Our Washington bureaucracy did not make us great, America was made great because we as a Nation strived hard, sacrificed often, and worked together to be the best. It is our goal, the Republican goal, to end the tax trap. It is our goal to help Americans earn more money and to keep more of the money they earned so they can do more for themselves, their children, their family and their community, and save more for their children and their future. And, frankly, to be able to give a little more at the collection box on Sunday.

Unending dreams and limitless possibilities, that is what the American dream is all about. It is up to all of us to take it back.

THE AMERICAN DREAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. HILLEARY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HILLEARY. Mr. Speaker, today we send more money to the tax collector than we spend combined on food, clothing, and shelter. In 1950, taxes just took a fraction of the working family's income, but today almost half of what the working person earns goes to the government in one form or another. Half.

Mr. Speaker, in the America my parents grew up in, if you worked hard and played by the rules, you had enough money left over from your paycheck to put something away for the future and you still had enough for those little extras that help make life special, at least your material life, like maybe taking your family on a vacation, for example.

That was what the American dream was all about. The American dream was also about making sure that children had more opportunities, more choices, and a better life than their parents.

□ 2300

And they should have those things. Then why is it for the first time in our history an entire generation of Americans has lost hope and confidence in their future? Why have we lost the vision of dreaming dreams and of unlimited possibilities?

The answer for too many people lies in Washington, DC. For decades, Mr. Speaker, Washington has told America that everything is OK, while it spent our children's inheritance and undermined their future. For too long, Washington has spent more than it takes in and spent our hard-earned tax dollars unwisely just to pay for a growing Washington bureaucracy. A bureaucracy that includes 160 different job training programs, 240 education programs, 300 economic development programs and 500 urban aid programs, just to mention a very few.

How does Washington afford all of these overlapping programs? By raising our taxes through the roof. Just ask our President. He was not in office 100 days before attempting to take even more of the hard-working people's hard-earned dollars.

By comparison, Republicans in Congress spent our first 100 days trying to desperately give tax relief to those same people but it was vetoed by the President. It should not surprise anyone that more and more American families find it difficult to make ends meet; that more and more Americans are forced to live paycheck to paycheck; and, that too many Americans want to put something away for the future but are not able to do it.

We should not be surprised by Bill Clinton's response. Against unanimous Republican opposition, Mr. Clinton imposed the largest tax hike in American history, $264 billion, yet he thinks if we take that money to pay for more and more government programs, somehow this will make people's lives better off.

It just cannot happen that way. The cost of Mr. Clinton's policies to the typical American family in higher taxes and lower earnings is $2,600 and all of us have felt that crunch; specially those who work for a living. Clinton's tax trap costs a lot of money and higher taxes means less savings and a more uncertain future, and that is why we have so many people in this country so afraid of the future and I share that fear.

These are real people with real concerns and real fires, and for them I ask every Washington bureaucrat, every Washington lawyer, every Washington lobbyist and frankly every Washington liberal, what is so extreme about asking Washington to live within its means? What is so extreme about demanding that Washington not spend extravagantly at the expense of our children?

Is it right to punish working families who are trying to save for the future or just trying to get ahead? Of course it is not. The liberals and the bureaucrats will tell you to work just a little harder for them. I say it is time we stopped working for the government tax collector and that next extra overlapping government program and start working for ourselves. It is time to end the tax trap and to give the American family some well-deserved tax relief. It is way past time to return power, influence, and money where it belongs: back to America's working families.

TROOPS IN BOSNIA SHOULD COME HOME BY CHRISTMAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, six months ago, 20,000 top United States combat troops were sent to do guard duty in Bosnia. We also support our troops in every possible way and want them back safely before Christmas as promised.

I have consistently opposed sending our fighting forces to foreign lands unless the objectives are clear and achievable and the timetable and the exit strategy are stated and fully understood by everyone. None of these details were presented to the Congress.

It is easy to send people to trouble spots, but it is seldom easy to get them out safely in a timely manner and an honorable manner.

President Clinton pledged that this was a temporary mission and that they would be pulled out and brought home in one year. The year is barely half gone. The costs are more than anticipated and rising. What are we now hearing from the highest levels of the administration? The word is filtering down that it may take more time, that our troops may have to stay longer in Bosnia to accomplish their objectives. Objectives which have never been clearly stated and, I believe, never even understood by those who gave the orders that sent them there.

We in Congress must be vigilant in the coming weeks and months. We must not allow our service personnel to become permanent occupation troops in Bosnia. If 1 year is not enough, will 2 or 3 or even 5 years suffice? Not likely. Our Nation should keep its word and our troops should be brought home this winter as promised.

WHO REALLY SPEAKS FOR THE CHILDREN?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. WELDON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, when talking about children, there are significant differences between Democrats and Republicans. Republicans do not believe it takes Washington bureaucrats and spending to raise a child.

But after 30 years of a failed welfare system, a rapidly failing public education system, and a deteriorating justice system, Republicans have a different answer. What it takes to raise a child successfully today is quite simple: two responsible parents. What children need is not more Government spending but a mother and a father who care about them.

When talking about children, Republicans begin with three principles:

First, that the moral health of a nation is no less important than its economic or military strength. The fact is, you cannot have a healthy moral environment to raise children in America when 12-year-olds are having babies, 15-year-olds are killing each other, 17-year-olds are dying of AIDS, and 18-year-olds are graduating with diplomas they cannot read. If we are to restore the moral health of America, this behavior has got to stop.

Second, it is the results, not the rhetoric, that counts. Anyone can sound compassionate, but the truly compassionate are those that go out and find ways to make the lives of our children more happy and healthy.

And third, we must be willing to face ourselves in the mirror and be honest with the American people about the failure of the Washington welfare system to help those who need it most. It is our responsibility as elected officials to acknowledge that Washington got it wrong, so that next time we can get it right.

The welfare trap in this country literally enslaves generations of Americans on Government assistance by depriving hope, diminishing opportunity, and destroying the lives of our precious children.

Just look at our inner cities. You will meet a generation fed on food stamps but starved of nurturing, hope, and basic education.

Yet every year Washington spends more money on more welfare programs, expanding the welfare trap from one child to another, from one generation to another. What the Democrats do not understand is that raising more taxes to expand a welfare system that does not work now will only make matters worse later.

And welfare is not the only problem facing children. Among industrialized nations at the start of this decade, we had the most murders, the worst schools, the most abortions, the highest infant mortality, the most illegitimacy, the most one-parent families, the most children in jail, and the most children on Government aid.

A Washington-based social policy does not help children. It destroys them. It does not keep families together. It tears them apart. Instead of turning urban areas of America into shining cities on a hill, it has made them into war zones.

We have spent $7 trillion on welfare-related programs, and yet we have more poverty, more crime, more drug addiction, more broken families, and more immoral behavior. The Washington welfare system is broken and needs to be shut down. We need to start over.

But there are alternatives that are less expensive and work better than the current system.

Why does Habitat for Humanity work so much better than HUD? Because Habitat for Humanity first requires recipients to learn the responsibility of home ownership, then requires them to build a home for someone else, and only then do they build their own home. What does HUD require? Absolutely nothing. Do you see the difference? The private charity requires something of the individual.

The current Washington-based welfare system demands no responsibility, no work ethic, no learning, no commitment, and in the end, no pride. What we need are local solutions that involve local citizens working with local children.

Spending more on the current Washington welfare system will not help children. We have to rebuild parents, families, and communities, but you cannot do it from Washington. It has to be done at home, in school, and at church.

But it is also time we tackle the problem of American culture.

Think of what your own children will be watching on television tonight. Think of what they will see at the movies this weekend. It is wrong, it's harmful, and we cannot tolerate it any longer. It's time to challenge the entertainment industry to end its decadent slide. What we tolerate today would have been unacceptable 25 years ago.

And so the question for America is whether we move into the future, or remain in the past. Do we demand more from parents, or do we leave it to Washington to solve all our ills? Do we return control of education to the local community, or do we run education from a Federal department in Washington? Do we change the welfare system and restore hope and optimism to the next generation, or do we continue to accept the welfare world of dependency, illegitimacy and despair?

And most importantly, do we make a real commitment to improve the lives of children across the country, or do we use children as political pawns in the upcoming election?

THE RETRAINING AND OUTPLACEMENT OPPORTUNITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Maryland [Mrs. MORELLA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced the Retraining and Outplacement Opportunity Act, legislation to help retrain Federal employees who are about to be separated by detailing them to the private sector or other agencies.

In light of the streamlining goals of the administration and the additional budget cuts proposed by the Congress, Federal workers are facing difficult times and are bracing themselves for more to come. Retirement and attrition will not add up to the 272,000 jobs mandated to be cut by the Workforce Restructuring Act of 1994. Agencies have been downsizing, and Federal workers know more reductions in force [RIF's] are imminent. Federal workers and Federal agencies are anxious about their future and the ramifications of further work force reductions.

I am a firm believer that loyalty must be repaid with loyalty. The Federal work force has provided outstanding services to this Nation, and now the Federal work force needs Congress' help. We must take this responsibility seriously and devise strategies that will help our Federal employees through this difficult transition.

Our strategies must center around two fundamental concepts: creating incentives for retirement and retraining displaced workers for jobs in the private sector.

Reform must allow for greater partnerships with the private sector, including extending the administration's idea of nonreimbursable details to the private sector. The legislation I introduced today would focus on retraining employees for the private sector through nonreimbursable details.

This legislation would permit an agency to allow an individual who has received a specific notice of separation or a certificate of expected separation to be placed on a nonreimbursable detail in another agency or private company for a period of up to 90 days while the Government pays his or her salary. After the 90-day period, the private sector would begin paying the salary. Unlike other details, the goal of this initiative is to place employees in these agencies and companies.

This bill would provide an employee and his or her agency to determine whether a potential match exists. The employee would have the opportunity to demonstrate his or her skills and ability, and the agency or company could evaluate the employee's likelihood of success.

This retraining opportunity would first be established as a demonstration project at the Department of Energy's Germantown, MD, facility. The DOE has been particularly hard hit by downsizing over the last 3 years. Recent cuts in the Department of Defense authorization threaten to impose substantial cuts of highly trained personnel and create a chaotic situation resulting from a massive RIF. These cuts would also divert time from critical cleanup programs, and I am actively fighting against these cuts. Regardless of whether these cuts occur, DOE is a good place to establish this demonstration project.

Within the current law, the administrators of this program would outline the plan, define the population, establish the selection criteria of candidates, and determine the agencies and companies that would be involved in the program.

If the detail occurs in the private sector, the employee would be considered an employee of the Federal Government and would retain all rights and privileges of a Federal employee until separated officially. The date of separation could be extended in the event that the employee would be separated before the detail ended. During the detail, the employee's compensation would be based on the employee's rate of pay before the detail. Private companies involved would set up an escrow account to store funds that would have been used for compensation had the employee been hired initially. If the employee is retained by the private company and remains for 2 years, the company would be required to transfer the money spent during the detail to the Treasury.

If the individual's work is satisfactory as defined under the agreement made by all parties, the individual would be given an offer, or, in the event that an offer could not be extended, the money would be reimbursed to the Government. If the individual is not satisfactory and not hired, the agency or company would not be forced