

helping to find him those medals, and they were, Mr. Speaker, the World War II Victory Medal, the Combat Infantry Badge 1st Award, the Honorable Services Lapel Button, the World War II Parachutist Badge, the Purple Heart, and the Bronze Star.

We thank Private McClammy for his service. We thank him for being a good American. We thank him for his service.

As Shakespeare wrote many years ago about the band of brothers: "From this day to the ending of the world, but we in it shall be remembered—We few, we happy few, we band of brothers."

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

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

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

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

UNITED NATIONS REFORM

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

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the 60th anniversary of the United Nations, it is appropriate that we look at its original mission and evaluate whether the United Nations has accomplished what it was set out to do.

The U.N. charter states in part that its purpose is to maintain international peace and security; to develop friendly relations among Nations; to achieve cooperation; and to promote and encourage respect for human rights. But, unfortunately, if we look at the U.N.'s record on these issues, we see that they have failed on every account.

Firstly, the U.N. has not maintained international peace and security. In fact, since 1945 there have been over 300 wars and over 22 million people have died in those wars. The only two times that the U.N. has ever supported intervening to stop hostilities was the Korean War, when the Soviet Union had boycotted the Security Council meeting, and the first Persian Gulf War.

In fact, the biggest threat to the civilized world today is terrorism, and the U.N. has failed throughout its existence to develop a clear definition of what terrorism is even.

Another main mission of the U.N. is to promote and encourage human rights and equal rights throughout the world. The U.N. Commission on Human Rights is the primary body to get that job done.

However, such countries as Cuba, Sudan and China, all of which have long histories of violating human rights, sit on that commission. In fact, several years ago, Libya, with its terrible human rights record, was selected to serve as chairman of that human rights commission.

In regards to the U.N. fulfilling its mission of solving international problems of an economic, social and cultural character, recent reports by the Heritage Foundation, the Freedom House, and The Wall Street Journal all indicated that a majority of the nations that are in the U.N. are neither politically nor economically free nations.

These general problems with the unaccountability of the U.N. lead me to one of the biggest problems and biggest scandals in the history of the U.N. and that is the Oil-for-Food scandal.

Right after the first Gulf War, this was put in place. The Oil-for-Food program was created to help those people in that country get the food and supplies that they needed. However, Saddam Hussein used the money to advance his own weapons and military programs as the poor people continued to be plagued by starvation and disease.

By allowing the corrupt Saddam Hussein regime to manipulate the Oil-for-Food program and bribe officials from other countries around the world, more than \$21 billion was stolen by Hussein at the very expense of the people that the program was designed to help, the Iraqi poor.

The U.N. has continuously denied access to the papers that would help us to get to the bottom of this. That is perhaps one of the most troubling problems with the Oil-for-Food program, the lack of cooperation by the U.N., lack of cooperation to help us all get to the bottom of what really went on. They have denied us access to papers, and they have also denied us access to the people who were involved and shielded them from responsibility.

The U.N. claims to be addressing these concerns by establishing the Volker Commission to investigate the allegations. However, it has been stated by a member that Volker has close ties to the U.N. and also to Secretary General Annan, as well as other conflicts. He has been accused of downplaying Kofi Annan's involvement in the scandal in his most recent interim report, and it was just 2 weeks ago that two of his top investigators on that very commission resigned because they felt that the report was too soft on Annan.

Volker is continuing to block congressional investigations by demanding that those committees return relevant documents and not allowing the investigators that resigned to testify before Congress.

I think that this behavior by the U.N. and its investigating committee is totally indefensible and cannot be tolerated. Kofi Annan's complete lack of hu-

mility, contrition, and acknowledgment of any wrongdoing should be disappointing to the entire world; and it is for that reason that I support suspending all U.S. funding to the U.N. until they agree to cooperate fully with the ongoing investigations into the Oil-for-Food scandal.

Another ongoing scandal at the U.N. that has not received as much press is the human rights violations in the Congo. U.N. peacekeepers in the Congo stand accused of committing 150 major human rights violations. They are accused of raping and forcing prostitution on hundreds of refugees, many of them children. These barbaric acts raise serious questions of the ability of U.N. oversight on their very own peacekeepers.

The United States has contributed over \$750 million towards that Congo peacekeeping mission since 2000. So the U.S. taxpayers at home, I believe, should know where their money is going and should know that the U.N. is doing its job to make sure that the people over there are protected.

All these problems that I have mentioned just now lead back to the very point that I am trying to make here tonight, that there is a lack of oversight and accountability by an international body that claims to represent the moral conscience of the world, and this should not be tolerated. As the largest financial contributor to the United Nations in the world, the United States is the one country in the best position to demand these reforms.

Tomorrow, we are expecting an extremely important vote to take place on the other side of the Capitol. A vote "yes" there will be a vote for U.N. reform, but a vote "no" will be a vote against U.N. reform. I certainly hope that that other body will vote in favor of U.N. reform.

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

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

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

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

SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from Kentucky (Mrs. NORTHUP) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NORTHUP. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. NORTHUP. Mr. Speaker, tonight we are eager to talk about Social Security and to talk about what it means to this country, to our seniors, to those that are about to be seniors and to our younger generations, our children, our grandchildren who will support the system throughout their work years and to talk about new opportunities that exist in Social Security to make sure that Social Security is sustainable and solvent for their lives, just like it is for those who are seniors today.

I think we should start the discussion by inviting seniors today who currently receive benefits to stay tuned. There are many people that talk about Social Security, that remind seniors that whatever changes occur they are changes for those who are in the current workforce and that it will not change for today's seniors. Sometimes that sounds a little bit like saying to today's seniors that they are not needed when, in fact, they are badly needed in this discussion.

It has always been our seniors that have appreciated Social Security specifically, but also had a broad interest to reflect on what it means to them and how important it is for their children and grandchildren. Over the years, they have been the caretakers of a system to make sure that Social Security lasted beyond their generation and into the future, both for their children and grandchildren, but also for the good of this country.

We need our seniors today just like we have always needed our seniors. We need them to pay attention to this debate, to participate in it, to bring us their good ideas, and to remind us that it is just as important to them that their children and grandchildren have a secure and solvent system of Social Security available to them.

So I thank our seniors for their concern. I thank them for the fact that they raise the issue at public meetings, in letters to the editor, in the mall. All of the places that we visit, they remind us that Social Security is important and that they are listening and that they care about the issue.

I invite them to listen to the ideas about the changes, changes in this country, changes in the demographics, changes in the challenges, and to bring to us their ideas of how we can better improve Social Security, make it stronger and more secure for their children and grandchildren.

It would be hard to start such a discussion without starting with the difference in the demographics in this country and why they present to us new and different challenges than when Social Security began back in 1935 or

when it was last changed back in the early 1980s.

So let us start there. When Social Security began, there were 40 workers supporting every retiree. Forty workers are a lot of workers, and for a little bit, all of those workers could pool and support the retirees that were currently in the system.

Not so long ago when we last changed Social Security, there were 12 workers in the system that supported every retiree; and so, again, it was a program where current workers could fairly easily support the retiring community.

Today, there are only three workers in the system for every retiree, and that means that every worker has to give considerably more to the system in order to make sure that we meet the needs of our retirees; and for our children when they start to retire, there will only be two workers in the system for every retiree.

□ 1900

And so we are looking to improve the system, to strengthen the system, to make sure it is for our children, as they bear that responsibility, also an opportunity to strengthen the system itself and that it will be a system that they can then pass on to the generations behind them as a strong, solvent and sustainable program.

Mr. Speaker, my friend here, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE), is eager to talk about this issue and to share with me his perspective. I know he hears from his seniors. I know he hears from the young people in his district, and he understands the challenge that we face as the demographics change, and so I yield now to him.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Kentucky (Mrs. NORTHUP) for yielding to me and I also thank her for her leadership on this issue.

I was just listening to her talk about the change in demographics, and I immediately sort of flashed back to a whole series of town hall meetings that I held in my district. I know many of my colleagues have done those, and one of the charts that I have put up in all of these town hall meetings is a graphic that shows very clearly the very issue that my friend from Kentucky was talking about. It is a chart that shows that, as late as 1950, there were 16 people working and paying social security taxes for each retiree. Sixteen for one, as late as 1950.

But, today, Mr. Speaker, as she so clearly pointed out, there are only three people working. And when my children, much less my four wonderful grandchildren, retire, there will be only two. That chart, when you put that on an easel and the folks attending the town hall meeting have a chance to look at that and absorb the impact, by the time I get to the point in the meeting where I ask all those attending how many of them think we need to do something, that we need to do something to strengthen Social Se-

curity, to fix Social Security, every hand goes up. I think it is inescapable.

It is interesting that, in my town hall meetings, most of them were designed to invite senior citizens to come into the meeting, and so the vast majority of the folks attending the meeting and engaging in the discussion were in fact seniors. Some of them had come at the urging of organizations like the AARP. But across the board, they look at the inescapable fact that we have fewer and fewer and fewer people working for each retiree, and also they realize the inescapable fact that we are just living longer.

If you look back to when Social Security started, under the urging of President Roosevelt, the average life expectancy was around 61. I know it changes if you are a man or if you are a woman and so forth, but the general life expectancy was about 61. By the way, retirement age was 65. A very interesting concept they had back then. But, today, the life expectancy is on the order of 77 years. And as we look at the retirement situation for my children and grandchildren, life expectancy is around 83 or 84 years. Clearly, we are living longer, we are having smaller families, and we are going to end up in the situation where the demographic changes in this country are going to put us in a position where there simply are not enough people working in order to provide the benefits for our retirees.

Now, in one moment, I will be happy to yield back to the gentlewoman, but it has been interesting to me as we have gone forward in the discussion in this debate how often some of us are accused of wanting to destroy Social Security or wreck Social Security or end Social Security or put something risky into the program that my mother, for example, my 84-year-old mother depends on, and that is Social Security. Now, I do not, I know the gentlewoman does not, and our colleagues do not want in any way to destroy Social Security and the very important benefits that so many of our seniors depend upon. So as we have gone forward in this discussion and certainly as we have looked at the many, many proposals, we track them in our office. And we are up to 13 identified proposals to do something about strengthening and saving Social Security. We look to make sure it is not going to do any harm and then underscore, as the gentlewoman said earlier, that all of us, I guess it is a sign of the times, all of us who were born before 1950 are not going to be affected.

The plans have been made. Folks are depending on the checks coming like this. And, frankly, we do not want to have anybody alarmed that there will be changes in the Social Security checks that they have come to expect. But in the long term, we are looking to strengthen the program, and we are just coming to grips with the demographics that she described that show we simply are not going to have enough people working and paying

taxes to provide for retirees if we do not do something to strengthen the system.

With that, I yield back to the gentlewoman.

Mrs. NORTHUP. I thank the gentleman for his comments, Mr. Speaker. And, you know, the gentleman from Minnesota brought up the changes in demographics and not only the fact that there are fewer workers for every retiree but also the fact that we are living longer, and I think we all have to really celebrate that.

It used to be that the average age of death was when you were 61; you could not retire until you were 65. So forward looking, you did not have the hope of so many years of retirement and opportunity to live and travel and live a life full of opportunities to see your grandchildren grow and graduate from high school. So the changes in demographics are really something to celebrate, to appreciate and to recognize that it is to the benefit of all of us. But we have to make sure that the Social Security System supports those changes.

I see that my friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) is here to join us in the discussion, and I want to welcome him and thank him for joining us. I will bet he is hearing many of the same discussions in Texas these days, and I yield to him now, Mr. Speaker, to comment about that.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman's yielding to me and allowing me to visit with our colleagues tonight on a very important topic of Social Security reform, and I am indeed hearing a good bit about this.

Mr. Speaker, I am a CPA, an accountant, and I address problem solving by first deciding whether or not there is a problem. My colleagues tonight have presented a very good case for the fact that we do have a problem. Now, you can call it a crisis. You can call it a problem, or you can call it challenges. I think we should not get hung up on the descriptor; let us just simply look at the math.

A lot of what we do in Congress is based on things that are not quite as verifiable as the math associated with this issue. And you do not have to be a rocket scientist to understand the math, to have gone through the number of employees working versus the number of recipients and how that ratio is closing to get to two to one and the fact that in the law today is built in a 27 percent cut in those benefits in the year 2041, 2042. It is at that point that the trust system, the trust fund will have exhausted, and there is a cut in benefits at that point in time. I have a son that will be retiring at about that point in time, and I am not interested in him having a 27 percent cut in his benefits.

The other thing that I think each of us has to tell all of the seniors, and I have a mom and dad out there who are dependent upon Social Security, that your benefits are fixed. They will con-

tinue to grow under the existing laws. And my colleagues who are in the 55-and-up bracket, the same rules apply to you. Your initial benefit, that primary insurance amount that is talked about, is in the law now, and when you turn 62 or 65, then that number will be set, as you are expecting it to be set today, and it will continue to grow over your lifetime so that your benefits are assured.

Every single plan that is being discussed does absolutely nothing, repeat nothing, to affect those promised benefits. So once you have assured the folks that have retired and are near-term retirees, those people who have the least amount of time to react to whatever changes are made, that they are not going to be affected, then they should be on the side of those of us who want to change it, who want to put security in the Social Security for our children and grandchildren.

My colleague from Minnesota mentioned his four grandchildren. You know, the first liar never stands a chance. I have six grandchildren that I am very proud of. And I believe that the lifetime benefit, the lifetime annuity that is Social Security, that this country has put in place for 75 years, that has stood us in good stead for 75 years, is important for my parents. It is going to be important for me, but more important to me as a grandfather, it ought to be in place for my grandchildren and my children. And we have the opportunity now to address that and to put the security back in Social Security for our grandkids.

Another fact that is reasonably undeniable is that, each year we delay in whatever the fix is, whatever the compromises we make, whatever the solutions are, each year we delay that, we do a couple of things: One, we add \$600 billion to the unfunded liabilities that are accumulating on the balance sheet of this country. The other thing that we do is we begin to narrow the options that we have to fix Social Security. Not only do we narrow those options, but we make whatever the fix is more extreme in those options that are available to us.

So in my mind, we do not have to argue it is a crisis or whatever. In my mind, we ought to be about fixing Social Security today, so that when we begin to face what I think is a much heavier problem and heavier lift, which is Medicare and Medicaid, we will have Social Security behind us and set for the foreseeable future, infinite horizon, whatever you want to talk about, that we have in fact put this behind us and are now working on those two very daunting challenges.

Some of the opposition that I hear, and most of that opposition until recently has been what I refer to as our outside voices; we have not had too many conversations using inside voices. Remember the kindergarten days, when you would come in off the playground, and the teacher would say, Let's begin to use our inside voices. We

listen to each other better when we are using voices than when we are screaming at each other at the top of our lungs.

Recently, I participated in a meeting with some representatives from AARP and a couple of my Democratic colleagues and some of my Republican colleagues, including the gentlewoman from Kentucky (Mrs. NORTHUP). We sat in a room for about an hour and a half using inside voices, looking each other in the eye, trying to understand what the other person's position was, trying to understand how they see the problem, how they see the solutions and at the same time trying to convey to our colleagues as well as to the leadership of AARP, our positions and why we think our solutions are the ones that ought to be a part of the ongoing situation.

As I understand it, that may have been one of the first opportunities for Members of both sides of the aisle to sit and look at each other in a quiet environment and to talk. I think the last 30 minutes of that meeting is probably one of the most productive we have had anywhere, because everybody had kind of gone through the initial party-line rhetoric and got that out of our system, and then we began to talk seriously about how we see Social Security and this need for change.

Let me give one illustration. I mentioned I have six grandchildren. I cannot find one grandparent who would gather their, my number is six, did I mention I have six, three boys and three girls, gather their grandchildren up and take them down to their local banker and say, Mr. Local Banker, I want to borrow a lot of money that I want to spend on myself, and I want you to draw up the loan papers so that my six grandkids will pay that loan off. I am talking the money, but they have to pay it off. I do not find many grandparents on an individual basis that would do that to their own grandchildren. But, somehow, we collectively, as a society, think that is okay, because that is what we are doing, that exact same thing. We are writing checks that we cannot cash, that we are going to require our children and grandchildren to pay off.

And Social Security is in that mix. And so we should be very serious about this process of reforming it. I am excited that, tomorrow, as I understand it, we will begin to have hearings in the Committee on Ways and Means to begin to look at specific things. Until this point in time, the effort has been to try to convince each other that we do in fact have a problem that needs addressing and needs addressing now.

We are coming to the end of that stage, and now is the stage we begin to look at the individual solutions, adopt the ones that ought to stick with us and cull the ones that should not. So we are in the process of gathering all those good ideas up to see which ones fit. My guess is, it will be a multifaceted fix. There is no one single

change or new policy that will fix Social Security. It is going to require a lot of pushing and shoving in a lot of different areas.

Two things, and then I will close and yield back. In my mind, personal savings accounts ought to be an integral part of whatever solutions we come up with. They are not a panacea. They do not in and of themselves fix this issue, but what they do address is a way to improve Social Security, to add an element of ownership to Social Security that we do not currently have.

If I work 40 years and die, there is a little bit of survivor benefits that go to my wife, but the bulk of what I have accumulated in terms of Social Security benefits forfeits back into the system. We can do a better system than that, and these personal savings accounts will add ownership-like issues to Social Security, which in my mind is an improvement to the overall system.

So I think that is important. And I have lost my second thought, so with that, I will yield back to my dear friend from Kentucky.

□ 1915

Mrs. NORTHUP. I am so impressed that the gentleman from Texas would tell us he has six grandchildren. My husband and I, after 36 years of marriage and six children, have one grandchild. I hope that I will catch you someday. They are the most blessed part of our lives and it is one of the things that makes us think long term as we consider public policy, what about our children, what about our grandchildren and hoping that their days are going to be as hopeful and filled with opportunity as our generations have been.

The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) has joined us. Welcome. Tell us what you are hearing in Georgia about Social Security.

Mr. GINGREY. I want to thank the gentlewoman from Kentucky (Mrs. NORTHUP) and, of course, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE). The gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is here, too. It is great to be here tonight to join with the team in talking about this. I did a quick count as we were talking about children and grandchildren. I think among the three of us, we have 15 children and 11 grandchildren. So it was really good particularly to hear the gentleman from Texas talking about our obligation to our children and our grandchildren. That is something that is so important, and it is an extremely important thing to mention tonight.

The problem that we have with Social Security, as has been pointed out by my colleagues, is a demographic problem. And thank God we are living longer today than folks did back in 1935 and 1936 when, as the gentlewoman from Kentucky (Mrs. NORTHUP) pointed out, the life expectancy was 61, 62 years old. You could not even get early bene-

fits at that point. You had to be 65. So Social Security for the government was a pretty good deal. They were not really worried about the trust fund.

Unfortunately, Congresses over the last 70 years have spent the trust fund money. I will not say squandered it. Certainly they have not stolen it. They have spent the money on very worthwhile endeavors, whether it is K-12 education, higher ed, Head Start, veterans benefits, agriculture, you name your favorite Federal program. But now we are in a real bind and that trust fund is not there and even if it were, even if it were and we did nothing to change Social Security as we know it, we get to the year 2042 and if we do nothing, and the other side of the aisle basically so far is saying, hey, it's not a crisis, maybe it's a nuisance and let's try to ignore it and do nothing. If you do that, across the board, Social Security beneficiaries are going to receive 73 percent of that defined benefit plan, what we promised them; they would get 73 cents back on the dollar. That is just not acceptable.

One way to fix the system, of course, and we have talked about this, would be to change the way you calculate that first check. The way it has always been done has been based on average wages, and that is what our current 45 million-or-so Social Security beneficiaries, their initial check is based on average wages. Then, of course, there is a COLA, cost-of-living adjustment, every year.

One of the ways to fix this problem, to make sure that people get, the seniors who are continuing to receive their checks, would be to change the way we calculate the initial benefit for those who are not yet at retirement age and to go from that first check based on average wages to average prices. If we do that, then we will solve the Social Security solvency problem. But people who are not yet retired, who are approaching retirement, the younger workers, their initial check will be a benefit that is probably 30, 35 percent less than our current beneficiaries are receiving. They would continue to get a cost-of-living adjustment. That would fix the system.

What the President has said and what this majority is saying is, we can combine that with the option for our younger workers to invest in an individual personal account with up to 4 percent of the 12.4 percent FICA tax. That would be their money. It would be their account. They literally would have their name on it. It would enjoy the miracle of compound interest. And for somebody 25 years old, you would get 35 or 40 years' worth of compounding. At the end of the day, that is, at the point of their retirement, whether they take the early retirement at 62 or at their age of full retirement, the benefit they would accrue, and it could be as much as a total corpus of \$250,000 in that individual personal account. That combined with their Social Security benefit check

would mitigate a lot of that loss and they would get almost as much as the current retirees are receiving, or maybe even more depending on performance.

Basically, the President has said, Mr. Speaker, very clearly that anybody 55 years and older and current retirees would be completely held harmless from any loss in their benefit. They would continue to receive what they are getting. There would be no changes. And now the President has actually, Mr. Speaker, taken it a step further. A week or so ago in a press conference, President Bush for the first time introduced the idea of progressive indexing and basically said this: those workers, those younger workers who are at the lower level of income, their initial check at retirement would continue to be based on average wages, so that they would absolutely not suffer any loss in their benefit. Yet they would have that option, if they wanted to, to take a small portion of their account, up to 4 percent initially, and put it in an individual savings account. It would be guaranteed that they would not take any loss of benefit, but there would be the distinct possibility, if you think about and look at the stock market over any 10-year period of time since its inception, that the return on that investment in that individual account would compound, would grow, would enjoy the miracle of compounding and they would have a much larger benefit at the end of the day than they would if they had not chosen that option combined with Social Security as we know it.

I think the opportunity for us to come together in these late afternoon and evening sessions and talk to our colleagues on both sides of the aisle and make sure that they understand so they can go back into their districts and explain to their constituents, we each represent 630,000-or-so great Americans, those people back home are receiving a lot of misinformation. They are getting these automated phone calls, they are getting these direct mail pieces paid for by 527s and the unions and God knows who, and the well is being poisoned. These people need to know. They need the facts. They need some honesty.

I really appreciate the gentlewoman from Kentucky for giving us this opportunity to come together this evening and talk to our colleagues and make sure that they are listening and understand because we want what is fair and balanced; we want what is good for our parents and our grandparents, but we certainly want the best possible for our children and grandchildren.

Mrs. NORTHUP. I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia for joining us. I know you have talked at great length about this. You have worked so hard on it and talked to so many of your constituents, and you bring their wisdom and insights to us today. It is important that we talk about it. It is a very

complicated issue, talk about calculation of benefits; but it is very hopeful. It is hopeful that workers who are more likely going to depend on this even more, most of all because they are maybe in the lower third of wages, that they are going to have nothing but better opportunities. They are going to get the full benefit of calculation and the possibility of a personalized account also. For those at the highest end, they will have the calculation that starts maybe less, but they will have the personalized account that can give them every bit of what they would have gotten under the old system.

So lower-income workers would have nothing but a better opportunity. Higher-income workers would be able to have about the same thing that they have under the current system. Yet there is a huge difference. The system would be sustainable and solvent for our children and grandchildren.

There are people, as you know, that keep talking about why we should not change anything, but I think the point tonight is the hope and opportunity that exists in today's proposals.

The gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) has joined us. He is one of our youngest, but brightest, Members. He is a leader on this issue. He has spoken on it with such great wisdom. I thank him for joining us tonight.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the gentlewoman from Kentucky hosting this hour. It is a wonderful opportunity for us to discuss the most important issue that this Congress is bringing forward. The most lasting reform is the best reform, and that is what we need to look forward to with this challenge of reforming Social Security. The Member that preceded me speaking was the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) who has taken on this issue with gusto and also the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) who is one of the first Members of Congress that actually said, let's get all the people at the table, let's get Democrats and Republicans and let's sit down with the AARP and let's try to discuss solutions for this challenge of Social Security. It was a wonderful thing to try to get all these players at a table together to talk about this most important issue.

Social Security is a program that is in trouble. It is in trouble because of the changing demographics of our Nation. It was built upon the idea that workers working today would pay for retirees that are retired currently. It was a system where workers would be taxed to help pay the benefits of retirees. That works when you have a large number of workers and a small number of retirees, but the changing demographics of our Nation require us to act in order to sustain this program.

When Social Security was formed, there were 41 or 42 workers per one retiree. Today, there are only 3.3 workers per one retiree. Therefore, that system of taxing current workers in order to

give a benefit to current retirees does not work with those numbers. It is not sustainable. What we need to look for is permanent solvency, lasting solvency, for this program of Social Security.

It has been a vital institution for our Nation over the last 70 years. It has helped many seniors be lifted up out of poverty. It has given a strong benefit to those that maybe are not able to work anymore. And it is a commitment that we have made as a great Nation to those that have put in their fair share into the system, those that have worked their whole life, played fair, paid into the system, and done what was right. We need to maintain that obligation that we have made, that previous generations in this country have made to seniors. This Republican Congress, this Republican House, this Republican President, have taken this issue on so that we can do good things for our seniors. We do not want to break Social Security. We want to make it stronger. The key way to make it stronger, the key way to create permanent, lasting solvency is through personal retirement accounts. That is the vital component for any reform. There are a couple of options that we can look at.

First some say, well, let's just raise taxes, and we can keep those benefits going. Or let's subject new income and new forms of taxation on the American people and small businesses, and we can keep the income stream going. That may work. That may work. But in order to make that obligation, in order to meet our current obligation, taxes would have to double on Social Security. Taxes would have to keep going up in order to keep that commitment going.

Others have said, Well, let's just cut some benefits. Again, that may be an opportunity for some to consider. It is something I reject. I do not think we need to cut benefits or raise taxes. I do not think they are the right way of achieving solvency.

Mr. KINGSTON. If the gentleman will yield, I think it is important to think in terms of Social Security, there are two problems. One is of generational fairness, which we can talk about a little bit later. The other one is solvency, which you have been discussing. We have dealt with the solvency issue by cutting benefits and raising taxes many times over the years. In fact, since 1937 we have raised the taxes on Social Security 20 different times. That is the amount of your money that is taken out of your paycheck by the Federal Government, that FICA tax that all these 23-year-olds getting out of college have their first job and they discover somebody named FICA is sharing in their efforts, their sweat equity.

□ 1930

But that started out, as the gentleman knows, 1 percent and 1 percent in 1937; employer 1 percent, employee 1

percent. In 1960, it was 3 percent, 3 percent. In 1978, 5 percent, 5 percent. Today, it is over 6 percent. We have done that 20 different times.

We have also cut benefits. In 1983, we actually raised the retirement age from 65 to 67. That is a benefit cut because, over one's lifetime in receiving benefits, if they have to wait 2 more years, that is a reduction of their benefit.

So we have done that traditional solution, short-term political fix, which gets most politicians through their next term. And I am glad to hear the gentleman say that we have got to look for a different way to work on the solvency issue.

Mrs. NORTHUP. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, let me just point out that as recently as 1993, many of our colleagues across the aisle participated in raising taxes on Social Security benefits. So, previously, far more of the Social Security benefits were untaxed at any level. Today, far more of them are taxed, and they are taxed at a higher level because of the tax increase in 1993. Now, the way I think about it is, if we start taxing Social Security and we tax it at a higher level, that is a reduction in benefits.

So I am shocked to hear some of our colleagues talk about criticizing anything about benefits when, in fact, there was an enormous chunk of Social Security benefits that were retaken back from seniors starting in 1993 because of the tax increase.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. NORTHUP. I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, this goes to the heart of the problem. As the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) and the gentlewoman from Kentucky (Mrs. NORTHUP) have said, the heart of the problem is solvency. We have a system that is going progressively more insolvent each day. As the baby boomers begin to retire in 2008, 2009, we have a problem. We do. So the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) mentioned solvency. The way in the past that we have achieved solvency was by raising taxes, cutting benefits. I prefer to say cutting taxes. That is just in my heart. But in terms of what we are trying to achieve, they have said we can cut some benefits, we can raise some taxes, and we can achieve solvency. The demographics of our Nation have changed so much that we have to look for the third way in order to get a better return on our Social Security investment, and the only way we can do that, the only way we can do that, is through personal retirement accounts. Much like 401(K) plans or IRAs or even the Thrift Savings Plan that current government employees, including us, have the benefit of. So it is wonderful, but that also goes to the heart. The heart of this issue is generational fairness, and I think that is an interesting point.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. NORTHUP. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to say that the plans the gentleman from North Carolina is talking about are similar to mutual funds, which they, up here, are selling. But I wanted to mention this generational fairness issue because I think that is part of the kitchen table discussion, and I always say Social Security needs a kitchen table solution because, if we are talking with other seniors, we are not moving the ball down the road. If we are talking to college students, we are not moving the ball down the road. We have got to have Mom and Dad, grandparents and grandchildren at the kitchen table and say, What is fair? And this is why it is important: If one retired in 1980, they got all their benefits back. Every nickel that they paid into the system, they got it all back within 3 years. If one retired in 2003, it will take them 17 years.

And if the gentleman does not mind my getting personal, as I recall, his magic retirement age is 2041.

Mr. MCHENRY. Absolutely.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, that is the year we cut benefits 27 percent unless we do something to protect and preserve the system. So for somebody like the gentleman who retires in 2041, it is going to take them probably 30 years. I do not know the mathematics. He may have figured it out, if he knows. But I know it will take him about 20 to 25 years at minimum to get all of his investment into it, and that means he can actually have a negative return; whereas there are a lot of people who have gotten a decent return out of Social Security, 5, 10 percent. But today, it is a 1 percent return, getting worse, and that is why there is a generational fairness.

My experience has been, when we talk to seniors and seniors who might even say, let us just raise taxes like we have in the past, we say, yes, but that does not solve the problem of the gentleman from North Carolina's (Mr. MCHENRY) friends. We are not worried about the gentleman from North Carolina, but we are going to worry about his friends. And the truth of the matter is when seniors say, Well, wait a second, you mean to tell me I have already gotten all my money back, but my kids will probably never get their money back? We say yes. Then we get into a real generational fairness. And that is why it is so important to have everybody at the kitchen table when we work on it.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, if the gentlewoman from Kentucky will continue to yield, I spoke with a group of seniors in Hickory, North Carolina just 2 weeks ago and discussed Social Security reform, and I said all the proposals that have been put forward in front of Congress, all the proposals, if we consider every one of them, no single proposal, none of them, will change their current benefits if they are 55 and older. So those that are retired today,

they should not allow AARP to lie to them in order to say that their benefits are going to be cut because no change to this program will allow for benefit cuts of current retirees. That is a pledge that we have all made in this Congress and our President has made as well. So I think we have to, first of all, be honest about it and tell our seniors today, this is not going to change their check. Their check is going to be there. We have made that commitment to them. They have played by the rules. They have paid into the system. They have played fair. So we are going to honor our commitment to them. However, it is important for them, if they are retired today, in order to make sure that their children and grandchildren have the same benefit that they are currently receiving. They want to leave them in a better system.

And I spoke to these retirees. I was at the seniors' games, in fact, 300 members of our seniors community, and I discussed this. And they said, Wonderful. They are actually happy that we are trying to take on this challenge for younger workers while at the same time keeping our commitment to those that are at or near retirement age.

So it is wonderful that the gentleman brings up generational fairness because, as the youngest Member of Congress and someone who is eligible to retire in 2041, that is the date that even some of the left wing Senators on the other side of the building here even admit that, in 2041, the system goes insolvent. So I think it is important that we discuss this issue of generational fairness.

I want to maintain the commitment to my grandmother, but at the same time, I want to make sure that my generation has the same benefit of a strong, vibrant Social Security system, so that when I retire, it is there, and it is affordable and reasonable.

And with that, I certainly appreciate the Secretary of our Republican Conference allowing me to have this colloquy here on the floor.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. NORTHUP. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to mention, if I can, that we met with the AARP, American Association for Retired People, the largest retirement group in America, and did it on a bipartisan basis. And the gentleman mentioned that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) pulled that group together. One of the things I was glad to hear AARP say is, We admit there is a problem; there is a problem with Social Security. I can tell my colleagues, in Washington, that is a huge first step because, months ago, we were hearing, No, there is no problem, that the President is exaggerating. So let us say we have got a little bipartisan glimmer of hope here that there is a problem.

The next question might be then should we address it now or wait and punt for future Congresses and elec-

tions. AARP was a little more, Hey, it is probably right to discuss it now and try to get something done. The gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. MCCREERY) of the Committee on Ways and Means is going to start having hearings on it. In fact, I think he will this week, if I am not mistaken. Lots of hearings are good. Lots of thought, because, personally speaking, and I think I speak for my two colleagues, we do want Democrats at the table. We want this idea to say, Go into the meeting, but do not say these are my lines in the sand. Let us go into the meetings open minded.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, if the gentlewoman will continue to yield, I would like to add one further thing. I enjoyed the piece the gentleman put together on Social Security reform and actually outlining what we in the conservative side of the House want to do in order to achieve lasting reform, to have generational fairness, while at the same time maintaining our commitment to have a strong, vibrant Social Security system. And I certainly appreciate what he wrote in the newspaper today. It was a wonderful article, and I recommend those who are watching or hear us here today to take a look at that, to understand what we are going for here by reforming this vital system.

And I certainly appreciate the gentlewoman from Kentucky taking on this challenge and leading our public affairs team in the House on the Republican side in such a good, strong direction by getting the message out on the need for reform and the positive aspects of it as well.

So with that, I thank the gentlewoman from Kentucky (Mrs. NORTHUP) for hosting this hour.

Mrs. NORTHUP. Mr. Speaker, I share my colleagues' concern about doing something now. The importance of it is easier to do it now because we can phase things in. We have opportunity and some time that we will not have if we wait until we are truly in a crisis.

But the crisis is coming on us very soon. The fact is baby boomers are going to retire starting in 2008, and then we will have a quick increase in the number of benefits, more people retiring and getting out of the workforce and basically fewer years in which to make any transitions.

One of the things that people say all the time that are on the "we do not have to do anything now" side is that they say we need to let the trust fund pay the benefits, all the money in the trust fund can pay the benefits up until a certain number of years. And, of course, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) knows there are no dollars in the trust fund. In fact, the trust fund never was meant to hold those dollars. They were meant to take in those dollars and lend them to the government.

Now, I suppose if we could bring back the Congress of 1945 and 1950 and 1955, we could ask them what their plans were for the year 2005, 2018, 2042. I suspect they would say that, as many

times have happened, at that point, the need seemed to be to provide those additional revenues to the government. Again in 1967, when Congress changed the benefit scheme, they added increased taxes on an increased basis that they paid into Social Security. They needed it to fund the war in Vietnam and to fund the Great Society. And I guess if we could bring back those Congresses we could say, What do you mean by spending Social Security taxes on the Great Society and the war? But that has passed. And the fact is that those dollars were spent.

I will say, though, that any company that took money into some sort of trust fund where there were going to be payouts expected would have had to accrue the liabilities, and if those liabilities had been accrued, along with the dollars in the trust fund, today, we would have \$10 billion of accrued liabilities in the liability side across from the trust fund. So even if we had not spent the trust fund, not we but the Congresses of the past, before we got here, not spent the trust fund, the liabilities would swamp the dollars that are in the trust fund.

So it is important to recognize that generations before us benefitted from the dollars that came into Social Security but then were paid out for other government programs. They funded the Great Society. They funded education benefits. They funded defense. Things that those generations believed were important. Our current seniors. And now the responsibility for our children, of course, is to continue to fund investments in education, Pell grants, medical research, our defense programs and, at the same time, assume the responsibility for Social Security.

The exciting thing is, when we put our heads together, we can figure this out. The sooner we do it, the less difficult it will be so that benefits stay strong and are available to our seniors in succeeding generations, so that our children and grandchildren, as they meet the responsibility of retirees that go before them, can also grow within Social Security a solvent and sustainable system that will support their generation and the workers that are behind them in the system.

So I know that the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) shares my belief that this is a time of hope and opportunity. We need to seize the moment and to really get the best ideas together to tackle the problem and set this program on a long-term course of sustainability.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

□ 1945

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I wanted to say I think there are some real opportunities here to address a number of the issues. The gentlewoman has mentioned the diversion of some of the Social Security surplus fund. Our Democrat colleague, the gen-

tleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR), has a bill I am interested in, and that bill has to do with a constitutional amendment that says any proceeds in the Social Security trust fund have to actually be taken completely off budget.

It does not really say where it could be held, because the problem is if the Federal Government has all that surplus, where do they put it? Do they invest it, do they buy gold with it, do they bury it in the ground, do they put it in a vault somewhere? You hate to think of billions and billions of dollars not earning interest. But I think the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) has an interesting bill. I am looking at it.

I also tried to figure out how do you do the lockbox. We have worked to try to get some sort of lockbox passed in the House in the past, and I am not sure we should reopen it. I have had some discussions about it, and it always boils down to, okay, you have a lockbox. What do you do with the money? I am a believer that if you almost did nothing with it, you would be better off than what we are doing now.

But I think that part of the Social Security solution is we should have a real discussion on what do you do with the temporary surplus. I say "temporary surplus," because it will start to be gone in the year 2018, rapidly diminishing going to 2041.

But I think all these things, if we can get some bipartisan discussions going, I believe we will find some things we agree with the other party about.

The gentlewoman from Kentucky knows that when we sat down with the AARP and they showed us their set of core principles and we showed them our core principles, there was a lot of overlap. It was not perfect, but there was plenty to stay in the room and keep talking about.

Mrs. NORTHUP. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I agree that it was a very interesting discussion. I will say, and I know that our younger generation would appreciate this, that in the course of conversations, there was one person that said, Let me just ask you this for curiosity's sake: If we had to say to our children and grandchildren that because of confluence of things, the economy, America's leadership in the world, whatever, that we were able to pay better benefits to current retirees and those about to retire, but you are just unlucky and you are not going to have the same benefits and that is just going to be where you fall in history, would that be acceptable?

I think pretty much everybody in the room said that would not be acceptable, that that would not be something that any of us feel we could say to our children and grandchildren.

Now, the opportunity is that we do not have to; that at the same time we shoulder the responsibilities of those that have retired and those about to retire, and at the same time we meet

our responsibilities to domestic programs, that by investing in Social Security, and, yes, taking it off budget so we do not spend the surplus, yes, allowing personalized accounts, yes, guaranteeing those in the lower one-third of income full calculations, like they have always had, and for those in higher levels, maybe they would have a combination of personalized accounts and a different calculation, that all of that can make the system solvent, sustainable, and also maintain benefits.

For those who think raising taxes is the answer, I think it is important to recognize that everything in this country, our domestic programs, Social Security's long-term solvency, depends on a growing and vibrant economy, and without that, this country will be in dire financial straits.

When you look at a country like France that has maintained retirees' benefits, but at the same time has done it purely by taxing more and more in more and more ways and at higher and higher levels, basically what they have done is create a society that is stale, that is not growing and is not able to provide the revenues they hoped the tax increases would bring.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, if the gentlewoman would yield, I am glad the gentlewoman brought that up, because one of the things that is interesting, and I have traveled in some of the Eastern Bloc countries, and one thing that really amazes me when you talk to countries like Bulgaria or Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, the Czech Republic, these countries that only 10 to 15 years ago were freed from Soviet oppression and they are now out experimenting with democracy and the rule of law, one of the things they realize is if you have absolute security for everybody in terms of government-sustained programs, then you do not have any work base and your economy does not move forward. You have done a lot of things at the cost of opportunity.

I think France is a miserable country in terms of an economic role model. I see a lot of these other countries that are really growing and making some huge changes and taking some bold steps.

I think one of the things we have to do is realize that decisions of 1937, do you want to still be driving a car and relying on communications or medical systems from 1937? Yet when it comes to social programs, we think a 1937 social model is the best thing in the world, the best we can do.

That is what bothers me. Because we are Americans. We should not fear. We should be able to be world leaders and not have to point to other countries and say, well, you know, look, this is what we want to do. We need to be braver and stronger and not become a nanny state.

Mrs. NORTHUP. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, if today Social Security was just being designed, if we knew that people who get to be 65 are probably going to live 17 more years, if

we knew that you were going to work a certain number of years and then you were going to be able to have a life expectancy that would go on for a number of years, you might have dreams of traveling, of going to visit your grandchildren, of staying in your home and being able to maintain it, all of those dreams would depend on an entirely different savings and retirement system than the system that was designed in 1945. You certainly would not design Social Security today like they designed it back in 1945.

So to just steadfastly refuse to concede that opportunities are better for Americans, there is a new paradigm in retirement that exists, there are new opportunities, and there is a new way of deriving benefits that grow the economy, that do not overencumber the workers that are still in the workforce, we would do that in a minute.

It is disappointing that we have not been able to move further in this discussion than we have. But as we all know, it takes a lot of discussion.

I am eager to hear from my seniors. I know the gentleman is. Even though things will not change for them, I think it is important that we continue to invite our seniors to the table because seniors have always not only protected Social Security for their current benefits, but been very eager to make sure that it was going to be there for their children and grandchildren.

I thank them for their continued investment in time and interest for that.

Mr. KINGSTON. If the gentlewoman will yield, I again want to say that we often get bogged down in the politics of the moment, the politics of the next election, the politics of the current 5 years or whatever; and we should be thinking in terms of the next generation rather than the next election.

But the other thing that I keep coming back to is because there are two issues, a solvency issue and a generational fairness issue, what my job assignment, my homework assignment is, when I have a town meeting I say to everybody, what I really want to ask you, sit down at the kitchen table with the parents, with the grandkids and the grandparents, and figure it out. Just see if you can find that balance.

I had one guy in a town meeting say, This is all about greed. All you have to do is increase the taxes 1 percent. He was 70 years old. He would not be paying taxes. The guy behind him was 30 years old and said, Sir, respectfully, I have to tell you that is not acceptable for me, because I am going to be the one paying.

Similarly, a lot of people think the golden arrow here is taking the cap off it. But if you take the cap off it, people get more benefits.

One thing to keep in mind, anytime you make it more expensive to hire an employee, then our folks are going to be going offshore with the jobs. We are already losing too many jobs offshore. Furthermore, there will be a lot of illegal aliens in America not paying into

the system. I think part of Social Security should be tied into illegal immigration. It is actually not immigration if it is illegal; you are here as an illegal alien.

All of this stuff, we should get the best ideas of the Democrats and Republicans, throw them on the table, get the folks back home to say this is the direction we want, and that is what we are trying to accomplish here.

Mrs. NORTHUP. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman for joining me tonight. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) is a leader in our conference and a leader on Social Security, and, of course, has long been appreciated for the ability to take very complicated issues and talk about them in ways that we all understand, and we can share and benefit from his insights.

I want to end tonight by saying that we are all more concerned about the next generation than the next election, and how much we appreciate our President, who from the day the last election was over did not forget that through that campaign he talked about the importance of taking on this tough issue, and did it so well and has been out talking to the American people. It is very refreshing to see somebody take on such a tough challenge and talk to the American people about it.

VOTE "NO" ON THE CENTRAL AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CONAWAY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, this evening I am joined by fellow House Members, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CARNAHAN), a freshman, and other House Members who will join us shortly as we talk a little bit about the Central American Free Trade Agreement. Some call it the Central American Free Labor Agreement, as we will soon see.

As you can see by this calendar, we are barely 2 weeks away from the deadline set by the House majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the most powerful Republican in the House of Representatives, for a vote. They plan a vote in this Chamber on the Central American Free Trade Agreement. This deadline coincides with the 1-year anniversary of when President Bush signed the agreement.

That does not seem like news, except for this: every trade agreement signed by the Bush administration in his 4½ years in office, every single trade agreement signed by the Bush administration has been voted on within 60 days of its signing. The President signs the agreement with Australia, with Singapore, with Chile, with Morocco; and this Congress votes on it right

away, in large part because there is not huge opposition to the trade agreements.

This time, we are now at 347 days since Congress, since the President signed the Central American Free Trade Agreement. That is how long CAFTA has languished in Congress without a vote. Why? Because Democrats and Republicans alike, people on this side of the aisle, people on that side of the aisle, understand that the Central American Free Trade Agreement is dead on arrival in the House of Representatives.

Last month, two dozen Democrats and Republicans in Congress joined more than 150 business groups and labor organizations echoing a united message: vote "no" on the Central American Free Trade Agreement. Yesterday, just outside this building across the street, more than 400 union workers and Members of Congress again gathered in front of the U.S. Capitol to deliver a united message; vote "no" on the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

So Republican leaders in this House and the Bush administration understood they had a problem. On this day it will be 12 months, 1 year, since the President sent CAFTA to Congress. There is not the support in this country or this Congress for this trade agreement because people understand what it does to our Nation, what it does to our workers, what it does to our food safety, what it does to the environment.

So what did the Republican leaders and President Bush do? They brought the six presidents of these five Central American countries and the Dominican Republic, they brought these six presidents to the United States. In fact, the six presidents are touring our Nation on a United States Chamber of Commerce junket going around the country trying to convince the American people, the press, and the American Congress to vote for the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

They traveled to Miami. They went to Los Angeles, they went to Albuquerque, they came to my State of Ohio attempting to convince Americans this is a good idea.

The Bush administration has not been able to sell it. Business in this country has not been able to sell it. The free trade ideologues in this Congress who need your vote for every trade agreement, they have not been able to sell it.

So what is next? They bring the six presidents from Central America to come in. Unfortunately, these presidents are not telling the whole story. Like our own President, they tried to convince us that CAFTA will lift up low-income workers and that CAFTA will create jobs here at home.

□ 2000

First of all, there is no truth to that. We have heard that on every trade agreement. But what they do not say