

It is the political, economic and moral—yes, I repeat, moral issue of our day.

REPEALING GAS TAX WILL HELP AMERICANS AT LOWEST RUNG ON ECONOMIC LADDER

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to my good friend and colleague from California and her editorial cartoon that she brought out, but I thought she and other Members on the liberal side of the aisle would be interested in this statement from President Clinton when he was freed from the strictures of campaign fever.

"It", raising the minimum wage, "is the wrong way to raise the incomes of low-wage earners." So said the President in Time magazine February 6 of last year.

Mr. Speaker, the challenge for us is not to prescribe some artificial wage mandated by Government. The challenge for us is to allow hard-working Americans to hang on to more of the money they earn and send less of it to the Federal Government, beginning with this regressive, horrible Clinton tax on gasoline. Let us repeal that today in true bipartisan fashion and that will help American workers at the lowest rung of the economic ladder and on up.

MANHATTAN JUDGE OKAYS TAX BREAKS FOR PEDOPHILES

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, a Manhattan judge has okayed tax breaks for pedophiles. The judge upheld the tax exempt status for Zymurgy, Inc., an organization that advocates sex between men and boys. The judge ruled freedom of speech extends even to those who advocate man-boy sex.

Mr. Speaker, where did this judge get his law degree, the back cover of Bazooka bubble gum trading cards or what? Will America, now Congress, subsidize pedophilia?

The truth of the matter is some of these judges have become so book smart, they are actually street dumb. I think it is time for Congress to take a look at some of this judicial branch decision-making process. Sounds pretty constipating to me.

IT IS TIME TO REPEAL REGRESSIVE GAS TAX

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I once again return to the point I have been

making since I got here, and that is that working families in this country are taxed far, far too much. Working families are being ripped off by the Federal Government and by the special interests that demand more and more money and higher and higher taxes.

So I am glad to hear the rumors that the President may at least be willing to roll back the ill-conceived gas tax that he imposed a couple of years back. That gas tax was part of the biggest tax increase in history, a tax increase that even the President later admitted was a mistake.

The President and the old Congress thought that higher taxes would fuel the economy, but a lot of working families are just about running on empty. Taxes are too high. Let us quit siphoning an extra 50, or 60 or 70 cents out of the pockets of American citizens each time they fill up their gas tanks. Let us agree right now, in a bipartisan way, to repeal this ridiculous regressive gas tax and ensure Americans get more mileage out of their own paychecks. It is time to cut taxes and get the lead out.

CONGRESS SUPPORTS HEAD START WITH \$36 MILLION OVER FISCAL YEAR 1995

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

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, a few days ago, I had the great pleasure of being a guest of some of my youngest constituents at the Dorothy Grant and William Bell Head Start Preschool Centers in Fontana, CA. I salute the dedicated staff and outstanding students of these two centers.

Since its enactment in 1965, Head Start has provided comprehensive child development services to more than 12 million low-income preschool children and their families.

I was proud to vote for this legislation in 1965, and I am proud of the accomplishments it is still making. While the thrust of Head Start is the same as it was 30 years ago, the program has evolved greatly and now encompasses more community and parental support.

Head Start has a proven role in reducing drop outs, providing access to health care, and assisting in preventing delinquency.

I applaud supportive Members of Congress for their recent work in the budget negotiations to fund head Start at \$36 million over and above fiscal year 1995. This action shows our strong commitment to providing a solid footing in educating our children.

OSHA SMALL BUSINESS RELIEF

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, last week my office received a copy of a let-

ter which the AFL-CIO is circulating to Members of Congress opposing the Small Business OSHA Relief Act, H.R. 3234.

Not surprisingly, the letter never mentions the fact that every single item in the Small Business OSHA Relief Act has been taken directly from policy pronouncements of the Clinton administration. The AFL-CIO has shown how extreme its own agenda is when it opposes this very modest legislation, which is limited in scope and represents areas of agreement between the Clinton administration's initiatives and our desire to make OSHA less adversarial and more commonsensical.

The Clinton administration has repeatedly said that OSHA needs to be reinvented. But will the Clinton administration have the backbone to stand by its own words and initiatives when the AFL-CIO comes calling?

CONGRESS SHOULD BRING MINIMUM WAGE TO VOTE

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would urge Speaker GINGRICH and the Republican leadership to let us vote on an increase in the minimum wage. In my State of New Jersey the minimum wage was increased to \$5.05 an hour, two Princeton University economists, David Card and Alan Kruger, surveyed patterns in fast food restaurants in New Jersey and Pennsylvania after the minimum wage went into effect. The result suggested a moderate hike, much like the one President Clinton is proposing, has actually increased total employment.

The reason is that minimum wage earners do not have the ability to save. They spend their money on basic necessities, and raising the minimum wage put more money into our local economy. The money was spent to purchase more goods, adding eventually to an increase in profits for our local businesses. The fast food industry that Card and Kruger studied found most of the people earning the minimum wage were the same people who used that increase to in fact buy more fast food.

So the bottom line is a higher minimum wage increased economic activities in New Jersey. It is supported by the President and supported by most Members in both the House and the Senate, and the leadership of the Republican Party should bring it up for a vote now.

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A SEAT ON THE COURT FOR \$10 MILLION

(Mr. JONES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, \$10 million is not a big deal to most liberal Democrats. But to Bill Clinton it's just

enough to pay for a seat on the Federal appeals court.

That's right, Mr. Speaker. Ten million dollars.

Just think what you could buy with that much money. A trip around the world. A big, fancy yacht. Or, a seat on one of the highest courts in the land.

As a life-time Federal judge, you could have power over the lives of millions of Americans. You could make decisions that shape society and the economy. And you would not even need judicial experience. All you would need is a little fund-raising experience working for the Democrat Party.

It's really a no-brainer if you think about it, Mr. Speaker. I mean, what would you rather do with \$10 million. Invest in cattle futures, or sit on the Federal bench for the rest of your life. Not a bad deal, I'd say.

AMERICA LOST IN THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, less than a week ago, we were celebrating Earth Day.

Today our country's environmental laws are under assault not only by the GINGRICH extremists in Congress but also in the World Trade Organization, the WTO.

The United States lost yesterday in the WTO. The WTO said our Clean Air Act violates international trade laws—yes, the same Clean Air Act that we celebrated last week.

But our environment wasn't the only loser in the WTO.

Workers in America's refineries lost, too. Workers in places like Ohio and Pennsylvania and Louisiana lost because they will have to compete with dirty gas imports from Venezuela and Brazil.

Mr. Speaker, America lost yesterday in the World Trade Organization. It was our first loss; unfortunately it will not be our last unless we repeal some of these trade agreements.

REPEAL THE CLINTON GAS TAX

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

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, as almost every American knows gas prices have climbed 5 cents a gallon the past 2 weeks and are at the highest level since the Persian Gulf war. President Clinton has dispatched his Energy Secretary to find the root of this problem.

She should not have to fly very far or look hard—after all, this same administration increased gas taxes by almost 5 cents per gallon in 1993. Offered in the name of deficit reduction, this tax hike is now hitting millions of American motorists who are grumbling loudly at the pumps. Fiscal conservatives in

Congress are currently exploring ways to repeal this regressive tax. However, it's not easy because as we found when repealing the Clinton tax on seniors' Social Security benefits, liberals hate to give up any taxes. The American people will be given a clear choice—the tax hikes and status quo spending of the Clinton administration or the billions of dollars of real spending cuts and tax relief of this Congress.

Americans should think about that the next time they fill up knowing President Clinton feels their pain.

GAS PRICES

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

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to speak on this, but after I have heard the comments from the other side regarding the increase in the gas tax back in 1993, I cannot constrain myself. First of all, I would remind my friends, let us go back and take a look at what happened under Presidents Reagan and Bush in regard to their increase in the gas tax. Let us not be revisionist.

Let us take a look at what happened to gas prices in this country when we raised it 4.3 cents per gallon. Gas prices in 1993, in 1994, in 1995 went down. They did not go up. But here we are in 1996 and we are reaching back to 1993 to be able to blame President Clinton because we have nothing else to blame him on because the stock market went up, employment went up, unemployment went down. Misery went down, so let us blame him on something else.

We are here right now trying to make sure that these working poor have an ability to earn a living wage. We have given them, in the same bill that increased the gas taxes, an earned-income tax credit to help people get off welfare and into work. The GOP right now is opposed to giving people a 90-cent raise in the minimum wage. I would say that somewhere between Abraham Lincoln and the current Republican leadership, the GOP has taken an about-face on slavery.

THE WAR ON DRUGS

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

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, President Clinton has been absent on the war on drugs. Yet yesterday, after more than 3 years in office, President Clinton finally announced a plan to reduce illegal drug use. But Mr. Speaker, it would appear to be too little too late. President Clinton has backed down on the war on drugs. For example, it was President Clinton that only days after taking office, cut the Office of National Drug Control Policy by more than 80 percent. It is during the Clinton administration that drug use among children

skyrocketed while interdiction and prosecution efforts dropped. It is during the Clinton administration that marijuana use among young people has increased 50 percent and has jumped 137 percent among 12- to 13-year-olds. Mr. Speaker, who is the President trying to kid?

The President has dropped the ball on the war on drugs and now he's playing election year politics.

PAY EQUITY FOR FEDERAL FIREFIGHTERS

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, tonight is the eighth annual fire and emergency services dinner. Two thousand of our Nation's fire and emergency services leaders gather in Washington to recognize the service of our Nation's firefighters and emergency responders, safety instructors, engineers, arson investigators, and others in the fire community.

However, hundreds of Federal firefighters will not be in attendance tonight because they are fighting brushfires in the West. Mr. Speaker, they are experiencing what many are calling the driest conditions in over a century.

Here in the Congress, I have introduced a bill, H.R. 858, the Federal Firefighters Pay Fairness Act, which would correct a significant pay inequity which exists for these and nearly 10,000 Federal firefighters throughout our country.

Mr. Speaker, despite the fact that my bill has over 135 bipartisan sponsors, we have been unable to get a hearing in the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight Subcommittee on Civil Service. In the next several days, I will be sending a bipartisan letter to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MICA], the chairman, requesting a hearing on this bill with approximately 100 Members of this body. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that we will see a hearing on that bill in the near future.

HEAD START WORKS IN ARIZONA

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

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in a bipartisan way to speak about a program that I think is widely applauded by most people in this House, and that is Head Start. It is a program that has certainly worked well in my district. I think it has worked well across the country, and it has worked well because it does good things and it has a performance record that we can all talk about. It is a program that is designed to provide nutrition, health screening and treatment, education, and social services to pre-school-aged children and to their parents, and it has contributed greatly to