

next 7 years, will be able to earn up to \$30,000 a year without deductions from Social Security.

There is another initiative by the U.S. House of Representatives to in fact make it easier for seniors to be independent, to live on their own and to earn more funds. I also feel that the eldercare tax credit, which will help families, is a very important and positive initiative of this 104th Congress.

In addition the House has passed the rollback of the unfair 1993 tax increase on Social Security.

But the final initiative, Mr. speaker, I think which is also important, is the opportunity to save Medicare, to make Medicare more viable, to make sure it is preserved and will in fact provide benefits for seniors in this generation and the next generation. What we will do in the proposal that is before the Congress is to reduce paperwork costs. Right now, Mr. Speaker, 12 percent of Federal dollars from Medicare go to paperwork. That is ridiculous. Businesses would not stand for it. We need to reduce that cost through electronic billing, et cetera.

We also have \$30 billion a year in fraud, waste, and abuse in the current Medicare System. That must be eliminated, and the savings go back to make sure we have the health care dollars for our senior citizens.

We also have the initiative to make sure we sustain medical training dollars for interns and residents, the indirect costs for medical education, but as a separate line item, and to make sure those funds that were used in prior Medicare budgets be used for Medicare for our seniors.

But the final option which I think really makes Medicare more modern, more accessible, and certainly more beneficial to seniors; while we are going to maintain fee for service for Medicare subscribers, we are also offering managed care as an option which may include pharmaceuticals and eyeglasses for no extra costs and also Medicare Plus, which is the medisave account which will have seniors who want to have a system where the dollars they get will be used for their health care, but whatever money is saved goes back in their pocket or, in fact, is rolled over to the next year.

So I am looking forward to working with the other side of the aisle, making sure that we save Medicare, working with the President, and while there may have been a veto of the current legislation, I am hopeful that working together with the White House we can make a Medicare plan that is going to be good for our seniors, will make sure we restore fiscal responsibility to our budgets, but making sure our health care is there for those who are in need.

NO VITAL AMERICAN INTERESTS AT RISK IN BOSNIA

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

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, we are now 8 days away from signing the Bosnia accord in Paris. This will seal the deployment of up to 40,000 troops into the Bosnian theater. That is right. The 20,000 troops that have been talked about include only the Army ground personnel in Bosnia. It does not include additional U.S. forces in German, the Adriatic, the Balkans, or in Italy.

Mr. Speaker, the President has yet to specify the vital United States interests at risk in Bosnia or the detailed and specific plans that he promised, the plans to achieve the objective that we have in Bosnia or the exit strategy, that he promised to bring our men and women safely home. The interests outlined by the President were broad universal ideals that would apply anywhere in the world. He made no case for a specific deployment in Bosnia. Sad experience has taught us that it is easy to send troops in but very difficult for them to accomplish the objective after they are there and even more difficult to get out in a timely and honorable way.

Besides all this, it will all be done on borrowed money. We do not have the money for it. It is all borrowed money.

I want to call everyone's attention to an article in today's Baltimore Sun. The headline is "Croats Seen Burning Town That They Must Give Back To The Serbs." It states that the U.N. condemned the scorched earth policy being carried out by the Croatian forces. These forces were working in organized burning teams. Mr. Speaker, this defies the peace agreement and shows that many in that tragic area will not honor it. When rival armies burn each other's towns, I find it hard to believe the President's statement that U.S. troops will not be entering a combat zone.

Another article we are mentioning was written by former Secretary of Defense Weinberger in this week's edition of the Forbes magazine. He asks:

Is it isolationism or is it failure to accept the burdens of leadership that leads me to conclude that we should not send troops to this ill-stated enterprise? I think neither. The U.S. has always been, and should always be, willing to accept the burdens of keeping peace and maintaining freedom for ourselves and our allies. But when—after two years of fatal, bumbling inaction—we cobble together a paper agreement solving none of the conflicts that started this war, it is simply common sense that opposes deploying any soldiers, U.S. or NATO, to a mission inviting disaster.

That is the end of the quote. Mr. Speaker, I could not agree more, and I submit the entire article for the RECORD:

[From Forbes, Dec. 18, 1995]

GETTING OUR TROOPS INTO THE TRENCHES BY
CHRISTMAS

(By Caspar W. Weinberger)

President Clinton's personal pledge to send 20,000 U.S. troops to join 40,000 NATO troops in the Bosnian cauldron invites another foreign policy disaster.

The Serbs, Croats and Bosnian Muslims have agreed, sort of, that Bosnia will give up 49% of itself to the Bosnian Serbs, who

promptly said that that was not enough. The key question that must be answered before we send in our troops is whether there is a peace agreement here that is likely to be kept by all the warring parties. If there is not, any "peacekeeping" mission will be futile. Despite chief negotiator Richard Holbrooke's hype and President Clinton's speech to the nation, the sad fact is that we have no such agreement.

PIPE DREAMS

The agreement is supposed to create a stable, new "multiethnic Bosnian country," with Sarajevo as its multiethnic capital. The agreement provides for a partitioned Bosnia governed by a federal parliament with control over foreign policy and some economic policy, but having two separate armies, two police forces and separate parliaments—all overseen by a rotating collective Bosnian presidency. Even Rube Goldberg couldn't have dreamed up a more complex design than this.

This agreement accepts the principle of two Bosnias, which is what the Serbs have wanted all along. But within hours of the highly dramatic initialing in Dayton, Bosnian Serb president, Radovan Karadzic, typically wavered back and forth between denouncing the agreement, half-heartedly accepting it, saying that Bosnia's 100,000 Serbs would fight against it, with Sarajevo becoming another "Beirut," and then later saying that maybe he would accept the agreement. Some of Karadzic's behavior may well be explained by the fact that before taking up brutal atrocities and mass murder, Karadzic was a practicing psychiatrist with a record of what is politely called "instability." Physician, heal thyself.

It is quite true that Serbia's President Slobodan Milosevic—no slouch at committing atrocities himself, but hoping to avoid indictment as a war criminal—has agreed to this arrangement. The very instability the agreement creates will offer Milosevic another opportunity to realize his goal of a Greater Serbia, backed by his Russian allies. We have allowed the Russians to become a part of the "intervention force," but to satisfy their sensibilities they will be allowed to report to U.S. Division Commander, Major General William L. Nash instead of being placed under direct NATO command.

The 20,000 U.S. soldiers will be deployed along a narrow, 2.5-mile-wide strip separating Bosnia's Muslim and Serb armies. If our forces are attacked, they will fight back, even though they are heavily outnumbered. Communications, exit strategies, command and control? Be patient. But if our troops are engaged, Mr. Clinton's prediction of "some casualties" will seem modest.

We have insisted that neither Dr. Karadzic nor that least lovable character, Bosnian Serb general Ratko Mladic, be permitted to have any role in the future because of their indictments as war criminals. But neither Karadzic nor Mladic has agreed to this. General Mladic is renowned for defying all attempts at civilian control of his army, regardless of any agreement. After all, he made and violated 34 cease-fire agreements.

Is it isolationism or is it failure to accept the burdens of leadership that leads me to conclude that we should not send troops to this ill-starred enterprise? I think neither. The U.S. has always been, and should always be, willing to accept the burdens of keeping peace and maintaining freedom for ourselves and our allies. But when—after two years of fatal, bumbling inaction—we cobble together a paper agreement solving none of the conflicts that started this war, it is simply common sense that opposes deploying any soldiers, U.S. or NATO, to a mission inviting disaster.

TWO ENDS AGAINST THE MIDDLE

Mr. Holbrooke can shout at every camera he finds that Bosnia is not another Vietnam, Lebanon or Somalia. But the parallel with Lebanon is deadly and exact. We dispatched troops to Lebanon to act as a buffer between two states, and innumerable militias that had not agreed to peace or a peacekeeping force. In Bosnia we have a paper agreement that Mr. Milosevic, anxious to save his skin, purported to sign for his former ally, Dr. Karadzic, whose wild and wavering statements after the agreement have made clear that the Bosnian Serbs will most likely fight any intervention force. And since the world has already been told that the U.S. force will be pulled out before next year's U.S. presidential election, Milosevic, Karadzic and Mladic can wait until November 1996 to try again.

Mr. Speaker, even though I oppose the deployment, I want to state very clearly that I am in full support of the troops, the individual people that are going there, doing their duty as they have been instructed. These men and women are members of the finest military in the world. To put these top combat troops in harm's way doing occupation duty is beyond belief, and I call upon the President to stop this movement into Bosnia while we can still do so.

Finally I will encourage everyone to show their support of our troops by donating to the individual services relief societies. This is the best way to support the children who will be left without a parent at this holiday season. In the gulf war there were so many letters to our troops that families could not communicate with their mothers and fathers. Giving a donation to the relief societies helps the services take care of the children separated from their parents because of the deployment of American forces abroad.

□ 2000

IMPACT OF THE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION BILL ON THE ENVIRONMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ENSIGN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I do not plan to use the entire time. What I wanted to do tonight and what I will do is to explain the budget and appropriation bills that have been proposed or passed by the Republican majority in this House and how they have a negative impact on the environment.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, we had some previous speakers who gave 5-minute special orders previously: The gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. LOWEY], the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO], and also the gentleman from New York [Mr. HINCHEY], that outlined some of the concerns that myself and Democrats in general have about the impact on the environment of the budget bill that has been passed by the Congress and which

the President today fortunately vetoed, and also the appropriations bill that funds the Environmental Protection Agency, the VA-HUD and independent agencies, an appropriations bill which has already been sent back to Congress twice but which will come back up again, probably as early as tomorrow.

Throughout this Congress, we have watched the Republican leadership step by step as they work to completely undermine 25 years of environmental progress in order to make it easier for special interests to pollute the environment at the expense of Americans' health and environmental heritage.

Despite what the Republicans may think, the election last year was not a mandate to roll back our most successful environmental laws. In fact, a recent Harris poll found that 76 percent of Americans think that air and water laws as they now stand are not strict enough; not that they should be downgraded, but they are not strict enough.

Despite this, undercover efforts by the new Republican majority to attack environmental protection through budget and appropriation bills is the paramount example of what lengths the leadership will go to fulfill their promises to special interests, despite the potential impacts to Americans' health, environmental heritage, and economic well-being.

Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased tonight, as we were waiting to address the House during the special orders, that we actually received from the President his veto message on the budget bill. One of the things that he stressed, and I would like to just read some sections from his veto message, is that this budget bill impacts the environment in a very negative way and takes away too much money from environmental protection.

If I could just read some excerpts from his veto message to the House of Representatives, he says: "As I have repeatedly stressed, I want to find common ground with the Congress on a balanced budget plan that will best serve the American people, but I have profound differences with the extreme approach that the Republican majority has adopted. It would hurt average Americans and help special interests. My balanced budget plan reflects the values that Americans share"; and among those values that the President mentioned was to protect public health and the environment.

He stressed in his veto message that "the budget proposed by the Republicans would cut too deeply into a number of programs, and specifically hurt the environment." He went on to explain how various programs in title V of the program of the budget bill were specifically geared toward downgrading environmental protection.

What I wanted to do tonight, Mr. Speaker, was to talk about, if I could, some examples of how in fact the budget bill, as well as the appropriation bill that we are likely to consider tomorrow,

will turn back the clock on environmental protection. In fact, one of the previous speakers tonight, I believe it was the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO], specifically said that what the Republicans are doing in these spending and budget bills is turning back the clock on environmental protection. My friend, the gentleman from New York [Mr. HINCHEY], who spoke previously, talked about how, specifically with the Clean Water Act, we have made so much progress in the last 10 or 15 years.

When I was first elected to the Congress back in 1988, the main reason why I believe that I was elected was because in the summer of 1988, we experienced in my district along the shore in New Jersey, a summer where all kinds of material washed up on the beaches: medical waste, sludge material, plastics. You name it, was on the beach. Most of our beaches were closed for the summer, and we lost billions of dollars to our local economy because of the tourists that did not come.

After 1988, in the Congress, and it was on a bipartisan basis, laws were passed that prohibited ocean dumping, that tried to protect against the disposal of medical wastes into the waters of the New York and New Jersey harbors. And, lo and behold, after two or three years, the beaches started to come back, the water quality improved, we did not have the washups that we had during the summer of 1988. So this year, this summer, in 1995, we had probably one of our best beach seasons ever, and people constantly remarked about the improvement in water quality.

But the gentleman from New York, [Mr. HINCHEY] pointed out that if you look at these appropriation bills and if you look at the budget, you are seeing significant cutbacks in the amount of money that is available under the Clean Water Act. Loans that the Federal Government provides to municipalities and counties throughout the country to upgrade their sewage treatment plants are severely cut, so that makes it more difficult for the communities to actually get sufficient funds to upgrade their sewage treatment plants. Specifically in New Jersey, in the part of New Jersey that I represent, we are very concerned about what we call combined sewer overflow. In many of the municipalities in north Jersey, as well as New York City and outlying areas of New York City, in the metropolitan area, there are sewage systems which are combined with stormwater systems, which means that essentially when it rains, the sewage and the stormwater get combined and there is an overflow, and raw sewage goes out into the New York harbor, and of course, makes its way down to the Jersey shore.

What we need are Federal dollars which have now been available and continue to be available over the last few years to try to either separate those sewer and stormwater systems,