

of health care in a very broad way. What happens when insurance companies refuse to pay for treatment is that, often, it just doesn't get paid. The debate over instituting a prudent layperson standard for emergency care does not just involve patients and insurance companies, it involves hospitals, as well. Hospitals are already required to treat uninsured patients out of their emergency rooms, and lost millions of dollars doing so. When we let insurance companies impose arbitrary limits on the type of emergency care they will cover, we essentially increase the population of uninsured that hospitals are required to serve. The number of uninsured individuals in this country is already a problem; we surely do not need to allow insurance companies to create another population of "pseudo-insured," whose insurance premiums are never passed on to the health care providers.

In addition to this overarching change in the relationship between patients, hospitals and insurance companies, denials of emergency claims are also changing health care in a more personal way. Emergency rooms, aware of the unfunded liability posed by the pseudo-insured, are treating patients differently.

For example, I was contacted by one woman in Northwest Indiana, whom I shall refer to as Louise. She is not a member of a health maintenance organization (HMO). However, when she rushed her seven-year-old son to the emergency room with a broken arm, she was not able to stop home first and pick up her insurance card. The hospital, again aware that if it did not follow protocol it could be left with the bill, protected itself by acting on the assumption that she was in an HMO. The Emergency Room doctor tried to get prior authorization to run several diagnostic tests on the boy, who had fallen from a slide and was having abdominal pain in addition to the pain in his arm. He could not. But the denial did not come about because it was immediately obvious that there was a confusion about the insurance. Louise's participation in the HMO was not questioned. Rather authorization was denied and Louise was instead told to drive her son to a clinic thirty miles away. When the doctor attending to the boy at the emergency room objected, he was told that, because the bone was not sticking out of the skin, Louise was expected to sign a form assuming all responsibility for the boy's condition and drive him to the clinic. Instead, Louise agreed to pay for the tests out of pocket, thinking that the insurance company would surely pay for treatment if the tests proved it was necessary. She was wrong. By the time the emergency room physician reviewed the x-rays and tests and found that the boy's arm was broken at a greater than 45-degree angle, the clinic to which he had been referred had closed. When the emergency room physician again asked for permission to set the arm, Louise was told to go home and bring the boy to an orthopedic physician's office at the clinic in the morning, fourteen and one-half hours later. She was encouraged to carefully monitor her son's finger circulation and sensation, because if there was further loss of circulation or if the bone broke through the skin she would have to take him back to the emergency room. Louise could not believe the treatment her son was receiving. At this point, when her son had been lying on his back with a broken arm for five hours, the confusion over Louise's, insurance was cleared up, and her son's arm was finally treated.

Managed care organizations' unfairly limiting patients' access to emergency care is having a ripple effect on our health care system, and it has to stop. Reasonableness must be introduced into the health insurance system. It is reasonable for an insurance-holder to go to the emergency room, the emergency care must be covered. If the treatment prescribed by a licensed medical practitioner is reasonable, that must be covered as well. Letting profit-seeking obscure the basis understanding in health insurance—that you buy health insurance to pay for your health care—is wrong. The Patients' Bill of Rights, which would institute a "prudent layperson" standard for emergency care, will go a long way toward making it right.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, here we go again! Once again, we hear that the Republican party wants real managed care reform, but what we see coming to us in legislation from your party is just a shell offering few real patient protections.

The bill Republicans tout as their solution to the pleas we hear from our constituents—many of whom have been the victims of harmful decisions meted out by managed care administrators—makes its mark by its failings.

Rather than protect patients, the Republican bill should be more correctly titled the "Insurance Industry Protection Act." The bill leaves medical decisions in the hands of insurance company accountants and clerks, instead of doctors; fails to provide access to care from specialists; fails to provide continuity in the doctor-patient relationship; fails to provide an effective mechanism to hold plans accountable when a plan's actions or lack of action injures or kills someone; fails to respect doctors' decisions to prescribe the drugs they believe would provide the best treatment; fails to prevent plans from giving doctors financial incentives to deny care; and allows health maintenance organizations to continue to penalize patients for seeking emergency care when they believe they are in danger.

Most importantly, the Republicans' bill will not even provide its "shell" protection to more than 100 million of the American people—it fails to cover two-thirds of all privately insured people in the United States.

As you can see, the Republicans' bill has many failings! On the other hand, Senate Bill 6 and H.R. 358, part of the 1999 Families First (Democratic) Agenda, will deliver real protections to millions of American families. These bills, which have the backing of dozens of consumer groups, include these vital protections—and more. They provide a vital mechanism for a timely internal and independent external appeals process—an essential tool when someone's life is in the balance! But the Republicans' bill is deliberately deceiving—it was introduced in the Senate after the Democratic-sponsored bill that contains real safeguards (and is also co-sponsored by Senate Republicans,) yet those promoting this "protection-in-name-only" bill gave it the same name, "The Patients' Bill of Rights."

The Republicans and the high-powered health insurance industry are trying to scare everyday working Americans, telling them if Congress mandated the protections that the Republicans left out—and which are contained in the Democrats' bill—then health care premiums would increase. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, however, estimates that each person would only pay \$2 a month more for the protections in the Democrats' bill.

The reality is that the cost of the Republican bill is too high.

It would continue the present system of administrators making health care decisions, exposing countless more people to inadequate care that could injure or kill them; it would force Americans to pay their own emergency room bills unless a doctor or nurse first told them to go there; and it would fail to allow doctors to freely practice medicine without the constraints of gag rules or limitations on prescription drugs.

Two dollars a month for these important patient protections is a reasonable cost for access to quality care!

Let us stop this destructive game of trying to convince people that they are better off with a reform bill that is "reform" in name only—that lacks the substance and real protections! To offer so-called "protections" with few safeguards to back them up is a deadly game we should not be playing!

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

ISSUES OF CONCERN IN THE COUNTRY TODAY

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

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, during this special order hour, I have secured this hour on behalf of the Republican majority and would invite all those Members who are monitoring tonight's proceedings and who would like to participate in this hour to join me on the floor here tonight, again those Members from the majority party who would wish to be present.

There are several issues that I want to discuss tonight: taxes, education, Social Security, and of course the President's war in Kosovo.

I want to engage in that discussion by reading into the RECORD a letter that many of us here received last week from the American Legion. The American Legion, of course, is one of the Nation's leading organizations representing veterans throughout the country.

They sent to Members of Congress copies of a letter that was written by the national commander of the American Legion. The letter was sent to the President of the United States.

That letter, again, also copied and sent to Members of Congress read as follows: "The American Legion, a wartime veterans organization of nearly three million members, urges the immediate withdrawal of American

troops participating in 'Operation Allied Force.'

"The National Executive Committee of the American Legion, meeting in Indianapolis today, adopted Resolution 44, titled 'The American Legion's Statement on Yugoslavia.' This resolution was debated and adopted unanimously.

"Mr. President, the United States Armed Forces should never be committed to wartime operations unless the following conditions are fulfilled:

Number one, "That there be clear statement by the President of why it is in our vital national interest to be engaged in hostilities;"

Two, "Guidelines be established for the mission, including a clear exit strategy;"

Three, "That there be support of the mission by the U.S. Congress and the American people; and"

Four, "That it be made clear that U.S. Forces will be commanded only by U.S. officers whom we acknowledge are superior military leaders.

"It is the opinion of the American Legion, which I am sure is shared by the majority of Americans, that three of the above listed conditions have not been met in the current joint operation with NATO ('Operation Allied Forces').

"In no case should America commit its Armed Forces in the absence of clearly defined objectives agreed upon by the U.S. Congress in accordance with Article I, Section 8, of the Constitution of the United States."

It is signed again by the national commander of the American Legion. Copies of this letter were sent to several individuals in the administration, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff chairmen, the Speaker of the House, the majority leader in the Senate, the minority leader in the House and several others, members on the Committee on Armed Services, and so on.

This resolution was adopted, again, in Indianapolis, as I mentioned earlier, on May 5, just last week. It is again referred to as Resolution Number 44 by the American Legion. It is their statement on Yugoslavia.

This is a sentiment certainly expressed by members of the veterans throughout the country. It is indicative, I think, of several other veterans organizations. Of course they are capable and prepared to speak for themselves, as many of them have.

But I can say, Mr. Speaker, that over the last weekend, as I returned home to Colorado, I had an opportunity to receive opinions and comments from several individuals throughout the district on this matter. I would say that the voice of veterans as expressed by the American Legion rings in a consonant cord with those sentiments expressed by my constituents.

Several other letters have been sent and forwarded to my office by constituents. One of the things I enjoy doing at these special orders is relaying the concerns of my constituents as expressed

in writing to my office and through E-mails and telephone calls and so on.

I use this opportunity to encourage constituents to write and to call, not just my constituents, but all those from throughout the country who are concerned about the affairs of our great Nation. It is worthwhile to write letters to Members of Congress. It is a proper role in the course of active citizenship to demand accountability from our elected officials, to let them know what is on the minds of those who constitute the citizenry of our great country.

Here is one letter I received last week as well. It starts out, Dear Congressman Schaffer, "This is a belated thank you for your vote to impeach" the occupant of the White House; we have to maintain our House rules I understand so I will have to edit the letter a little bit, "and your stand, unfortunately useless, against the current action in Kosovo.

"We've heard that the CIA, NATO, military advisors, and our own military recommended against the bombing in Kosovo but that" the President, "with the great military astuteness he's shown since Somalia, decided to go ahead. Is there any way, in this life, to hold this man accountable for the damage he's done to this country over the years?

"Just a side note, I'm opposed to paying the U.N. this so-called debt we are claimed to owe. I'd love to see us disengage from that organization in all ways.

"Thanks for your dedication and service." This is a woman from Fort Collins, Colorado who sent this letter in.

This is another letter from a constituent of mine: "The mood of the country over the recent past is that the United States is not at war unless we say that we are at war." In the first portion, Mr. Speaker, of this letter he writes a little bit tongue in cheek. "And the way we say that we ARE at war is to have Congress declare war. In other words, even if we are ACTUALLY at war it is not a war until we call it a war."

That sounds a bit bizarre, but in fact the writer accurately characterizes the current disposition of the Congress and certainly the Presidency. There has been no declaration of war in this war, and there are many people running around here in Washington claiming that we are somehow not at war.

It certainly was something to explain when the three members of the United States Army who were held as prisoners by the Yugoslavian forces, upon their release, received the Prisoner of War Medal. I would love to hear someone over at the White House try to explain that, prisoners of a war that does not exist. Nonetheless, they were pinned with a medal, which I think they deserve.

I do believe we are clearly engaged in an act of war and outside the parameters of Article I, Section 8 of the Con-

stitution, that which gives the authority to this Congress to declare a war, and that is our responsibility.

This writer from Fort Collins, Colorado goes on. He says, "The recent presidents and Congresses have moved toward erasing the separation of powers called for by the Constitution. Congress is to decide if we are going to go to war and when, and declares war when it is ready. The President executes the war as commander and chief. It is about time we called for a halt in this tendency toward an imperial presidency."

He goes on: "The country seems to think that the NATO treaty supersedes the U.S. Constitution where war is involved. Well, that is a very serious matter indeed, to say that a bunch of bureaucrats in Brussels can say that the U.S. has to go to war. But the matter is not that complicated. We can still have the treaty but should place in it that the U.S. will not go into any war unless and until Congress declares war."

Again, this is from a constituent in Fort Collins, Colorado.

There is another writer from Johnstown, Colorado. He says: "I believe that our American National Security interests are adversely affected by the NATO-USA involvement in Yugoslavia.

"Our national defense/military preparedness is already marginal from years of downsizing in defense capabilities. Further USA military expenditures for the Kosovo cause are not warranted and our military shows", it is very difficult to read; this is handwritten, and our military has shown to protect our country. "I support increased spending in missile defense systems, advanced aircraft and substantial size/numbers increases in our land, sea, and air forces.

"I applaud your votes of" April 28 "concerning withholding of ground forces and not supporting the air strikes.

"Please continue your efforts to extricate our country from a colossal mistake by" our Commander in Chief "and the Secretary of State Albright."

Again a letter from Johnstown, Colorado.

Another letter that I would like to share with our Members from Greeley, Colorado: "I would like to express some concern for the path we seem to be taking in Kosovo. As I recall, we were only assigning troops to Bosnia for a short time and they are still there. Our recent history in being the 'world's' peacekeeper is not outstanding. We continually 'draw lines in the sand' and then say, well not this time but next time. I wish I had confidence this was not a political ploy but a legitimate diplomatic endeavor—but I do not."

This is a student, it seems, from the University of Northern Colorado who wrote just last week. He put a postscript on his letter. It says: "It takes humility to seek feedback. It takes wisdom to understand it, analyze it, and appropriately act on it." Keep "First Things First Every Day".

□ 2015

A letter from Aurora, Colorado, also within my district: "As a conservative Republican and as a Vietnam veteran, I appreciate your opposition to the U.S. Attack on Serbia. The Clinton policy is misguided. The commander seems only interested in his place in history. If he had wanted historic recognition for foreign adventures, he should have gotten some experience in 1968, when he had the chance.

"It is the wrong leadership with the wrong policy taking the wrong action. I urge you to do whatever you can to end this adventure as quickly as possible by sponsoring or supporting legislation to end funding for this hopeless intervention in another civil war."

Again, this is letter from a constituent of mine in Aurora, Colorado.

Here is another one. "Dear Congressman Schaffer:" This is from Wellington, Colorado. "The best idea I have heard yet is Senator SMITH's bill to stop any funding of the Kosovo bombing. I fully support it. It should prove difficult to fly a bomber with no MasterCard for the fuel. Sincerely, Ben." From Wellington, Colorado.

Here is another letter I received from a gentleman from Bellvue. He said that he recently met a woman from Yugoslavia, a graduate student from Colorado State University in the 1980s. She continued her studies there and got her Ph.D. in the 1990s. The writer says, "She is a beautiful lady, and I have enjoyed many hours in friendship with her. Her mother came to her graduation party, and I had a chance to meet her. Our common language was Italian, and she said that I was the only person in America, except for her daughter, that understood her. She is a lovely lady in her 80s and lives in peace in Yugoslavia. This week American bombs, rockets and missiles were exploded in anger over her homeland. For the sake of all that is right and in the name of humanity, please don't kill this lady. She is a friend. We are not at war with anybody." He is reminding us that this Congress has not declared war under Article I, Section 8.

"If we are a member of some club," again referring to the U.N. or NATO, or perhaps both, "that says we have to bomb other countries, perhaps we should get out of it. As a taxpayer, I cannot afford to spend millions of dollars for cruise missiles that might land on my friend's mother. Please tell the President to stop bombing other countries. I repeat, we are not at war with anybody. Thank you."

I have received several letters on that order; and, Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD those letters I have referred to.

THE AMERICAN LEGION,
OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL COMMANDER,
Washington, DC, May 5, 1999.

THE PRESIDENT,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: The American Legion, a wartime veterans organization of nearly three-million members, urges the im-

mediate withdrawal of American troops participating in "Operation Allied Force."

The National Executive Committee of the American Legion, meeting in Indianapolis today, adopted Resolution 44, titled "The American Legion's Statement on Yugoslavia." This resolution was debated and adopted unanimously.

Mr. President, the United States Armed Forces should never be committed to wartime operations unless the following conditions are fulfilled:

That there be a clear statement by the President of why it is in our vital national interests to be engaged in hostilities;

Guidelines be established for the mission, including a clear exit strategy;

That there be support of the mission by the U.S. Congress and the American people; and

That it be made clear that U.S. Forces will be commanded only by U.S. officers whom we acknowledge are superior military leaders.

It is the opinion of The American Legion, which I am sure is shared by the majority of Americans, that three of the above listed conditions have not been met in the current joint operation with NATO ("Operation Allied Force").

In no case should America commit its Armed Forces in the absence of clearly defined objectives agreed upon by the U.S. Congress in accordance with Article I, Section 8, of the Constitution of the United States.

Sincerely,

HAROLD L. "BUTCH" MILLER,
National Commander.

Enclosure.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE—
THE AMERICAN LEGION

May 5, 1999

RESOLUTION NO. 44: THE AMERICAN LEGION
STATEMENT ON YUGOSLAVIA

Whereas, The President has committed the Armed Forces of the United States, in a joint operation with NATO ("Operation Allied Force"), to engage in hostilities in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia without clearly defining America's vital national interests; and

Whereas, Neither the President nor the Congress have defined America's objectives in what has become an open-ended conflict characterized by an ill-defined progressive escalation; and

Whereas, It is obvious that an ill-planned and massive commitment of U.S. resources could only lead to troops being killed, wounded or captured without advancing any clear purpose, mission or objective; and

Whereas, The American people rightfully support the ending of crimes and abuses by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the extending of humanitarian relief to the suffering people of the region; and

Whereas, America should not commit resources to the prosecution of hostilities in the absence of clearly defined objectives agreed upon by the U.S. Congress in accordance with Article I Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, May 5-6, 1999, That The American Legion, which is composed of nearly 3 million veterans of war-time service, voices its grave concerns about the commitment of U.S. Armed Forces to Operation Allied Force, unless the following conditions are fulfilled:

That there be a clear statement by the President of why it is in our vital national interests to be engaged in Operation Allied Force;

Guidelines be established for the mission, including a clear exit strategy;

That there be support of the mission by the U.S. Congress and the American people; and

That it be made clear U.S. Forces will be commanded only by U.S. officers whom we acknowledge are superior military leaders; and, be it further

Resolved, That, if the aforementioned conditions are not met, The American Legion calls upon the President and the Congress to withdraw American forces immediately from Operation Allied Force; and, be it further

Resolved, That The American Legion calls upon the Congress and the international community to ease the suffering of the Kosovo refugees by providing necessary aid and assistance; and, be it finally

Resolved, That The American Legion reaffirms its unwavering admiration of, and support for, our American men and women serving in uniform throughout the world, and we reaffirm our efforts to provide sufficient national assets to ensure their well being.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE SCHAFER: This is a belated thank you for your vote to impeach Clinton and your stand, unfortunately useless, against the current action in Kosovo.

We've heard that the CIA, NATO military advisors, and our own military, recommended against the bombing in Kosovo but that Clinton, with the great military astuteness he's shown since Somalia, decided to go ahead. Is there any way, in this life, to hold this man accountable for the damage he's done to this country over the years?

Just a side note. I'm opposed to paying the UN this so-called debt we are claimed to owe. I'd love to see us disengage from that organization in all ways.

Thank you for your dedication and service.

Sincerely,

MRS. C. LILE.

APRIL 17, 1999.

REP. BOB SCHAFER,
Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SCHAFER: How much longer will we have to sit and watch the genocide going on in Kosovo? The United States failed to stop the genocide of Jews and Gypsies in World War II; we failed to stop the genocides in Laos and Rwanda. This is not a matter of foreign policy; this is not a matter of a Democratic President and a Republican Congress. This is a matter of morality, of humanity and human dignity. We have a moral imperative to do something.

We say: send in ground troops NOW, before it's too late.

Sincerely,

JONATHAN BELLMAN.
DEBORAH KAUFFMAN.

REPRESENTATIVE SCHAFER: Best idea I've heard yet is Sen. SMITH's bill to stop any funding of the Kosovo bombing. I support it fully. It should prove difficult to fly a bomber with no MasterCard for the fuel.

Sincerely,

BEN MAHRLE.

REPRESENTATIVE SCHAFER: As a conservative Republican and as a Vietnam vet, I appreciate your opposition to the US attack on Serbia. The Clinton policy is misguided. Clinton is only interested in his place in history. If he had wanted historic recognition for foreign adventures, he should have gotten some experience in 1968 when he had the chance.

It is the wrong leadership with the wrong policy taking the wrong action. I urge you to do whatever you can to end this adventure as quickly as possible by sponsoring or supporting legislation to end funding for this hopeless intervention in another civil war.

Sincerely,

JAMES BEETEM.

DEAR MR. SCHAFFER, I would like to express some concern for the path we seem to be taking in Kosovo. As I recall we were only assigning troops to Bosnia for a short time and they are still there. Our recent history in being the "world's" peacekeeper is not outstanding. We continually "draw lines in the sand" and then say, well not this time but next time. I wish I had confidence this was not a political ploy but a legitimate diplomacy endeavor—but I don't.

Sincerely,

DR. DAVID CRABTREE,
DR. KAREN CRABTREE.

APRIL 29, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SCHAFFER: I believe that our American National Security interests are adversely affected by the NATO/USA involvement in Yugoslavia.

Our national defense/military preparedness is already marginal from years of downsizing in defense capabilities. Further USA military expenditures for the Kosovo cause are not warranted and our military should exist to protect our country. I support increased spending in missile defense systems, advanced aircraft and substantial size/numbers increases in our land, sea, and air forces.

I applaud your votes of April 28, 1999 concerning withholding of ground forces and not supporting the air strikes.

Please continue your efforts to extricate our country from a colossal mistake by President Clinton and Secretary of State Albright.

Sincerely yours,

THOMAS H. STEELE.

MAY 2, 1999.

TO: REPRESENTATIVE SCHAFFER: The mood of the country over the recent past is that the United States is not at war unless we SAY that we are at war. And the way we say that we are at war is to have Congress declare war. In other words, even if we ACTUALLY at war it is not a war until we call it a war.

If we are actually at war but do not want to call it a war we use a legal fiction, or an euphemism, to call being at war something else: a police action, attack, intervention etc.

The mood of the country is that declaring war is a BIG DEAL, and we do not want to do it unless we have to. But actually going to war without calling it a war is not so big a deal because we think we can pull out if we want, do not have to win, do not have to defeat, etc. We can simply play at war but without the commitment. But declaring war does not really have to be a big deal. There are big wars and little wars, costly wars and cheap wars, easy wars and hard wars.

The situation is similar to the act of recognizing the existence of a foreign regime. When we said that we did not recognize Communist China it did not exist as far as we were concerned, even though we all know that it did actually exist. Non recognition is not dangerous to the country. But actually going to war is a serious matter, at least in my view. Therefore I strenuously object to using euphemisms when engaging in it. And it seems to me that this was exactly what the founding fathers had in mind when they said that it was up to Congress to declare war. They did not want the president to just start wars any time he wanted to, especially since he is also the Commander in Chief. And that is what has been happening. But Congress has abnegated its responsibility by not calling him on it. Exactly what will, or would happen if they called him on it and he ignored them is a serious constitutional question. It seems to me that he could and should be impeached and removed from office.

The recent Presidents and Congresses have moved toward erasing the separation of powers called for by the Constitution. Congress is to decide if we are going to go to war and when, and declares war when it is ready. The President EXECUTES the war as commander in chief. It is about time we called for a halt in this tendency toward an imperial presidency.

This country seems to think that the NATO treaty supercedes the U.S. Constitution where war is involved. Well, that is a very serious matter indeed, to say that a bunch of bureaucrats in Brussels can say that the U.S. has to go to war. But the matter is not that complicated. We can still have the treaty but should place in it that the U.S. will not go into any war unless and until the Congress declares war.

MICHAEL MORAN.

MARCH 25, 1999.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN: Olga Radulaski is from Yugoslavia. She graduated from CSU in the 1980's. She continued her studies there and got her PhD in the 90's. She's a beautiful lady and I've enjoyed many hours in friendship with her. Olga's mother came to her graduation party and I got a chance to meet her. Our common language was Italian, and she said I was the only person in America, except for her daughter, that understood her. She's a lovely lady, in her eighties, and lives in peace in Yugoslavia.

This week American bombs, rockets and missiles were exploded in anger on her homeland. For the sake of all that is right in the name of humanity, please don't kill this lady. She's a friend.

We are not at war with anybody. If we're a member of some "club" that says we have to bomb other countries, perhaps we should not get out of it. As a taxpayer, I cannot afford to spend a million dollars for a cruise missile that might land on Olga's mother.

Please tell the President to stop bombing other countries. I repeat, we're not at war with anybody.

Thank you.

FRED COLLIER.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I am joined tonight by one of the stellar Members of the class that was elected at the same time I was, in 1996, which constituted a very solid block of new Members in that year for the United States Congress, now in our sophomore year, and it is a great privilege to serve with the gentleman from Montana. I yield to him.

Mr. HILL of Montana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado; and I want to thank him for securing this time. I certainly want to echo the comments of the folks writing to the gentleman with regard to the activities in Kosovo.

I joined with the gentleman voting to withdraw our troops and to require the President to secure the approval of Congress before he puts in any ground troops.

If we look at the policy with respect to Kosovo, the objectives that were set out in the beginning of this adventure, I guess we would say, of course, that one of our goals was to prevent the ethnic cleansing. That is the effort on the part of the Serbs to drive the Kosovars out of Kosovo.

Of course, that aspect of the policy is an obvious failure. Every night our heart aches for those refugees we see in the neighboring provinces and in the neighboring countries.

The objective was, of course, to bring stability to the region. These refugees have brought greater instability to the region. Macedonia is a very unstable setting. The large number of refugees are being held in encampments because, if they were allowed out of those encampments, the concern would be that that would destabilize Macedonia.

What is really interesting is that this President, under the War Powers Act, is required to submit reports to the Congress whenever troops are put in harm's way. Of course, the War Powers Act was passed over President Nixon's veto, but, as I recall, President Ford made four reports under the War Powers Act, President Carter made one, President Reagan made 14, President Bush made 7, and President Clinton has made 46 reports under the War Powers Act. That means that he has put troops in harm's way on more than twice as many occasions as have all the previous presidents under the War Powers Act.

Interestingly, two of those reports were to deploy troops to Albania, where rioting Albanians were threatening our embassy in 1997 and in August of 1998. And of course the other objective of this activity has been to protect the prestige of NATO. In every one of those instances, I think the President's objectives of this war in Kosovo have not been fulfilled, and that is why I joined with my colleague in voting to bring our troops home. Unfortunately, we were not successful in getting that done.

But one of the things I wanted to visit a little bit tonight about, and I think this has kind of gone unnoticed, is the fact that those men and women over there fighting today are going to be our veterans of tomorrow.

Mr. SCHAFFER. That is right.

Mr. HILL of Montana. And we, as the gentleman knows, passed a budget here in the House of Representatives where we made a very strong commitment to veterans' health care. The President proposed a budget that basically flat-lined it. There was no increase in veterans' health care. And Congress, recognizing the importance of living up to the commitments that we have made to our veterans, increased the funding by about \$1.7 billion.

I have a few letters from folks in Montana. Veterans' health care is a pretty interesting issue in Montana. One of the interesting aspects of the Montana experience in World War II is that there is a larger proportion of Montana's population that served in World War II than any other State in the country. That had a lot to do with the census during the 1930s. Montana lost a lot of population, and the allocation of forces and the draft quotas were based upon population numbers that predated 1940. So Montanans sent more men and women to fight in World War II than other States did proportionately.

So, as a consequence of that, we have a larger proportion of veterans; and, of

course, we have a very large State also to deal with.

They just recently closed a veterans facility in Miles City, a veterans hospital in Miles City. In fact, one veteran wrote to me and said, "I'm wondering what message you are trying to send to us. You expanded the veterans cemetery and you closed the Veterans Hospital. Does that tell us that you have something in mind for the World War II and Korean War veterans?"

In any event, this Congress has approved a budget that will increase spending to provide health care to veterans, and it is extremely important that we live up to the commitment that we made to these disabled veterans and other senior citizens who are veterans who need to secure their health care.

Budgets are about more than numbers. Budgets are about priorities. And the budget that we just passed, I think, is an important one because I think it tells the American people what our priorities are for the future of America. And I want to just outline again what those are.

I talked briefly for a few minutes about increasing spending for veterans' health care, but also we included in our budget a provision to set aside all of the Social Security taxes that are collected for Social Security, which is something that is unique. Congress has not done that. Over the last 20 years, the surpluses coming from Social Security, as I know most of my colleagues know, has been spent on other things. We established a milestone. We say from now forward all of the Social Security taxes, 100 percent, will be set aside to save Social Security.

We also want to strengthen our national defense. I think it is obvious to everyone who is paying attention to the situation in Kosovo, the war in Kosovo, it is obvious that our military is strapped to the absolute limit. We cannot fly many of our airplanes. We are running short of armaments. It is clear we have inadequate training or insufficient training in many cases, that our men and women are being stretched to the limit and perhaps beyond it. We need to put more resources to the national defense.

Also, as part of this budget, there is a plan to lower taxes on the American people. I think it is important for us to have some discussion about why it is important for us to lower taxes for the American people. The portion of our national income today that is going to taxes, to the burden of taxes of the Federal Government, is the third highest it has ever been in the national history. In fact, the only time the percentage of our national income was higher going to taxes was in World War II, in 1945 and 1946. So it is a simple matter of fairness, that the tax burden is too high and we need to lower the tax burden on American families.

I think it is really important that we talk about and have a clear debate about where we think we ought to re-

duce taxes. There are two areas I think that are particularly important.

One is eliminating the marriage penalty. I think it is grossly unfair that 70,000 of my constituents in Montana pay on average \$1,400 more in taxes because they are married than if they were single.

I also believe that we need to do something about the estate tax. There is not a tax that is more unfair than the estate tax. The fact that we tax somebody simply because they die seems to me to be extraordinarily unfair. While it is often perceived as a tax on the rich, the very wealthy do not pay that tax. It is working men and women, small business owners and people who have saved and have been prudent with their money. Farmers and ranchers particularly are hard hit by the death tax.

We just passed on May 8, Tax Freedom Day. The American people have been working all year long, until May 8, to support government. Now they get to work for their families.

One of the ways we can help them live up to the responsibilities of their families, be able to provide for their families, is by reducing taxes. We did that in the last Congress. We passed the \$400 per child tax credit. It will go to \$500 this year. It is surprising how many Montanans have written to me thanking me for that \$400 per child tax credit, saying that that is going to allow them to be able to spend more money on education for their children, or perhaps even clothing or food or the necessities of the family, or even maybe a family vacation. But Montanans are grateful for that.

Incidentally, that is \$50 million more that will be made available to the citizens of Montana to spend in Montana, which will, of course, strengthen the economy of the State of Montana.

So many Montanans write to me and say that both the husband and the wife have to work in order to support their family, or a woman might even write and say that her husband has two jobs, a full-time job and a part-time job, just to support the family.

Forty percent of that income is going to the government. That is too high of a percentage. We ought to be 20 or 25 percent total going to government. And the best way to do that is a downpayment with the marriage penalty.

Mr. SCHAFFER. The gentleman is absolutely right. The tax burden on the American family is upwards of 40 percent. And that is just the tax burden. When we include the cost of Federal regulation and other compliance costs associated with just being an American citizen and doing business in the United States, the actual tax burden on the American family averages well over 50 percent today. It is one that we are constantly reminded of back home when we go back home to visit constituents.

I wanted to read a letter I received from a constituent in Loveland, Colorado, which reinforces what the gen-

tleman just said. It is a letter from a small business owner, runs a sprinkler and landscape company, and he says, "Dear Congressman Schaffer: I am your constituent from Loveland. As a business owner and a grandparent, I am very concerned about the serious economic problems facing our country. I feel our current income tax structure is having a very negative impact by taxing production, savings and investment, the very things which can make the economy strong."

So these folks support a national consumption tax, as the letter goes on, and they want to see some answers. But this is pretty typical of what we are hearing more and more from a greater number of American citizens throughout the country that are realizing that this silly notion of punishing hard work and success cannot be a successful formula for the United States of America. They are asking us to look harder and work more vigorously toward wholesale tax reform and at the very least reducing the overall tax burden.

I ask constituents all the time, what would be a reasonable level of taxation? I ask, if they could pick a number, a fair number, as an American citizen, what their percentage of income should be to pay to live in the United States, and the answer is typically somewhere around 20 to 25 percent. Well, we are almost twice that. And, again, when we include the regulatory costs of State, local and Federal governments, the American taxpayers are crying out for relief.

And not just on the tax side, but they are demanding that we be a little more critical of the expenditures that take place here in Congress. There is extravagant spending on programs that constitute nothing more than grand waste. It is unfortunate that this city seems to have a sense of momentum about it.

We make progress in small increments every year, and we really have turned the corner over the last 6 years. Republicans have had the majority in this Congress. We have made a remarkable difference and changed the overall trend line for everything from the national debt to eliminating deficit spending and now putting aside dollars over the next 10 years that can be used to achieve real priorities and objectives of the country such as saving Social Security, providing for a world-class education system, providing for a strong national defense and so on.

□ 2030

So the point my colleague mentioned and the voices of Montana are remarkably similar to those of my home State of Colorado and I presume throughout the rest of the country, as well.

Mr. HILL of Montana. If the gentleman would continue to yield, why is it important for us to save Social Security?

First of all, we have to look at what the President's actuaries say. And they

say, if we do not do something now to address this, we are going to be faced with two choices. One is to cut benefits by as much as a third, or to increase taxes by as much as a third.

Neither of those options are acceptable to me. And one of the reasons is that most working families today pay more in Social Security taxes than they do any other form of taxes. That is the tax rate that has gone up the fastest. And the idea that people have been paying into this year after year after year and now we are being told that because Congresses in the past have not had the discipline to put that money aside that they are either going to have their benefits cut or the tax burden is going to go simply higher simply is wrong.

I think that people who pay into Social Security all of their lives have the right to expect that it is going to be there when their turn comes to be able to collect on it. But beyond that, I think it is really important for us to understand how important it is to us.

My mom is 80 years old, and I can tell my colleagues that I feel great knowing that she is going to have a Social Security check coming every month, that she is going to be able to take care of the needs that she has. And I am very grateful that she has Medicare so I do not have to worry about whether or not she is going to have quality or adequate health care.

That is why it is so essential that we exercise the discipline today so that those programs are going to be there for the next generation of people but they are also going to be there for this generation of retirees.

Frankly, when I first ran for Congress, I used to talk about my granddaughter Katie and I used to point out that she is going to pay \$185,000 in taxes in her lifetime just to pay her share of interest on the national debt. But we cannot pass a bigger tax burden on to our children and grandchildren because the consequence of that is that they are not going to have their shot at owning their own business or pursuing their dream, the American dream, because the tax burden would have to go up.

So fairness dictates that we save Social Security, that we save Medicare, that we exercise the discipline today to make sure that those programs are going to be there and they are going to be sustained for my mother's generation, my generation, my children's generation, my grandchildren's generation, and even, hopefully, my great grandchildren's generation.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, all those concerned about saving Social Security, providing for a world-class education, providing for a national defense, and the other great priorities of our country are just grieving I think right now over the notion that we had to pony up \$13.1 billion last week in the supplemental appropriations bill to support the President in his war and it is tremendous expense.

When the failure of diplomatic policy disintegrates to the extent that it has and is carried out by unskilled administrators at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, there is a huge expense that detracts and takes away not only from all of these priorities that we discussed but from these children.

At a \$5.6 trillion national debt divided by all the men, women, and children in America, that comes out to about \$20,000 per person. Now, a child born today has to pay that back over the course of his or her working life with interest, and it comes out to about 10 times that amount. A child born today literally owes on today's debt approximately \$200,000.

So we just have to fight harder not only at being more fiscally frugal here in Congress but insisting that our international policy and the skill with which we carry out diplomacy is done properly and done in a way that is emblematic of the most free, most powerful country on the planet.

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCHAFFER. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado for yielding.

The manner in which he has described the inner workings of the Federal Government is very accurate in that what we do in one arena does affect what we do in another, particularly with respect to our financial condition, which is why I came down to the floor tonight was to bring the attention of this chamber to the continuing disastrous foreign policy being pursued by the Clinton administration.

The activities being promulgated by the Clinton administration in Yugoslavia remain unauthorized by the Congress, unapproved by the Congress, and completely bewildering to the vast majority of the residents of the Third District of California.

What is the national security interest that the administration is seeking to protect by destroying the infrastructure of Yugoslavia? What is the standard by which the administration will judge their air campaign a success?

Going to the reference of my colleague, how much will this ill-founded campaign cost our country in blood, bombs, and bullion that has to be taken from Social Security if nowhere else?

It is inarguable that the administration's foreign policy in Yugoslavia is reducing our military readiness and preparedness. What will be the consequence to our national interest as a result of this stripping of our ability to conduct our military efforts elsewhere in the world, and for what purpose?

My friend from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) earlier shared with us the list of obviously non-military targets being destroyed or damaged in this air campaign. Those are my colleagues' and my tax dollars being used on, as the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) said, day-care centers, schools, church-

es and the like. That is Social Security money being used to destroy day-care centers, schools, churches and the like.

Do my colleagues know what I find the most ironic? I go home on Friday of last week and I find it extremely ironic that all of America's foreign policy eggs now rest in a Russian basket.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, this must stop, not next month, not next week, not tomorrow, now.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, it is remarkable, just as my colleague says, about our reliance on a Russian partnership to try to resolve this matter and keep some peaceful solution.

I found it disturbing somewhat the level to which the communications and diplomacy with our Russian counterparts have disintegrated. Two weeks ago we had a Republican Conference meeting downstairs and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) announced that he was at wit's end that we can no longer rely on communication between the President of the United States and the President of Russia.

The President of Russia, of course, is virtually incapacitated as a result of a medical condition and lacks the mental coherence to lead the country, and so there is a shell of a Government that operates around him. And our own President, of course, is typically preoccupied with other things and unable to devote the full attention that the American people deserve to the crisis.

And so Members of Congress, again, had proposed to meet with members of the Russian Duma in Vienna a week ago Friday; and it was the greatest hope for optimism that we had in resolving the crisis between the two countries. And I say remarkable because, as a Congress, we have no diplomatic leverage, we have no diplomatic authority, we cannot sign treaties, we cannot engage in the kind of discussions that the State Department can. Yet, absent the leadership from the White House, it has come to the legislative body of two countries to meet together to try to hammer out a compromise and a solution.

The fortunate outcome of that meeting was that there were some positive results that were reported back to this Congress just last week. Again, keeping in mind the limited authority that legislators have to engage in diplomacy, there were still pretty promising prospects for the Russian Government to use its considerable leverage over Milosevic to try to get him to cease the efforts toward ethnic cleansing; and that would, of course, have to correspond with an effort by the United States to withdraw from military activity and put in place an international coalition of peacekeepers.

Unfortunately, for a long period of time, that is an expensive proposition. Far cheaper, however, than even one week's worth of a full-scale war that is being undertaken today.

But I point that out to my colleagues and to the American people in general

just so that we all can keep in the proper perspective about the miserable failure in leadership that is occurring again at the White House, the lack of skill and expertise in carrying forward the position of leadership that the United States of America for 223 years has traditionally enjoyed.

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would continue to yield on that point. The gentleman's point is well made. And I do not think we need to go further than to examine simply our ability to communicate with the Russian Duma, for instance.

The administration did not approve of those trips, did not sanction them, did not disprove them, nor did they discourage that trip. Interestingly enough, Reverend Jackson, who went and met with Milosevic and obtained the release of those three gentlemen with one of our members, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BLAGOJEVICH), that was a remarkable event. That was leadership, taking on the burden, unsanctioned, unapproved, unencouraged. And yet he went forward. That is what leadership is all about. And he brought those three people home to the grateful arms of this country.

I really wish that that kind of leadership existed more in the administration. Because that was a great victory for just our ability in America to act in our best interest.

Mr. HILL of Montana. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would continue to yield, I know that before coming here to the House he was a businessman; and like me I think as a businessman, I think I used to always try to contemplate the consequences of the decisions that I made as a businessman and tried to anticipate them. And I keep trying to anticipate what the outcome will be of this war in Kosovo.

If, by chance, Milosevic agrees at some point to withdraw his troops and allows us to put peacekeeping occupying troops, in reality, into Kosovo, which the administration would consider a victory, the consequence of that is going to be that we will elevate the KLA, which our own State Department has identified as a terrorist organization. It obtains its funding by being a conduit for illicit drugs and drug trafficking. It is an organization that has its ties to Bin Laden, the terrorist group. It has as its objective the autonomy of Kosovo but probably the linking of Kosovo to Albania, which would create greater Albania, which would be a terrible destabilizing influence on that part of the world.

My point, simply, is that any definition of "victory" as it might be described by the White House leads to serious consequences that substantially complicate the proposition in the Balkans, increases the level of commitment that we are going to have to make in terms of personnel and troops and resources, all of which appear to be negative. And that is the question that I have with the policy from the begin-

ning is I could not see any outcome from our decision to go to war and to bomb Kosovo that was a positive one other than the potential to stop the ethnic cleansing.

I mean, if it would have been possible through our actions to stop the Serbs from driving the Kosovars out of Kosovo, that is possible. But the fact is that the policy was an utter failure.

And interestingly, in all the briefings that I attended prior to our decision to go to war, I was told that that was the likely result, that the air strikes could not stop Milosevic, that it would not cause him to change his mind, and that it could not stop the Serbs from driving the Kosovars out of their country. So, from the beginning, where we are today was fully anticipated.

Now, the problem is that is there any outcome that would be a positive outcome for us and for that region of the country, and I am having difficulty in my own mind being able to draw that conclusion.

Mr. SCHAFFER. There are a few American people that are not able to, as well. I have another letter that I want to share with my colleagues. This woman is from Loveland, Colorado. I just received the letter last week. She wrote:

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SCHAFFER, "I am writing to voice my opposition to our bombing of Kosovo. It seems I am never called by the public opinion polls that seem so influential in Government policy-making. I hope that you, as my representative in Colorado, will vote against financing any further aggression against Kosovo.

I hope the War Powers Act will get serious reconsideration and be revoked. I feel this act tempts the President to use war as a tool of diplomacy. If a NATO member had been attacked, I would certainly be behind this bombing. It is not that I condone ethnic cleansing, but I do feel it should only be addressed by war when it crosses a country's border. Otherwise it falls to diplomatic or U.N. action, sanctions, in my humble opinion.

It is very hard to pay your taxes April 15 and realize, less than a week later, \$6 billion is being requested for actions in Kosovo. It is time Congress take back some control.

I just grabbed the sample of letters that happened to be sitting on the desk. I think out of 30 or 40 anti-Kosovo letters, there was one among them that is in favor of the action. I am curious as to whether the woman from Loveland, Colorado, echoes similar sentiments to those that my colleague hears among his constituency?

□ 2045

Mr. OSE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Are you sure of the postmark of that letter? That sounds like it came from Sacramento or Woodland or Yuba City.

My colleague earlier referred to the law of unintended consequences that we all deal with in business and having to ever so carefully calibrate what we are doing and the consequence thereof. I have to say, I have never seen a truer example of what happens under the law of unintended consequences than this fiasco we are involved in in Yugoslavia.

The President has no plan, the President has no means of measuring success, the President does not know what it is going to cost, and the President does not know when we are coming home.

Contrary to the depiction of this body last week where someone in the administration said we voted against coming home, against going forward and against supporting anything, in fact we did vote to keep our troops out of Yugoslavia, to not declare war in a situation that does not threaten our national security interest, and to require the President and the administration to comply with the constitutional requirement that Congress retains the sole authority to declare war. That was a strength of our system and a triumph for American democracy. I was pleased to be part of it.

Mr. HILL of Montana. I just want to make one comment.

We had the vote on the appropriations issue. I think a lot of folks out there are thinking, well, if Congress had not appropriated that money, that would have stopped the President from conducting the war. Of course, that is not true. The President is conducting this war, was conducting this war out of the normal defense budget. That will be tested under the War Powers Act, what the limits of his constitutional authority as Commander in Chief is. But the fact is that, had Congress not approved that appropriation, the President could have continued to wage this war.

This Congress, this House of Representatives, however, sent a strong message to the President that we do not believe that we should be at war with Yugoslavia and that we do not believe that he ought to send ground troops in, whether they are for peacekeeping purposes or whether they are for combat purposes or whether they are there for an occupying force.

At a recent meeting that we had with the Secretary of Defense, he made it clear that the level of commitment of ground forces if we win this war will be several times higher than the level of commitment that was being talked about before we started the air campaign. I do not think the American people are prepared for the size of the force that it is going to take to occupy that country. What we have to understand is that the President's current plan for rules of engagement if we do send those troops in there, which would be to further this disaster, would be to disarm the Kosovar Liberation Army, which is now doubled or tripled in size according to the latest reports, who are prepared to fight a war of attrition as they have fought for centuries for independence for that country.

The fact is we will be putting our troops into a very troubling, very harmful situation where the warring parties are still going to have conflicting interests.

It concerns me deeply, where the President is leading us. The best thing

for us to do is to find some peaceful solution that allows us to end our commitment to this fiasco, as my colleague from California calls it.

Mr. SCHAFFER. The confidence of the American people as well needs to be considered, also. We are not used to seeing wars carried out in the fashion that this President is carrying out this war. We are used to winning decisively. We are used to seeing U.S. leaders clear the way through securing the support of the global community to stand against world tyrants as Milosevic certainly represents.

I held a town meeting just yesterday morning, as I hold a town meeting every Monday morning, between Fort Collins and Loveland, Colorado, from 7 o'clock to 8:30. It is at that same place and same time. We open up the morning with a question of the day and see what is on the minds of the 60 or 70 people who routinely show up.

The sense of outrage over the mistaken bombing of the Chinese embassy was something that just had American citizens in my district shaking their heads in disbelief. It is certainly unfortunate. Apologies from our country have gone out to the Chinese. It was acknowledged that this was a mistake, that the CIA had been operating under, as I understand, 6-year-old maps in choosing this target.

The B-2 that flew the mission actually hit the target it was intending to hit. It is just that our government and the folks over in the White House had no idea that, over the 6 years since that map had been constructed, that the real estate had changed ownership and has come into the hands of the country led by the gentleman who was in the United States just 3 weeks ago where we rolled out the red carpet for the Premier of China and welcomed him with open arms.

Well, relationships are not all that favorable today, are quite strained and have set us back for a number of years.

I yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. HAYWORTH. I thank my colleague from Colorado as well as those from Montana and California for this very informative special order.

As my colleague raises the question of our relationship with China, I would invite my colleagues to rejoin me, Mr. Speaker, and those American citizens who watch these proceedings on the House floor in 1 hour's time, thereabouts, commensurate with the rules of the House in special orders, as we graciously provide time to our friends, the minority, and then return with majority viewpoint on what is transpiring in the world.

But I want to thank you for the letters, the points of reference and the fact that our national security is at risk and we have to take steps to provide for the common defense. I look forward to furthering that discussion in about 1 hour's time.

Mr. OSE. I would like to return, finally, to the point that the gentleman

from Colorado was touching on just prior to my initial remarks, that being that following on the law of unintended consequences, the consequence to us in Congress is that we are forced to make choices. When one member of the government, that being the President, interjects our military forces into an arena where arguably we do not belong and have no national security interest at risk, it forces us to choose between standing behind the troops and making sure that they have the adequate munitions and materiel to conduct this campaign and defend themselves or the other choice being reducing our ability to fund domestic programs such as Social Security, Medicare, education and infrastructure.

I do not relish that choice. I want to take care of our military to the highest degree possible. We stand today in a position that is seriously degraded relative to our historical positions on a military sense. But we have responsibilities elsewhere in this country of a domestic nature. Having the administration conduct this affair, if you will, I use that word advisedly, forces us to take money from other programs that are desperately needed here, being Social Security and Medicare. It is, again, a prime example of the law of unintended consequences. We are engaged in something overseas that has no constitutional authority, for which there is no identified national security interest at stake, and are being forced to reduce our ability to deal with programs here at home that are vitally important to our seniors and our youth and the people throughout this country. It is a difficult choice that we are faced with.

I think last week Congress stepped up and sent a clear and unequivocal signal that there were people who disagreed with the administration. Again, I want to get back to my point, that is a triumph of our system.

Mr. HILL of Montana. The gentleman from Colorado I think drew some contrasts with regard to leadership. One I think can look at the Gulf War and the Kosovo War and see some differences in terms of leadership.

President George Bush and Colin Powell provided outstanding leadership in organizing our political interests, our military interests, identifying our vital national interests, getting the support of the American people and then using overwhelming military force to accomplish the mission. We have engaged in the war in Kosovo now longer than we were engaged in the Gulf War. A lot of folks I do not think realize that.

But my point simply is, is that the Powell doctrine grew out of that. I want to remind my colleagues what that is. First, our political and military interests have to be aligned. There has to be a vital national interest.

General Powell has pointed out that he sees no vital national interest. He sees, by the way, there it has no threat to NATO as well.

And then the American people have got to be brought on board. That takes leadership. It takes a President who is willing to go out and explain to the American people why this is important, it is important to our national interest, and why it is important for us to commit the resources and take the risks that are associated with it.

And then there has to be a plan for what victory is going to look like and then a full commitment of whatever it is going to take to accomplish that.

Look at this situation. Whereas we had, I do not recall how many, 40 nations or so, supporting us in the Gulf War, we really have 19, but they are not really fully committed. Our political and military interests are not aligned at all. Congress does not support the effort. There is no plan for victory. The commitment of force is insufficient to accomplish the mission. It was noted from the beginning. The difference in leadership is stark.

That is why we are in this terrible dilemma that we are in today. Congress is facing a difficult dilemma because we have a worn-out and hollowed-out military; and this adventure, this war in Kosovo, is making that situation worse and more complicated and weakening our ability to defend our true national interests in other parts of the world. And so it is a very difficult proposition for all of us, I know.

But if we had a leader who understood the principles that are associated with what we need in terms of foreign and military policy, I know a lot of us would feel a lot more comfortable going forward from here.

I thank the gentleman from Colorado for arranging the time.

Mr. SCHAFFER. The gentleman from Montana hit the nail on the head when it comes to this letter that I received from a constituent again last week from Brighton, Colorado. He writes:

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SCHAFFER: I am writing this letter in response to NATO's action in Kosovo. I do not agree with this action. Specifically, and he has a number of points here, six points:

NATO should not be involved in an offensive action. It is a defensive treaty organization.

Number two, I do not believe that the United States should be involved in this action because it is not in the national interest, and I believe the bombing of Kosovo has made the refugees worse off than if we had stayed out of it.

Number three, I view what is going on in Kosovo as an ageless civil war which we have no business getting into.

Number four, I do not agree with sending ground troops, either NATO's or the U.S.'s into Yugoslavia.

Number five, I will never agree to allowing the U.S. to spend untold billions of dollars to support the NATO effort in Kosovo or Yugoslavia.

Number six, I do not agree with favoring the selective aid to one country which is being subjected to, quote, ethnic cleansing over many others that have suffered the same fate in the near past and the present.

Again, this is from a constituent in Brighton.

In the closing minutes that we have, I would like to invite my colleagues to

comment on letters like this. We are receiving thousands and thousands of letters from constituents. I view these letters to be very, very important. They provide for me the encouragement and the direction from my constituency to help me be a more forceful leader on the House floor and to speak more clearly about the interests of my constituency that I propose to represent here and believe that I do.

I think it is a healthy thing for all Americans right now, if they have ever considered writing a letter, showing up at a town meeting, calling a Member of Congress, submitting a letter to the President, this is the time to do it. We have not had a crisis of this proportion in a long, long time. This is not a time for inaction among the constituents.

I would like to hear in the minute or two that we have left from the others their opinions on the value of constituent input.

Mr. OSE. I thank the gentleman from Colorado.

I, too, had town hall meetings this weekend. In fact, I had one last night in a community called Carmichael. It was probably a 95 percent opposition to what we are doing in Yugoslavia.

The characterization that you lent to your constituent I think is extremely accurate. The American people have a very clear understanding of what America is all about. America is not about being undefined, ill-equipped and undirected towards an objective. America is about figuring out what we want to do and then doing it.

We are not in that situation today by virtue of a lack of leadership from the administration. The voters of this country understand how America works, and they are looking to us to conduct our affairs in accordance with that clear thing. That is, identify the objective and then go do it.

I thank the gentleman for including me in this hour tonight. I am pleased to reinforce the sentiments that he has seen in his constituents.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Let me just ask one more question. How important are letters like this in your office and among your constituency? What happens to these letters when they get to your desk?

Mr. OSE. The gentleman from Colorado brings up an interesting point. We probably receive upwards of 5 to 700 letters a week, some by e-mail, some by Postal Service. We respond to every one. The subject matter is all over the map, depending on what happens.

We find that an absolutely credible means of identifying things that are affecting our constituents directly. It is an immediate thing. It is like squeezing a water balloon in my district. If something happens, bam, I have got a letter. Something happens, bam, I have got an e-mail.

I want to encourage everybody, as we have for 220 years, to stay in touch with their representatives and continue to write. In fact, now would be a very timely period to write because of

our difficulty with the administration in Yugoslavia.

I thank the gentleman for that point.

Mr. HILL of Montana. As the gentleman knows, certainly there are well-informed Members of Congress on most every issue, but I find that there is greater wisdom in my district than there is wisdom here in this Capitol. Very often, my constituents write to me and give me special insights into how an issue or how a matter would impact them.

□ 2100

Certainly people have, I think, a personal view of the situation in Kosovo. They have sons and daughters who may be called upon to fight, or they have neighbors who will or friends.

But also I think that there is an issue here about who we are as a country and how we are governed as a country. I do not think that the American people are comfortable with the idea that one person can make a decision to put this Nation at war, put our men and women at risk and the treasury of the country at risk without the consent of the American people and their Congress.

The letters that I have received are overwhelming in opposition to this war, but I have found some of them very insightful. Even had one member of the Armed Services send me a letter resigning his commission as a consequence of this.

But the fact is, is that I find that extraordinarily valuable. Like my colleagues, I think we received 40,000 or more letters a year. We respond to them all. It is a challenge for us to get that job done. But the value to me, of course, is hearing from my constituents, having their input, having their ideas and their views. I always learn from them, and I appreciate it very much.

Mr. SCHAFFER. We are all part of the Republican majority here in Congress, and many people wonder how it is that we have two divergent viewpoints in Washington about how to lead the country, that which is represented by the President and that which is represented by the majority here in Congress, and I think tonight's special order by Republicans, Members of the majority party, is one indication of how it is we come to differences of opinions on such important matters of public policy.

I am proud to be a part of the party that takes its direction from the people of the country, that reads the mail, that listens to the phone calls, that responds to the opinions that come to us at town meetings, and, as we all know, there are legions of special interests whose lobbyists parade through the halls of Congress trying to leverage every bit of influence that they can on politicians, but it is the voice of real people, ordinary Americans who will commit to 10, 15, 20 minutes to sit down and put their thoughts in writing and communicate to their Congressman that, if they continue to do so in

great numbers and reach out and realize the tremendous difference that a Republican majority has made in this Congress for the American people, it is not only possible but, I believe, imminent that the voice of the people will rise up over and above those of the special interests that have so much influence at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue.

So I am very, very proud to be associated with the colleagues that have joined me here tonight, Mr. Speaker, in this special order. I am grateful for the indulgence in yielding to us an hour for the majority party, and for those members of the majority party we try to reserve this hour every Wednesday night, and we will be back next week.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUYKENDALL). The Chair is concerned about a couple of remarks made by previous speakers earlier this evening and will remind all Members that the rules of decorum in the debate prohibit the attribution of unworthy motives to the President. That standard applies both to debate and to extraneous material read into the RECORD.

A NECESSARY EVIL?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on the previous set of speakers and talk about the Kosovo burden, the Kosovo burden and decision-making in the 106th Congress, how it impacts and will impact on everything we do in the rest of this Congress.

I might begin by stating that I previously stated already that Kosovo is, in my opinion, a campaign of compassion. I think that it was important to confront Slobodan Milosevic. He gave the civilized nations no choice. I think this war is a necessary evil.

All wars are evil, necessary evils, but the word "necessary" becomes very important. "Necessary" is a vital word that many of my constituents are questioning, and like the gentlemen before me, I have gotten many letters and many comments, and I welcome those comments and those letters, both those that agree with me and those that do not agree with me. It is important that we discuss and have a dialogue about whether or not this war, like all other wars, it is an evil, but is it a necessary evil?

I think it very important to note that I, too, have had a series of town meetings, and in three or four town meetings, the first three, unanimous agreement when I asked do they support the present actions in Kosovo. Ninety-five percent of the people in the audience raised their hands. One meeting I had 200 people. I was shocked to