WE ARE SPREADING OUR MILITARY TOO THIN

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

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, later this week we are going to be asked to take a very, very difficult vote, and it will involve how much should the Congress authorize to spend for this war in the Balkans, and as a previous speaker, my colleague from Indiana, just said, there are many of us, not only here in Congress but around the country, that have serious concerns about this war. What my colleague from Indiana did not mention is history, and there is an old expression, and I think it is from Montezuma, who said that those who refuse to learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

Mr. Speaker, let me give the Members a very important history lesson that the Germans learned in the 1940s, in World War II. In World War II the Germans sent 400,000 troops into the Balkans, they suffered 70,000 casualties, and at the end of the war they controlled less ground than the day that they marched in.

Mr. Speaker, this is a war that I think we need to think long and hard before we get even more deeply involved, but we had the debate last week on that, and we had our votes, we had a chance to vote. This week, though, we are going to get a chance to vote on whether or not we should fund the war; and then secondly, if the Republican leadership is successful in the Committee on Rules, whether or not we should vote for even more funding than the President requested.

I want to talk a little bit about history as well because we are continually told that we have spread our military too thin, and I agree with that. The truth of the matter is we have spread our military too thin, but I think the best analogy is an analogy of peanut butter and jelly. We have spread our peanut butter and jelly entirely too thin, but it is not because we are not giving our military enough money.

I want to talk a little bit about what is happening. We have been told, for example, in the last several weeks that we are about 14,000 sailors short in terms of our Navy, but do my colleagues know what? We are not short a single admiral, we are not short any generals. In fact, as this chart indicates, in 1945 when we had 12.1 million Americans in uniform, we had 31 generals above the rank of four star. Today we have 1.3 million Americans in uniform, and we have 33 generals. So, we may be short on Army personnel, we may be short on people in the Navy, but we are certainly not short on generals.

Let me point out another chart, and this is really for the benefit of my Republican colleagues.

As my colleagues know, just 4 years ago we passed a 7-year balanced budget plan, and in that balanced budget plan we said that in Fiscal Year 1999, the year that we are in right now, we said that we would spend $267 billion on defense. That is what we said we would spend this year. Well, according to the Congressional Budget Office, we actually will spend this year $273 billion. So, in other words, we are already spending $6 billion more on defense than we said we were going to be spending.

Now despite that we are being asked this week to fund an additional $13 billion. Now I go back to my analogy of the peanut butter and jelly. It is not that we are not giving the military enough money or enough peanut butter and jelly, the problem is that we are spreading it far too thin. We currently have troops in 135 different countries. We are prepared to fight a war in Korea, we are prepared to fight a war in the desert, and now we are apparently going to have to fight a war in Kosovo. The problem is, Mr. Speaker, we are spreading ourselves too thin, and at some point we in the Congress have to say the problem is not that we do not give enough money to the Pentagon, the problem is that the administration wants to spread that money too thinly.

I simply want to ask my colleagues and the Members of the House a couple of very simple and straightforward questions, and frankly as it relates to defense policy, as it relates to foreign policy and ultimately as it relates to budget policy. We ought to get clear and simple answers to tough questions, and I would like to propose two questions to my colleagues in the House:

First of all, should we borrow from Social Security to pay for a war in Kosovo? My answer is no.

The second question is: Should defense spending get preferential treatment in the appropriations process, or should we give them a special appropriation now? And again my answer is no, and I think the numbers speak for themselves.

Ultimately, Mr. Speaker, we are going to be asked, Republicans and Democrats alike: Is this such an important policy, is this such an important war, that we are going to take money out of the Social Security Trust Fund? I hope we will say no.

Now my proposal will be that we give the President exactly what he asked for. He is asking for $6.05 billion in emergency supplemental appropriations, but I believe we ought to offset that with spending cuts in other parts of the government, and that can be done. In fact, if we do that, it means that every other department will have to cut its appropriations in the next several months by about 1 percent.

Now that is a big cut, but we are talking about a $6 billion cut out of a $1,700 billion budget. I think we can tighten those belts, and that will mean that we will not be stealing money from Social Security.

It was only a couple of weeks ago that we here on the House floor said we are going to pass a budget for the first time in American history or for the first time in recent history that actually balances the budget, and for the first time saying that every penny of Social Security taxes will go only for Social Security. That was just a few weeks ago. Well, I meant it when I said it then, and I think most of my colleagues meant it, and I think we ought to make the tough choice when we have to vote on this emergency supplemental where we will already be spending more money than we said we were going spend just a few years ago in defense. I am willing to give defense the extra money the President has requested, but I think it ought to come out of other parts of the budget.

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

(Mr. ALLEN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. BRADY of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.)

CENSUS 2000

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, once again I rise to point out that the experts support the use of scientific methods to correct the census for undercounts and overcounts. Yesterday the National Academy of Sciences released the first report from the fourth panel to review the Census Bureau's plans for the 2000 census. Yet again, the experts convened by the Academy endorsed the Census Bureau's plan to use science to evaluate and correct the census counts.

At the end of 1998 the Census Bureau asked the National Academy of Sciences to convene a fourth panel to evaluate the Census Bureau's design for Census 2000. This independent panel, like the three that preceded it, has unequivocally stated that statistical methods work. The Academy panel stated yesterday that the design of the quality control survey represents, and I quote from the panel, ''good, current practice.'' In fact, the panel explained, and I quote:

''Because it is not possible to count everyone in a census, a post-enumeration survey'' using modern scientific methods ''is an important element of census planning.''

Currently the Census Bureau intends to use a post-enumeration survey entitled the Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation or A.C.E. The A.C.E. Survey was designed in light of the Supreme Court

decision regarding the use of statistical methods for the purpose of apportionment. Mr. Speaker, we are beginning to hear criticism of the A.C.E. This Academy report should finally put that criticism to rest.

Yes, the A.C.E. is a different program in its design and size than the survey that had been planned for Census 2000 prior to the court case. Those who are critical of these differences are not reviewing the details of A.C.E. As the Academy reports, changes in sample size as a result of the Supreme Court decision, quote, should not affect the quality, end quote, of the results. In fact, the panel comments that since the Bureau will no longer be using statistical methods for apportionment, there is no need for the larger survey envisioned prior to the court decision. In addition, the Academy notes that it is appropriate to combine information across States.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday's report demonstrates the professional community's continued strong support for the Census Bureau's plan for the year 2000 census. In 1994 the Academy issued its first report which laid the foundation for the current plans. In 1995 a second panel reviewing Census Bureau plans at the request of Congress in a bipartisan way reported that spending more money on traditional methods would not improve the accuracy of the counts or the census. Earlier this year a third panel of experts convened by the National Academy of Sciences said that it strongly supports the use of a quality control survey to correct for errors in the census.

I support counting everyone. The National Academy of Sciences has stated for the fourth time that the best way to count the population is to use modern scientific methods. I am going to rely on the opinion of these independent, impartial scientists at the National Academy of Sciences. These experts say the plan devised by the professionals at the Census Bureau will give us the most accurate count. That is the plan that I support.

If my colleagues agree with me, that we should count everyone, then they should join me in getting out of the way of the professionals at the Census Bureau. Let us let the professionals do what they are hired to do, count people, and let us let them do it in the best way they can. We should be encouraging the use of modern scientific methods in Census 2000, not preventing them.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to put into the RECORD the report from the National Academy of Sciences, the fourth report that has come out in support of the use of modern scientific methods for the most accurate count in counting all Americans.

The report referred to as is follows:

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL, COMMISSION ON BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES AND EDUCATION,
Washington, DC, May 3, 1999.

Dr. KENNETH PREWITT,
Director, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC.

DEAR DR. PREWITT: As part of its charge, the new Panel to Review the 2000 Census offers this letter report on the Census Bureau's plans for the design of the Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation (ACE) survey, a new post-enumeration survey. This survey is needed in light of the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling regarding the use of the census for reapportionment.

In general, the panel concludes that the ACE design work to date is well considered. It represents good, current practice in both sample design and post-stratification design, as well as in the interrelationships between the two. In this letter the panel offers observations and suggestions for the Census Bureau's consideration as the work proceeds to complete the ACE design.

BACKGROUND

Because it is not possible to count everyone in a census, a post-enumeration survey is an important element of census planning. The survey results are combined with census data to yield an alternative set of estimated counts that are used to evaluate the basic census enumeration and that can be used for other purposes. For 2000, an Integrated Coverage Measurement (ICM) survey had been planned for evaluation and to produce adjusted counts for all uses of the census.[1] The recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling against the use of sampling for reapportionment among the states eliminates the need for a post-enumeration survey that supports direct state estimates, as was originally planned for the ICM survey. (The state allocations of the ICM sample design deviated markedly from a proportional-to-size allocation in order to support direct state estimation. Specifically, the ICM design required a minimum of 300 block clusters in each state.) Alternative approaches are now possible for both sample and post-stratification designs for the 2000 ACE survey. As a result, the planned ACE post-enumeration survey will differ in several important respects from the previously planned ICM survey.

PLANS FOR ACE SAMPLE AND POST-STRATIFICATION DESIGN

Our understanding of the current plans for the ACE survey is based on information from Census Bureau staff.[2] Building on its work for the previously planned ICM, the Census Bureau will first identify a sample of block clusters containing approximately 2 million housing units and then will independently develop a new list of addresses for those blocks.[3] In a second stage, a sample of block clusters will be drawn from the initial sample to obtain approximately 750,000 housing units, which was the number originally planned for the ICM. (Larger block clusters will not be drawn in their entirety; they will first be subsampled to obtain sampling units of 30–50 housing units. Because the costs of interviewing are so much greater than the costs of listing addresses, this subsampling approach allows the interviewed housing units to be allocated in a more effective manner.) Finally, in a third stage, a sample of block clusters will be drawn from the second-stage sample to obtain the approximately 300,000 housing units required for the ACE sample. The target of 300,000 housing units for the ACE, which may be modified somewhat, will be based on a new set of criteria that are not yet final.

The Census Bureau is considering three strategies for selection of the 300,000 ACE subsample from the 750,000 sample: (1) reducing the sample proportionately in terms of state and other block characteristics from 750,000 to 300,000; (2) reducing the sample by using varying proportions by state; or (3) differentially reducing the sample by retaining a higher proportion of blocks in areas with higher percentages of minorities (based on the 1990 census).[4] These options for selection of the 300,000 ACE housing units from the 750,000 units first selected will be carefully evaluated. The plans include three evaluation criteria for assessing the options: (a) to reduce the estimated coefficients of variation for 51 post-stratum groups (related to the 357-cell post-stratification design discussed below); (b) to reduce the differences in coefficients of variation for race/ethnicity and tenure groups; and (c) to reduce the coefficients of variation for estimated state totals. (Option (3) above is motivated by criterion (b)). Without going into detail, it is also useful to mention that the Census Bureau has instituted a number of design changes from the 1990 post-enumeration survey for the ACE that will reduce the variation in sampling weights for blocks, which will reduce the sensitivity of the final estimates to results for individual blocks. This represents a key improvement in comparison with the 1990 design.

The current plan to produce post-strata involves modification of the 357-cell post-stratification design suggested for use in 1990-based intercensal estimation. Current modification under consideration by the Census Bureau include expansion of the geographic stratification for non-Hispanic whites from four regions to nine census divisions, adding a race/ethnicity group, changing the definition of the urbanicity variable, and adding new post-stratification factors, such as mail return rate at the block level. Logistic regression, modeling inclusion in the 1990 census, is being used to help identify new variables that might be useful, as well as to provide a hierarchy of the current post-stratification factors that will be used to guide collapsing of cells if that is needed. (In comparison, the analysis that generated the 357-cell post-stratification was based on indirect measures of census undercoverage, such as the census substitution rate.)

The Census Bureau plan demonstrates awareness of the interaction of its modification of the 750,000 housing unit sample design with its modification of the 357 post-strata design. (On the most basic level, the sample size allocated to each post-stratum determines the variance of its estimate.) The plan also makes clear that even though much of the information used to support this modification process must be based on the 1990 census, it is important that the ultimate design for the ACE survey (and any associated estimation) allows for plausible departures from the 1990 findings. For example, significant differences between the 1990 and 2000 censuses could stem from the change in the surrounding block search for matches, the planned change in the treatment of ACE movers, or changes in patterns and overall levels of household response.

OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

Sample design to select the 300,000 housing units

Because of the need to keep the ACE on schedule by initiating resource allocations that support the independent listing of the 2 million addresses relatively soon, as well as the need to avoid development and testing of new computer software, the Census Bureau has decided to subsample the 300,000 ACE housing units from the 750,000 housing units of the previously planned ICM design. The panel agrees that operational considerations support this decision.

[1]Footnotes at end of attachment to the letter.

The cost of the constraint of selecting the 300,000 ACE housing units from the 750,000 ICM housing units, in comparison with an unconstrained selection of 300,000 housing units, is modest. While the constrained selection will likely result in estimates with somewhat higher variances, the panel believes that careful selection of the subsample can limit the increase in variance to that it will not be consequential. (By careful selection, the panel means use of the suggested approaches of the Census Bureau, or new or hybrid techniques, to identify a method that best satisfies the criteria listed above.) This judgment by the panel, although not based on a specific analysis by itself or the Census Bureau, takes into account the fact that a large fraction of the 750,000 housing units of the ICM design are selected according to criteria very similar to those proposed for the ACE design.

In addition, the panel notes that the removal of the requirement for direct state estimates permits a substantial reduction in sample size from the 750,000 ICM design in sparsely populated states, for which ACE estimates can now pool information across states. As a result the ACE design could result in estimates with comparable reliability to that of the previously planned, much larger ICM design.

Given the freedom to use estimates that borrow strength across states, the final ACE sample should reduce the amount of sampling within less populous states from that for the preliminary sample of 750,000 housing units. However, there is a statistical basis either for retaining a minimum ACE sample in each state, or what is nearly equivalent, for retaining a sample to support an ACE estimate with a minimum coefficient of variation. The estimation now planned for the ACE survey assumes that there will be no important state effects on post-stratum undercoverage factors. In evaluating the quality of ACE estimates, it will be important to validate this assumption, which can only be done for each state if the direct state estimates are of sufficient quality to support the comparison, acknowledging that for some of these analyses one might pool data for similar, neighboring states. (Identification of significant state effects would not necessarily invalidate use of the ACE estimates for various purposes but would be used as part of an overall assessment of their quality.)

This validation could take many forms, and it is, therefore, difficult to specify the precise sample size or coefficient of variation needed. We offer one approach the Census Bureau should examine for assessing the adequacy of either type of standard. Using the criteria for evaluating alternative subsample designs (i.e., the estimated coefficients of variation for 51 post-stratum groups, the differences in coefficients of variation for race/ethnicity and tenure groups, and the coefficients of variation for state totals), the Census Bureau should try out various state minima sample sizes to determine their effects on the outputs. It is possible that a moderately sized state minimum sample can be obtained without affecting the above coefficients of variation to any important extent. There are a variety of ways in which the assumption of the lack of residual state effects after accounting for post-stratum differences could be assessed, including regression methods. We encourage the Census Bureau to consider this important analytic issue early and provide plans for addressing it before the survey design is final.

The panel makes one additional point on state minima. The state minima will support direct state estimates that will be fairly reliable for many states. The Census Bureau should consider using the direct state estimates not only for validation, but also in estimation—in case of a failure of the assumption that there will be no important state effects on undercoverage factors. Specifically, the Census Bureau should examine the feasibility of combining the currently planned ACE estimates at the state level with the direct state estimates, using estimated mean-squared error to evaluate the performance of such a combined estimate in comparison with the currently planned estimates. We understand that the necessity of prespecification of census procedure requires that the Census Bureau formulate an estimation strategy prior to the census, which adds urgency to this issue.

Finally, the panel has two suggestions with respect to the criteria used for assessing the ACE sample design. First, there should be an assessment of the quality of the estimates for geographical areas at some level of aggregation below that of states, as deemed appropriate by the Census Bureau. (This criterion is also important for evaluating the ACE post-stratification design, discussed below.) Second, the importance of equalizing the coefficients of variation for different post-strata depends on how estimates for specific post-strata with higher coefficients of variation for post-strata that do not have much effect have less need to be controlled, assuming that the estimates for these post-strata do not have other uses.

Post-stratification plans

The 1999 census adjusted counts used 1,392 post-strata, but post-production analysis for calculating adjusted counts for intercensal purposes resulted in the use of 357 post-strata. The panel believes that the use of these 357 post-strata (and the hierachy for collapsing post-stratification cells) was a reasonable design for 1990, and that, in turn, the 1990 design is a good starting point in determining the post-strata to be used in the 2000 ACE. The Census Bureau is considering four types of modifications to the 357 post-strata design, although it has not yet set the criteria for evaluating various post-stratification designs. Logistic regression will be used to identify new variables and interactions of existing variables that might be added to the post-stratification. Finer post-strata have the advantage of greater within-cell homogeneity, potentially producing better estimates when carried down to lower levels of geographic aggregation. Some gains with respect to the important problem to lower levels of geographic aggregation. Some gains with respect to the important problem of correlation bias might also occur. However, stratifying on factors that are not related to the undercount will generally decrease the precision of undercount adjustments. The tradeoff between within-cell homogeneity and precision needs to be assessed to undermine whether certain calls should be collapsed and whether additional variables should be used.

It is also important to examine the effects of various attempts at post-stratification on the quality of substate estimates, especially since certain demographic groups are more subject to undercoverage, and so substate areas with a high percentage of these groups will have estimates with higher variances. (This argument is based on the fact that, as in the binomial situation, the mean and the variance of estimated undercounts are typically positively related.) We believe it is extremely important that analysis at substate levels of aggregation be conducted to inform both the sample design and the post-stratification scheme. Furthermore, this issue needs to be studied simultaneously with that of the effect of the design and post-stratification on the post-stratification on the post-stratum estimates. The fact that analysis of substate areas appears in both sample design and post-stratification design is an indication of the important interaction between these two design elements and justifies the need for studies of them to be carried out simultaneously. The panel encourages the Census Bureau to work on them at the same time.

The panel notes that the decision to use a modification of the 357-strata system from 1990 for the ACE post-stratification design will probably not permit many checks against estimates from demographic analysis that use direct estimates from ACE. This limitation may increase the difficulty of identifying the precise source of large discrepancies in these comparisons. However, the panel does not view this is a reason not proceed, since the precision of direct estimates at the finest level of detail of post-stratification (using 1,392 strata in this context) could make such comparisons more difficult to interpret, and the estimates from demographic analysis are not extremely useful for this purpose (except for blacks, and then only nationally).

As work on both the sample design and post-stratification design progresses, the Census Bureau should not rely entirely on information from the 1990 census: substantial differences might occur between the 1990 and the 2000 censuses that would lead to either a sample design or a post-stratification design that was optimized for 1990 but that might not perform as well in 2000. Instead, the Census Bureau should use a sample design that moves toward a more equal probability design than 1990 information would suggest. Similarly, the Census Bureau, using whatever information is available since 1990 on factors related to census undercoverage, should develop a post-stratification design that will perform well for modest departures from 1990.

Finally, when considering criteria for both sample design and post-strata, it is important to keep in mind that the goal of the census is to provide estimated counts for geographic areas as well as for demographic groups. Since the use of equal coefficients of variation for post-strata will not adequately balance these competing demands, the Census Bureau will need to give further attention to this difficult issue. The balancing of competing goals is not only a post-stratification issue, but also a sample design issue. For example, if block clusters that contain large proportions of a specific demographic group are substantially underrepresented in the ACE sample, the performance of the estimates for some areas could be affected.

Documentation

Given the importance of key decisions and input values for the ACE design, it is important that they be documented. In particular, the Census Bureau should produce an accessible document in print or in electronic form that (1) gives the planning values for state-level, substate level, and post-stratum level variances resulting from the decisions for the sample and post-stratification designs and (2) provides the sampling weights used in the ACE selection of block clusters.

SUMMARY

From its review of the Census Bureau's current plans for design of the ACE survey, the panel offers three general comments;

The panel concludes that the general nature of the Census Bureau's work on the ACE design represents good, current practice in sample design and post-stratification design and their interactions.

The panel recognizes that operational constraints make it necessary for the Census Bureau to subsample the ACE from the previously planned ICM sample. The subsampling, if done properly, should not affect the

quality of the resulting design if compared with one that sampled 300,000 housing units that were not a subset of the 750,000 housing units previously planned for the ICM.

The panel believes that removal of the constraint to produce direct state estimates justifies the substantial reduction in the ACE sample size from the ICM sample size. The planned ACE could result in estimates with comparable reliability to that of the larger ICM design.

The panel offers three suggestions for the Census Bureau as it works to finalize the ACE design, some of which the Census Bureau is already considering: (1) a method for examining how large a state minimum sample to retain; (2) some modifications in the criteria used to evaluate the ACE sample design and post-stratification, namely, lower priority for coefficents of variation for excessively detailed post-strata and more attention to coefficents of variation for substate areas; and (3) a possible change in the ACE estimation procedure, involving use of direct state estimates in combination with the currently planned estimates. In addition, the Census Bureau should fully document key decisions for the ACE design.

The panel looks forward to continuing to review the ACE design and estimation as the Census Bureau's plans are further developed. The panel is especially interested in the evolving plans for post-stratification design, including the use of logistic regression to identify additional post-stratification factors; plans for the treatment of movers in ACE; and the treatment of nonresponse as it relates to unresolved matches in ACE estimation. In addition, after data have been collected, the panel is interested in the assessment of the effect of nonsampling error on ACE estimation and the overal evaluation criteria used to assess the quality of ACE estimates.

We conclude by commending you and your staff for the openness you have shown and your willingness to discuss the ACE survey and other aspects of the planning for the 2000 census.

Sincerely,

JANET L. NORWOOD, *Chair,*
Panel to Review the 2000 Census.

Attachment: Panel Roster.

PANEL TO REVIEW THE 2000 CENSUS

Janet L. Norwood (*Chair*), Urban Institute, Washington, DC
Robert M. Bell, RAND, Santa Monica, CA
Norman M. Bradburn, National Opinion Research Center, Chicago, IL
Lawrence D. Brown, Department of Statistics, University of Pennsylvania
William F. Eddy, Department of Statistics, Carnegie Mellon University
Robert M. Hauser, Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin
Roderick J.A. Little, School of Public Health, University of Michigan
Ingram Olkin, Department of Statistics, Stanford University
D. Bruce Petrie, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, Ontario
Andrew A. White, *Study Director*
Constance F. Citro, *Senior Program Officer*
Michael L. Cohen, *Senior Program Officer*

FOOTNOTES

[1] See National Research Council (1999), *Measuring a Changing Nation: Modern Methods for the 2000 Census.* Michael L. Cohen, Andrew A. White, and Keith F. Rust, eds., Panel to Evaluate Alternative Census Methodologies, Committee on National Statistics, National Research Council. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

[2] See Kostanich, Donna, Richard Griffin, and Deborah Fenstermaker (1999), Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation Survey: Plans for Census 2000. Unpublished paper prepared for the March 19, 1999, meeting of the Panel to Review the 2000 Census. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C.

[3] The use of the term block cluster refers to the adjoining of one or more very small blocks to an adjacent block for the purpose of the ACE sample design. Large blocks often form their own block clusters.

[4] The Census Bureau is aware that mixtures of strategies (2) and (3) are also possible, although such mixtures are not currently being considered.

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

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

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 addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

END THE HOSTILITIES BEFORE OUR MILITARY RESOURCES ARE FURTHER DEPLETED

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

Mr. SHERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for this special order today so that we may share with the American people and all the Members of Congress the results of our peace mission this past weekend to Vienna which was led by my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON). As a member of the House Committee on Armed Services, I felt a special responsibility to our service men and women to find a way to end the hostilities before their lives are further endangered and before our military resources are further depleted.

□ 2015

As a Member of Congress, I felt that the people of my congressional district wanted me to pursue a peaceful and diplomatic end to a conflict that could escalate into wider hostilities.

I believe that the eleven Members of the House delegation significantly increased the opportunity for a diplomatic settlement to the current hostilities in Kosovo without further loss of life. We did so in a way that will help accomplish the U.S. and NATO goals of ending ethnic cleansing and providing for the return of the refugees to an autonomous Kosovo.

We met extensively with our counterparts this weekend in the Russian Duma who are also committed to bringing a peaceful resolution to this conflict. Russia is a key player in finding a diplomatic resolution, and we must keep in mind that our continued involvement in the bombing campaign threatens future relations between the United States and Russia.

The members of the Russian Duma we met with agree that the Balkan crisis poses a tremendous threat to international security, and they share our desire for a diplomatic solution rather than military escalation. Failure to find such a solution not only will undermine Russian-American relations but will further exacerbate the human suffering caused by the terrorism, the ethnic cleansing and massive refugee problems in the region.

The end product of our sessions with the Duma provides a realistic framework for the administration to negotiate an end to the Balkan crisis. We call for practical measures to achieve three equally important tasks: withdrawal of Serbian armed forces from Kosovo, an end to the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia and a cessation of the military activities of the KLA. All three of these goals must be accomplished to recognize a lasting peace.

We can accomplish these tasks by allowing a voluntary return of all refugees and the unhindered access to them by humanitarian aid organizations. NATO would be responsible for policing Yugoslavia's borders to ensure that weapons do not reenter Yugoslavia with the returning refugees. An armed international force, not composed of the major combatants, would administer the peace in Kosovo, and the Russians are very willing to participate in that armed international force.

A sense of the Congress resolution is being finalized which would put Congress on record in support of our framework for peace. It is our hope that such a resolution will be voted on later this week and that the administration will also pursue the diplomatic route to peace, including further discussions with the Russians.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution when it comes to the House Floor for a vote. Neither our congressional delegation nor the members of the Russian Duma were negotiating on behalf of our respective governments, but we are confident that the framework we jointly developed clears the path for a solution to the crisis that will both end the ethnic cleansing and stop the bombing.

I am proud to have been a part of this bipartisan peace mission. The eleven Members of Congress who sat at the same table for 19 hours with members of the Russian Duma are committed to finding a diplomatic avenue acceptable to all parties that will bring peace to the region. I am convinced that the framework we established will pave the way for a lasting peace.

Unlike some of my colleagues, I am very confident in the ability of our Armed Forces to win this war. But I believe that we must continue to prepare for all-out war, and we must fund our Armed Forces, but we must also search for peaceful solutions.

The time is ripe. The Russians will help, and the Serbs are ready to avoid a wider war that will totally destroy their country and also sacrifice the lives of our brave young men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces.