

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). Is there any objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ADJOURNMENT TO TUESDAY,
JUNE 29, 1999

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 29, 1999, for morning hour debates.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR
WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON
WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO
MEXICO-UNITED STATES INTER-
PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection and pursuant to the provisions of 22 U.S.C. 276h and clause 10 of rule I, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Mexico-United States Interparliamentary Group, in addition to Mr. KOLBE Arizona, Chairman, appointed on February 11, 1999:

Mr. GILMAN of New York, Vice Chairman,

Mr. DREIER of California,

Mr. BARTON of Texas,

Mr. BALLENGER of North Carolina,

Mr. STENHOLM of Texas,

Mr. FILNER of California,

Mr. REYES of Texas, and

Mrs. NAPOLITANO of California.

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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

Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MORE DEBATE ON GUN SAFETY
AND INSTANT CHECKS REQUIRED

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, some might read the headline in The Washington Post as another attempt to blame the FBI. The headline reads, "Delays in FBI Checks Put 1,700 Guns in the Wrong Hands." What the headline means is that guns, 1,700 of them, 1,700 persons or maybe a little less, 1,700 criminals or people who may be with other problems that would suggest they should not have guns, have gotten guns.

The reason why this is an extremely important announcement, and I am wondering what happened with this report in the debate last week, is that last week this House attempted to even lower the time frame for the instant check on gun shows to 24 hours, and it is clear that this loophole is an enormous loophole to give guns to criminals, guns to criminals.

This article indicates that the process is that after 3 days, if there has been no determination on the individual trying to seek the gun, then it automatically goes to that person. So, 1,700 guns got in the hands of criminals. And the real element is what would we have done with a 24-hour check when that allows for the very problem that we are talking about.

Just this morning a tragedy was reported about someone who got a gun and killed their three children, three daughters, because the restraining order that had been issued against this father did not get on the computer in time. And in the State of Colorado he was able to get the gun and shoot his three daughters.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that we would not let the gun lobby take this issue from us because of all the money that they have. It is reasonable, it is rational, and the American people see the basis in it.

We cannot fight technological problems. We hope the FBI fixes its system, but glaringly we can tell that the fact that there is a 3-day instant check is not even enough. There are problems with the system to the extent that even if we had 3 days we are not getting all of the guns out of the hands of criminals. What would happen if we had a 24-hour instant check; and after the 24 hours expired, the individual could get a gun?

Mr. Speaker, I would simply hope that this House would take up again gun safety legislation to keep the guns out of the hands of criminals. Does this headline need to be even more glaring by showing us the tragedies and loss of life because criminals have guns? Criminals have guns.

I hope that we will come to our senses and stand up for the American people.

NATO GOT IT RIGHT

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, last Sunday one of the newspapers in my home State of New Jersey, the Newark Star-Ledger summed up the outcome of the Kosovo conflict in an insightful editorial. The headline of the editorial says it all, in my opinion: "NATO Got It Right."

I would like to read a few passages from the editorial. It begins, and I quote,

The case for our intervention in Kosovo is still being made. The evidence turns up daily corpse by corpse, mass grave by mass grave, massacre by massacre. Claims of ethnic cleansing were treated with a certain skepticism when the bombing went on. Were the atrocities really that bad or was this just a case of war-time exaggeration? We now have our answer.

The editorial goes on to cite an estimate by the British Foreign Office that 10,000 Kosovars were the victims of mass executions by the Serbs. Then the editorial poses perhaps the most important question of all, and I quote, "Still, how much worse would it have been if NATO had not intervened? The dimensions of unchecked genocides are a matter of guesswork."

What we have seen, Mr. Speaker, in Kosovo is a genocidal campaign by the Serb forces that was halted by NATO's intervention. Moreover, the success of our military intervention resulting in the quick withdrawal of the Serb forces has allowed for the genocide to be documented essentially in real time. Yes, there were some crude efforts by the Serbs to conceal the evidence of the atrocities that they had committed, but the grizzly discoveries being made every day by the allied troops offer compelling proof, irrefutable testimony of what happened. It will be difficult for future revisionist historians to deny what happened in the villages and fields of Kosovo.

Mr. Speaker, this is an extremely important development. Throughout the 20th century genocide has occurred while the world looked the other way. It is, of course, impossible to conceal all evidence of the mass murders of thousands or millions of people. But in past cases of genocide, the world only found out what happened after the fact. For example, in the years during and after World War I, 1.5 million Armenians were massacred by the Ottoman Turkish Empire. At that time the term genocide had not yet been coined to describe mass murder of a civilian population as part of a government policy.

During the Armenian genocide, word started to filter out about mass atrocities and a flood of refugees into neighboring countries offered firsthand testimony. Relief operations were set up, but the Ottoman forces were able to cover up much of the evidence, not only while the genocide was occurring but also after the fact. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, there

was no allied occupation. The killing fields remained under the control of those who committed the genocide. To this day, Turkey still denies that the Armenian genocide took place.

Mr. Speaker, during the Second World War there were strong indications that the Nazi persecution of European Jews had reached a new level of barbarism. There are many indications that the allied governments were largely aware of the Nazi holocaust while it was going on, although this information was not known to the general public. With the defeat and occupation of Germany and the liberation of the concentration camps, it became apparent for the world to see what had occurred was a degree of mass murder so extreme a new word had to be invented, the word genocide.

The evidence of the holocaust was documented. The world was utterly shocked by what happened and the international community solemnly vowed: "Never again." The genocide was documented, but only after 6 million Jews and millions of other victims had been murdered.

What we have seen in Kosovo may represent a major historical turning point. Not only have we documented genocide as it occurred, but we have acted to prevent more widespread slaughter. And I hope this will serve as a precedent for our future resolve and commitment. More important, I hope our action in Kosovo will deter a future Milosevic before he embarks on a policy of genocide.

To quote again from the Star-Ledger editorial:

Our intervention in Kosovo demonstrates our internationalist tradition is still in place and that a multi-national intolerance of mass murder has developed. While we cannot be policemen to the world, we are also not willing to see this type of barbarism prevail, particularly in an area that was a battleground for two world wars.

Mr. Speaker, America's military intervention, with our NATO allies, on behalf of the people of Kosovo, was a just and a moral cause, a noble effort. The successful campaign in the Balkans, like so many of our country's international triumphs, was motivated both by idealism and by our national interests.

There was clearly an altruistic motive in stopping the Serb dictator Milosevic from carrying out his plans to drive the ethnic Albanians from their homes in Kosovo. But there was also the pragmatic recognition that instability in the heart of Europe threatens American interests. We fought two world wars on European soil, and held the line against Soviet expansionism for nearly half a century. We have learned the lesson of history, that a murderous, aggressive, genocidal regime must be stopped before causing widespread instability and death.

We can be very proud of the courage and professionalism of our men and women in uniform who carried out this operation. We can be proud of the American technology that allowed us to achieve our objectives so successfully with no combat casualties. And we should also be proud of our political leaders for taking a stand against aggression and eth-

nic cleansing, and for staying the course when a successful outcome appeared far from certain. President Clinton and his national security team deserve great credit for their leadership. The leaders of some of the allied nations faced difficult internal opposition but still showed great resolve, for which they deserve our respect and gratitude.

Mr. Speaker, in the past few months, there has been a shocking lack of support for our commander-in-chief on the floor of this House, as members of the Republican Party, including some in very senior leadership positions, have talked about the Kosovo campaign as the "Clinton-Gore War," trying to score cheap political points while our armed forces were involved in combat operations. I don't want to cast this debate in purely partisan terms; there were some members of the Republican Party who strongly supported this operation, while other Republicans at least had the decency and good taste to express their reservations in more restrained language. And there were also members on this side of the aisle who expressed misgivings about the operation. Fair enough; this is a democracy and this House should be a place of vigorous, sometimes partisan debate. But now that we have clearly achieved a military victory and are implementing our political objectives, I would have hoped that the opponents of the Kosovo operation would offer at least grudging support. Instead, during the recent debate on the Defense Authorization bill, there were some in this House who, because of their animosity for our President, still saw fit to criticize the President and his national security advisers and to try to argue that the Kosovo operation was not a success.

I guess you have to accept a certain amount of partisanship, but I still remember the days when our differences ended at the water's edge. You only have to go back to the early part of this decade, to the Gulf War. I voted to support President Bush's decision to use force to oust Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Many in my party did not support that decision. But once the conflict began, there was bipartisan support—not only for the troops and the operation, but for the President himself and his national security team. After our victory in the Gulf War, President Bush, a Republican, received an enthusiastic, triumphant reception here from a Democratic Congress. I hope we can get back to that kind of bipartisan consensus when it comes to our nation's international commitments.

Mr. Speaker, I did want to cite one positive development that came out of the human tragedy in Kosovo. Thousands of Kosovar refugees have been given temporary shelter at Fort Dix in my home state of New Jersey. The outpouring of support from the community has been extremely impressive. I think it says a lot about the true character of the American people, about our willingness to help out those who are in need.

Mr. Speaker, it's true: NATO did get it right. We still have a lot of hard work ahead of us. Slobodan Milosevic and his henchmen must be held accountable for their crimes. The challenges of rebuilding Kosovo are enormous. Likewise, helping a post-Milosevic Serbia get re-integrated into the family of civilized nations is a daunting, but urgent challenge. I am very hopeful that we can move forward as a nation—with the support and commitment of our European allies—to achieve these goals.

In the half-century since the Holocaust, we have said "Never again." In Kosovo, we finally proved that we meant it.

Mr. Speaker, I provide for the RECORD the complete article I referred to earlier.

[From the Sunday Star-Ledger, June 20, 1999]

NATO GOT IT RIGHT

The case for our intervention in Kosovo is still being made. The evidence turns up daily—corpse by corpse, mass grave by mass grave, massacre by massacre.

Claims of ethnic cleansing were treated with a certain skepticism while the bombing went on. Were the atrocities really that bad or was this just a case of wartime exaggeration? We now have our answer.

As NATO troops entered Kosovo, they found each day substantial evidence of widespread slaughter. Much came from eyewitnesses, but there was accompanying testimony from those who could not speak, the dead, buried in mass graves.

The assessment by the British Foreign Office that 10,000 Kosovars had been the victims of mass executions by the Serbs is chilling. Still, how much worse would it have been if NATO had not intervened? The dimensions of unchecked genocide are a matter of guesswork.

The international war crimes tribunal has begun its forensic investigation in Kosovo, and it will not be hard to find further proof of such atrocities. While the war may have been bungled and the assumptions that prompted our tactics were sometimes naive, there now should be little doubt that our resolve that action had to be taken was well-founded.

Our intervention in Kosovo demonstrates that our internationalist tradition is still in place and that a multinational intolerance of mass murder has developed. While we cannot be policemen to the world, we are also not willing to see this type of barbarism prevail, particularly in an area that was a battleground for two world wars.

There is one more step to be taken. Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic has been cited as a war criminal by an international tribunal. We must see that he, along with the other butchers of Bosnia and Kosovo, answers to these charges.

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN U.S. IS DEFICIENT IN PRODUCING SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS

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

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the Congress about a matter of great importance, and that is our future economic well-being.

We are blessed with an excellent economy today, and when we ask why that is and look at the statistics we find out that approximately one-third of all the economic growth today in our Nation arises from information technology; computers, Internet and so forth. And if we look at how much is caused by scientific developments in technology and engineering, overall it is greater than one-half of our economic expansion. Clearly, the economic health of our Nation depends very strongly upon good scientists, good engineers, good mathematicians and good research.