

As a representative of Romanian people both in the Romanian Government and abroad in foreign relations, it is my duty to ask these questions and kindly appeal for your intervention to the proper departments in order to insure that the image United States is portraying to the Romanian tourists is a better one.

Another great concern that I have pertaining to travelling in the United States is the procedure that the U.S. Department of State has established for Romanian applicants for visitor's visas. I have raised this issue in conversations with U.S. Ambassador to Romania James Rosapepe and the U.S. Consul, Mr. Patterson, and was told that my concern was not uncommon but unfortunately procedures are set in Washington DC.

An application for a visitor's visa, which is, in fact, an interview tax, costs \$45. Apart from the fact that the applicant must demonstrate "strong ties" to the origin country and, therefore, for the U.S. Embassy to avoid the danger of a new immigrant, (demonstration that is not always taken into consideration on a consistent criteria basis), the applicant has to pay for the visa, for the travel to Bucharest in order to give an interview with the Consul, interview which occurs only 1 or 2 out of 10 applications, the rest being just useless conversations with some desk officer at the U.S. Consulate. A simple arithmetic shows that the applicant pays sometimes his or her monthly salary (an average salary in Romania is about \$120/month) just to learn that he or she has been rejected and thus is not allowed to travel to the U.S.

Should I mention to you also that rejected applicants never get back their money? Or is there a way to make money out of the sincere and legitimate desire of Romanians to travel to the U.S.? And when taking into consideration the original if not strange technique of the "visa lottery", one could picture a very commercial way to observe the universal right to free travel and circulation of any citizen of the world. I strongly believe that principles are to be observed not only by declarations, but also by facts. And people can feel the difference. I remember a demonstration in front of the U.S. Embassy when people were carrying slogans like: "The Berlin's walls were moved to the U.S. Embassy".

Few years ago, talking to the U.S. consul in Bucharest about visa issues, I told him that the U.S. Government was accusing Ceausescu about restraining the Romanian's right to travel free and he replied that "traveling to America is not a right, but a privilege".

U.S. citizens come to Romania without applying for a visa, nor paying for one (unless they stay longer than 30 days). I strongly believe that in the spirit of democracy, The United States Department should take measures to waive discriminating treatment and to envisage a reciprocal one.

As an advocate for the democratic system of United States who has not given up under the pressure of communism, I come before you urging you to take this appeal in consideration. People of Romania are not 2nd class citizens, they are not beggars, nor criminals. We have our dignity and would like to be treated accordingly. We look up to the United States, to Americans, to anything that carries a label "made in America" with open heart. Romanians want to be part of NATO and part of the Western culture, however, aspects of life such as ones mentioned here are making us believe that we are not welcomed. We are treated sometimes as we are not good enough to be worth a chance.

I close this appeal by saying that I will continue to believe and to preach the model of democracy that United States offers to the world, while believing that these things are going to be dealt with properly.

I thank you all for listening or reading this letter, for understanding our feelings and for taking action.

Respectfully yours.

SALUTE TO NEWT

HON. JENNIFER DUNN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 1999

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, at the "Salute to Newt" last Wednesday, our former Speaker of the House again proved that, in the words of TIME Magazine, he "belongs in the category of the exceptional." Newt Gingrich is a man who thinks both with a vision for our country and with compassion in his heart, and I bring his remarks from that special evening to your attention.

Joined by the Gingrich family and friends, the event was a wonderful tribute to Newt. Mary Tyler Moore, International Chair of the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, said it best in her introduction of Speaker Gingrich. Moore said, "Newt Gingrich may be many things to many people, but to us he is a champion and a hero—and his leadership in Congress will be sorely missed." A portion of the proceeds from this event were donated to the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation.

As the man who led us in capturing and holding a Republican majority in Congress for the first time since 1928, his comments continue to offer each of us insight for the future.

In a very real way, I hope tonight does symbolize what America is all about. Jonathan as a person, not just a symbol for a cause. Mary Tyler Moore as a person, not just a symbol of a cause. But the fact that America is about 260 million real people of remarkable diversity, each of them with extraordinary God given talents, and each of them needing the help of their fellow American to use all those talents.

We were able, for a five-year period, to do a great job because of each of you. Because of those of you who are members, those of you who are on my staff, those of you who were supporters, donors, volunteers, friends; it was team effort.

Time magazine named me "Man of the Year" in 1995, but in fact, it should have been the "Team of the Year," because it was a very remarkable, collective effort, by an extraordinary range of people.

My daughters talked about me as a father, but the truth is, they're pretty good daughters. And they spent a lot of time on the phone with me, and now we're all into email so it's gotten even more chaotic, {laughter} and they and Marianne track me as much as I track them because I think life, in that sense, is a team effort.

Marianne recognized, and I was so grateful that she did so, and we talked about it earlier, but she recognized the Capitol Police. I think all of you, particularly those of you who go to the Capitol fairly often, who, as I often do, take them for granted, all of us were brought up short when Officer J.J. Chestnut and Detective John Gibson were killed. I think it was a reminder, a wake up call if you will, that these men and women literally risk their lives for their country, and in that case, two of them paid to protect the Capitol with their lives, and I want to repeat what Marianne said and just say to all of you who are here tonight, thank you for four years of wonderful service and protection and I am very grateful to each and

every one of you, and I regard you as my friends, and I know from the fact that you participated in so many trips with me and on occasion laughed at various and sundry dumb things I was saying, that you are my friends.

You see different pictures, we talk about, one of the pictures was about mental health parity, and my mother has had challenges for over twenty years involving bi-polar disease. I walk every year in the breast cancer effort, and my sister Robbie, who is here, is a survivor of breast cancer and we know first hand how serious and how real it is.

I think at every level, my brother and my sisters are here tonight, my daughters, Marianne, all of us felt it personally, but I think for many of you, those in office and those out of office, those in Washington and those around the country, I think you know that you were as much a part of our extended family, and that it was very, very real, and that together, we accomplished a lot.

I think it's a very important thing that this city doesn't do a very good job of giving us credit for it, because it would make the establishment of this city very uncomfortable, but I think we ought to recognize that together, we ended, as that one video shows so lovingly, 40 years of Democrat control.

Together, for the first time in 68 years, we re-elected a Republican majority. Together, for the first time since 1926 we ended up keeping that majority for the third time. And it is with enormous pride that we have here tonight, my dear friend Speaker Denny Hastert.

As I told the House Republican Conference in a rather exciting meeting one afternoon just before we went on home for Christmas, I thought that in the context we were in that Denny was absolutely the only person who could hold the party together, and I called him today to congratulate him as the budget passed, something which I had not been able to accomplish for all of last year.

And to get it through, on time, and to pass it, even with a couple of Democratic votes helping add the margin, was a great achievement. I think this is part of what the human experience is about.

It's important to understand that I left the Capitol with an extraordinary sense of happiness because for 20 years I had been allowed to serve the people of Georgia, because for 5 years I was allowed to lead the House Republican party, one of those years in all honesty, with Bob Michel's total support because he was still the leader, but in every way he supported my effort for us to be a majority.

For four years, with your help, I was allowed to serve as the Speaker of the House, and I felt that as a visionary and a strategist and a teacher that I had carried us as far as I could, and that frankly we needed a legislative leader who would focus on leading the House Republican party as a legislative body, and I am extremely proud of Denny, and I think he is going to end up being a very effective Speaker, and I think when he is re-elected two or three more times he will be a very, very powerful Speaker, and I will be back at that point to visit you occasionally and chat with you about ideas that I'm developing, that I hope you will schedule.

It's important to remember that not only did we achieve a lot in power, because it was a decisive transition in power in this city, but we achieved a lot in policy.

We passed welfare reform. We passed it three times—twice it was vetoed, the third time the president announced he had invented it and signed it with great glee.

But frankly that's less important than the fact that today there are 43% fewer people on welfare and 43% more Americans out there earning a living, having a chance to pursue

happiness, showing their children that the work ethic matters, and that's good for America, and it's good for individual Americans.

The pictures that Charlton Heston talked about, that he narrated, that showed John Kasich and Pete Domenici signing the budget deal which was in fact an extraordinary achievement.

People tend to forget, we were projected, when I became Speaker, we were projected to have over the next decade a three trillion, one hundred billion dollar deficit. I believe it was announced yesterday that the surplus for this year is one hundred and eleven billion on a unified basis and even if you discount all the Social Security revenue, we have reduced the deficit for the operating budget to 16 billion. Numbers which I would venture to say in the summer of 1994, you could have gotten a 50 million to one bet against that particular possibility.

We have now created, by balancing the budget, the lower interest rates that are fueling the economy. We also have a chance to save Social Security, and we are in a position where we can cut taxes and return to the American people the money that belongs to them.

And let me remind you that when we balanced the budget, we did so in a bill which cut taxes for the first time in seventeen years, and part of this prosperity is the fact that we cut the capital gains tax and, once again, lowering the cost of job creation paid off, as more and more people got in the business of creating jobs.

We also saved Medicare for what now looks like it will be a 15 or 20 year period, without having raised the FICA tax, and we began strengthening defense and intelligence, and I am particularly proud that Porter Goss, who is here tonight, is continuing to lead as the Chair of the Intelligence Committee and to give us a chance to really reshape our intelligence.

Now, I spent the last four months with Marianne studying, thinking, trying to learn a few things and get a chance to be outside the daily business of this city. And for just a few minutes, I'd like to share with you sort of my initial reflections. This has been my first chance to come back and to have a chance to share with you.

And let me say, I want to pick up on what Connie Mack said. I believe that we are the party of freedom, and we only make sense as the party of freedom. I believe that we represent the cause of freedom, which is even bigger than our party.

And I believe that America is the country of freedom. I believe that as you go around this town, from the Washington Monument built to a man who led the Continental Army, presided over the Constitutional Convention, and literally served as father of his country for eight years, a man without whom we could not be the country we are.

To the Jefferson Memorial, a man who wrote the Declaration of Independence, who was Governor of Virginia during the Revolutionary War, who helped us create the Bill of Rights, who founded the Democratic party to have legitimate dissent without treason, a new concept in the late eighteenth century, and then presided as president.

To the Lincoln Memorial, a man who by sheer will insisted that we would be a union, and a memorial which can never be visited without profit by any who would understand both what has made America, and how deeply God is a part of our experience.

To the opposite end of the mall, where General Grant's statue stands below the Capitol that he defended, and we are reminded that this nation was, in the end, created in blood at Valley Forge and elsewhere, and stained in blood at Antietam and Gettysburg.

To the FDR monument. To the greatest president of the twentieth century, a man who presided over the defeat, and led in the effort to defeat, Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Imperial Japan.

Again and again, from monuments to the First and Second World Wars, to monuments to the Koran War, to the Vietnam Memorial, we are reminded that freedom is expensive, that it requires constant effort, and that we have a duty in our generation to take the freedom our parents gave us and to strengthen it, improve it, and give our children, and grandchildren as my daughter pointed out, even more freedom. These are monuments to the sacrifices that lay at the very heart of freedom.

I believe that in the next two decades, we have an opportunity to decisively extend freedom. And I believe there are five key steps to greater freedom in the next decade or two.

Some of them are domestic, some of them international. Many of them will be controversial. Let me tell you what the five key steps to freedom are in the next few years.

The first is here at home. It is the freedom to save for your own retirement, without politicians controlling your money.

It will be controversial. There will be a fight. People will flinch from it at times. But it is an objective fact that the Social Security actuaries will report that being allowed to have a Social Security Plus account that you invest will save Social Security permanently, without a tax increase or a benefit cut, will do so with such enormous economic repercussions, that the Social Security actuaries believe that our children will have to cut the FICA tax, because the surpluses in the trust fund will simply grow too large to be managed.

Now, that is a future which the surplus of the budget gives us a window now to take advantage of, and I think we should have the moral courage to say to the American people, 'the president was half right.'

He was right in saying let's invest it, he was wrong in saying let the politicians invest it, and we believe enough in the American people to find a way to get them some kind of tax credit out of that surplus so that every American, when they go to work and they start to pay a FICA tax, they have the right, and the duty, to save for their own retirement, with them, not the politicians, in control of that saving.

And that will end class warfare in America in a half generation as every worker in America comes to own part of the American dream, and every worker in America sees their account, and their savings. And, in the process, the economy will grow faster, Social Security will be saved, and we will have moved power out of Washington, and back to the American people.

Second: We ought to have the freedom to work for ourselves, for our families, for our communities, for our religious institutions. And I believe, in peace time, that means that we should establish a cap on all taxation, state, federal and local combined, at 25% of income, and no American should pay more than 25%.

One of the purposes of this political action committee will be to write every Republican county, and district, and state organization as they have their conventions next year, and urge them to adopt a platform plank that calls for a 25% cap.

We're not going to get there overnight. We're not going to get there in three or four years. But as someone who did preside, after all, over reforming welfare, balancing the budget, cutting taxes and saving Medicare, I think I can say that I have some sense of what's doable.

And the fact is, in 1970, Governor Ronald Reagan went to the Governor's Association

and proposed welfare reform. He was defeated forty-nine to one. Twenty-six years later, standing on his shoulders, we passed that welfare reform.

Government grew big because of the Depression and the Second World War. It has no justification for being this big except our lack of cleverness at applying privatization, setting priorities, and modernizing the system to make it smaller.

And I think as a party, we should adopt the principle that over the next 15 years we will shrink government until we get it down to no more than 25% of your income. Because, after all, if there was a big war, you would have to raise taxes, and if you are already at 45 or 50%, you have no margin to raise taxes without threatening freedom.

And if you believe in the Tocqueville vision of volunteerism, and Marvin Olasky's great book *The Tragedy of Human Compassion*, which I think was the key explanation—and I thank Bill Bennett, who is here tonight, for having originally asked me to read it—it was the key explanation that volunteerism, charities, and a willingness to go out and be involved in your community is vastly more effective at changing the human condition than is larger government.

And in that process, I believe, we can eliminate the death tax, cut the capital gains tax to 10%, and put ourselves in a position as a country to teach the rest of the world that we want big active citizens, not big active bureaucracies, because that's what makes freedom truly strong.

Third, and I'm going to step on virtually every interest group in the country with this next one. It comes directly out of Adam Smith's point about the modernization of the Middle Ages. We should have the freedom to use all the aspects of the information age to improve our lives.

We, as patients, ought to have all the knowledge about our health records. We should have all the knowledge about our own disease. We should have all the knowledge about all the different possible cures.

We, as citizens, should have access to every expert system we can to apply the law to ourselves, with minimum payments to attorneys rather than maximum payments.

We should have a common-sense approach to the environment. We should have a 24-hour a day, seven-day-a-week, year-round learning system where teachers get paid based on results rather than on tenure, and where, in fact, students have a chance to be learners all their lives, not just from 9 until 3 when it is convenient.

But that requires the courage, every morning, to get up and look at the technology and say, "how can I strengthen the consumer-slash-citizen's rights," rather than "how can I protect the guild the interest group, or whoever it is that is currently protecting their rice bowl."

Fourth, and this is particularly important for Republicans, but it is crucial to all Americans. We need freedom for all Americans to pursue happiness.

It really struck me about 2 weeks after the election. The democrats had run racist ads, and they were terrible, and it was a despicable campaign, and it was deliberate. But it was tragically our failure over the preceding four years to so behave that in every black and Hispanic community local people didn't automatically say, "That ad is baloney."

We have to decide that we truly mean that every American is endowed by their creator.

Every American with disabilities, and Jonathan is here tonight. Every American who has a long-term disease. The young people who were up here tonight who will spend a lifetime without hour help having to inject, having to monitor carefully, having to experience everything Mary shared with us.

Young Americans who are black, or Hispanic, or Native American. And we have to decide that we, as a party, and we as individuals mean it enough that we are going to break through the baloney, break through the bureaucracy, insist on results, and we're going to reach out in every neighborhood.

Some work has been done in this direction, but frankly it is far too little, we are far too timid, we don't challenge ourselves enough, and we should recognize that if God has truly endowed, as I believe he has, every single child in this country, in every single neighborhood, then we have an obligation to make that endowment real.

And if we are seen as being truly serious, and we are truly serious, I believe that for more than a generation, the vast overwhelming majority of Americans will give us the chance to implement that seriousness in creating a better future for all of us.

An example I thought about, these are U.S. Representative JIM ROGAN's twins that are in this picture right up here. They are wonderful young girls. JIM loves them deeply. And all I would say to each of you is, we ought to be able to put the face of every child their age, of every single background, in every single neighborhood, in that picture. And they should have just as great a change to be happy, to be healthy, and to know that they are going to have a good future. And we should just force ourselves to do the hard work of freedom until that happens.

And finally, and this is going to sound a little daring, and I don't quite know how to say it, I lack U.S. Senate Chaplain, Rev. Lloyd Ogilvie's brilliance with interpreting God's will and language that the Senate will actually listen to. Not always obey, but at least listen, and that's a major achievement.

I think, and I want to say this as clearly as I can because it's so important. I think we ought to stand for freedom for the entire human race.

For fifty years, we led an anti-Communist coalition. And we won. We are now the pre-eminent power on the planet, and the time has come to ask of ourselves, "for what purpose has God given us this level of pre-eminence?"

And I believe the answer is exactly what Jefferson, Washington and Lincoln would have said: That we owe to every citizen.

Remember that the Declaration of Independence begins by saying, "We hold these truths to be self-evident. That all men are created equal, and that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Notice that phrase, that entire phrase, is universal. It doesn't say they are American truths. It doesn't say they apply to white males. It doesn't say they are Western European. All are created equal. Endowed by their Creator.

I think the United States has to lead. I think we need a great debate, that's very straightforward. If you think the world will be safer if the United States hides, join that side. If you think the world will be safer if we lead, join this side. Let's divide up. Let's have a fight over it. I think overwhelmingly the country will choose that we have to lead.

When we start to lead, I think the goal of our leadership should be simple: We want every single citizen on the planet to be free, safe and prosperous.

And we are prepared to provide moral leadership, we are prepared to encourage missionary activities, both religious and secular, we are prepared to support commercial activity, we are prepared when necessary to support diplomatic, police and, if necessary, military activity. But we truly believe the time has come for the planet to be free, because our children will never be free if there

are large pockets of dictatorship, tyranny and terrorism on this planet.

That requires us, and this is not a comment on the Clinton administration, it requires us as Americans to rethink our strategies and to rethink our systems.

We can't just bully the planet into following us. We could when it was the Soviet Union, because the alternative was so horrible that, in fact, people would follow us even when mad at us.

We're going to have to learn to listen a lot. We're going to have to learn to learn a lot. We're going to have to learn that leadership doesn't mean that you've got to fix breakfast for everybody every morning. And leadership doesn't mean that the 'cleanup campaign' is you cleaning out the garage of every one of your neighbors. But it does mean building teams, being patient, being persistent.

It does mean telling the truth. You can't have prosperity in Russia without the rule of law, and free enterprise, and private property. You can't have honesty and prosperity in Indonesia if you have corruption. You can't tolerate, in the long run, a government like North Korea because it is literally killing the people of North Korea. And you can't ignore Rwanda just because it is too difficult for CNN to get a reporter to cover the butchery.

We have an obligation to systematically, calmly and methodically lead across this planet everywhere, and we can't avoid it.

Now, I think that does mean we're going to have to learn to build institutions, better systems.

I think it means we've got to have a defense budget and a 'policing' budget. They are not the same thing. And for the last seven years, the 'policing' budget has eaten up the defense budget.

I think it means a larger total expenditure on national security, a total overhaul of the State Department, a total overhaul of the intelligence capabilities. If you knew the numbers, and I don't know if they are declassified or not, but if you knew the numbers of people we have in our security apparatus who can speak fluent Chinese, or can speak fluent Serbia, you would be humiliated at the inability of the richest, most powerful nation in the world to get its act together.

This is not a commentary just on this administration. This is going to take serious thought, serious work, and whoever the next president is, they're going to need leadership from the Congress based on a lot of hearings, and a lot of hard work.

Having said that, those are five large long-term goals. Let me very briefly talk about three immediate challenges.

One: I believe the Republican party should adamantly, at every level, adopt the 11th Commandment that Ronald Reagan used. And I think we ought to say, 'let's have a great presidential nominating process, with no negative ads. Let's get together and find who is the best person with the best ideas.'

But the idea that we should have eight, or nine, or ten of our candidates destroy each other, I think is absolutely ludicrous. And I think every serious leader of this party ought to say to every single candidate, 'go out there and tell everybody your best ideas in a positive way,' and let's have the person with the best ideas win the nomination, and then let's all get together behind them.

But I do think if we don't do that, you're going to have a bloodbath for three or four months next year, and out of that bloodbath you're going to have an incumbent administration with an incumbent president, with the media bias, prepared to spend six months taking our nominee apart. And I think we owe it to America to have a positive, unified Republican party offering a candidate with good ideas.

Second: Because it is so currently topical, let me just say briefly; I strongly urge that we end the Independent Counsel process, dead. Not modified, not improved, not partial. Kill it. Get rid of it. Go back to the system we had before 1972. It has been a monstrosity. It has served no one well, and it criminalizes and undermines the process of American government in a way which is tragic.

And I would also urge all of you to thoroughly reexamine the process by which the Executive Branch now gets appointees, because we stop many of the best people in this country from even thinking about applying, and there ought to be some way to appoint some kind of commission of honorable people on a bipartisan basis, so that the next administration will not find that two-thirds or half of the people it wants can't even consider trying to meet the ludicrous standards we now set, and trying to fill out the materials we now provide.

Lastly, I could hardly come back in lieu of Kosovo, and not comment for a minute. Kosovo is very, very serious. Much more serious than the evening news understands.

The President of the United States has compared Milosevic to Hitler. Has suggested that this is the worst process since Nazi Germany. Has announced that the United States and all the power of NATO is being brought to bear on a tiny, limited country, called Serbia.

The Germans yesterday floated an idea which would be a disaster. A papered-over, negotiated settlement, with a dictator who would have won.

Let me be very clear at two levels here. First, Serbia is important because the world is watching.

If the Chinese decide that we are an irresolute, finicky, confused, timid nation, they will try to take Taiwan. And we could stumble into a war of extraordinary proportions, because they are serious people.

If the Iranians decide that they could take out Tel Aviv, and we would do nothing—I don't want to bet that the Iranians wouldn't try it.

If the Iraqis decide that after all of our eight years of bluffing, they could use bacteriological or chemical weapons against their neighbors and we would do nothing.

Remember, the danger may not be that we would actually do nothing, the danger is that their confusion would lead to a war.

1914, the First World War was an accident. Nobody thought they'd fight. 1939, Hitler promised his generals that Chamberlain would never fight, and Britain would stay out of the war. 1950, the American Secretary of State publicly announced, "Korea is outside our defense zone," and the North Koreans believed him.

Wars occur more often because democracies are confused, than because people are deliberately risk-taking. And this president has now set a very high standard for the United States.

And I believe there is a simple responsibility. First, the president should go to the nation and outline unequivocally, in clear, simple language what are our goals. If Milosevic is this evil, how can he stay in power? If his government has been this horrible, how can it be tolerated? If the Albanians are to go back home, how can they do so while being disarmed, as the Germans suggested?

So what are our goals? Against what should we measure America two years from now? What should have happened? How will we know we were successful? And then the president and the Congress should debate those goals.

If they are the right goals, if that requires declaring war on Serbia, then we should declare war on Serbia. If it requires sending a

military force of enormous proportions, we should send such a force.

But that should not be a politician's decision. Nor a presidential candidate's decision. The reason we call General Shelton "Chairman of the Joint Chiefs" is because he is assigned the duty of designing the campaign plan to execute the will of the American people.

And his assignment should be simple. With minimum American casualties, in the shortest possible time, deliver victory, as defined by the president.

Having finished with Serbia, we should return briefly to Iraq, and the world will be safe for at least twenty years, because the world will have learned that when the American nation is serious, it is un-opposable.

But if we are irresolute in Serbia, if we accept a papered-over, phony victory, not all the press conferences and all the spinning in the world will convince the North Koreans, the Chinese, the Indians, the Iranians, the Iraqis, the Russians and others, that we are a nation to be dealt with seriously.

This president has put his stamp in the middle of the table. He has said the American nation is now committed, and NATO, which is essentially the American nation and its European allies, is now engaged, and we have to insist, for our children's safety, that we succeed.

Let me close, by first of all thanking all of you. As was mentioned several times, part of this resource is going to go to Juvenile Diabetes research. The rest is going to go to help launch our political efforts, to continue with vision and strategies and education.

Let me also close at a very personal level. In 1958, as many of you have heard me say, my step-father took me to the battlefield at Verdun. He was serving in the United States Army, as he did for 27 years. And he convinced me, at the end of my freshman year of high school, that civilizations die, that wars are real, that freedom is precious.

It has been for 40 years, 41 years this coming August, my privilege, as a citizen, to be a part of this extraordinary process by which the ethnically most diverse nation in the world governs itself, and seeks to provide opportunity for all of its citizens.

In that time, I've watched Barry Goldwater launch a movement that was considered a little nutty, and went down in glorious defeat in 1964, and created modern conservatism.

I watched Ronald Reagan give wonderful speeches, retire as Governor, emerge briefly to be defeated for the nomination, do a radio show from the ranch, and then emerge, in a magic moment, as America lost its way, as malaise took over, as the economy decayed, as the Russians invaded Afghanistan, and with Margaret Thatcher gave us a dual performance of the power of human leadership that changed the future. And in eight brief years he defeated the Soviet Empire, reestablished the American economy, reestablished American morale, and reminded us of the difference between evil empires and bastions of freedom.

I was privileged to serve with President Bush at a decisive moment, which is often forgotten by our friends, when every member of the Democratic elected leadership in the Congress voted against Desert Storm. We tend to forget after victory how rapidly they are forgotten. And yet President Bush had the courage, from day one, to insist that Kuwait would be taken, that Saddam's army would be destroyed, and that we would do what was necessary.

With your help, with your hard work, with your contributions and your tireless effort, we broke a 40 year monopoly, transferred power in the legislative branch, and truly changed the lives for millions of Americans.

As Mary said earlier so generously, all of us working together saved people with diabetes, we saved people with breast cancer, we put massively more money into medical research, we began a process of preventive disease approaches that I think are going to lead to wellness and major changes.

We saved hundreds of thousands of Americans from poverty by moving them into work and education, we taught their children that there is a better future than waiting on the check and sitting in public housing.

We created opportunities for our parents to have better choices in Medicare, and we began the slow, laborious process of rebuilding and rethinking our defense and our intelligence capabilities.

From that tiny country, on the fringe of the Atlantic Ocean, to a nation which stands astride the world, it has been an amazing process of two hundred and twenty-three years this July 4th. Our generation has a chance to extend that freedom, that prosperity, and that safety to every person in America, and to every person in the world.

It is, in Franklin Delano Roosevelt's words, our generation's rendezvous with destiny.

To each of you in public office I wish you God-speed. As Marianne pointed out the night we announced we would step down, we will be around in public life, and we will work with you in every way we can to give our children, and now my grandchildren, a better future. Thank you, good luck, and God Bless you.

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK ACT OF 1999

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 1999

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Mississippi Valley National Historical Park Act of 1999. This legislation will establish a Historical Park on the former Eaker Air Force Base in Blytheville, Arkansas.

The former Eaker Air Force Base, which is located just outside of Blytheville in the Mississippi Valley region, is the site of 14 archaeological sites associated with Native Americans. The central and lower Mississippi Valley region contained the highest population levels and the most complex Native American societies north of Mexico before the arrival of European peoples in the 16th century. It has also hosted Spanish, French, English, and ultimately American societies at different times in the last 450 years.

Because of its value in illustrating and interpreting the heritage of the United States, these sites have been recognized by the National Park Service in numerous ways, such as designation as being placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984, and as a National Historic Landmark in 1996.

Archaeological sites such as these benefit, educate, and inspire present and future generations of Americans, but no unified heritage park for the central Mississippi Valley region exists within the National Park Service. This legislation will protect the archaeological sites located on the former Eaker Air Force Base, and preserve, maintain, and interpret the natural, seismic, cultural, and recreational heritage of the central Mississippi Valley region.

A TRIBUTE TO ARLO PETERSON

HON. BILL LUTHER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 1999

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to recognize the important achievements of Arlo Peterson, a Minnesotan who was a pioneer and visionary leader in bringing affordable energy and electricity to thousands of rural and later suburban Minnesota residents. Arlo is retiring from his position on the board of Connexus Energy after 34 years of service to his state. Arlo served 25 of those years as Chairman of the Board of Directors. He took on this leadership position for one of the country's leading electric cooperatives upon the death of his father Ed Peterson in 1964, who had been a board member for 17 years. Together, these two men gave their state more than a century of service to help bring affordable electricity to their fellow residents.

A farmer from the small town of St. Francis, Minnesota, Arlo has been a model of stewardship for rural cooperative growth, ensuring that Minnesotans in his vast service area would have the energy and electricity they needed at rates they could afford. He has embodied a spirit of dedication and commitment to service for more than 34 years. Arlo took time from his primary endeavor as a family farmer to improve the lives of others in his own and neighboring communities, and helped to provide a national model of a successful electric cooperative. We are grateful for his tremendous contributions.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CROP INSURANCE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1999

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 1999

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Crop Insurance Improvement Act of 1999. I am honored to have Representative THUNE, Representative MINGE, and Representative BOSWELL joining me as original cosponsors of this comprehensive crop insurance reform proposal.

The basis for this legislation is quite simple. Frankly, the current federal crop insurance program is broken and needs serious repair. Too many of our nation's farmers—especially in North Dakota—have suffered from severe weather disasters in recent years only to fall victim to a federal crop insurance program that does not protect them adequately. With so many producers being driven off the land because of uncontrolled circumstances caused by Mother Nature, the federal government must act quickly and thoroughly in enacting comprehensive crop insurance to allow our nation's farmers the opportunity to manage their risk. However, I caution that even though crop insurance reform is desperately needed, it is only the first step in reforming a safety net in American agriculture.

The Crop Insurance Improvement Act of 1999 reforms the current program by encouraging the broadest possible participation of producers in the program and to ensure greater affordability of the program for producers. It