care under whatever comes out of these budget negotiations.

There has been a lot of talk about flexibility on the Republican side, and specifically today a number of Republican Governors came down to the capital and stressed that they would like to have flexibility in the Medicaid Program and how it is administered, and I agree with that concept of flexibility. But the flexibility should not go so far that they can declare certain people ineligible for Medicaid and, therefore, have no health insurance, or set the standards and the coverage for the Medicaid Program so low or so slim, so to speak, that the type of coverage that is now provided where certain services, certain health care services, are provided, would not be provided or the quality of care would be diminished.

So I am hopeful that we will not only see in these negotiations a Medicaid Program that guarantees coverage for those who are not eligible for Medicaid, but also that certain minimum standards be put in place as to what a health care coverage or what a policy would include for low-income people, and lastly that sufficient funding be put back into the budget bill for the Medicaid Program so that we do not see a decline in quality for the program.

□ 1530

The President mentioned in his veto message five concerns that he had about the Republican budget when it dealt with Medicaid. I would like to go through those briefly.

First, he said that the Republican budget cuts Federal Medicaid payments to States by $163 billion over 7 years, a 28 percent cut by the year 2002 below what the Congressional Budget Office estimates is necessary for Medicaid spending. So the concern here is that if you cut Medicaid by 20 percent over what we estimate we need for those who are currently eligible for Medicaid, that by the year 2002 States with the lesser funds would have to eliminate that many people from the Medicaid Program.

Second, the President mentioned that the Republican bill converts Medicaid into a block grant with drastically less spending, eliminating guaranteed coverage to millions of Americans and perhaps forcing States to drop coverage for millions of the most vulnerable citizens, including children and the disabled. This is really the key during the budget negotiations. We do not want to eliminate what we call the entitlement status of Medicaid, so that certain people are not eligible because States decide that they do not have enough money and will not cover them.

Third, the President said that the Republican budget purports to guarantee coverage to certain groups but does not define a minimum level of benefits. There again, it is not only important that a eligible Medicaid recipients continue to be eligible, but that whatever package is put together of coverage for them, that those same minimum level of services be included for a national standard so that individual States can change it.

Fourth, the President said that the Republican budget purports to protect certain vulnerable populations with set-asides, but would cover less than half of the estimated needs of senior citizens and people with disabilities in the year 2002. The best example of this are those particularly vulnerable seniors who are low income, who now have their Medicare part B coverage paid, but would not necessarily have it under this proposal. As I said again, Mr. Speaker, we will be talking about this a lot more. It is most important that Medicaid be guaranteed for those low-income people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. SOUDER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. SOUDER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S VETO OF THE BALANCED BUDGET ACT PURELY A PUBLIC RELATIONS STUNT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kentucky [Mr. LEWIS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the President vetoed the Balanced Budget Act of 1995. I am not surprised, but I am disappointed. I want to talk about why I believe the President vetoed what I think was a very good budget for this country. It was a bad veto for all of us. First of all, it was purely a public relations stunt, as full of irony as hypocrisy. The President had the pen Lyndon Johnson used to sign Great Society into law flown into Washington, DC from Texas.

After his speech, the President quickly left the room before he had to answer questions about his balanced budget, but there were plenty of questions Mr. Clinton should have answered for the American people. The President criticized the House-Senate plan to save Medicare for the long term, but has failed to offer his own. Perhaps worse, 1994's Clinton health care plan contained major spending reductions in the growth of Medicare.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder why it was OK for the President to control spending on Medicare but not for the Republicans to do the same. He also should have spoken further about the Great Society programs Lyndon Johnson used that pen for. For instance, most Americans consider LBJ's war on poverty a terrible failure. Today, one child in three is illegitimate, drug use is up, education scores are down, and generations of families have depended on welfare instead of work. We have the highest crime rate in the world, and many of our inner cities are devastated.

Is the President endorsing LBJ's war on poverty that has cost $5 trillion and left this country's poor in worse shape that before? One more question, Mr. Speaker. When Bill Clinton was running for President, he promised to balance the budget in 5 years. In his first State of the Union address he promised to use economic projections of the Congressional Budget Office. Now he not only refuses to offer a real 7-year balanced budget plan, but he uses economic figures cooked up by his own economists so he does not have to make tough choices. Then he stands on the sidelines and demagogues honest efforts to balance the budget. Why does the President consistently say one thing and do another?

I realize that this may sound more than a little partisan, but frankly, I am upset about a veto of the first balanced budget we have had in more than a generation, our first and perhaps last chance to stop robbing our children and grandchildren.

My daughter, 13 years old, my son, 24 years old, what kind of future are they going to have unless we get realistic about balancing the budget? I call on the President to do just that. The President's LBJ pen did not work at first. After trying a new inkwell he was finally able to sign his name. If there was any justice, the ink would have been red.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Idaho [Mrs. CHENOWETH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. CHENOWETH addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

THE REAL ISSUES REGARDING AMERICA'S ROLE IN BOSNIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. HORN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, the tragedy in Bosnia is very much on the mine of every Member of this Chamber. Bosnia is not a partisan matter. Our policy in Bosnia, in my judgment, has been the error of two administrations, one of one party and one of another party. The embargo was put on by one, said that it would be lifted by another, but that still has not been done.

The result is that the Bosnians, who were aggressed against, attacked, have not had the weapons to defend themselves when they wanted to defend themselves. Now we say in the Dayton agreement that we will make sure the Bosnians are finally armed. The embargo still exists. It needs to come off. Of course, it never should have been put on.

Mr. Speaker, the issue in this debate is not who is an internationalist and who is an isolationist. I would like to think the issue is who is a realist.