die? How many more mothers will lose their lives or babies or elderly? How many more Palestinians or how many more citizens of the State of Israel?

So as has been offered, it is high stakes, but frankly, I believe it is life or death. It is life or death for this world order. It is life or death for those of us who believe that the Mideast offers one of the strongest opportunities for anchoring the understanding of people from different walks of life and religious beliefs.

This is the time now to view this summit with all of the resources that we might offer as the United States of America to bolster the journey and travels of Prime Minister Barak, to acknowledge that he has lost his interior minister who has resigned, and his minister of foreign policy refuses to come. Yes, he is traveling a very difficult journey, but I believe that if the American people can offer to him their applause and congratulations along with our applause and respect for President Arafat, and to say to all three men and all that will be engaged in this discussion for peace, it is now time to select and to choose, Mr. Speaker, courage over caution. We must have peace.

ISSUES OF CONCERN TO COLORADO AND THE NATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, to begin this evening, as my colleagues know, many of us have been delayed due to transportation difficulties with the airlines out there. Some of my constituents were surprised to learn that Congressmen, in fact, also have their bags lost, that Congressmen also are delayed on these flights. So tonight I thought I would show my colleagues a pretty clear demonstration, since they may see it as I speak, of exactly what happens to a Congressman who loses his baggage. If my colleagues will look down, they will see my dress socks. Obviously, the real socks are in the suitcase and somewhere the suitcase is out there in that system.

In all seriousness about that, in the last 8 years, in serving in the United States Congress, I have had very good air service across this country.

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As many of my colleagues know, we are very, very dependent in all walks of life in this country, we are very, very dependent on our service from one State to the next State or across the country.

I am telling the Members, in the last 3 months the air service in this country has deteriorated significantly. I have not, with the major airline that I fly, I have not, to the best of my knowledge, had an on-time arrival in 3 months. That has not happened, that kind of record has not happened in 8 years.

I am not going to speak about transportation this evening any more than I am doing right now other than to point out that this problem is getting worse. Once in a while the airlines can blame it on weather, once in a while the airlines can blame it on mechanics, but the fact is that there is a deterioration of service, and it is incumbent upon the executives of these airlines to fix the problem, because our country is too dependent upon it.

The taxpayers in this country provide a lot of dollars for airports. The passengers in this country provide a lot of dollars in their taxes that are put on there, passenger taxes at airports to help supplement our airline service. We deserve more, in my opinion.

It was with some interest last week that I saw news stories about what I guess they call air rage. There is no place for anyone on an airplane to take out their frustrations, in my opinion, on a stewardess or someone else on the airplane. But I do want Members to know that there should be some understanding of some of the frustration being felt by these passengers across the country.

I was at Denver International Airport today and there was a lady there who had been stuck for 2 days at that airport. So as we talk about airplane rage or some of these other things, remember what is happening to the passengers in this country. We deserve more from some of these airlines. That is not all of the airlines. Obviously, some of them are performing well.

I think it is time we pay very close attention, Mr. Speaker, to those ratings that come out every month or so talking about which of these airlines are having a tough time with service and which of the airlines want to merge, and come to us and ask us for more dollars for airports and things.

I think we have every justification to stand out and say, ''Hey, why do you not improve your service? There are a lot of people paying taxes out there for better service.''

In Denver, for example, we have one dominant airline. We have some of the highest business rates in the United States. We should expect premium service. I should add again that for many, many years I have received premium service out of Denver, but something has happened in the last 3 months. It is going to damage our economy here before too long.

TOLL ROADS IN THE STATE OF COLORADO

Let me go on. I want to talk about several other things this evening. First, I want to talk about the proposition of toll roads in the State of Colorado. I want to move from there.

I have noticed several editorials in the last few days about estate taxes, actual editorials. In fact, it sounds to me like the Democrats, who have for years and years supported the death tax, and in fact, this year the Clinton administration in their budget proposes an increase, an increase in the death tax, these editorials sound like they are writing for that portion or that section of the Democratic Party that supports these death taxes. They act as if we owe the government these death taxes.

I am going to talk about the death taxes for a few minutes after I finish talking about the toll roads, and then I will spend a few minutes on social security and talk about the plan that we as Congressmen have for our retirement, although we are also on social security; the plan that Vice President GORE voted for, the plan that Vice President GORE, under his policies, under his procedures, supported.

We will talk a little about social security. We will talk about the problems with social security. We will talk about, look, do we do what the Vice President has proposed, although he has recently changed his mind, and that is kind of, do not touch it? Of course we are afraid to touch it, but if we do not do something about it, that system is going to break. It is going to fall out of the air. The engines are going to start coughing and that plane is going to fall out of the air.

We have to keep social security firm. The way to do it in my opinion is take some bold moves. Frankly, those bold moves have been proposed by George W. Bush, the Governor of the State of Texas. I want to talk about these policies.

I am not here tonight to get into partisan politics, but clearly there is a big distinction when it comes to social security between the Governor of the State of Texas and the Vice President. We have every right to stand on this floor and debate what those differences are.

I would venture to say that by the end of the debate, the majority of my friends on the Democratic side will join us on the Republican side saying, hey, let us take a bold move. Let us do something with social security. Let us save social security.

I would also venture to say that the majority of my colleagues on the Democratic side need to wake up, in my opinion. I do not say that in a derogatory fashion, but be aware, probably, is a better word, be aware of the fact that this death tax is hurting a lot of people in this country. Their policy of the death tax in this country should be changed. We will get into that.

Let us first of all talk about the newest proposition in the State of Colorado by some elitists, in my opinion. That is, gosh, Colorado is a popular spot.

Mr. Speaker, I represent the Third Congressional District of the State of Colorado. That district is one of the largest districts in the United States. It is also the highest district in the United States. Basically, it is all of western Colorado, here to my left.

If we talk about the mountains, and for those not familiar with western and eastern Colorado, the easy way to

think about my district is basically all of the mountains, and then I do go some in eastern Colorado.

The Third Congressional District is geographically larger than the State of Florida. Although there are six congressional districts in Colorado, the Third Congressional District only has a little less than 20 percent of the population. Eighty plus percent of the population lives outside the Third District. But do Members know what? That 80 percent of the population to a large extent enjoys going into the mountains of Colorado.

A lot of us who grew up in Colorado, a lot of us who spent time in Colorado, know what those mountains mean to us. For generation after generation after generation of my families in Colorado, the mountains are what kept them in Colorado. The people of Colorado love their mountains. The people of Colorado are entitled to see their mountains. The people of Colorado are entitled to enjoy those mountains.

But last week we had a new proposal from some bureaucrat, quite frankly, saying, you know, we have too much traffic on I–70. For those who do not know what I–70 is in Colorado, they all know Interstate 70, but where it lies, it virtually cuts the State in half. The mountains go about like this.

What this bureaucrat has come up with is to say, well, let us go ahead because I–70 is so heavily traveled, especially out of the major cities, and we have another interstate called I–25, here, so we have a lot of traffic coming out of these cities, the metropolitan population areas, into the Third Congressional District to enjoy those mountains.

By the way, the highways in the Third Congressional District, they were not paid for by people in the Third Congressional District. Those are taxes to build those highways that were paid for by everybody in the State of Colorado and visitors to the State of Colorado. In fact, our Governor, who personally I have known for a number of years and who I think has done the most outstanding job of a Governor in many, many years, was able to forge through in his first few days and months of office a new program to fund additional taxes to build these highways.

We have grown in popularity. We do have a lot heavier traffic on the I–70 corridor. It used to be when I was in the State House of Representatives the only time we had heavy traffic on I–70 was on Friday afternoon, traffic up to the ski areas, and on Sunday afternoon, traffic back from the ski areas. Now almost every day of the week we have traffic on I–70.

So what happens? We have a highway that is being utilized very heavily, so we are trying to figure out solutions for it. Maybe there are ways, other routes that we can use. What are the solutions?

I could not believe my ears last week. We had a bureaucrat that came out and said, hey, not for any other congressional district in the State of Colorado, just the congressional district that the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) represents, let us put a toll booth right on the highway. Let us bring the troll in. We have taxed the people to build the highway, now let us tax them to keep them off the highway.

Most are familiar obviously with toll booths, Mr. Speaker. My guess would be their experience with toll booths has been we set up a toll booth to collect money because it is the truest form of ''the user pays.'' The person who benefits from the highway is the one who travels on the highway and is the one who pays the tolls.

This toll booth being proposed by a bureaucrat is not a toll booth to raise money for construction of highways, it is a toll booth to impose a penalty upon people who want to come visit the Colorado mountains. It is a price to be put on, and if people can meet it, if they are wealthy enough, they get to go to the mountains. If they are a poor working guy out there or gal who does not have that kind of money, they do not get to go to the mountains. It is a new toll. We have a new troll in Colorado.

It is not fair. Fundamentally it is not fair. Let us talk a little about it. What kind of rate do Members think they would have to charge in that toll booth to keep people from visiting their mountains, $1? We are not going to stop anybody for $1, by charging a dollar in the toll booth, and the reason is we do not want them to go onto the highways, we want to slow down what we call congestion traffic.

Would it be $5? That is not going to slow it down. What about $20? Maybe a little. But $30 or $40, yes, we will then begin to slow the traffic down on I–70 going into the Colorado mountains, $30 or $40 or $50 at the toll booth. We will begin to take the congestion off that highway.

Do Members know who they are impacting or where the unfairness of this is? They are not impacting the person who drives the Mercedes, or in fact the person even in my economic bracket. I could afford to pay for it. But the people we are impacting are the people who live out here who work 40, 50, 60 hours a week, can barely get by, and they take their families to Glenwood Springs, Colorado, to the Hot Springs pool for family recreation, or they take them to the Sunlight Ski Area in Glenwood Springs, or to Powderhorn in Grand Junction, or they run them up to Breckenridge when there is a special rate for skiing.

There are a lot of families in Colorado that are not wealthy, Mr. Speaker. There are a lot of families in Colorado where both the man and woman are both working to make ends meet. A lot of those families that are not wealthy, where both parents have to work to make ends meet, enjoy the mountains just like somebody who has a lot of money enjoys the mountains.

It goes the other way, too, by the way. My guess would be, although I have not had a personal conversation with this individual who proposed this, my guess would be that he also wants to collect a toll going the other direction.

So when the people in rural Colorado, and I can tell the Members, a lot of children in rural Colorado have never been in an airplane. They have never been higher than maybe a four- or five-story building. Right now in probably 98, and this is hard to believe, in 98 or 96 percent of the State, maybe, 96 percent of the State of Colorado, there is one escalator, one escalator. So one of the beautiful areas of Colorado, one of the areas of major attractions, is Denver. Denver has the Broncos, it has the Rockies, the Children's Museum, the fish aquarium, it has the hockey team, it has Elitch Gardens, a lot of different things; Denver University. There are lots of things that the people in the mountains like to go to the city.

Now all of a sudden we have somebody out there trying to get momentum claiming that it is good for the environment to go ahead and tax the people that were taxed to build the road, tax them to keep them off the roads. They never even mentioned in this proposal what kind of impact it is going to have on that blue collar worker, that blue collar labor who does not make a lot of money, and 30 or 40 bucks out of their pocket means a lot. It hurts.

If these people really want to cut down on congestion through a toll road, they are not going to do it with $1, with $5. They are going to have to do it with $30, $40, $50. All of a sudden we have discovered a troll sitting on the tollgate to my district, to the district that I am privileged to represent. We have made a determination in Colorado that if people want to go see the mountains of Colorado, if they want to enjoy those 14,000 foot majestic packs, and I have by far more 14,000 foot peaks than other people in the country, I have 54 or so, if people want to go out and enjoy that, they can as long as they are part of the wealthy status, as long as they have the money to pay the toll. When they go up to the troll, if they have 40 or 30 bucks, throw it in the box.

Fortunately, we have a Governor in the State of Colorado who in my opinion is not going to stand for that kind of thing. Fortunately, we have a Governor in the State of Colorado who has stood up and put together a good highway improvement program. He has put those taxpayer dollars into construction.

I think there is some legitimate argument, by the way, for a toll booth if in fact that money is going to improve that road.

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I can remember growing up, and my father used to show us all the time, the kids, he and my mom had six kids. My parents now live in Glenwood Springs,

they are great, great wonderful people. I remember when I was young and mom and dad pointed out the Denver Bolder Turnpike, the only toll booth in the State of Colorado.

My dad and my mom always used to tell us, you know what is good about this? They are going to take this down, the government promised us, they are going to take it down the day they pay for the improvements on the Denver Bolder Turnpike.

Do you know what the government did back then? The day that those improvements were paid off, the toll booths came down. Now, that is fair, and people back then accepted the Denver Boulder Turnpike toll booth, because they knew that money was to improve the highway.

It was not put there as a punishment as this is being proposed to do. It was not put there to raise money off the Denver Boulder Turnpike and to transfer to other people programs, it was put there to improve that turnpike. My, my, my how things have changed over time.

Now they want to put a toll booth up there, this recommendation, to penalize you for using the very roads that those taxpayers put in place, to penalize you especially if you are lower middle income or lower income, to penalize you from going up and enjoying the mountains that give you the pride of the State of Colorado.

Colorado is known to my colleagues throughout this floor. You know Colorado. Some of you may know it for the Broncos. Some of you may know it for the Rockies. But, realistically, you know it because of those Rocky Mountains.

We have a fundamental right as citizens of the State of Colorado to enjoy our mountains, without having to pay a toll at a government toll booth to keep congestion off that highway, a toll booth that allows only the wealthy to go by. If you do not have that cash, that $30, $40, $50, and that is exactly what it is going to take to stop that congestion or at least slow it down, then you are out of luck.

It is wrong. And I am not going to drop this issue. I have written Chairman Dan Stuart on their input. I said thank you for the opportunity to comment on the scoping phase of the I–70 environmental impact statement. I am writing to notify your commission and the Federal Highway Administration that I adamantly, adamantly oppose the use of tolls or any other so-called congested pricing levies aimed at discouraging Coloradans from traveling along I–70 in Western Colorado.

Again, how interesting that the only toll booth they are suggesting is right there on the gateway to the Third Congressional District. I have been told by officials that the use of congestion tolls is but one of the many possible remedies being considered. Even so, I strongly urge the traffic planners charged with drafting this EIS to dismiss out of hand the idea of congestion toll roads based clearly on the lack of merit and the discrimination that it exercises against the people who do not make that kind of money, and they are being kept out of the mountains for which they have a lot of pride.

They are citizens of Colorado or visitors to Colorado. There are a whole range of sound and reasonable solutions I write about in this letter that are available. But erecting a toll gate to and from Western Colorado, erecting a toll gate to get in and out of my congressional district is wrong. It is wrong because it is being put there for a punitive nature to punish people who want to go into the mountains, because some ivy league person has thought gosh how cars are evil. Highways are evil. Congestion is evil. Of course, who likes congestion? We all like to have some great method of transportation that does not have congestion.

For you to go out and penalize us in Western Colorado by putting a toll gate both coming in and out of my district, it is not going to be accepted. Forget it. That is not in the letter, I thought I would just ad-lib a little there. But erecting that kind of gate is unacceptable.

While the use of tolls may be appropriate in certain circumstances, it would be unfair to impose a congestion toll for no reason other than to discourage travel by taxpayers who paid for the roads in the first place. Colorado taxpayers have paid more than their fair share for construction and maintenance of these roads. A new congestion toll without a corresponding improvement in the quality of the interstate would seem punitive.

Well, you get the point. I am not too excited about this proposal. I have not had an opportunity to talk with the particular bureaucrat that is out there proposing it.

But I will tell you before it catches on, before you try and go out there and try and dress it up so it looks real pretty, you better understand and I think strengthen our voice that is going to oppose this.

I want to commend the governor of the State of Colorado, that governor understands that there are lots of approaches that we can use to resolve this problem, that governor understands highways. And I would hope that my message rings throughout the entire bureaucracy including the Federal Highway Administration. Do not put toll booths on this highway simply for the purpose of punishing people who want to go up there, not for construction, but to punish them because they want to visit the Colorado mountains.

DEATH TAXES

Let me move to another subject, death taxes. Colleagues we know what death taxes are. You work all your life. You accumulate. I will give you an example, my wife and I. My wife and I did not start with any money. We just started saving early on. I will tell you we did not have boats or nice cars. I mean we have used cars which were nice for us, and nothing against somebody who wants to have a boat, I think it is great. In fact, if I had the money, I would buy those, that is extra.

But in our mind, my wife and I in our life, one of our goals was to have something that when we went on, when we passed away and we could pass on to our children so they could have a little head start for their life so maybe they could afford a down payment on a home, so maybe the family ranch that is in my wife's family, that maybe her portion of the ranch could be enjoyed by the next generation following us, that maybe some of the other things that we have worked so hard to accomplish and we have toiled, just like many, many other young couples in our country are doing now, we did that a few years ago.

There are a lot of young people out in the country today, a lot of young people by the way, Democrats, in business. It is not all that bad, business. A lot of small business people, a lot of farmers and ranchers, a lot of young people getting into these professions and they, too, share the goal that my wife and I shared that my mother and father, my wife's mother and father shared and that is, look, we do not want to spoil the generation behind us, but let us do something for the generation, let us try and jump start them, let us give them a little head start.

Now, when you accumulate like that, you do not accumulate taxfree, with the exception of some IRAs, and those are taxed, but basically as my colleagues know, you do not accumulate this property tax free, you pay taxes on it. When you earn it, you are taxed on it, and you take what is left after the taxes and you put it into an account or you make some kind of an investment for the future.

We are not talking here about money that here you earn it, we are not talking about money that goes over here 100 percent, it does not happen. What happens here is the taxman comes in and he cuts his chunk here. He gets his chunk right here. So when it gets over here, your fund for the future has already been taxed.

So you begin to accumulate this property, with the goal, as my wife and I had, that at some point in the future you would be able to pass on in the next generation in our particular case maybe a piece of ground, maybe a business, maybe a portion of a ranch out there in Colorado. I keep referring to Colorado because ranching is an important industry, and the death taxes, Democrats, by the way you ought to pay attention to this, the death taxes have had a significant impact on our ranching community out in Colorado. They have been very punitive, very punishing.

So we get to this point and guess what happens? The government has not had enough. What the government does when you are young, there are teachers and in school they teach you to go out in America and capitalism, go out and

the harder you work, the chances are, the harder you work, the more successes you will have, and that you have an opportunity to accumulate, you can buy your own home in the United States.

In America, you can own a ranch. In America if you work hard enough, you can do things, you can accomplish. Who would ever think that the government that preaches that at our young ages and tells our young people that the opportunities are no greater anywhere in the world but America, who would ever think that very government is flying over you like a vulture on the day you die to come in here and take property that has already been taxed and, in some cases, take out between 50 and 70 percent of that and move it to the government.

Now, what do death taxes do? Let us talk about a couple editorials. I read an editorial over the weekend, maybe it was in the Wall Street Journal or in the Denver Post. Anyway, I read this editorial. I think it was Broder, whatever his name is, the gentleman's name, and he talks about this estate, and he sounds like it is only fair for the government to come out and take money from you upon your death, even though you have already paid taxes on it.

They talk about as if it is a windfall for a family. Take my wife's family, for example, they have been on the same ranch in Colorado since 1850. The writer of this particular article seems to think it is a windfall, if that family is able to pass that ranch on to the next generation, my wife's generation and then the generation after my wife, to that generation as if it is a windfall. Then they always like to jump. Democrats you had 40 years to do something about this death tax.

Some of you have come over on it and I appreciate that. I noticed lately in the last couple of weeks the Democrat leadership, because they have now sensed that their policy of increasing the death tax, which is exactly what the Clinton administration has proposed to do in their budget is not selling well with the American people. The American people are saying, wait a minute, it does not make sense to us. We have already paid taxes. Why should punish us upon our death with another tax?

Some of you sense that. And the leadership over on the Democrat side has sensed that and now they have come up with the bill to help get rid of the death tax. I am glad you have acknowledged that there is a problem. I am glad after time after time after time you fought us on trying to eliminate or at least give some relief under the death tax that your leadership, the Democratic leadership policy has now begun to shift towards our side to say, you know, something maybe it is not fair when somebody dies that the vultures of the government go down and pick apart the property that has already been picked apart with taxes.

Nobody complains about the initial taxation if it is fair. Where the complaint comes in is how much more do you want, how much more do you think you can take out of this family ranch before you make that ranch collapse from an economic point of view?

Let us talk about what happens in an estate tax. Remember even if the wealthy and, oh, do they love that, do the editors and do some of the Democrats opposing this do they love to talk about the wealthy people of this country. This is a tax against the wealthy. In fact, it was designed in part as a punitive tax against the Carnegies and the Rockefellers and the Fords and people like that around the turn of the last century. Do they love to go out after rich people?

They love to create class warfare in this country. Let me tell you what happens even with a rich person in a community. I am going to give you a good example. A small town in Colorado, population maybe 9,000 people. I am not going to identify the person, other than to say let us call the gentleman Joe. Joe and his wife, Mary, these people are my parents' age, so they are in their 70s. They started out in this small town of Colorado.

Joe started out as a bean counter, as a bookkeeper for a construction company. I am telling you these names are made up, but the story is true. Mary was a homemaker, so they both worked real hard, she took care of the kids and Joe worked hard.

From day 1, he worked 6½ days a week. He sacrificed a lot of time away from his kids, and his wife sacrificed a lot of her time to make up for the time he was away from the kids. And over time he moved from being the bookkeeper in the construction company to have an opportunity to buy into it. This is a small town construction company, population 9,000. Then pretty soon he was able to save a little money here, save a little money there, and he was able to invest and start with some of his neighbors a local bank.

What did Joe do with the money? Joe did not take the money that he accumulated in his community, he did not take it out in his backyard and dig a hole and put the money in the ground. He used the money in the community. He bought buildings in the community. He employed people in the community. He gave significant contributions to almost every charity in the community. He helped a school on their funding drives. In other words, he was a strong economic factor. I should speak about both of them, both of them contributed to this in their own way. That couple was an economic mainstay of this small community in the state of Colorado.

What happens? Unfortunately, Mary passes away. My friend is a good guy, and his wife was very bright. But they did not go out and hire attorneys to try and evade taxes with the government. And so what happened when Mary died, the estate, her share of the estate went to Joe. Joe decided to liquidate the construction company, sell it, decided to sell the bank.

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He did and he got hit with a capital gains tax. That is fair enough. At that point in time, it was at least 28 percent, at least 28 percent on the sale of it.

Then unfortunately my friend Joe, who was an economic mainstay with his wife in this community, what happened to him is he got terminal cancer. Four, five months later, he passed away. The government then came into this community. They forced that family to liquidate the buildings they had to come up with the money to pay an effective tax on that estate, when one puts in the capital gains, an effective tax of I think around 82 percent of 50 years of hard work in this community, 82 percent when combined with the capital gains. The government came in.

Now, true, they were wealthy. By standards, they were wealthy. They had worked in this community. They earned every darn dime of it through hard work. It did not fall out of the sky for them. The government certainly did not give it to them. They taxed it all along.

What happened as a result of this? So much to the local contributions to the local church. That money now goes to Washington, D.C. Instead of that money being circulated in their own community where it had been circulated for 50 years, it now is going to be transferred to Washington, D.C., because the Federal Government says we are entitled upon one's death to transfer that money from one's local community to our big city. So there goes the local contributions and the charities.

Let me tell my colleagues, the church there, the church that he went to, 80 percent of their budget was donated by this individual. It was a pretty good sized church. It had several hundred members in it; 80 percent of it was funded by that individual.

When that church, when the elders of the church went to speak to the family about continuing these contributions, the family said we do not have the money anymore. The money has been transferred to Washington, D.C. So much for any more jobs being generated by that money. So much for deposits being put into savings accounts and the local banks where local people could then go borrow the money to set out on their dreams or to buy a car or to pay for improvements of their house or maybe to buy a house.

All of these different things, money was sucked out of that community. I remember Ross Perot talking about the sucking sound or something of Mexico. If my colleagues want to see where the real sound is, take a look at where the death tax where it takes that money.

If one lives in Kansas and one dies in Kansas and one is hit with a death tax,

that money does not stay in Kansas. That Federal death tax goes to Washington. If one dies in Florida and one gets hit with the death tax, that money does not stay in one's community in Florida, it goes to Washington. If one dies in California and Washington and Wyoming and Colorado and Utah and Idaho, wherever one dies, one's money does not stay in one's community to continue to circulate in one's community; it is sent to Washington, D.C.

How many of my colleagues out there think that money is being well spent in Washington, and how many of my colleagues out there think one darn dime makes its way back to that little community in Colorado?

These death taxes are fundamentally unfair. They are unjustified. It is perhaps, despite what some of these people are writing in their editorials, it is perhaps the most unjustified tax in our system. How does one justify taxing somebody upon their death simply because they have accumulated property upon which they have already paid taxes, simply upon which they have accumulated property by hard work, by following the American principles of free enterprise, by following the American principles of capitalism, by going out there and following their own dream in America; and when they get to that point in hopes of helping the next generation, they lose it.

Now, let us talk about something else that is impacted by these estate taxes, something that some of us may not even think about. Let us talk about open space.

In Colorado, again, I am awful proud of that State, and I am proud of my district. It is a wonderful, beautiful district. I think it is probably one of the most beautiful. The gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and I could compete, but by gosh we are both up there in the top. Our open space is what makes it beautiful.

We have tremendous, tremendous land in these States. But do my colleagues know what is happening? Take for example a typical family ranch. Now, some people will tell us, well, one has a large ranch out there and a ranching family, and the estate has a value over the amount of the government decides to tax, I mean the amount that puts it eligible for this death tax. What one ought to do, ranchers, go out and buy life insurance. That is what life insurance is for. If one is prudent and responsible to the next generation, one is going to go out and buy life insurance to save that ranch.

Well, do my colleagues know what, it is pretty obvious to me that people that make that kind of proposal have not ever tried to look very closely at the economics of ranching. One may have some land, but one does not get into ranching for money. One does not make enough money. Most ranchers out there do not make enough money to pay the premiums on the life insurance. So that is not a practical, realistic thing.

Well, what happens is, if one has a ranch, let us say a couple thousand acres, let us say in the Glenwood Springs Valley, so Glenwood Springs, Colorado, so one has high property values or higher property values, and, unfortunately, one and one's wife or one's wife and one pass away, do my colleagues know what happens to that property if one does not have the cash to pay off the government, if one's family does not have the cash to pay it off? I will tell my colleagues what happens. The family has got to sell the ranch.

Where is the value of a ranch in Colorado near Glenwood Springs? Is it in cattle ranching? Is it in sheep ranching? Is it in hay production? No. It is not in that economy. The value of it is one goes into that ranch, and one puts it in little tiny 35-acre parcels. One takes that beautiful open space, and one turns it into a 35-acre multihome, multiwealth subdivision.

So pretty soon these open spaces that one enjoys by the government that stands up here and preaches about the value of open space, and they themselves force one to dissect that land so one can pay them off upon the death of one's parents or upon one's death; one makes arrangements to have it split up like that.

These are some of the unintended consequences that decades of this death tax have had in our country. The time has come, and I can tell my colleagues I stand with a great deal of pride to see the governor of the State of Texas, one of his policies, if he becomes the President, and he has made it clear, and the reason I bring this up is I want to bring the Democrats to action. I want the Democrats to stand up and say me, too, because we want to get rid of this estate tax. The governor of the State of Texas said he is going after that estate tax if he becomes President.

Now, one can contrast that to the policies of the current administration. Remember what the current administration has proposed this year and in their budget. It is in the budget. It is not me just making this up. It is in their budget, the Democrats. It is in their budget. That is to increase the death taxes by $9.5 billion, not just keep it the same, but increase it.

I am telling my colleagues, fundamentally the American people will not support the proposal to raise the death taxes in this country. Every one of my colleagues on the Democratic side ought to take issue with the President and the Democrats' policy of trying to raise those estate taxes. Those death taxes are not right. They know they are not right. Their gut tells them it is not right to do that. It is not right to go to somebody who is living the American dream who has worked 50 or 60 years, or even if they worked 10 years, to go out and say on the property one has already paid taxes on, we are going to tax it again. We do not care what it does to the next generation. We do not care how the next generation pays for it. We do not know what kind of dreams have been squashed by the fact that those vultures are flying over one's death bed. The government does not care about what happens to the next generation that one has worked all one's life to provide a little something for. They do not care about whether or not those people get that money. They want that money transferred to Washington, D.C.

Now, tonight I know a lot of us have children who are now young couples. They are just now getting into the work force, couples that are worried about Social Security; couples that are worried about what they can save, and they have their dreams. Oh, to be that age again, to just dream about, oh, when we buy our first home, when we really get to go buy a brand-new car, when we get to have our children and our family, and then we can begin to think about, well, maybe we can put some money aside so they can have a college education, and maybe we can put some money aside so that, if something happens to us, they will be able to carry on the family business or the family ranch, or maybe they will have other money to give them a little head start.

If only they knew, if only these young people in this country knew what this policy, and, frankly, Democrats, they know they supported it, they have increased, they are proposing to increase it this year, they ought to join us. Because if these young people knew how this government operated with this death tax, they would be darn mad about it, very mad, very upset. I do not blame them a bit.

So I am asking my Democratic colleagues, and I am asking them to support a change in the policy of the Clinton-Gore administration, although GORE is very clear about his position on this. Let us do something about those death taxes.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Well, enough with the estate taxes, enough for the toll road in Colorado that I talked to my colleagues about. Now I want to talk about something else. First of all, let me tell my colleagues, if they are age, say, 48, if they are 48 years or older, they do not even have to worry about what I am going to talk about because they are well taken care of.

I can tell my colleagues that the principles of the plan that I am going to talk about have primarily been pushed or advocated by the governor of the State of Texas, George W. Bush. Very clearly one of his principles is the people, currently the older people of our society, 48 and above somewhere in that area, they do not have to worry about it.

What am I talking about? I am talking about Social Security. Social Security. Let us talk about that program a little tonight. First of all, and again, as I said, if one is 48 years old, I am about there, if one is my age or above,

there is plenty of money in Social Security.

On a cash basis, Social Security has a surplus. On an actuarial basis, which means once Social Security pays the obligations that it has made under the benefits of that program, Social Security is bankrupt. But for us to reach that bankrupt status, it is going to take 30 years. So that in my age bracket and above, we will not get to that point probably, or not many of us will get to the point where we really have to worry about the bankruptcy of Social Security. But I think it is incumbent upon those of us who do not have to worry about it for us that we sit down and start doing some planning and worrying about it for the next generation.

For the kids that are, the young men and women the age of my children, they should, and are now paying into the system. They are providing for us. We have an obligation to the young generation. Frankly, that is exactly what the governor of the State of Texas has said, George W. Bush. We have an obligation under his policies to provide some planning so that we do not hand to the next generation a bankrupt Social Security program.

Now, let us talk about the current problem. We will talk about some of the problems that we have in Social Security. But first of all, for any of those who think they can defend the Social Security system and the management of it right now, let me ask them a question, or just think about this for a minute. If one went down to the local convenience store and one bought a lotto ticket, paid 10 bucks, one bought a lotto ticket, and let us say one won the lotto and one won $10 million, wow, great, $10 million. Would anybody in these Chambers take one's $10 million or even $10,000 of that $10 million and send it to the Social Security Administration to invest it in the Social Security program for a return on one's dollars?

There is not any one in this Chamber that would even send $1 to Social Security voluntarily to invest on one's behalf. Why? Because over the last few years I will give one an example, if a young couple today putting into Social Security system, in other words, the young couple the age of my children, they can expect for the dollars that they are, that are taken out of their check and invested in the Social Security program, they can expect a return of 1.23 percent, 1 percent, a little over. Well, 1¼ percent is the kind of return that they can expect with their investment today.

That is assuming that no more benefits are increased. That is assuming that the number going into the system stays the same, 1.23 percent. I would defy anyone on this floor to go out there and show me a savings account anywhere in the country that pays 1.25 percent. Just show me one savings account that only pays that. I mean, even the most conservative savings account in the country pays 2 or 3 or 4 points above that. It is a lousy return.

It is a system that needs a fix. Let me tell my colleagues, the system is not broke entirely because of incompetence. There are several factors that have contributed to putting Social Security into the problem it is in today. One of them is pretty good news for all of us. That is that, over the years since Social Security was first put into place in about 1935, over the years, the life-span has increased dramatically.

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When Social Security was first put in, they did not expect that kind of jump in the increase in life-span. Unfortunately, as the life-span has increased, the premiums have not increased along with it. So now we have people who we maybe thought were going to be in the system for 10 years who are now in the system for 15 or 20 years. That is a problem.

Number two, the people that have put into the system, because of inflation, medical inflation and increased benefits and so on, the people that are now drawing Social Security, that are currently drawing a check out of Social Security, those people, during their lifetime, will pull out an average of $118,000 more than they put into the system. So the people today drawing out will pull out an average of $118,000 more than they put in. A system cannot be run economically when it allows participants to pull out more money than they put into the system. That is another problem that we have.

And finally, let me comment about the workers. This is an interesting statistic. When Social Security was first put into place, we had 42 people working for every person that was retired. The reason I am taking the time to write this is because it is so important. There were 42 people that were working for every person that was retired. Today that number is 3 people working for every person retired. And within the very near future, say 10 or 15 years, we will have 2 people for every person retired. My colleagues, those numbers spell trouble. We need to pay attention to the system. We need to do something to try to change the direction of this ship.

Well, let me tell my colleagues, for government employees, for us in these Chambers, for the Congressmen, we realized that we did not want to totally depend on Social Security for retirement so we developed our own plan here called the Thrift Savings Plan. And it is not just for Congressmen, by the way, it applies to government employees, 2.5 million employees. It is a program of choice. They are not forced into it. It is called the Thrift Savings Plan.

What the government did is they had to take care of these 2.5 million employees, so they allowed them to have a program of choice and every month those employees can take up to 10 percent of their pay and the government matches the first 5 percent. So they can put in 10 percent and then the government matches the first 5 percent, and they can invest it in one of three different programs.

One is a program which has high risk, but it also has high return. And this is the stock market. I think last year it was 28 percent return or a 20 percent return. Or, by choice, they can take a program that has a lower return but lower risk, or a program that is guaranteed by the government which has the lowest return but also the lowest risk, which by the way still exceeds greatly the 1.23 percent return we get in Social Security.

Now, that all sounds confusing, but suffice it to say the government has a program called the Thrift Savings Plan for 2.5 million employees to provide them with an option in Social Security, providing them with choice in investment. For example, if an individual makes lousy choices, here they only have 10 percent. Only 10 percent. The rest of the retirement there is no choice about where it goes. It is guaranteed payment. So no one can ever lose everything they have. It cannot happen under this system.

Well, what happened. Do my colleagues know who supported that, to my colleagues on the Democratic side? The vice president supported that. In fact, I have a quote somewhere, but the vice president was a cosponsor of the Thrift Savings Plan. He was a cosponsor. So what the Governor of the State of Texas and what many of us have said to do is to apply that somewhat toward Social Security. Let us allow the people, especially the young people in this country, the young people who are just getting started and who want to have more of a choice, a more sophisticated investment return, let us give them a choice.

Let us give them an opportunity not to put all of their Social Security money into a stock market; we are not going to do that, but let us allow them to have choice up to 2 percent. Take 2 percent of their paycheck, 2 percent, and remember for the Federal Government employees are allowed to take 10 percent, but allow people on Social Security under this proposal to take 2 percent and let them invest. Let them try their hand in the market. Historically, no matter what investment we look at, historically every investment out there in the stock market and the bond markets, and here I am talking as a whole, does better than 1.23 percent, which is what Social Security now pays.

Now, why would that program cause the kind of uproar that has been created in the last few months? Is it because the person pushing it the hardest is running for president? That has something to do with it. But what it really is, it frightens the status quo. That is what really is happening. What scares Washington, what makes bureaucrats shiver in their knees, is the fact that someone comes into this town

and has a bold proposal, who wants to move off the status quo and wants to take charge. Someone who has enough guts to stand and say, hey, I am going to lead, I am going to take us into some positive territory, so either move with me or stand aside.

The minute the system, the bureaucracy of the Social Security or any government bureaucracy is challenged, watch out. Because, as my colleagues know, they will turn on you and try to tear you apart from every angle they can. And how interesting it is that that is exactly what is happening with the Governor of the State of Texas and his proposal to fix Social Security. He ought to receive a pat on the back from everybody in this Chamber. We ought to go up and say thanks for being bold enough to propose something with seriousness and be ready to charge forward with a change to Social Security. We should also thank him for being smart enough not to throw it all out; not to put it all at risk; and, most importantly under this proposal, he allows choice.

If a person in Social Security does not want to invest in any of those choices, they do not have to. If a government employee does not want to participate in the Thrift Savings Plan, they do not have to. It is a program of choice and it is a program, which, in my opinion, is the most viable option we have out there today to move Social Security out of the red into the black on an actuarial basis. That is the beauty of this thing.

Now, I know that since that proposal was made, first of all, after the Governor of the State of Texas advocated it, we had a lot of fire come from frankly the administration's policy and the vice president. But then, all of a sudden, the pollsters went out there and they came back with poll results that said the American people wanted to see us shore up Social Security; that the American people were willing to look at choice; the American people are willing to take reasonable, reasonable, risk, well, then all of a sudden the administration starts to change their policy. So now they have come up with a plan. That is good. Let us take these plans, let us put them together and let us save Social Security for the future.

Let me wrap it up. My colleagues have been very patient with me this evening. I appreciate the opportunity to address my colleagues.

I talked about toll roads, toll roads being proposed in the State of Colorado simply to punish people for being on the road. Not to build new highways, but to simply institute what I believe is congestive pricing. There is too much congestion, too much traffic on the road, let us take the people who built the roads with their taxes and let us tax them off the road. It is unacceptable.

Unacceptable as far as I am concerned, especially considering the fact they are putting the toll gate at the entrance of the Third Congressional District of the State of Colorado.

Secondly, I talked about the death taxes and how unfair that tax upon a person's death is. Whether an individual is wealthy or whether they have a ranch or whatever, think about the consequences of penalizing somebody upon their death. It is an unjustified tax. It is a tax we should eliminate. I hope we will not let these editorial writers in some of these papers convince us that it is a good way to attack the rich, that it is a good way to get a vendetta going among people who have taken the American Dream and lived it and accomplished it.

And, finally, as my colleagues know, I just wrapped up on Social Security. Let us take a plan that is a bold plan. Not a risky plan, not a risky plan for this next generation, but let us do something, let us make the next generation have something better than we have. After all, the American Dream is to make sure that the people, the generation and the children beyond us, live a better life than the best life we have ever lived. And we can do it if we just stick together.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BECERRA (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today and July 11 on account of business in the district.

Mr. MCNULTY (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today and the balance of the week on account of family illness.

Mr. SMITH of Washington (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today and the balance of the week on account of personal business.

Mrs. FOWLER (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today on account of travel delays.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

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

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

Mr. MINGE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. STRICKLAND, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at the request of Mr. WELLER) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. WELLER, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, today.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Administration, reported that that committee had examined and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 4425. An act making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 148. An act to require the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program to provide assistance in the conservation of neotropical migratory birds.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Administration, reported that that committee did on the following dates present to the President, for his approval, bills of the House of the following titles:

On June 30, 2000:

H.R. 3051. To direct the Secretary of the Interior, the Bureau of Reclamation, to conduct a feasibility study on the Jicarilla Apache Reservation in the State of New Mexico, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4762. To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require 527 organizations to disclose their political activities.

On July 1, 2000:

H.R. 4425. Making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, July 11, 2000, at 9 a.m., for morning hour debates.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

8437. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Pine Shoot Beetle; Addition to Quarantined Areas [Docket No. 99–101–1] received June 13, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8438. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Tobacco Programs, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Tobacco Inspection; Subpart B—Regulations [Docket No. TB–99–10] (RIN: 0581–AB65) received June 13, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8439. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service,