

protect the balance that was established. I will not violate that oath, and I encourage my fellow Members of Congress to join me in cosponsoring and supporting this resolution.

ADMINISTRATION DECREASES BUDGET FOR VETERANS ADMINISTRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from California (Mr. McKEON) is recognized during morning hour debates for 2 minutes.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to bring to the attention of this House a serious problem that is facing our veterans.

While the Clinton administration is discussing, if not formalizing, the decision to send our men and women into Kosovo, they are not planning or formalizing plans on what will occur when they return home. For the third consecutive year, the Clinton administration has produced a budget that cuts veterans' funding. The administration is adding new programs and placing new burdens on the Veterans Administration while decreasing their budget.

The Veterans Administration budget has tremendous shortfalls in general health benefits, research grants for problems unique to our military veterans, and finally in burial benefits. Our veterans today are fortunate to even have a flag at their funeral let alone an honor guard. Over 50 percent of our national cemeteries are full or open only for cremation. Furthermore, only three new cemeteries are planned and with a 10-year window to open one, the problem of where our veterans are buried will only escalate in importance.

How does the Clinton administration plan to solve these problems? By cutting funding for our veterans, by taking researchers out of the lab and into patient care, by refusing to offer a credible short-term, midterm, or even long-term solution to burial issues.

As the Clinton administration continues to consider sending our men and women into harm's way, I call upon them to think about what they will do when they return home. Let's show some appreciation for their dedication and hard work by never again disgracing them with a budget like this.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. There being no further requests for morning hour debates, pursuant to clause 12, rule I, the House will stand in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.) the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend James David FORD, D.D., offered the following prayer:

When we think of people and their needs, we know we can offer our prayers for ourselves and for all people. When we see illness, we pray that You, O God, would give renewed strength and make whole; when we see alienation or estrangement, we know that we can pray for Your gift of reconciliation and understanding; when we see wars or conflict, we pray that hostilities would ease and peace would reign; when we see a lack of spirit so that faith is not there and meaninglessness is widespread, then we pray, O God, give us hearts that are open to Your grace and Your love.

Bless us and all Your people this day we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

STORAGE OF NUCLEAR WASTE AT EARTHQUAKE HOTBED IS STUPID

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, most of us see earthquakes in real tangible terms: A natural disaster, an unpredictable violent force of nature that mankind has been trying to predict, and outwit, for centuries. We see earthquakes as a cause of billions of dollars worth of structural destruction and the cause of death for untold thousands of people.

It seems now that the scientists over at the Department of Energy are seeing earthquakes in other terms. Now they are just "part of the plan," part of the plan to "hasten the process," I quote, to cover up high level nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain.

Folks, Yucca Mountain is the heart of 32 known earthquake faults, just hundreds of feet from our groundwater levels, and just miles away from the homes of thousands of Nevada residents. Boy, talk about con men and city slickers.

For the better part of a century, DOE has been trying desperately to fit a

square peg in a round hole, knowing they are unable to develop structures that can withstand the crushing force of earthquakes. Now they are telling us they are trying to cash in on the destructive power of earthquakes. I guess that means that the mountain, when it collapses, will help cover up the waste. That is unbelievable.

Albert Einstein once said, "There are only two truly infinite things, the universe and stupidity. And I am unsure about the universe."

Mr. Speaker, to store nuclear waste at a hot bed of earthquakes in Nevada is stupidity, and I am doubly sure about that.

SOCIAL SECURITY MUST BE SAVED

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I join with those who maintain that we must save Social Security, we must save it for the 46,481 households in my district back in Illinois who currently receive it, and we must save it for the millions of workers and their families who need the economic security and protection which it provides.

Since its inception, Social Security has provided benefits to more than 160 million workers and their families. Without our Social Security system, half of the Nation's elderly would live in poverty. We must save Social Security for the unmarried and elderly widowed women who rely upon it for more than half of their income. There are over 53,000 female head of households with no husband present in my district alone.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the time to cut and experiment. We know what works, we know how it works, and we know why it works. Let us keep it working for all of the people.

AMERICANS KNOW BEST HOW TO SPEND THEIR OWN MONEY

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, as American taxpayers keep a steady eye on April 15, only 65 days away, many will notice that the \$500 per child tax credit passed by the Republican Congress in 1997 will make things a little easier this year.

For those with children, the pain of April 15 will be mitigated somewhat because the Republican Congress passed legislation allowing middle class families with children to keep a little bit more of what they earned.

Let us remember a key point that seems to be overlooked by those on the other side of the aisle: Washington did not "give" anything to millions of middle class families with children; Uncle Sam is merely allowing them to keep a

little bit more of what already belongs to them.

This legislation was passed because Republicans think the tax burden on the middle class is too high. Revenues to Uncle Sam are at record levels. Taxes paid in Washington have risen steadily higher since the days of Ronald Reagan ended.

The idea that the Federal Government, of all things, can be trusted better to spend our money than the people that earned it, is simply mind-boggling.

FDA MISGUIDED ON PRIORITIES

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, the Food and Drug Administration has approved a new state-of-the-art antidepressant for dogs. The FDA says "American canines are suffering from anxiety." Think about it, no barking beagles, no more whining weimariners, no more defecating Dobermans.

Meanwhile, the FDA continues to deny approval for certain cancer-treating drugs to help mom and dad.

Beam me up. It is evident that the FDA has gone to the dogs. What is next, Viagra for felines?

I yield back all the misguided priorities of the Food and Drug Administration.

DOLLARS TO THE CLASSROOM

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, when we think of our children's schooling, we think of books, classrooms, computers and things like flash cards, spelling tests and calculators. We do not think of bureaucrats, bureaucratic programs and stacks of paperwork.

As we stand here today, children are sitting in their kindergarten through 12th grade classrooms, learning everything from spelling the word "house" to a method of reaching a calculus derivative. They are learning with a teacher, and with the use of classroom tools.

The very small part that the Federal Government does play in adding value to the elementary and secondary education experience should be to fund classroom activity directly.

Dollars to the Classroom: A simple, but profound, concept. Instead of keeping education dollars here in Washington, let us send our Federal dollars directly to the parents, teachers and principals of our local public schools, local people, who are truly helping our children to learn.

BUDGET SURPLUS BELONGS TO TAXPAYERS

(Mr. GUTKNECHT asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, the President said something recently in Buffalo, New York, that I think perfectly captures the attitude of our some of our friends on the left when it comes to tax cuts.

In Buffalo the President spoke about what should be done with the projected budget surpluses over the next 15 years. He said, "We could give it all back to you and hope that you spend it right, but . . ."

"Hope that you spend it right?" Excuse me, what exactly does the President mean when he says "hope that you spend it right?" Is the budget surplus something that belongs to the government, or does it belong to the people who earn the money?

Well, it does not belong to Washington, and it does not belong to the politicians. It belongs to the people who sent the money to Washington in the first place. They are called taxpayers, and, yes, some of us believe that they ought to get some of it back.

TEACHER TECHNOLOGY TRAINING ACT

(Mrs. MORELLA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that will provide teachers with the technology training that they need to meet the classroom challenges of the 21st Century.

The Teacher Technology Training Act would include technology, teacher training and professional development programs that are authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act of 1994.

What it would do is it would require states to incorporate technology requirements in teacher training content and performance standards. We certainly do need this. During the 104th Congress, language was included in the Telecommunications Act to provide affordable access to the Internet for our Nation's schools.

Well, with all its possibilities, technology alone cannot improve our system of education. It could be just a useless baby-sitter, providing little educational benefit, without the help of the classroom teacher.

The classroom teacher is the key to success in bringing technology into our schools. All too often, however, teachers are expected to incorporate technology into the classroom, without even being given the training to do so.

So this bill would require that they have it. It costs no money. It would be included, and our classrooms must have teachers who know how to use technology in order for our children to succeed into the next century.

I hope my colleagues will join in co-sponsoring this important legislation.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
Washington, DC, February 8, 1999.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on February 8, 1999 at 12:35 p.m. and said to contain a message from the President whereby he submits the National Drug Control Strategy for 1999.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAH.

1999 NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL STRATEGY—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Agriculture, the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, the Committee on Commerce, the Committee on Education and the Workforce, the Committee on Government Reform, the Committee on International Relations, the Committee on Resources, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the Committee on Veterans Affairs, and the Committee on Ways and Means:

To the Congress of the United States:

On behalf of the American people, I am pleased to transmit the 1999 National Drug Control Strategy to the Congress. This Strategy renews and advances our efforts to counter the threat of drugs—a threat that continues to cost our Nation over 14,000 lives and billions of dollars each year.

There is some encouraging progress in the struggle against drugs. The 1998 Monitoring the Future study found that youth drug use has leveled off and in many instances is on the decline—the second straight year of progress after years of steady increases. The study also found a significant strengthening of youth attitudes toward drugs: young people increasingly perceive drug use as a risky and unacceptable behavior. The rate of drug-related murders continues to decline, down from 1,302 in 1992 to 786 in 1997. Overseas, we have witnessed a decline in cocaine production by 325 metric tons in Bolivia and Peru over the last 4 years. Coca cultivation in Peru plunged 56 percent since 1995.

Nevertheless, drugs still exact a tremendous toll on this Nation. In a 10-year period, over 100,000 Americans will