

TIME FOR BUSH ADMINISTRATION
AND CONGRESS TO DEAL WITH
BUDGET NEEDS IN RESPONSIBLE
FASHION

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 6, 2002

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, last year, President Bush presented and Congress passed his tax cut predicted on Americans paying down the deficit in the next ten years. There were unrealistic assumptions about Federal spending, claiming to protect Social Security and Medicare, with a trillion dollars left over for contingencies. Today, \$4 trillion of those assumptions have disappeared. The White House has sent a budget to Congress that will never be presented for a vote because even the Republican leadership knows it would fail.

It is time for the Bush administration and Congress to step back and deal with our critical budget needs in a reasonable fashion. The tax changes that were all scheduled to expire in less than 10 years should be reassessed in light of our stated priorities. We should not dramatically increase our debt, borrow against Social Security and Medicare, and abandon priorities for senior citizens and veterans that were clear and important commitments to American voters.

There should be a careful reexamination of the proposed military budget to eliminate unnecessary weapons system that will not help us in our war on terrorism and that will not even be helpful fighting conventional wars. We should commit to reforming agricultural spending so it does not waste huge sums of taxpayers money while hurting the environment and consumers, not even benefiting most states and taxpayers.

Last year I made it clear that the budget resolution did not have a pretense of reality and that the tax cut was based on seriously flawed premises. The events of this last year have revealed with a vengeance the accuracy of these predictions. Oregonians expect their political leaders to keep their commitments to reduce our multi-trillion dollar national debt, protect Social Security and Medicare, avoid reckless and irresponsible spending, and reform existing programs to give more value while saving money. Today's vote is a political charade that does not advance any of these objectives. The fact that it is brought forward as a suspension bill with no meaningful debate underscore the fact that even the Republican leadership is not serious about it. I hope that we can stop these meaningless political exercises and get on with the hard and serious work of budgeting for this year and America's future.

PARCA—CELEBRATING 50 YEARS
OF GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR
PERSONS WITH DEVELOP-
MENTAL DISABILITIES

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 6, 2002

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me today in paying tribute to

Parca, a private, nonprofit organization serving people with developmental disabilities, on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. Since 1952, Parca has enriched the lives of these special people while strengthening our community through its devoted services. Parca's impact on those with developmental disabilities, as well as on their friends and family, is recognized with great appreciation by many in our community.

Mr. Speaker, in 1952, people with developmental disabilities and their families were often unable to find programs and support to help meet their special needs. Flo Nelsen organized a group of concerned parents and established Parca to provide support for individuals and families with developmental disabilities such as Down's Syndrome, autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and other neurological disorders. Flo Nelsen believed that every developmentally disabled person had the right to resources and support to help them reach their highest potential and become actively and productively involved in the community. Families and individuals with developmental disabilities can turn to Parca for advocacy, information, counseling, support, and, most important, fun.

Over the past fifty years, Parca has expanded to provide a variety of services and programs for different age levels, and it has expanded into Marin County, Silicon Valley, and the East Bay. Parca's Recreational Experience for All Children (REACH) program provides child care services for children with or without developmental disabilities, giving children an opportunity to appreciate and learn from one another. The recreational activities of REACH help children appreciate their differences and identify their similarities. Another great benefit of this program is the child to staff ratio is 6 to 1, and in some cases, 3 to 1, depending on the needs of the children. The result is a better learning experience because individualized attention is geared toward their pace of learning. Parca provides numerous recreational and social opportunities for families and individuals with developmental disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, one of Parca's important and unique contributions is the Raji House—a unique program that allows out-of-home weekend service for children and teens with developmental disabilities. As you know, Mr. Speaker, one of the many difficult challenges of raising such a child is getting a break, and this service provides parents with a respite care service. At the same time, it gives the children a chance to learn and grow as they spend a weekend in a rich home environment with the opportunity to go on fun, exciting, and educational field trips. Both parents and children have the opportunity to become rejuvenated through Raji House.

Parca also offers an adult service program that trains adults with the skills needed for self-reliance and independence. Among many of Parca's accomplishments is a collaboration with housing developers to provide affordable housing to individuals and their families, furthering Parca's efforts to promote independence. Independent Living Skills Counselors live on-site with residents to ensure their safety, and counselors help them learn the basic skills needed to live on their own, including balancing a checkbook, cooking meals, doing laundry, and planning grocery lists. These skills are something many take for granted,

but for those with developmental disabilities these skills are the key to greater freedom and independence and a sense of pride and accomplishment.

Sarah Hurlbut, a young woman who is currently a resident in Parca's Page Mill Court Apartments in Palo Alto, has made extraordinary progress since she moved into the apartments in 1998. With the help of Parca she has been able to live on her own for the first time. Sarah is no longer a shy young woman—through Parca's help she has become more assertive and is becoming a leader among her peers. As Sarah's experience has demonstrated, this program has been critical in our effort to help those with developmental disabilities become an integral part of our community.

Parca's excellent family and counseling services provide families with information regarding individualized education, program planning, and counseling on a variety of issues. The "Speaker Series" provides information to those interested in learning about important issues such as child care, education, independent living, and wills. Parca's People First chapter teaches adults with developmental disabilities on how to advocate for themselves. The group has also organized trips to our state capital in Sacramento and to our national capital here in Washington, DC, to provide families and individuals with developmental disabilities an opportunity to advocate their positions on issues directly affecting their community.

On February 9, 2002, Mr. Speaker, Parca will be holding its "Hearts of Gold Anniversary Celebration" to mark 50 years of golden opportunities to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. As Parca celebrates this historic milestone, I invite my colleagues to join me in recognizing and commending the entire Parca family for the time, effort, and invaluable contributions that have been made to help individuals with developmental disabilities achieve their highest potential. We celebrate the vision and the success of Parca and wish continued future success.

ESTABLISHING FIXED INTEREST
RATES FOR STUDENT AND PAR-
ENT BORROWERS

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 24, 2002

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to support S. 1762, to establish fixed interest rates for student loans and to loans and to extend current law with respect to Federal support for lenders.

The passage of S. 1762 will establish fixed interest rates for students and correct a problem in the Higher Education Act that, if not acted upon, would threaten to end the participation of private lenders who fund the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP). The continued availability of low-cost, federally guaranteed loans under FFELP is crucial to ensuring that our nation's students and parents are able to pay for college and other higher education opportunities.

As a member of the 21st Century Competitiveness Subcommittee, which has jurisdiction

over higher education issues, I am committed to making higher education more accessible and affordable for students. I applaud the student, school and loan provider groups that have worked with Congress and the administration to develop this "win-win" solution. This legislation is good for students and good for our nation.

HISTORIAN STEPHEN AMBROSE PRAISES MISSISSIPPI NATIONAL GUARDSMEN

HON. GENE TAYLOR

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 6, 2002

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, my hometown newspaper, *The Sun-Herald*, based in Biloxi, Mississippi, recently printed a feature by noted historian Stephen E. Ambrose. I found Mr. Ambrose's words to be especially insightful at this time when our American troops are at war in Afghanistan. It is a ringing endorsement of the dedication of our men and women in uniform, as well as a testament to the new American diplomacy—one that encourages cooperation among nations and perseverance in rebuilding communities and restoring peace.

Most importantly, though, Mr. Ambrose pays tribute to a group of men and women who are often over-looked as defenders of our Nation, protectors of freedom and some of America's finest diplomats abroad—our National Guardsmen. Each day our nation's guardsmen are performing missions on or above every continent in the world. They are serving alongside their active-duty counterparts in Operations Northern and Southern Watch. They are also playing a vital role in helping, serving, and supporting peacekeeping operations, a vital part of our National Military Strategy. As stated by former Secretary of Defense Cohen, "Today, we cannot undertake sustained operations anywhere in the world without calling on the Guard."

And, I am particularly proud that Mr. Ambrose chose to acknowledge the citizen-soldiers from my state, the State of Mississippi. Their work has been tireless, but not thankless. Today, I would like to thank those guardsmen, who continue to represent Mississippi and the United States so well.

[From the *Sun-Herald*, Dec. 10, 2001]

UNITY CAN RESTORE WAR-TORN COUNTRY

(By Stephen E. Ambrose)

TUZLA, BOSNIA.—My wife, Moira, and I, along with a squad-sized group of veterans of the 29th Division who hit Omaha Beach on D-Day, went to Bosnia for Thanksgiving week. As part of the USO-sponsored trip, we spoke with U.S. Army troops, attended briefings, meals and engagements, and watched former members of the 29th meet the newest members of the 29th here.

But mainly we learned.

We learned how soldiers of different races, backgrounds, and countries can set aside past enmities and work together to rebuild a region. And while we were reminded that American troops served similar functions in the last century, we realized they will serve those roles in this new century with new methods, new aims and new partners from around the globe.

It is a lesson our allies in the war against terrorism would do well to grasp; one we can only hope is soon played out in such Afghan cities as Kabul or Kandahar or Mazar-e-Sharif.

Because of all we learned, and the promise for the future it held, this was the best trip ever.

We witnessed things we never imagined possible. One day, we stood at Eagle Base, headquarters for the 29th Division, surrounded by Black Hawk helicopters, ready to take off but waiting for two other birds coming in.

With us was Major General Steven Blum, the American commander of the NATO peacekeeping operation force here. The troops around us were fully armed. The incoming birds landed. They were Russian, part of the air-landing brigade that serves under Blum's command. They landed about 50 meters away from the Black Hawks. Russian soldiers emerged combat ready in the presence of American soldiers just as ready. But there were greetings, not shooting.

The last time that happened was at the German city of Torgau on the banks of the Elbe River in 1945. With this difference: Now, for the first time ever, an American general was commanding a Russian unit.

There are fighting men and women from 30 nations under Blum's command. I saw Greek and Turk soldiers patrolling, side-by-side, armed and working together. Germans and Frenchmen. Poles and Estonians. Latvians and Swedes. Lithuanians and Brits. Irishmen and Austrians. They serve in the Stabilization Force, SFOR for short. The large curved sign over Eagle Base's gate proclaims: "Home of the Peacekeepers." Blum's NATO command, the Multi-National Division North (4700 troops) is anchored by the 2672 Americans (down from 20,000 in 1995), part of the 29th Division. It includes regular, reserve and National Guard units.

DEFENDING THE FUTURE

The next day we drove to Forward Observation Base Connor, a small outpost of 120 men, 65 of whom were from the Mississippi National Guard. They were young, professional and spoke with charming accents. They come from a state known for its defense of the past. But they are now preparing for the future.

The Guardsmen wore American flag shoulder patches. They were black, brown, yellow, red, pink, white. All religions and ancestors. When off duty, they wore baseball caps that proclaim on the front, "Hard Rock Cafe: SFOR Bosnia," and on the back, "Love All. Serve All." That is not how things used to be in the Mississippi National Guard, but it is now.

The Guard is helping rebuild and restore peace while setting an example for Bosnia's Croats, Serbs, and Muslims on how different people can work, serve, live and survive together.

"That American flag on the troops' shoulders is what the people of Bosnia respect—and they don't mess with them," Blum said. "Our soldiers have been social workers one minute, combat soldiers the next . . . No other army in the world could do this."

What these soldiers and their foreign counterparts are doing—all of it—is wholly new. An international force working to keep peace and commanded by an American was a dream of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower a half century ago. Now it is here.

These troops are setting the precedent for much of what lies ahead in modern American foreign and military policy. A similar base in Afghanistan might be built. There will be many others. In Bosnia, American troops are protecting Muslim civilians. While not very

far away, in Afghanistan, we are attacking Muslim terrorists.

UNDER STRONG LEADERSHIP

Blum has a unique task. He is 55. He has made 1500 airdrops and has had open-heart surgery. He speaks so well, thinks so swiftly and knows so much that he reminds me of Eisenhower in 1945, when Ike was 55. At all times, Blum was at full concentration. He is an outstanding military commander and diplomat, as good as Ike was in Germany at the same age—but on a much smaller scale.

"Bosnia has more weapons per person than anywhere else in the world. So many, that to celebrate a wedding they throw grenades and shoot their AK-47s," Blum said of the region, divided by three peoples and three armies: Muslim, Croat and Serb . . . "Our aim is one country, one army."

Eagle Base is Tuzla's largest employer, providing construction and service jobs, as well as others, at fair wages. Muslim works beside Serb works beside Croat.

They see in their own eyes, black and white, yellow and brown Americans working together. Clearing mines, for example. The American teams go out to remove them using mine-sniffing dog teams. The fields are everywhere, with mines killing or maiming a civilian a day.

Blum showed us the site of the Visoko airfield raid, called Operation Dagnet. On September 27, elements from the 10th Mountain division of urban warfare specialists carried out a search-and-seize mission. Along with confiscating illegal arms. They arrested six Algerian associates of Osama bin Laden.

On October 28, in Operation Omaha, Blum's troops made a ground-air assault on two sites, where the found illegal weapons, including an underground cache of six surface-to-air missiles.

He also took us to a mass gravesite. "Same thing as 1945," he said, "just new names." More than 200,000 people were killed in Bosnia. No one knows how many others were injured. There are now more than a million refugees. To escape shelling, women, children and elderly fled by following the power lines from the cities across the roughest mountains. This was Europe's worst fighting in 50 years.

The 1995 Serb assault on Srebrenica killed more than 7000 people. The town was shelled—including a mortar round that exploded on a soccer field filled with boys. That impelled Western powers to take action, and put the troops there under U.S. command.

RESTORATION AND LIBERATION

The American presence in war-torn countries and its role in helping rebuild, restore, and democratize them goes back to 1945 and Japan, West Germany, and later South Korea. Now it is being carried out in Bosnia with a multinational force. America sends her best young men not to conquer, not to destroy, but to liberate. The American military presence had a most remarkable effect in Japan and Germany from 1945 on, and in South Korea after 1953.

It wasn't the Coke or the blue jeans that left lasting impressions, but rather the understanding of right and wrong, the safeguarding of rights for women and the encouragement to create free and prosperous societies.

The U.S. Army's role in these countries is one of the great success stories of the 20th century. A sequel is happening right now, at the beginning of the 21st century, in Bosnia. And one hope and prays, soon in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere.