

Mr. President, I would like to read a few passages from an article that appeared earlier this year in one of my State's newspapers, the Las Cruces Sun News. Las Cruces is the largest city in Dona Ana County, a county with a large number of colonias. The article, written by Deborah Baker of the Associated Press, is titled "Colonias: The American dream is more of a nightmare for many State residents." Mr. President, the passages I would like to read, which could apply to most of the new colonias dotting our Nation's southwestern border, describe the appalling conditions under which these people live every day:

The American dream lives on a trash-strewn hillside at the end of a rutted road in a cluster of trailer and shacks called El Milagro—"The Miracle."

There, two families share three rooms: a two-room trailer, and a dirt-floored addition with walls that stop several feet short of the ceiling.

Cooking is done on a grate balanced between cinderblocks over an open fire on the dirt floor. Water comes from a pipe, run from a neighbor's house, that sticks up from the ground behind the trailer. There is no bathroom—not even an outhouse. No electricity. No heat.

Mr. President, this is a description of third-world living conditions existing here in the United States of America. Such conditions are unsafe, unhealthy, and, I believe, simply intolerable. Nor is this a small problem. I know that in New Mexico we have at least 60 such communities in desperate need of this basic infrastructure. In Dona Ana County alone, there are 35 colonias.

Our border States have made great efforts in trying to deal with this problem. My State of New Mexico, for example, has spent large amounts of money to build community centers, health facilities, fire stations, and day care centers for its colonies. New Mexico also recently enacted a statute to tighten up zoning laws that had previously allowed developers to subdivide plots of land repeatedly for residential use without first supplying basic infrastructure.

Unfortunately, however, many of the border States simply do not have the financial capability to help with some of the more costly infrastructure that these communities need, especially drinking water and wastewater facilities. The colonias themselves certainly do not have these funds.

Consequently, I am offering an amendment, for myself and for Senator BINGAMAN, that I believe will greatly help these most needy of communities.

Mr. President, my amendment will authorize the Environmental Protection Agency, or any other appropriate agency, to award grants to any appropriate entity or border State to provide assistance for the construction of drinking and wastewater facilities.

My amendment also authorizes these agencies to use funds to operate and maintain these drinking and wastewater facilities. I believe this is a key point. It is not enough just to

build these systems. Without the technical assistance to keep them operating, and operating well, we haven't accomplished anything.

In closing, Mr. President, I would like to thank Chairman CHAFEE and Senator KEMPTHORNE for their gracious help with this important amendment. I believe the amendment will go a long way in helping some of the neediest communities in the United States in two crucial public health areas. These colonias will finally get adequate sewer service, and they will finally receive clean, safe water to drink.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the amendment? If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment of the Senator from Rhode Island.

The amendment (No. 3072) was agreed to.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, move to reconsider the vote by which the amendment was agreed to, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CHAFEE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak as in morning business for not to exceed 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

A BALANCED BUDGET

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, as we are here, I think, close to completing a very important piece of legislation on safe drinking water, we, as Members of this body, recognize that in another sense we are marking time during negotiations between the Republican leadership of the House and Senate and the President of the United States on the question of the balanced budget.

There was, just a few weeks ago, a crisis in the course of our Government as the President vetoed a continuing resolution and thus put out of work many hundreds of thousands of Government employees. Crisis negotiations led to a further continuing resolution under which each of the agencies of Government will continue in operation until the 15th of December while the various parties negotiate a long-term budget.

One of the conditions of that return, a part of the law signed by the President of the United States, was an agreement to reach before the end of this session of Congress, that is to say, before the end of the year, a budget which would be projected to be in bal-

ance by the year 2002 under figures and statistics provided by the Congressional Budget Office, so that each of us knew the parameters within which that debate would take place.

At the same time as these temporary arrangements were being made, this body and the House of Representatives passed, and is about to send to the President of the United States, a bill, the Balanced Budget Act of 1995, which accomplished precisely that goal. Many of the elements of that proposal are controversial, though it does for the first time truly reform our entitlement programs, including Medicare, Medicare in a way that preserves its financial security, keeps part A from going bankrupt, fairly continues the present percentage of premiums paid by the beneficiaries of part B, and adds to the premiums only of very well-off Americans.

The President has announced—and in this case we have no reason to doubt him—that he will veto that Balanced Budget Act of 1995. So far, in spite of that announced intention, in spite of his signature solemnly affixed to a bill which calls for just such a balanced budget under just such a set of statistics, the President has submitted no alternative budget which would be balanced under those rules by 2002.

As a consequence, the negotiations, which began abortively more than a week ago and seriously just a couple of days ago, have not even produced an agreement on an agenda. This is not surprising. We have produced and sent to the President the Balanced Budget Act of 1995. We believe that it covers all of the conditions asked for by the President: that it properly and appropriately funds Medicare, Medicaid, welfare, the national defense, the environment, and a wide range of other activities.

The President disagrees. That is the President's prerogative. But, Mr. President, it is not an appropriate response to that disagreement to simply sit still and say, "Give me another alternative." The President has a duty, if he is serious at all about the budget crisis facing this country, to say,

Here is my proposal for a balanced budget by the year 2002, based on these same propositions. Here are the differences between the two parties. Let us negotiate those differences.

To this point, every economic indicator since the election of just more than a year ago is in a positive direction. Interest rates are lower, inflation is down, employment and the gross domestic product are up, based, as we understand, primarily on the proposition that our financial markets believe that the budget will be balanced.

In my opinion, if the President continues to refuse to propose any alternative, if he believes that the politics of scare tactics about Medicare and other programs are a better election platform on which to run than an actual balanced budget, we will almost certainly suffer a loss in each one of

those economic indicators, which will not help the President—for that matter, will not help the Congress, and certainly will not help the country.

We are bound and determined to have just such a balanced budget. The President has now, by his signature on a bill, agreed to just such a balanced budget. It is time—it is well past time—that the President, who so eloquently disagrees with ours, produces his own so that we can work constructively toward a solution.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GORTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT AMENDMENTS

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Linda Reidt Critchfield, a fellow in Senator LIEBERMAN's office, be granted privileges of the floor for the duration of the debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THOMPSON). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, previously this afternoon I submitted amendment numbered 3072 on behalf of myself, Senator KEMPTHORNE, Senator BAUCUS, Senator REID and Senator DOMENICI, and that amendment was adopted. I ask unanimous consent that Senator BINGAMAN be added as a cosponsor to that amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PEACE AGREEMENT IN BOSNIA

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, yesterday when I was on the floor I made some comments which I do not think were very clearly understood because I was assuming some people were aware of some of the problems that have existed since the initialing of the peace agreement in Bosnia.

It has been very disturbing to me, after having been over there, to feel that most people are laboring under the misconception that there is in fact a peace. The President himself in his message to the Nation said, "Now the war is over." I just wish the President would go over there and see that the war is not over.

But since that time, there have been some articles which I would like to read, and then submit into the RECORD. One is from the Los Angeles Times of November 25, just a few days ago.

"On Friday, November 24, approximately 200 Bosnian Government troops looted a U.N. base in the Bihac"—that is right over here, Mr. President, on the Croatian border—"manned by a Bangladeshi battalion. They fired machine guns over the heads of the peacekeepers and carried off food, fuel, and equipment including nine armored vehicles. The 80 peacekeepers returned fire"—keep in mind that while all of this is happening they are firing and returning fire—"but were forced to retreat. The Bosnians were taking advantage of the imminent withdrawal of U.N. forces to make way for NATO troops"—which gives you an indication as to what would happen even if we were able to stop this obsession that the President of the United States has in sending troops into Bosnia and were able to try to get them withdrawn.

Also, a Reuters publication on the same day, on Friday, the 24th, says, "Also on Friday the 24th, U.N. officials reported that Croat forces burned and looted houses"—these are Croat forces—"in areas located in central and northwest Bosnia. Houses were burned and looted in the city of Gornji Vakuf"—which is this area right in here—"in central Bosnia and also in the cities of Mrkonjic Grad, and Sipovo"—which is this area right in here.

If you look, the major part of the activity is taking place in this section right of Bosnia. This is the section in which the United States would have forces.

I have often wondered, and have not been able to get an answer from anyone, as to who drew these lots for us; why we have the French over here and the British over here, but we would be right here—virtually everything north of Sarajevo up to and including Tuzla, and a corridor that would go through here, which is one of the most contentious areas.

This comes from the New York Times article of the 27th: "On Sunday, November 26, angry groups of men stoned and flipped over U.N. vehicles passing through Serbian sections of Sarajevo."

Sarajevo is an area that is divided up between Croats, Serbs, and Moslem forces, each with their own checkpoints.

Also according to the New York Times: "As of November 26, a total of 210 peacekeepers have been killed in the 4 years of conflict in the former Yugoslavia."

Mr. President, these are identified as peacekeepers. If you will remember, one of the major concerns that we have is that the President is putting our forces into a situation that is ideal for what we call "mission creep." That is, you go in with one idea. Say you are going to go in, as we are going in, to keep the peace. Obviously, there is no peace to keep. But still they call them "peacekeepers."

When the President made his speech he was very careful to use the word "implementation."

So it has already crept from peacekeeping to peace "implementation."

The Times article goes on: "In Bosnia itself, 107 have been killed, most by the former Serbs but some by the Muslims. Serbs have repeatedly used peacekeepers as hostages to secure their aims."

Further, in the same article: "In the past NATO has been able to respond to attacks on peacekeepers with air strikes on Serbian artillery and other positions. Now this is less of an option because the multinational troops will be mingled with the civilian population especially in places like Sarajevo, where about 10,000 troops are to be deployed."

"The NATO operation is billed as one where superior Western firepower will obliterate any obstacles. But the NATO led force will not be threatened mainly by organized resistance, but by angry women and children, lone snipers and renegade bands of armed men determined to thwart a plan that would drive them from their homes and negate all they have fought to achieve."

We are talking about people who have fought each other for nearly 4 years. And I stood on the streets of Sarajevo and saw those areas where they have pounded the residential areas and have obliterated them. Many of the people who are there now are not the people who lived in Sarajevo before. They were not there back during the Winter Olympics that we remember so fondly in such a beautiful thriving city as Sarajevo then was. They are people who came in there as refugees. Once the people were driven from their homes, they were no longer livable for individuals who had those homes, and now refugees have come in.

So we are dealing now with two groups of people that are going to be problems—assuming that we are successful in going in there to achieve some type of peace.

Col. Thierry Cambournac of NATO, deputy sector commander of Sarajevo, said he feared that the soldiers could get drawn into conflicts in urban areas