

Let's turn to another tragedy, for which liberals have proposed as a solution, additional restrictions on the Second Amendment. It is important that we look at the circumstances and see if their solution would have addressed the problem.

In early March, a six year old boy brought a gun to school and shot a six year old little girl. This is an unspeakable tragedy and my heart goes out to the little girl's family. No one should have their little girl taken from them in a senseless act of violence. At its root, this tragedy is a reflection of moral decay in our society. It reflects a lack of value on human life in American society today.

As we as a nation consider a response to this tragedy, it is important to look at the specific events that led to this tragedy. The six year old who shot his classmate was living with his uncle in a crack house. The boy's father is in jail for a burglary charge. ABC's Nightline indicates that the boy's father had at least five children by four different women. The mother had been evicted from her apartment. The gun the boy used was sitting out in a bedroom, underneath some sheets and was a stolen gun. It has been reported that the gun may have been traded for drugs. The father described his son as enjoying violent movies and television shows. And, teachers described the boy as aggressive and a bully. They also stated that he had been suspended from school twice, once for fighting and a second time for stabbing a little girl with a pencil.

Mr. Clinton has already laid the blame for this tragedy at the feet of Congress for not approving his gun control proposals. The reality is his gun proposals would have done nothing to stop this tragedy, and he refuses to admit that the problem in this case runs much deeper into the soul of this individual, his relatives, and our nation. Mr. Clinton's statement is a shameful exploitation of this tragedy to secure support for legislation that would have done nothing to prevent this tragedy. Too often the media and politicians point to the need for additional gun control as the "solution" because they do not have any other answers or lack the will to consider the root causes that lead to these tragedies.

It appears that this child was raised in a culture of violence with little respect for the rights of others, including the right to life. The blame for this tragedy rests primarily with the parents who failed to teach this child to respect life and others. Also, the peddlers of violence in our society are also partly to blame. Professor William Allen, at Michigan State University, said it best when he stated, "When you have 6 year olds shooting 6 year olds, you are not talking about crimes anymore, you're talking about moral decay."

We are dealing with a cultural meltdown. Many are proposing simple, quick fix solutions. However, we must recognize that there are no quick fixes to such a tragedy. At the root of this tragedy is a corruption of the heart and soul of our nation. We must work to restore a value on life.

We must counter the message that some adults in our society are sending is that some life is expendable. Children learn from our actions. Not only do many of our movies, music lyrics, and video games portray life as expendable, but many of the actions of adults in our society convey this message as well. When our children see adults, including political leaders, advocating the acceptance of drugs, eu-

thanasia, partial-birth abortions, and abortion on demand, adults devalue life and teach our young people that life is expendable.

Today, we must ask ourselves if we will have the courage to confront the root causes of violence. I am once again reminded of the comments made by Mother Teresa in 1994, when she stated "Our children depend on us for everything—their health, their nutrition, their security, their coming to love and know God. For all of this, they look to us with trust, hope, and expectation. But often father and mother are so busy they have no time for their children . . . So their children go to the streets and get involved in drugs or other things. We are talking of love of the child, which is where love and peace must begin." We as a nation must heed this advice.

We must work to renew in our society a respect for the value that human life has. Only if society places a higher value on life will we be able to make serious progress in reducing the violence in our society.

DEBT REDUCTION RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2000

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4601 the "Debt Reduction Reconciliation Act of 2000." It is time for the U.S. Congress and the President to start living the way American families do.

When a family owes money on a credit card, loan, or car, they pay a price to borrow that money—an interest rate. Interest rates make the purchase made by that credit card or loan or the car more expensive; hence, there is a financial incentive to pay the debt off as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, it seems that too many members of Congress and this President have forgotten what interest rates and debt really mean.

Our refusal to be mindful of simple accounting methods has resulted in the rapid accumulation of surplus revenues in the U.S. Treasury Department's operating cash accounts. At the same time, we have a public debt of \$3.54 trillion. However, we currently lack the mechanism needed to apply these surplus funds to the debt quickly. At this time, the Treasury may only issue less debt, reverse auctions, or purchase debt instruments. While these tools are useful, specific economic conditions influence which method can be employed at what exact time, limiting the options of the Treasury Department.

A more flexible solution is needed, and we have one in H.R. 4601. The "Debt Reduction Reconciliation Act of 2000" would protect the on-budget surplus revenues collected during the remainder of fiscal year 2000 and appropriate them for debt reduction by depositing them in a designated "off budget Public Debt Reduction Account." By moving the surplus out of the Treasury's operating cash accounts, appropriators would not be tempted to spend money they do not really have.

The "Public Debt Reduction Account" would give the Treasury flexibility to use its existing debt reduction tools in the most effective manner. Surplus revenues deposited in this ac-

count would remain available until utilized for debt reduction. Most importantly, the Treasury would be able to schedule reverse auctions at the most advantageous times, make funds available to brokers buying back debt on the open markets, or decrease the size of new debt issues—depending on which mechanism, or combination of tools, proves most cost effective.

It is also important to note that H.R. 4601 applies only to the surpluses for this current fiscal year. The "Public Debt Reduction Account" is not intended to become an automatic allocation as other accounts are, and in no way would this bill tie the hands of appropriators in the future.

Too often, we state that policy goals are worthy of implementation—some time in the not so near future. Right now, our economy is robust and healthy. In fact, Federal Reserve Chairman Greenspan's biggest concern is that our economy is growing too quickly. It is this rapid economic growth that has helped to create the surpluses we are discussing, and we should address this issue now.

We must also consider what we have to gain by focusing on debt reduction: an improved credit rating; no more interest payments, and most importantly, the renewed faith of the American people who will finally be able to see that their government lives by the same set of standards.

Do not believe the hyperbole that you will hear from the other side of the aisle. Without H.R. 4601, we will continue to spend and spend. Never in the history of the modern Presidency and Congress has there been an on-budget surplus that wasn't spent. In addition, without this bill the Treasury will continue to lack the financial mechanisms to apply surplus funds to the debt in a manner that is expedient and efficient.

Over the last few months, many of us have written about the need to reduce the debt. We've spoken about it in committees and here on the floor. In fact, many of you supported the goal of debt reduction by voting for the budget resolution. It is time for us to support a tangible, realistic solution.

This Administration has tried to argue that no solution exists. Not only is that statement incorrect, it is also grossly misleading. What the President really wants is the ability to spend every penny that comes into the Treasury.

I feel that we owe the taxpayers of this nation a lot more. After all, the surplus is the result of their hard work and willingness to pay taxes. We need to ask ourselves, "what would the families in my district do if they were suddenly able to pay off money they owe?" For me, that answer is simple. I urge support of H.R. 4106.

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN JOHN D. DINGELL HONORING THE MONROE EVENING NEWS ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 175TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 23, 2000

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize and pay tribute to The Monroe Evening

News. The longest continuously published newspaper in Michigan. The Monroe Evening News traces its roots back to 1825 when it was first published by Edward D. Ellis as The Michigan Sentinel. The 175 year history of this distinguished paper is one in which the people of Monroe County take great pride.

The Monroe Evening News has survived and flourished because it has changed with the times while remaining true to the journalistic values first put forth by Mr. Ellis. Perhaps the most significant change in The Monroe Evening News occurred in 1994 when the employees acquired a majority stake in the paper. In 1999, the employees bought all of the remaining shares, making it one of only two newspapers in the country to be owned, in its entirety, by its employees. Employee ownership will preserve for future generations the controlling local interest that characterized its first 175 years.

With such a long history, The Monroe Evening News has seen many changes. In 1987, the publication delivered its first Saturday morning edition. The success of the Saturday morning edition led the paper to publish a Sunday morning edition only two years later. Today, The Monroe Evening News is published seven days a week. In 1998 another major change occurred, The Monroe Evening News built a state-of-the-art printing facility. This new printing plant enabled the paper to adopt a computerized, full color layout. Before the plant was constructed, the paper was published on two printing presses that were built in 1924 and 1932, believed to be the oldest in the country.

Through 175 years of change and progress, the one constant at The Monroe Evening News has been its journalistic commitment to objectivity and fairness. These values reflect those of the community the paper serves and account for the growth and success it has enjoyed.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask my colleagues to rise with me in tribute to a fine institution, The Monroe Evening News.

TRIBUTE TO THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KOREAN WAR ON BEHALF OF VFW POST 4379 AND THE 23RD VFW DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 23, 2000

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, today I commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War. This Saturday, June 25th, the Winchester Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4379 and the 23rd VFW District will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War to "Honor America's Heroes."

On June 30th, 1950, President Truman ordered United States ground forces into South Korea and a naval blockade of the Korean coast. Only a few days earlier, North Korean forces had crossed the 38th parallel invading South Korea and capturing the South Korean capital of Seoul.

One of the war's most dramatic battles, Chosin, saw 17 Medals of Honor and 70 Navy Crosses awarded, more than any single U.S. action. The Marines and other Allied troops

saw nearly 2,400 of their own killed and 10,000 wounded or frostbitten. And yet, this is often called the "forgotten war" by our veterans, who found themselves returning to an indifferent home front keeping their experiences to themselves.

Well, I say "NO MORE," Mr. Speaker! And ask that my home district of Riverside County, California and the whole nation open their minds and hearts to the stories of our Korean War veterans—that they join in the celebration. The sacrifice that service men and women have selflessly accepted over the centuries deserve at least that much. I offer my most heartfelt appreciation to the veterans of VFW Post 4379 and the 23rd VFW District.

NEW SPIRIT OF GREEK-TURKISH COOPERATION IN NATO

HON. DAVID L. HOBSON

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 23, 2000

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Speaker, there has been a remarkable step forward in the rapprochement between Greece and Turkey over the past two weeks as our two NATO allies have cooperated militarily as part of NATO's Dynamic Mix exercise in the eastern Mediterranean.

Greek-Turkish military cooperation during this exercise marks a historic turning point. For the first time, 150 Turkish soldiers landed on a Greek beach as part of an alliance wargame to practice repelling an enemy assault on a NATO ally in its southern region. Turkish troops landed near where the Greeks began their 1821 war of independence against the Ottoman ancestors of modern day Turkey. As part of the maneuvers, Turkish warplanes also landed at a Greek airbase for the first time since 1972.

Improved relations between Greece and Turkey started with low-level talks on non-contentious matters and were given a boost by mutual outpourings of assistance when destructive earthquakes struck both countries last year. Military cooperation between Greek and Turkish forces—which had been stalled by intractable disputes over the Aegean sea, airspace, sovereignty, militarization of islands, and Cyprus, since the early 1970s—could pave the way for further progress on bilateral problems. Although the two allies have not yet tackled these complex issues, their commitment to cooperation in NATO maneuvers in the eastern Mediterranean is an encouraging sign.

Turkey made the first gesture on Aegean disputes this time by agreeing to file flight plans for its military aircraft participating in the exercise, a Greek demand even though the 1944 International Civil Aviation Organization accords do not require military aircraft flying in international airspace to do so. Greece accepted the goodwill offer by allowing the flight plans to be filed in NATO's southern region headquarters in Italy, rather than in Athens.

Turkey is one of the staunchest NATO allies and continues to field the largest standing army in the Alliance after the United States. Turkey anchored NATO's southern flank from the time it joined the Alliance in 1952 through the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991. Turkey hosted NATO's southeastern land and air

commands at Izmir, while counterpart headquarters in Larissa, Greece, were stood up just last fall. Turkey has played consistently in NATO exercises in the region, despite Greek boycotting of the maneuvers over disputed Aegean airspace and militarization of its islands.

Greek-Turkish military cooperation in NATO's southern region is crucial for the Alliance to shore up its defenses in the eastern Mediterranean, respond to potential crises in the Middle East, and promote stability in the Balkan region. Our allies in the eastern Mediterranean have already become the new front line states for post Cold War conflicts, such as the Gulf War, the conflict in Bosnia, and the war in Kosovo. Further military gestures to circumvent longstanding Aegean disputes, such as Turkey's compromise this time, will strengthen bilateral relations between two key allies and bolster NATO's ability to defend its southern region in the 21st century.

HIGH NEED HOSPITAL MEDICARE RATE RELIEF ACT

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 23, 2000

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I recently introduced the High Need Hospital Medicare Rate Relief Act of 2000 to address the unintended consequences of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. It had a disproportionate impact on hospitals that serve especially large numbers of Medicare and Medicaid patients. These hospitals are located in our most rural communities and in our largest urban areas and include sole rural hospitals and large academic medical centers.

What they have in common is the overwhelming amount of care they provide to our Country's elderly and poor, insured and uninsured. It is their service mission that distinguishes them and now puts them at grave financial risk.

With the revenue stream heavily weighted toward Medicare and Medicaid, these 600 or so safety net hospitals are more dependent on federal and state reimbursement than any other hospitals. They have relatively few commercially insured patients, and therefore, little or no ability to offset Medicare costs. This financial problem is exacerbated by the large numbers of uninsured patients that rely on these same providers for care.

We are talking about the providers that make up the Nation's health care safety net. The High Need Hospital Medicare Rate Relief Act of 2000 defines these hospitals as ones whose combined Medicare and Medicaid inpatient days exceed 65 percent and whose Medicare disproportionate share percentage exceeds 40 percent. The Act targets relief to these high-need hospitals through two separate payment mechanisms.

First, this bill directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to calculate a qualifying hospital's market basket update—or inflation adjustment—for federal fiscal years 2001 and 2002 as if there had not been a 1.8 percentage reduction in the market basket adjustment for fiscal year 2000. By restoring the rate base at these hospitals for purposes of calculating future year rates, this proposal would partially offset the accumulated cuts inflicted by the