

at our hearings, he talked about one trucker who had driven from the West Coast to the State of Virginia in 48 hours, 48 hours, and in the cab there were jars of urine where he did not even stop to go to the bathroom. You wonder why we have such a miserable record, why so many people are dying.

And then, in three short months, under NAFTA, trucks are going to be able to cross the border in Mexico and come into the United States. All of these trucks will be able to go into all of the States in our country, and the IG found recently that Mexico has no hours-of-service requirements, no logbooks are required for truckers, no vehicle maintenance standards, no roadside inspections, no safety rating. When the IG conducted a survey of the effects of NAFTA, he found 44 percent of the trucks were in such poor condition that they were taken off the road immediately. So we can see if these trucks now are permitted to come across the border from Mexico in addition to the unsafe program that we now have.

Because of these findings, the Department of Transportation's IG has said we should move the Office of Motor Carriers, and the National Transportation Safety Board, and many, many others agree.

Today, there may be a vote on the floor under the suspensions calendar that will roll back the efforts that have been made with regard to truck safety. So on behalf of the 5,374 people and their families who have died in truck related deaths, I would hope that Congress would not roll it back. The question is, who controls this place? Will it be the special interests, or will it be the American interests? The Congress took the action it did in the conference report to advance safety. Hopefully, the Congress will not roll it back.

Madam Speaker, I ask people to focus, Members back in their offices, look at this and other pictures that I will bring up today to see if we really want to roll back truck inspection safety. I hope not.

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#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Having reference to an earlier speech this morning, the Chair would remind all Members that it is not in order to urge or advocate action or inaction by the Senate.

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#### QUESTIONING THE CONTINUANCE OF RUSSIAN AID

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, here in Congress we must answer tough

questions regarding the continuance of aid to Russia. We, along with the IMF, have pumped billions and billions of dollars into a corrupt system. Is it any wonder that the Russian economy is floundering? How can we stand by while this fraud continues?

Was anyone surprised to learn that Moscow's government and the Russian Central Bank were not following sound banking principles? The indicators have been there since the fall of the Soviet Union that an organized crime establishment was thriving under a weakened Russian Government. Yet, the U.S. Government has continued to loan billions of dollars to this high-risk government.

The amount of Russian aid and the numbers involved in embezzlement are staggering. According to Russian officials, capital flow from the USSR and Russia between 1985 and 1999 was over \$120 billion, possibly as high as \$200 billion. That is more than the entire foreign debt on the Russian Federation, in and up to 10 times more than the total foreign investment in Russia.

Now, sadly, Madam Speaker, a significant portion of this money was plundered by self-serving Federal and local government officials. We in Congress must acknowledge this catastrophe and take steps to prevent this from happening again.

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Even more disturbing is that this money was siphoned off and funneled out of Moscow and mixed with the profit from activities such as prostitution and illegal weapons sales.

Moreover, a Lugano-based engineering and construction company, Mobitex, allegedly opened credit cards and deposited large sums in private accounts for the benefit of president Boris Yeltsin, as well as members of his family and close associates, according to the Swiss authorities.

Madam Speaker, as the scandal unfolds, we must re-evaluate our policy with Russia that has been pursued by the IMF and the Clinton administration. Congress should also review the lax standards applied by the U.S. Government and international financial institutions in the distribution of financial aid to post-Communist and developing nations.

Earlier this year, the IMF and Russian central bank acknowledged the diversion of IMF funds to private companies. There were other reports that the World Bank loans were also misused or embezzled by Russian officials. In fact, one disclosure was a \$250 million loan made by the prime minister of Russia and a close ally of Boris Yeltsin at the time.

The extensive abuse of U.S. aid could not have happened had the President, Vice President, and other senior administration officials not aggressively pushed for multi-million dollar loans to keep Boris Yeltsin afloat.

The question, Madam Speaker, occurs with regard to how much did they know. Were there reports about the abuse from the intelligence communities and the FBI? How could this administration continue to support pumping billions more into this flawed system?

Another possibility is that the misuse was overlooked by bankers who had financial gains in assisting with the laundering of this money. They would potentially stand to gain the most if the United States and the IMF continued to prop up the Russian economy. Did political pressure from these bankers help keep the money flowing continually into the Russian economy?

The Committee on Banking and Financial Services has the unique opportunity to stop the abuse associated with Russian assistance. Congress should assess the damage that has been done by this corruption. We must ascertain whether the law has been broken by any U.S. officials or banks.

Within the IMF, what steps are being taken to improve obvious problems with Russian policy? Has the IMF bailout of 1998 significantly improved Russia's economy? I hardly see how the answer could be yes, since the \$40 billion short-term bond market, GKO, collapsed, the ruble was devalued by 75 percent, and the rate of inflation increased from 6 percent annually to 60 percent.

Where are the accountability measures? Where are the preventative steps to avoid this happening again? Are due diligence standards or risk assessments being applied to foreign loans? How could between \$4.5 to \$10 billion, not million but billions, go unnoticed?

Congress must face the music and answer these questions. We cannot continue to line the pockets of corrupt officials.

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#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

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#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. STEARNS) at 2 p.m.

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#### PRAYER

The Reverend Dr. Karl P. Donfried, Professor of Religion, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, offered the following prayer:

Standing as we do in the large confusions of the world not accustomed to peace, we pray, O Lord, gird us with

newness of vision that our steps may be straightened to Your will and our decisions enlightened by Your spirit. In the fog and fury of this anguished age, keep the inner world of heart and mind clear and strong, that we be not buffeted from our course by the wild winds of confusion and seas of bitterness. Discipline us to sharpen our insight and open our hearts on all sides and so guide us to make wise judgments. Lay Your hand upon us, O God, that we may be healed and made whole in the fullness of Your love. Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GIBBONS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### WELCOMING REVEREND KARL P. DONFRIED TO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

(Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me today to speak this afternoon about a constituent of mine, Reverend Karl Donfried, who offered the opening prayer here in the House of Representatives on this day. I would like to use 60 seconds to both welcome and introduce him to the House of Representatives.

Reverend Donfried is a professor and chairman of the Department of Religion and Biblical Literature at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. He has been a member of Smith's faculty for more than 30 years.

Reverend Donfried is deeply involved in the religious community at Smith College and in the ecumenical movement in western Massachusetts. He developed the Ecumenical School of Theology in Springfield's Christ Church Cathedral, where he has served as the Ecumenical Canon of the Cathedral since 1977.

He chaired the Lutheran Roman Catholic Committee of New England and was appointed to co-chair the New Testament Panel of the National Lutheran Roman Catholic Dialogue.

A theologian and a scholar, Reverend Donfried has taught at Brown Univer-

sity, Amherst College, Mount Holyoke College, and Assumption College.

I use this opportunity today on behalf of the House of Representatives to extend a heartfelt welcome to Reverend Karl Donfried.

#### REPUBLICANS STOP 30-YEAR RAID ON SOCIAL SECURITY—NO TURNING BACK NOW

(Mr. ARMEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, every now and then we get to witness history. We all watched in awe as Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa shattered the home-run record. We all watched with triumph as the Berlin Wall came down. And, Mr. Speaker, we all watched with splendid anticipation as AL GORE was inventing the Internet.

Well, Mr. Speaker, history has been made again today. This morning the Congressional Budget Office reported that because Republicans have held the line on spending in fiscal year 1999, there was \$1 billion of on-budget surplus.

That is right. In fiscal year 1999, Republicans stopped the 30-year raid on Social Security. In fiscal year 1999, Republicans stopped President Clinton from spending Social Security and put the needs of seniors ahead of the needs of bureaucrats. Mr. Speaker, that means that \$126 billion in debt reduction has taken place in fiscal year 1999.

Mr. Speaker, we did not spend one penny of Social Security in 1999. We stopped the raid. Mr. Speaker, there is no turning back now.

#### REGULATIONS COST TAXPAYERS \$400 BILLION YEARLY

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, the Gettysburg Address is 286 words. The Declaration of Independence is 1,322 words. Government regulations on the sale of cabbage is 27,000 words.

Mr. Speaker, now if that is not enough to stuff your cabbage roll, regulations cost taxpayers \$400 billion a year, \$4,000 per every family each and every year, year in and year out.

Unbelievable. It is so bad, if a dog urinates in a parking lot, the EPA declares it a wetland.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. I yield back 2,800,000 words in our Tax Code.

#### RUBY HILL MINE IN EUREKA, NEVADA, RECEIVES EXCELLENCE IN MINE RECLAMATION AWARD

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, for far too long now we only hear the misleading statements from the environmental extremists about the perils of mining.

Well, folks, there is more than fried cabbage here today. There is actually some good news worth listening to.

In my district outside of Eureka, Nevada, the Ruby Hill Mine, owned by the Homestake Mining Company, has received the Environmental Excellence in Mine Reclamation Award.

Yes, my colleagues heard it, mining is good for the environment. This award was given to Homestake Mining Company because they exhibited outstanding innovation in its design, mitigation, and concurrent reclamation progress.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that mining and the environment can coexist; they can work together and ensure that the environment is not hurt by mining and that we as Americans can still benefit from mining and enjoy the quality of life that we now know.

I would like to congratulate the Homestake Mining Company for their dedication, forethought, and hard work in demonstrating that mining has learned to work with the environment.

I yield back the balance of my time, Mr. Speaker, and all the negative misconceptions about mining and its importance to our country.

#### VOTE DOWN H.R. 3036

(Mr. WOLF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, here is a picture that I used earlier today of a truck that killed people in a car. Here is another major truck accident.

Today in the House we may very well bring up H.R. 3036, which rolls back truck safety.

In 1998, there were 5,374 deaths with regard to trucks. In 1997, there were 5,398 deaths with regard to trucks.

It is like a major airplane crash taking place every two weeks. If that happened, the Congress would be up in arms.

Why would the Congress now be rolling back what the Congress did with regard to truck safety? H.R. 3036 takes a step backward.

If we do this, every time we pick up the newspaper and see that somebody is being killed in a truck accident, we are going to feel very bad.

I hope that the Congress votes this down if H.R. 3036 comes up.