

which shook this entire Nation when we saw two deranged young men go into the Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, and rampantly murder classmates, schoolmates of theirs.

All of us have done a great deal of thinking about this over the past few weeks. We know that the White House held a conference just yesterday, a youth violence summit, during which many thoughts and recommendations were provided. But I think it is very important that as we look at this situation, the problem of violence in our schools, that we keep this in perspective.

First, our thoughts and prayers continue to go to the families and friends of those who were victims and, of course, to the many young people who have heard of this around the country who have gotten very, very rattled and frightened because of the prospect of this happening again.

But, again, I believe it is important for us to keep this situation in perspective. In fact, I am one who believes that the victims in this case are more representative of the young people of America today than these two deranged individuals.

There are many people who believe that American culture has gone bad. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that American culture has gone bad. It actually has gotten broadened. We have a broadened culture today.

A quarter of a century ago, this country had four television networks: ABC, CBS, NBC, and the Public Broadcasting System. We could choose books from our local library or the corner book store, and that was about it. And we all know what it is that we have today: Two hundred channels on television. We have a million websites out there. And we can go to "Amazon.com" and choose from 4.7 million CDs or books.

And so, as we approach the year 2000, we do not have a violent culture. What we have is a create-your-own culture. And it is mostly a very, very good create-your-own culture. But, obviously, with that broadened culture, at the extreme edges, it can be downright horrible.

So before condemning America, first we should consider that, as I mentioned, that the child victims in Columbine are a lot more reflective of American culture, of American youth, than their child killers.

They were terrific kids. Based on all the reports that we have gotten, they were creative, energetic, religious, and very involved in their community. Those are the kids we find in high school libraries across the country today.

We also know, based on the figures we have seen, that American kids today are more religious, they volunteer more. And I am very proud that, in just a few weeks, I am going to be presenting for about the 15th year Youth Volunteer Awards in Southern California to scores of young people in

the San Gabriel Valley in California who have stepped up and volunteered in law enforcement and libraries and hospitals and a wide range of areas where community needs exist.

We find that there are today fewer out-of-wedlock births, and students are less violent today than they were a decade ago. So I think that another tragedy of Columbine is that two mentally deranged individuals can cause us to question and look past all of the extraordinarily positive work of American parents and the positive work that has taken place in our communities. It is impossible to explain or in any way justify insanity, and that is exactly what we have witnessed here.

More than anything, Mr. Speaker, we need to do a better job of identifying and helping young people who are deeply troubled. With this make-your-own culture to which I referred that is so broad, a hateful, sick person can in fact create an entire world of hate and evil for themselves. It is obvious that the answer is not for us to go back to four television networks, 10,000 books, and PAC Man. But the answer is for us to more successfully intervene in the lives of troubled youth who are spiraling into a world of violence.

It seems to me that we need to recognize, Mr. Speaker, that there are solutions, not necessarily Federal governmental solutions, but we want to do what we can here. But there are solutions. Last week I met with the sheriff of Los Angeles County who is proposing that we move ahead and do everything possible to have boot camps for those kids who are taking guns into schools. And we need to prosecute those young people who take guns into schools.

So those are just a couple of the steps. And I hope very much that we can recognize the positive things that are taking place there, as I know many of my colleagues will be presenting Youth Volunteer Awards throughout their districts in the coming weeks.

TRANSITIONING TO A NEW ECONOMY

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk a little bit about our new economy, the information-based economy, and all the transitions that have been happening during this decade and really since about the mid-1970s and into the 1980s.

It has been a dramatic change, one of the largest changes arguably in human history in terms of the direction of our country; and it has been shifted towards a new economy, based primarily on technology and information. And one of the most important challenges that we in this body will face in the years ahead is adjusting to that, is figuring out how to understand how our economy has changed and, as a con-

sequence, how we need to change to embrace that.

One of the biggest arguments that I want to make off the start is this is not an option. The new economy is not something that we can choose to opt in or opt out of. It is a fact of life, and we need to be prepared to adjust to it. And there are some policies that we can adopt.

But, more than anything, right up front we need to increase our knowledge as policymakers, I urge all Members of Congress to do this, of the changes that have occurred in our economy that have moved it more toward a high-tech economy, and what changes do we need to make as policymakers to address that.

I would like to lay out five broad categories today and just say that, as a member of the New Democratic Coalition on the Democratic side of the House, we are working very closely on these issues, working with leaders in the technology field, leaders in the education field to try to make the policy changes that are necessary because I think it is critical that we address those.

The biggest one, of course, is education. We need to shift our education systems from K-12 to beyond to embrace the idea of life-long learning and the importance of technology. The three R's are still absolutely necessary. But if they do not have some knowledge in there about computers as well, they are going to be left behind in the new economy, and we need to make sure that that is included.

We need to make sure that people understand that the world has changed, they are not simply going to be able to get through high school and then move into a job and never have to update their skills. They are going to have to be willing to constantly update their skills, and we in government are going to have to provide the access to the updating of those skills, whether it is Voc, higher education of any kind, retraining on the job. We need to create those incentives.

But at the beginning, at the front, before we get to that, we need to change our K-12 system to make it more aware of the needs of technology and of the need of teaching kids how to learn and how to learn for life.

Secondly, we have to invest in research and we have to give our companies in this country the incentive to make those investments.

An important issue is going to come through Congress at some point this session that would permanently extend the R&D tax credit. That will have a critical impact on our economy. Research and development is absolutely necessary to keep up with the breakthrough technologies that seem to be happening on a daily basis. We need to give our companies the incentives to make those investments.

Currently, we only offer the R&D tax credit for one year and then we play this game of roulette in the next year

as to whether or not we are going to let it go on from there. Companies cannot plan in that sort of an environment. They do not know whether or not they are going to have the money to do the research over the long haul. We need to make that permanent.

Third, we need to build the technology structure. This is about broadband communication, giving people access to the Internet. The Internet has the ability to be the greatest equalizer of all time in terms of knowledge. It is not going to divide us. It is going to give anybody with a PC and a link to their phone line to get to the Internet the ability to gather knowledge which they never would have had access to before. But we have got to give companies the incentive to build that infrastructure so that people will get that access.

This means deregulation and allowing that competition to flow so that we will build the infrastructure and get access to the Internet beyond just the urban areas which have it now and out into the rural and suburban areas where it is desperately needed.

Fourth, we need to leave the Internet alone. Overregulating the Internet can potentially strangle its ability to get that information out there and help companies grow. Too much regulation would be a very bad thing, and we need to leave the Internet alone and not overregulate it.

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Lastly, we need to increase exports. We need to get access to more markets. Ninety-six percent of the people in the world live someplace other than the United States. If we are going to increase markets for all goods, we are going to have to do it overseas.

I want to emphasize that this is not limited to certain technology areas, the Silicon Valley or Seattle or the research triangle or Boston. Any company one can think of is affected by technology.

We just heard today that we had another 4 percent increase in productivity this last quarter. That is driven almost exclusively by advances in technology and helps grow the economy everywhere. Regardless of what business you are in, technology can help make that business more productive, help make our economy stronger and, most importantly, help people get and keep good jobs that will enable them to raise their family and take care of their bills and obligations. We must embrace the new economy and the high-tech economy so that we can prepare for the future.

THE BOMBING OF YUGOSLAVIA

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, many people have felt right from the start

that the President and Secretary of State made a horrible mistake in starting the bombing of Yugoslavia. The President and Secretary Albright have made this horrible mistake even worse by escalating the bombing so much. Now Yugoslavia has been bombed far more than in World War II when it was bombed by both sides.

This war has been and is so unpopular that I read last week that the main White House spin doctor had gone over to try to help improve NATO's public relations. We certainly did not have to have White House spin doctors to convince us to go to war after Pearl Harbor. At that time, only one Member of Congress voted against the U.S. entering World War II, but at that time the people were solidly behind the war effort because we and our allies had been attacked.

In Yugoslavia, for the first time ever, the U.S. has become an aggressor nation. Our foreign policy has been turned upside down.

Tony Snow, the columnist-commentator, wrote last Friday: "Three features distinguish the war in Kosovo from every other in American history. This is the first in which we have been the unambiguous aggressor; the first in which we've had no discernible national interest at stake; and the first in which we have let others act as our sovereign."

Paul Harvey, in his Friday newscast, said someday this will be called "Monica's War," meaning many people believe the President was in part attempting to improve his image as a world statesman after the embarrassment of the impeachment scandal.

Now the party line coming out of the White House is simply to label anyone who opposes the war as doing so because of hatred for the President.

Well, while I strongly disagree with the President over all these bombings, I do not hate him or even feel any personal animosity toward him. But anyone who uses this hatred argument is simply trying to avoid discussing the case on its merits or lack thereof. They are appealing to emotion and prejudice and resorting to name calling when they accuse people of opposing the war simply because of hatred for the President. It is so obvious that an argumentative ploy like that is simply an attempt to avoid discussing the merits of the war.

We bombed Afghanistan and the Sudan just 3 days after the President's apology about the Lewinsky scandal was such a flop.

We started bombing Iraq on the afternoon before the House was scheduled to begin impeachment proceedings.

When bad publicity started coming out about the Chinese espionage, on the eve of the Chinese Premier's visit, we started bombing Yugoslavia.

We should not be so eager to bomb people. We should only go to war when absolutely forced to and when our national security is threatened or our

very vital national interest is at stake. Neither is present in Yugoslavia.

The U.S., using NATO for a political cover, has now done over \$50 billion worth of damage to Yugoslavia, a very small country with less than 4 percent of our population.

It is obvious that Milosevic cannot hold out much longer, but we have already spent billions which we are taking from Social Security, and we will have to spend many billions more on this stupid war before it is all through, all to make a bad situation much worse than it was before we started. We are creating enemies all over the world, giving up our reputation as a peace-loving nation by attacking a country that had not attacked us nor had even threatened to do so. And apparently this was done mainly to help improve the President's legacy and because NATO was desperately seeking a new mission.

Very soon this war will be settled, I hope, and then the President and his spin doctors will declare a great victory. But, in reality, it will take us many years to recover from the damage that we are doing to ourselves and our country, both financially and diplomatically.

Don Feder, the nationally syndicated columnist of the Boston Herald, summed it up this way:

President Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright set the stage for the catastrophe in Kosovo. If there were a Nobel Prize for ineptitude in diplomacy, they would be its joint recipients.

He continued:

The military will be so exhausted by doing social work with bombs and troops that resources won't be there to defend the United States when our vital interests are at stake. When China confronts us in Asia, we can tell our allies there that we have spent all of our missiles in the Balkans.

He wrote this before we bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade.

Finally, Mr. Feder, wrote this:

Kosovo was an avoidable tragedy. Clinton and Albright should toast marshmallows over the flames of Kosovo. They lit the fire.

TCSP GRANTS AWARDED AS PART OF ADMINISTRATION'S LIVABILITY AGENDA

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

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to join a number of my colleagues this evening in reporting on the benefits to our congressional districts of the TCSP grants that were awarded last week by the Secretary of Transportation and by the Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration.

The TCSP grants stand for Transportation, Community and System Preservation grants. These are a vital part of the transportation program as part of the administration's livability agenda.