

saying that they have made progress. Yes, they have continued to eradicate marijuana, they have fallen behind some in some of their efforts for interdiction on cocaine, and we need those efforts back up. They have not extradited people that we have asked to be extradited, but they have started the process to extradite.

But there are a couple of facts that make this a very difficult vote should it come to that here in Congress. One is, for all the current plans and efforts that they have done in this past year, there are a couple of irrevocable facts. One is, their drug czar was living in an apartment owned by one under the name of one cartel member. Through that compromised drug czar, who was actually on the take from the cartel, potentially every single source we have in Mexico was compromised.

It is going to be very difficult to rebuild a relationship of trust when you have potentially blown every single source you have worked to develop over decades when they have the brother of the President being involved in the assassination of a presidential candidate, when they have people high up in their military, we learn that they are on the take from the drug cartel.

These are not little low-level occasional problems. When we have the DEA unable to go into regional parts of their country, we have substantive problems we have to address with Mexico.

The North American Free Trade Agreement, often referred to along the border and in other parts of the country as the North American Free Drug Trading Act, is something that has opened up the borders, and we have to get control of those borders. But we must not forget much of what we know about the corruption in the Mexican government is because leaders of Mexico have in fact identified those leaders for us and acknowledged that they have to clean it up. The fact is is they have started and have proposals on the table to work through extradition, to work through rebuilding their navy. We need a maritime agreement, but one of their comebacks to us is, as my colleagues know: Your government never asked us to sign the maritime agreement.

Part of our argument in Congress is with our own administration, and it is tough to put all the blame on Mexico. I say that as somebody who, for my 4 years here in Congress, has been steadily pounding on Mexico because I believe they have not been aggressive enough in drug enforcement. I have had several amendments related to Mexico, and I am not certain how I am going to vote. But it is not a clear-cut case, and we need to continue to encourage the current government.

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to reclaim the

5-minute special order of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

LIBERALS THINK WASHINGTON KNOWS HOW TO SPEND AMERICANS' MONEY BETTER THAN THEY DO

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

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS) on his plan. It is something that we have supported since 1995 and had the President and also Members of this Chamber on the left supported the same thing. Then when the President vetoed the nine appropriation bills in 1995 that shut down the government, that could have been avoided. I hope that we will be willing to do that in the future.

I was very, very interested to hear our Democratic friends talk about fiscal responsibility and talking about how the saying went that the balanced budget has no constituency. Mr. Speaker, I can tell my colleagues one person that cared about it in 1993 while he was sitting on the couch watching C-Span in the summer in Pensacola, Florida, was myself.

I remember in 1993 watching the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) and a band of young Republican conservatives come to this floor and fight the President and the liberal left's plans to pass the largest tax increase in the history of this Republic. See, their vision of America then and now has been that if we want to balance the budget, the only way we can do it is by raiding the pockets of taxpayers.

In fact, we had some insight on this about a month ago when the President went up to Buffalo, New York, and he told the people in the audience that we really have to avoid this idea that the Republicans have that we are going to cut taxes. The President said to that Buffalo audience:

We could give you money back and hope that you spend it on the right things, but we cannot trust you, basically.

As my colleagues know, what a vision for America. What a sad, tired, worn-out vision for America. It is a vision that is radically different from what the Republican party believes.

GOP, as far as I believe, stands for government of the people. We believe people know how to spend their money better than bureaucrats in Washington, D.C. That is why I ran for office in 1994. I saw the President's budget and the Democrats' budget that passed without a single Republican vote, and I saw that the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) and the rest of the Republicans laid out a blueprint, and we said:

Let us balance the budget in 7 years, and if we balance the budget in 7 years, then the economy will explode.

Now the President said that we could not do this because this would destroy the economy, and how many liberals did I hear come to the floor and speak into this microphone and tell the American people if we tried to balance the budget in 7 years, the economy would be wrecked? Boy, talk about a rewriting of history. Now they talk about the Clinton recovery?

I remember Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the Fed, testifying before the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH's) committee, and he said:

If you guys and ladies will only pass this balanced budget plan, you will see interest rates go down, you will see unemployment go down, and you will see one of the largest peace-time economic expansions in the history of our country.

That is what Alan Greenspan said. And do my colleagues know what? It is a good thing we listened to the economic intelligence of Alan Greenspan instead of the demagoguery that came from the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, because we stayed the course, we fought the good fight, and we took a deficit from \$300 billion when we got here in 1995 down to a point where it is almost balanced.

Mr. Speaker, the news only gets better. We find out this past week that the CBO is now saying:

If Congress and the President do nothing, then the \$5.4 trillion debt that threatens my children's economic future and all of America's economic future will virtually be eradicated in 15 years.

But the question is:

Can the President and those on the left leave well enough alone?

See, we have got these horrible little things called budget caps, a road map for fiscal responsibility, and they think this is a bad thing. In fact, the President sees his only way out is by doing what he did in 1993 and what Democrats have done for 40 years. He says, let us take it from the American people; they do not know how to spend their money. Let us raise taxes by billions and billions of dollars. That is in the President's budget. That is the President's plan.

My gosh, if we talk about cutting taxes, how about cutting taxes for Americans that make from 45 to \$60,000? Raising the threshold? What if we talk about cutting capital gains taxes that actually helps so many Americans, helps grow the economy? They say that is a bad thing. I disagree.

Unlike the liberals, I still believe Americans know how to spend their money better than Washington, D.C.

KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

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, I am honored to be joined in this special order with a number of Republican colleagues, two from my home State of Colorado and one from the great State of Michigan, and I would invite other members of our conference to come join us as well as we spend a little bit of time sharing with each other and with our colleagues on the opposite side of the aisle and indeed the American people the values and beliefs that we stand for and that we, as a Republican party, hope to move forward on the floor of the House.

Among those are key objectives of this session: tax relief for the American people, a strong national defense, a world-class education system, and Social Security reform in a way that guarantees and safeguards the Social Security system.

Mr. Speaker, part of that discussion also entails some international issues that I know at least one Member is prepared to talk about, and with that I yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO) who had a unique experience with one of his elementary schools in his district that I think all of us would benefit learning more about.

□ 1330

Mr. TANCREDO. I thank the gentleman. It truly was. Of the 25 or more years that I have spent in public life, this was perhaps the most significant and most moving experience I think I have had.

I visited a class, a fourth and fifth grade class at Highline Community School in my district. It is a public school in the Cherry Creek School District. Why this school is unique, and it certainly is unique, and that is a word that gets thrown around a lot, oftentimes misused, because it really means nothing else like it. But I can use it appropriately and correctly in describing this particular school.

Actually, this particular class and their teacher, Mrs. Vogel, about a year ago this class studied or actually had to just read a little tract that was discussing the situation in the Sudan, particularly the situation of slavery in the Sudan.

The Sudan, as we know, is a troubled country with a history of civil war now that has gone on for about 8 or 10 years that has cost almost 2 million lives. More people have died in this struggle than in any war since World War II. This is absolutely amazing that we pay so little attention to it. That was really the concern raised by the students and the teacher.

They said, how can this be happening? How can slavery be happening in this day and age, medieval slavery be occurring in the world someplace today, and nobody knows or no one cares? So they set about to do something about it. They started an organization that they now call STOP.

It has now become an international organization, and, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that this fourth and fifth grade classroom of Mrs. Vogel's has now raised over \$100,000 worldwide, and has redeemed, has purchased freedom, for over 1,000 people in the Sudan. It is an absolutely incredible story. This classroom has done more for human rights in the Sudan than this administration, I assure the Members, than this government, has done.

They are not finished yet. When I was there on Monday, they had just received a fax copy of a front page article that appeared in a Tokyo newspaper about this class. It is truly an extraordinary situation. I brought them a flag, and each one of the students in the class had written me a note. I have introduced them into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. But I want to keep talking about this, Mr. Speaker, because few other people are. This is a land that needs our attention.

I am on the Committee on International Relations. We had the Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, in a week ago to discuss foreign policy issues. As it turns out, in a half-hour presentation, in a 30-page written document about foreign policy, every foreign policy issue we have, every country was named where we have an interest, where there is a concern, except for one. I scanned it thoroughly to watch for it, to look for it. Not one time was there a mention of the Sudan. There are horrendous things happening there that need to be brought to the attention of the American public. The attention is being brought by classrooms like this one; no, in fact, just this classroom. I wish there were more, and there will be before we get done with this.

Mr. SCHAFFER. It is a remarkable example of what a classroom can be, given the liberty and freedom to teach under the direction of a professional educator. For those students in particular, they are getting quite an education in international affairs, about how government works, about human rights, and so on.

Those young kids also ought to be concerned about their retirement and their savings, another topic that Republicans care deeply about.

I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) to talk about why those kids should care about the Social Security Administration.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. I thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFFER) for organizing this one-hour session. When I yield to the gentleman from Colorado, I want you all to feel free to respond.

Mr. Speaker, let me just give my impression of what has happened, how it happened, and maybe what we have to look forward to.

In 1995, Republicans took the majority in this House, the U.S. House of Representatives. After being a minority for 40 years, we came in quite aggressively trying to promote the phi-

losophy on what we thought was going to be good for our future and for our kids and our grandkids.

We decided, with a great deal of determination, that we were going to balance the budget. We cut out \$70 billion of projected spending that first year, in 1995. We pledged among ourselves that we were going to be very frugal in cutting down the size of this government in order to balance our budget, in order to not pass on the debt of this country to our kids and our grandkids.

I am a farmer. Where we grew up in Addison, Michigan, our goal was to pay off the farm so we could leave the farm to our kids, so they had a better chance of making it and surviving. We should do the same thing as a country.

We were successful. The only reason that we went from a \$300 billion deficit projected for as far as we could see, \$200 billion on out, was that we became very frugal in slowing down the increase in spending. Now we have succeeded. We have an overall unified budget surplus. Most all of that is coming from the social security surplus.

The question is, what do we do now? If part of the goal is to have a smaller, less intrusive government, should we reduce taxes? Should we pay down this \$5.5 trillion debt? Should we somehow make the adjustments into capital investments, hopefully in individuals' names for social security, to start solving the social security problem?

Let me tell the Members what I think the fear is as Republicans try to make these tough decisions. The fear is that if we do not get this money, if you will, extra money out of town, the spenders, the tax and spenders, are going to use it for expanded government spending.

Just a comment on the President's budget. He is suggesting over \$100 billion of increased spending, almost \$100 billion over the caps that we passed in 1997 for increased spending. We could say that is coming out of the social security surplus, because that is where it is coming from.

What do we do? If we could be guaranteed that the spenders that want a bigger government, that want to tell the people of this country how they should act and where they should go and how they should do it by increasing the taxes and taking the money out of their pockets, if I could be convinced that we could hold the line on spending and the growth of this intrusive government, then I say the first choice is to pay down the public debt.

Not only does that increase the economy by reducing interest rates, but I think there is a danger of the spenders saying, look, we need this money for all of these good things, and therefore we are going to reach into that pot, if you will, of social security trust fund money and start spending it like they have for the last 40 years.

So let us look at a balance. Let us say that everything coming in from social security should be saved for social security. One way to do that is to pay

down the debt. Hopefully we will have the guts, the intestinal fortitude, to move ahead on social security. But let us also look at the other general fund surpluses to put that money back where it came from, in the pockets of this country's taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, that is sort of my speech. I think the challenge is really ahead of us. I just encourage, Mr. Speaker, everybody that is listening to contact their Congressman, contact their United States Senator, to give them your ideas and thoughts as we move ahead. The danger is that this government is going to continue to grow, it is going to continue to be more intrusive, it is going to continue to be a weight or a burden on economic expansion and development.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Back home in Colorado, there is no question that the majority of constituents that we hear from in my State are very strongly behind the belief that the era of big government is over. When we look at the President's proposed budget plan, it does entail escalated rates of spending here in Washington, additional tax increases in that budget, and just tremendous growth of the bureaucracy and the regulatory structure in Washington.

My district is on the eastern half of Colorado. My colleague from the other half of Colorado is here representing the western slope. I yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS).

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to change the subject for a moment, although I do recognize and appreciate the gentleman from Michigan's comments on social security.

The good news about our country is that people are living to a longer age. That is as a result of our good health in this country and the medicine and so on. But they have never adjusted anything in social security to account for that. The average couple on social security right now draws out \$118,000 more than they have put into the system. On an actuarial basis, the system is broke.

The Republicans have said for years that we have to fix it. I note that the President, in the State of the Union Address, said that he wanted to reserve a certain percentage. We have agreed to reserve that percentage. I am glad that the President has joined our long-term efforts in saying we can do it in a balanced budget way. But as the gentleman has said, I think very accurately, we have to make sure we keep the big spenders, keep their fingers out of the cookie jar.

I would like to shift for a moment, because I know my colleagues would like to talk about it, and invite the gentleman from Michigan to join us as well. That is topic of the national defense.

In Colorado, all three of us border an area called the NORAD Command Center. What they actually did in Colorado, they went into a mountain full of granite, they hollowed it out, our coun-

try did, and we put a command center inside that mountain in Colorado Springs, actually in the district of the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. JOEL HEFLEY), who is considered around here as an expert in defense.

This center, among other responsibilities, detects missile launches from around the country. As many of us know, and we have been very active in complaining about this, unfortunately, the need for a strong military has been somewhat diluted because we have been in fairly peaceful times. I can assure the Members, as my colleagues would agree, that that is a very dangerous attitude to get into.

We are respected throughout the world and we are the superpower throughout the world in part because of the strong military that we have. There are a lot of people in this world who would like to take things that we have, and they will take it by force, if they ever have that opportunity. We can never afford to be second in the strength of our military.

In order to maintain or actually regain, at this point in time, the strength in our military, we have to do several things. One, the quarters that these military people sleep in and the pay that they have is very low. I last week toured a number of military barracks, and I will tell the Members, it looks like poverty housing in a large city. It is disgraceful.

We owe these young men and women that are serving in our military more than that. We need to make a commitment to put money in to bring those barracks up to at least decent living standards.

The second thing, of course, and the Republicans have taken the initiative on this, that is a pay increase for our people who serve in the military. So we have to worry about personnel. We have to get our personnel built back up again. We have got to give them benefits that will encourage our personnel to stay in the military for a career. We have to get the excitement back in the personnel that we put in there about the defense of this country.

We have very dedicated, very hard-working people that serve us today in the military, but we are testing their patience when we ask them to live in the kind of facilities they are in, and when we pay them the kind of pay we are giving to them.

The second issue that I touched on at the beginning of my remarks is the NORAD Command Center, and frankly, what we call missile defense.

For years the Democrats, and I will make this very clear, for years the Democratic administration and the Democrats in most part have opposed the Republicans' urging that we install a missile defense system in this country.

President Ronald Reagan was ridiculed, ridiculed, by the liberal media and by the liberals in the United States Congress and around parts of this country when he said, this country needs a

missile defense system. The most logical way to have a missile defense system is a space-oriented system.

All of a sudden, in the last year, the Democratic Party and the administration has turned a new leaf. They have now stepped forward and said, we are willing to have a missile defense system. It is amazing in this country how few of us out there know that this country has no missile defense system.

When I speak with my average constituent, I say, tell me, do you think the United States, if we detect a missile launch, which we detect in the NORAD facility in Colorado Springs, and by the way, our detection can tell us the size of the missile, the speed of the missile, the destination of the missile, time of firing, et cetera, et cetera.

When I tell my constituents that then the only other thing we can do is call up on the phone to the destination and say, you have an incoming missile, say a prayer, that is all we can do for you, they are stunned. Because a lot of my constituents know that we provide missile defense for the country of Israel. We provide missile defense for some of our allies' ships, because under the antiballistic missile treaty we can do that, but we do not provide it for ourselves.

Is that the finest example of ludicrous behavior we have ever seen? It is important that we put in place in this country, not just talk about it, although talking about it is an important first step. I am glad that the Democrats have joined us to talk about it. They have come over to the Republican position that the defense of this country is necessary, that we need to put missile defense in.

But we have to get beyond talking. What about a land-based system? In my opinion, the only realistic missile defense that we can put in in this country is going to have to be space-oriented. Why? A land-based system, with the technology that we have today, cannot pick up a threatening missile at the launchpad of another country. It can only pick it up once that missile is within a certain range. Maybe 100, 200 miles is when the radar picks it up and actually fires a missile against it, probably within 100 miles of the target over the land.

So if our missile here from a land-based system goes up and connects with the enemy missile, and by the way, they told me when I went and looked at our land-based system that the odds of these two missiles coming together at the same time are about the same as throwing a basketball out of Cincinnati, Ohio, and making it through the hoop in Washington, D.C.

You get about one chance on a land-based system, and if you happen to hit the incoming missile, you blow it up over the United States. If, for example, we had an incoming missile into Kansas City, they might connect with the missile somewhere over Colorado and we would have this nuclear explosion.

What makes sense on a defensive missile system is a space-oriented system that can pick up and either destroy the missile before it leaves the launchpad, or has any number of windows as the missile is coming over to our country to hit that missile.

□ 1345

And our odds of being able to come in on the directional altitude of that missile with a laser are a lot higher than the hopeful or lucky shot from a land-based system.

So, I know that I and my colleagues, we have had many discussions on it. Our constituents are concerned about it in Colorado where the detection takes place. But it is a subject that all of us have to put to the forefront so that we can offer the next generation, those young people that the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDI) went and visited, we want to assure not only the ability to free slaves, but assure that the next generation has the best possible defense out there for these rogue nations that are willing to use a missile or a nuclear weapon against the United States of America.

The best way to do it, and finally recognized by that side of the aisle, is for us to sit down, not just talk about it, put money where our mouth is, and build that system as soon as we can. I am sure my colleagues may want to comment on it.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, the topic is certainly a relevant one, but not a new one here in Congress. For years, the Republicans have been trying to point out this fact that the North American continent has no defense against a single, incoming intercontinental ballistic missile. We cannot stop it presently.

The strategy that we have suggested over the years involves several different strategies, trying to get at least two shots at a missile launched at the North American continent. I had a tour of NORAD, I have been on a few of them over the years, but just a few months back. And one of the simulations that I had seen, just in terms of the timing, is important to realize. We are talking about a missile launched from the interior of China takes about a half-hour to get to the North American continent. A half-hour is all the time we have.

What NORAD does is approximately within the first few minutes, they can identify the type of missile that is launched, can identify a potential path in the early first few minutes, can identify potential targets, and over about the first 15 minutes gets closer and closer to narrowing and defining the specific targets. It takes about 15 minutes to identify the exact city that is being targeted in such a launch.

But what a space-based laser system would allow us to do is basically shoot down those missiles in the boost phase. The technology, people think this is some technology that does not exist. This is technology that we have today.

We just have not spent the money to deploy this technology. And it is now becoming an expensive proposition. If we would have been on track and moving forward on a missile defense system over the last 6 years that the Clintons have held the White House, the cost of this would be substantially less than what we are confronted with today.

But when it comes to the reality that we are virtually defenseless after an attack has been initiated, it really causes us to put this within the context of priorities. We are spending billions of dollars in Washington on things that really do not affect the day-to-day lives of the American people. But defending our borders is one of those priorities that we need to get more serious about here in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a long time coming for the President to stand here, as he did just recently, and say all of the sudden he realizes we need to develop a system to defend our country. It is a realization that I think is a step in the right direction, but it is 6 years too late, frankly, and it puts the American people at some peril.

What the White House has tried to convince the Congress over the years is that we can maintain national security through reliance on our intelligence-gathering community throughout the world. But Pakistan and India showed how reliable that system is, when Pakistan detonated five nuclear devices, frankly, when we were looking right at the site and had not figured out what was occurring.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman pointed out that he just recently toured NORAD, NORAD is probably the most sophisticated intelligence-gathering facility in the world. The other sophisticated ones happen to be under the control of the United States or on American territory also. So we have the intelligence capability.

But the intelligence does not do a lot of good once we figure there is an incoming missile, as the gentleman said. We can have all the intelligence in the world about where that missile is coming, but if we do not have a missile defense, what good is the intelligence?

Mr. SCHAFFER. That is exactly right. With the technology we have today, if it were to be employed, it virtually makes the prospect of nuclear weapons becoming obsolete a very real one. Think about that for a moment. The prospect of having nuclear weapons become obsolete basically by stepping forward and deploying the technology that makes it possible to knock down those missiles at a reliable rate in the offender's airspace before these missiles finish the boost phase or leave the enemy territory and airspace.

Mr. MCINNIS. And where the missile would discharge in the country of the person launching the missile. Then they would think twice about launching it if they knew, for example if China or Russia right now, where our big concern about Russia is an accidental launch, but if Russia decided to

launch against the United States but they knew that we could destroy that missile at some point over Russia, so we may pick a point where it has the maximum impact on Russia. They would be reluctant to launch that missile if they knew on its course it was going over Moscow and we could use a laser beam and destroy it there and have nuclear impact there. There is some serious thought about that.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, the other aspect that I think needs to be understood by more Members of Congress and the American people is that the threat of this kind of warfare is really getting broader, not more constrained. Even though the Berlin Wall fell and the old line communists have lost power in Russia, in the old Soviet Union, it is the expansion of rogue nations accumulating and developing nuclear technology that we need to be more concerned about.

In fact, it was Korea that launched the Taepodong missile, the three-stage rocket, and really announced to the world that they had the capacity within a 600-mile radius to reach the North American continent in less than a half-hour. That was a real shock to all of us, but I also think it sends up a signal for all of us that we do need to elevate the level of priority in this Congress, and express that concern to the White House, that defending our borders is a high priority.

It is the reason that we, as a Republican Conference, have made this among our top four objectives in this Congress. I yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDI).

Mr. TANCREDI. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for our colleagues to understand and for the people listening to understand that those rogue nations are indeed becoming much more dangerous and they now pose the greatest threat to the security of the United States that has actually existed since the end of the Cold War.

One of the reasons why that is the case today is because they have technology. They have been able to improve their missile systems, they have been able to improve their guidance systems as a result of a technology that we provided for them and also as a result of the President's Executive orders that were signed that allowed that transfer of technology to go on.

Since I am the newest Member here, I had several great opportunities to discuss issues like this during various retreats and prior to actually coming and taking over or getting sworn in, and I asked every single person that came in, every single person who had a foreign policy or foreign relations or some expertise in this area, I asked them four questions: Is it true that we have transferred technology to the Chinese? Is it true that transfer was illegal? Is it true that it has jeopardized our security? And is it true that that was made as a result of these Executive orders signed by the President?

Mr. Speaker, each case, to a person, liberal, conservative, and this was at

the Kennedy School at Harvard, we had four liberal people in front of us, foreign policy specialists, and to a person they all said yes. We never had one person that disagreed with that.

When we look at the situation that we face, not only is there more nations out there with the capacity to strike the United States; now we are even more unprepared than we were in the past because of what this administration has done to our military. Not just our missile defense system, but the general preparedness of the military which has degraded dramatically over the last several years. And not only has the preparedness degraded, our ability to respond all over the world degraded, but our responses everywhere around the world. Troops continue to be sent all over the place. There is a proposal to send 4,000 to Kosovo, along with the United Nations troops, that would not be under American command. Troops that would be under blue berets.

These things are being asked of American troops and boys and girls, citizens who are in the armed forces. To put their life on the line. To go in harm's way. We are not providing the support that we need to both in the housing and also in the actual equipment of war that they need to protect their lives. And we put not just them but the entire Nation at risk by the fact that we do not have the defense system that we need.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago the President stood up there at the podium during his State of the Union address and boasted at the time that there were no nuclear weapons pointed at the United States of America. Just a year later, there were no less than 13 targeted at the United States by China, and done so presumably with the targeting technology and satellite communication equipment that they ended up with through the signing of the six waivers, that have been mentioned, by the Clinton administration, the President himself.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, that is exactly the point. We do not need to argue with the administration about whether or not there are missiles pointed at this country. We know. And what we have tried to convince the administration is that we should not go on the assumption that Russia is telling us the truth that they are no longer targeting the United States. We should not go on the assumption that China says, "Don't worry. We are not interested in targeting the United States."

In fact, we should go on the opposite assumption. The fact is that throughout the world, whether it is Russia or China or some terrorist organization, there will be at some point in the future of this country a threat or a missile launched against this country. We can today prepare for that.

Mr. Speaker, I am one of the leading critics of the Clinton administration and what they have done to our defense and to our military. But I have deter-

mined that I am going to put my resources not as a critique of the Clinton administration necessarily, but to say to the Clinton administration, all right, the administration is finally acknowledging, as we have all discussed, thank you for finally acknowledging that we need to put money into this military. Real money into a real military. Thank you for acknowledging that we need real missile defense in this country.

We should assume that the proliferation of nuclear weapons will continue. We should assume that we cannot unilaterally disarm. And we should assume that at some point in time somebody might try and take us on. There is a reason that they call our Trident submarines, for example, "peacekeepers." Because if we are strong and we remain number one, we minimize the chances of us getting into an engagement. But we must, nonetheless, be prepared.

Mr. Speaker, I think it was George Washington who said the best way to avoid a war is to always be prepared for war. Well, as we have said here, the best way to avoid an incoming missile is to always be prepared for an incoming missile. That is our best defense. That is all we are asking of the administration. Put money in so that the best way to protect the next generation from an incoming missile is to be prepared for an incoming missile.

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

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I commend the delegation from Colorado. Just an observation: The air in Colorado may be thin, but its representation in Congress is very strong.

Mr. MCINNIS. Our snow is good.

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out, as somebody who represents San Diego which actually is one of the largest if not the largest military complex in the world, we always think about the fact that since the sacking and burning of Washington in 1814, Americans have basically perceived themselves as being insulated from attack from across the ocean. The trouble right now is that we sort of make that assumption that our Capitol is safe. In fact I think, more importantly, we would like to make the assumption that our wives and our children and our families back at home are safe from foreign aggression.

The sad fact about it is that is not true. And I will just ask anybody if they want to think that this is not an important issue to do as I was able to do. Talk to the parents who lived in Tel Aviv at the time the scuds were coming into Tel Aviv in Israel, and talk to those parents about the difference of being soldiers in the field as opposed to being parents at home and the fear of their children having missiles rained down on them. That really made an impression on me and really changed my attitude a lot of ways about missile defense capabilities.

Now, I have got to say that when I came here a few years ago to Washington, I was really shocked, in fact dumbfounded, that there were people here in Congress who sat on a certain side of the aisle that would vote for a missile defense system if that missile defense system would defend another country. But at the same time there would be a motion made by somebody on the Republican side, and I hate to do this but it tended to draw along partisan lines, if somebody proposed that the missile defense systems that we were developing would be used to defend our own children or our own families, they voted against that funding.

I just shook my head. I have to say this as somebody who believes in rights and responsibilities, that if the taxpayers of the United States are going to bear the responsibility of developing missile defense systems, how in the world can those who claim to represent those taxpayers not allow that defense system to defend those taxpayers?

□ 1400

It is astonishing how shortsighted people can be. For a long time, people did not think about the fact that our troops could have missiles rain down on them when they were in a tactical situation. All at once, now it is universally accepted by Democrat, Republican, Independent, left and right, that a theater defense system is not only appropriate, it is essential if we are going to defend our troops in the field.

What is sad is, are we going to wait until the missiles land in our neighborhood before the same enlightenment applies for defending our sovereign territory here in North America? What is really scary is, what does it take to learn.

I think that maybe what it takes to learn is that a lot of Americans before 1814 thought the Capitol was safe because of our big Atlantic Ocean. After the sacking and burning of this Capitol and this city, there was a lot different attitude about national defense.

I hope that we are able to learn from other countries' experiences rather than having to wait for those disasters to actually end up in our own neighborhood.

Let me point out, I will say this clearly, and I think any Member of Congress will say this, the only thing worse than seeing our Capitol destroyed would be watching our neighborhoods at home destroyed. We have a responsibility to defend that and to add that. I do not think it is something that is pie in the sky. I do not think it is something that is outside.

I think we saw what American ingenuity did with a glorified P.C. computer and a missile defense system that was never meant to be a missile defense system. It was supposed to go after airplanes. But Americans and American ingenuity can conquer this problem and defend our neighborhoods. I think we have to have the trust and commitment to get the job done.

We spend billions and billions to go all over the world to protect everybody else's neighborhood. Doggone it, we have the responsibility to do the same for our own.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, the Patriot System we all watched during the Desert Storm conflict was something that we celebrated, and I think most Americans found to be rather remarkable. But we had the ability in a theater missile defense structure to have a relatively high success rate of shooting down incoming missiles with respect to the attacks on Israel.

But once again, the discussion about a national missile defense system as it relates to an intercontinental scenario is a defense system that we just do not have and does not exist today.

Again, the scientists, those who are involved just from the research and technology side, have developed the technology to defend our country. It is just a matter of making it a priority and putting the pieces in place here politically to make that defense system a reality. That is what we are going to be pushing for this year.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield just very briefly, I am sure that, when we get back to our office, somebody will call up and say, "Are you guys aware of what is called the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty?"

Just very quickly, to run through that again, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the basis or premise for it was that Russia got together with the United States and said, "All right, the best way for us to provide security that we will not have a conflict between each other is neither one of us will build a missile defense system. That way, we will be hesitant to attack each other because we do not have anything to defend ourselves."

For example, the United States, under the theory of this treaty, would not attack Russia because they would not have any way to defend themselves from Russia's retaliation.

Well, those days of that treaty are over. If one reads the treaty, the treaty can be abrogated by the United States and by Russia. It is foolish for us to continue under the pretense that this treaty is going to preserve us from an incoming missile attack at some point in time by some rogue nation.

At the time this was signed, technology was different, the thoughts were different, the atmosphere was different, and the number of countries that had this kind of weaponry was different.

So I think it is important, as the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFFER) and I have discussed, do not let that ABM Treaty be a diversion from what is a necessary and, frankly, an obligation of this Congress and to the people of this country for this generation and future generations to defend our country.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, we, in discussing

what should be higher priorities here in this Congress, not only with respect to our attention, but also with respect to budgeting and the finances, many may wonder how it is that the gentleman and I and others like us believe that we should balance the budget and do it continuously, second, establish the priorities that allow us to rescue the Social Security system, provide for a world class education system and defense system, as well as provide tax relief for the American people.

I want to kind of switch the subject by talking about another issue we are concerned about, but it really is all within the context of priorities. The President, in his latest budget, has proposed \$10 and a quarter billion for what amounts to a land grant, the Federal Government purchasing more land, primarily in our State and out in the West under the Lands Legacy Initiative.

This is one of the things, when the President and others who believe what he does, that the Federal Government should increase the ownership of property, decreasing the amount of private ownership of property in America, that some are inspired by that. There is no question about that.

But, in reality, what proposals like this do is, first of all, it takes valuable land out of private ownership. These lands are taxed by our local school districts, by local communities, provide necessary funds for education, for street, and road improvements, for county budgets, and so on.

But the other thing it does, by removing that land from private ownership and putting it into the government's pocket, it results in restricted liberty and freedom of the American people.

For the gentleman and I who represent a great western State, our heritage is built upon the land and land ownership and sound management of natural resources in a way that has really created a thriving economy among western States.

So I use that as an example, and perhaps the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) and I would talk further just about the effect of the Clinton administration, the Federal Government's perspective on these western land-related issues.

But, once again, I point out that this is an area where the administration's priorities are different than the Congress'. We believe in defending the country, creating great schools. The President obviously believes in having the Federal Government purchase more land that is better managed under private ownership.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS).

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank gentleman for yielding to me. This issue of course crosses party lines. It is a bipartisan issue. It is the question of how much land should the Federal Government be allowed to continue to buy up, take out of the private market-

place, and to put under government hands and government management.

I have often heard some of the special interest environmental groups try and educate the American public thinking that the government every day sells away land and gives land to mining companies and timber companies, and the land is being destroyed by millions of acres. In fact, just the opposite is true. You see dwindling industries, not just because of this, but in part related to this, you see dwindling industries in timber and so on.

What you see is the government acquiring land. The government is a net acquirer. In other words, the government acquires more land than it gets rid of by many, many, many multiples. The government does not sell very much land. If they sell, it is for a right-of-way or they may do a land swap or something like that.

But if one takes a look across this country, when one looks at the different lottos that are used to buy open space, the different kind of funds that local municipalities and areas have dedicated of taxpayers' money to buy land from the private marketplace and to put it into the government hands, and then you consider proposals when the President of the United States is willing to go out and spend billions and billions of dollars to take more land away from the American people and put it into the government, I mean, I am not sure that is the right answer.

Clearly, all of us with today's technology have to be more concerned about what do we do for the preservation for future generations of the land we have. But I think the best managers of the land most obvious, not always, but most often are the people that live the land, the people that live off the land, the people that work the land, the people that enjoy the beauty of the land.

You must always be suspicious when the government shows up and says we are here to help. We have better ideas than you do. The better ideas come out of Washington, not out of Colorado.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Absolutely.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, as the government buys, for example, wilderness areas, the first thing you do is you take away local control. The gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFFER) and I have discussed this on a number of issues.

The gentleman has a vast district in eastern Colorado, some of the most beautiful, I think, some of the most beautiful plains in the United States. I adjoin him, and I have the western part of the State of Colorado which we think are the most beautiful set of mountains. We share those beautiful mountains with States like Utah, Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming, but the Rocky Mountain range.

There are certain areas there that are owned by the government, and the government should retain the ownership of that. But we must make sure that the concept of multiple use stays

in place. We have to be careful because, what else happens, is when the government buys land, they drive up the price for everybody else.

It is very hard today to find one's children or my children desire to go out and be a farmer, especially in our areas where the government has driven up the price of land because they are out acquiring the land. We have to encourage good and prudent management of the land, whether it is in the government hands or whether it is in private hands.

But I am not sure the answer is always to take it out of private hands and put it into government hands and one is going to end up with better management. Sometimes that might be the answer, but not always.

The American people need to be aware of how many thousands of acres every day across this country, through one government agency or another, at one level, local, clear up to national, go from private hands into public hands.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Absolutely. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, the best stewards of the land, the best environmentalists are the farmers, the ranchers, the private landowners who have a future at stake in the ownership of that land. This is what they want to hand down to their children.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is a heritage, like the gentleman said.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, it absolutely is. For us in Colorado, this is what defines our State. This is part of our culture in the western States. We have some of the most beautiful vistas and greatest natural resources, some private, some public, but in all cases, these are resources that, when managed well, the extraction of minerals or the sound timber management actually improves the environmental quality, particularly with respect to timber.

Let me talk about that for a moment, because the timber industry in the west, after, not only the poor policies that are put forward by the Forest Service these days, but also the misapplication of the Endangered Species Act, there are very, very few mills left in States like ours.

But what we are discovering is that active forest management, from a scientific perspective, actually improves overall forest health. What we are seeing out in the West today are devastating forest fires that burn far more intensely than ever before. We are seeing the pine beetle infestation in western States, which is an infestation at escalated levels primarily as a result of the poor condition of government-owned forests in western States.

When these trees begin to grow too closely together, they start competing for nutrients, for water. They prevent the snowpack from getting to the surface of the forest floor, and it respirates much quicker than would be natural.

As a result, these trees begin to undergo a certain amount of stress. Once they become stressed, these beetles

move in, these trees die, they become brittle, they become dry. It really sets up the West for some of these devastating forest fires that get worse and worse year after year after year.

But there is one interesting thing about these forest fires. Sometimes they tend to stop along straight lines. I have flown over some of the old burned areas, and I have never seen anything like it before. It is really remarkable.

These forest fires will burn, and they will stop along pretty much a straight line in some cases. The difference between the side that burned to the ground and the side that is still green and standing and flourishing and providing habitat for wildlife is that the government owns the land that was not well managed and not well taken care of. Private owners are managing the land that is still green today, still providing critical habitat for wildlife and so on.

The bottom line is the Federal Government owns far more land than it is able to effectively take care of, and that is irresponsible. That is an antienvironmental record that our Federal Government is moving itself into by acquiring more land than we have the capacity to care for.

I would also make one other observation. Since the fall of communism and the old Soviet Union, many of the republics have had a difficult time making the full transition to free market capitalism and ensuring democracies in their new countries.

One of the key provisions that comes back to us over and over again in observations is that what these countries need to do to make the last step toward free market capitalism is guarantee private property ownership. These are countries that understand they need to move toward private property ownership, not away from it.

We here in the United States, enjoying the greatest economy on the planet right now, are moving with great speed in the exact opposite direction, having taxpayers wealth confiscated from the American people, sitting here in Washington, D.C. so the Clinton administration and others who agree with him can then go back and purchase at above-market prices land that should remain in private property ownership, putting it into the hands of the government which, as I mentioned, is incapable of doing an effective job of taking care of it.

So it is quite a problem. It is one that, when we hear the term the "war on the west," the gentleman and I understand that term very well. But for others who have heard the term may not understand what that means. It essentially means the Federal Government coming into a great State like ours, not only purchasing the property rights, but the mineral rights that go with it, and affecting directly the water rights, water being the most precious natural resource that our economy depends on.

□ 1415

Mr. MCINNIS. If I might, the gentleman is correct. And let me make it very clear. There are some areas, and my colleague and I have talked about this, there are some areas where timbering is not appropriate. There are some areas, regrettably, where in our history some people have abused the timber rights. They have gone out and clearcut areas where they should never have clearcut. And part of that, by the way, was the irresponsibility of the Federal Government's supervising that type of thing.

But what has happened is they have taken that section of misbehavior and said, and there are actual groups out there that have said, we never want another piece of timber taken off Federal lands. We have the national Sierra Club, whose number one goal of their president is to take down the dam at Lake Powell, drain Lake Powell, which is one of the most critical resources in the western United States.

What I am trying to say here is that, just as we have an obligation as citizens of this country to build a missile defense system for the next generation and just as we have a like obligation to provide a good solid education system for the next generation and just as we have a similar obligation to provide a retirement system for the next generation, we also have an obligation for this next generation to enhance the environment that we are in. But the answer for the enhancement of the environment is not necessarily, and in most cases not at all, to take away the right and the dream of private property ownership.

Now, I should add, and some night we should just come and discuss that, how when the government decides they do not have the money to go in there, what they will do is go in and regulate. That way they never have to buy the land. They just go in on private property and regulate it so no one can move.

In the State of Colorado we had, I think it was the jumping mouse.

Mr. SCHAFFER. The Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse.

Mr. MCINNIS. The jumping mouse, and on the eastern range, which had never been seen, never been spotted, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, and they were going to regulate that as an over-riding land issue.

My bottom line is, we owe it to the next generation to protect our environment, but we owe it to this next generation to do it in a common-sense way that also preserves, as my colleague has very accurately defined, the fundamental philosophy of this country, and that is, as a citizen of this country we all dream someday of owning our own house or owning our own piece of the pie. And if we take care of that pie, we can all have at that opportunity. Do not let Washington, D.C., dictate and do not let Washington, D.C., try to convince the American people that they know what is best.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Sustaining our heritage and preserving our legacy is really a matter of keeping this land in private ownership. Many of the old farmers and ranchers who are reaching retirement age now and planning their estates realize they are going to have to deal with the inheritance tax.

Mr. MCINNIS. The death tax.

Mr. SCHAFFER. This is another aspect that we are trying to address and trying to eventually get to the point of eliminating the death tax overall. And I think that the Congress ought to view death tax elimination in environmental terms as well. Keeping these properties in the hands of the families that have worked this land for many, many years is something that we want to see more of, rather than moving toward more government ownership.

I know this is an issue in our State of Colorado. It is also an important issue in the State of South Dakota, and I see the gentleman from South Dakota has joined us for the remaining couple of minutes that we have left. The inheritance tax is a big issue for his constituents, and we will finish this special order up with just a brief discussion on inheritance taxes.

Mr. THUNE. Well, Mr. Speaker, I thank both my friends and colleagues from the great State of Colorado for taking this issue up. This is an issue which is important, obviously, to anybody who makes their living off the land.

And one of the things I find is one of the biggest insults to people who actually are in the actual day-to-day business of farming and ranching and involved in natural resource industries is to suggest that they are not concerned about conservation. When the gentleman was discussing the environmental burdens and the regulations that the government imposes on people who are trying to make a living at that, I could not help but think of a lot of the small independent farmers and ranchers in my State of South Dakota and the cost that is associated with those burdens. We talk right now about prices being in the tank, which they are, and it is very difficult for small independent farmers and ranchers to make a living today. And, obviously, that is something that we are going to have to address as well.

Frankly, one of the reasons we are not doing so well is because we have failed in a couple of important things, and one is opening export markets. We made a commitment, when the last farm policy was put in place, that we would aggressively open export markets. We have not done that. We do not utilize the tools that are in place and, furthermore, I think that this is a basic failure in our farm policy today. And, as a result, we are seeing the depressed prices because we do not have the demand that we need out there.

But the second thing that is really important, as the gentleman mentioned, is regulation and taxes. Again, that was another thing that was prom-

ised under the new farm policy a couple of years ago, which happened before the gentleman and I arrived here, but it was clear one of the things we said we would do is regulatory reform. That has not happened. There are still enormous costs associated with production agriculture.

And, again, as the gentleman, my friend from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFFER), also noted, there is the tax burden. Today, when someone dies, we basically have to deal not only with the undertaker but with the IRS. And that is a real liability in terms of trying to provide a framework for passing on the family farm, the family ranch, the family business to the next generation of Americans. The tax burden continues to strangle folks who are in the business of production agriculture.

So I think this is something that needs to be addressed. I hope we will do it in this Congress as part of our agenda, as we address the needs that are out there and talking about, for the first time in a generation, the politics of surplus, a surplus that has come about as a result of decisions that we made a couple of years ago in the balanced budget agreement. We were able at that time to bring some tax relief, but we need to bring additional tax relief after we have addressed Social Security and coupled that with paying down the national debt, which is an important priority for myself and a lot of Members I think on our side of the aisle, and hopefully a lot of Members in the whole Congress, but also to look at ways that we can continually streamline regulations and lessen the tax burden on America's working families.

I cannot think of any working family today that is having a tougher time making a living and making ends meet than people who are in the day-to-day business of agriculture.

Mr. SCHAFFER. The farm economy is really going to be strained this year. The administration's failure to aggressively and assertively open up foreign export markets is really leaving American producers high and dry in many cases.

Also, the debacle in Brazil, for example, with the devaluing of the currency and the role indirectly that our government played, is going to result in cheap soybeans swamping the U.S. market. Now, we have some soybean growers out in our parts of the country, it is going to be a bigger issue perhaps in the Midwest, but for agriculture in general these kinds of realities over the next months are going to, unfortunately, result in a very troubled agricultural economy in America. And I think we are going to feel the brunt of it around August, September, and October, in those months, and on into the year 2000.

But at a time when we know that competitiveness issues, that regulatory issues are going continue to be hitting hard on American farmers and ranchers we need to seize on that opportunity to focus on the other govern-

ment-imposed fixed costs of doing business, the inheritance tax certainly being one of them. Capital gains tax relief is something else that could make the difference between farmers declaring bankruptcy and selling out versus remaining in production agriculture and hopefully passing these productive agricultural assets on to their children.

The important thing to remember when we talk about eliminating the inheritance tax, or the death tax, we hear many of our critics on the Democratic side of the aisle who will claim this is a tax cut for the rich. We have all heard that. And many farmers and ranchers, when calculating the present value of their land and equipment and so on, it sounds like an awful lot of money. But that wealth is all tied up in the land. It cannot be extracted easily at all.

And what we are talking about is the children, the heirs of the present farm land owners, having to fork over upwards of 50 percent of the value of that asset over to the Federal Government when it changes hands between the parents to the children. Fifty percent of the value of an asset value of a farm means that that farm goes on the auction block, that it is sold. It is over. It is out of business. And that is why the inheritance tax relief that we are trying to push forward is so critical for agriculture today.

Mr. THUNE. It is. And what people do not realize is that agriculture is a very capital-intensive business. It is not uncommon for a small independent producer to have a lot of investment in equipment in order to try and do all the things they have to do to raise a crop and then be able to market it.

So the gentleman is exactly right in that people, when they talk about this being something that favors people in the higher income categories, I can tell my colleague one thing, the farmers and ranchers I know and visit with in South Dakota are not people I consider to be cutting the fat hog. In fact, right now, they are having a very, very difficult time.

And if we want to keep them on the land, if we want to keep that small family farm, independent producer, the thing that I think has helped establish and build the values in this country that we cherish, if we want to keep them on the land, we have to make it easier to transfer that farm or that ranch to the next generation of Americans. And that is why I think, again, as we look at what we can do in terms of trying to assist the agricultural economy today, rolling back the estate tax, the death tax, dealing with capital gains, as the gentleman noted, is important as well, and also trying to figure out a way to make it less costly to be in production agriculture.

Because, again, there are enormous costs to these regulations. I hear ludicrous examples of this all the time. And probably the most recent one I heard was a small business in South Dakota that wanted to sell, and they

were trying to get a buyer. And the buyer, before they could consummate the sale, had to go through an environmental analysis. Well, they discovered in one of the buildings there was an air conditioner hanging out in the back, as there often is in our State of South Dakota, because the summers get to be a little hot, but that air conditioner, as air conditioners are prone to do, was dripping a little bit of water. And the EPA said, well, I am sorry, we cannot have that. That is disrupting the vegetation. Ironically, their solution to that was to come up with a one foot by one foot square slab of concrete to place down there. Not that that would disrupt the vegetation.

There are ludicrous, frivolous examples of these regulations all the time. And I will not say for a minute that there are not needs in terms of safety and health reasons why we have regulations, but there are certainly a lot of frivolous ones. And as they apply to agriculture, we should look at what we can do to make it less costly.

Mr. SCHAFFER. The American public is looking to Congress for somebody here to listen and to resolve many of these issues, and I am proud to be part of the Republican conference that will continue to push forward for a strong economy, for maintaining and protecting Social Security, providing a strong national defense, providing for a world-class education system and, ultimately, trying to provide for some tax relief for the American people.

THE STATE OF THE MILITARY

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

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I just left a meeting with Secretary Cohen, Chief of Naval Operations, and General Shelton. I know people are talking about Social Security, they are talking about education, they are talking about Medicare, but I want to read something to my colleagues, and I want to quote.

Quite often our military leaders have been remiss in stating what the actual needs are so that they do not get in trouble, and I would like to read this to my colleagues. This was taken from a hearing in Las Vegas, Nevada. It said, "Displaying unusual candor, the commanders of combat training centers for the Army, the Air Force, the Marines, the Navy and Coast Guard described poor training conditions, outdated equipment held together 'by junkyard parts', and an underpaid, overworked cadre of service workers who cannot wait to get out and find a better job."

What is happening is our overseas deployments are 300 percent above what they were at the height of Vietnam. We are driving our military into the ground but not using the reinvestment into the parts, the manpower, or even the creature comforts for our military folks.

This goes on to say, "We have a great military filled with terrific soldiers who are suffering from an inability to train at every level with battle focus and frequency necessary to develop and sustain its full combat potential."

Mr. Speaker, we are maintaining only 23 percent of our enlisted. If my colleagues go out in any military division today and ask our sailors or our troops of any branch how many of them have been there within the last 8 years, every hand will go up; about 90 percent of them. They have not seen anything else but a de-escalation of military spending and/or support, which is denied.

We only have, today, 14 of 23 up jets at Navy Fighter Weapons School, known as Top Gun. They do not have engines. There are 137 parts missing. The 414th for the Air Force, the same problem. They do not have engines or parts to fly their aircraft back here in CONUS. We had 4 of 45 up jets at Oceania. What does that all equate to?

Why they are down is because we are taking the parts to support Bosnia, to support our off-loads and our carriers and our air force out of Italy, to put those parts in those parts of the world. We are killing our training back home. When we only have 23 percent of our enlisted and 30 percent of our pilots in all services, that means our experience is gone. Captain O'Grady, who was shot down, was not trained in air combat maneuvering.

□ 1430

That lack of training. When you only have four up jets in a training squadron back here in the United States, that means all your new pilots are getting limited training so when they go over, whether it is just handling an emergency or handling a combat situation, they are not trained for it. We lost about 50 airplanes this year, Mr. Speaker. We are going to lose a great number of aircraft and pilots over the next 5 years, even if we invest in those spare parts and so on today.

Now, the service chief will tell you, we have just put money into the spare parts and it takes delay. But that money they took and put into spare parts came out of other military programs. The chiefs have told us we need \$150 billion. That is \$22 billion a year. The President's new money is \$4 billion. Last year when they say they needed 150, the President said, "Well, I'll give you a \$1 billion offset," which means it has to come out of other military programs, which is a zero gain, zero net for the military.

We are in bad shape, we are losing our troops, the economy is high, but the number-one reason why our troops are getting out, yes, pay raise is important. But the number-one reason is because they are away from their families. They are going overseas, they are deploying, they are coming back, then they have to deploy here and they do not have the equipment, the spare parts that they use or take a part off of

your Chevy and put it on another Chevy. That part is not going to last you very long and we are going to lose those numbers of pilots.

It is said that we have more tasks for armed services than we do people. Now, we are asking our people in all services to do this 300 percent increase of deployments. But we have one-half the force to do it with. That means that the ones that are left have to go and do twice the work than we had to do it before. We cannot sustain that kind of downsizing and leave our troops unprepared.

If we look at Haiti, at Somalia and Aided, Aristide is still there, it is still a disaster and we have spent billions of dollars. The already low budget that we have, all of those excursions come out of that low budget which even drives us further.

EDUCATION

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

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to thank my Democratic colleagues for joining me here today to talk about one of the most vital issues that faces this Congress, I think, and certainly this country over the next several years, and that is education.

So that you and others will not think that I am just standing talking about education, because I have found in this great deliberative body called the People's House, we talk about a lot of issues, and we can talk endlessly on issues if someone will provide us data. But prior to my being elected to the People's House in 1996, I served 8 years, or two terms, as the elected State Superintendent of Schools in my home State. I have made education a top priority, public education for our children, not only at the State level but I have done that also since I have been here in Congress.

Throughout my service as Superintendent and to this day as a Member of Congress, I have spent a great deal of time in the classrooms of the schools of my State to observe firsthand the exciting educational innovations that are taking place in my home State. I would say that is true all across America. As my colleagues join me this afternoon, I trust they will talk about some of the exciting things that are happening in their State, also. Too many times, all we do is we talk about the problems, and it is important to acknowledge we have shortcomings and that we work on those shortcomings to make them better, because young people only have one chance to get a good education in their first 12 years and so it is throughout the rest of their lives. But sometimes it is important to acknowledge our successes as well as our shortcomings.