

the individual. People who are unwise or unlucky in their investments would suffer. We saw many examples of this in recent stock market falls.

Finally, privatization would increase the Federal deficit by more than a trillion dollars over the next ten years. Taking a mere two percent of payroll away from the Trust Fund could double or triple the size of the deficit. This effect is what some people trivialize as "transition costs." I do not believe it is trivial, and given the other concerns which privatization raises, I think we should look long and hard before we leap in this direction.

How do African-American women fare in privatization proposals currently floating around in Congress? Not good at all.

Although Black women typically live longer lives, their lifetime earnings are usually much lower than their white counter-parts. Under privatization, this lower level would mean black women would be forced to live longer on a smaller amount of money.

Hugh Price, President of the National Urban League and Julian Bond, Chair of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, wrote an editorial in the New York Times, on July 26, 2001 addressing African American women and social security. They found that guaranteed government assistance is essential to the African American community. While African Americans make up only 12 percent of the general population, they make up 17 percent of all Americans receiving Social Security benefits and 22 percent of all children's survivors benefits. However, the Administration has been unclear on how disability and survivor benefits would continue to be funded.

A study by the National Urban League counters assertions made by the Administration that African Americans will benefit from private accounts bequeathed to their relatives. According to the study, the typical African American man dying in his thirties would only have enough in his private account to cover less than two percent of the survivor's benefits under current law. This also has a devastating impact on African American women as survivors.

Members of Congress must be fiscally responsible when it comes to making decisions regarding Social Security. Fiscal responsibility entails looking at the whole picture and seeing the effect it may have on all individuals in society. I urge my colleagues to make this the inclusive America we continue to represent to the world and ensure that Social Security proposals give everyone some comfort in life!

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

(Mr. LANTOS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ENSURING THE SAFETY OF AIR TRAVEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, tonight I have been listening

to my colleagues, and they are talking about privatization of Social Security. I am actually here to speak about the attempts to privatize our air traffic controllers.

I do not know why everyone keeps thinking that privatizing is the best thing in the world. When I started working down here in Washington, I have to fly a lot, and with that, I certainly see what goes on in our airports; but I also had the opportunity to spend time in the tower.

I spent time at JFK Airport in New York; and it just so happened when I was there, a terrible storm came in, and what happens an awful lot of times in our towers, with the equipment that they are using, it fails and yet our traffic controllers were right there and were using the equipment or the hand stuff that they have used for 20 years; and to watch these men and women work, they are absolutely wonderful.

When we start talking about privatization, this is not the answer. We have dedicated people keeping our skies safe, and if anybody needs any reminder about that, think about September 11. Our air traffic controllers around this Nation landed over 5,000 planes within a certain amount of hours without any kind of incident. Think about that.

My concern also is if we are going to think about privatizing our air traffic controllers, is it going to be a bottom line. These are dedicated people. I spend time with them because they are always saying the equipment is not working. This past weekend we read about the FAA putting new equipment into some of our airports, and then they are the first ones to say it has got bugs in it. We are going to put it in anyway, and we are going to work the bugs out. I personally would rather have the men and women of air traffic controllers working the bugs out before they have to lean on using it.

With that, my colleagues on this side of the aisle and hopefully the other side of the aisle will work to make sure we do not privatize our air traffic controllers. It is not the answer, and it is not cost efficient. The men and women that serve this country, keeping our planes safe and keeping us all safe, certainly deserve, and by the way, if we start looking at trying to get people to work in New York and certain other areas of the country, they do not want to go there. They just do not want to go there because the work is so hard, and yet our people are there every single day, minute by minute, watching every single plane in this country; and the only thing that they are concerned about is the safety of their citizens that are in the planes.

We should do everything, everything in the world to make sure that we do not privatize. As I said earlier, privatizing everything is not the answer to the problems that we are facing. What we should be doing is having better working conditions for these men and women and giving them the equipment that they need.

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

(Mrs. MEEK of Florida addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today, like so many other Americans, I boarded a plane and I arrived safely at my destination. This is what the American people expect when they board a plane: safety, security, and the guarantee of a safe landing at the end of the flight.

The American people hold the Federal Government accountable and responsible for the safety of our skies. Homeland security has become our Nation's top priority.

On the same day that the administration proposed a Department of Homeland Security, President Bush also issued an executive order weakening the security of our skies by removing the air traffic controllers from the Federal Government. President Bush's action opens the door to privatizing this vital air safety role and risks placing corporate profits ahead of public safety.

For this administration to declare air traffic controllers no longer an essential component of our Federal homeland security system undermines America's faith in air safety.

In the few short hours after the attacks of September 11, air traffic controllers guided hundreds of thousands of Americans out of the skies to safety. Their heroic actions saved countless lives. Their dedication and professionalism should be honored just as we honor firefighters, police officers and emergency first responders who also performed heroically on September 11.

The role of air traffic controllers in homeland security is vital every day and should never be discounted or weakened. The American people have an expectation that our skies are safe. The Federal Government and air traffic controllers, as employees, are responsible for providing that safety. Unfortunately, this executive order undermines air safety and weakens our homeland security, and it should be rescinded.

OPPOSITION TO PRIVATIZING AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS

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

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise to express my concern in opposition to privatizing air traffic controllers in airports across our country.

I do not know about my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, but the safety of the flying public should not be done by the lowest bidder. Congress has already determined that privatization does not guarantee better service, safety, or efficiency.

Frankly, we were all shocked to learn of the President's executive order, released last Friday, deleting the words "an inherently governmental function" from an executive order of December 2000 regarding air traffic controllers, which set the wheels of privatization into motion.

It is amazing to me that this Congress has invested billions of dollars on a new agency to federalize baggage screeners while at the same time entertaining the idea of contracting out our important air traffic control positions for the cheapest offer. This is an illogical step and inconsistent with our previous attempts to ensure a safe means of transportation.

We should heed warnings from other countries that are currently struggling under privatization. The privatized systems of Canada and Great Britain have not worked. Canada has delayed buying new equipment, postponed hiring new controllers, and even increased fees to cover costs.

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Great Britain resorted to the banks for a bailout. Is this the system we want to follow? In talking about privatization and Social Security, I think we have a comparison. Look what happened to the stock market. What would happen if we privatized Social Security today.

We talk about competition. I wish the President and the administration would look at competition towards pharmaceutical companies and bidding on the Medicare prescription drug program, having pharmaceutical companies bid to get the business of Medicare for pharmaceutical drugs for our seniors. It makes it competitive, but they will not talk about that. During the confusion of September 11, our hard-working air traffic controllers landed 5,000 planes in less than 2 hours without one operational error. Should we privatize a system that performed so efficiently and accurately during the most critical day of all days?

I hope this Congress is not fooled by the promise, or gimmick, of privatization.

AGRICULTURAL CROSSROADS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KELLER). Under the Speaker's an-

nounced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, last month's enactment of the agriculture authorization bill signaled that we are at a crossroads here in America, not just as it relates to agriculture, but very interesting developments for the environment, community development, and even the huge increase in agricultural funding could not conceal the cracks that are emerging as these issues are coming forward.

Hidden behind all of the fireworks that surrounded the agricultural bill, we have ended up with it being further removed from the needs of most farmers. It is not only removed from the public we are supposed to serve, not only removed from the agricultural interests, but it is even removed from the will of the Members of this body.

I recall on this floor working hard on a motion to instruct the conferees of the House to vote in favor of provisions of the Senate that would have placed a \$275,000 payment limit. Despite the fact that it was passed by 265 of our colleagues, it was ignored by the conferees in favor of a \$360,000 payment limit that itself was riddled with exemptions which will make it largely meaningless.

Mr. Speaker, I am afraid we are having two very different visions of the agricultural future of this country emerge as a part of those deliberations. One is for the status quo which is a mutation of over 70 years of depression-era subsidization which no longer meets the needs of average farmers, consumers, and certainly not the environment.

This vision is opposed to one that is economically sound, a sustainable future, that is in fact healthy for the farmers, the environment, consumers and the taxpayer. What matters? Why would a city representative like me become so interested in farm policy? Well, we cannot deal with the governments of this country without focusing on the role that agriculture plays. It is firmly grounded in American lore, our history and our tradition. Think back to Thomas Jefferson's agrarian ideals. Ignore for a moment that this was sort of an effete intellectual who never turned a profit on his many acres of land and several hundred slaves, never mind that he was hopelessly in debt, and eventually lost his estate at his death to his creditors. Nevertheless, that vision, that agrarian ideal of Thomas Jefferson persists; and agriculture still is essential today to America, even though only 2 percent of our population is actively involved with farming, versus 25 percent or more in the 1930s. There are still 2 million family farms and ranches that cover nearly 50 percent of the land area in the lower 48 States.

Americans spend 10 percent of their income on food, and that is one of the

lowest ratios in the world. However, this 10 percent that we spend is disguised by a variety of subsidies and tax payments. Indeed, 40 percent of net farm income comes from the Federal Government. So there are a great number of tax dollars that are claimed. There are huge environmental costs that are associated with our current system of production which I will talk about in a few minutes, and consumers are paying exorbitant prices for commodities like sugar, more than twice the world market, pay dearly for avocados, peanuts, and the list goes on.

The environmental impacts of agribusiness is something that I think is important for us to focus on. It is, for instance, in many areas extraordinarily water-intensive. It is not just a problem occasionally when we have some parts of the country as they are today facing drought and water quality problems. Although even the administration seems to acknowledge that we are going to be facing serious problems associated with global climate change, they are not prepared to offer up any solutions for that, but that is going to have potentially very profound effects on how water is supplied in the future.

Mr. Speaker, it takes a tremendous amount of water for us to be involved in some grotesquely inappropriate activities. We are providing heavily subsidized water for subsidized crops, like growing cotton and rice in the desert. In the Pacific Northwest, we have been having problems in the Klamath River basin where we have water-intensive agriculture in an arid plane.

It takes an enormous amount of water to produce meat for human consumption. 1,000 tons of water for one ton of grain; and increasingly, our cattle are grain fed and it requires almost 5 pounds of grain to produce one pound of beef for human consumption. If we do the math, you see the huge amount of water that is involved in the production of cattle.

Agriculture also poses many of the most important challenges to water quality. It contributes to poor water quality in 60 percent of the Nation's impaired river miles, which is more than the dams, sewage discharges, and urban storm drainage combined. Think of it. Agriculture produces 60 percent of the water quality problems in the Nation's impaired river miles, more than dams, sewage discharges, and urban storm drainage combined.

We have a situation where the petrochemical fertilizers are also extensively required. It takes on average approximately 1.2 gallons for every bushel of corn. And then there is the oil production for energy. A typical cow will consume the equivalent of 284 gallons of oil in their lifetime, the energy necessary to sustain that animal. We have essentially transformed cattle from solar-powered animals to fossil fuel machines.

It is also a diet that is unhealthy and unnatural for these animals. It has turned once bucolic agricultural enterprises into an extension of the modern