

I speak as a member of the Subcommittee on Defense that wants to strengthen our defense, and we are doing it because we are still strengthening it even after applying the same standard to them as to the rest of government.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, again, we are actually adding \$2 billion more to this defense budget than this White House and the Pentagon requested.

Facts are stubborn things. No means no. But to the minority party in this chamber and to the folks at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, no apparently means maybe when it comes to the Social Security Trust Fund.

Mr. Speaker, let me repeat, the transcript of what transpired today in the White House press room, a journalist to Joe Lockhart, the Press Secretary, question: "Just to be clear, the third option you would consider, you would under no circumstances accept going to the Social Security surplus at this point; is that correct?" Mr. Lockhart responds, "We have put forward a better way. We hope they will consider it. We will be here. They understand what our ideas are."

This President stood in the well. He said save 62 percent of the Social Security surplus, implying he would spend 38 percent of it on other programs. He outlined various new ways to raise revenue. We brought it to the floor of this House. Not a single Member voted for the Clinton tax-hike package, not anyone on that side. So no meant no when it came to raising taxes.

All we say is this, Mr. Speaker, our 1 percent solution, one penny out of every dollar in savings will save Social Security and stop the raid. A penny saved is a retirement secured.

ARMENIAN TERRORISM AN OUTRAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I appear here to add my voice to those who are expressing our strongest sense of outrage at the reported terrorism against the Armenian Congress which has so far claimed the lives of Prime Minister Vazgen Sarkisian, the Speaker of the Assembly Karen Demirchian, Deputy Speaker Bakshian, Energy Minister Petrosian, and senior economic official Kotanian.

I was pleased to lead a congressional delegation to visit Armenia during the August month. We had the opportunity to personally meet with these individuals who were clearly professionals on all they did, dedicated to the well being of the country and its people, and repeatedly demonstrated their obvious commitment to bringing peace and prosperity to the region. In fact, we

were there to help to promote the peace process with Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan.

Prime Minister Sarkisian, only a few days before we arrived, had addressed the people of Armenia on a television broadcast talking about the window of opportunity that Armenia had for the peace process as well as opportunities for trade in Armenia by those from other parts of the world, as well as the need to do something about corruption, to prevent corruption, and for transparency, for openness of the system. He got great applause; but it was, indeed, a very courageous statement he made.

He was also here less than a month ago, and many of us who were interested in Armenia met with him and again discussed the process of the peace progress as well as the openness to trade and the advancements that are being made by the brilliant Armenian people.

I am just very saddened by what we have learned about what has happened. This unwarranted intrusion against the Armenian people's democratically elected leaders must not in any way deter the commitment of the Armenian government to further develop and strengthen the nation's democracy.

Our prayers and our best wishes are with the people of Armenia in the hope that the current hostage situation will be peacefully resolved and the perpetrators of this heinous crime are brought to justice.

DIGITAL DIVIDE AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. LARSON. Mr. Speaker, today across our Nation, we are most fortunate that this economy that we are participating in continues to surge and roar. Yet, Mr. Speaker, today based on the finding of the Commerce Department, we find an alarming trend throughout this country as it relates to something that is commonly referred to as the digital divide.

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The genesis for this special order this evening is to discuss that divide and potential solutions through prospective legislation that will be introduced in a compendium of bills that colleagues from the Committee on Science and the Committee on Education and the Workforce will be addressing as we move forward this evening.

In a conference report entitled Falling Through the Net, Larry Irving, in testifying before the Subcommittee on Empowerment of the Committee on Small Business, and speaking directly to the ranking minority member, the gentlewoman from California (Ms.

MILLENDER-MCDONALD), reported the following: He cited that there is an alarming trend that is taking place all across this Nation. Even though there is greater access to the Internet, what we find is that the gap is widening between those who have access to information and those who do not. And for those who do not, most disturbingly we find that it is happening along the lines of race, gender, geography and wealth.

We must seek to close that gap. We must seek to make sure that in the policies that we enact here in the United States Congress that we leave no one behind in this economy.

This poses a problem for us because of this gap. It is three-tiered. First, in terms of the economic isolation that it creates; economic isolation that all too often takes place within our urban areas and, therefore, impacts our minority populations who live there; economic isolation that takes place in our rural communities because of the inability for us to reach those communities with the technology they richly deserve and need; and it also results in an inferior form of education.

The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS), who serves on the Committee on Science, and the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) on the Committee on Science, have pointed out, there is not a sufficient pipeline for us to make sure that there is a transition in our public school systems from school to work. In fact, many people have come before this Congress, many from the business community, asking us to ease immigration quotas so that they can import people from abroad to provide for the more than 350,000 jobs in the high-tech area that are currently going unfilled.

Any economist worth their salt has spoken at length about the Information Age. We have come to acknowledge that knowledge will be the future currency in this country, and it is knowledge that will make this economic engine that is propelling us forward continue to thrive in a global economy. Tonight, we hope to address this by way of solutions.

Now, I know all too often that Congress has a deserved reputation of talking at length about the problems but does very little in the way of solutions. What we are hoping to address by way of legislation is to look at three fundamental areas. All of us involved in education understand the three Rs of reading, writing and arithmetic, and yet to guarantee in the future that teachers will have the best tools afforded to them, that we will be able to provide our children with the very best and most up-to-date technology within the classroom, fundamentally we have to do three things: We have to look at retooling our infrastructure; we have to look at retraining our teaching force; and we have to rethink how we look at education from the bottom up.