

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

Americans purchased is now 4.3 cents more expensive because of Bill Clinton and the liberal Democrats.

Yesterday was tax freedom day. And in honor of tax freedom day, Congress should repeal this regressive gas tax and let the American people keep more of what they earn.

Mr. Speaker, we know the President feels our pain, but the real question is, "does he feel the gas tax pains?"

EDUCATION CUTS

(Ms. McKINNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and include extraneous material.)

Ms. McKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, I am no longer astonished by the lengths to which Republican leaders will go just to cut education funding. Monday's Washington Post reported that the Republican House majority leader favored cutting education in order to pay for a repeal of the gas tax. Now, that's audacious stuff coming from someone who used Government loans to get through school.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican leadership could have easily paid for a repeal of the gas tax by not giving the military \$7 billion more than what it asked for in 1996.

In fact, what guarantee do we even have that the oil companies will reduce their prices once the gas tax is repealed?

Once again, Mr. Speaker, the Republican leadership has demonstrated that it is only interested in greasing the rigs of the oil companies, while giving the American middle class a Texas-sized wedge.

I include for the RECORD the following article from the Washington Post of Monday, May 6, 1996:

ARMEY: CHEAPER FUEL VIA EDUCATION CUTS
(By Serge F. Kovaleski)

House Majority Leader Richard K. Arney (R-Tex.) yesterday suggested that the revenue loss from a repeal of the 1993 gasoline tax could be offset by cutting spending on education.

"Maybe we ought to take another look at the amount of money we are spending on education," Arney said on NBC's "Meet the Press." "There is a place where we're getting a declining value for an increasing dollar. It's in education."

"If in fact we can get some discipline in the use of our education dollar, I think we can make up the difference," Arney added.

The White House said yesterday that targeting education funds is not acceptable.

Reducing the federal 18.3-cents-a-gallon gasoline tax by 4.3 cents, as proposed by Republicans, would save the average motorist about \$27 a year in taxes, but would reduce federal revenue by \$30 billion to \$35 billion over the next seven years, the White House estimates.

Senate Majority Leader and presumptive GOP presidential nominee Robert J. Dole (Kan.), who has made repeal of the 1993 gas tax a focus of his campaign against President Clinton, plans to introduce legislation Tuesday to repeal the 1993 tax temporarily. The increase was part of the deficit reduction package that Clinton pushed through Congress in 1993 without a single Republican vote.

Under the Dole proposal, the tax would be rolled back through January 1997 and a permanent repeal would be considered as part of the budget for the fiscal year starting Oct. 1. Clinton has said he would be willing to consider scrapping the tax if Republicans found a fair way to make up the revenue loss.

But in a statement yesterday, White House Chief of Staff Leon E. Panetta called on Dole and House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) "immediately and unequivocally" to repudiate Arney's suggestion that education spending could be cut to finance a reduction in the gasoline tax.

White House economic adviser Laura D'Andrea Tyson, also interviewed on "meet the Press," refused to say whether the President would sign a freestanding bill to kill the tax hike, but argued that any cut should be part of a balanced budget plan. "It's going to be very hard for them to find \$30 billion to \$35 billion," she said.

Tyson stressed the White House would prefer tax reductions for education or a family tax credit or an IRA expansion rather than a gasoline tax cut.

Sen. Phil Gramm (R-Tex.), on ABC's "This Week With David Brinkley," said the best way to offset the tax repeal would be to cut welfare benefits for legal immigrants, which would result in savings of about \$14 billion a year. He also said Congress should not twin the gasoline tax repeal and a minimum wage increase, which Dole has suggested to appeal to Clinton and the Democrats.

Gingrich echoed that view in remarks on CBS's "Face the Nation." He said the gas tax legislation would be a "simple, narrow bill" that would not be lined to the minimum wage issue. He said the House Ways and Means Committee would meet Tuesday to consider how to pay for the tax repeal. He did not embrace Arney's suggestion or reject it.

He said that Dole's "proposal to repeal the gas tax increase has been generally pretty popular. I think it will pass by a big margin," giving Clinton "a chance to sign it into law before Memorial Day so that Americans who drive over Memorial Day will pay slightly less for gasoline."

The Clinton administration, however, said that wholesale prices are already going down after the President's decision last week to sell 12 million barrels of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

Economists have noted that when the price of gasoline is adjusted for inflation, it is cheap by historical standards. In 1995 dollars, average gasoline prices are at 1991 levels but are well below where they were for most of the 1980s. The average national price for a gallon of unleaded regular gasoline at the pump is \$1.273. That is also far cheaper than gasoline prices in most of the world. In some European countries gasoline is three times the U.S. price.

AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT POLLING

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, last night on NBC's television program called "The Fleecing of America," it was revealed that Clinton's Department of Agriculture has hired a political pollster for \$33,000, our tax dollars, by the way, to go out and poll some political people, white Americans only. This particular pollster is known for polling for Democrat women. And so she went

out and polled, in Kansas by the way, white Americans not Hispanics, not blacks but white Americans, in Kansas, the swing voters, to find out how they were feeling about the Food Stamp Program.

It just so happens that the House chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, the gentleman from Kansas, [Mr. ROBERTS], is running for the Senate against a female opponent in Kansas. But our tax dollars were being spent to find out what the Kansas public was thinking. How long is the American public going to put up with this? How long is the American public going to allow their tax dollars to be used for political purposes by this administration? I ask Secretary Glickman to ask Under Secretary Haas to resign.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NEWBORNS' AND MOTHERS' HEALTH PROTECTION ACT

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

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, today, in honor of Mother's Day, I am introducing a bill to improve health protections for new mothers and their babies.

We have all heard the stories from mothers we represent about the difficulties and tragedies that can result from a too-early hospital discharge after childbirth. Providers concur that the first few days after delivery are critical to both the mother's and the infant's health.

The Newborns' and Mothers' Health Protection Act removes insurance mandates that restrict the length of postpartum care mothers and infants receive. The bill requires that health plans provide up to 48 hours of coverage for normal delivery, and 96 hours for caesarean section—the accepted recommendations of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The proposal is designed to ensure that post-delivery care is based on the unique characteristics of each mother and her newborn child. Like the Bradley-Kassebaum bill that overwhelmingly passed the Senate Labor Committee, this legislation would return the length of stay decision to mothers and their health care providers. The bill does not impose a mandate, but rather, removes one, giving doctors more flexibility in meeting the needs of their patients.

All 15 Democratic Members of the Ways and Means Committee have joined me in introducing this important legislation. It is my hope that my Republican colleagues will join us in a bipartisan effort to pass these vital protections for newborns and their mothers.