

years and years and years in this institution when the other side controlled, had the majority control of the House of Representatives, we went in a cycle, a period of continual runaway Federal spending, racked up enormous deficits, and added to a debt that is now about \$5 trillion.

So, Mr. Speaker, as we listen to this debate, and I hope the American people are tuning in, because frankly there is going to be a lot of rhetoric and hot air that fills this Chamber in the next few days. But I believe if we listen carefully to this debate, that it will not be lost on the American people that this is the same group that year in and year out, and this is an election year, we are going to hear people arguing and talking about how the Republicans want to kill this program or that program. And now they are saying that the Republicans want to kill Social Security.

That in fact is not at all the case. We are here because we want to save that program and that is why we are dedicating this surplus, 90 percent of it, to saving Social Security. Walling it off and giving that other 10 percent back to the American people whose money it is in the first place.

That is what this debate is about. It is about being responsible to the taxpayers of this country. If we leave this surplus in this town, I can assure one thing. That is that it will get spent. There is no way that the Federal Government and the liberals in this institution will allow those dollars to stay here for very long.

So, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to address some of these issues this evening. I wanted to respond to some of the arguments that I heard in the debate earlier from my friends on the other side of the aisle.

I encourage the American people to tune into this debate. It is important. It is about their future and their tax dollars and seeing that they get the best possible return on their dollars.

ISSUES FACING AMERICA AT THE END OF THIS CONGRESSIONAL SESSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to note that we are less than 5 weeks away from the end of this session. We will probably adjourn no later than October 15. The date is still basically October 9, but the rumor is that it will be some time after that. It is certainly going to be no later than October 15 or 16. The necessities of this election year dictate that we will have to adjourn.

I think that there is a full plate of unfinished business, and it is most unfortunate that most of that business is not being addressed. We did a few bills today that are significant, I guess, in terms of conference reports. We also

did a bill that I think is very harmful relating to education, and I will come back to that.

The rumor is also that a continuing resolution which will carry our budget into next year will be substituted for the passage of individual appropriations bills. The debate and the discussion of critical issues that will take place on appropriations bills will probably not be there unless we have a rule which allows us to have a number of hours of debate on the continuing resolution, the long one. There is a short continuing resolution that is going to take us into October, but a longer continuing resolution is being prepared.

This means that we will not have a chance in the context of appropriations and budget making systematically, we will not have a chance to discuss certain vital issues. They are vital issues that are not getting the kind of exposure that they need.

□ 2045

The American people have common sense that we welcome, we ought to welcome into this process, and we need to let them know what is going on.

I want to commend my colleagues, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT), for the very thorough discussion of Social Security, what the Social Security trust fund means, how it works, what it is all about. Out of this present conflict between the majority party and the minority party, perhaps we will have a better understanding developed by the lay people in this country, by the voters, by the ordinary common people of what Social Security is all about, how it works.

We may have an honest bookkeeping process developed, because right now they do smoke and mirrors with Social Security funds. They use the funds in various ways that cover deficits in the regular budget. They talk about being off budget at certain times, and they place it in budget at other times. Maybe we can have a separate accounting system for Social Security growing out of this conflict between the two parties as to how Social Security should be administered.

It is a vital issue for all Americans. There are very few families that are not in one way or another touched by what happens with Social Security. Certainly, in the African American community, for some time now there have been studies showing that African Americans in smaller percentages live to be 65. The mainstream community, the white community, the greater proportion of them live to be 65 and over and enjoy their Social Security benefits.

Right now a much smaller percentage of African Americans are living to be 65 and being able to enjoy the Social Security benefits. Therefore, the African American community will be very hard hit by the movement of the retirement age from 65 to 67. That is going to

take place within two or three years. You are going to have to wait until you are 67 before you can receive your Social Security benefits. Already the people who need the help the most are going to be penalized by this Band-Aid approach to saving Social Security.

A commission, several years ago, came up with that answer, one thing we should do is move the retirement age from 65 to 67. Now they are proposing to move it to 70 after that. It will keep moving and there will be certain groups of people who will never catch up with it, if we do not find some other way to save and protect Social Security.

I think we ought to declare off limits now and forever more any movement of the age of retirement as a way to protect Social Security. What my colleagues were saying earlier makes much more sense. Let us use the money that has accumulated in these prosperous times to deal with the problem that we project for Social Security down the road.

I am not going to go back and repeat their arguments. I want to congratulate the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) in particular, Dr. McDERMOTT, who was the author of the single payer health plan here in Congress. He is still the author of it; he originated it, the single payer health plan.

Dr. McDERMOTT gave a brilliant analysis of how the Social Security fund works and how the money is accumulated. And I want to congratulate him for that statement, that presentation.

Saving and protecting Social Security is something we have got to talk about more in the next few days in the context of the proposal of the Republicans that we have a tax cut. There is a surplus. Most people do not realize that that surplus is primarily money in the Social Security fund. The surplus is in the Social Security fund. Anyone who wants to take part of the present surplus and move it somewhere else will be taking it from the Social Security fund.

Our position is that we must protect the Social Security fund first, protect Social Security and guarantee that the difficulties projected will be taken care of before you begin to take money out of this surplus which is mostly Social Security funds.

I previously stated that I think that if there is a surplus, some part of it ought to be dedicated to education and the necessary steps to improve education. A greater investment in education is a worthwhile use of any surplus funds. But not until we are sure that we have the adequate protection for Social Security, that the money stream, the revenue stream, the projections for the future are all in place and we can see where the money is going to be left over after you make the necessary adjustments to secure Social Security.

That is on our plate. We need to really deal with it. We need to broaden and

maximize the discussion over the next few weeks, and everybody should be in on it. It affects us all. It is a very important program. It takes the cash straight to the recipient, to the person. It has a minimum amount of bureaucracy and layers of infrastructure. It is a check to a person who has earned it in terms of his Social Security rights.

Another thing that we must discuss more in the next few weeks is the Federal assistance to education. I regret that a continuing resolution is going to cover this whole question of what are the appropriations for education for this year. Somehow we need to infuse into the discussion of the continuing resolution a discussion of what are you going to do about education this year. The despair that is felt by parents across this Nation must find some relief from the Federal Government.

The Federal Government is responsible for only a small portion of the funding of education. We have gone over that before. Seven percent of the total funding for education is Federal funding. The rest of it is State and local funding. But that 7 percent that comes from the Federal Government is a stimulant. It makes the local government and the State government do certain kinds of things that they normally do not do.

The Federal Government has been accused of interfering, creating a bloated bureaucracy, making red tape, unbearable for teachers. This cannot be true when only a small percentage of the funds for education are Federal funds. If the Federal Government has only a 7 percent funding involvement, then our influence is only 7 percent, and we cannot, we cannot have an authority beyond the funding. We are the scapegoats, the Federal Government is the scapegoat, but it is limited, too limited.

I have always said that 7 percent is not enough. The Federal Government should at least rise to the level of 25 percent of funding for education in America. If we have 25 percent of the funding, if we provided 25 percent of the money responsibility on our schools, we still will only have 25 percent of the authority and influence. The other 75 percent of the authority and influence would still be at the State and local level. So our schools would still be State and locally run.

Federal assistance to education, unfortunately, if we have a continuing resolution, may be held hostage. It is a great excuse to do nothing.

The majority party would like to do nothing. They are aware of the fact that poll after poll and focus group after focus group demonstrate that the American people, the voters place a very high priority on matters related to education. And they think the Federal Government should be more involved in education in a very basic way.

But instead of engaging that involvement or desire to be rescued in an honest way, the majority party chooses to

play trickery and pretend it is concerned about education, while it does things like the bill that was on the floor last Friday.

The bill on the floor last Friday was called Dollars to the Classroom. If you look at it very closely, it is not Dollars to the Classroom, it is dollars to the governors of the States, dollars to the governors. And the governors were given great freedom as to how they were going to spend those dollars, so fewer dollars would probably end up in the classrooms where they were needed most. The Dollars to the Classroom is just one more gimmick, part of a smoke screen that the majority Republicans have pursued to make people think that they are concerned with education when they are not.

Dollars to the Classroom would have pulled all of the authority and all of the infrastructure out of the Department of Education, which would be another way to destroy the Department of Education. They do not say that anymore, but that is still the goal.

We must make certain that in the process of developing this continuing resolution, there be a broader discussion of the things that ought to be in there that are not likely to be in there, if you leave it to the majority Republicans. We ought to not go another year without dealing with school construction, class size reduction or technology.

I will come back to a larger discussion of this. But saving and protecting Social Security, Federal assistance to education. Minimum wage increase, it has been defeated in the Senate. It has not even been put on the floor here, but I think that they owe it to the majority, again, of Americans who would like to see a minimum wage increase, they owe it to put it on the floor and let us vote on it. But that is not likely to happen.

HMO reform, greater health care coverage, HMO reform to bring the HMOs back into control. They got off to a bad start, and no one has said we ought to abolish HMOs. You do not hear any discussion of that. I think HMOs were at the center of the plan proposed by Mrs. Clinton. Most people do not realize it, that health maintenance organizations were a critical part of that plan that was ridiculed and withdrawn for no good reason, really, because it was superior to what has been allowed to mushroom and grow spontaneously, sort of. The HMOs are here to stay, so reform of HMOs is a vital discussion that has to take place. And we are in the process of doing that. The problem is we have to have a full discussion of that between both houses.

Coupled with HMO reform there must be the effort to get greater health care coverage. We need to deal with the fact that 10 million, at least 10 million Americans are not covered that ought to be covered by some health care plan. Again, Dr. McDermott, who was explaining the Social Security plan, is the author of a single payer health

plan which would result in the coverage of all Americans. Single payer is not popular these days. Those kinds of things are not even discussed that much, but we should keep it in the back of our minds, that Canada has a single payer system. And Canada is able to cover its citizens without going bankrupt. Canada is alive and well. Its economy has not been plunged into any kind of crisis. For years Canada has had a single payer health plan which covers everybody. Whatever we do, regardless of what form it takes, HMO reform or any other adjustments, we ought to move to cover everybody with a health care plan. That ought to be still on our agenda.

There are some larger issues that also may not be legislative issues, but in this time of focus on the personal life and the intimate life of the President, we ought to be reminded that this great Nation cannot take its eye off major problems throughout the world. This great Nation has a duty to keep watching the kinds of developments that are taking place all over the world which may have an impact upon us.

We ought to be concerned about the stall of the peace process in the Middle East. It is a process and a set of combatants there that we have great involvement with, both the Arabs and the Jews of Israel. We have allies and enemies on both sides. And that process can blow up in our face in a short period of time. We need to not focus so on the trivialities of a Ken Starr report and focus back on some of the pressing foreign policy issues like the Middle East peace stalemate.

Yugoslavia, Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo, those are items that also may blow up in our face. But even if they do not get worse and blow up, we have to be concerned about the fact that they are a drain on the American taxpayers now. The Yugoslavian conflict that we reluctantly entered and provided leadership for meaningful intervention, that conflict now has gone on for quite some time and America, the taxpayers of this country, have gotten bogged down in a process which is draining the Treasury. The amount of money available for these kinds of interventions is all going toward Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Serbia. Now they say we need greater involvement in Kosovo. We are talking about \$6 or \$7 billion now directed at one part of the world.

I am all in favor of this country exercising its role as the indispensable Nation, providing leadership when nobody else is there to provide the leadership. It is important. But when you go into a conflict like the Yugoslavian conflict and you stay there and expend billions of dollars, then what you are doing is creating a precedent, which I am certain the American people, anybody with common sense would not want followed.

□ 2100

We are ready to intervene, ready to become a part of rescuing people in

emergency situations, but emergencies should not continue forever. We are nation-building in Yugoslavia. We are doing what we said we would not do in Somalia; what we said we would not do in Haiti. We are going to the extreme of staying much too long, and the patience of the taxpayers in terms of the next necessary intervention will be worn thin. I think we should find a way to extricate ourselves from Yugoslavia after an expenditure of \$7 billion. It is a lot.

On the one hand, we expend that much money in Yugoslavia, and we totally abandon Haiti. We had promised an aid package to Haiti, and that aid package only consisted of \$200 million of United States funds, funds from this country. But it was part of an international package where the French and the Canadians and a number of countries were going to also contribute to the reconstruction of the economy in Haiti. Well, none of these other countries are willing to ante up and pay their portion or give their portion of the aid until the United States moves part of its \$200 million to Haiti. So we are stuck. And Haiti is in a crisis now because theirs is an infrastructure that is continually crumbling.

We cannot keep ignoring Haiti. Haiti is a part of the Western Hemisphere. Haiti is a part of a collection of islands and places in this hemisphere where things happen that we cannot ignore, and important developments there impact upon our quality of life here.

For example, as the economies of Haiti or any other of the Caribbean islands crumbles, the drug lords move in. We have some small island countries that are now controlled by drug lords. We may be surrounded if we do not move to look at the problems of this hemisphere in a new way and deal with the problems of Haiti and the problems of the crumbling economies of certain island groups that have been hit very hard with a new set of rules that make it more difficult for them to sell their bananas in the European market.

The economies that were hit hard by the hurricane just yesterday and today, economies that never were that strong and have never had any significant assistance from the United States, those economies now are sitting there as bait and targets for drug lords to prey upon.

We are very concerned about drugs and the continuing in-flow of drugs and the impact that drugs have on our economy. We are going to spend millions of dollars to provide aid for police and military operations in certain countries in order to combat the drug trade. Most of that money is going to go into the hands of the very people who are part of the whole problem. Large amounts of corruption have been discovered in all of the countries that we will be giving this aid to: Mexico, Colombia. Every country.

In the final analysis, when we get down to the bottom line, the law enforcement officials are involved in the

drug trade, and that is a consequence of allowing the economies to decline and the standards of government to be corrupted. And we are not going to solve the problem by addressing whatever aid systems we have only to the military and to the police agencies.

Much further across the world there is another problem that we ignore at our peril: The India and Pakistan nuclear testing duels. India and Pakistan both have exploded nuclear weapons. We are so busy watching Monica Lewinsky and following Ken Starr, the fact that these two nations both, in a period of less than a month, exploded nuclear weapons does not seem to bother us.

We have forgotten, I think, that nuclear debris blows in the air, and nuclear debris gets into the water, the oceans, and it moves around the whole world. Every time we have nuclear explosions of any kind, we increase the amount of debris out there in the atmosphere.

I was not a star pupil in physics, but in college biology we did learn about the half-life of radioactive material, how long it stays there, and the fact that radioactive material bombards our genes and our genes suffer from mutations. Some of the new kinds of diseases and microbes and viruses that we have are probably the result of radioactive bombardment and, thus, these mutations.

I remember in the biology class the professor citing some experiment that had been done with fruit flies. Fruit flies breed rapidly, so they can tell from one generation to another what the changes were. And the radioactive bombardment of fruit flies had led to some astounding mutations and changes in those fruit flies.

That was a long time ago, when I was in college biology. The rules are still the same. The principles are still the same. If there are bombs being exploded in India and Pakistan, then we have a problem that we ought to all be looking at.

The Indians and the Pakistanis danced in the street. The ordinary people went out and danced in the street when India exploded their nuclear bomb. They thought it was a great thing. It was like a great celebration that we are now a great power. The party in power, the Hindu party, is now said to have a firm grip on the populace, and that they will probably stay in power for a long time, because they have demonstrated that they are a modern nation and can stand toe-to-toe with the other nuclear powers.

So the people who danced in the street in India and the people who later came behind them and said we need one, too, they applauded their government for matching the government in Pakistan. They are the ones who are most vulnerable in terms of radioactive fallout. They do not know it, but there will be increasing cancer cases and all kinds of strange things happening to them. It is quite sad to

see humanity dancing with glee, joyfully celebrating a phenomenon that is likely to have a very cruel and immediate physical impact on them in the next decade.

India and Pakistan represent a very explosive situation. Something is going to have to give there. And instead of waiting until it progresses to the point of Yugoslavia, where we have mayhem and murder and, for humanitarian reasons, all the nations of the world decide they want to do something about it, we ought to try to solve the Pakistan India problem now.

At the heart of it is the Kashmir crisis, the Kashmir situation, which is a long-standing crisis. When I was in high school I remember India received its independence and Pakistan was a breakaway area that, at the last moment, broke away and formed its own independent nation. Kashmir was supposed to become part of Pakistan but a deal was made with the rajah of Kashmir. And although the people who lived there primarily were Muslim, he was Hindu, they decided to go with India. He decided, as an individual.

That may be collapsing too much history too rapidly, but, basically, Kashmir is a place where the greater percentage of the people are Muslims. If they are given a chance to vote, they would vote to become a part of Pakistan. If they became independent, because they are Muslims, they would have a close alliance with Pakistan. India knows this. And instead of acquiescing to the will of the people, allowing a vote to take place and having Kashmir become either independent or quasi-independent, or having Kashmir make the decision to join Pakistan, India refuses to allow a vote. There is armed conflict there. Soldiers are arrayed on different borders and real difficulties may erupt at any time.

The United States has played a major role in several conflicts that have taken place over the years because the United States has basically been an ally of Pakistan. Pakistan deserves a little more help from the whole world, and certainly from the United States, because Pakistan will probably be the loser in any armed conflict with India if nobody else came to their aid. Instead of waiting for some armed conflict to develop, we ought to try to go to the aid of the situation by insisting, having the United Nations use its moral force, appeal to that element in India which still believes in Mahatma Gandhi, and appeal to India's sense of leadership in the world to go ahead and let Kashmir and the people of Kashmir vote. Let them determine where they are going to go in the standoff between armies in Kashmir and move on to a different set of arrangements.

Now, this particular crisis and this particular problem did not just pop into my head. It is one that has been brought to my attention because in my Congressional District, the 11th Congressional District in Brooklyn, there is a large Pakistani community, either

the first or second largest Pakistani community in the country. And like everybody else, they have brought their problems to my attention. And I am appalled at the length of time that the Kashmir-India-Pakistan crisis has gone on.

It is one of the things that we should be concerned with. It is one of the things that we are neglecting, as the indispensable Nation. If there is a real bloody conflict, they are going to call on us. If there is a threat to the stability of the world, or the fishing lanes, there are all kinds of reasons why we will respond, and that is good. Just for humanitarian reasons, we should respond, and I have no problem with that, but we will not unless we are able to take our eyes off the trivial, the endless flow of trivial details about what is happening in the President's private life and what is happening with the Ken Starr Monica Lewinsky case, et cetera.

We need to come back and, before this session of Congress ends, try to get serious about the fact that we are the indispensable Nation, involved in all kinds of activities that are important to the world as well as important to our own economy and our own quality of life.

So I have talked about saving Social Security, the Federal assistance to education, minimum wage increase, HMO reform and greater health care coverage, the stalled peace process in the Mideast, Yugoslavia, Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo, and those kinds of eruptions in that part of the world, Pakistan, India and Kashmir. These are just some of the kinds of pressing problems and issues that we ought to be addressing.

Finally, I would also like to conclude my little list here by talking about something much closer to home, which arouses a lot of emotions, and that is the President's Commission on Race. Recently, the President's Commission on Race made a report, and 99 percent of the people of this country do not even know they have concluded their activities and made a report. I think that some aspect of the Lewinsky-Starr pornographic drama was unveiled on the same day they made their report. Certainly in the days that followed, the headlines, the media, everything was dominated by the Lewinsky-Starr Peyton Place drama or soap opera.

So the Commission issued a report, and I have not had a chance to read the report yet, but I have read some of the highlights in the press conference or the interviews with members of the Commission. The Commission made a great point of saying that it did not think that we should apologize for slavery. It did not think that the American government should apologize for slavery.

Now, I wonder why, if they were not going to make a positive statement, that we should apologize for slavery, why did they bother to deal with that

issue at all? I think the Commission sort of defined itself by rushing to make a statement that was a negative one. Instead of emphasizing that what it did stand for, what it did want, it made a statement which everybody picked up as wonderful. It is wonderful that the Commission on Race, appointed by the President, says that there should be no apology for slavery.

Now, that is something that needs to be discussed and it, of course, is completely off the radar screen. Very little discussion will take place. But the President is to be applauded, still, for appointing that Commission. The existence of that Commission was a very important step forward. However small its budget might have been, or its staff, or however circumscribed its charge was, it was a constructive step forward by a President who did not have to do it. There was no crisis in terms of rioting in the street, there was no crisis of bombing of schools, there was no crisis of a governor standing in the school-house door.

□ 2115

All of these kinds of things were not happening. So the President had no political reason for appointing a commission to review race relations. It was a brilliant stroke to just get people to discuss it. Discussing the issue will not resolve the very serious problems that we face with respect to race relations in the United States, but not discussing it certainly will not get us anywhere and when a President uses his prestige to spark a discussion and move it forward, that is a very positive achievement and the President should be given full credit for that.

The problem is in my opinion that the people on the commission did not take full advantage of the opportunity. I think the commission had some of the best minds in the field. All the people there were quite impressive in terms of their academic credentials, in terms of their experience, et cetera. I think they had very good minds. I regret that the commission, the giant intellect and the giant minds were accompanied by very tiny spirits. I think it is a tiny spirit that makes a point that we will not recommend that there be an apology for slavery and that is the most important thing that they have to lead with. We do not recommend that there be an apology for slavery. They are tiny spirits because they seem to be afraid, intimidated by certain forces that have insisted that apologizing for slavery is ridiculous or it is absurd, it is unfair to ask this generation to apologize for slavery because they cannot do it, they were not here, there were good people in both North and South, et cetera, et cetera. There are a lot of reasons that are given. However, all of these reasons, and everybody who backs away from endorsing an apology for slavery, including the majority of the members in the Black Caucus think it should not be done because it is too little and we do

not want to have people have their consciences salved by taking a little step like apologizing for slavery. I disagree. I think it is symbolism and we live by symbolism. Symbolism is very important. There is a galloping symbolism that other nations are adopting. We have an apology every week just about. If you follow the papers, something is there every week apologizing for some atrocities that have been committed in the past, some injustices, et cetera.

This week, today, Thursday, September 24, we have an apology with money. I am going to read from the New York Times International, Thursday, September 24, today. This is on page A-12. Siemens Creates a Fund for Nazi Slave Workers.

"Following the lead of Volkswagen," Volkswagen was in the paper last week. Volkswagen apologized for the enslavement of large numbers of people during the war, having them work in their plant and not only apologized, they offered \$12 million. I think Siemens is following the lead of Volkswagen.

"Following the lead of Volkswagen, the German electronics giant Siemens announced plans today for a \$12 million fund to compensate former slave laborers forced to work for the company by the Nazis during World War II.

"Siemens is one of several German businesses under pressure from lawsuits in the United States and threats of more at home from Nazi-era victims.

"Volkswagen last week became the first of these companies to agree to such payments when it announced its own \$12 million fund—a change of heart after arguing for years that it had no legal duty to pay back wages for labor forced on it by the Nazi war machine.

"Siemens had a similar change of heart. Almost a year ago, the company insisted that it could do no more for its former slave laborers than express 'deepest regrets.'

Siemens has gone from apologizing, they did express deep regrets, they apologized. And we are saying large numbers of people are saying that this nation, America, the great nation of America should not even do that. Do not apologize for slavery. Do not have the government apologize for the horror, probably the greatest crime committed against humanity when you add it all up and look at its in its totality. But Siemens is doing that for the laborers who were forced to work as slaves during the war. Volkswagen is doing it. Siemens today, Volkswagen last week. And last week, week before last, quite some time, the Swiss, the Swiss banks and the Swiss government have been apologizing to the Jews who were swindled out of their money in various ways when they deposited it in Swiss banks during World War II. The Swiss are also on the spot in terms of their being the agents of the Nazi government, and they are very apologetic about that. So to have our Commission on Race portray themselves as heroes because they are against apologizing for slavery is most unfortunate.

I think that some good can come out of the commission report. I will certainly look at the report closely and I hope that we move to act on some of

the recommendations that are made by the commission. But the commission in total certainly has left a legacy of spinelessness. The tiny spirits stick out there despite the gigantic minds. An apology for slavery would be very much in order. It is very much consistent with what is being done all over the world. The Japanese apologizing to the Koreans that they forced into prostitution, the Catholics apologizing in France to the Jews for what they did to them, on and on it goes. There are apologies in civilized nations, in civilized cultures, apologies all over. So are we not able to at least take that step of apologizing for slavery, having our government apologize for the fact that slavery was legal, slavery was protected by the government. For 232 years it took place here on our continent under the supervision of legal bodies that protected it. We are not asking for \$12 million for a group of slaves that might have worked one place and \$10 million for another group. New York City was the third largest slave port in the country. Most people do not know that. They associate slavery with the South. But New York City was the third largest slave port in the country. There are many streets named after the great slave owners, slave holders, in Brooklyn, my own home borough. If you were to have some way to compute the amount of money that is owed in back wages to all the slaves who labored for years and years without any pay, certainly New York would have a big payout. You would have a large number of families that would be eligible for very big payouts. But we are not going to go that far. We are not going to try to do the impossible. But an apology is a good beginning. A recognition of the horrors that were perpetrated with the aid of government is a good beginning. We should have had that beginning.

Now, I have covered a lot of territory, all the way from slavery and protecting Social Security to apologies for slavery. My point tonight is, these are very important items that must be kept on our agenda. These are very important items that we cannot ignore.

A recent book came out about this whole matter of the slave labor in Germany. Each of the factories that were involved, Volkswagen and Siemens, they say the Nazis forced them to use slave labor. But there is a book out which is called "The Splendid Blond Beast: Money, Law and Genocide in the Twentieth Century" by Christopher Simpson. In that book the thesis is the companies pursued the cheap slave labor. They wanted it, they went after it, they bid on it. It was not just the government insisting that they utilize the slave labor of prisoners of war and Jews and other people that the Nazis had enslaved. "The Splendid Blond Beast: Money, Law and Genocide in the Twentieth Century" by Christopher Simpson. That book has come out recently. There are discussions of it. That is why I think it should be related

to the apology for slavery and the commission report. All of these things relate very much to each other. All of them are important.

We are a Nation now that has a leadership role in the world. We are the indispensable nation. The President calls us the indispensable nation. I agree with that term. But we are absorbed with trivialities. One way to smother this Nation and to destroy it is to get so consumed with trivialities that we cannot deal with the major basic issues that confront our economy, our Nation and the world. We are obsessed with ephemeral kinds of things that do not mean very much one way or the other. We are consumed. We are manipulated to be consumed by trivialities. The lives of the movie stars and the lives of the elected officials when they are treated like the lives of the movie stars become far more important than the critical issues of our day. We need to do something about the issues that I have just outlined. We need to do something now. We are at a pivotal period where we do not have certain kinds of pressures on us. We do not have a recession. We have a surplus that we are looking at. We need to have a real, thorough examination of what it means to have a surplus and deal with that. We also need to take a look at the context with which these trivialities keep being pushed to the forefront.

The newspapers and the television stations are obsessed with forcing us to examine the trivialities related to the President's private life, for example. First you have an organ of government, the special prosecutor's office, publishing great details, exploiting trivialities in a way which will guarantee that the report gets a maximum distribution. You have an organ of government paid \$40 million, the whole Special Prosecutor's office, which is putting out something which you could call a form of nonfiction pornography. In fact I think it was a statement made by Ken Starr himself that is very interesting where he said that anybody who does that kind of thing certainly deserves to be condemned. Ken Starr on 60 Minutes in an interview with Diane Sawyer in 1987 made the following statement. Quote, from Ken Starr:

Public media should not contain explicit or implied descriptions of sex acts. Our society should be purged of the perverts who provide the media with pornographic material while pretending it has some redeeming social value under the public's "right to know." End of Ken Starr's quote.

Kenneth Starr, 1987, 60 Minutes, CBS Television interviewed by Diane Sawyer. Let me just read the quote once more. Quote from Ken Starr:

Public media should not contain explicit or implied descriptions of sex acts. Our society should be purged of the perverts who provide the media with pornographic material while pretending it has some redeeming social value under the public's right to know.

End of quote from Ken Starr.

I agree, Mr. Starr. But you are the one who is guilty. We have your report

which has been basically rejected by the majority of the American people. They do not like it. You overreached. Whoever acts in concert with you or that you act in concert with, they have overreached. And we have a situation where all of these publications and exposures of salacious material have not impressed the American people in a positive way. We have the common sense of the American people rising up to challenge and attempt to manipulate their minds. The salacious material, the pornography was all put there in order to distract you with trivialities and not focus on the case that is not there against the President. The President has done nothing which is an impeachable offense. One way to make you forget that is to introduce Peyton Place and soap opera instead and let you get all caught up in discussions of the details of the soap opera, Tobacco Road, Peyton Place and a whole lot of details about intimate activities that should not be published under a government imprimatur, certainly not by a special prosecutor.

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So the American people have rejected it. It has not worked. There has been no automatic response which says throw him out; you know, we do not have that. The polls have not done any gyrations spinning downward, and I want to read from an article that appeared in today's New York Times. Frank Newport, the editor and chief of the Gallup poll writes the following:

Republicans these days do not seem to think much of public opinion polls. With a strong majority of Americans still opposed to the impeachment of President Clinton, some prominent Republicans are arguing that Congress should do what it thinks is right, not what the polls say.

It is very strange to hear politicians, Republicans or Democrats, saying we should ignore the polls. We live by the polls, and, you know, when we should be ignoring the polls and providing leadership and guidance, that is seldom happens. But suddenly the Republicans have said the polls are not important. I wonder how long that is going to be in effect.

Going back to the article by Mr. Newport, quote:

Poll taking in an art, not a science, HENRY HYDE, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee said on Tuesday. Representative TOM DELAY of Texas was more direct: I think frankly the polls are a joke. Dan Quayle, the former Vice President, sees a subtext. I think that the people are far more turned off with Bill Clinton and all of his shenanigans than all of these public opinion polls are expressing, he said in August.

So, Dan Quayle, TOM DELAY and HENRY HYDE all think polls are ridiculous, they are superfluous, they do not mean much.

Going back to Mr. Newport's article:

But Republicans should not shoot the messenger. After all polls do nothing more than summarize the opinions of the people. In a democratic society ignoring the polls demonstrates a considerable arrogance. Why

should we assume that pundits and elected officials know more than the average American or that careful scientific polls do not accurately measure public sentiment?

There is no doubt that Americans want Congress to listen to them. In a Gallup survey conducted this month 63 percent of those surveyed said that on the question of a possible impeachment of President Clinton Members of Congress should stick closer to public opinion rather than doing what they themselves think is best. And to date Americans do not want the President to leave office. Even after the release of the Starr Report and of Mr. Clinton's testimony on videotape the number of Americans who approve of the job Mr. Clinton is doing is 66 percent according to a Gallup poll taken on Monday. Only 32 percent of respondents favored impeaching and removing Mr. Clinton from office. Thirty-nine percent said that he should resign.

The results were similar in other polls. In a NBC news poll, also taken on Monday night, only 26 percent of the respondents believe the President was telling the truth, but 60 percent did not believe the President should resign.

It is certainly possible that the public can still be convinced that impeachment is a correct course. That is what happened during Watergate. In November 1973, just 30 percent of Americans favored impeaching and forcing Richard Nixon from office. By August 1974, just before Nixon resigned, more than 60 percent favored such action.

The job for those who feel Mr. Clinton should leave office is to take these convictions to the public to continue to make that case. Ultimately, however, Congress should listen to the public's response, much of it measured through polling.

That is the end of the quote of Mr. Frank Newport in the New York Times. I think that is today, today's New York Times, September 24 on the op-ed page.

I cite that because, and I read from Ken Starr's statement before 60 Minutes to make the point that we are off into trivialities, and we are being deliberately in many cases led into trivialities, into matters of little consequence, in order to ignore the big issues. And, as a Nation, we are probably going to be subjected to this kind of activity again and again.

The spin is a part of American political life now, the spin. The spin often will spin you into outer space where there is nothing but dust and there is nothing of any consequence.

So I am arguing that we should exercise the common sense out there that they do not appear to have here in the Congress.

Continue to focus on the issues, continue to understand that saving Social Security is an issue that ought to be discussed widely, you ought to have a role in that, you ought to go visit your Congressperson and talk to them about it. You ought to understand that an \$80 million tax cut jeopardizes the effort to systematically begin the process of guaranteeing that Social Security will survive and be there fully when it is needed in the future. You ought to not allow yourself to be pulled away from the focus on that very real issue.

Federal assistance to education is a very real issue. Let me just expand for

one moment on what happened today. We had on the floor of the Congress today a bill which would increase the immigration quota for professional workers. That immigration quota increase is designed primarily to bring in more information technology workers into this country. Information technology workers are people who work in various ways with computers and the Internet programing and various things related to the computer culture, and there is a great demand for workers. We already have 65,000 of those workers in America. That quota was overrun back in the spring, and now they want to bring in this year another 25,000, and then every year between now and the year 2000 increase the number.

What does that have to do with education in America? It says that we are going to be giving away. We have already given away 65,000 jobs to foreigners. We want to give away another 25,000 to foreigners this year, and we are going to give up to 1,000 in the year 2001; 107,000, I forget. The big problem here is that those figures do not tell the full story. If this is the way the problem is going to be solved when you have vacancies and a need for workers in the high tech area like information technology, if you are going to allow the companies to bring in people from the outside, then they are never going to be willing to fund and develop an adequate education system in America.

You know, first of all there is an advantage in bringing in foreigners from the outside. They always pay them less. They do not pay them as much as they pay information technology workers who are based and trained here. So that is one advantage they are always going to be seeking.

We must insist that the piece of legislation which passed on the floor today is the wrong way to go, that we ought to revamp our education system in order to be able to have a pool, a large pool of people who are in the early grades exposed to computer literacy training, and they go up to high school, and they get more training, and some kids could actually graduate from high school and not go to college and get certified; Microsoft I think certification, A-1 certification; and make between 30 and \$40,000 a year. If they want to continue at a junior college or college, you know all of those opportunities are almost guaranteed to be there in the future. That is the way we are going with our economy and the technology. The jobs will be there. The Department of Labor estimates that there will be 1.5 million vacancies in 5 years in the information technology area.

So, we cannot wait until this session is over. We need to do something about federal assistance to education now.

Last Saturday I had a luncheon as part of the Congressional Black Caucus legislative weekend. I had a luncheon and invited 50 school superintendents to come and help us to develop a strat-

egy or let us get together in solidarity in order to make certain that for the remainder of this session of Congress we are not ignored that the education agenda is not pushed on the back burner and left there. Thirty-five school superintendents came; I was surprised at the large number who responded. These are superintendents from what we call America's most challenged districts, the districts that have the largest percentages of poor students, students who receive free school lunches.

So, you know, at that time we addressed the basic issues that they are confronted with. They want the school construction program that is proposed by the President. They want that to pass: \$22 billion over a 5-year period to help with school construction. They want class size reduction. They want wiring of the schools for technology. If we do all these things, we will not have to call upon foreign nations to provide us with a work force in the next five to ten years.

We want to deal with HMO reform. You know, we talk a lot about Medicare and the problems that Medicare has. The problems that Medicaid, the poorest people have, are far worse than the problems being experienced by the people who have Medicare. And there are too many problems with HMOs and Medicare already.

The big problem with Medicaid is that the Governors, the States, are squeezing the capitation fees so hard, they are lowering the capitation fees for families and individuals to the point where it is hard for the HMOs to provide the kind of service they should provide. It is the Governors, it is the State apparatus that insists on squeezing more and more, saving more and more, and it has become a situation where the government has endorsed second class health care. Second class health care is deadly health care. You either have first class health care or you have dangerous and deadly health care. And when you cut corners on health care, it means that the health care is likely to do more harm than good. We are being forced into that by States that are greedy and want more and more money.

So that is an important issue.

Save and protect Social Security, provide federal assistance to education now, let us not wait this session. We need to act on the President's proposals. More and more people in the black community, I must confess, parents, are looking to vouchers, 56 percent according to several polls. Fifty-six percent of the parents said they are ready to try vouchers. I know why that phenomenon is taking place. They are desperate. They have given up on the public schools. The way to reverse that desperation is to show there is some reason to have hope, take some action to do meaningful things about the situation in our public schools, take dramatic, highly visible action like school construction, class size reduction and the wiring of schools in order to have a

maximum use of technology. That brings hope for the public schools. It renews all that is there.

We must continue despite the fact that a continuing resolution sort of blocks out a clear discussion of the issues. We must continue the discussion and try to force onto the agenda of the continuing resolution debate all of these priority programs like the saving and protection of Social Security, and the federal assistance to education, HMO reform. They cannot be smothered away by the fact that there will be no individual appropriations bills on each one of these areas.

So I hope that the common sense of the American people will invade these halls in the next few weeks, we will get away from the trivialities and the pornography and return to issues that matter most in this indispensable Nation. We need to continue to make decisions that are going to carry us into the 21st century as a leader of the free world.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. Manton (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today after 5:00 p.m. on account of personal reasons.

Ms. SANCHEZ (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) beginning at 5:00 p.m. today and for the balance of the day on account of official business.

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 Ms. KAPTUR) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CONYERS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HINCHEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MINGE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii, for 5 minutes, today.

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

Mr. CHAMBLISS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PAUL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BILBRAY, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. KAPTUR) and to include extraneous material:)

Mr. KIND.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas.

Ms. PELOSI.

Mr. CONDIT.

Mrs. CAPPS.

Mr. DOOLEY of California.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York.

Mr. UNDERWOOD.

Mr. KUCINICH.

Mr. McDERMOTT.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii.

Mr. OBERSTAR.

Mr. KLECZKA.

Ms. SANCHEZ.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri.

Ms. LEE.

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

Mr. THOMAS.

Mr. EHRLICH.

Mr. RIGGS.

Mrs. NORTHUP.

Mr. BOB SCHAFER of Colorado.

Mr. BILIRAKIS.

Mr. CASTLE.

Mr. SMITH of Oregon.

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

Mr. TOWNS.

Mrs. MORELLA.

Mr. RAMSTAD.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana.

Mr. HUTCHINSON.

Mr. ROHRBACHER.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

Mr. DIXON.

Mr. GREEN.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Oversight, reported that that committee did on the following date present to the President, for his approval, a bill of the House of the following title:

On September 23, 1998:

H.R. 1856. To amend the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 to promote volunteer programs and community partnerships for the benefit of national wildlife refuges, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 44 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, September 25, 1998, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XXIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

11228. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Brucellosis in Cattle; State and Area Classifications; Florida [Docket No. 98-014-2]

received August 17, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

11229. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Mediterranean Fruit Fly; Addition to Quarantined Areas [Docket No. 98-083-1] received August 17, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

11230. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Mexican Fruit Fly Regulations; Removal of Regulated Area [Docket No. 98-084-1] received August 17, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

11231. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Validated Brucellosis-Free States; Alabama [Docket No. 98-086-1] received August 17, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

11232. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Mediterranean Fruit Fly; Addition to Quarantined Areas [Docket No. 98-083-2] received August 18, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

11233. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule—Risk-Based Capital Standards: Unrealized Holding Gains on Certain Equity Securities [Docket No. 98-12] (RIN: 1557-AB14) received September 15, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

11234. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule—Capital; Risk-Based Capital Guidelines; Capital Adequacy Guidelines; Capital Maintenance; Servicing Assets [Docket No. 98-10] (RIN: 1557-AB14) received September 10, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

11235. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Final Flood Elevation Determinations [44 CFR Part 67] received September 15, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

11236. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Changes in Flood Elevation Determinations [Docket No. FEMA-7261] received September 15, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

11237. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, transmitting the Department's final rule—Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket No. FEMA-7694] received September 15, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

11238. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, transmitting the Department's final rule—List of Communities Eligible for the Sale of Flood Insurance [Docket No. FEMA-7693] received September 15, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.