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Senate

The Senate met at 9:15 a.m., and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, ultimate Judge of us all, free us from the condemnatory judgments that elevate ourselves and put others down when they do not agree with us. Sometimes, we think our disagreement justifies our lack of prayer for them. Often we self-righteously neglect in our prayers the very people who most need Your blessing. Give us the prophet Samuel's heart to say, "Far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you."—I Samuel 12:23. Awaken us to the danger for our spiritual lives that results from neglect of prayer for our adversaries. Make us intercessors for all those You have placed on our hearts—even those we previously have castigated with our judgments. We accept Your authority: "Judgment is mine, says the Lord." I pray this in the name of Jesus, who taught us, "Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven."—Luke 6:37. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CAMPBELL). The Senator from Montana is recognized.

Mr. BURNS. I thank the Chair.

SCHEDULE

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, today there will be a period for morning business until the hour of 10 a.m.

Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2937, the White House Travel Office leg-

islation. A cloture motion was filed on the pending Dole amendment to that measure, with that cloture vote occurring on Friday, unless agreement can be reached otherwise. Rollcall votes are, therefore, possible during today's session. Leader time shall be reserved.

AMERICAN FAMILIES NEED HELP

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I come to the floor this morning, again, with America on my mind and American families on my mind. Today, they are working harder and they are worrying more about job stability, and they are wondering about what the future holds, especially when this Government wants to call all of the rules and regulations from here throughout the country.

Most families live from paycheck to paycheck, and they struggle every month just to make ends meet. They are frustrated because the money they used to be able to live on does not get to the end of the month. Some would say, "There is a lot of month left over at the end of the money." Families, from Montana to Maine, want freedom from Washington and the crushing burden it puts on the backs of all Americans.

Let us talk about taxes first, as we have been doing all week. We need to give some of the 1993 tax increases back to families. That is what repeal of the 4.3-cent gas tax would do.

I thought a lot of the comments yesterday of my friend from Missouri, when he says, "Let us give it back to the people." This really stresses people who have to go to work every day, and it goes to people that will not work. That is not fair. These are the people that are trying to make America work.

Tax freedom day is now after 128 days because of that big tax increase in 1993. Total taxes are now running around 38.2 percent on family income. This re-

peal starts to at least give some of the money back to American families and also helps them along with their savings, and with the education of their young folks.

Also, let us talk a little bit about Government regulation this morning.

Flextime. What we have been talking about is the ability—and the TEAM Act—of people, of employers and employees, sitting down and ironing out some of the factors in a workplace that make a company go. That is what we are doing here, and talking about what is wrong with this communication between an employee and an employer. What is wrong with some of them setting some rules and some parameters which help not only the employee but the employer and also help the company to survive?

Home office deduction telecommuters. We fought very hard for that. I think back in 1991 or 1992, we put an amendment in the Transportation Act that says we ought to study the impact of folks who stay home and do their work because they have new technology such as computers, such as fax machines, such as telephones. So we said, do a study and see what impact that has on our transportation system and on our highways because right now we know we cannot outbuild the roads to stay ahead of America's love for the automobile.

So what is wrong with having a designated spot in a home in telecommuting maybe where even the employees here in Washington who did not want to come up I-395—as you know, I-395 from 6 o'clock in the morning until about 9 o'clock in the morning has been termed the world's largest parking lot. What is the impact on the environment? What is the impact on our fuel consumption, and on energy consumption?

Why can we not look at our tax bracket and say, "OK. Maybe you can stay home maybe 1 or 2 days out of

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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every week and still get your work done, still be in contact, still communicate with everybody in the office and your customers or people in other places."

What is wrong with the TEAM Act? What is wrong with making these kinds of agreements for a better workplace? Where I come from, the people I am talking to sure want higher wages. The Government got their increase. In 1993, it was taken away from you; stagnated wages. If you look at a State like Montana, everybody wants to put the miners out of business where the best blue-collar jobs in Montana are in natural resources and the management of natural resources.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BURNS. So this morning, Mr. President, I ask that we take a long look at the total picture of families and what makes them tick. How do we secure their wages? How do we give them some permanence, and how do we contribute to a better life for families in all of America?

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Connecticut has reserved 15 minutes.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I thank the Chair. I thank my colleague.

ARMS SHIPMENTS TO BOSNIA FROM ISLAMIC COUNTRIES

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, a few days ago, on Tuesday of this week, a number of colleagues rose to express criticism of the actions of the Clinton administration with regard to arms shipments from Islamic countries, including Iran, across Croatia to supply the Bosnian Army and the decision made not to intervene by this administration in April 1994. Yesterday, our colleagues in the other body voted to appropriate \$1 million to conduct a formal investigation of this incident, which has been referred to as Iran-Bosnia.

Mr. President, as far as I am concerned, the suggestion here that what happened in April 1994 with the Clinton administration bore any resemblance to the Iran-Contra affair is wrong. There is simply no connection between the two. As my colleagues in the Senate know, for quite a long time—1993, 1994, 1995—I was very critical of this administration's inability to lift the arms embargo multilaterally, preferably, but unilaterally if necessary. But for the very reasons that led me to work, on a bipartisan basis, with the Senate majority leader and others to urge this administration to mandate finally that the arms embargo against Bosnia be lifted, I find the criticism of the administration and the President with regard to the decision made in April 1994 to be way off base, to be unfair, to be a bum rap. It is, in fact, quite the opposite of what was implied and expressed by all of us who worked so hard to convince our colleagues and

this administration to lift the arms embargo against the Bosnian Government. I want to explain why I come to the conclusion that what the President did in April 1994 was not simply not wrong, but, in fact, I believe it was the right and moral decision to make.

Let me go back to that time in early 1994. In January 1994, we passed an amendment, supported by the majority leader and myself and many others on both sides of the aisle, which expressed the sense of the Senate—because it is all we could manage to convince our colleagues to support—a sense of the Senate that we should lift the arms embargo on the Bosnian Government by an 87-to-9 vote. That was a vote here in this Chamber. That vote expressed the growing disgust, fury, and frustration by most of us here in this Chamber, if not people throughout the country and the world, that acts of aggression and genocide were occurring, primarily by the Serbs against the Bosnian people, and not only was the world just standing by, but we were prohibiting the Bosnian people from receiving the arms necessary to exercise their fundamental right of self-defense. That was in January of 1994 that the Senate spoke.

In the spring of 1994, Bosnia was in dire straits. The newly established federation joining the Bosniacs and the Croats was in a very precarious state. The Bosnian Moslems in Gorazde, Sarajevo, and elsewhere were under siege, and not just casual siege but siege that threatened wide-scale death, destruction, and defeat. The Bosnians again, confronted by a foe with immense advantage and heavy weaponry, were, under an embargo passed in 1992 before the war broke out to try to stop the war from breaking out, denied by the international community the means to defend themselves.

I said then repeatedly, as others did in this Chamber, that that embargo was unjust and immoral. Major cities in Bosnia were threatened with being overrun by the Serbs. In fact, the Bosnian-Croat Federation was on the edge of defeat and annihilation.

Against that backdrop, in April 1994, the Croatian Government asked the United States, through diplomatic channels, whether the United States Government would object if Croatia were to allow arms shipments to go through its country, Croatia, to the Bosnian Government from other countries, primarily Islamic countries, including Iran. In fact, as I mentioned Islamic countries, there is some reason to believe that not just Iran, although that for understandable reasons concerns us, but also Turkey, perhaps Malaysia, perhaps including, with the support of our allies, Saudi Arabia, supplied arms to the Bosnians in transit through Croatian territory. The question then posed to the Clinton administration by this diplomatic query from Croatia was, should the United States at that point have acted forcefully to require the Croatians to stop those arms from going to the Bosnians?

President Clinton decided that the United States would neither approve nor object to such shipments. American diplomats told the Croatian Government in response to their question that they had "no instructions" on the matter. That, I feel very strongly, was the right decision diplomatically and morally, for to have done otherwise would have meant that the United States was not simply refusing to supply arms itself to the Bosnian Government, was not simply at that point enforcing to the extent it was able the embargo against the Bosnians, but was in fact demanding that other countries that wanted to allow arms to go to the Bosnians not be allowed to do so.

Some critics now insist that in making that decision the administration undertook covert action without reporting to Congress. That is a quasi-legal argument invoking, I suppose, memories of Iran-Contra, and I wish to explain why I feel there was not covert action here. In fact, it was neither covert nor was it action.

Let me make clear, too, that unlike the Iran-contra episode, there was here no mandate from Congress not to supply aid as there was in the case of aid to the contras. In fact, here there was growing support in Congress to have the United States Government either supply arms to the Bosnians or at least, as happened later in the year, to stop enforcing this immoral embargo.

Why do I say this was neither covert nor was it action? In legal terms, the administration decided to take no position, give no instruction on the delivery of arms through Croatia to Bosnia from Islamic countries including Iran. That does not constitute action. The State Department has made it very clear that the United States had no contact with Iran on this matter and took absolutely no action to facilitate these shipments. So I do not see how this can be construed as action by our Government which would require formal reporting to Congress under relevant law.

Second, and very importantly, this decision was by no means covert. While my colleagues who have been critical of late of the decision have acted, I presume, on the basis of an article which appeared early in April of this year, 1996, in the Los Angeles Times about the President's decision, the fact is that the decision made by the President and the administration in 1994 to give no instructions to the Croatians on the question of Islamic shipments of arms to the Bosnians across their territory should have been known to all of us and certainly should not be construed as news.

The leadership of the Congress and the relevant committees and their staffs have and at that time and from the beginning of the war in Bosnia had routine access to the very same intelligence information about the Islamic arms shipments that was seen by administration officials early in 1994, and, in fact, before. No one, to my