body alike that are on the Committee on Appropriations feel this is an unrealistic position. So the question is, is it realistic to try to return all of this money or are we going to leave ourselves severely strapped? I daresay that there is not a person in this body that does not expect we would leave ourselves severely strapped.

Another approach is to invest the money in priority programs. And a third approach is to try to find a mix.

The Blue Dog Coalition, of which I am a member, it is a group of moderate to conservative Democrats, will propose a budget tomorrow that has a mix. In that sense it is similar to the budget proposed by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT). We propose taking 50 percent of the money that is in surplus and using it to reduce the $5.6 trillion debt; 25 percent of the money to be used as a tax reduction measure, or for tax reductions; and 25 percent for program priorities.

We feel that this is a responsible division of how the budget surplus ought to be used. It recognizes the needs that we face here in America, health care, education, defense, veterans, agriculture, environment and others. At the same time, it recognizes the responsibility that we have in a time of prosperity and affluence to pay down our national debt to the maximum extent possible, while at the same time trying to give a dividend to the taxpayers and meet the needs of our great Nation.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, just in concluding the discussion this evening, as we are guided in our budget discussions, I think there should be some central principles. One of the most important principles in achieving fiscal discipline is to not play sort of the divide and conquer strategy; not get to the point where the sum of the parts adds up to more than we would like the whole to add up to.

We have heard about a variety of programs this evening. We have heard about a variety of tax cuts. There is merit to all of them. What we have to do in putting together a fiscally responsible budget is put them all on the table at the same time. I guess what I mean by divide and conquer, it is really more of a divide and pander strategy, which is to say we take each issue area which may be a priority for somebody, whether increased defense spending, increased education spending, increased spending for health care, an estate tax cut, a capital gains tax cut.

There are all groups out there, as well as individuals, who have their favorite. They come and talk to us about them and we want to make them happy. It is sort of the nature of being a Congressman that we want to make our constituents happy, so we want to promise all those things, and that is where we get into trouble.

What we have to say is if veterans are a big priority, then make it a priority and make it work in the budget. Make the sacrifices in other areas to make sure that we can do that. But we should not promise more than the budget can contain. That is what leads us to fiscal irresponsibility.

That is what, sadly, the Republican budget we are going to hear about tomorrow does. It promises all across the board and does not meet the test of fiscal discipline, getting us into the position of paying down our debt and be responsible to the future.

We are not the only ones who have needs. Future generations are going to have needs. Whether it is tax cuts or spending programs, if we take it all now, we will be mortgaging their future.

Mr. Speaker, I see the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) has joined us, so I will yield to him to talk also about fiscal responsibility. But I urge more than anything that we balance the budget and start paying down the debt. It is the responsible thing to do for our future.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Washington very much for yielding to me, and I very much appreciate his taking the time tonight in order to discuss the subject that we will be debating in earnest tomorrow.

I guess the one thing that he said that I want to overly emphasize is that if by chance we have surpluses, and most of us, I think, and most of the American people understand that when we owe $5.6 trillion, we really do not have a surplus to talk about. And since most of the surplus, in fact all of the surplus this year is Social Security trust funds, we in the Blue Dog budget that will be offered as a substitute tomorrow, we emphasize that we should take that money and pay down the debt with it and really do it. I believe we will have bipartisan support for doing that because everybody is talking about that.

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But the one thing that some are not talking about, and this is why we will offer our substitute amendment, some are saying that we ought to take future surpluses. And it was not too long ago in this body that we had a difficult time estimating next year, and then we started 5-year estimations and projections of what surpluses and what the budget would hold, and now we are starting 10 and 15 years.

My colleagues, I believe it is very dangerous for the future of this country to base 15-year projections and say we are going to have a tax cut that will explode in the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth year. That is not conservative politics, at least if they are a businessman or woman. We understand that they do not make those kind of decisions today based on what might happen tomorrow.

What we are going to be suggesting is, if in fact we do in the next 5 years achieve a surplus of the non-Social Security nature, let us put at least half of that down on the debt, let us pay an additional 50 percent down on the debt, and let us take 25 percent of that and let us meet the very real needs of which I know the gentleman from California is as concerned as I am about defense.

Let us put some real dollars in recognizing that, just as we have our young men and women in harm's way tonight, that it is extremely important that we give them the resources to do that which we ask them to do. And we cannot do that with the budget the majority is putting forward tomorrow, and everyone knows that.

It is time to get honest, and the Blue Dog budget will in fact get honest. And we will attempt, hopefully, to have a majority of this body agree with us.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. CON. RES. 68, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2000

Mr. LINDER (during the special order of Mr. SMITH of Washington), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106–77) on the resolution (H. Res. 131) providing for consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 68) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2000 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for each of the fiscal years 2001 through 2009, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

TRIBUTE TO ADMIRAL WILLIAM F. BRINGLE

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

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I am going to do a tribute to an admiral that we lost in San Diego, a four-star.

But I would also say, and I would say excluding what the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) has said, in 8 years, this is the most laughable oxymoron discussion I have heard in 8 years on the budget about saving Social Security and Medicare. I would like my colleague sometime to explain how the President takes $9 billion out of Medicare and then puts in 15 percent.

So we will have that debate tomorrow. But I do not disagree with the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) on a lot of the issues. But the other group, I am sorry, they are either naive or they just state their own opinion as fact and they are factually challenged.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about Admiral William F. Bringle. He was a very good friend of mine. And he is like Will Rogers, that he is the kind of guy that never met a man that he