But at any rate, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) was away. How can we get our work done? He should have a seat at the table, and he should join with us to save one penny on the dollar for every dollar of discretionary spending, so that the government can live within its means and quit the raid and continue to cease the raid on the Social Security Trust Fund.

Mr. Speaker, I would invite the minority leader to come back to town and go to work and join with us and realize that a penny saved is retirement security.

Mr. Speaker, the children of America do not want to sleep less well because the Washington bureaucracy is not doing its work. We are not mandating specific cuts, so if important programs get slashed and the administration suggests that it is the right thing to do, then because they have decided to do it, let it be.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that fat should be cut from the bloated Washington bureaucracy, and we can protect Social Security and Medicare by making sure the savings do happen.

PARTIES TO THE BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS ARE AWOL

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I find it disappointing. As we try to bring this budget to conclusion, as we try to finalize the negotiations, we have major people that are a part of this process that are AWOL. They are absent.

How does the Speaker of the House who has to negotiate with the President stay up late at night every night so he can call the President in Turkey? Is that the way to negotiate?

In Pennsylvania where I come from, if the governor or if his cabinet left town during those final negotiations, the press would have been all over them. Why is it possible for the President, the minority leader, who was away yesterday who is the one who is proposing any kind of trimming of waste or fraud, is the one who is holding out, but he is not available to negotiate yesterday? That is why this process has run on. The President is just finishing his second trip abroad since October 1, and this is when we have been trying to finalize the budget.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, it is important for those who are a part of this negotiating process to stay in town, get the work of the American people done, so we can pass the budget that does not rob Social Security.

CONGRESS HAS MORE TIME THAN TAXPAYERS HAVE MONEY

Mr. THUNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, it is November 17, and we are still here for one reason, and that is that we have got more time than the American taxpayers have money.

This Congress has passed all 13 appropriation bills. The President has chosen to veto 5 of those bills. Why did he veto them? Because they did not spend enough money. So we are still here negotiating with all the President's men since he is trying to negotiate.

The minority leader is traveling in California raising campaign cash. We are still here until the President agrees with us on a budget that does not raid Social Security, does not raise taxes, and riders the budget of waste, fraud, and abuse.

We will stay here as long as it takes until the President gets back and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) gets back from his California dreaming.