

an Indonesian military which continues to be uncooperative and brutal. Airdropped food is providing a minimum of sustenance for hundreds of thousands of refugees slowly starving in the Timorese hills, but the Jakarta-driven massacre continues as stories of mass-killings during the past few weeks come forward through eye-witness testimonials, as refugees forced into West Timorese camps are terrorized and murdered, and as the militia masses its Indonesian-military-backed forces along the western side of the Indonesia-East Timor border (as it now can be called). The Australian media reported that Interfet peacekeepers chased three TNI trucks (TNI being the acronym of the Indonesian military) through the streets of Dili Thursday, TNI trucks which were loaded with troops who fired three bursts from automatic rifles, trying hard to shatter any remnants of the peace which they were tasked with restoring.

Originally this letter was a call to action. Now, I hope, it acts as a call to continue that action. Unflinching vigilance and continued humanitarian action will be absolute necessities in the coming months, not only in East Timor but also for the hundreds of thousands of refugees forced into military convoys or onto boats headed to West Timor and other Indonesian islands. (Recent reports speak of a near total absence of males between the ages of 16 and 50 in the refugee camps and convoys.) And at home in the United States there are bills in both the House and the Senate (HR. 2809 and S. 1568) which would 'lock-in' the temporary bans on military and financial assistance to Indonesia. These bills also set conditions (including a safe and secure environment in East Timor, full humanitarian assistance, and the return of all refugees), which Indonesia must meet before this assistance can resume. I write this letter in the hopes that you will read it and be incensed, that you will read it and want to pressure our government to act, to continue to act. The United States government carries much of the blame for this slaughter in East Timor, as they have sat by for twenty-four years while Indonesia—third largest global market for U.S. weapons and consumer goods; home to a bargain-priced, easily-exploitable labor force; and our viciously anti-Communist Cold War ally—carried out its sadistic policies against the East Timorese population, as they (the U.S. government—and we citizens by extension) turned a blind-eye and an approving nod to the invasion. I write this letter as a plea, an agonized cry from across the Pacific, to ask that you pressure our representatives in Washington to act. Please pressure them to act.

OPPOSITION TO CONFERENCE
AGREEMENT ON H.R. 2488

HON. MAX SANDLIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 29, 1999

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, I have heard my friends on the Republican side talk about how their budget sets aside \$2 trillion of the \$3 trillion projected surplus for debt reduction. While this certainly sounds appealing to those of us who have been talking about the importance of paying off the national debt, the facts just don't match the rhetoric.

My Republican friends neglect to point out that they are double-counting the Social Security surplus in order to claim that they are reducing the debt. This body has overwhelm-

ingly voted to exclude Social Security surpluses from budget calculations. These surpluses are essential to meet future obligations to Social Security. Every Member of this body, Republican and Democrat alike, have said that Social Security surpluses should only be used for Social Security, and should not be counted for any other purposes. But despite all of the rhetoric about Social Security lockboxes and taking Social Security off-budget, some folks on the other side of the aisle keep counting the Social Security surpluses when it suits their purposes.

Using the Social Security surplus to reduce debt held by the public simply offsets the increased debt held by the Social Security trust fund. If all we do is save the Social Security surplus, we won't reduce the total national debt by one dime, and we will have done nothing to reduce the burden we leave to our children and grandchildren. In fact, despite all of the rhetoric from the other side of the aisle about saving money for debt reduction, the total national debt will increase by \$200 billion over the next five years under the Republican budget.

The truth is, they don't want the American people to know the consequences of their massive tax cuts. They don't want them to find out that, if we want to be fiscally responsible and stay within the spending caps we agreed to in the 1997 budget, passing their tax cut bill will require a 38% reduction in spending on important programs—programs like FEMA, class size reduction, and law enforcement. Both parties agree that defense spending needs to increase if we want to preserve military readiness, but if the Republicans pass their tax cuts, our military will suffer as well. While these important programs that benefit all Americans will have to be cut, two-thirds of the tax cut will benefit only those people who fall in the top income tax bracket.

The fiscal irresponsibility does not stop there. The new trick in Republican accounting books is the "emergency" spending designation being used to bypass the spending caps. They have even resorted to calling the 2000 census an "emergency"—an outrageous claim considering that the Constitution requires a census every ten years! This "emergency" spending comes straight out of the "projected" surplus Republicans want to use to finance their tax cut.

This creative accounting is unacceptable. I am a strong advocate of a sound budget and fiscally responsible tax cuts, but the best tax cut we can give the American people is a promise we will first pay down the national debt by setting aside some of the true surplus—the non-Social Security surplus. The Blue Dogs have put forward a proposal that would lock up half of the true budget surplus to pay down the national debt. This approach will truly reduce the burden on future generations.

I am proud to be an original co-sponsor of this legislation. The Blue Dog's Debt Reduction Lockbox bill would save 100% of the Social Security surplus by requiring that the budget be balanced excluding the Social Security surplus. It also helps ensure a fiscally responsible budget by establishing a point of order against any budget resolution that contains an on-budget deficit or any legislation that would result in an on-budget deficit and would prohibit OMB, CBO and other federal government entities from including the Social

Security trust fund as part of budget surplus or deficit calculations.

While the Republican tax cut bill's debt reduction provisions are merely a rhetorical gesture at best, the Blue Dog bill delivers on debt reduction. It places 50% of the projected on-budget surplus over the next five years in a Debt Reduction Lockbox, away from those who would squander it on irresponsible tax cuts.

The Blue Dog bill also delivers on our promise to save Social Security and Medicare by reserving the Debt Reduction Dividend—the savings from lower interest payments on the debt resulting from its reduction—for these two programs. Seventy-five percent of these savings would be reserved for Social Security reform and 25% for Medicare reform.

Mr. Speaker, the fundamental tenet of the Blue Dog proposal—debt reduction—has been recklessly omitted from the Republican bill. Our primary goal as we debate how to divide the projected budget surplus should be to maintain the strong and growing economy that has benefitted millions of Americans. Irresponsible tax cuts, however, are not the means to achieving this end. Using that simple objective as our guide, it is clear that the best course of action this body could take is to use the budget surpluses to start paying off the \$5.6 trillion national debt. Reducing the national debt is clearly the best long-term strategy for the U.S. economy.

Economists from across the political spectrum agree that using the surplus to reduce the debt will stimulate economic growth by increasing national savings and boosting domestic investment. Paying down our debt will reduce the tremendous drain that the federal government has placed on the economy by running up a huge national debt. Quite simply, reducing the federal government's \$5.6 trillion national debt takes money that is currently tied up in debt and puts it back into the private sector where it can be invested in plants, equipment and other investments that create jobs and economic output.

Federal Reserve Board Chairman, Alan Greenspan, has repeatedly advised Congress that the most important action we could take to maintain a strong and growing economy is to pay down the national debt. Earlier this year, Chairman Greenspan testified before the Ways and Means Committee that debt reduction is a much better use of surpluses than are tax cuts, stating:

The advantages that I perceive that would accrue to this economy from a significant decline in the outstanding debt to the public and its virtuous cycle on the total budget process is a value which I think far exceeds anything else we could do with the money.

We should follow Chairman Greenspan's advice by making debt reduction the highest priority for any budget surplus.

There has been a lot of discussion here in Washington about a "grand bargain" on the budget that would divide the surplus between tax cuts and higher spending. Our constituents are giving a very different message. I would encourage my colleagues to ignore this inside the beltway speculation, and listen to the American public. Our constituents are telling us to meet our obligations by paying down the national debt.

The folks I represent understand that the conservative thing to do when you have some extra resources is to pay your debts first. They don't understand how we can be talking about grand plans to divide up the

budget surplus when we have a \$5.6 trillion national debt. They want us to use this opportunity to pay down our debt.

We hear a lot of talk about "giving the American people their money back". I would remind my colleagues that it is the American people who owe the \$5.6 trillion national debt we have run up. If we are truly interested in giving the surpluses back to the American people, we should start by paying off the debt we have run up on their credit card.

I would suggest that the best tax cut we could provide for all Americans, and the best thing that we can do to ensure that taxes remain low for our children and grandchildren, is to start paying down our \$5.6 trillion national debt. Reducing our national debt will provide a tax cut for millions of Americans by restraining interest rates. Lower interest rates will put money in the pockets of working men and women by saving them money on variable mortgages, new mortgages, auto loans, credit card payments, and other debts. The reduction in interest rates we have had as a result of the fiscal discipline over the last few years has put at least \$35 billion into the hands of homeowners through lower mortgage payments. Continuing this fiscal discipline and paying down the debt is the best way to keep putting money into the hands of middle class Americans.

Just as importantly, reducing the national debt will protect future generations from increasing tax burdens to pay for the debts that we have incurred. Today, more than twenty five percent of all individual income taxes go to paying interest on our national debt. The amount of income taxes the government will have to collect just to pay the interest on the debt will continue to increase unless we take action now to pay down the national debt.

Every dollar of lower debt saves more than one dollar for future generations. These savings that can be used for tax cuts, covering the costs of the baby boomers retirement without tax increases or meeting other needs. We should give future generations the flexibility to deal with the challenges they will face, instead of forcing them to pay higher taxes just to pay for the debt we incurred with our consumption today.

I urge my colleagues to vote against reckless spending by voting against the Republican tax cuts—but let's not stop there. Join me in supporting the Blue Dog Debt Reduction Lockbox bill and let's eliminate our debt.

IN CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL
UNITY DAY

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 29, 1999

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the designation of a "National Unity Day" to celebrate our country's diversity as well as promote the need for harmony within our nation.

Presently, my good friend Paul Callens and several of his colleagues are participating in the Unity Walk, a 3,200-mile trek across the United States. This Unity Walk is a means for sending the message to all Americans that we must create racial harmony within our communities at both the local and national levels. The walkers also hope to interest community leaders and local government officials in celebrating a National Unity Day.

Their voyage is scheduled to end in San Francisco on October 10, 1999. The participants hope to engage fellow Americans in

worthwhile discussion about the issue of racial harmony. Their ultimate goal, however, is the designation of a National Unity Day commemorating the importance of indivisibility among our diverse group of citizens here in the United States. This would also include an annual National Unity Day celebration to recognize National Unity Day on the second Sunday of October every year.

In our land of great freedom, we must not tolerate racism or prejudice of any kind. We must work together for peace and unity among the citizens of the United States to whom liberty and justice are natural human rights. The Unity Walkers have asked communities to examine their attitudes toward racial differences and make strides toward ending those racial divisions that threaten the soul of our nation.

I ask my colleagues to join with me today in support of the establishment of National Unity Day, as we work to celebrate the differences among us.

CONGRATULATING LION RAISINS
GRAND OPENING

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 29, 1999

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Lion Raisins on the Grand Opening of California's newest raisin processing facility. After four generations, Lion Raisins still strives to deliver quality and service beyond their customer's expectations.

In 1903, Alex Lion established one of the first raisin packing facilities in Fresno, California, named Lion Raisins. He packed raisins for the first time, probably Muscats since that was the principal variety at that time. He shipped them by train to Chicago. The price of raisins dropped while they were in route, causing the buyers to reject them. Alex went by train to Chicago and spent several weeks there selling raisins on the streets. His packing career was somewhat sporadic after that, according to his grandson, Al Lion. The first actual packing was done on the farm that the family owned at Kings and Highland. Later they had a packing house on "H" Street, and then in 1923 or 1926 the packinghouse was built at the present site at California Avenue and Second Street.

During this time Alfred Lion, Alex's son, was living in San Francisco and was involved in the selling there. His father called him back to take an active part in the packing operation. He took over the management after his father's death in 1963.

Brother's Herb and Al entered the family business; Herb in 1947 and Al in 1957. For years, until Herb's retirement in 1991, the brothers shared responsibilities, with one managing the business end of the operation, and the other the packing. They alternated responsibilities every year. In recent years, Al's sons, Larry and John, were active in the business for a time. Larry worked from 1970 to 1981. John worked in the plant from 1974-1975. Herb Lion died in July 1995.

Four generations later, Lion Raisins is the largest family owned and operated raisin processing facility in California. For nearly 100 years, the Lion family has been committed to the raisin industry and a vital part of the San Joaquin Valley. Today Lion Raisins processes nearly 50,000 tons of California raisins annually, and distributes them around the world

under the Lion brand label. This has led them to be the largest independent raisin packing company in the area in terms of tonnage packed and sold.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise to congratulate Lion Raisins in the grand opening of California's newest raisin processing facility. Lion Raisins has been a model business, after four generations of delivering quality and service beyond customer expectations; through commitment, pride, and integrity. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing Lion Raisins many more years of continued success.

TRIBUTE TO ALLEN A. PICKENS

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 29, 1999

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend and congratulate Mr. Allen A. Pickens on his very distinguished career and well-earned retirement. Through the years, Al has made great contributions toward the development and economic stability of the island of Guam. He played a significant role in the transformation of Guam from an economy dependent on Federal and local government to its present state as a self-sufficient economic center of the Western Pacific.

As a teenager growing up in Des Moines, Iowa, Al dreamt of being an accountant. In pursuit of this objective, he attended the Central College in Iowa for a year on a basketball scholarship. Forced to drop-out due to an illness, he later enlisted in the United States Air Force. After four years of involvement with Air Force security operations in West Pakistan and Okinawa, Al was able to return to school. He spent the next 3 years finishing his studies at Drake University.

Upon graduation, Al was offered a job in Hawaii with the accounting firm Peat Marwick. It was in Hawaii that he met and married his wife Dianne, who was an office manager and accountant for the state's Catholic Social Services.

Al first came to Guam in 1962, during the island's introduction to international commerce which was made possible by President Kennedy's withdrawal of the island's security clearance requirements. After several years of working and traveling between Guam and Hawaii, Al was assigned to manage the Peat Marwick Guam office in 1969. Less than six years later, he became the youngest partner in the firm. As resident manager and, later, partner, Al guided KPMG Peat Marwick toward great success as a premier accounting firm on Guam. Since the 1994 merger of KPMG Peat Marwick with Deloitte & Touche LLP, Al served as managing partner. As one of the first accountants on the island, he was considered mentor to hundreds of young accountants who have gone through his firm. A large number of his former apprentices now run Guam's top companies.

In time, Al also gained a solid reputation as a business consultant. Local businessmen have come to rely upon his professional advice. Several island businesses would never