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House of Representatives

The House met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. DICKEY].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 16, 1996.

I hereby designate the Honorable JAY DICK-
EY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this
day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of May 12, 1995, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leader limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. SAM JOHNSON, for 5 minutes.

TIME TO CREATE A TAX SYSTEM THAT PROMOTES FREEDOM

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I found a statement by Richard E. Byrd, who was speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates from 1908 to 1914, which was the time when the income tax began. He predicted and I quote:

A hand from Washington will be stretched out and placed upon every man's business; the eye of the Federal inspector will be in every man's counting house * * * the law will of necessity have inquisitorial features, * * * it will provide penalties, it will create

complicated machinery. Under it men will be haled into courts distant from their homes. Heavy fines imposed by distant and unfamiliar tribunals will constantly menace the taxpayer. An army of Federal inspectors, spies, and detectives will descend upon the State.

Unfortunately, I believe the gentleman's prediction was right.

We in Congress have created a system that has grown from 11,000 to 7 million words, from 14 pages to over 9,000, and now has 480 different tax forms that require an additional 280 forms to describe the first 480. I don't believe this system is either simple or fair.

I will ask anyone to tell me that it is simple and fair when they can explain why 50 different tax experts, given the same return for a family of 4, come back with 50 different answers.

And why does it take over 115,000 IRS agents to enforce this Tax Code. Does anyone realize that there are more IRS agents than are employed by the Environmental Protection Agency, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Drug Enforcement Agency combined.

I have to agree with Fred Goldberg, the IRS Commissioner under George Bush who said:

The IRS has become a symbol of the most intrusive, oppressive, and nondemocratic institution in a Democratic society.

Not to mention overly complex, economically destructive, unprincipled, inefficient, and discriminatory.

Discriminatory because, as stated by Justin Morrill, a Member of this body back in 1866, in this country we neither create nor tolerate any distinction of rank, race, or color, and should not tolerate anything else than entire equality in our taxes.

Even the Founding Fathers were opposed to any politics based on income differences, because they feared it would lead to class warfare. They believed that comity and tolerance among the States and classes were the preconditions for a unified country.

I believe that the current system has divided the Nation because it says, that if you work hard and make a good living you should be punished. To all those who say the current system is fair I would like to point out a recent Readers Digest poll which found that Americans believe that no one should pay more than 25 percent in taxes and that is Federal, State, and local combined. And this feeling was universal across race, economic, and gender lines.

I believe it is time to create a tax system that promotes freedom. Freedom to me means a system that is fair and simple, encourages savings and investment, is efficient, drives the economy, provides opportunity for all and puts more money in your pocket.

That is why we will introduce a resolution to repeal the 16th amendment to the Constitution. The American public will see how destructive our tax system really is. I believe as Abraham Lincoln did that "with public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed." That is why I call on Congress and the American people to help us pull up the income tax system by its roots and replace it with a system that gives everybody the chance to succeed in attaining the American dream.

ISSUES CONGRESS SHOULD ADDRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I think many of us know that for the last few weeks we have been in our districts. The House has not been in session until yesterday evening. Of course, it is an opportunity to talk to your constituents on a daily basis and get their input.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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What I found overwhelmingly was a feeling on the part of my constituents in my district in New Jersey that this House of Representatives and this Congress under the leadership of Speaker GINGRICH and the Republicans is not getting the job done.

My constituents expressed concerns about health care, whether or not they were going to have affordable health insurance or any health insurance at all; they expressed a great deal of concern about the environment, because we are now getting close to the summer season. My district is very dependent on shore tourism. For the last few years we have seen significant, at least in the last 10 years, we have seen significant improvement in our water quality, and they do not want to see the clock turned back on environmental protection.

They are also concerned about education. Today in my district in New Jersey we vote on the school board elections and the budgets. Property taxes are going up in many municipalities, and there is concern about a lack of State and Federal aid to help and provide property tax relief.

They are also concerned about jobs. They are concerned about whether or not pension, health care benefits, are going to be available, and whether they are going to have a job at all.

I ask the Members of this House, I ask the Speaker, what is it that this Congress under the Republican leadership, under Speaker GINGRICH and the rest of the Republican leadership, have done about any of these issues? And the answer is pretty much nothing.

We are back now for a 6-week session. I understand that the House Republican leadership under Speaker GINGRICH is going to propose some bills that are essentially, in my opinion, nothing but smoke and mirrors, an effort to sort of suggest that they are going to address education, environment, and health care issues, but that they really will not be addressing those issues in a significant way.

Let me just talk a little bit, if I can, about what is missing from this Republican leadership or Gingrich agenda. First of all, the education element. We are continuing to operate now as we have since the beginning of this fiscal year on what we call continuing resolutions. In other words, we have not passed a budget, we have not passed appropriation bills, to keep the Government going, and I know we have had actually at least two Government shutdowns because of the inability, if you will, of the House Republican leadership to pass legislation to keep the Government operating.

But a big part of these continuing resolutions or stopgap spending appropriation measures that have been passed here have actually implemented major cuts in education funding, for title I and other programs that are important to our school districts.

What that means is that when those school districts do not get the edu-

cation funding to hire teachers or to pay for teachers' salaries or whatever, they either have to lay teachers off, as many have now or give notice of layoffs, or increase their local property taxes to make up the difference.

That is what is happening in the State of New Jersey. Many of our constituents are going to be going to the polls today voting on school board budgets that are higher because they cannot expect the Federal aid that they normally would have. What that means is that property taxes go up for many of them and property taxes are already too high. There has been a lot of talk about taxation by the Republican leadership around here, but they have not mentioned the fact they are actually increasing property taxes because of the cutbacks in education funding.

On the issue of the environment, as you know, next Tuesday, or next Monday I should say, will be Earth Day. We will be celebrating, I believe, the 26th Earth Day. Over the last 25 years, on a bipartisan basis, there were major accomplishments to protect and improve the protection of the environment. Water and air quality have improved. But if you look at the record of this Republican Congress and the Gingrich agenda over the last year, they have tried significantly to turn back the clock on environmental protection. They introduced and passed in this House what I call a dirty water bill, which eliminates a lot of the protections to improve water quality, particularly with regard to enforcement. The spending bills, the same stopgap spending bills that have major negative impacts on education have also had negative impacts on environmental protection, to the point where the EPA cannot do inspections, cannot do clean-up of hazardous waste sites pursuant to the Superfund Program. Grants that would go to municipalities and counties to upgrade sewage treatment, to make sure our water continues to be clean, have been cut back significantly.

What I have always said is it is very nice to have environmental laws on the books, and we do have some good ones, but what is the point if you do not have the money to enforce those laws?

So I would just conclude, Mr. Speaker, and say that this House and this Republican leadership needs to address the real issues that face the American people, and not operate in this smoke and mirrors agenda.

TRIBUTE TO GAIL DOBERT, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF BUSINESS LIAISON, AND LONGTIME AIDE TO SECRETARY RON BROWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New York [Mr. FORBES] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity. I take the

floor today to pay tribute to a young woman, a young woman by the name of Gail Dobert. Gail Dobert was lost by us on April 3 in the tragic airplane crash in Croatia that took the life of Secretary Ron Brown and 33 others. This morning I take the floor to talk about Gail and the promise that Gail represented.

Mr. Speaker, literally tens of thousands of young people come to Washington, DC, every year, with the hope of promise for the excitement and the opportunity to be part of this Government. Whether it is the government of Ronald Reagan or George Bush or Jimmy Carter or Bill Clinton, they come to this town because they are caught up in the excitement of a living and vibrant democracy and wanting very much to be a part of that democracy.

I rise today to pay tribute to Gail. Gail Dobert was a Department of Commerce official. Her family of Moriches, Long Island, a very wonderful family, who described themselves as Kennedy Democrats and said that they are thrilled by Gail's participation in the political process. Along with many of my neighbors on Long Island, I was deeply saddened when we learned of the loss of Gail and Secretary Brown and so many others on that tragic day.

But today we are here to celebrate the life of Gail and what she meant. So many individuals search their whole lives through to try to make a lasting contribution to the world, to their communities, to their Nation. I think it is fair to say that Gail Dobert, in her very short 34 years, made a tremendous contribution, not only to the political process, but enhancing our own democracy and to working for the concerns that brought her to Washington.

Gail was born in Oneonta, NY, on April 12, 1961, the same day that headlines were made when the Russians had somebody orbiting the Earth. She grew up in St. Johns Street in Sayville, Long Island, and, ironically, she died on St. Johns Hill in Croatia. As a Long Islander, she loved the ocean, the warm breezes and the beaches that she came to love after her experiences every summer on Fire Island with her family. Rehoboth Beach, of course, became her favorite getaway beach from the rigors of Washington.

In 1979 she graduated from Connetquot High School in Long Island and left to attend Bucknell University. She was the beloved daughter, as I said, of Ken and Maureen Dobert, two individuals who describe themselves as Kennedy Democrats. She is the devoted sister of Ray and Darla, granddaughter of Helen, and I might add that this family's tragedy has only been enhanced because Gail lost both her grandmother and her grandfather, Maureen's parents, earlier in the year.

She is the adored niece of Regina and James and Elizabeth and cousin to Michael, Jennifer, Christopher, and Janice.

Prior to coming to Washington, Gail worked for Philip Morris and the New