

Thus, as the issues I outlined illustrate, the Republican attack on education moves higher education closer to being yet another Republican designed luxury for the wealthy. I think I speak for all of us when I say that our presence here tonight should be mistaken for nothing less than our determination to prevent access to higher education from moving out of the realm of Government priorities and into the realm of privileges for the few.

Mr. Speaker, those of us who benefited from student loan programs, those of us who were able to get an education, undergraduate, graduate, or professional school, realize how important it is to have these Government programs. It is very unfair for those of us who are now in Congress to be advocating these student loan programs or grant assistance programs should be terminated or cut back, particularly at a time when this country faces such competition from abroad and we know that higher education is a very valuable tool for those who want to go out and be successful and get a job in this very competitive world.

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

[Mr. HORN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Ms. KAPTUR] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

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

[Mr. KINGSTON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois [Mrs. COLLINS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. COLLINS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I am really very proud to join with several of my colleagues tonight to engage in a discussion, in a dialogue, about an

issue that really is near and dear to the hearts of, I think just about all Americans, and that is the whole issue of education and the education of children and what the future of this country is all about.

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I am the daughter of immigrant parents who, quite frankly, could only dare to dream that someday their daughter would sit in the House of Representatives. My father came to this country as an immigrant, and my mom worked in a dress shop in the old sweatshops, if you will, for most of her life in order to provide me the opportunity to be able to go to school.

I can remember going to that dress shop to meet her every day after school, and I would complain because, as all kids, I wanted to be outside. I did not want to be in a noisy place, and it was dirty. I remember those women, though. I remember them with their backs bent over their sewing machines just trying to pump out the dresses as quickly as they could so that they could provide for their family.

My mother would say to me when I would complain, "Take the opportunity for an education so you don't have to do this." Now, that is my mother's story, which is multiplied thousand and thousands of times around this country and this body that we all serve in here.

The fact is that that is what the American dream is about. It is being able to provide your kids with the future and have them have opportunities that you may not have had or to have the same opportunities.

What we are looking at in the House and what myself and my colleagues want to talk about a little bit tonight is, as this House of Representatives embarks on a process over the next few weeks, we are going to urge people to really pay very careful attention to the Republican proposals that are, in fact, going to slash education funding, slash that opportunity that so many of us were given to be able to go to school, to get an education, to expand our horizon, and they are going to slash that education funding by making incredibly devastating cuts in Federal student aid, education and training programs and the total elimination of the very cost-effective direct lending program. These are very shortsighted cuts. They are going to shut that door. It is going to close the educational opportunities for working families in this country.

So many of us have this opportunity through the use of student loans. These cuts not only jeopardize our Nation's economic competitiveness but they destroy the hopes and the dreams of working families who struggle to build a better future for their families, for their kids, and, quite frankly, what is most disturbing about the cuts in education is that they are going to finance, I mean, this is the worst of all possible reasons, to make cuts in such

a vital part of what our lives are all about, they are going to cut these education programs in order to finance a tax cut, a tax break for this country's wealthiest individuals, folks who have the opportunity.

This is the United States of America. Part of that American dream is to do well, to be able to have the wherewithal to have the good life. That we all understand. But folks at that upper end of the spectrum have the wherewithal to send their kids to school; they can do it, and they do not need help that working, middle-class families do in order to be able to make sure that their kids can get those interest-deferred student loans.

The whole budget debate is about priorities, about the deep cuts in education programs. These cuts, I will tell you, speak volumes about misplaced priorities; more than priorities, misplaced values.

We are trying to once again instill values in people in this country and in our youngsters to understand the value of education and of respect and of working hard and responsibility. Those are all the values that people like my colleagues have been taught, that I have been taught, that we often lament that maybe are not there in today's society.

But if we are going to look at what kinds of things we are doing here and where we place our values, how can we not place our values on education and making sure that our kids' futures are secure? So that the cuts speak volumes about misplaced values and priorities of the Gingrich revolution.

Let me just tell you about Connecticut. The Republican cuts translate into a loss of approximately \$325 billion in education and training funds over the next 10 years. Cuts in student aid and specifically reductions or the elimination of the in-school interest subsidy could mean 43,000 students from Connecticut would pay more for a college education, and by eliminating the interest-deferred Stafford loans, Republicans will add \$5,200 to the cost of an education for the average college student in Connecticut.

I have got to say \$5,200 may not be very much to the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. GINGRICH], but I will tell you that it is a heck of a lot of money, and it is plenty to the 15,000 working families that rely on this subsidy in my district.

According to the Department of Education, my district alone, the Third Congressional District in Connecticut, will lose \$9 billion in student support provided through the in-school interest subsidy.

That increase will devastate families like the Baxter family of West Haven, CT, a family that is struggling to put their children through college. This is the Baxter family right here in this photograph. I met Gail Baxter this spring at a student loan forum that I organized, and Gail told me that she was very, very worried about what cuts

in the student loan program would mean for her and for her kids. It is no wonder she is worried. Gail is a single mother who has, this fall, four children in college, four children in college. That means four college tuitions to pay.

The Republican plan would cost Gail Baxter and her family approximately \$20,000 more this year, and it is all to pay for a tax cut for the wealthy.

So if you want to take a look at what that bottom line is, the Baxters will pay \$20,000 more so that the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans can pay \$20,000 less. Where is the equity in that? Where is it? It is not. You cannot find it. It defies logic.

It is not just parents who are worried. Students understand that the GOP cuts will be devastating to their futures.

Let me tell you about one more individual in my district, and then I want to invite my colleagues to join this debate.

Recently I met with students from Quinnipiac College in Hamden, CT. They organized a letter writing campaign expressing their opposition to cuts in Federal student aid.

Let me just give one example from Laurel Drum of Quinnipiac College. She writes, "Recently reports suggest you are considering the biggest cuts in the history of student aid," and, in fact, that is right, "the biggest cuts in the history of student aid, and while I applaud congressional efforts for responsible deficit reduction, cuts in student aid just do not make sense. Student aid actually saves taxpayers money by stimulating economic growth, expanding the tax base and increasing productivity. That is why every major opinion poll shows strong support for student aid programs."

Let me just say that I am so proud of the efforts and the determination of my constituents in their ardent opposition to the cuts in education spending. They want Congress to continue vital Federal support for higher education, because they understand, quite frankly, they probably should understand as well as, and Members of Congress should understand this as well as every working family in this country, that education is the cornerstone of economic security. They get it, and what they are saying to us is, "We elected you," and we have to get it, if we truly want to be people here who represent the interests of those good, hard-working, responsible people who send us here on their behalf.

I would like to now really get my colleagues involved in this, and I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] to talk about her perspective on this issue.

Mrs. CLAYTON. I thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut and thank her for the opportunity to participate in this special discussion about education.

I want to share parts of a letter with the Members of the House that I re-

ceived in August from 22 young people from the town of Edenton, NC, in my congressional district. These young people are either in high school or are recent graduates who at the time were participating in the summer jobs program.

They write, "Congresswoman CLAYTON: During the school year we all thought how dreadful the summer would be without a job, to do nothing, nothing to do, nowhere to go. Then we received a letter that told us that we would be able to have a summer job this summer. For many for us," they wrote, "this meant an opportunity to gain money to spend on school clothes and shoes that would not have been without this job. However, as the time went on, we began to see that the jobs we held were not only for some money but an opportunity gain some valuable work experience, job skills to help career choices and develop our self-esteem, responsibility and maturity."

As I read, I thought, clearly, they are demonstrating the maturity they gained. I continue to read, "This program," they wrote, "is a good thing for society to have because with the limited number of jobs for young people in this area, we all would have been on streets this summer with nothing to do." Then they asked the compelling question: "We understand that it must take a great deal of money and manpower to keep a program like this going, but if it benefits young people, is not it worth it even if it costs some money?" They concluded, "If this program closed down, there would be no hope for society today. We would like to think you are not giving up on us before you give us an opportunity to have a fair chance."

Mr. Speaker, I am inserting at this point in the RECORD the entire letter from these young people.

The letter referred to follows:

AUGUST 3, 1995.

To our Honorable Congressional Leaders:

We are the twenty-two participants in Chowan county with the Job Training and Partnership Act's Summer Youth Employment and Training Program (SYETP). We chose to write to our North Carolina and United States Congress men and women to let you know how beneficial this program has been in all our lives. We chose to write as a collective group rather than as individuals to show you that we are in agreement with our ideas, and with hopes that our voices in a collective harmony will ring louder than one voice in the wind. We hope that you will consider our words with the sincerity with which they were written, and magnitude of our problem.

We are all students or recent graduates of John A. Holmes High School in Edenton, NC which is the county seat of Chowan county. During the school year we all thought of how dreadful the summer would be with no job, nothing to do, and no where to go. Then we received a letter from the Albemarle Commission that told us we would be able to have a job this summer. For many of us this meant an opportunity to gain money to spend on school clothes and shoes for the next year that we wouldn't have had without this job. However, as the time went on, and with the help of our counselor and supervisors we began to see that the jobs we held

were not only sources of money but an opportunity to gain valuable work experience, job skills, help with career choices, and develop higher self-esteem, responsibility, and maturity. This program is a good thing for society to have today, because with the limited number of jobs for young people in this area we all would have just been out on the street this summer. During our six weeks in SYETP we have gained valuable lessons that help us at home and at school.

Our group is composed of a lot of different people with different personalities and dreams, but we all share the fact that this summer the SYETP has helped us all a great deal. We understand that it must take a great deal of money and manpower to keep a program like this going, but if it benefits the young people isn't it worth it? Please remember that we are the future! Programs like the Summer Youth Employment and Training Program help give us the skills to begin to prepare ourselves for the future that we will one day control. If you all are looking for the answer to a lot of the problems concerning young people, it lies in programs like this one. If this program closes down, we believe that there is no hope for society today. It would be like giving up on us before we have even been given a fair chance. If you want to help the small town of Edenton, or the other counties in North Carolina, or even the entire United States of America then do us youth a favor. . . . Keep the program open for other people to experience. For many of us this has been our second or even third year, and we want it to be available for our brothers and sisters. However, for most of us this was just our first year in the program and our first work experience, please do not let it be our last. We need the JTPA Summer Youth Employment and Training Program.

Sincerely,

CHOWAN COUNTY SYETP
PARTICIPANTS,
TOMEKA L. WARD,
Counselor.

I could be no more eloquent and forceful than these 22 students who wrote this letter to me from Edenton, NC, in my district, the irrationality of these cuts and how it will impact young people in the opportunity for education. It makes no sense, Mr. Speaker.

The Labor-Education bill which passed just recently demonstrates this senselessness. Rather than promoting education, that bill is, indeed, an obstruction to education. Half of the cuts, some \$4.5 billion, come from education; 60,000 disadvantaged children who need a little help at the beginning of their lives really will not get that help at all. They will get no help.

Head Start is now being cut \$137 million, abandoning some 180,000 children nationwide and some more than 4,000 young children in my congressional district in North Carolina.

Healthy Start will be cut by 52 percent, exposing infants and children at the very dawn of their lives to the perils of infant mortality and other threats. Thousands of needy school-children during their most important education and formative years will go without this vital support.

Title I will be cut \$1.1 billion, denying critical basic and advanced skill training for more than 1.1 million children nationwide and some 20,400 students just in North Carolina.

Drug-Free Schools is cut by 59 percent. This program is currently serving 129 school districts; in other words, they are serving 100 percent of all the schoolchildren. This program is designed to fight what, to fight crime, fight violence, fight drugs, keep drugs away from students in our schools.

What did we do? What does the Republican majority want to do? To gut this program. Yet they say they believe in young people.

Goals 2000 is completely eliminated—381 school districts in North Carolina will be denied this program and the advantages of it.

Vocational education, cut by some 27 percent, thousands of those schoolchildren willing to work who have found hope, now a mountain of hopelessness, will not be able to work. Why? Because the school-to-work program is cut by 22 percent.

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And, the summer jobs program is eliminated altogether. Some 9,000 young people in North Carolina will be put out of work for 1996 and some 61,000 will be out of work in our State by the year 2002. And, sadly, Mr. Speaker, that includes the 22 young people who wrote me who rejoice in thanking us for the opportunity to mature and provide for the educational opportunities this year. They, too, will be out of those jobs.

See, the privilege of an education belongs to all in America. But, the Labor-HHS-Education bill, with the stroke of a pen, takes that privilege away for thousands of people.

This Saturday, in Rocky Mount, NC, I am hosting a youth summit. More than 800 young people have already confirmed that they will attend. What will I say to these young people?

This blind march to a balanced budget, without considering the merits of programs, is taking us down the wrong path. I wonder where it is taking our young people?

More important, Mr. Speaker, I think we ought to be about supporting education for our young people rather than a big tax break for the wealthy. America needs a future, and young people are our future.

I thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] for allowing me to participate in this very important discussion on education.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON], who I think has really touched on what we need to be centered on, and that is what is happening overall to our children. I think that there is terrible great fear in our society today about what is overall, whether it is education or whether it is health, what is going to be the future of our kids, and I think that there is a lot of insecurity amongst parents and families today about that whole issue and that this—only these cuts reinforce the fact that we are fearful that our kids do not have a future. I thank

the gentlewoman for her comments, and what I would like to do is ask the gentleman from Maine [Mr. BALDACCI] to give us a little bit of some of his thoughts on this area.

Mr. BALDACCI. I thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO].

I spent some time this afternoon in my office talking with a young man from my State of Maine. His name is Patrick, and he is a sophomore at Georgetown. He is studying international economics. He is very bright, articulate, and thoughtful. He happens to also come from a working-class family and is able to attend Georgetown with the help of federally funded student financial aid. I know that without that financial aid Patrick, and indeed a majority of Maine students, would not be able to afford higher education.

We all know how expensive college education is. Public and private schools have been forced to raise their tuition to meet expenses, putting a college education even further out of reach for many students. Topping that, by cutting financial aid, it is a recipe for disaster.

Mr. Speaker, what is critical about student financial aid, that it provides access to higher education. It does not make anybody smarter or more skilled, but it does give people the ability to go on to school to broaden their minds and learn new and necessary skills.

In my State a few years ago they had a conference on aspirations because we had so many dropouts and that it was not good for our society and our heritage to have those kinds of situations throughout Maine, and we wanted to raise young people's aspirations to go on to higher education, because it was better for them, it was better for the community, the State, and the country. We really worked hard to turn that dropout rate around.

In our State there are 33,000 young people who need to involve themselves with a guaranteed student loan. Before I came to Congress, we only had enough resources in our State for 18,000 of those young people; 15,000 young people had to get higher-interest loans in order to go to school. So, not only did we have a dropout-rate problem, not only did we want them to go on, but we did not even have the resources to assist in making sure that they had those opportunities.

Now, coming to Washington and seeing that the rug is going to be pulled from underneath them, it is going to turn that situation in reverse, and every single study that has ever been done on aspirations, any study that has been done on defense jobs that have been displaced, any study that has ever been done on laid-off shipyard workers or mill workers, it is education is the key, and, if you remove this opportunity and this bridge for students to reach out and gain their dreams in their future, it not only hurts them, but I submit it hurts the State and also the country.

Ms. DELAURO. The gentleman's comments are about hopes, and dreams, and aspirations, which is really what it is all about, and, you know, just in one other areas I have just got to mention we have had a program for the last 2 or 3 years called a school to work, school to career. These are youngsters who are not going to go on to a 4-year liberal arts college, and that is probably the majority of our kids today, that is the circumstance they find themselves in, and we have not, as a nation, focused in on what to say to them that we really do value, that you want to go from school to work. We want to help you do that. And what we are turning around and saying is forget it, you know. Your hopes, and dreams, and aspirations really do not mean very much in the scheme of things, and we have got other fish to fry. We have got other folks to take care of, and it is a heck of a letdown to kids, and I think that you just capture what, you know, people's feelings are.

Mr. BALDACCI. I appreciate your comments because, when you talk about your family and coming over, I had seven brothers and sisters, and we were very much engaged into going to school and going to higher education because that was the key to our futures and our success, and I appreciate what you are doing also.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman very much, and let us get the gentlewoman from California [Ms. WOOLSEY] engaged in this conversation and get some of her thoughts and comments on what has been said in some other areas.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Well, first of all, I thank my colleague from Connecticut for organizing this special order and giving us the opportunity to speak about the most important priority this country should have, and that is education.

Mr. Speaker, it is really hard for me to believe that it was just last year when I convinced this body to approve a landmark resolution which put us on our way to making our schools the best in the world.

Yes, it's true.

Last year, the House approved my resolution which called on Congress to increase our investment in education by 1 percent a year, until the education budget accounts for 10 percent of the budget in 2002.

At the time, I said that the resolution would send a clear message to those who decide how our Federal dollars are spent, the appropriators, that this Congress was serious about improving education.

Well, guess what, folks? Times have changed. We've got a new majority in Congress, and, instead of going forward, we're going backwards. Fast.

The new Republican majority in the House blatantly ignored the pledge we made last year to our children's education, and passed one of the worst bills I have ever seen—the Labor, HHS, and Education appropriations bill.

This bill cuts: Head Start, Chapter One, Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Goals 2000, School-to-Work, vocational and adult education, and college aid.

In all, this bill cuts education by 13 percent in 1 year alone. Thirteen percent.

I repeat, that is the wrong direction, and that's not the way we are supposed to be taking care of our children.

You see, I believe, as do my colleagues here tonight, that our Nation's greatest, greatest responsibility is to provide a quality education for everybody in this country.

I believe this because education is absolutely central to solving the problems facing our Nation.

When we strengthen education, we prepare our children and workers for jobs that pay a livable wage.

When we strengthen education, we get people off welfare and, for heaven's sake, we prevent people from having to go on welfare in the first place.

When we strengthen education, we actually prevent crime and violence in our communities.

And, when we strengthen education, we increase respect for our health, our environment, and for each other.

Speaking of welfare, Mr. Speaker, having been a single working mother on welfare 28 years ago, I am absolutely certain that, if it had not been for the fact that I was educated—I had 2 years of college—I would not have been able to work myself off welfare to the degree that I did, and have the successes that came to me, nor would I be a Member of the House of Representatives today. That is why, for the life of me, I cannot understand why the new majority wants to cut and gut our education system. In fact, if they do not stop, there is going to be a triple feature playing down at our theaters in the very near future, and that is going to be called, "Dumb and Dumber, Sick and Sicker, and Poor and Poorer," and let me tell you it is not going to be a bargain matinee.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to stop this assault on education. It is time to make our Nation's No. 1 special interest our children and not the fat cats and lobbyists in Washington.

Ms. DELAURO. Amen. Thank you very, very much, and what we need to do is one more time introduce that 1 percent until the education is 10 percent of what our budget is about. That is when we really will be doing the job we were sent here to do, to make sure there is a future for our kids.

I would like to ask my colleague now from Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN, to talk about, I think, a recent experience he had with kids and to let us hear his story.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Connecticut for requesting this hour this evening for us and to share her time with us.

Yesterday I had the opportunity in Houston, because I am proud to serve on what is now called the Economic

and Educational Opportunities Committee, Education and Labor Committee last session, because, no matter what problems we deal with in our country, education is the answer, and yesterday I had the opportunity to visit an elementary school in Houston, Franklin Elementary, and the sixth-grade class provided me appropriately the front page in green, a booklet, and I will go into that in a few minutes, but yesterday the kids are back in school around the country. After Labor Day they go back, but in Texas we had our children back in school for about 3 weeks, and every year young people across the country venture out to buy new notebooks, pencils, backpacks and the same excitement about going back to school mounts inside of them again. But, Mr. Speaker, this year is a little different. Yes, school has started again, but Congress is welcoming students back with less funding for this year than they did last year. Programs hit hardest include basic math and reading services, efforts to promote safe and drug-free schools, resources for State and local officials to implement higher standards, and education technology. Cuts in these vital programs will cause irreparable harm to students in my community and particularly across the country.

It may shock some of you that the lion's share of cuts in Federal aid to education are in elementary and secondary education, but it is true. We will be spending \$4.5 billion less in 1996—almost 20 percent of the total Federal aid to schools—than we did in 1995! At the very same time, local, State, and nationwide enrollment trends are up. In fact, the Houston Independent School District, where Franklin Elementary is reports a 2.2-percent enrollment increase or 4,462 more students in 1995 than in 1994. And, the Aldine Independent School District where my wife teaches reports a 3.2-percent enrollment increase or 1,375 more student in 1995 than in 1994. We are having more students, but they are having less money in each of these school districts.

On top of these steep cuts, my home State of Texas stands to lose all the money we won last year under the Elementary and Secondary Education Reauthorization Act. I supported the package last year through Congress largely because we changed the funding formula, and I know Connecticut was kind of caught in the middle on that, but for high-growth States like Texas, and Arizona, and New Mexico, and Florida, the reauthorization of chapter 1 funding actually provided additional funds for our students.

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In the updated formula, it took into account these population increases in Texas and high growth States. But in order to gain the support of the Northeastern States, what we did was in conference committee we agreed and said the new funding formula would go into

effect for new money, and the spending levels, only the amount above the 1995 spending level, would go in under the new formula.

Unfortunately, for every child in these United States, the 1996 appropriation is not increasing. In fact, it is decreasing. In Texas we are going to lose in chapter I alone \$97 million. Texas has about 10.5 percent of the Nation's poor children, but about we receive only 4.5 percent of the chapter I money. This inequity for Texas children can only worsen in the future unless we change it and the U.S. Senate changes it.

These education cuts are not what we are hearing as shared sacrifice. Education will suffer a staggering 18 percent cut. By comparison, agriculture spending is cut by 9 percent, transportation by 7 percent, and the Department of Defense by .3 percent. Cuts in Federal Aid to Education will adversely affect every working family and further diminish the quality of life of thousands of American communities. State and local governments will not be able to make up that difference without raising taxes or short-changing our children's future.

I know the value of good education. I as a youngster growing up in Northside Houston, in the district I am honored to represent, our hope for a better life was better education. That is even more important today in 1995 than it was in 1965 when I was a student in Jeff Davis High School in Houston and we received our first Federal funding.

Yesterday I participated in a press conference with the Department of Education in which Franklin Elementary was recognized by the Department of Education for their vast improvement in our Texas achievement scores, the test that is required around the country. Different States have different achievement tests.

Franklin Elementary moved from the 35 to the 59 percentile to the 75 to the 89 percentile, and that is in a school that 98 percent of those children are qualified for school reduced or free lunch. The reason Franklin Elementary improved was because of renewed commitment by the students, by the teachers, and by the faculty.

A representative from the Department of Education and I had the opportunity to tour an innovative fourth grade team teaching classroom, and we actually sat down and read to a classroom. I do that often times. I have already done it three times this year. We sit down and read a great book and talk with the children in the lunchroom about their school and their pride in their school that a year or two years ago they did not have.

Federal funding is used in that school for computers, for additional counselors, for chapter I, and yet they are not going to have that because of the cuts. The students and teachers were willing to make that commitment by staying late during the week and coming in on Saturdays. Teachers came in

without extra pay on Saturday because they knew the commitment from the community. They participated in workshops that would not be there if the Federal Government did not continue that commitment.

Let me share with you some of the letters that I received yesterday from some of the students. Let me share a letter from a young man, Michael Gonzalez. His statement is:

Thank you for the free and reduced lunch program. It helped us a lot because my mom has a lot of bills to pay.

Again, this is a school that 90 percent of those children qualify for it.

Another letter, from Mario Silva. Mario says:

Thank you for giving us free lunches and for making the school look better every year. You have done a good job on fixing the school. You have brought our school from bad to good. We hope to do even better this year.

They hope to do even better than the 89 percentile, yet we are cutting the funding for Franklin Elementary.

Mr. Speaker, I hope we can find common ground on education, because I am committed that education is a key to the stronger future for America. I hope our colleagues on both sides of the aisle will stop balancing the budget on the backs of these children, particularly the ones that I was with at Franklin Elementary School in Houston yesterday.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank my colleague. It is I guess actually true, out of the mouths of babes, all of us have had that wonderful experience of reading to youngsters in classrooms, and I think the gentleman shares the same feeling. You walk out of the classroom and you feel you really have accomplished something, that you are not just taking up space, that in fact you really have tried to give something back when you watch those youngsters with their eyes so high and just absorbing all of that. And to think some of that could really be gone. A point you have made, which I think is a very important one and I think people are going to understand this very quickly, is that if Federal dollars are taken away, you have one or two things happening: Either the State has to pick them up in some way, which deals with increases in taxes, or the services go. In both instances, it is a hardship. Certainly if the services go and some of the programs go, it is more than a hardship. It is really, if you will, eating our young.

I love that booklet. I think that is terrific. Those kinds of things you keep right by your desk in your office to remind you why you are here. That is terrific.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. It reminds us why we are actually here working for the students that are actually working. As we talk this evening, they are working to make sure they do better. They are the ones going to be standing on this floor 10 to 15 years from now.

Ms. DELAURO. If we give them that opportunity, and that youngster said

"we want to do better next year," that is what this body has got to do, is to do better on this issue.

I would like to ask my colleague from New Jersey, Mr. ANDREWS, to give us your views, but also how can these kinds of cuts in this area, in your view, be justified? How do we justify this?

Mr. ANDREWS. I would like to thank my friend from Connecticut, Congresswoman DELAURO, for giving us this chance to talk about this. Let me say for the RECORD, because I know we hear all the political rhetoric from the other side, let me say for the record, we understand you cannot solve problems simply by throwing money at them in public education. We are not saying that.

Many of us would disagree as to how to do it, but many of us understand the imperative of getting our Government's fiscal house in order and balancing our budget. But in all the numbers and the political rhetoric thrown around, what you have given us tonight is an opportunity to talk about people.

I want to talk, Mr. Speaker, tonight about some of the people who are affected by the issues we are talking about. Many of us sense in all of our districts a tremendous sense of frustration that people have about government. They go to work 50, 60, 70 hours a week. If they are fortunate enough to have two adults in the family, the two adults barely see each other, five minutes in the morning before they leave for work, 15 minutes in the evening after the chores are done, after the children are put to bed, before they go to sleep. All the things that they would do during the week they do on Saturday, if they do not work on Saturday at their third job, and they see their children for 3 hours a week at a soccer game or 2 hours a week to take them to Girl Scouts or something like that.

People wake up in the middle of the night and look at their husband or wife, if they are fortunate enough to have one, and say what are we doing this for? And we are handing over 30, 40, sometimes 50 percent of our income in taxes to government at all levels, when you add up the State, Federal and local.

Now, many of those individuals I talk about, Mr. Speaker, are saying what do we get from the Federal Government for 30 or 40 or 45 percent of our income? What are we getting in return for that?

Well, Mr. Speaker, the programs we are talking about tonight are programs where middle-class people get something in return for their tax dollar. Let me offer you a couple specific examples.

The daughter of a family where the mother is a paralegal and the father is a real estate salesman, if that little girl has a reading problem, whether she goes to public school or Catholic school or in many cases Christian or private schools, she gets help with her remedial reading teacher, someone who comes in and tutors her on how to read from the Federal Government. That is

being cut, the reading teacher for the little girl from that family.

The teenager of a mom who is a single woman who works as a nurse, and her son wants to get special training to be an auto mechanic when he graduates from high school, so in addition to his regular high school curriculum of history and math and English and physical education, he gets special vocational education on how to fix a car or truck engine through Federal vocational money. That is being cut and taken away.

The daughter of a family where the father is a public employee and the mother is a paralegal, who wants to go to a private university in a State like mine, a Princeton or Rider or Drew University, \$25,000 a year to go there, the way she goes to school is this way: First of all, she works in the summer and on weekends and at night. Well, work-study money that would help her get a job when she is in school is being cut.

Her parents take a home equity loan on what little equity they may have in their house. They better hope they have a lot more, because the student loan she would get to make up the difference is being cut in the following ways: First of all, it is not clear what we are saying to her, because our Republican friends have not been explicit yet. See, they want to keep this under wraps as long as possible, because, Mr. Speaker, when middle-class America finds out what is hidden under this shell they are not going to like it very much. But here is what we think is hidden under the shell.

They are going to say to that young woman, once you graduate and you have got \$50,000 in debt and you get your first job, if you are lucky enough to get a first job, that pays \$18,000 a year right out of college, you got to start to pay your loan back right away. No deferment until you get a job. The first week after you get your diploma you have got to start to pay your loan back, whether you have a job or not. Forget about your car payment, your auto insurance, your rent, your grocery bills, your health insurance. You got to pay your loan back right away. That is being cut.

Or better yet, let us say the young woman wants to go to graduate school because many of our people are finding out today a Bachelor's Degree is not enough, you have to have a MBA, a Master's in social work, some advanced degree. Apparently one of the proposals is that she will have to pay interest while she is in school.

Now, think about this, Mr. Speaker: She graduates from undergraduate, a \$50,000 debt, and now she has got to go to graduate school and it costs \$25,000 bucks a year to go to that in many places, and she is working as a teaching assistant or a waitress or doing whatever she can to make ends meet. Now we say you have to pay interest while you are in school too. Or you can defer it, a great gift from Uncle Sam,

meaning your debt will go up by 25 percent, and instead of owing \$100,000 at the end of your years in school, you will owe \$125,000. That is being cut.

Finally, the father in that family, say he is one of those unfortunate shipyard workers that our friend from Maine talked about or he is one of the workers at a Federal military installation, gets laid off in the latest round of base closures. They are happening from California to Maine, all over the country. And what that family decides is that one of them would like to go back to school and learn how to be a computer repair person or a person who works a blood testing machine at a hospital, and it takes money to do that, \$5,000, \$6,000, \$7,000 to go back in the middle of your life, when you are 45, 47, 51 years old, and try to learn a new skill in a job market that says you are too old to start all over again, but not old enough to retire.

That is being cut. So if you want to talk about where the cuts are in this bill, they go almost from cradle to grave. The reading teacher for the kid in the first grade, cut. The auto mechanic class for the 16-year-old, cut. The student loan for the person who is smart enough to go to the finest school, cut, because she has to start to pay her loan back the first day when she graduates. We did not have to do that, as my friend, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE], pointed out, but she will.

The graduate school student who wants to go on and do something has to pay interest in school. Finally the dad or mom in that family, the latest person to get a pink slip in the unending hemorrhage of pink slips in this economy today, tries to go to school to learn a skill, that gets cut.

Mr. Speaker, I know there have to be cuts in the budget and specifically cuts in education, I understand that. But imagine how angry our constituents were when they picked up the newspaper last week and read the following story. The Secretary of Interior of this country, under duress and protest, signed a deed conveying \$1 billion worth of mineral rights owned by the people of the United States of America, signed a legal document giving those 1 billion dollars' worth of public assets to a Danish mining company for the sum of \$265, under a law passed here in 1872.

Mr. Speaker, I want to balance the Federal budget. I understand there are ways education could be cut to balance the Federal budget. I may disagree with some of my Democratic colleagues as to how to do that. But all of us ought to understand that in an environment where we are saying to that kid, no reading teacher, no shop teacher to teach auto mechanics, got to pay your loan back the day after you graduate from school, too bad you have to let the interest accumulate, and dad, you lost your job, you need retraining, too bad, look in the want ads, that is what we are saying in this budget. And

we are giving away 1 billion dollars' worth of public assets to a foreign company because the majority would not change a law that was passed in 1872?

□ 2100

That is the priorities we have in this body today. It is wrong. And you have given us a chance tonight to talk about that. Let us do more than talk about it, though. Let us vote this way. Let us convey this message to the American people, and let us hope they remember in November of 1996 what is going on.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank you. You really have said it all. In addition to reading the paper about giving away our land and at what price and what we are cutting, there are numerous other examples.

When you take a look at just repealing the alternate minimum tax, which was not requested, was not asked for, put in by Ronald Reagan so the richest corporations in this country could pay the 20 percent rate, repealing that, giving the biggest, giving the richest corporations in this Nation, and we want to have them have a tax break so that they can invest and do this, but taking away all tax obligation to the richest corporations in this country. And then you say to folks who are every day playing by the rules, who are doing three or four jobs, parents, my parents, Congressman WARD's parents, MAJOR OWENS' parents, all of the folks who are here today, they are willing to work those three or four jobs to give their kids the opportunity. But when they are working three or four jobs and then you deny them the opportunity, that is why they are angry.

Mr. ANDREWS. Let me just say one more thing. My mother did not graduate from college. My father did not graduate from high school. But they sure were smart enough to know that something is amiss in a country's priorities when we cannot afford to help pay for reading teachers for children in schools across this country we can afford to guarantee \$30 billion of debt of the Government of Mexico. There is something very wrong with what is going on here.

Ms. DELAURO. There is another issue which I hope my friend from Kentucky will mention, is to provide an exclusion from taxes for billionaires, an issue on which he has really been a leading fighter to close that loophole so that those folks who are billionaires can pay their fair share of taxes. Let me have my colleague from Kentucky [Mr. WARD] share his own life experience with us on this issue of education and student loans.

Mr. WARD. I thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut very much. I appreciate this opportunity to participate in her discussion on this very, very important issue.

I am a fellow who would not be here but for student loans. It was a situation when I was in college that I worked full time. My parents were able to help but just some. In order to get

the tuition paid, I had to take out loans.

If I had to face some of the challenges that we have heard about tonight, if I had to face immediate repayment, I would not have been able, I would not have been able to succeed and to get through the University of Louisville.

What we have here is a situation where maybe some who did have those opportunities, as we have heard from the gentleman from New Jersey, many, many of us here in this Chamber had the opportunity to get some help with student loans and grants and other kinds of assistance. But it seems that there are some of us who want to pull the ladder up behind them.

Of course this goes across the whole range of things, whether it is a GI loan that got people their first house or the GI bill that got them through school or other sorts of small government assistance, small assistance that made the difference, because none of us tonight is talking about the government paying the whole way. None of us is talking about throwing money at a problem. Each of us is talking about government helping to bridge the gap, to make the difference, to do that little bit extra that can help, that can mean the difference between success and failure.

There is no question when you look at the barometers of success and the indicators of what opportunities someone will have in our society, the one thing on which there is total agreement is that important part of the makeup of a person who succeeds is education.

What really surprises me and grates on me is that the very issue that we have talked about, people taking care of themselves, people taking responsibility for themselves, is left out of this discussion. It is these very people who have gotten themselves into a position of getting into college, of going through college, of making that commitment of work and sacrifice who are going to be affected by this.

So as one who had the opportunity, who spent 10 years paying back his loans, I can only say I cannot be part, I cannot imagine being part of an institution that says to everyone else, we are pulling up the ladders because we have got ours.

With that I thank the gentlewoman for allowing me this opportunity to participate in this special order.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank my colleague very, very much. I just want to, before I introduce my colleague from New York, MAJOR OWENS, just mention a couple of things.

One of the things that is going to be eliminated here is something called the direct loan program. And really by targeting the extinction of that initiative, what we are seeing is the Republican leadership in this House throwing away about \$6.8 million in taxpayer savings.

We ought to be trying to take a look at expanding a new streamlined approach to processing student loans. What we have tried to do here, and the program is working, is to take the bank out of this equation and, with the institution and the family working together, thereby making it more affordable to deal with the loan, what we should not be doing is limiting the growth of such a direct loan program or totally eliminating it after 1 year.

There is just one other program that I want to mention, and that is the national service program, AmeriCorps. We often fault young people today when we say to them, you have got advantages, you do not give anything back, that you are taking only, that it is the me generation, you are focused, self-centered on yourself, give something back to your communities.

My God, the national service program is exactly what was tailor made to say to young people, you commit to doing things in your community, helping in your community, providing a real service, not make-work, not a no-show, but providing a real service and taking an interest in your community. We will provide you and your family with some assistance in order for you to have an education.

The Republicans want to totally eliminate AmeriCorps, national service, and the 4 million new service opportunities in the next 4 years alone.

I would like to bring into the conversation someone who has spent a long time warring about a number of these issues and trying to expand opportunity for young people. That is my colleague from New York, Mr. OWENS.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut for this special order.

I associate myself with the remarks of my previous colleagues and will try not to be repetitive. I have served on the education committee for the whole 13 years that I have been in Congress. H.G. Wells said that civilization is a race between education and catastrophe. That may not be the exact quote but that is the gist of it. Catastrophe has stared us in the face as we go forward with these reckless cuts that have been proposed by the Republican majority in this House.

Speaker GINGRICH says his objective is to remake America. And in this process of remaking, this behavior has become very reckless. Education, which is the cement, the glue, the adhesive which helps to hold our society together, is being destroyed. We have proceeded step by step, starting with Ronald Reagan who offered the report or commissioned the report called "A Nation at Risk" and moving from that to George Bush, "America 2000," and moving from that to President Clinton's "Goals 2000," all of which had some continuity. We were moving in the right direction.

Suddenly the Republican majority proposes to wreck all of that. Instead of remaking America, we are going to

destroy America because we do not recognize the critical role of education. These cuts are very mean, they are very extreme. They are very dangerous.

The Republican majority in the House of course proposes to wipe out the Department of Education totally. Only the Senate prevailed and has slowed the process down, but they are still moving with legislation to wipe out the Department of Education; a modern society in this complex world of ours would not have some central direction from a Department of Education.

A Department of Education at the Federal level plays a small role compared to the role played by centralized departments of education in other industrialized societies, but that is a very key role. It is a critical catalytic role. Only about 7 percent of the total budget spent for education is Federal money. But it is key in terms of stimulating, in terms of pushing for reform, and it is all very well packaged in "Goals 2000," in title I and Head Start. It is all very well packaged, but they have taken a sledge hammer to it all, and they are destroying it all in the process. In the process they will destroy the country.

We cannot have a society able to compete in this very complex and competitive industrialized world of ours, a global economy, without having great emphasis on education. I applaud President Clinton's proposal to make education a priority. When he laid out his 10-year budget proposal, education receives increases in that budget of \$47 billion over the 10-year period. Similar to the Congressional Black Caucus before where we increased over a 7-year period the education budget by 25 percent. Education deserves the priority. It has to have a priority. Not only should we not have these cuts, we should be moving forward with increases.

The civilization of New York City once boasted of having free universities. The city universities were free without tuition when I moved there in 1958. We do not have that any longer. But we are instead going rapidly backwards where not only do we have free universities but even with all of the aid that is offered by the State and the city and the aid available from the Federal Government, with it being cut so drastically and forcing tuition costs up, large numbers of people in New York City who want to go to college will not be able to go to college in New York City.

These same city universities compete with Ivy League schools in terms of the number of Nobel Prize winners. Nobel Prize winners have come out of these city universities. The numbers of Ph.D.s that have come out of our city universities are as great as the Ivy League schools when you take a look at it and add it all up. So all of this is being wrecked when they say they are

going to remake America. What they are doing is destroying America.

Unfortunately, the powerful juggernaut approach that is being taken here will wreck education right across the country. It is most unfortunate. American voters, taxpayers should rally to stop the destruction of our civilization, and the first place that we should focus on is to stop the cuts in education.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank my colleague, Mr. Speaker. My colleague has spent a lifetime and his professional lifetime in this body focused in on this area of being part of the education committee.

It is truly hard to believe sometimes that we would wreck education, which is, as we know, the key to the future, to the success of this Nation, to the success of individuals. Each succeeding generation has wanted to pass on increased opportunities in this area. We are finding ourselves in the position, I think, parents are finding themselves in the position today where they are saying that their kids are not going to have the same kinds of opportunities that they had.

Chief among those opportunities are the opportunities to increase their ability through education, whether it is higher education or whether it is vocational education, but a route in which we allow people to aspire and to dream, if you will.

I am really proud to stand with my colleagues here tonight in staunch opposition to the Republican leadership's plan to shut the door on educational opportunity to America's working families. Speaker GINGRICH likes to portray the Republican budget as part of a revolution. There is nothing new here. This is, it is not the least bit revolutionary. It is nothing new, and it is not revolutionary. It is, quite honestly, the same old trickle down economics of old, which is that you provide a tax break for the wealthiest in our Nation, and that is paid for by limiting the opportunities of working middle-class families in this country.

□ 2115

I started this hour by telling my own story, which is about my folks and their beginnings. My dad is an immigrant; my mother working in the old sweatshops and her admonition to me which was: Take the opportunity for an education, so that you will not have to do this.

That is essentially what we are denying to parents today; their ability to help and provide their kids with a future. That is wrong. That is something all of us here tonight are going to oppose and we hope that the American public will join us in that opposition.

Mr. Speaker, let me thank my colleagues for participating in this conversation tonight.

ISSUES OF IMPORT TO AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May