

Now, by opposing the block grant concept, my Democrat colleagues and the Clinton administration are trying to convince the American people that big brother Government knows what's better for a community than the people who live there. They call this proposal mean spirited and callous. In reality, the only mean spirited thing in this whole debate is the current state of our welfare system.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I think I understand why my colleagues oppose these reforms. They are simply afraid to admit the Great Society failed. But, now is the time for us to move on and begin transforming our welfare system from a social drug promoting dependence to a program that enables the participants to become productive members of society.

HOW MANY TIMES DO WE HAVE TO PAY?

(Mr. SKAGGS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, before we take up the takings bill, I ask everybody to look at the story of Colorado's Summitville Mine. This was an active gold mine, using a cyanide leaching technique to extract ore. But a couple of years ago the mine's poorly designed holding ponds broke, overflowed, and a very, very toxic flow went down Alamoosa Creek in southern Colorado.

About a year and a half later, the foreign company which owned the mine declared bankruptcy and left. At the request of the State, EPA took over the cleanup.

Here is the kicker. The companies that now own the site are claiming that EPA's effort to clean up is a taking of their property, for which they deserve compensation.

Under the Constitution, this claim would be laughed out of court. But if we pass this takings legislation, it is exactly the kind of claim that American taxpayers would be forced to pay.

The public has already paid twice for Summitville: First, the environmental disaster, and now the EPA cleanup. Let us not have to pay a third time. They have got to be kidding.

More on the Summitville disaster on special orders tonight.

URGING BIPARTISAN SUPPORT FOR A GOOD JOBS MEASURE, THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM RELIEF ACT

(Mr. ROTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, I have a proposal I think can bring our liberal and conservative friends together, because if we want to do something for working people in America, if we want to create jobs, jobs, jobs, I have a bill for us to

sign onto. I am introducing the Travel and Tourism Relief Act.

The travel and tourism business is the second largest employer in America. More than 11 million people in this country are employed directly or indirectly by the tourism, and travel and tourism industry amounts to nearly 15 percent of America's gross domestic product, generating more than \$800 billion a year in expenditures.

Travel and tourism is the Nation's single largest export. More than 50 million visitors come to the United States each year, generating about \$71 billion in revenues. With taxes at their current level, tourism also generates approximately \$50 billion for the State and local governments.

Under my bill, Mr. Speaker, the travel and tourism industry will grow and it will help our local communities. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support our working people and small business owners by backing the Travel and Tourism Relief Act. Together we can secure a prosperous future for communities across America.

Mr. Speaker, this bill helps kids. This bill helps moms and dads. Rather than a government handout, this bill creates jobs for the American people. I ask Members to sign on.

REPUBLICAN PROPOSALS TOUGH ON CHILDREN, TOUGH ON VETERANS, AND TOUGH ON SENIOR CITIZENS, IN ORDER TO PAY FOR TAX BREAKS FOR THE WEALTHY

(Mr. STUPAK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, this morning we have heard a lot about the Republican plan to cut \$17.3 billion from the budget, the rescission package. Where are they going to cut? The Women, Infant and Children Program, school lunches, the Day Care Lunch Program. They are tough on kids.

Who else are the Republicans tough on? They are going to be tough on the veterans, because they want to cut \$50 million out of veterans' facilities. Those veterans who need medical help are going to lose \$50 million.

They are going to be tough on our senior citizens. Two million senior citizens will lose the LIHEAP Program to help them heat their homes. In my district tonight in northern Michigan it is predicted to be 20 below zero, but we are going to be tough on those people. How about housing for seniors? One million seniors will lose housing under the \$17.3 billion rescission package they propose.

Tough on seniors, tough on veterans, tough on kids. Where is the money going to go? Is it going to go to deficit reduction? No. Is it going to reduce the debt? No. It is going to go for the Contract With America, to pay for the tax breaks for the wealthy, those who make more than \$180,000. That is where the money is going.

CHANGES INSTITUTED BY NEW REPUBLICAN PROPOSALS WILL RESTORE THE REAL AMERICAN DREAM

(Mr. GANSKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, this session of Congress deserves to be called historic for many reasons: For its hard work, for keeping its promises, for making real changes that America wants. Many of these votes have been passed by widely bipartisan measures.

In just a few more days Congress is going to do something that the American people have wanted for decades. We are going to fix the failed welfare system. Welfare is not going to be a way of life. It is no longer going to trap one generation after another generation after another generation.

A new generation of Americans is going to find out that the American Dream is more than a welfare check. The American Dream starts with children being children, not having children; with staying in school, not dropping out; with finishing high school, not getting high; with work, not welfare.

The changes we will offer for the welfare system will embrace the American Dream. Our changes will reaffirm faith in ourselves by reaffirming one of the basic tenets of the American way of life—individual responsibility. So hold on for a few more days, America. Help is on the way.

THE REPUBLICANS PERMIT FREE LUNCHESES FOR THEMSELVES, BUT NOT FOR AMERICA'S CHILDREN

(Mr. BRYANT of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRYANT of Texas. Mr. Speaker, what is most appalling about the efforts of Speaker GINGRICH and his lockstep Republican chorus to deprive 13 million American children of their School Lunch Program is that the Republicans refuse to give up the freebie lobby lunch program which they themselves are able to enjoy under the current rules of the House.

While the lockstep Republicans gladly jeopardize the nutrition and education of children in America, they have repeatedly refused to even allow a vote in this House to outlaw the free lunches, free gifts, free football and theater tickets, and free golf vacations that they are able to accept from the special interest lobbyists seeking to influence their decision.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is that if the Republicans have their way, there will be no free lunch for kids who cannot afford one, but there will be

sumptuous free lunches for Congressmen at the finest restaurants in Washington, paid for by special interest lobbyists.

While lobby freebies may win tax breaks for special interests, eliminating the School Lunch Program will in the long run increase the burden on every American taxpayer. It is clear where Republican priorities are. They will let the lobby moochers keep their free lunches and eliminate the School Lunch Program for America's kids.

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SUPPORT RESOLUTION OF INQUIRY REGARDING MEXICAN BAILOUT

(Mr. STOCKMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STOCKMAN. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House today a little bit surprised to see that we are giving away billions of dollars to a country in which the president has been implicated in the murder of another presidential candidate. We are talking about real tax dollars and real money, and I am proud to say that I am going to reach across the aisle and support the Kaptur amendment today to ask some serious questions from our President.

We are planning to give away \$53 billion without any oversight from Congress. It is the people's money and the people need to speak and say where we stand. I stand here saying that Congress needs to know what Clinton is doing with the money from an organization which has no oversight by Congress. I plan to support the Kaptur amendment.

SUPPORT HOUSE RESOLUTION 80, INQUIRY REGARDING MEXICAN BAILOUT

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. First let me thank the gentleman from Texas for the bipartisan nature of an important resolution on which we will vote this afternoon. I wish to draw my colleagues' attention to it.

Mr. Speaker, today the American people are going to win the first vote being allowed in this Congress on the misguided taxpayer-backed bailout of the Government of Mexico.

As a result of a procedure we employed to force the leadership of this House to let us vote on the first step in getting to the bottom of this, the House this afternoon will vote on House Resolution 80, a bipartisan resolution of inquiry which requires the administration to answer key questions regarding its \$52 billion bailout of Mexico.

I ask my colleagues to vote "yes" on the previous question and "yes" on House Resolution 80. Get answers to questions for your constituents such as who are the private creditors who will benefit from this rescue package? How solid is Mexico's pledge of oil collateral? Demand answers for your constituents.

This will be the first vote in many to follow, I hope, so we can get to the bottom of who our taxpayers are being asked to bail out.

CALL FOR APPOINTMENT OF AGRICULTURE SECRETARY

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, today is the first day of March. Today is the first day of Lent. Today is the first day of the third month that we do not have a U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

Is having a Secretary of Agriculture important? Apparently not to this administration. Or maybe it is agriculture issues that are not important to this administration.

And what are agriculture issues? Food stamps, nutrition, School Lunch Programs, to name a few. Yes, that is right. For all the bureaucratic belly-aching over School Lunch Programs, neither the President nor the Senate Democrats have pushed for the confirmation of a new Secretary of Agriculture.

Could there be a slight disconnect here, Mr. Speaker? And what else besides the School Lunch Program is in jeopardy or up for grabs? The 1995 farm bill, the Delaney clause, the Market Promotion Program, minor use pesticides. But forget these. How about every item on your table, everything you buy at the grocery store?

Is it not important enough to the American consumers for the President and the U.S. Senate to confirm a new Secretary of Agriculture?

CONTRACT WITH AMERICA CALLED HIT ON SCHOOLCHILDREN

(Mr. TUCKER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TUCKER. Mr. Speaker, in the parlance of lexicography, a contract is something that is a promise to be upheld or fulfilled. But in the common vernacular, a contract is also something that we understand is a hit that is put out on someone.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot about the contract on America and it is exactly that. It is a hit on America. But today we understand who that hit is really on. When we read an article in the L.A. Times today that the Agriculture Department tells us that there is going to be a \$1 billion hit on schoolchildren in terms of the School Lunch Program elimination, we understand

what the contract on America really is.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, on Capitol Hill there were more people walking the halls than you could ever imagine, and that is just the beginning.

Yes, the first day of March is the first day of the beginning of the end of the Republican contract on America, because the chickens have come home to roost and we finally understand who the hit is on and it is on the 13 million American children of this country.

BLOCK-GRANT PROPOSAL LOSER FOR MISSOURI

(Ms. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I am for the balanced budget and I am for welfare reform. Last weekend in my district, I met with concerned child care advocates at a place called Cradles and Crayons which takes care of the medically fragile children in my community. The room was packed with school nutritionists, child care providers, administrators, parents, and concerned citizens. I listened and I learned. They are unanimous in their concern regarding how we balance the budget and reform our welfare system, and their particular concern was with this proposal for block grants for children's programs, particularly the Children's Nutrition Program.

Their historical experience has been that when the Federal Government block grants, that usually means less money. Their outrage was around a program such as school lunches and that a program that had worked for over 40 years would be in jeopardy as a result of this block-grant concept. In the Independence district alone, Harry Truman's home district, they were going to lose \$500,000 under the block-grant proposal put forward by the Republicans. The story was the same in Grandview, in Raytown, all over my district. The State of Missouri would lose lunches for 150,000 children.

Mr. Speaker, the message was clear: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Congress needs to balance its budget but not on the bellies of our children.

FEDERAL FOOD ASSISTANCE

(Mrs. CLAYTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, WIC works.

It is a program that services low-income and at-risk women, infants and children.

Pregnant women, infants 12 months and younger and children from 1 to 5 years old, are the beneficiaries of the WIC Program.

For every dollar this Nation spends on WIC prenatal care, we save up to \$4.21.