

with the people of the United States of America and explain what that situation is. Right now he has got the cover of Medicare, he has got the cover of budget. While all this is going on, the Pentagon is buzzing away down there preparing to send these troops over to a country that is not a threat to this country.

I think the test, the ultimate test that each and every one of us in these chambers should employ, is the test that came across to me when I sat at a graduation speech this last spring. An 18 year old young man just got his degree and walked by. The person next to me leaned over and said, "We are very proud. That young man is going into the United States Marines."

At that very instant I thought to myself, could I look at his parents if we lose this young man in Bosnia? Could I look at his parents eye-to-eye and tell them that the loss of their son was necessary for the national security of the United States of America? Could I look them in the eye and tell them that it was necessary to send their son over to Bosnia? Were we able to look them in the eye when we were over in Lebanon or Somalia? I venture to say before we give our support to this President to send those troops into Bosnia, we ought to consider what our response is going to be to those parents.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MCINNIS. I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by saying I just returned from that part of the world this weekend. I had a chance to meet with all of our top NATO officials and to go to observation posts on the Serbian border.

I am not going to disagree with anything the gentleman said. What I would say as a member of the minority party talking to a member of the majority party is I would ask that the gentleman ask the Speaker of the House that we be allowed to vote on this. It is our constitutional duty.

Everything the gentleman said I agree with. Congress ought to vote on it. The gentleman and I and the other 400 Members ought to decide this issue, not the President of the United States.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I absolutely agree with the gentleman. This should not be the decision of the President of the United States. The President of the United States should come to the U.S. Congress and ask us for our permission. Frankly, I am going to be leading the charge against it, because while I have not been to Bosnia, I have an 18-year-old son.

THE NEED FOR AN INDEPENDENT, CONSOLIDATED STATISTICAL AGENCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. HORN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, today on behalf of myself, Mr. CLINGER, Mr. PETRI, Mrs. JOHNSON, Mr. CHRYSLER, Mr. DAVIS, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. HOBSON, Mr. KNOLLENBERG, Mr. LEACH, and Mr. ROGERS, I introduced the Statistical Consolidation Act of 1995. It would create a Federal Statistical Service which would combine the functions of the Bureau of the Census and Labor Statistics, one in Commerce, one in Labor, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

A core principle of the Republican majority is that government is too big and costs too much, and that we should seek economies wherever we might. The new Federal Statistical Service would streamline and improve the quality and efficiency of key data production, which affects not only the apportionment of Congress, the State legislatures, the boards of supervisors and city councils, but also business, the allocation of Federal and State programs, and many industry functions across the country.

Duplication of effort hampers the collection of statistical data. Both the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of the Census collect data on the Nation's small businesses. The results are not only a wasted effort, but inconsistent and even contradictory findings. Public and private sector planning relies heavily on the accuracy of these statistics, which are collected through an assortment of sources.

The Nation needs better coordination and planning among its statistical agencies, to make Federal programs more responsive to the needs of our citizens. Lack of coordination has limited the usefulness of the data.

Senator Abraham Ribicoff, Democrat of Connecticut, a number of years ago saw the same need for change. He introduced the Statistical Policy Act of 1980. This Statistical Consolidation Act of 1995 takes many provisions from Senator Ribicoff's very far-reaching legislation. It is designed to remove duplication, harness information and technology, and streamline the collection and utilization of statistical data.

Some of you may ask, why not consolidate all statistical agencies, as Canada did with its Statistics Canada. After all, if Canada can do it, so can the United States. Canada, however, is not an example of complete consolidation. In fact, many of Canada's statistics come from sources other than Statistics Canada. In addition, the United States has nine times as many people and more complex statistical tasks than does the Government of Canada.

The new Federal Statistical Service would be headed by an Administrator nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. Other officials to be nominated by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate are the Deputy Administrator, general counsel, and inspector general.

Also established is a Federal Council on Statistical Policy to advise the Administrator and the President. On the

Council would be statistics and survey professional experts from outside the Government, who would make policy recommendations to both the President and the Administrator.

The bill, when enacted, would trigger several events. Not later than 12 months after enactment, the new Federal Council would report to Congress on the consolidation of Census and Bureau of Labor Statistics field offices and on the savings possible from the merger. At the same time, the Council would provide a report on the feasibility of separating the decennial census mission from the rest of the Census Bureau. That action is in the bill to help Congress and the Nation grasp the cost of the decennial census.

Finally, within 18 months after enactment, the Council would recommend to Congress any changes in the procedure for releasing major social and economic indicators.

A well-informed electorate with access to knowledge of the state of the society is the cornerstone of a proper working democracy. Decisions based on the output of the Federal statistical system affects every citizen. That system is called upon to serve the voters of today and tomorrow. It is on their intelligent choices that the success of our democracy ultimately depends.

There must be better coordination and planning among these statistical agencies so that programs are more responsive to the needs of the Federal Government. It is my hope this bill will be passed as a bipartisan effort. The passage of this measure will not only mean better coordination, but it will also ensure independence from partisan influences, which are more probable when these functions are located in a Cabinet department.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to carefully consider this proposal and hopefully adopt it during this session.

MAKE NEEDED CHANGES IN MEDICARE LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. DEUTSCH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak tonight on something we did last week and we are probably going to do again on Thursday, and that is to pass a bill that basically eliminates Medicare in this country. We will pass it again as part of the reconciliation bill on Thursday, and it will go over to the Senate.

The reason I am speaking about it is with the faint hope that my colleagues on the majority side will try to make some changes. I just doubt that will happen between now and Thursday, but the good news is it is a bicameral legislature, and the Senate will have the possibility to deal with this, and ultimately this is a piece of legislation that will go in front of the President. The President has issued a statement he will veto this legislation. I urge him