

Indeed, the most important step President Uribe could take to end terrorism within Colombia's borders is to investigate, prosecute, and punish all those responsible for violations of human right and international humanitarian law, including the paramilitaries and their military allies.

It is impunity, not human rights defenders, that is eroding any prospect for peace, democracy and the rule of law in Colombia.

Sadly, U.S. policy is complicit in aiding and abetting this serious state of affairs in Colombia.

SAVE SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, since I came to Congress in 1993, I have been very concerned about the future of Social Security. Because when I was chairman of the Senate Taxation Committee in the State of Michigan, it was brought to my attention that Social Security was running out of money. It seemed like an easy challenge to convince, if you will, America and Congress that something needs to be done if we are to save this important program that has been so helpful to so many senior citizens.

We talk about \$87 billion that the President has now requested for additional help in fighting the war in Afghanistan and Iraq and for homeland security, but retirement security is just as important. And the retirement security in this country is in great risk, and if we keep putting off a solution to the problem of Social Security, then the solutions are going to be more drastic as we wait years and years. And that is what I have found out over the last 9 years as I have introduced additional business.

Let me give some figures, dollar figure, Mr. Speaker, on how short of keeping our promises on Social Security we are. The actuaries estimate that it is going to estimate that it is going to take \$120 trillion, \$120 trillion over and above what we are taking in in the Social Security tax to keep our promises of benefits for Social Security over the next 75 years. And why are we unwilling to deal with this? So discouraged that there has only been on my count, 26 Members of either the House or the Senate that has ever been willing to sign on the bill to keep Social Security solvent.

There are two global forces coming to hit head on, not only in the United States but throughout most of the world. One force is the fact that our seniors are living longer we are having an aging of society. And that does not mean you are growing older. It means the number of old people in relation to young people is growing very rapidly. And the other force is the birth rate is going down.

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Most countries in Europe and the United States have a birth rate that does not propagate and replace the mother and father of those children, so fewer children and more people living longer, and since we have a pay-as-you-go program, where current workers take their tax dollars and send it and immediately the next week it goes out to current retirees, the program is unsustainable.

Here is my challenge and my warning. If we do not do something, we can have the same kind of problem that countries like France and Germany and Italy and Spain and Japan are facing now. The payroll withholding tax in France is 51 percent for their senior citizens. Fifty-one percent out of every dollar they make is deducted to pay for their senior citizens in that country, and that is because there are so many senior citizens in relation to the number of people working.

In Germany, it is approaching 42 percent payroll tax deduction. Just think of the pressure on business because the only way they have to make up this money is to charge more for their product or to reduce what they are paying for their employees, and therefore, they are going to be less competitive.

Let us not let that happen in the United States. Let us not allow a program like Social Security that has been so helpful to so many of our seniors, that so many of our seniors in this country depend on.

Right now over 80 percent of our seniors depend on Social Security for over 90 percent of their total retirement income. It is a huge challenge. We need to deal with it. I ask my colleagues to examine this problem.

Mr. Speaker, I would just ask all Americans in the next election to ask the candidates that are running for office what is their solution to save Social Security.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KING of Iowa). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. NADLER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, along with many of my colleagues in the New York delegation, tonight we remember September 11. Nearly 2 years after September 11 the shock, pain and trauma on that day lingers with my constituents in New York. While we resiliently cleaned up the site ahead of schedule and have begun to rebuild, no New Yorker can walk past a fire house or police precinct or gaze at downtown New York without an empty feeling in the pit of their stomach.

In my own District, 25 different fire stations lost people in the terror attacks, and more than 500 of my innocent neighbors who did what most Americans do every day, simply woke up and went to work, lost their lives in this terrible attack.

The hijackers chose two of the most prominent symbols of American prosperity, enterprise and strength. By taking down the symbols of America, the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, they hoped to show the weakness of American resolve. Instead, the opposite happened. America showed that in times of adversity ordinary people become heroes.

New York is the most diverse city in the world, but on that day, and I would say every day in our rebuilding effort, we were united as one.

Tomorrow, along with the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING), we will be presenting on this floor and hopefully passing the True American Heroes Act, which will award the Congressional Gold Medal to the brave rescuers who perished helping others after the attack, the police, the firefighters, the emergency medical. Our bill lets us honor the men and women who died so that others could live.

We must also remember that the World Trade Center disaster was one of the greatest rescue efforts of all time. Because of the heroic efforts of the rescue workers, the final death toll was less than 3,000. This is truly remarkable when we consider that more than 20,000 people may have been in the buildings when the planes hit, not to mention the 10s of thousands in adjacent buildings, subways and streets.

9/11 not only united New Yorkers, it united the Nation. Americans recognized that the attack on the World Trade Center was not an isolated event, experienced in Washington or Philadelphia, and Pennsylvania, or in New York. This was an attack on all of America, and Americans were unified in their response.

All over the country people joined together to send food, clothing, blood and prayers. To this day, everywhere one goes in the city of New York, in hospitals, fire stations, police stations, even stores there are messages of support and hope sent from around the country to help New Yorkers through this terrible period.

New Yorkers are standing with me tonight as I thank my colleagues in this Congress on their behalf. Within days of the tragedy, Congress appropriated \$40 billion for disaster relief