

children to go to college. It is expensive to go to college, anywhere between \$10,000 and \$15,000 a year if you are going away. Some places it is as high as \$20,000 and \$25,000. Those families cannot afford that.

What are we doing about it? What we ought to be doing, as the President has suggested and we have suggested, is providing about a \$10,000 tax deduction for these families to send their kids to school. That would help. That is something that they could get excited about.

And leave those student loans alone. They are there for a reason. They work. Education is the best investment we can make in this country. It has historically been so. In my lifetime it started after the Second World War with the GI bill. They made a huge difference in the human resource potential and capability of this country.

The National Defense Act that occurred a decade or so later made a big difference. So we put student loans into effect so students could afford to go to school without having to pay exorbitant interest rates once they left school. Now in this Congress an attempt to roll back student loans. I guess what irritates me about that is a lot of the newer Members on the Republican side of the aisle got through college on student loans. PHIL GRAMM got through school on students loans. NEWT GINGRICH got through college on student loans. In fact if it was not for student loans they would not be where they are today, which is the only good reason from my perspective to be against student loans. A little joke, but nonetheless, they want to pull the ladder up now and not let anyone else climb it.

That is not the way I think the country ought to operate. We work best when we pull together as a community, each helping one another, making opportunities for each other, not alone, not as rugged individualists, but working as a community. It is what really is great about America, the sense of community, going into neighborhoods across this country and watching all the activities that occur.

George Bush was absolutely right. Maybe he did not use the best phrase, but remember when he said he was excited about this thing called 1,000 points of light. I thought it was a pretty good phrase, but a lot of people made fun of it. What he was talking about was community. He was talking about folks coming together at the PTA, the little league, the ethnic clubs, the sports groups, the folks that work the Habitat for Humanity crowd, all these different organizations out there doing things, giving to the community, giving to others, being creative, the Rotary, the Lions, the religious organizations. It is really what this is all about. It is pulling together, people pulling together, not individuals doing it on their own.

It takes a community today to raise a child. It starts in the home. It starts

with the parents. Of course, they are the core, but it takes more than that. It takes safe streets, it takes good schools. It takes great teachers. It takes a lot of things to make this work. We have got to get back to that. We have got to get back to that.

In conclusion, let me just say, Mr. Speaker, I hope that this next Congress, whomever is in charge, and I hope it is us, but we will find out in about 2 months, will adopt this sense of community and this spirit that has brought us forward over these past 200 years in this country, because it really is what is at the heart of America.

If we do that again, I think we will hopefully become a more collegial body and work together to talk about the issues that are so important to the American people, the things they talk about at the kitchen table, at the picnic table, the things that are really important to them, and get away from this whole notion that the world revolves around line item vetoes or proxy voting or unfunded mandates.

I mean, some of these things may procedurally be important to do, but really, it is not really where folks want us to laser in on their problems. They want us to focus in on the things that they care about: their education, their pensions, their health care, their wages. Those are the things that matter. And their families, their families, making sure that the family works together, stays together, operates as a unit.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I wish you a good evening.

FIGHTING CRIME TO PROTECT THE AMERICAN DREAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. CHRISTENSEN] is recognized for 20 minutes.

Mr. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, during the month of August, I had the opportunity to spend some quality time with my fellow Nebraskans. During that month I knocked on over 3,500 doors and discovered that, willing or not, people are beginning to focus on the elections just 61 days away now.

The November elections are going to be very historic for, as a nation, we are poised to get ready for the 21st century, where we will set the course for flagship America and where that course will go into many uncharted waters.

This November, we are going to be selecting a helmsman to lead our Nation into the next century to steer that Nation, to steer our Nation on a safe and steady course. This November, we will decide whether to elect the reform Congress, one that I believe has accomplished more in over a generation than any other Congress, or return to the status quo of higher taxes, bigger Government, bloated bureaucracy, unprecedented arrogance that came with 40 years of one-party Democratic rule.

I heard the former speaker talk about the fact that it takes a village to raise a child. It does not take a village to raise a child. It takes a parent. It takes two parents. It takes people that care about a child to raise that child up right.

I think that is what this November election is going to be about: restoring the American dream for that child. To each of us it means a little bit different. To some it means going to college. To others it might mean owning a home. To others it might mean being an entrepreneur and starting your own business. It means getting married to some and starting a family.

□ 1715

As a Member of Congress I believe that the American dream has got to be centered around a few very core issues. One is balancing this country's budget to begin to pay off the \$5 trillion worth of debt that hangs around our children's necks, to give them an opportunity to live in a debt-free society full of opportunity, opportunity awaiting them in the 21st century. Restoring the American dream means freeing Flagship America of the anchor of taxes and regulation and letting working families keep more of their hard-earned money and providing better opportunity for them all. Restoring the American dream means streets where seniors can stroll safely into the night and schools where children can learn without fear for their life and fear walking to school in the morning without their parent beside them.

And that is what I would like to talk with you about this evening, the violent crime and illegal drugs that are casting a long cold shadow over the American dream, for without safe streets, secure schoolyards and a drug-free future, no other element of the American dream is possible. We must have safe streets, secure schools, and a freedom from the fear for us to accomplish that American dream. I believe this is possible, and I believe we can achieve it.

You know, in Nebraska we are very fortunate. Generally we have been spared the worst of crime. The crime and horror stories that are played out on the TV screens which you see in Chicago and Los Angeles and Houston and New York does not normally happen in Omaha, but sadly that is no longer true. You know, I grew up in the rural part of Nebraska. I can remember when we left our door unlocked and the keys in the pickup. But no longer can you do that. In Omaha last year alone we had 41 killings, 8 more than in 1994. Omaha's police arrested 20 percent more juveniles in 1995 than they did in 1994. And that shadow, the shadow of crime, even took one of our brave men in blue.

You know, two studies have been released most recently that show that we are losing the war on drugs. The Health and Human Services study showed that drug abuse is climbing

among our teens, putting them on a crash course with history. The study showed that drug use by our children doubled in the last 3 years. Monthly use of LSD and other hallucinogens leapt 183 percent from 1992 to 1995, and 54 percent in last year alone. Cocaine shot up 166 percent; marijuana grew at 141 percent. In 1992, 1 in 20 kids dabbled in these poisons at least once a month. But last year 1 in 10 used these drugs regularly, twice as many. District 66 schools, the west side schools in my district, released a study just a couple days ago that showed that marijuana use is increasing at every grade level.

If we are to rebuild the American dream, it is here where we must begin, in our schools, in our communities, stone by stone and brick by brick. We must rebuild the foundation of this great Nation to insure freedom from fear, freedom from drugs, to achieve the opportunity for the American dream for everyone, and this new Congress has laid down the cornerstone in this historic fight.

This past year the Congress took on significant steps to make our streets safer in the quest of that American dream. We unanimously approved the Victim Restitution Act. The bill instructs courts in Federal criminal proceedings to require convicted offenders to pay restitution to their victims. The fact that we passed this Victim Restitution Act without a single dissenting vote tells me that Congress has changed and that we can work in a bipartisan fashion. Nowadays we all agree that criminals should have to pay for their misdeeds literally.

We also approved the Exclusionary Rule Reform Act which would allow prosecutors in Federal court to use evidence gathered by law enforcement officials acting in good faith. Today criminals are frequently acquitted on technicalities only because the officers investigating unknowingly stepped over some arbitrary line. We should never allow a typographical error on a warrant to be used by some slick criminal defense attorney to put a vicious criminal back on the street. I am hopeful that this bill can be approved by the other body and sent to the President soon for his signature.

We also passed the effective Death Penalty Act to limit the number of appeals of convicted felons on death row. Currently those on death row can file almost unlimited appeals, tying up the courts and using the process to escape their sentence. We have seen that again and again in Nebraska where vicious killers like "Whack 'Em" Willie Otey and John Joubert were able to cheat justice for decades. Finally the people won out, and they are put to death this year.

Now that this legislation has been signed into law, I am hopeful that justice will soon become more swift and much more certain. We passed the Violent Criminal Incarceration Act which provides resources to States for prison construction and also contained truth-

in-sentencing provisions intended to make convicted criminals serve more of their prison terms that they are given.

We passed the Criminal Alien Deportation Improvements Act which strengthens our ability to deal with aliens who are convicted of serious crimes while they are in the United States. It is a shocking fact that our Federal prisons now hold more than 25 percent non-U.S. citizens. Since 1980 the number of alien inmates has skyrocketed 600 percent. Why on earth should our States pay hundreds of millions of dollars a year to incarcerate foreign drug dealers?

In the House we also passed legislation that would double the penalties for most crimes against children and against senior citizens. This legislation sends a simple and clear message to criminals that if you are so cowardly and so craven that you must prey upon the most vulnerable Americans, then plan on becoming a permanent resident of cell block B.

We also passed Megan's Law. This important legislation requires law enforcement officials to notify communities and families when a convicted sex offender is released and moves into their neighborhood. No longer will our families live in fear from the unknown. It is bad enough that some convicted sex offenders are ever released. At the very least we should let people know when they move into their neighborhood.

Working closely with my good friend Representative LIGHTFOOT, chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee, we passed legislation that will place the Integrated Ballistic Imaging System, better known as IBIS, into the Omaha law enforcement communities. This will allow our law enforcement officials to "fingerprint" bullets used in the commission of a crime and match them up with the gun they came from.

This will make crime solving a whole lot easier for those charged with the duty of protecting us and be able to really lock the key on those convicted of a crime using a gun.

Finally, after a lot of hard work, we were able to get "high drug-trafficking" States like Nebraska earmarked with a \$5 million to help us put a plug on the evils of drugs flowing down Interstate 80. It is still waiting approval over in the Senate, and we are working with Senator LOTT to try to get that through.

But I believe that each of these measures are an important factor in fighting the increased drug usage in our country, because I believe each bill, brick by brick, gets us closer to restoring that American dream.

Besides the bills that we passed here in the House, I introduced two bills that I believe will bring us closer to restoring the American dream and bringing safety to our streets and secure schools. One was my prison reform bill. On this issue I have to admit I have got some critics. Some people have said

that prisoners are overcrowded. Some people have said that prisons are uncomfortable. Some people have even told me that prisoners are denied access to recreation.

To my critics I say:

So what? For too long, liberal judges, and slick criminal defense attorneys and misguided policies have turned our prisons into playhouses. To fix that, I sponsored legislation that makes it clear once and for all that our prisons are not country clubs.

First, my legislation would require prisoners to work 48 hours each week. If both parents in middle-class families are forced to work just to make ends meet, at the very least we should demand that those who have broken our laws and terrorized our families should put in an honest day's work as well.

Second, the Christensen bill requires Federal prisoners to study at least 12 hours per week.

Part of the role of the prison is to prepare convicted criminals to reenter society. It is not their choice whether to spend that time playing cards or getting their GED. It is our choice.

Third, my bill prohibits the use of weight lifting equipment in Federal prisons by Federal prisoners. Why should taxpayers be forced to pay for criminals to become stronger and more deadly so that they can prey upon our families once they reenter society? Our prisons are not for recreation, they are for incarceration.

Fourth, the Christensen bill would ban the use of televisions in Federal prisons, with a narrow exception for educational purposes. So long as just one Nebraska family cannot afford the luxury of cable television, then not one Federal prisoner should have it either.

It is time we quit treating our Federal prisons like Holiday Inns. Finally, the Christensen bill seeks to end frivolous prison litigation. Inmates right here in Nebraska, in my district, have claimed violations and have used taxpayer dollars to fight their claims in court for not having meals of their choice, complaining about soggy toast and cold hamburgers, cruel and unusual punishment because Nebraska taxpayers would not pay for a nose job. Even a right to child pornography in prison, despite the fact that the inmate was serving a sentence for first degree sexual assault on a child and manufacturing child pornography. Try finding those rights in the Constitution! But some slick criminal defense attorney probably would make that claim. The bottom line is that these lawsuits are nuts, and they must stop, and they will.

The second piece of legislation that I sponsored makes it clear that the problem with guns in our society is not the guns but the felons who use them for a criminal purpose. I call my bill the Hard Time for Gun Crimes Act. This bill would dramatically increase the penalties for possessing, brandishing, and discharging a firearm during the commission of a Federal felony.

For instance under my bill if you fire a gun during the commission of a Federal crime, if it is the first offense you will get 30 extra years in jail. If it is the second offense, you will get a minimum of 50, 50 extra years in jail.

The key message is that we have had it with gun related violence. Americans have zero tolerance for gun crime so our justice system should as well too. I think we should keep those who would misuse guns in jail and not let them walk the streets as they have done in the past. No more slick criminal defense attorneys pushing criminals to freedom through legal loopholes, no more soft sentences before the judge, no more legal gymnastics setting criminals free after a fraction of their allotted time in jail. My bill sends a very clear message:

If you want to use a gun to commit a felony, plan on spending the next few decades behind bars, no exceptions.

□ 1730

I believe that the new Congress has brought about true change. We have worked hard to balance the budget for the first time in a generation, just as we said we would. We worked hard to reduce the burden of big government on hardworking Americans and job-creating businesses, just as we said we would.

As I have laid out here today, we have worked very, very hard to make our streets safe and our schools more secure, just as we said we would. We are doing it so we can restore the American dream for every child, for every family, for a brighter and safer 21st century, because I believe together, in a bipartisan fashion, that this Congress has had a number of successes, and that together, and in future Congress, we can continue to build a future for that child, and that child than can be raised by his own parents, not the village, but by his family, for a bright and safe 21st century.

REPORT FROM INDIANA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COOLEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give my report from Indiana. Each weekend my wife Ruthie and I travel across the State of Indiana, and often we meet good people who are taking responsibility for making our communities a better place to live. In my book, these people are Hoosier heroes, Hoosier heroes because they work and sacrifice to make a difference.

Today I would like to recognize many of those individuals involved with the Lincoln Central Neighborhood Family Center in Columbus, IN, as Hoosier heroes. There are 5,000 people who live in this neighborhood, one of the older parts of Columbus. The families who live in the Lincoln Central neighborhood may be considered poor in finan-

cial terms. There are 40 percent of them who are under the poverty line. Eighty percent of the children from that neighborhood are on free or reduced lunches. But I want to submit, Mr. Speaker, that they are rich in spiritual materials, because citizens from around the city came together to form a community group to help rebuild, to clean, and to make Lincoln Central a better place to live.

They are people like Hutch Schumaker, a local businessman and community leader, who donated his time to make sure that the planning was in place and the community was behind the effort to improve Lincoln Central neighborhood; people like Randy Allman, who is the coordinator of the Lincoln Central neighborhood group, who is responsible for conversion of the armory into single apartments for senior citizens; and Kate Garvey, who is a local resident. She has been very active in the planning committee, making sure people from the community are involved in this effort.

Then there is Diane Doup, who is the activities coordinator. She is responsible for allowing folks to come in and tour. She took me and then later Ruthie on a tour of the neighborhood so we could witness firsthand the remarkable efforts of the citizens of this neighborhood, taking charge of their own lives to build a better future.

Citizens in the Lincoln Central neighborhood come from one of the poorest areas in the inner city of Columbus, but by joining together to improve, strengthen, and secure a better way of life, their mission is very simple. I want to quote to you today, Mr. Speaker, from their mission statement:

To create a safe and caring neighborhood where individuals are treated with respect and live in harmony in their community.

It first started in 1994, when hundreds of volunteers from around Bartholomew County, including local churches, businesses, and other groups, joined with the 5,000 neighborhood members in Lincoln Central neighborhood to work together. Along with some of the local service agencies, they took charge in a resolve to meet the needs of their community.

When I was there I toured around the neighborhood in August and I happened to see some of their projects. I was greeted by proud residents who were eager to show me how they were improving their neighborhood. They began by buying up some of the old houses, getting them purchased so they could resell them to families who needed them. Now those houses have been fixed up and painted up and are some of the best-looking houses on the block. These families have been allowed to move in and they have a better hope for the future.

The neighbors have come together and they bought up one house next to an old play lot and have torn it down, and are converting the entire area into a new playground for the kids of Lin-

coln Central neighborhood. I saw many dilapidated old homes that they have targeted for refurbishment and renewal, so those who are less fortunate will have a better place to live.

What is so remarkable is one of the comments I heard from Jerry Combest, a resident. He told me, as an organization, we are looking for a hand up, not a handout. We want to help make our lives better for ourselves. That comes through in the spirit from the members of the Lincoln Central neighborhood. They are not sitting back and asking somebody else to take charge of their lives and their neighborhood. They want to take responsibility and fix up their own neighborhood. These good people are leading the way as examples in Columbus, IN. I am proud of their good work.

I want to say that everybody involved with the Lincoln Central neighborhood has earned the title of Hoosier hero.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. UNDERWOOD (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today through Tuesday, September 10, on account of official business.

Mr. GEREN of Texas (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, on account of personal business.

Mr. SANFORD (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today, on account of assessing the effects of Hurricane Fran on his district.

Mrs. COLLINS of Illinois (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, on account of illness.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. VOLKMER) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BONIOR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. VOLKMER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. SCHROEDER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. CLAYTON, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. PORTER) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. MCINTOSH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PORTER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. RIGGS, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to: