and animals, but also for the sustenance of life in South Florida.

Now, program activities include ranger-led walks and talks, the boat tours, tram tours. But, most significantly, it is the educational programs that are arranged. The Everglades National Park sponsors on-site curriculum-based education programs for local fourth, fifth, and sixth graders. Participation in these programs is by advance reservation, and teachers are required to attend training workshops