

children. But I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that our current welfare system is in fact destroying the lives of millions and millions of children. Welfare which in fact was designed to create a safety net has in fact trapped millions of children in a pitiful web and their families in a pitiful web.

Let us just look at it for a second. Our current system of welfare has destroyed in fact the traditional family structure, so that children do not even know the meaning of a home and a family. Our current system of welfare has in fact destroyed our children's sense of values. Our current system of welfare has kept our children from understanding the work ethic, the work ethic that in fact has built this Nation.

In fact, our current welfare system has kept our children from seeing a parent work. Our current system of welfare makes a joke of a \$5.15 minimum wage that this Congress passed, when we in fact pay people in my State in Florida the equivalent of \$8.75 an hour for not working.

Our current system of welfare has in fact bred crime, crime that has destroyed our neighborhoods, crime that in fact kills our children in this city, has killed thousands of children over the years, young people also trapped in a welfare web. They force our senior citizens and all Americans to live in fear and behind bars.

Welfare in fact has served and this current system has served as a magnet to attract illegal aliens into the United States. Our current system of welfare pays better benefits to those who really refuse to work, and pays better benefits to illegal aliens than we in fact pay to some of our senior citizens or to our veterans who served this country.

I think that if we really care about the welfare of our children, Mr. Speaker, if we really care about our senior citizens and if we really care about our veterans and we care about the future of this country, we should care about passing meaningful welfare reform.

In fact, we passed a welfare reform that says that welfare should not be a way of life, that in fact it should be limited to 2 years and a 5-year lifetime maximum. It is not severe. We said that they should work for some of their benefits, for example, food stamps, put in at least 20 hours' work.

We are not talking about disabled or elderly or infirm. We are talking about able-bodied Americans. We think we should return power to the States and restore a sense of personal responsibility when in fact the President's proposal has no real time limits, no real work requirements, non-citizens and felons will continue to receive welfare and we will have maximum control here in Washington. This is the system we have created.

I ask, what helps children and what hurts children? We have an opportunity to help children, to change welfare as we know it, and to make a dramatic change in the lives of millions and millions of citizens of our country

and children in our country who deserve much better than the welfare system that they currently have.

Mr. Speaker, I urge that we adopt our plan, that the President in fact not veto this plan for the third time, and that it become in fact the law of our land to help our children, not hurt our children.

TAXES AND THE WEALTHY

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to speak very briefly about two unrelated topics.

First, a few days ago we passed a resolution here in this House designating July 3 as Cost of Government Day. This resolution noted that the average person now spends 50.4 percent of his or her income in taxes of all types, Federal, State and local, 50.4 percent. In other words, the average person now works until July 3 just to pay the cost of government at all levels. That is taking into account the taxes of all types, like income, Social Security, sales, property, excise, gas, all the different types of taxes, and then the taxes that we pay in the form of hidden taxes in the form of higher prices and so forth. Even worse, President Clinton's 1994 budget said the young people born that year would pay average lifetime tax rates of an incredible 82 percent. Paul Tsongas, the former Congressman and Senator from Massachusetts who was a liberal Democrat when he was in Congress wrote a column about that and he said that we were going to turn the young people into indentured servants for the government unless dramatic changes were made. I do not think we should allow that to happen, Mr. Speaker. But the reason I mention this tonight is this: I am not for increasing our tax burden at all. In fact, we need to strive to lower our tax burden. But I can say that what we need to do is lower the tax burden on the average people and on the people of middle and lower incomes and to do that and to balance it out, we need to drastically raise the taxes on those movie stars and athletes and CEOs who are making these multimillion-dollar salaries. I think that would be only fair.

What really stirred me into this is hearing last week that one basketball player had signed a contract for 7 years for \$123 million and then the Washington Post a few days ago printed what they called a Free Agent Tote Board and they have these other contracts for NBA players: 5 years for \$55 million, 1 year for \$30 million, 7 years for \$98 million, 7 years for \$105 million, 6 years for \$24 million, 7 years for \$42 million, 4 years for \$28 million, on and on. They reported about one player for the Washington Bullets who was a substitute who did not even play well last year and he is holding out for \$45 million for 7 years.

Mr. Speaker, I would say that things have gotten totally out of whack. I remember telling my two sons last December when I heard that one baseball player had signed an \$18 million 3-year contract that could they imagine how much was \$6 million a year. In my district, an average person makes between 21 and \$22,000 a year. A person making \$25,000 a year would have to work 40 years to make \$1 million. To make \$6 million in 1 year, you would have to average \$150,000 a year. This is ridiculous. This is sickening how much these athletes are being paid for playing a game 6 or 7 months out of the year. It has gotten totally ridiculous. I say that we should drastically lower the taxes on the lower- and middle-income people and raise them on these people that are getting these totally exorbitant, unjustified salaries. I realize it will not be done, but we should boycott the NBA and these other leagues and organizations that are paying these totally ridiculous salaries and totally undeserved.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The other topic that I wanted to mention tonight, Mr. Speaker, and like I say, it is two totally unrelated things but it does pertain to the spending of government money. We have spent \$4 billion so far in Haiti, and the Washington Post a few months ago reported on the front page that we have got our troops there picking up garbage and settling domestic disputes. We have spent billions more in Rwanda, Somalia, and now Bosnia where there is no vital United States interest and no threat to our national security.

Last week Georgie Anne Geyer, the very respected foreign affairs columnist, wrote this about Bosnia. She said:

For 4 years and 2 Presidents, the top military brass in Washington essentially lied about Serb capacities. They built a bunch of thugs and rustic mountain Serbs, dependent on that pitiful weaponry I saw, into super-Serbs.

She told about seeing this weaponry. She said:

There it stands, all the terror that American and European military men trembled before: old tanks, their sides packed with sand; antique mortars nearly falling off the mountainsides; artillery pieces out in the open, without even trees to hide them. One could be forgiven for thinking oneself back in World War I instead of the nuclear age.

The military exaggerated the capabilities of Saddam Hussein. Now they have exaggerated the capabilities of their opponents in Bosnia, and I think back to the time when President Eisenhower warned about the military-industrial complex and I wonder if these things are being done to somehow justify higher and unjustified appropriations. I think if they are, that is very sad and very unfortunate, Mr. Speaker.

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