

United States and how Congress is reacting to its responsibilities in these days looking to the future. It cautions against foolhardy and too deep cuts which may cost us in lives and money in the future.

After victory in World War II, the world seemed safe. America demobilized its military forces with a vengeance.

Peace was in hand and the world expected it would remain so. Defense plants closed, soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines came home as fast as bulging troop ships could sail across the oceans.

In 1945, while the allies were mopping up the Germans and finishing off the Japanese, the United States had 12 million citizens under arms.

In 1946, it had less than 3 million.

That number dwindled until, in 1950, it was 1.4 million.

In June 1950, North Korea—under the direction of its patron, the Soviet Union—attached South Korea.

The United Nations stood up to defend the tiny country from the communist invasion, and the United States was back at war.

The problem was that in the previous five years, the nation had decimated its military force, using the "peace dividend" to balance the federal budget and to get the economy in order.

Fighting raged during that time in Southeast Asia, Greece and the Mideast but the United States was at work rebuilding Europe and trying to devise a policy to deal with the Soviet Union's ambitions.

By 1947, the United States had little military force at all. Manpower was minimal. It had no ready atomic bombs and there was great doubt that the Strategic Air Command could hit any targets anyway. When President Harry Truman told Secretary of State George C. Marshall that he would like to "give the Russians hell" Marshall tactfully suggested that one American division in Europe was not an adequate instrument for even the threat of hell.

Much later, nuclear deterrence would become the policy, but when the shooting started in Korea, the United States found itself little better off militarily than it had been eight years earlier when the shooting started in Pearl Harbor, and almost as surprised.

When the shooting stopped in Korea, the United States had tripled the size of its armed forces and quadrupled the size of its defense budget.

Fast forward to 1992. The Cold War is over and the U.S. House of Representatives is proposing to slash the military budget by twice as much as the president recommended.

Jacksonville area Representatives, Charles Bennett and Craig James voted against the \$1.5 trillion budget containing those drastic cuts.

Over a period of five years, the House budget would trim \$88 billion from the defense spending. The Pentagon calls that excessive.

Certainly, the collapse of the Soviet Union calls for defense budget reductions of reasonable size. But the former superpower's nuclear warheads still exist and there are still formidable threats in the world from other quarters, as we learned 18 months ago in Kuwait.

There is a difference between paring defense down to reasonable size and stripping our defenses to get money to ensure liberal officeholders sufficient votes to remain in office. Congress needs to learn that difference and act accordingly.

NUMBER 1 PROPERTY CRIME— AUTO THEFT

HON. CHARLES E. SCHUMER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 24, 1992

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Speaker, automobile theft has become the Nation's No. 1 property crime problem. Auto crime accounts for more than half of the value of property lost to crime—some \$8 to \$9 billion each year. Auto theft touched 1 in every 50 American households last year, with more than 1.6 million motor vehicles reported stolen.

To address the growing crisis, I and the gentleman from Wisconsin, the chairman and ranking Republican member of the Subcommittee on Crime and Criminal Justice, join together today to introduce the Anti-Car Theft Act of 1992. This bill would significantly toughen the Federal penalties for auto theft. It would create a new offense for armed carjacking—this is the most recent innovation in auto theft, in which the criminal brazenly walks up to a car waiting at a traffic light, points a gun at the driver, and demands that the car be turned over. Our bill would make armed carjacking punishable by up to 20 years in prison. It would also double the penalties for existing auto theft offenses.

The bill also includes a program for assisting State law enforcement efforts. Several States are now taking creative and resourceful approaches to the problem. Michigan, for example, has set up an Auto Theft Prevention Authority, funded by a \$1 per car surcharge collected by insurance companies, that is devoted exclusively to fighting auto crime. This program has been astonishingly successful. Since its establishment, as national auto theft rates have skyrocketed, Michigan's has actually declined by more than 13 percent. Our bill would authorize \$10 million in assistance to States following the Michigan example.

In addition to tougher penalties and enhanced enforcement, the bill contains three new and inventive programs aimed at deterring auto theft by taking the profit out of stolen cars. The most prevalent method for making money from auto theft is with so-called "chop shops," which dismantle the stolen car and sell it in parts to shady auto repairers. Broken up, an automobile's parts can fetch up to four times the value of the whole car. Our bill would require that an automobile's major parts be marked with the car's vehicle identification number. This would allow police officers raiding a suspected chop shop to quickly and definitely determine whether the establishment is indeed trafficking in stolen parts. The bill would also provide for repair shops who sell used parts to check the ID numbers of the parts they sell against the FBI database of stolen car ID numbers, to ensure that the parts they are selling are not stolen.

Some auto thieves simply resell the car whole, by obtaining an apparently valid washed title document. A thief washes a title by going to a State's department of motor vehicles, presenting a fraudulent out-of-State title, and saying that he or she has just purchased the car and wants to title it in the new State. By the time the new State checks with the old State, the thief has already sold the stolen car to an unsuspecting purchaser. Our bill would create an electronic clearinghouse

that would permit States to instantaneously check the validity of a purported out-of-State title.

A third, increasingly popular, method for profiting from auto theft is to export the stolen vehicle for sale abroad. The stolen automobile is simply hidden in a shipping container and put on an outgoing boat. Our bill would tighten the Customs Service's supervision of exported automobiles, and would direct Customs to spot check containers destined for overseas.

The Anti-Car Theft Act of 1992 is a critically needed step toward reducing the overwhelming cost that auto theft is now exacting. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this bill.

A TRIBUTE TO FRANCES JEAN NICHOLS

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 24, 1992

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention today the fine work and outstanding public service of Deputy Frances Jean Nichols. She is retiring after dedicating 26 years of service to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and will be recognized at a dinner in her honor on March 27.

Frances Jean was born on January 2, 1941, in Los Angeles where she grew up and attended public schools. From an early age, she had her sights on a career in law enforcement and joined the L.A. County Sheriff's Department in June 1965.

Frances Jean graduated from the Sheriff's Academy in 1965 as a member of Class 107 and began her law enforcement career at the Sybil Brand Institute for Women. During this time, she formulated a waitress training program for inmates in an effort to provide them with a marketable skill.

In 1968, she was transferred to the West Hollywood Patrol Station and began assisting in the production of departmental training films. Ten years later, she was assigned to the San Dimas Station Detective Bureau where she investigated crimes against children and also coordinated the station's Juvenile Diversion Program. Her additional duties included lectures to various civic organizations on rape prevention and training station personnel in first aid and CPR. In 1982, Frances Jean was transferred to the preemployment bureau where she conducted background investigations on Sheriff's Department applicants.

Mr. Speaker, in over 26 years of service, Frances Jean Nichols has served honorably and made extraordinary contributions to our community. I ask that you join me, our colleagues, and friends in recognizing her selfless dedication. Her many years of public service is certainly worthy of recognition by the House today.