

high rate of interest, the taxpayers are going to pay it, and the students will get a tiny, tiny cut, less than 1 percent.

Oh, that is a great deal, that is a great way to do this. Get rid of the banks, give the loans directly to the kids through the schools. You could give another 600,000 students loans next year at a much lower rate of interest. They have tried to eliminate the Safe and Drug-free School Program and after school programs. That is quite a record. But they have become born again on the issue of public education. Now they say what they really want to do is fight over how the money they did not want to spend on public education is spent because we have held them here against their will. Because they want to bolt out of town without finishing their work, we have managed to get another \$1.1 billion commitment for education. They are saying, well, they are really concerned about how that money might be spent. They want it to be spent under something called title VI. Title VI, the first 16 percent goes to administration. Republicans like that. And the other 84 percent can go to anything, does not go to teachers, smaller class size. It is not even necessary to be invested in rebuilding our schools.

They can spin and spin and spin as much as they want as they wax eloquent about the importance of public schools. They are a billion point one late and 4 days late.

CLINTON FOREIGN POLICY—A CAUSE FOR ALARM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my distinguished colleague from California.

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I just want to say to my colleagues in response to the last speaker in the well that, as the chairman of the Early Childhood Youth and Family Subcommittee, which has jurisdiction over all Federal education programs and policies from preschool through high school, we did in fact have hearings specifically on the different, the competing Republican and Democratic classroom size and teacher training proposals in this Congress, and I do not recall receiving any letter or indication of interest from the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I want to speak about foreign policy, a very difficult and delicate task these days. If it were an easy subject, I do not think the Nation's first President would have encouraged us to avoid foreign entanglements altogether, but it is precisely because it is difficult and because risks to Americans and our interests are so great that we have got to exercise all due care and diligence of an exercise of American foreign policy, and that particularly means using our troops and putting them in harm's way.

A successful foreign policy is built on clearly articulating American interests

and having the willingness to fight for those interests when and how best appropriate. In other words, knowing what we are doing, looking before we leap. A successful foreign policy is not built on photo opportunities, it is not built on eroding American capability by saying one thing and then doing another. And most certainly it is not built on appeasement.

Most Americans follow international events through the media. The press tends to provide us snapshots of what is going on in the world other than of course the sensational topic du jour that we read about inside the Beltway. The snapshots that have made their way through the haze lately, from Russia to Haiti to Bosnia to Sudan to Iraq, North Korea, to the Middle East are indeed a cause for a great deal of concern. When you take a close look at those events and what the Clinton administration is doing, and in some cases not doing, they are in fact a cause for alarm.

Bosnia:

When President Clinton committed troops to Bosnia in 1995, he promised they would be home by Christmas of 1996. Everybody remember Christmas 1996? Well, that deadline is almost 2 years passed, and our troops remain on the ground with no strategy in place for their withdrawal. Indeed the Clinton administration has no idea has no idea when the troops can be withdrawn. After several years and about 10 billion of taxpayers' funds, it would seem to me that the administration needs to start talking about bringing an end to this mission or accomplishing something more than we are.

Somewhat of an irony, just in the Speaker's Lobby outside of this Chamber we are invited to send Christmas messages and Christmas greetings to our troops in Bosnia. My message is: Hurry home. I wish it were possible to send that message. We cannot send that message in good faith because we do not have policy for that now, and I want to know why not.

And interestingly enough, the administration recently considered bombing Serbia over the Kosovo Province and, in fact, is considering supporting a deployment of some 2,000 observers from the Organization of Cooperation Security in Europe. Of that not many Americans know who is in the Organization of Security and Cooperation, what it is comprised of and what its capabilities are. But I guarantee you they will not be able to do much in Kosovo. I suppose they can watch, as we can watch, but I am not sure they will be able to do much more. I do not even know what the ground rules would be for such observers nor how to protect them. I imagine some would be Russians, some would be appeasers, and some would be other, and I do not know exactly what they would expect to do or how to do it. We need those details as we approach the 72-hour countdown before the ultimatum on using force in Kosovo.

North Korea:

Since 1994 the Clinton administration has pursued a policy of butter for guns

with North Korea. The reports out of North Korea suggest that despite its receipt of a hundred million in heavy fuel oil and two hundred million food aid, the dying regime of Kim Jong-Il, there have been repeated violations of the 1994 nuclear agreement that has continued to proliferate ballistic missiles, has continued to divert food aid from the starving population from the needy to the elites of the ruling class, the ruling few. The North Korean regime is engaged in narcotics trafficking and counterfeiting of American dollars.

At some point what this means is the administration is going to have to decide when North Korea has simply gone too far, what does it take? Can we not verify the deal that they are supposed to comply with?

In Iraq a similar situation exists. Since the end of the Gulf War the United States has taken a lead in ensuring Iraqi compliance with the ceasefire agreements. The administration has talked tough on Iraq. We all remember those words the President made, threatening use of force and engaging in a massive show of military might earlier this year. However, the reality is that the effectiveness of the U.N. arms inspections has been badly undermined by the United States. In addition to the mountain of evidence making that clear, the words of Scott Ritter, a former U.S. Marine and leading arms inspector, raises serious questions about the administration's commitment to eliminating Iraq's war making capability.

This is an issue with serious ramifications. In addition to the threat of chemical-biological weapons, Iraq has apparently hidden away components to build three nuclear weapons. It simply needs to acquire the necessary fissionable material on the international black market in order to produce a completed nuclear weapon. And we have withdrawn.

This is hardly get tough policy. We need to know more. We need to know now. We need to know it before we go home.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WELLER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MANY ISSUES FOR THE WANING HOURS OF THE 105TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, if I might just take a moment? I see my good friend, JOE KENNEDY, is on the floor of the House, and

I was not able to pay tribute to him along with my colleague, Representative HENRY GONZALEZ, and I just wanted them both to know, and I hope to extend my remarks in the RECORD, how much I appreciate their leadership for the Nation. Mr. KENNEDY has been long known as an advocate for the least of those and particularly as he has helped in dollars to assist those seniors without the resources to give them good heating in the winter and air conditioning in the summer, and that is a tough place to be in. So I thank him for his leadership, his kindness, his recognition that the voiceless need a voice.

And then there is nothing more to be said about our senior leader in the Texas delegation, HENRY GONZALEZ, who has for years been a fighter on equal opportunity and home buying in America. He, too, has lifted up those who are voiceless. He is a giant of a person with kindness and dignity, and we wish him well, and we wish my good friend, JOE KENNEDY, well as they retire from this body.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about what we can do in these last waning hours, and that is why I am here today, because certainly there are many issues in my district. We have just faced flooding about a month or so ago, and many of my constituents are trying to rebuild their homes. There is a great need for modernization of our schools, and so there is a lot that we, as Members of Congress, could be doing in our local communities. But I would like to assure you, Mr. Speaker, that we can actually do some good here.

There is no reason, Mr. Speaker, why we cannot pass the school modernization legislation that allows us to rebuild our crumbling schools so that schools like those in my district whose roofs are falling in, the wiring is not good, we can actually bring tax relief locally by providing tax credits for those constituents who are putting in bonds in order to rebuild their schools. We can do that.

Mr. Speaker, we can have a real actual collaboration on the census. We understand that sampling is documented by the National Academy of Sciences, the National Foundation of Sciences, which indicate that sampling is the best and accurate way to count the 2000 census. We can still do that, Mr. Speaker.

And frankly I think that we can answer our constituents on the question of a good Patient Bill of Rights. We can do that. We can balance the rights of physicians and patients. We can overcome the burden of HMOs who tell you that you cannot get the service at this emergency room or you cannot continue with this doctor. We can do that, Mr. Speaker.

We can help the home health care agencies. We can tell them that the interim payment system that is brutalizing them, keeping them from keeping our seniors in their homes with their children and protecting them a way

from the hospital system or the nursing home, we can get a better system for those small agencies, and I am determined to do so.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, something I would like to talk about that I know America can do because America is a land of equality and good conscience and good-faith. We can pass the Hate Crimes Protection Act. Matthew Shepard should not die in vain, and neither should James Baird, and I believe that we who believe, who are believers, as well as those who want to offer the secular reasons for doing so, even if you may disagree with the beliefs that you think Matthew Shepard represented, he is a human being, and he was killed because of his sexual orientation and because of his difference.

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James Baird was killed and dismembered, beheaded in Texas, because he was black. There is no reason why we cannot pass a Hate Crimes Protection Act of 1998 that protects the disabled, it protects you if your religion is different, if your race is different, if your gender is different, if your sexual orientation is different.

We have had some 21 members of the gay lesbian community killed in this Nation because of their difference, and 10,000 hate crimes in this Nation. One person who testified in our hearings in the Committee on the Judiciary said very clearly, "I am not gay, but because it was perceived that I was gay, I was brutally beaten."

Do we want to have a Nation that fights China on human rights grounds, that fights countries in Africa on human rights ground, and yet not stand up and be counted here on the basic human decency of not beating somebody so brutally, hitting them over the head that you crush their skull, leaving like a scarecrow on a fence?

This is not about Wyoming. This is not about the good people of Wyoming or the good people in Texas or the good people in Ohio or the good people in Washington, DC. It is about a Federal standard that insists on human decency. It is about the fact that we have only 40 states that have passed their laws, that Wyoming has defeated hate crimes laws three times, that Texas hate crimes laws were so weak that we could not even prosecute those who dismembered Mr. Baird, and we may have a problem prosecuting those in Wyoming.

Let us do the right thing and pass the hate crimes protection act and all the other good initiatives that the American people want.

MAKING EDUCATION DECISIONS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I think it is appropriate at this point to rewind

the tape a little bit to earlier this year in this very chamber where the President came before the Congress and the American people and requested billions of dollars in additional spending and billions of dollars in additional taxes.

Now, I believe fundamentally that trust and credibility are something that we try to contract with the people who send us here, the ability for us to go back home and tell the people back at Staten Island or Brooklyn that we are fighting to do the right thing here in this country and this Congress. And I believe, and I think a lot of the colleagues on this side of the aisle believe, that the American people are taxed too much; that too many people go to work each and every day and do not see enough come back in the form of their paycheck.

Now, indeed too much money goes to the Federal Government and not enough comes back to the people in Staten Island, the ones that I represent. Obviously what has happened is the Republican majority in the last several months has fought for much needed tax relief and fought for the elimination of the ridiculous marriage penalty tax, whereby millions of American couples are penalized through the Tax Code for being married. That means they pay an additional fee over and above what they should pay just because they are married.

In addition, there are a lot of small business owners around this country who want good health insurance, but they can only deduct approximately 45 percent of that health insurance. What that means essentially is the Federal Government takes that money in place of good health insurance, affecting many of the small business owners' decisions when it comes to the uninsured and providing health insurance for their families. This Congress offered 100 percent deductible to be imposed next year. Not to mention the fact we are trying to stimulate our economy by allowing our economy to grow, and that means getting the money out of Washington and allow people, whether it is in Staten Island, San Francisco, anywhere across the country, to reinvest the money, to save money.

Basically, folks, it is the freedom to spend your money as you see fit and not here in Washington. And we fought month after month, and what happened? The President threatened to veto it and killed the tax relief that was so desperately needed from so many people across this country.

Now we see an attempt to divert attention away from the issue at hand, and, yes, it becomes under the guise of education. Who could not stand in this well and say we do not want to improve education? We have been fighting for years to try to improve education, at least I know back on Staten Island. But there is a philosophical and fundamental difference as to who is best able to make those decisions.

Now, I stand firm and I stand strong to say the people on Staten Island, the