

give them the attention they need to grow up to be healthy in both mind and body.

At the President's meeting on school violence at the White House, various experts on violence repeatedly made the point that this problem of school violence is a problem with many layers. They also said that such a complicated problem demanded more than single simple solutions.

One cause of the problem is that parents spend nearly one-third less time with children than they did a generation ago. With more single-parent families and more parents working more jobs and more hours and spending more time in traffic, there is just a lot less time for parents to be with and communicate with and raise their children.

□ 1745

In many families today, the kids are left alone most of the time. And as we all know, kids do not raise themselves.

When parents are home, they often do not spend as much time talking with their children. With television, the Internet, pagers, and other distractions, parents communicate less with kids even when they are able to be home. Before television, time around the dinner table was a time for family communication. Now if a family has time for dinner together, many families have the television on during dinner and nobody really talks to one another.

Another factor that was mentioned was the amount of domestic violence and child abuse that some young people are exposed to today. We have always had these problems, but the problem is far worse now than it has ever been. It is obvious that children exposed to abuse are much more prone to resort to violence in their own lives.

Another factor is the size of high schools. Most of our schools were built after World War II when we were trying to accommodate the baby boom. The schools were built large for economic reasons, and the size did not matter when families were intact and parents could spend more time with children. However, in today's world, it is unwise to have anonymous children in large schools.

Another problem is the increasing diagnosis of mental illness among children. One of the experts at the summit said that mental illness is more prevalent than ever but health insurance covers these problems less than ever. Consequently, many kids have problems but cannot get the professional mental help that they need.

One expert said that our problems stem from what adults do to children or do not do for children. The answers to our problems lie with adults and what we can do to raise children properly.

We spend so much of our debate and our time addressing the symptoms of

violence but not the causes of violence. We talk about guns or conflict resolution or school violence programs. And it is right that we do so. But we spend far too little time discussing how we can prevent these problems in the first place.

It is obvious that the modern family needs help in filling the time holes that exist. The only institution, in my view, that can possibly fill these holes are our public schools. Schools have complained about the need to fill all these holes. But the truth is that only through the public schools can we achieve the scale that we need to solve these problems with all the children of our country.

We need nothing short of a revolution in our public schools to deal with the modern problems that children face in the modern world. Nostalgia for the past, criticism of other institutions for not meeting these challenges, or finger pointing at institutions that are not doing enough will not get us to a solution of these problems.

We must really begin to build the public will to do what is necessary to really solve these problems. Raising and educating children correctly is a huge task and will not happen without human will to achieve that goal.

In World War II, everyone thought America was way behind and would not win. What critics misunderstood was the will of the American people. Once every American internalized the goal of winning the war, each one of them did what was necessary on a daily basis and the war was won. The same can be achieved with our children, but a similar effort to what took place in World War II must be achieved.

All of us, whether we have children or not, has a responsibility to enter into this effort to educate and raise our children. It is in our deep self-interest to do this. Government at all levels must help, and local government has the major responsibility. I hope in the days ahead we will work together to find answers to this crisis.

Before the memorial service in Littleton, I went with Colin Powell and Vice President GORE and the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE), other members of the Colorado delegation, to meet with the parents of the dead children. We met with them for an hour and a half before the memorial service. We hugged them. We cried with them. I told them that the whole country was there with us standing with them at this time of terror and sorrow.

One of the mothers, after sobbing uncontrollably and shaking in my arms, pulled back with a picture of her child and she said, "Congressman, I hope you will lead in the Congress to make sure that my child did not die in vain." I will never get her face out of my mind. And now we have more fathers and mothers in Georgia who today are saying, "I hope my child was not injured in vain."

How many more children have to go down for all of us to accept the responsibility that we have to see that children are cared for and loved and respected and disciplined so that this does not happen again?

We may not be able to agree on much here, but we owe every parent who has lost a child to violence our best, honest efforts to work together as a Congress to solve some of these problems.

I am not so arrogant to think that we have the power to single-handedly solve these problems. But we need to start the process of reaching out to one another for comprehensive, meaningful, effective solutions. We need an honest discussion of the profound changes that are happening in our society and what we can agree will begin to change our culture so that all of our children, every one of them, is raised to be a productive, law-abiding, contributing citizen in this great society. If we cannot somehow do that, we will be consigned to more and more Littletons and more and more Conyers, Georgia.

Every day in our country we lose 13 young people to suicide and violence. Every day there is a Littleton. And it has to come to an end. If we cannot act on something as important as our families and our futures, then we will fail in our most basic duty to promote the safety and well-being of all of our people.

We must do it now, not a month from now. We must do it before the next breaking news on CNN about another school shooting. We must do it before we see the pictures of children running across the lawns of schools trying to find safety. We must do it before we get another wake-up call and another specter of death among our young people in our schools.

We have already waited too long. We have overslept. It is time to wake up. It is time to hear the wake-up call and to say, this must stop, this must end.

And as another parent at Littleton told me, "Surely," as tears rolled down his face, "we can do better."

This is the greatest country that has ever existed on Earth. We have a national crisis. The crisis is among our young people and it is in our schools. And surely we can summon the goodness and the greatness of our people and all of us to face down this death and to bring it to a final and lasting conclusion.

#### CRISIS IN OUR SCHOOLS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), the Democratic leader, for those words. And I

would also like the RECORD to note that earlier today, when we finished business, that the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) also came down and spoke about recent shootings and tragedies facing this country.

I want to speak tonight, as the Speaker's designee in our special order, about what we Democrats as a party have been trying to do here to address this very, very serious national crisis, as the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), our Democratic leader, stated.

But what we say here tonight, I want everyone to understand, is not a Democratic or Republican issue. We want to work with both sides to try to bring some consensus if we can on things that we should take as a Nation. But I think it is important for us to understand where some of us see as where we are going.

And things I say here tonight are my beliefs as the convening chair of the Crime and Drug Task Force for the Democrats, not just this Congress but the past Congress, and does not necessarily reflect the views of everybody in our caucus. And I am sure they do not reflect the views of my Republican friends.

But some of us are beginning to sit back and try to meet individually and bipartisan; and, as a Democratic caucus, we have been convening the chairs of the Education Task Force, the Health and Human Services Task Force, of the Crime and Drug Task Force and we have been meeting.

We were meeting before the tragedy of a month ago out in Colorado and really since the first of the year really. We had numerous meetings. In fact, today we had another one that we convened and tried to kick around more and more ideas and bounce ideas off people. I know many of us, both Democrats and Republicans, have been in schools and talking with teachers and parents and what can we could.

As the convening chair, my qualifications before I came into the U.S. Congress was I was a police officer for 12 years as a city police officer and as a Michigan State police trooper and worked with juveniles, worked in juvenile crime areas, and taught criminal investigations at the academies and constitutional law and everything else. And the school violence issue that has swept across the Nation the last 18 months, it is hard to put into words how it has torn at so many of us and how do we best address it.

What we have found through all of the meetings, through everything that has happened, even with the shootings today in Conyers, Georgia, I think the only thing we can see say is this is a very complex issue and there is no single solution, there is no magic program that we can pass that would solve this. And we have got to get past blame games.

I know the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), the Democratic leader, again has asked the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) to try to put together a bipartisan group. And I hope we can do that.

As we looked at what has happened, many of us see America has become alienated from each other. We see increases in hate crimes. For our children, we see and the experts tell us that we spend over the last 15 years one-third less time with our children than we did 15 years ago. So there is maybe less structure, maybe less discipline there, less guidance for our children.

For our children, the alienation that we see is now surfacing in schools. Society's problems are beginning to surface in schools. And even from our own leadership, I think when we have disputes on the floor which end in harsh words amongst each other does not speak well of the House as a whole or elected leaders and contributes to that alienation.

It is time for people to come together to try to reconcile our differences, the ill will that exists not only on the House floor of the U.S. Congress but the ill will that may exist in our families, our homes, our schools, our communities, our leaders, and even within ourselves.

So how do we end alienation and begin reconciliation to end the school and personal violence that we see that is gripping the headlines every night? How we do it is probably as varied as America. What works in North Carolina may not work in Michigan. Or we know the program that may work in North Carolina, character education, as they tell me, we may know it by a different name in Michigan where I represent. But what works in my northern rural district certainly will not work in the inner cities of our great cities.

□ 1800

But what we understand is this. We understand that 100,000 weapons, be it guns or knives, come to school each day. We know that there are four times more guns out there, handguns, than there are children going to school, so there is access to guns readily available. We know as the Democratic leader said, there are 13 deaths per day of young people in America. We know that school psychologists tell us that probably 20 percent of the kids, students from K through 12 probably 20 percent of them need some help in dealing with problems at home, call it mental health problems, if you will. They also tell us that 3 to 6 percent of the students in our schools have severe mental health problems.

So when children lash out with those statistics, with the ready availability of weapons coming to and from school, you can see how the violence erupts

and comes out and we see the headlines we see each and every day. We ask the statisticians and others in our meetings, is there a large enough sample of violence with the shootings that have occurred in the last 18 months, enough of a sample to say, are there similar characteristics of school violence in America? They have told us, no, the sample is not large enough, that any kind of conclusions you may draw from the incidents may very well be skewed because they have been small.

Let us hope the sample does not get any larger. But we should not wait until there is enough violence in our schools to say, "Okay, now we have enough sample, what can we do?" I think there is enough for us to work together as Democrats and Republicans to come together and start to look at what can we do.

There have been many ideas kicked around. I would just like to share some of them tonight, not that any one of these ideas would be a solution but at least I want the Congress and the American people to know we are thinking, we are looking, we are probing, we are asking the questions and we need your input. Many of us feel that maybe there should be a national commission to examine not just the short-term but what are the long-term impacts, what is the long-term approach that we want to take here?

It seems like violence in America is constantly shifting. Maybe we need a national focus, much like maybe the Carter Commission we had in the late 1960s to address the problems facing the country then that actually put forth some proposals and some solutions. How do schools and communities access what may work or may not work? What ideas are out there? How do they reach out? You have so many programs going on in the Federal and State governments and Department of Education and Department of Justice and the Health and Human Services and public health, can we not somehow put these programs under an umbrella so schools can easily access to learn what is working in northern Michigan that may work in southern California. Can we have a national clearinghouse? Can we be under a commission and an agency? Can we do a one-stop shopping area, if you will, so we know what is working?

We have plenty of studies out there across this country that says this works up here in Boston, Massachusetts, or character education based on this model will work in North Carolina, or school resource officers work in Michigan. How do we allow everyone to access it? New Jersey has a program called crisis intervention officers. Is that different from a school resource officer which is really community policing where parents and teachers and students work together in a partnership to keep down crime and violence in the schools.

We have met with former pro football star Jim Brown. His program American is a great program that may help us and is being used in 14 different States right now to address after-school problems and self-esteem that young people need. His program looks like one that may work. It may not work again in my northern Michigan area but it certainly is one we should look at. Each community, each State is unique unto themselves, but as we have seen in the last 18 months, we are all subject to the same violence in families and in schools and communities.

From the victims families, from all the folks we have had a chance to talk to, it seems there is a lot of confusion and hopelessness and despair out there. As I said, there is no simple solution. There is no political quick fix. We need vision. That is why I was so pleased today to see both the Democratic leader and the Speaker speaking of a willingness to work together and a need of a vision in this country, an action and a long-term commitment. Unfortunately in the United States Congress, we authorize and pass programs that will last for 1 year or we do a pilot program for a year or two. Then if it looks pretty good, we will use a 3-year program or a 5-year program. But I think we need a long-term commitment here. We need at least a commitment of a generation. I think it is incumbent upon this generation to start putting forth and thinking long-term so we can save not only this but also future generations.

As I said earlier, the family situations, the situations that we see in school are reflective of so many families that are surfacing in the schools. So you cannot say it is a State issue. You cannot say it is a local issue. I think the Federal Government must show some resolve. By that, we in the Democratic Party believe that it is not just something that we pass a program and then block grant it to the States. We at the Federal level must show the resolve. We cannot shirk from this responsibility. We just cannot block grant away another national problem.

This is a national problem and it is begging for a national solution. But if you are going to get at the root of the problem, I think you have to strike at maybe four main elements we have seen, we have looked at, we have studied, we have discussed in our many meetings and discussions with experts. It is what is happening in our communities, what is happening in our homes, what is happening in schools and yes, what is even happening with the proliferation of guns when we have four handguns for every student going to school floating around these communities, the easy accessibility of them. Do you address all four of them? I think you have to address all four because all are interrelated. They are interconnected. All are branches, if you

will, on a tree that combine to form a trunk or the base but underneath there lie the roots and the roots which anchor the tree, the forbidden tree, if you will, the anchor of school violence and death that we have unfortunately seen once again here today. The branches on this tree, be it guns, schools and communities or the home, look remarkably similar, and it probably should, because it is us. It is really America. It is what we teach. It is what we teach the baby roots, our children, if you will. So when they grow, they become the anchor of the tree of school violence and death.

So let us not fail to see the forest but for the trees and let us not fail to see America for the violence we are experiencing because America is the greatest country there has ever been. We have an opportunity here now to stop and look at what is going on in this country, in our communities, in our schools, in our homes, and what can we do as a Nation? The violence, we just cannot look at it in other people. We have to look within ourselves. Because the violence is ingrained. It is not just what we do or what we say, but I think we also have to go beyond that and the violence or the signals we send can also be caused by what we do not do or what we do not say. By what we do, like reconcile differences within our homes, our families and our schools and our communities would be a start. So where do we start? If we focus with the schools, as I said earlier, I believe society's problems are surfacing here, for all to see, to place our sons and daughters and children in with the schools, let us focus on the schools and what should we be advocating, what should we be doing? Again, there is no simple program to pass, if the Congress would pass it and fund it, it would go away. Congress cannot reconcile America's alienation within the family or within each of us, but we certainly can encourage you, support you and assist you. And here are some of the ways some of us believe we should start. The Federal Head Start program. Can we not expand that program? Many of us for years have said, look, at 3 to 5 years old, they should be in Head Start. We should fully fund it. But if we expand that program, can we not teach mandatory in the curriculum violence prevention and conflict resolution? Why can we not take that one and expand it? It has been interesting as we have had the Law Enforcement Caucus, we have had experts in many times and it has been interesting that the larger cities have noticed the problems they were having in their schools and part of their curriculum is violence prevention and conflict resolution. It is interesting to note it has not been the larger school districts that we see that are having the violence that we have been witnessing lately. Maybe there is something there that we should teach

and why not start it at the Federal Head Start program? We have the healthy child program. It is a program that coupled aspects of it, last year in the balanced budget agreement, we put in CHIPs, Children's Health Initiative Program, CHIPs as we call it for short. That was to help young people who do not have health insurance have health insurance. In the State of Michigan, we are like 20,000 applications behind. People are waiting 6 months to access this program. They are either going to be in the Medicaid program or the CHIPs program. Why do they have to wait 6 months? Why are we 20,000 applications behind, when I was bringing it up with the governors representatives and then we really do not have a good idea or a good answer on why they cannot expedite the program and provide it to these people, to the young people who are uninsured, especially when we talk about the mental health provisions that 20 percent of the students are coming to school with mental health problems or difficulties or need someone to talk to and 3 to 6 percent of them have severe mental health, how come we are not addressing that? Why are we not expanding these programs to address these needs? If you take the K through 12, we have heard from school counselors and probably everybody across America says, "Yeah, I know a school counselor," but when you talk to the counselors, we say what are you doing, are you there to counsel, are you there to help, are you there to be there for the students, to interact with them. Basically they tell us, "Well, we really don't have time because we're busy with the busing schedule," or "We're busy doing the curriculum," or "We're busy preparing the students for the next round of testing going on by this group or that group or the State," or "We just really are helping the students who want to go on to college with their college applications and things like this." The counseling that we envisioned or we saw when we were in school just is not there anymore. So if the counseling, be it nurses, psychologists, school resource officers, crisis intervention officers, counselors, cops in the schools, should we not make sure that if they are going to do this, they have the opportunity to do it and not get bogged down and not be utilized for busing or for curriculum development or testing or college applications? Should they not really have it, should there not be a professional staff that could help there? And should that not in order to protect them from the budget cuts that occur all the time as local taxpayers struggle to keep their millage rates low to provide a quality education? If they are the first people who are cut every time there is a budget cut, is there a place then for the Federal Government to step forward and say, look, if there are going to be professional

staff, should the Federal Government not at least put forth the majority of their salary so they are not subject to these cutbacks, so they can be there to interact?

And what about before and after school programs? Everyone tells us that the juvenile crime rate is the highest between 4 o'clock and 8 p.m. at night when the students are out of school and they have idle time on their hands. Can we not have programs? I have often wondered why these so-called after-school programs are only run during school but when young people are out and about the most during the summer, there is no program. Should there not really be a year-round program for them? Should cities or schools not do sponsorship? Like in our city we have the summer recreation program but after school starts, what about those who are no longer in sports, what is for them? In my hometown after that?

Again can we use these professional Federal staff people to assist there? That is something I think we should take a look at. We talked a lot about school hot lines. School hot lines, ones that have been used out East here quite a bit with some success. Those were the school hot lines we talked about the student using if they have a concern, be it safety or just a concern, they can use the hotline to call in and someone would get back with them, be it one of those counselors or nurses or crisis intervention people or school resource officers.

With the recent incidents from Colorado and now too in Georgia, the superintendents are telling us and even in my district, even last Monday we had another bomb threat, how do you crack down on that if you have a hotline? Does that become the hotline for the bomb threats or the assaults or alleged assaults on the school? Then do you put in the caller ID? Can you crew the trap lines? Can you backtrack it, to cut down on these? And why could the hotline not be a parent's link to the school to see what is going on in the school, what events are going on, what is the drama club doing, what is their next event? Also why can the homework assignments not be there so the parents know if there is homework assignments, so they can take an active role in there?

Another suggestion we have heard in our many, many meetings is why can we not do hold and safe rooms? Hold and safe rooms is, I mentioned earlier, 100,000 weapons come to school every day with young people. If you are with a weapon in school, what happens? Do you hopefully not like what happened in one school shooting incident where the student came with a weapon in school, was sent home, got more weapons and unfortunately violence erupted.

□ 1815

So holding safe rooms, should each district have one, have one designated, that is a program that does not even cost anything, but what it tells us is a student comes here with a weapon, we are just not going to release them back into the community without holding them and making sure they are safe and making sure all precautions are taken to protect that student, other students and the community itself.

And what if the student is removed from school? I have heard governors say throughout this great Nation of ours, that first student that comes to a class with a weapon, just throw them out of school, no questions asked. Then where does it go? Where does the student go? Back into our communities? Do they work? Where do they go?

There is nothing to help them, and just letting them loose back into the community does not seem to be the answer of all we have seen in these recent months, in the last 2 years. So some States have what they call alternative schools. Some of us like to call them reentry schools.

And if you are going to be suspended for whatever, be it weapons or whatever it may be, why not, before you come back into your school, there is a reentry which must address the reasons for your suspension, and especially if it had something to do with weapons or drugs or alcohol. Let us answer, let us answer those questions before you reenter.

I indicated earlier that guns unfortunately are readily accessible and four guns for every one student we have, and 100,000 weapons come to school a day, and we have 13 deaths a day of young people. How do you begin to address that? If you are going to start addressing legislation such as that, I think not only you have to address what is happening in communities but also in our homes.

And in the last week you have seen many dramatic votes in the Senate on it, everything from 21 years old to purchase hand guns to closing the Brady loophole on checks at gun shows and pawn shops and child safety locks and liability and storage, and these are things I think that we have to address and at least talk about. Whether you are a Democrat or Republican, conservative, liberal, it is something we have to have a discussion about, and hopefully it can be a meaningful discussion.

We have talked, many of us, and I know even today the Speaker mentioned about ratings on games and Internet access and things like that; and besides all the meetings we have been having, we have been hearing articles and experts talk about are we really training our children to kill, and they talk about the desensitization which is going on with children.

And many experts have said, and if I can quote from one or two articles,

children do not naturally kill, they learn it from violence in the home, and most pervasively from violence as entertainment and television, movies and interactive video games. And they go on to say that every time a child plays an interactive video game, he is learning the exact same conditioned reflex skills as a soldier or a police officer in training.

Mr. Speaker, every parent in America desperately wants to be warned of the impact of TV and other violent media on children, but unfortunately we have seen, I said on the Committee on Commerce, unfortunately we have seen a lot of our TV networks sort of stonewall what it really means in our key means of public education in America, and I hope we are not stonewalling them.

These are all issues that we have been trying to address, and there have been again many, many articles that we have looked at, we have argued about, we have debated, and we continue to look for answers. As I said, there is no one single program, there is no one single solution, there is no Democratic or Republican solution here. We must work together on this.

As we talked about the counselors, there are about 90,000 counselors right now in America, and they are in the public schools from middle to high school. We have 90,000 counselors for 19.4 million students. That comes out to about 1 counselor for every 450 students.

But as we spoke to those counselors and their representatives, they said, "We do not get a chance to counsel anymore like we used to. We actually spend time," as I said earlier, "helping on developing core curriculum, helping on the busing schedule, helping out with kids wanting to go on to college," and how do we help them out there, "and just basically doing testing, testing, testing so our school scores well on the test so we can hopefully get more resources." But the kids are lost in the whole shuffle.

So is it feasible to put in 100,000 more counselors, much as we did 100,000 cops on the street, to stop this violence that we see in our schools? And if you looked at it, that would add about 100,000 more counselors, would bring it down to 1 to 250 students. But then we got to make sure those counselors are not bogged down doing busing, or testing, or core curriculum development, or college preparation.

And what about after school programs? We think there are many of them, good programs that can work, whether it is Amer-I-Can or Boys and Girls Clubs or whatever, why can we not do those things?

As my colleagues know, we just did an emergency supplemental appropriations that the President asked for \$6 billion, ended up being \$15 billion, and we passed that. Can we not put forth an

emergency school supplemental appropriation?

And what about family, school and teacher initiatives? Why can we not have these hot lines? Why can we not expand the family medical leave that we tried to do, to make it available so parents can go to school to spend some time with their children, whether or not, not just at report card time but other times? Why can we not expand that?

These are just some of the ideas I said that have come out of the Democratic Caucus. We have been working on it since the first of the year. It has taken on new urgency with the situation in Colorado and again here today in Conyers, Georgia, but I want you to know that we have been working and thinking and trying to take your suggestions and ideas that have come from the American people and from the psychologists and National Education Association and American Federation of Teachers and everyone we met with, and as House Members we have even met with Senate Members. And again, we are all trying to pull together, and unfortunately today's incident once again leads me to come to the floor tonight to join with the Democratic leaders and others to try to talk about what we are doing, what we are doing.

And I notice one of the leaders in this area, Mr. ROEMER from Indiana, is here, and at this time I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to thank my good friend, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK), from the Midwest, right next to Indiana, my home State, for having this special order on a very, very important topic in America today. I want to commend our leader, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) for taking the time to come to the floor to address this very, very important issue for all Americans in facing, and not only are we facing trying to come up with creative and bold and innovative solutions to make our schools better, we need to make our schools safer.

I was sitting in my office just minutes ago making phone calls back home to Indiana to talk to and listen to farmers, and our farmers are going through a very difficult time in small town communities with the price of beans and corn and hogs being so low. And I was speaking with some of them, and some of them were saying, well, we are in danger of going out of business and we are having all kinds of problems in our small town communities, but we have our family and we have our children, and we will get through this.

Imagine, imagine what some families in America are going through today in Paducah, in Jonesboro, in Springfield, in Littleton, in Georgia today, that had their children shot at school, have children injured and sent to the hospital, are scared about sending their

children to a public school or a private school to get an education in America today. That is a compelling issue for this Congress to address and address in a bipartisan way, address in a thoughtful way, address in maybe a short term way but in also a long term way, with vision, with perspective, with a lot of thought and with, hopefully, a lot of answers.

I cannot imagine, as a parent of three children, being in the shoes of some of the parents that are in these cities across America, in these suburbs across America, in these situations across America where their children are in danger, where their children are being harmed, where their children might be shot. And just on CNN tonight in a Gallup poll, they did a Gallup poll to 13 and 17-year-olds, asking our 13 and 17-year-old children in schools today, "Do you feel safe?" Asking them what some of the biggest problems are in our schools: peer pressure and the cliques and standing up for what you think is right and against somebody putting down other students in very harmful and mean ways.

But we have to get back, and I think my colleague from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) understands this, we have to get back in Congress to helping try to have a national dialogue, as education is the number one issue across America. Every single union hall I go into, it is the number one issue, every single business I go into it is the number one issue, every single home I knock on in Indiana it the number one issue.

And now not only are we concerned with better schools, innovative schools, creative schools, helping with charter schools, helping with this Ed-Flex program that we just passed, but we must be concerned with safer schools. We cannot let this happen over and over and over again, from Arkansas to Mississippi to Kentucky to Colorado to Oregon to Georgia. We do not want this happening in Indiana, and I know in my good friend's home State of Michigan and Port Huron the other day we had another instance of potential violence.

So I would hope that the Speaker and the Leader could get together, I would hope Democrats and Republicans could join together to discuss in a national way, with national dialogue and input from a lot of different sources, teachers and parents and principals and counselors, people that think that families are the number one concern and the number one answer, people that think that media violence is the number one concern and the number one answer, people that think that metal detectors and safety and security measures in schools are the number one concern and number one answer, people that think that there are too many guns in society.

Mr. Speaker, let us have these debates. I do not necessarily think that

we can legislate everything here to answer this compelling problem on the House floor, but we can talk about the importance of family and the role of bringing up our children, we can talk about how parents must be at that kitchen table and talking and listening to our children. We can talk about how this has to be done more in America. We can talk, and hopefully talk and respect the First Amendment about the number of media games, of games on the Internet that companies are putting out there for our children, that do not need to be sold to our children, that escalate the number of violent activities on the programs, that reward kids for the more people that they harm on these video games, the more points they get and the more harm they can do. We do not need to be selling those products to our children.

And we can talk about some, yes, some answers that maybe Congress can come up with. We can talk about maybe some ways to put some programs together to allow our local schools to pick from a host of different answers, whether those answers be that the school picks from looking at putting more metal detectors in the schools, to having more counselors in the schools, to having more mental and psychiatric resources available in the schools, to more D.A.R.E. officers in the schools, to other proven research methods that make our schools safer, allow our local schools to pick and choose as they should, as the local schools should do, from a host of different measures.

□ 1830

Let us in this great Chamber, where George Washington peers down on us and godly trust is above us, where we have had so many historic debates in this great place, let us discuss the issues of the day. Let us bring education front and forward to improve schools, to make them better and to use more creative approaches to do that, but also look at the safety issues, to look at what we need to do to give more assurances to our parents and our families, that our schools and the United States of America are going to be safe places for our children.

We can do an emergency supplemental. If we can make that a priority in this country, and I voted for it, to make sure our troops have the resources overseas to be successful in battle, we should make sure that our families are talking about the right things. Where we can help, where we cannot, where we cannot legislate this, we can have a national dialogue, but we can talk about many of these other things here in this body, with Republicans and Democrats together, sharing in some of the answers, disagreeing maybe on some of the answers but at least proposing some solutions to these problems, with safety in our schools,

with better schools in all of our neighborhoods across this great land.

So I really want to say that there cannot be anything more important that we as a Congress can deal with in this session of Congress. There cannot be anything more important to parents than better schools and safer schools. There cannot be anything more important in the history of the country as we move into this new millennium than better and safer schools and Congress working together to improve those schools.

So I just want to say, in just the few minutes that the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) has the special order tonight, that I share in his concern; that I applaud his leadership on drawing many people together in the Democratic Caucus to look at a wide variety of answers, whether they be long-term answers, such as I think fully funding Head Start programs and preschool programs, long-term answers like helping our families, encouraging our families to stay together and not implode, looking at counselors and metal detectors and letting local schools pick from a host of solutions, but we need to draw people together in our caucus, we need to draw people together across both lines of our parties. We need to come together to discuss and debate these issues today, in America, at our kitchen tables, in our great halls for debate and help solve some of these problems.

Again, I want to thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) for having this special order. I again want to thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) for taking the time to come to the floor to talk about these issues, and I want to commend the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) for trying to put some packages together on the crime side, on the juvenile justice side, to also look at some solutions to these vexing and very important problems.

Mr. STUPAK. I thank the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) for joining us tonight and thanks for coming down and joining us. As one of the leaders in the education field, as the gentleman has been, with a new Democratic coalition and others, we really appreciate the insight he has given us as to what works in Indiana, in his district, as I said earlier. What works in New Jersey or Michigan or wherever it might be, it may work in that community or that State unique unto itself but all of our communities in this country right now are basically subject to violence in families, in schools and communities. No matter how one cuts it, no matter where one stands on the issues, there just seem to be so many weapons available and so much alienation out there and so many opportunities for violence. I am sure if the gentleman looks closer in his polling results that he has seen, he will see there is sort of like this

hopelessness out there, confusion and despair on what we should do, and the gentleman is absolutely right, there is no simple solution. There is no quick political fix to this vexing problem.

We need vision, we need action, and we need long-term commitment, and again not just for 1 year or 3 years or 5 years, but at least a generation.

I know that the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) has always worked in a bipartisan way with Democrats and Republicans and that is what we are asking here. As the Democratic Caucus, we have been reaching out and we will continue not just to our colleagues on the other side of the aisle but also over in the Senate to try to find some kind of solutions.

All these things, whether it is the community, the schools, the homes or guns, they are all interrelated, interconnected. We have to be prepared to start addressing all parts of the problem.

I wish we could but the Federal Government just cannot pass a law, the Federal Government just cannot reconcile America, or alienation within the family or even within each other, but we certainly can encourage; we would support and do anything we can to assist.

So I certainly appreciate the gentleman's time and effort in coming down here tonight to speak with us.

There is another issue, of course, that is on the minds of all Americans and that is, of course, Kosovo. One of our colleagues, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), wanted to take a few moments, so I am going to yield him some time to talk about that situation.

So while we talk about school violence or what is happening, we still have other matters that we must address again hopefully in a bipartisan way, and I would yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) for yielding. Let me just say that I certainly endorse everything that he has said about violence and about the terrible tragedies taking place in our country, in our schools today. As the father of three children, I know that every parent grieves when we hear of these tragedies at our schools. We obviously need to put our heads together, Democrats, Republicans, Americans all. There are no easy solutions, and none of us has the magic answer.

We certainly cannot legislate these things. I think as leaders of our great country we need to have a dialogue and we need to put our heads together and come up with something with which all Americans can identify. So I thank my friend from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) for his leadership in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to speak a bit about violence that is happening on the

other side of the world in Europe, and that is the situation in Kosova. I had not intended to speak but I earlier heard the remarks of our colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM), and I just felt that some of the things he said really should not be left unchallenged.

I believe what the United States is doing in Kosova is noble, and I believe what the President has attempted to do is noble. We could have easily stood by and let the genocide and ethnic cleansing continue and not done a thing and that would have been the easier thing for us to do, but I think to the President's credit and to our great country's credit we decided that we just could not stand idly by 55 and 60 years after the Holocaust and see another tragedy going on on the continent of Europe.

To those people who say, well, why is the United States involved when there is genocide going on all over the world, obviously we are involved with our NATO allies. NATO is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and so NATO is primarily concerned with what goes on in Europe, and this has a terrible destabilizing effect in the Balkans and indeed on the whole continent of Europe.

So we, as one of the lead nations in NATO, as the lead nation in NATO, I believe we need to be very responsive to genocide and ethnic cleansing.

Mr. Speaker, there seems to be a tendency in some quarters to unfortunately equate the victims of genocide with the oppressors who are carrying out the genocide. We cannot equate those two. It is very, very clear what is going on in Kosova today. The ethnic Albanians are the victims and Mr. Milosevic and his Serbian government are the oppressors. That is clear.

There were two million ethnic Albanians routed from their homes. I think when we get into Kosova we are going to see 100,000 or more people in mass graves ethnically cleansed. There are already at least 100,000 missing, and we get reports day in and day out of mass graves. We cannot allow that to happen.

There are some people that say, well, this did not happen until the bombing started. That is nonsense. This has been going on for years. We have called it slow ethnic cleansing. It is true that the pace has accelerated since the NATO bombing but ethnic cleansing has been going on against the Kosovar Albanians for many, many months and years, a systematic campaign and every negotiated attempt was made to try to get Milosevic to come to his senses, and only when that failed did the bombing start.

I went to Rambouillet during the negotiations in France to speak with our American officials and to try to help convince the Kosovar Albanians to accept Rambouillet. They accepted the

Rambouillet Accords. Even though it was far short of what they would like, they believe and I believe that they are entitled to independence and to self-determination. When the former Yugoslavia broke up, and it broke up because of Milosevic, every other group in the former Yugoslavia was given the right to independence and self-determination.

The Croatians, the Bosnians, the Macedonians, the Slovenians all were given that option and opted for independent nations. Why are the Kosovar Albanians not given the same option? Why do they have to live in second class status? I think it is very, very clear that Serbia has lost any moral authority ever again to govern the people of Kosova. They have no right to it. The people of Kosova have the right to independence and self-determination.

Ethnic cleansing cannot be tolerated, and I think the principles with which we lay down to stop the bombing remain firm and must remain firm. There should be no erosion of those principles.

Milosevic knows what he needs to do. In order for the bombing to stop, the Kosovar Albanians need to return to their homes and they need to be protected by international armed forces led by NATO and they ought to have the right of independence and self-determination.

We ought to, in my estimation, be arming and training the KLA, the Kosova Liberation Army. They are the only counterbalance to the Serbs on the ground. If we do not want American troops on the ground, and many people do not, then they are the only counterbalance to the Serbs.

I have introduced a bill along with my colleague the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD) that says that we ought to be arming and training the KLA. In the long-term and in the short-term, we ought to be airlifting and air dropping anti-tank weaponry to them because they want to turn to us. The KLA wants to work with the west. The KLA wants to work with NATO. If we continue to rebuff them, they are going to go elsewhere for their arms. They may go elsewhere, Iran and other places that we do not like, and then if they do that we cannot then point and say, aha, because it will have been a self-fulfilling prophecy.

They want to be pro-west. They want to work with us. They want to defeat the Serbs. They want to aid NATO and we have been rebuffing them. It is ashame. It is wrong. It is morally wrong, and it is wrong in terms of what we should be planning.

I also believe, Mr. Speaker, that if we are going to fight this war, all options ought to be on the table, including the possible option of ground troops. I do not say this lightly, but I think we cannot tell Milosevic in advance what

we will do and what we will not do, because if we tell him what our game plan is he can plan accordingly. That is why he has dispersed his military, he has dispersed his armaments because he does not fear a ground evasion. If we keep him guessing, we will take away a number of options from him.

Let me say this about Milosevic: We continue to treat him as if he is somehow the solution, we are going to negotiate with him, we are going to deal with him. I read reports where Milosevic supposedly is ready for a deal as long as we state first and foremost that Kosova will remain part of Serbia. That would be a disgrace to give him that. That would be a disgrace to say that we are somehow pretending that since Rambouillet nothing has happened, when we know there are tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of people executed and ethnically cleansed.

So we should not give in to Milosevic's demands. We should hold firm and adhere to those principles.

Again, all options should be on the table. We have Apache helicopters in Albania. In my estimation, we ought to be utilizing them. We ought to be doing humanitarian air drops, dropping food to half a million starving Kosovar refugees who are trapped in Kosova, who are in the mountains and do not have enough food.

I was at Kennedy Airport last week, welcoming the first round of Kosovar refugees coming home to the United States, to be with their families, and they were tears streaming down people's eyes, hugging and kissing. It was something really to behold. These people are suffering. Milosevic is a war criminal who ought to be indicted by the International Tribunal in the Hague. We should not be giving in to him, capitulating to him or in my estimation even negotiating with him.

We need to win this war. We need to guarantee that those people come back to their homes and we need to put those responsible for genocide on trial, and we need to be very, very firm and, again, I believe that we need to arm and train the KLA.

I want to enter into the RECORD two letters. One is from the Veterans of Foreign Wars, which states that the veterans of foreign wars of the United States is resolved that in order to bring this conflict to a rapid and successful conclusion on terms favorable to NATO we will support the United States acting as part of the NATO alliance, taking decisive action with the full range of overwhelming military power to eject, remove or otherwise force the withdrawal of Serbian military and paramilitary forces and to restore Kosovars to their homes.

□ 1845

Mr. Speaker, I would like to enter into the RECORD the Kosova Coalition,

which is signed by many, many people, Christians, Muslims, Jews, all kinds of ethnic groups in this country to Members of Congress urging our support for NATO's efforts to stop the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. One paragraph says, "We, therefore, call on Congress to request that it take all necessary steps to end Serbia's campaign of ethnic cleansing, force the withdrawal of all Serb forces, create a secure environment for the return of Albanians to their homes, and allow them to govern themselves and to rebuild Kosovo."

Finally, I want to say that the smears that have been leveled in some quarters against the KLA talking about them using drug money and whatever have no basis in fact. Intelligence reports and everybody else say that it is nothing but a political smear campaign, and again today in the Wall Street Journal it says, The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency says claims that the KLA raises money from drugs quote, "have not been corroborated and may be politically motivated."

So I am tired of the smears. This country is doing the right thing, the noble thing. We are to make sure that the Kosovar Albanians get their legitimate rights. We are to stay the course; we are to be firm, and I am proud of the United States of America standing up at this very important point in time.

I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

APRIL 20, 1999.

The PRESIDENT,  
*The White House,*  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States is gravely concerned about the worsening situation in the Balkans. As the combat veterans who for the last 100 years have fought all of our country's wars, we have until now opposed the deployment of U.S. forces to the former Yugoslavia. Our opposition was based on our concern for the safety of our servicemen and women in the midst of the Yugoslav civil war. Also, we have been uncertain what vital U.S. national security interests were at stake in that country's conflict.

Since we took that position, however, the situation has changed. In the past few weeks Serbian leaders have used their military and paramilitary forces to overrun Kosovo, destroy the social and economic fabric of the province and terrorize the populace into flight.

Despite, and in defiance of NATO's diplomatic efforts and its air campaign, Serbia now has achieved its objectives in Kosovo. By doing so it has raised the stakes in this conflict. Having waged unrestricted war on the people and province of Kosovo, NATO's credibility and U.S. leadership have been directly challenged by Serbia. NATO will neither continue as a credible, unified alliance, nor will the U.S. retain its world leadership role if the Serbian challenge goes unmet and Serb aggression is not stopped.

Many of our members are deeply troubled by the situation we face. Some realize the long history of this conflict, the skill of our adversaries, the inhospitable weather and terrain and the political difficulty of maintaining alliance unity are important factors

that will affect our actions and their outcomes. Others are mindful of the lessons of past wars. The gradual applications of force that allow adversaries to seize objectives before our power peaks and the limits placed on the use of our military power which can prolong conflicts, increase casualties and erode public support are lessons that seem to some to apply equally to today as to yesterday.

Nonetheless, in consideration of the current situation, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States is resolved that in order to bring this conflict to a rapid and successful conclusion on terms favorable to NATO, we will support the United States acting as part of the NATO alliance, taking decisive action with the full range of overwhelming military power to eject, remove or otherwise force the withdrawal of Serbian military and paramilitary forces and to restore Kosovars to their homes.

We also believe that careful consideration should be given to the formation of a NATO peacekeeping force to guarantee Kosovars' freedom from further oppression and the right to its self-determination.

Finally, Mr. President, with such important questions before us we believe and urge you to ensure first that the American people are behind this effort and then to take this issue to the United States Congress for its advice and consent.

Sincerely,

THOMAS A. POULIOT,  
Commander-in-Chief, Veterans of  
Foreign Wars of the United States.

KOSOVA COALITION,  
Washington, DC, May 19, 1999.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: We are writing to urge your support for NATO's efforts to stop the ethnic cleansing of Kosova.

We are horrified by the atrocities, including mass murder, systematic rape, and widespread expulsions, committed by Serb forces against the civilian population of Kosova. We strongly support NATO's military campaign in Kosova, but are concerned that our efforts thus far have not been enough to stop the atrocities there. In fact, the State Department recently reported that Serbia has forced nearly 90 percent of the Kosovar Albanians from their homes and is continuing its effort to cleanse Kosova of its Albanian population. We cannot allow Serbia to succeed.

We, therefore, call on Congress to request that NATO take all necessary steps to end Serbia's campaign of ethnic cleansing, force the withdrawal of all Serb forces, create a secure environment for the return of the Albanians to their homes, and allow them to govern themselves and rebuild Kosova.

We also support the efforts of the UN War Crimes Tribunal. We strongly believe that those individuals who committed or ordered others to commit crimes against humanity must be brought to justice.

Lastly, we believe that the international community should continue to help alleviate the circumstances facing the Kosovar refugees. To the extent possible, the refugees should be able to remain in the Balkans to better enable their eventual return to their homes. All countries bordering Kosova should keep their borders open to refugees and treat them with dignity and respect.

Although we are disheartened by the events unfolding in Kosova, we are supportive of NATO's mission there. But the ethnic cleansing must stop. NATO can help achieve that goal by expanding its mission in Kosova.

Sincerely,

Illir Zherka, National Albanian American  
Council; Bruce Morrison, Former Mem-

ber of Congress; Richard D. Heidman, B'nai B'rith International; Glenn Ruga, Friends of Bosnia; John Cavelli, Conference of Presidents of Major Italian American Organizations; Hisham Reda, Muslim Public Affairs Committee; Marilyn Piurek, Polish American Leadership Council; Jess N. Hordes, Anti-Defamation League; Steve Rukavina, National Federation of Croatian Americans; Bob Blancato, Italian American Democratic Leadership Council; Mark Lazar, Federation of Polish Americans; Abdulrahman Alamoudi, American Muslim Council Foundation, John Pikarski,\* Gordon and Pikarski; Rabbi David Saperstein, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism; Dr. Jim Zogby,\* Arab American Institute; Steven Schwarz, Jewish Council for Public Affairs; Tolga Cubukcu, Assembly of Turkish American Associations; Phil Baum, American Jewish Congress; Peter Ujvagi, Hungarian American National Democratic Leadership Caucus; Jason Isaacson, American Jewish Committee.

\*These individuals are signing the letter in their own names. Organizations they represent are included for information purposes only.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for coming down and sharing his concerns.

I know the gentleman from Virginia would like to speak on school violence, and I would like to yield to him at this point in time.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan for yielding to me. I also want to say a word about the comments of the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), my friend and colleague. He is absolutely right. Mr. Milosevic is a war criminal and he is a bully, and we cannot yield to him. We must not let him prevail, nor can we as a society ever become apathetic to the suffering, the murder, the genocidal campaign that has gone on in the Balkans. We must stand firm; we must stand with NATO, and that means whether it is politically popular, or whether it is not the popular will, it is up to us to show leadership. The President is showing leadership. Most of the leaders of NATO are showing leadership, particularly in the United Kingdom, and we applaud them for doing that. History will give them credit if they do not get it from their electorate today.

As we approach the dawn of a new millennium, we as a people, individually and collectively, must stand up for a civil society, a society under the rule of law, a society where democracy determines leadership, a society where people are rewarded for their effort within a capitalist economy.

So we have a major role internationally. But we must also set a standard domestically, and there is an area where this society falls short of meeting that standard, and that is in the area of gun control. Because the statistics will show that that is one area where we trailed the rest of the indus-

trialized nations. In fact, there are more children killed by firearms in the United States than all 25 other industrialized nations combined.

Now, when we stand for principle internationally, it would seem that it is incumbent upon us to do the right thing domestically, and it is not right that 13 young people every day lose their lives due to firearms, whether it be through homicides, suicides, or unintentional shooting.

Mr. Speaker, there are events such as happened today, such as happened recently in Littleton, Colorado where that enters the radar screen of our mind. But it should be an objective every day, particularly in this House, to bring us in line with the other civilized nations and to stop the proliferation of handguns and assault weapons.

The last year for which we have statistics, we know that about 3,000 children and teenagers were murdered with guns, over 1,300 committed suicide with guns, and about 500 died in unintentional shootings, just in one year. A total of nearly 5,000 young people were killed by firearms, and that is a relatively typical year. In fact, in a typical year, we have over 20,000 people, adults and children alike, killed by firearms. That is way out of sync with the rest of the civilized world. There is no country that even registers on the same radar screen as the United States. They do not reach 100 deaths by firearms in a year, and we have 23,000.

Mr. Speaker, two in 25 high school students, so we are talking about tens and tens of thousands of high school students, report having carried a gun in the last month. Where are they getting these guns? Why are they getting these guns? They are getting these guns because we have lax laws, because of our gun control policy which is too determined by politics and by political campaign contributions.

I speak particularly of the gun lobby and of contributions from the National Rifle Association. If the Republican Party does not want this to be a campaign issue, if they do not want this to be a partisan issue, then they should not be accepting the millions of dollars of campaign contributions from the National Rifle Association. Because it is going to be a campaign issue when 85 percent of those campaign contributions are going to Republicans, when one can go right down the line of the people who lead the fight against gun control, and look at the campaign contributions, and most of them have gotten \$9,900 a year. Some have gotten as much as \$14,000. I do not know how they do that, because they are supposed to be limited to \$10,000 a year, maximum. But we have the numbers. The numbers are available. People should look at it. People should compare those to votes. People should also respect the fact that an important vote was cast today. It was a deadlock, it

was decided by the Vice President of the United States, and it was the right thing to do.

I hope that this will not continue to be a partisan issue, that we will do the right thing in the House of Representatives. That, in fact, we will be able to add the same amendments to the Juvenile Justice Authorization, and lacking those amendments, that we will be able to at least add them to the appropriations bill on Treasury and Postal Operations.

It is long past time. Thousands of people have died because we have not been willing to stand up to the kind of political bullying that comes from many in the gun lobby.

Mr. Speaker, we should not miss this opportunity to focus on this very serious problem in our society. We must start to do the right thing legislatively. We must stop this violence. I am not suggesting that to take away guns is a magic bullet. But I am suggesting that when we went to school, we had the same kind of psychological problems with peers and girlfriends and so on, but we did not have dead victims as a result. We might have done silly things, but gosh, we did not have access to guns; we did not shoot people, we did not leave people dead in a pool of blood. And that is happening because guns are much to easily accessible to our young people who do not have the maturity to be able to use them. We ought to increase the age of accessibility to guns, we ought to put safety locks on guns, and we ought to reduce the proliferation of them, whether it be through pawnshops or through gun shows or retail or wholesale or whatever. The time has long since passed for us to take the lead in this very serious issue and restore a civil society and reduce the violence that is prevalent throughout this American Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Michigan taking this time to speak about school violence. School violence is a reflection of society. This is an important issue. We ought to be addressing it today.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, realizing my time has expired, I once again would just like to thank the Speaker for his courtesies here tonight and understand that of course that as we address this issue, it is more than just guns, but things are happening in communities, in schools and in homes, and we invite Democrats and Republicans to come together and address this in a bipartisan manner

#### A GREATER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR AMERICA'S DEFENDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentlewoman from Idaho (Mrs. CHENOWETH) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Speaker, I found it interesting, the comments tonight on Kosovo. It is my firm belief that we are involved in an illegal war. We speak glowingly about the rule of law, and yet the Constitution requires that the Congress raise up armies and declare war. The War Powers Act clearly defines the limits within which the President may engage in war-like activities such as we have become involved in in Kosovo. The U.N. charter requires that no Nation see this kind of violent activity in a sovereign manner when there is internal conflict. So I do not care where one looks, whether it is international law, constitutional law, or statutory authority, this is an illegal war.

As we think about the war in Kosovo, Mr. Speaker, I want us today, as we begin to approach the time when we remember the veterans, the men and women who have served so bravely overseas, as we begin to enter into that season in our year, I want us to think about them and not forget them. Because in today's military, a young enlisted person serving out his or her first contract can expect to make only \$1,075.80 a month. Over a 40-hour work week, this averages to \$6.70 an hour. But most of our military personnel do not work 40-hour work weeks. We all remember the famous army slogan: We do more before 9 o'clock a.m. than most people do all day. Well, Mr. Speaker, it is true. These young enlisted personnel can expect to be at work before first light and not home again until long after dark.

□ 1900

Mr. Speaker, we do not pay them overtime. These young people train for weeks at a time away from home. They keep themselves in a state of top physical readiness, and they live their personal lives according to the high standards of integrity and honor we mandate for them. These young servicemen and women must uproot their families on a moment's notice, moving to a new duty station across the country or across the globe. A lot of them do it for as little as \$6.70 an hour.

For members of the military with families, the situation is even worse. Despite a modest living allowance, 12,000 families currently serving our armed forces are dependent upon food stamps, food stamps. We have government employees living off of government subsidies. Mr. Speaker, why do we not skip the intermediary step and just pay them properly in the first place?

During the holidays at the Mountain Home Air Force Base in Idaho, a network of military spouses work together to collect donations of money and toys for the enlisted families who cannot afford to give their young ones Christmas or Thanksgiving.

Last November and December, the Mountain Home Warm Heart organiza-

tion, run by the spouses of servicemen, distributed over \$18,000 worth of food and toys and cash to needy military families.

Where did this money come from, Mr. Speaker? From the pockets of servicemen who already had very little to give. If this were not bad enough, many military families have more serious concerns than just Christmas and Thanksgiving.

At the Mountain Home Air Force Base, 459 women and children are receiving regular food assistance. That is not a proud record for us. One hundred and seven of those are infants. The Mountain Home Air Force Aid Society made \$131,000 in emergency assistance loans to military families. I am very concerned about what will happen to these families when the money runs out and they still have to make monthly payments on their loans.

In the 18th century, citizen soldiers won our independence and secured our liberties. We hailed them as heroes, and revered the courage and commitment they demonstrated in defense of our Nation. Today that Nation is protected by citizen soldiers with the same integrity and that same sense of duty. Only in 20th century America, we do not even pay them a living wage. We should be ashamed of ourselves.

From 1988 to today, there have been 32 deployments of our military. In the previous 60 years, there were only 10 deployments. Put another way, Mr. Speaker, prior to this administration, the military was deployed an average of once every 6 years. During the Clinton administration, the military has been deployed an average of four times every year.

Furthermore, since 1987 we have depleted our ranks by 800,000 servicemen, 800,000 servicemen. In practical terms, that translates into more frequent deployments and dangerously long hours. It is illegal in this country for truck drivers to be on the road longer than 8 consecutive hours without rest. We have pilots now patrolling the Mediterranean in 14-hour shifts.

In short, this administration is expecting our servicemen and women to do 100 times as much and place their lives at risk 100 times as often with 800,000 fewer people for as little as \$6.70 an hour.

Mr. Speaker, I recently paid a plumber \$90 an hour to unplug my garbage disposal. An auto mechanic can expect \$50 an hour. A teenage person working as a bagger in a grocery store can earn up to \$12 an hour. None of these jobs requires 24-hour dedication to duty and a constant threat to their lives.

Mr. Speaker, one young Marine I know of has taken a second job to supplement his income. Every night this Lance Corporal goes home and trades his Marine uniform for a blue and red tee shirt and matching hat from Dominoes. This young Marine, this hard-