

Minnesota is smuggled from Mexico. And this is the source, the Minneapolis Star Tribune, Sunday September 27th of last year. Again, hard drugs coming in through Mexico; Mexico certified by this administration.

Finally, the DEA administrator, Tom Constantine, again questioned what this administration is doing and talked about Mexico. He said, "The truly significant principals have not been arrested and appear to be immune from any law enforcement effort." So this administration has certified a country as fully cooperating that, again, is dealing in death and destruction at every level of our effort to eradicate illegal narcotics from coming into this country.

Now, what is my role? Again, I chair the House Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources of the Committee on Government Reform. Today I join my colleague, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS), who introduced a resolution to decertify Mexico. I did not sign on that resolution, although I now support that resolution because of the evidence I have found.

However, the Speaker has asked me and other chair members of the majority to conduct a thorough review of the drug policy of the Congress, the drug policy of the Nation and also of the certification and decertification of Mexico and other countries that are dealing in illegal narcotics. I, as chairman, intend to conduct that review to see if drug decertification is the answer, to see what other mechanisms we can enact to hold Mexico's feet to the fire and other nations who deal in illegal narcotics and do not make an effort to fully cooperate and yet receive benefits from the United States Government. So that will be my task and my responsibility to work with others.

We launch that investigation, that review and that oversight process tomorrow. One of the subcommittees of the Committee on International Relations will begin tomorrow looking at the drug policy issue in Latin America. We know, again, that almost all of the heroin coming into the United States, the huge quantities of heroin, comes from Colombia and is also produced in Mexico and transits to the United States. We know that cocaine is produced in Peru and coca in Bolivia, and now a majority of cocaine in Colombia, and that also is transited through Mexico.

So we know where the problem is. What we do not know are the solutions on how to get a handle on it. We do know that we must restore a few dollars into the programs that are most effective, the most cost effective. Stopping drugs at their source, where they are grown, the crop eradication programs, we have now seen are so effective. And substitution programs in Bolivia and Peru we know are stopping

production, they are stopping cultivation and providing alternative development for people in those regions so they do not go back to producing the basis for hard drugs.

We know we have to work with President Pastrana, the new president in Colombia. We must get him the resources to eradicate the hectares of poppy that have grown while the administration stopped equipment and resources from reaching that region. We know we must do that.

We must get a handle on the situation in Mexico. Mexico is losing control of its Nation. The Baja peninsula is now controlled by drug lords. Ironically, where the President met, in Merida, the Yucatan peninsula is now controlled by the drug lords; and other areas, regions and states of Mexico are totally controlled by narco-terrorists who are raining destruction, who have gone from corruption to terrorist intimidation of people in that country.

I will say that there are people at the top, President Zedillo, a brave attorney general who we met with, that are trying their best, but I am concerned that they are about to lose control of their nation to narco-terrorists. So we must find a solution. We must find some way to hold their feet to the fire, to aid them, as good neighbors.

We must reach across the aisle when the minority leader of the House says that what the President has done is not correct relating to Mexico, and we must find a solution that is correct. We cannot afford to let this go on. We cannot fill our jails with any more Americans. We cannot subsidize the quarter of a trillion dollar loss to our economy, not to mention the destroyed lives of our young people and other Americans who could have been so productive.

So that is our task. It is an important task. It is, again, I believe the biggest social problem facing this Nation.

Stop and think if we could eliminate 60 percent of the crime. Stop and think if we could eliminate 60 to 70 percent of those deaths. Stop and think if we could have more productive citizens rather than people strung out on drugs, ruining again their lives and their loved ones' lives, of what we could do in this Nation.

So I believe it is an important task. I do not plan to let up for a minute. I do not have the answers at this point, but we will review every possible solution. We extend our hand of cooperation across the aisle to our colleagues and to anyone who is interested, who wants to come forward and help us with a problem that we must address, that we must resolve in the best interest of the Congress, in the best interest of our Nation, and in the best interest of those who hope to have any future in this country, our young people.

INTRODUCING H.R. 948, THE DEBT DOWNPAYMENT ACT

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

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues in Congress a letter I received today. It is a letter from Mr. and Mrs. Alan Paul of Ellsworth, Kansas. The Pauls write to suggest that Congress use its good sense and to do what is best for the country.

Mr. Paul specifically writes, "Comes now a budget surplus. You know and I know that the 'surplus' can be what we want it to be depending on how we cook the books. Fact is, without Social Security, there is no surplus. Suddenly, Democrats see new programs we cannot get along without, Republicans get those tax cut dollar signs in their eyes, and our collective brains get all mushy. I have a revolutionary idea," Mr. Paul writes. "Let's do nothing. No new programs, no tax cuts, nothing. Let the surplus reduce the debt, thereby reducing the annual interest payments out of the budget and thereby bolstering Social Security."

Mr. Paul is right. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced the Debt Downpayment Act, legislation that will establish a plan for paying down our national debt. While many in Washington celebrate the idea that we have balanced the books, Americans, and especially Kansans, have not forgotten that our national debt stands at \$5.6 trillion. That is over \$20,000 for every American. Twenty thousand dollars per person is not balanced, and using the Social Security Trust Fund to mask the true extent of the debt is not balanced either.

Debt is certainly not a glamorous issue in Washington. It is much more exciting to talk about new programs that our surpluses could fund. In each of our districts there are great needs. In Kansas, all of our major industries face record low prices. Wheat, oil, hogs and cattle prices are wiping out family farmers, ranchers and small oil producers.

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Our hospitals are struggling to meet the needs of an aging and rural population. I rise this evening not to suggest that we should ignore the pressing needs of the American people but to remind Members of Congress that as we meet these needs we must continue to make the difficult choices that can help us reduce our national debt.

Mr. Speaker, despite the claims, we do not have surpluses as far as the eye can see. In fact, we have a very short window of time where demographics and a strong national economy will allow us to pay down a portion of our national debt.

The Congressional Budget Office, the General Accounting Office, the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Dr. Greenspan, have all warned us repeatedly that the good times will not last forever. Assuming we continue with our current economic growth, deficits are still expected to return in the near future.

Mr. Speaker, the chart shows where we are today in 1998, and we are headed on the right path but, lo and behold, doing nothing still sends us back and in 2040 the projected debt levels are two times our gross national product.

Those are not good signs. This is the window of opportunity for us to do something right, and we cannot afford to let this chance pass us by.

The legislation I have introduced is simple. If Congress does nothing to botch this opportunity, the amount of our publicly-held debt is expected to be reduced by \$2.4 trillion by 2009. This bill simply locks in today's once in a lifetime opportunity to pay down the debt by establishing gradually reduced debt limits each year. Doing so provides an average annual down payment on the debt of \$240 billion each year for the next 10 years and requires no new spending cuts.

I urge all my colleagues to consider the benefits of paying down the debt. Today, nearly 15 percent of the Federal budget goes to make interest payments on the national debt.

Mr. Speaker, 15 percent of our budget goes to pay interest on the national debt. That is almost as much as national defense, almost as much as Social Security, and more than income security or Medicare. It is a huge portion of the problem we face each year.

The budget today looks too much like bad credit card spending. We pay only the minimum amount each month. We spend a hefty sum on interest and we never establish a plan to pay down the principal.

My bill would save an estimated \$730 billion in interest payments over the next 10 years. That is good for the Federal budget and it is good for the economy. We can lower interest rates for America's car loans, our mortgages, our student loans and our farm debt and free up 11 percent of the budget for tax cuts or other important priorities.

Foremost, reducing our debt strengthens our ability to meet our obligations for Social Security. In 2013, just 14 years from now, as the baby-boomers retire, payroll taxes are expected to be insufficient to meet the promised Social Security benefits. Congress will either need to raise taxes or tap into general revenue. By reducing the debt, we can do something today that makes it much easier to meet the needs of the next generation's retirement.

This legislation also removes Social Security trust fund revenues from all calculations of the surplus. We must be

honest with ourselves and with the American people.

H.R. 948 offers a simple, straightforward plan for paying down our national debt. With the right decisions today, we can strengthen economic growth into the next generation, but if we fail we could see an expansion of the size and scope of government and a debt burden that lowers the standard of living for every American. I urge each of us to make the necessary commitment and seize this historic opportunity to do the right thing for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren.

Mr. Paul's letter concludes, "And maybe, Jerry, just maybe, if you pull off this miraculous feat, God will forgive us all for the terrible sins we have committed against our future generations."

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. EVANS (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, on account of family illness.

Mr. BUYER (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today, on account of illness.

Mr. MCCOLLUM (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today and the balance of the week, on account of family medical reasons.

Ms. GRANGER (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today and the balance of the week, on account of illness.

Mr. EVERETT (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today and the balance of the week, on account of illness.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. PALLONE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GREEN of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FORD, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. FOSELLA) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DIAZ-BALART, for 5 minutes each, today and March 3.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WOLF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TANCREDO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HAYES, for 5 minutes, on March 4.

(The following Member (at her own request) to revise and extend her re-

marks and include extraneous material:)

Mrs. JONES of Ohio for 5 minutes today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 39 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until Wednesday, March 3, 1999, at 10 a.m.

RULES AND REPORTS SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO THE CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(d), executive communications [final rules] submitted to the House pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1) during the period of June 18, 1998 through January 6, 1999, shall be treated as though received on March 2, 1999. Original dates of transmittal, numberings, and referrals to committee of those executive communications remain as indicated in the Executive Communication section of the relevant CONGRESSIONAL RECORDS of the 105th Congress.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

792. A letter from the Acting Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Sugar to be Imported and Re-exported in Refined Form or in Sugar Containing Products, or Used for the Production of Polyhydric Alcohol (RIN: 0551-AA39) received February 22, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

793. A letter from the Under Secretary for Acquisition and Technology, Department of Defense, transmitting A report identifying the percentage of funds that were expended during the preceding fiscal year for performance of depot-level maintenance and repair workloads, pursuant to Public Law 105-85 section 358(e) (111 stat. 1696); to the Committee on Armed Services.

794. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule—Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Television-Audio Support Activity [DFARS Case 98-D008] received February 22, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

795. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule—Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations Supplement; Specifications and Standards Requisition [DFARS Case 98-D022] received February 10, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

796. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule—Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations Supplement; Flexible Progress Payments [DFARS Case 98-D400] received February 10, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.