

they will not be getting the money from the Federal Government that they need in order to continue to operate.

What we are seeing here again is the Republican agenda, which is essentially to destroy Medicare as we know it and create a second-class health care system for senior citizens.

DEMOCRATS WOULD SHUT DOWN GOVERNMENT AGAIN

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

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, it is no secret that liberal Democrats want to protect big government and that they are addicted to special interest money. But it is interesting to see the lengths to which they will go in order to protect the status quo here in Washington.

Earlier this week, a Democrat leader said the following: "We are simply going to shut this place down."

What that means Mr. Speaker, is that the liberals in the Democratic Party are so extreme that they are willing to put a halt to the business of Congress in order to do the bidding of the union bosses here in Washington.

What it also means is there may be no gas tax repeal. No Medicare reform. No welfare reform. No tax relief for America's families. And no balanced budget.

It is sad that a once-proud party has resorted to extremism and blackmail to force their special interest agenda on the American people.

HIGHER GAS PRICES MEAN UNPRECEDENTED OIL COMPANY PROFITS

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, has anyone noticed what has happened to the stocks of oil companies in this country? Their profits have gone up phenomenally. Exxon made \$2 billion in the last 3 months. Other companies have shown profits in the range of 40 percent. Unprecedented profits.

Of course, it is all a result of a corporate decision, knowing that we had had a very harsh winter, that if they deliberately reduced their reserves and knowing there was going to be strong demand, they would be able to push the price way up. Of course they can all get together and increase the price at the pump so that consumers pay for this increase, and boy, has it paid off. Look at the corporate executive of the six largest oil companies. Their stock options alone in the last 60 days have increased by \$33 million. Unbelievable.

But should we really let the consumer pay for these profits? Of course not. To think that the consequences of their decision is going to be paid by consumers is unconscionable.

THE DO-NOTHING DEMOCRATS

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

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago Harry Truman attacked the do-nothing Congress, and I think 48 years later Truman would be saying the same thing of the do-nothing Democrats.

Last year we got elected to do some very specific things. We got elected to provide a balanced budget, the first balanced budget in a generation. The do-nothing Democrats fault it. The do-nothing President vetoed it.

Now he is doing the same thing with the gas tax. We want a straight reduction to cut gas taxes. We are providing it. The do-nothing Democrats once again are standing in the way. The do-nothing Democrats once again are threatening a veto.

Talk about tax cuts, we provided tax cuts for middle-class families. The do-nothing Democrats fought it. The President vetoed a \$500 per child tax cut. They increased taxes in 1993 on senior citizens up to 85 percent of their earnings. We offered relief. The do-nothing Democrats vetoed it.

Most importantly, I think, on Medicare, they know Medicare is going broke. We did something about it. The do-nothing Democrats vetoed it and shamelessly demagogued the issue, and are willing to throw the senior citizens out in the cold.

BUDGET RERUNS

(Mrs. KENNELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the majority presented their budget for the next year. The press release from this body, we really could not tell what was in it. It was rhetoric. However, if we looked at the press release from the Senate, the other body, we saw some numbers so we could find out somewhat what was in the budget.

What I could understand is, it is a rerun of proposals that were vetoed by the President late last year and have no support by the American people.

One proposal in particular should deeply concern us. This budget proposes reducing the amount that States must spend on medical services for our Nation's poorest. This will set off a race to the bottom, one where no State wins by behaving responsibly and where the big losers in America are the poorest and the sickest.

We ought to be fighting to protect these people, not abandoning them. I worry about this year's budget now.

POISON PEN VETOES

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Bill Clinton was in high dudgeon

yesterday at his press conference. This morning's Washington Times said it was "An afternoon of flappedoodle and balderdash." That is probably an understatement.

Yesterday, Bill Clinton accused Republicans of using a poison pill.

Well, let's talk about Bill Clinton's poison pen.

Bill Clinton's poison pen vetoed the first balanced budget to a reach President's desk in a generation.

Bill Clinton's poison pen vetoed Medicare reform. Now, our grandparents risk seeing Medicare go bankrupt because of Bill Clinton wants to demagog the issue.

Bill Clinton's poison pen vetoed the \$500 per child tax credit that would have help millions of struggling families make ends meet.

Bill Clinton's poison pen vetoed welfare reform. Not once, but twice. Millions of Americans will never know the dignity of work because Bill Clinton refuses to fix the failed welfare state. Instead of keeping his promises, Bill Clinton would rather use his poison pen to veto the wishes of the American people.

LESSONS NOT LEARNED

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, last year the American public witnessed the Republicans shutting down the U.S. Federal Government so they could try and force the President of the United States to cut Medicare, to give tax cuts to the wealthy.

Apparently the Republicans have learned nothing from their repudiation by the American people of that budget because they are back again this year. They are back again today cutting over \$168 billion out of Medicare, reducing the spending below the rate of inflation for senior citizens, which means that senior citizens will have less money to purchase the health care that they have today in the future.

What will they do with that money? Not repair the Medicare account. They are going to give that money in capital gains tax to some of the wealthiest people in this Nation.

That is what the country repudiated last year when they shut down the Government. That is what the country is going to repudiate this year, and senior citizen ought to understand that the Republicans are back, same old budget, same old ploy, and the same old cuts in Medicare to give tax cuts to the wealthy.

REPEAL THE GAS TAX

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

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, in 1993 President Clinton imposed the largest tax increase in American history on the citizens of this country. As

part of that increase, he raised the Federal gas tax 30 percent to pay for social programs and Washington bureaucracy.

This is the first time the gas tax had been raised to pay for these kinds of programs. It was to help improve our Nation's highways and mass transit systems, instead, President Clinton used it to finance his massive, ineffective, status quo social bureaucracy.

This is not only bad policy, it is wrong! While Republicans are fighting to lift the oppressive tax burden from America's shoulders, President Clinton and his congressional Democrats are adding to the weight. Yesterday, Republicans in the Senate tried to repeal the gas tax, but Democrats blocked their attempt. This is just another example of the Democrat attempt to protect their wasteful status quo social programs by bleeding the American people dry. Mr. Speaker, this must stop and we must start by repealing the gas tax.

BRAVO, MRS. WARD

(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, the IRS said Carol Ward of Colorado Springs was a cheat, a liar, a thief, and a big drug dealer. The IRS then posted those accusations on flyers and spread them around all over town. The IRS then seized her business, her son's business, and all her money.

But at trial Carol Ward was found to be innocent. Mr. Speaker, Carol Ward is now suing the IRS for \$1 billion, \$1,000 for each of those 1 million people that saw those fliers. Bravo, Mrs. Ward. And as far as the IRS is concerned, I hope Mrs. Ward kicks their assets all over Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back all the liability the IRS has in this case.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are guests of the House and may not manifest any approval or disapproval of proceedings. It is a violation of the rules of the House.

INTRODUCING THE WORKING AMERICANS WAGE RESTORATION ACT

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

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, we have heard many stories in this House over the past few weeks about the stagnation of wages and that America needs a raise. Last night I heard one of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle lament that real wages have declined 16 percent over the last 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, I agree that American workers need to take home more of their earnings to their families. Today I will introduce legislation to enable every worker to deduct on their income tax the money that they contribute to Social Security every payday. My bill, the Working Americans Wage Restoration Act, will increase the take-home pay of the average two-earner family by \$1,770 per year.

While it does not affect the receipts of the Social Security trust funds in any way, this legislation will eliminate the unfairness to workers who must now pay tax on the 6.2-percent of their income that they contribute to Social Security.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation, which will give a much-needed boost to the hard working men and women of our Nation.

SAME OLD STORY

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I simply would like to tell my colleagues the story of ages past. Speaker GINGRICH: "I would like to see Medicare wither on the vine." The majority leader in the Senate: "I was there fighting, 1 of 12 to vote against Medicare in 1965."

Now they have a new budget and the budget is the same old song, the same old story. What they want to do is to force hospitals to close by cutting Medicare. They want to make sure that our children who need preventive health care do not have it, and they are looking to close the nursing homes where many of our parents who worked so hard during their lives now need to have this care, the loving care that these homes provide, because of the cuts in Medicaid.

And, yes, what about Mrs. Jones, 74 years old? She has been going to the same physician for all of her life. Now the Republicans say, "You cannot do that, Mrs. Jones. You are going into managed care." A prison, which will not allow our seniors choice for their medical care. What do we say now to Mrs. Jones?

Same old song. Cutting Medicare and cutting Medicaid. Giving the money to the wealthy. What do we hear from the Republicans? Anything new? No, the same old story, verse, and song.

WHO DROVE UP THE PRICE OF GASOLINE?

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, the question today is who drove up the price of gasoline. In May 1993 the Federal gasoline tax was raised 18.3 cents a gallon. That vote marked the third

time in just over a decade that Congress increased the tax.

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Since December 1982, the Federal levy on gasoline has exploded 357 percent, even as the price of gasoline has trended steadily downward. Mr. Speaker, inventories were down because of the unusually long winter, a fire in California closed a Shell oil refinery, and Saddam Hussein's stubbornness in keeping 500,000 barrels a day of Iraqi crude oil have caused the price to go up.

But who in fact drove the price of gasoline up? I submit that Congress under Democrat control did by raising the gasoline tax. It is pretty clear who the people in collusion are. It is the people here in the Federal Government. The Federal gasoline tax was hiked in 1983. It has been hiked ever since, and we need to understand that the Democrat-controlled Congress is at fault.

SAME OLD BUDGET

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman from Texas is right. It is the same old song. As the Four Tops would say, "It's a different verse since you've been gone." That is what this budget is. The Republicans have come back, and they have taken their old last year's budget. What it did to seniors, what it did to schoolchildren, and they put a smiley face on it. But it is the same old bad budget.

Mr. Speaker, for months they have tried to undermine the Federal commitment to education. On Sunday, the majority leader of the Republican Party even suggested that we compensate for a revenue loss by cutting education. It is as if Marie Antoinette were telling the peasants let them eat cake, but he says to students in America, let them pump gas.

We need more opportunities in this country, not less. Is it any wonder that a Republican Party that cannot seem to learn its own lessons wants everyone else in America to pay more for learning.

THE GAS TAX

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

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Mr. Speaker, when Bill Clinton ran for President he said "I feel your pain." You know, he has a way with appearing emphatic and compassionate. But now, 3 years into his Presidency, Bill Clinton is now the source of a lot of pain that the American people feel.

In 1993, he and the liberals here in Congress, enacted the largest tax increase in history. Part of that tax increase was the 30-percent increase in the Federal gas tax. Every gallon that