

and would come apart when the over 85 population is projected to grow by 40 percent.

Again, the same way the number of children who did not have private health insurance was growing, the number of seniors who need nursing home beds is growing, and here we are at the time when these populations and needs are growing and those people would become uninsured and not have coverage. We are talking about block granting and providing less money to the States for the very coverage where there is more need. What you are pointing out is exactly on point.

The other thing that I wanted to mention that you talked about is this whole notion that somehow the Republicans, GINGRICH and the others, are saying what we are really doing here is protecting Medicare because it is going to go insolvent and so we have to implement these cuts in order to make Medicare solvent 5 or 6 years from now.

Again, I would say nothing could be further from the truth. I mean, these cuts are not being implemented in order to protect Medicare. These cuts are being implemented to give the tax breaks for the wealthy. And the President in his budget resolution, in his budget that he proposed earlier this year, guarantees the life of the Medicare Trust Fund for at least a decade. His budget proves that the Republican Medicare cuts, the damaging changes that we have talked about, are not necessary to balance the budget. There is over \$120 billion remaining in the trust fund and there is no imminent danger that claims will not be paid. And although the trust fund did not perform as well as projected in 1995, the difference between the actual and projected performance was within the typical margin of error and has been incorporated into budget projections.

Every year minor adjustments were made to make sure that the trust fund would remain solvent for the next decade. Democrats continued to do that. The President did that back in 1993. His health care reform would have expanded the life of the trust fund significantly. This is just an excuse, and I know you mentioned that. And I would not be surprised if our colleagues on the other side are going to suggest this again later tonight, that somehow GINGRICH and they are protecting the trust fund from insolvency. It is not true.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. It is so important that Americans not be fooled by GINGRICH saying that we just want to protect Medicare by the next round of speakers trotting out their articles from conservative, generally pro-Republican newspapers, saying they just want to protect, whether it is the Washington Post or the Washington Times, that typically support the Republican agenda, the Wall Street Journal, to say that we are just trying to save Medicare. The Medicare cuts are for tax breaks for the wealthy, as have you said over and over, Mr. PALLONE,

and as the voters clearly, and the public clearly understands from last year, when GINGRICH tried to do this before.

And it is clear that the Gingrich crowd here, the far right of the Republican Party that has supported all of this and pushed all of this, they have never believed in Medicare. They voted against it 30 years ago. Last fall the presumptive nominee of Speaker GINGRICH's party has said, "I was fighting the fight 30 years ago because we knew Medicare would not work." Speaker GINGRICH last fall himself said, "We just want it to wither on the vine. We cannot politically afford to get rid of it in round one, because the public will not stand for it."

They have never cared about Medicare. They voted against Medicare for 30 years, most not the middle of the Republican Party. But because that was the consensus, that Democrats and Republicans alike realized that the public supports Medicare, because that far right of the Republican Party that Speaker GINGRICH is so close to and that really runs things, and particularly the freshmen, all of them have clearly shown their opposition to Medicare year after year after year after year and that part of the party clearly does not support it.

They still do not support it. They will trot out newspaper articles showing how responsible they are, but it is obviously tax breaks for the rich and watch Medicare wither on the vine. That is what they are about. That is what they want to do.

They have a Washington Post article they will use, a newspaper that supported the Gingrich agenda time after time. It has a reputation of once being a more moderate paper with an editorial board made up of people that are conservative and do not support these programs, but representing the far right of that party.

Speaker GINGRICH's comments about Medicare that he wants to see it "wither on the vine" and "it is tax breaks for the rich" tell the whole story. They are simply not interested in saving this program but in gutting this program and in seeing it wither away.

Mr. PALLONE. I agree. I know our time is almost over here, but again if it were really true that they were concerned about the Medicare program, they would deal with it separately from the budget. They would not use the cuts in Medicare and Medicaid as a reason, if you will, or as the basis for these tax breaks that are provided in this new budget that they are trotting out. And even more important, they would not make the changes, the substantive changes in the Medicare program and the Medicaid program that we talked about this evening.

What they are doing is trying to push seniors into managed care, to deny them the choice of their doctors or their hospitals. They are including these balanced billed provisions that will force seniors to pay more out of pocket for the health care. All of these

major structural changes in Medicare are being implemented and those are being done under the aegis or with the excuse that somehow they are trying to preserve Medicare as we continue, and it is just the opposite.

□ 2315

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. The medical savings accounts that the Speaker has extolled, the virtues, over and over and over again, as an idea of a big insurance company, major contributors to the Speaker that salivate over the prospect of getting to write all this insurance for a Medicare program that is withering on the vine. It means major income to them, major costs to senior citizens to pay for a tax break for the wealthy.

Mr. PALLONE. In fact, the Congressional Budget Office has clearly indicated that medical savings accounts will actually cost more money to the Federal Government. So if you are talking about trying to save money, that clearly is not the way to go.

I want to thank the gentleman again for being here tonight.

THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON] is recognized for the balance of the time remaining before midnight as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to say to my friend from Ohio over here that if the Washington Post is a conservative newspaper, then the Grateful Dead is a country and western band.

I also, in fact, before he leaves, I was going to ask Mr. PALLONE about one of these quotes that I had because I thought this was interesting, April 24, "well, let me tell you, Members, that this trust fund is not broke." I cannot believe that a Member of the House would say that, contrary to all the evidence. But it is interesting.

I want to make this point because I asked our Democrat colleagues three times if they would yield, three times was denied, and one reason that I think my good friends would not yield any time is they wanted to have free rein of one of their most specious mistruths that I hear them say. That is the quote that the Speaker said that Medicare was going to wither on the vine, when they know, because we have pointed out to them that that was in reference to HCFA, the Health Care Financing Administration in Washington, and that the Democrat Party has notoriously and maliciously misconstrued that quote.

The reason why they would not yield time is because it is easy to run your mouth about something or talk about something when there is no one there to challenge you. If either one of them wanted to come to the floor right now and debate this, I control the time, I

will be happy to yield to them so that they can talk about it. But otherwise, Democrats can continue to throw softballs back and forth to each other. Then Republicans can come down here and throw softballs back and forth to each other. And do you know who loses? The American people.

I think it is much better to have a truthful and honest dialogue than just this one-sided aren't we great, let's polish off our halos, let's convince the C-SPAN audience. As long as you are here, I will yield time to my friend, Mrs. SEASTRAND from California, and the gentleman from Maryland, Mr. EHRLICH. We are going to talk about this.

Let me yield to the gentlewoman from California [Mrs. SEASTRAND].

Mrs. SEASTRAND. I just wanted to say, you have the quote of our colleague who has just spoken and he mentioned that it was the Washington Post, that the Washington Post was favorable to Republicans. I just would say, I have some quotes here from the New York Times and also from the Santa Barbara News Press, which is owned by the New York Times.

I would like to point out, the Santa Barbara News Press did not endorse my candidacy for Congress. The point is that new government data, this is February 5, 1996, New York Times, it says, new government data show Medicare's hospital insurance trust fund lost money last year for the first time since 1972, suggesting that the financial condition of the Medicare program was worse than assumed by either Congress or the Clinton administration.

And I have here a clipping from the Santa Barbara News Press, owned by the New York Times, that says, big, bold letters, Medicare trust fund loses \$4 billion, Clinton administration downplays apparent miscalculations, but new data certain to fuel high stakes political debate over the solvency.

Mr. KINGSTON. I have two other sources that confirm the same thing. Here is the Washington Post, that great conservative newspaper which has endorsed every Democrat who has run for office for the President since the paper's existence, but it says here, Medicare is nearer to the red, that the Clinton trustee, who last April 3 predicted it was going to go bankrupt in 2 years, miscalculated. And then this other chart shows what the actual trust funds are for the fiscal year 1996, right now losing over \$4 billion, \$4.2 billion, year to date. This chart is actually as of April 23, 1996, this comes from the New York Times, which, again, is not any kind of a conservative propaganda sheet by anybody's stretch. But this is fact. And what is so amazing is we still have the Democrat party and leadership in absolute denial.

Mr. EHRLICH. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, it is a pleasure to participate in special orders with the gentleman from Georgia and the gentlewoman from California. We had a great special order last week.

I have to tell you, just as observation as a freshman coming here from the State legislature, 8 years in Annapolis, where obviously C-SPAN does not televise the proceedings and the parties do not fight like this and the PAC's are not there and the high stakes are not there, but I have to tell you, the debate in Annapolis was so honest. People dealt with facts.

My best friends in the committee I sat on in the State legislature were people who did not agree with myself philosophically, but we would fight over facts and then would go out and have lunch.

I come here and I watch episodes like we just observed and it is really interesting. I guess my question to you is a rhetorical question.

Why cannot folks on the other side simply debate with respect to facts? Why can they not say, look, EHRLICH, look at you Republicans, Medicare should increase 10 percent a year. If it grows 7 percent a year, it is not good enough. At least they would be intellectually honest. We could have a real give and take.

I suspect the fact you were not allowed into the conversation, no time was yielded to you, was they know that is the case. They know a 7-percent increase per year, as the Republican budget proposal proposed, is no cut.

But look at the terminology, look at the words they use. And you just saw a great example of it here. The half-truths, the innuendo, the term "extremist," one of my favorite terms these days. I guess an extremist is in this House these days those who come to Washington with a philosophical orientation who believe certain things, who have principles and who do not compromise those principles but actually believe that Members of Congress should bring those principles on this floor.

Of course, compromise is part of the political game. We all know that. But you have fundamental beliefs and principles that should drive you as an adult politician and we are adult politicians. It is a great honor to stand here tonight and talk to the American people, but why do they have to turn to the rhetoric, the half-truths and the innuendo every time.

Mr. KINGSTON. let us look at this, because here we have a trust fund that has lost \$4.2 billion a year to date on Medicare. Here we have the Clinton appointed Medicare trustees last April saying that it would be broke in 6 years. Then what do we have? We have the minority Democrat leader, DICK GEPHARDT, saying, the Republicans are saying this because the report will have solvency problems that there is a great emergency, this is a hoax.

That was said on Meet the Press, July 30, 1995. Another one, great DICK GEPHARDT again: It is a big lie to say that Medicare is in trouble.

These are people who are paid \$134,000 a year. They ought to know what the truth is.

Mr. Speaker, on the time, I did not get that courtesy from our Democrats who just spoke, but I offered them some of our time to defend this statement.

Let me tell Members that this trust fund is not broke.

Well, let me tell the gentleman who just spoke, here is the chart. I do not know what you call it when you have more money going out than you do coming in. But back home on Main Street America, when that happens to American families, that is called going broke.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. I guess this is just proof that the Members from the other side of the aisle have been in control of this House for 40 years, and we are now suffering the consequences of those 40 years with a \$5 trillion debt. I guess it is just telling us that perhaps it is their misunderstanding of how you take money in and you only spend what you have, and I guess it is the old standby that that is why we are in trouble because they just do not get it. We were spending more than we were taking in. I think this is just a proof of it.

If the gentleman does not understand that 4.2 billion is a trust fund in trouble, then that explains 40 years of recklessness in this House.

Mr. EHRLICH. Mr. Speaker, I really have a caveat to your observation because these folks are obviously very intelligent. I am not sure it is a misunderstanding. I think it is an understanding. What they understand is, if you go to this floor often enough and use quotes out of context and use words like extremist and use arguments that are not based in fact, but if you repeat those arguments time and time and time and time again, every night, on TV, on radio, on the floor of this House, some people will buy your argument. Some people will. They understand that. I really think that is a logical extension of your remarks.

Mr. KINGSTON. On our truth meter here tonight I have three lies real quickly. Two we have dealt with. One is misconstruing the Speaker's quote, which was an outright deliberate misrepresentation, a lie, as we would say back home. No. 2, saying that a fund that is losing money does not have financial problems. Then No. 3, saying that the new Republican budget cuts Medicare, when the Republican budget that has just been introduced this year actually increases Medicare spending from, and I have the exact number with me, it goes up to \$305 billion from \$190 billion.

So here the Republican budget increases Medicare spending from 190 to 305 billion and we have heard people as recently as 20 minutes ago saying this is a cut.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. That is almost a 70 percent increase.

Mr. KINGSTON. We are going from about \$5,000 per individual.

I notice that the gentlewoman from California has a beautiful picture of her mother there.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. I decided to bring a picture of my mom because I sometimes think that people think that we on this side of the aisle were hatched. We have moms. We have dads. We have grandparents. We have children. And we are concerned.

I just grabbed my mom's picture because I was listening to the working in my office and listening to the debate or I should say the discussion earlier this evening. I could not believe my ears. I just grabbed a picture of mom to say that this is my mom, and she desperately depends on Medicare. She is concerned about what is happening on the House floor and what is going to happen with the President. Are we going to save Medicare?

I just brought down a picture of Mom so that we can take a look at her while we will have this discussion.

Mr. KINGSTON. For Mother's Day you can tell her that the Republican proposal for Medicare increases her benefits from \$5,000 to \$7,000 and saves the fund from going broke by giving her more options. Those options, as we all know, put more competition in there, give your mother a little bit more to choose from than a Blue Cross, Blue Shield policy.

Mr. EHRLICH. Mr. Speaker, just one observation, I think, forms that background for this discussion. Short-term political calculations have ruled this House.

By the way, it is a bipartisan. Republicans have made their share of mistakes, we all know that. But short-term political calculations have ruled this House for decades. By that I mean, let us not tell the American people the facts. Let us hide the deficit. Let us hide the problems of Medicare.

If we just repeat what people want to hear rather than the truth, we will get reelected. Of course, traditionally that is the way you get reelected. It is so refreshing to be with folks who have come to Congress in the last year and a half, some on the other side of the aisle, relatively few, who are willing to tell the truth to the American people because in my view, that is what defines leaders.

I do not think it takes any particular talent to be a politician. Any of us can go hire a pollster, read the poll results and tell people what they want to hear. There is no particular talent in doing that. But to have the courage of your convictions, to have principle, to have political guts to go tell the American people, look, folks, we have to do something, your mother depends on Medicare. Your mother wants to hear the truth. Your mother wants to hear a party with ideas, a party with a plan to save Medicare.

□ 2330

They do not want to hear fear and fear and fear mixed with a little generational warfare, a little class warfare. "Let's scare some of the seniors. Let's scare some of the folks at the lower end of the economic scale. Let's talk about the rich people."

I would love for them to define rich one day. That defines politicians. What defines leaders in my view are folks with principles and ideals, willing to bring their case to the American people. That is why it is fun to be with the Members here tonight.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. If the gentleman will yield, I first want to thank the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON] for having this special order and taking the time to speak out on these important issues along with the gentlewoman from California [Mrs. SEASTRAND] and the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. EHRLICH]. Your points are well taken tonight that you have made about Medicare.

The Republican Party has led the way in making sure that we roll back the 1993 unfair Social Security tax. The same party, the Republicans, also allow seniors to earn more than \$11,280, actually up to \$30,000 over the next 5 years. The same Republican Party is also looking out for seniors on Medicare. We want to make sure that there is more money there for health care services.

What we have done in our proposal which is not yet the law is going to make sure we remove \$30 million in fraud, waste and abuse. It is also going to make sure that medical education for interns and residents, the indirect costs, is on a line item that is protected but not part of Medicare because we need health care for seniors, it just goes to seniors. Also reducing our paperwork costs from 12 percent to 2 percent. All of those things that we have been working for will make sure that Medicare will be solvent, protected and expanded for this generation of seniors and the ones to follow.

Mr. EHRLICH. If the gentleman will yield for a question, I agree with everything you said but you just took about a minute and a half to lay out principles, facts and bills and proposed statutes.

Our problem is, though, that is a poor soundbite. You just talked about facts, about real bills. Is it not easier to scare the American people, to use fear as a political weapon? To say, "Those people want to cut Medicare"? Boom. Three seconds. It is tough, is it not?

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. That has been our problem up till now, but I think by having this special order that the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON] has reserved for tonight and by bringing together I think some of the sharpest minds we have in Congress like yourself and the gentlewoman from California we are able to hopefully get the message out that we are trying to take the extra time, the extra effort to explain what is happening and the fact that we need the American people's support to make sure this proposal is in fact passed.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. If the gentleman will yield, you commented about you would hope that one day they would define rich. I served in the State assembly in California. When we talked

about giving the working family, the taxpayer out there, Dad and Mom, a tax break, we would hear the same cries from the floor of the assembly. I just have a feeling that you probably heard it in your service to your State about the rich.

I would like to quote the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. GEPHARDT], the House minority leader, in a press statement made on May 7. I quote, and we heard it earlier from the colleagues that preceded us.

"But the Republicans thought it was better to lavish more tax cuts on their wealthy special interest supporters."

You had asked, can we define rich? I would like to run through some of those rich, wealthy special interest supporters that I voted for and that you voted for, some of the things that we want to see for them.

How about taxpayers with income below \$100,000? Eighty percent of the GOP tax cuts go to people making less than \$100,000 while 61 percent to those earning between \$30,000 and \$75,000.

How about the small business owner? That is what makes up the majority of jobs on the central coast of California. We have a pro-job, capital gains tax relief that will affect middle-class business owners.

There was an IRS analysis of 1993 tax returns, and that analysis found that 77 percent of tax returns reporting capital gains were filed by taxpayers with incomes less than \$75,000. Again, maybe that is rich to some people. Families with children. The \$500 tax credit per child applies to families with incomes below \$110,000, and that is joint return, or \$75,000 single.

Or how about married couples who claim the standard deduction, mostly those with incomes less than \$50,000. Our tax package corrects the current problem of a married couple filing jointly who pay more in taxes than if they were unmarried and filing separately.

We hear a lot about the destruction of the family and we want to help families. Again, maybe this is their definition of rich, married couples who are making less than \$50,000.

The other two, families who want to adopt a child. Families with incomes below \$75,000 would qualify for the maximum credit of \$5,000 to defray adoption expenses. Last, families who care for their elderly parent at home, they would receive a \$1,000 elder care deduction. So I rest my case. Those are the rich that the other side of the aisle talk about all the time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I think it is also important to note that just about everybody in working America buys gasoline and we have a President who has bragged about, "I feel your pain." I believe he feels people's gas pain, too, because he caused it, with an additional 4 cents per gallon gas tax. Every time you fill up with 10 gallons, you pay 40 cents more because of the 1993 Bill Clinton gas tax.

I represent a rural area. Folks have to drive a long way to get places. It

hurts them disproportionately. I know out west people are hurt disproportionately. Working people, the people with lower incomes, have a higher percentage hit. This is a 30 percent gas tax increase. The average gas tax right now per gallon is 38 cents. That is the combination of Federal and State. Are we saying now that only wealthy people buy gas?

Mrs. SEASTRAND. If the gentleman will yield, George Stephanopoulos was in Santa Barbara this last weekend. He admitted that he really does not fully understand this situation because he only lives a few blocks from the office, the White House.

Those that live here on Capitol Hill and work here in the administration obviously do not understand what our folks in our rural areas of the world have to do. They have to drive a distance, from work to their home, or to the grocery store, or to the gas station. In some instances they make a 100-mile round trip and maybe more. Yet that was quite an interesting comment because they just do not get it here in Washington, D.C. about how all the rest of us live.

Mr. KINGSTON. It is a complex problem, buying gas. I could see why Mr. Stephanopoulos could not follow it. "You mean people actually fill up the gas tank and drive to work?"

That would be revolutionary over there on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Mr. EHRLICH. If the gentleman would yield, this is coming from a man who said about this President, for this President, "Words are actions," which is an interesting thing to say when you think about it. Because words are not actions. Words are cheap. Words are really cheap in this town.

It is really nice and a pleasure to serve with people for whom words have meaning. Candidate Bill Clinton, 1992. "I oppose Federal excise gas tax increases."

Words should have meanings. I want to debate those folks on the other side with respect to words and facts, because words should have meanings. The reason people are so skeptical and cynical about politics and about this floor and about this institution is that they see comments like, for this President, "Words are actions." Words should have ramifications, words should have meanings, even in an election year, even in this town, even on this hill.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. If the gentleman will yield, just as a corollary or an adjunct to what you are saying, in 1992 when the President ran, he said he wanted a middle class tax cut, to end welfare as we know it and a balanced budget amendment. We sent him all 3, he vetoed all 3. That goes right back to what you are talking about.

Mr. EHRLICH. Absolutely. Eloquent rhetoric. We all sat on this floor and watched the master politician. I hate being called a politician. I know you all hate it, too. Because politicians tell people what they want to hear. I know you three and I know a lot of people

who sit in these chairs every day do not tell people what they want to hear, they tell people what they believe and what they think is best for the future of the country. As I have said earlier, that distinguishes politicians from leaders. Leaders lead. Politicians hire pollsters to tell them what they think the American people want to hear.

Mr. KINGSTON. Another great example of this is the minimum wage. It sounds great. "Let's give people 90 cents an hour more. It won't hurt them."

Yet if you look at what an increase in the minimum wage has done over the last increases, it decreases the number of jobs that are out there. This will cost Americans over 250,000 jobs. There are some interesting statistics on the minimum wage when we look at it.

Only 2 percent of the people get minimum wage over 30 years old on an average. Thirty-nine percent of the people making minimum wage are teenagers. Sixty-six percent of the people making minimum wage are part-time workers. And on an average, an employee who starts at minimum wage today, in one year has a salary of \$6.05 an hour.

When you look at this and think that if you increase the minimum wage, you eliminate the number of jobs, you are going to increase the cost of groceries or services, goods and whatever it is that the retail stores sell, it is not a winner for the taxpayer, it is not good for the job seeker, it is not good for the teenager, it is not good for the employees, and it is not good for middle class America. Even though it is politically expedient to say, "Yeah, let's give them a raise."

But the thing is, we have offered a gas tax cut, \$500 per child tax credit, lower taxes on income taxes and things like this. You can put more real dollars in the pockets of American workers without expanding the size of government and government mandates.

Mr. EHRLICH. If the gentleman would yield for a brief moment, words are cheap. Words mean nothing. Bill Clinton, February 6, 1993.

Raising the minimum wage is the wrong way to raise the incomes of low-wage earners.

Should the American people not get to believe what politicians say at some time? Or are we just going to allow pollsters and poll-driven politicians to drive the agenda in this country so that short-term political calculations that get you elected contribute to the \$5 trillion in debt we suffer from in this country and the inability of this Congress to show the political guts to dive head-on into the real problems facing the society today. Is that not what leadership is all about?

Mrs. SEASTRAND. If the gentleman will yield, I would like to quote also that famous quote at the fund-raising dinner that the President stated on October 17 where he said, "I think I raised your taxes too much, also."

I want to remind the gentleman here that as of yesterday, working families

across this Nation are going to be providing for their own needs. Prior to yesterday, they worked for government, whether it was the local entity of government, State government or the Federal Government. They now have the freedom to work for their home, to pay for their cars, to pay for their children's education, for their clothes and such.

Words are cheap. Because here we have the President admitting that he taxed Americans too much and yet we have to fight the battle to reduce taxes in this town.

Mr. KINGSTON. Wait a minute. I want to make sure I understand. You are saying that May 8 was Tax Freedom Day and you are saying from January 1 to May 8, that all the income earned in that period of time went to the government? Is that what you are saying?

Mrs. SEASTRAND. One hundred twenty-eight days.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thought that day was back in April. April 15. Why are we in May?

Mrs. SEASTRAND. The gentleman probably knows the answer to that. It is the fact that government is growing and taking more and more and with such increases, such as we saw in 1993 with the gas tax, and the other increases for many other programs here in Washington, DC.

This place represents Washington values and not the values of American families. But that is right. One hundred twenty-eight days, the average working man and woman work to pay for taxes at all levels of government. It is pretty amazing.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. If the gentleman from Georgia will yield further, just to add to what the gentlewoman from California [Mrs. SEASTRAND] said, that is all the taxes that take it up to May 8. But adding up all the Federal, State and local regulations, you actually get into July before you start receiving a dollar you can keep.

I think what this 104th Congress has done, we have really, with the Republican majority, been able to derive some things that the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. EHRLICH] talked about earlier which will give us permanent change. We passed a balanced budget for the first time since 1969; we passed the line-item veto which is now the law so we can cut out pork-barrel legislation just to get Congressmen or Senators reelected; we ended unfunded mandates where we tell local governments, "You have got to pay for this just because we passed a bill on to you"; and we passed regulatory reform. By doing that, we hope that Americans will be able to keep more of their paycheck instead of sending so much to Washington to go to more waste and programs that have already taken care of this.

□ 2345

Mr. KINGSTON. Are those things passed into law or are they sitting over in the Senate?

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Well, the line-item veto was passed into law. The unfunded mandates, that is in the law. Regulatory reform is going to wait for the conference committee of the House and Senate. And balanced budget went to the President already twice, so I think the third time will be the charm and hopefully we will get the President to sign the balanced budget.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. If the gentleman would yield, we talk about taxes that we pay to May 8 and then talk about regulations that would cost us until July. The gentleman from Georgia was pointing out about the tax increase that all of us suffered as of 1993, and I just would say that if we repeal the gas tax and get that signed into law, we are going to save low- and middle-income families almost \$70 a year. If we take a nationwide average, that is \$48 in everyone's pocket by savings on what they are putting in the tank.

Mr. EHRLICH. If the gentlewoman would yield, here we are talking about for the most part, with the exception of the gas tax repeal, intangible benefits. Five trillion dollars in debt, does anyone know what that looks like? The regulatory burden that our small business folks suffer from, we pay for a good at the market or at the store but we do not think about the regulatory burden. It adds to the consumer price of the good, but we do not think about it.

Is it not always easier to run a 30-second attack ad? "Those Republicans, the class warfare, they will not raise the minimum wage. They do not want to put a few more cents into your pocket." Never mind the folks, the marginal workers, minority workers, unskilled workers, disabled workers who will lose their jobs when we raise the minimum wage. They do not talk about that. Inconvenient. Bad sound bite.

How about the class warfare? It is very frustrating, although I am really personally not as frustrated. As I go back to my district on weekends and some weeknights and talk to folks, they get it. People are not stupid.

Seniors are not dumb. I refuse to believe that most seniors in this country buy what we just heard an hour ago. Seniors are the most sophisticated group in this population. Your mom is smart. My parents are smart. They know what is going on. They can read the newspaper. They can add the numbers up. They understand why we are in the fiscal crunch we are in.

And to run a campaign based on fear and fear alone, the gentlewoman from California just whispered to me before we went on the floor here. She said, where is their idea? Where is their plan?

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Where is the plan?

Mr. EHRLICH. There is no plan. It is fear. Fear wins elections. Class warfare wins elections. If they can get that woman making \$18,000 a year to be jealous of that woman or that guy

making \$24,000 a year, guess what, they got a vote in the other column. Class warfare works.

Remember the speeches during the 1992 campaign? Well, that trickle down speech, that trickle down speech is capitalism. We are a capitalist society. We want people to have a piece of the American pie. We want to grow the American pie, not turn class against class, grandchildren against grandparents.

I cannot wake up every day and come to this House thinking that fear will dominate American politics and that class warfare will dominate American politics and that half truths will dominate American politics after the 1996 election.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. If the gentleman would yield, I do not know about you, but I get quite a few letters from seniors in the district, and they say, "We know that there is a problem. Please fix it so that we can have something for our children and our grandchildren." You are right, our seniors are not dumb, and I think when they are presented with the facts, they understand.

Many of those seniors lived during the depression, my mom did, and went through some very hard times, and they do not want to really see those hard times for their grandchildren. They want to have the hopes and dreams, and you are right, we want to expand opportunities for everyone. We do not want to expand those bureaucracies, and we want to be honest with people to find honest solutions to problems that are facing us. But you are right, fear does sell for that quick fix before an election.

I am glad to stand here with gentlemen that want to face some hard polls sometimes. The figures do not always come out, but we have a job here to try and tell people why something may be bad policy, like the minimum wage, and how it is going to destroy jobs for the very people that we want to help.

The gentleman is right, fear does sell things, but in the long run, I am going to be able to face myself and look myself in the mirror if I can be honest and true with the American voters, honest and true with my mom and honest and true with the voters across America.

Mr. EHRLICH. If the gentlewoman would yield for just a second, I ask that the gentleman from Georgia throw that "medigoguery" article back up. I think too often as Republicans we get skittish and defensive about big-city newspapers who in a very real philosophical sense do not support us most of the time.

So when big-city newspapers, like the Washington Post and the Baltimore Sun papers and other major papers, the New York Times, around the country have the courage of their convictions to tell the American people the truth, like this editorial, I would ask the gentleman to read some of the pertinent parts of this editorial.

This is what those folks you heard an hour ago do not want the American

people to hear, and I would yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. Well, what this editorial had to do with was when we introduced our plan to save and protect Medicare and the Democrats started demagoguing it through fear because, as Mrs. SEASTRAND said, they had no plan of their own. So what this does is says the Democrats, what they are doing is pretty crummy stuff. They are engaged in demagoguery big time and it is wrong, and it goes on to say that the Republicans have a plan, the Democrats do not. The Republican plan is gutsy and the Democratic TV ads are just scare tactics.

I think the sad thing here is that we are in a debate right now where, frankly, neither side is gaining because neither side has credibility, because the American people hear us, they think well, they have a good point. Then they hear the Democrats, they say, well, I did not know that. After a while they do not know who to believe. That is why I was so disappointed tonight when the Democrats would not yield us time to have a dialogue, and I was further disappointed when we tried to yield time to them.

But we have to have a dialogue back and forth that puts America center stage, not Republicans and not Democrats but America, what is good for your mother, what is good for mine, and also what is good for my children and your children.

Let me yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX], and I know we have to wrap it up.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. One of the things we are also doing for seniors is to make sure with Social Security—we are the ones leading the charge, the Republican majority—to make sure that \$358 billion owed to the Social Security Trust fund, through our line-item veto and other cost-cutting measures from real waste in the government, goes back and we make sure those funds are restored.

Prior congresses have taken money from the Social Security Trust Fund. We want to make sure it gets restored so the Social Security Trust Fund will forever be solvent and be working. We are also working to make sure there are in-home services for our seniors so they live longer, independent and at home before they have to go to any other skilled care. We are also working on that.

Seniors have done so much to make sure we have the opportunity to be here, and we appreciate their getting back to us about suggestions on making sure that we save some important programs but eliminate the waste and making sure the country truly gets its money's worth.

Mr. KINGSTON. I think we need to wrap it up.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Well, I just would say it is a pleasure talking, and I guess we will have to be down here every evening trying to make the points and trying to tell the American people that

we sincerely want to preserve Medicare, to save it for our moms, our dads, our grandparents, and for our children who are depending on us to do so for the future.

□ 2353

It is a pleasure being with you this evening.

Mr. EHRLICH. It is a pleasure being with everybody. Demagogues hate facts, but truth usually wins out.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I heard a similar quote that said ignorance and bliss is easy. Let me just say that I think it is important for all of our constituents to call us, to write us, to get involved, to come to town meetings and so forth. We are in a huge national debate. We have a budget that has a deficit of about \$140 billion to \$150 billion. We have a \$5 trillion debt. We cannot pass this legacy on to our children, and we will not even be able to do, because the day of reckoning is coming sooner than that.

I will close with one story I tell many, many times, you have all heard it, a story about a guy crossing the road. He gets into the middle of the road, and a car comes whizzing around the corner. All of a sudden, the man jumps out of the way, the car swerves to the same direction. The man jumps to the right, the car swerves to the right; the man jumps to the left, the car swerves to the left. Back and forth. At the last possible minute, the man jumps out of the way, and the car pulls up next to him. The driver rolls down the window, and it is a squirrel, and he says, "It ain't as easy as it looks, is it?"

I think that is the situation we are in in the United States of America right now. We have got a lot of problems, and it is not going to be easy, and it is not going to be something where you can just stay at home and say this is what ought to happen. We all need to be involved in this. But we are America, and Americans have always risen to the challenge, and we will get through these problems today.

Thanks for being with us.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DICKEY (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today after 6:00 p.m. and for the balance of the week, on account of attending his daughter's college graduation.

Mr. HOUGHTON (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today until 5:30 p.m., on account of official business.

Mrs. FOWLER (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), until 11:30 a.m. today, on account of medical reasons.

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. PALLONE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. MEEHAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. CLAYTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DOYLE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. BROWN of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

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

Mr. WOLF, for 5 minutes, on May 10.

Mr. CHAMBLISS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. LONGLEY, for 5 minutes, today.

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

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

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

(The following members (at the request of Mr. PALLONE) and to include extraneous material:)

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii.

Mr. WYNN.

Mr. STARK.

Mr. MILLER of California.

Mr. LAFALCE.

Mr. FAZIO of California.

Mr. RANGEL.

Mr. HOYER.

Mr. HAMILTON.

Mr. POMEROY.

Mr. LANTOS.

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota in three instances.

Mr. GORDON in 10 instances.

Mr. SERRANO.

Mr. PICKETT.

Mr. KANJORSKI.

Mr. KLECZKA.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. LONGLEY) and to include extraneous material:)

Mr. DORNAN in three instances.

Mr. GOODLING.

Mr. STUMP.

Mr. TORKILDSEN.

Mr. CALLAHAN.

Mr. FORBES.

Mr. HAYWORTH.

Mr. CRANE.

Mr. HOSTETTLER.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until Friday, May 10, 1996, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XXIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

2895. A letter from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, transmitting

the Service's final rule—Sheep and Wool Promotion, Research, Education, and Information: Certification and Nomination Procedures for the Proposed National Sheep Promotion, Research, and Information Board (Board) (Docket No. LS-94-015A) received May 9, 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2896. A letter from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, transmitting the Service's final rule—Sheep Promotion, Research, and Information Program: Rules and Regulations (Docket No. LS-95-010) received May 9, 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2897. A letter from the Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Service, transmitting the Service's final rule—Agreements for the Development of Foreign Markets for Agricultural Commodities (RIN: 0051-AA24) received May 9, 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2898. A letter from the Comptroller General of the United States, transmitting a review of the President's fifth special impoundment message for fiscal year 1996, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 685 (H. Doc. No. 104-209); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

2899. A letter from the Deputy Secretary of Defense, transmitting the Department's report on assistance to the Red Cross for emergency communications services for members of the Armed Forces and their families, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2602 note; to the Committee on National Security.

2900. A letter from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and Technology), transmitting certification that the standard missile 2 block IV major defense acquisition program is essential to the national security; has no alternative that would cost less; its new estimates are reasonable; and its management structure is adequate, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2433(e)(1); to the Committee on National Security.

2901. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule—Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Cost Reimbursement Rules for Indirect Costs—Private Sector (DFARS Case 96-D303) received May 8, 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on National Security.

2902. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulations Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Educational Assistance: Technical Amendments (RIN: 2900-AH59) received May 8, 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on National Security.

2903. A letter from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting the Secretary's certification that the current Future Years Defense Program fully funds the support costs associated with the Longbow Apache program, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2306(i)(1)(A); to the Committee on National Security.

2904. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a draft of proposed legislation to authorize consent to and authorize appropriations for the United States contribution to the fifth replenishment of the resources of the African Development Bank, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1110; to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

2905. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a draft of proposed legislation to authorize consent to and authorize appropriations for a United States contribution to the interest subsidy account of the successor [ESAF II] to the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility of the International Monetary Fund,