

representing 29 States. In the Lincoln-Douglas debate there were 92 competitors representing 33 different colleges and universities.

Rebecca Makris, Derek Young, Jonathan Cross, and Tara McErien represented the University of Rhode Island. During the six preliminary rounds the team defeated teams from Northeastern University, Simmons College, Oakland University, Colorado State University, Cornell University, Ohio University, Morgan State, and Central Michigan University.

Overall the winning record of the team placed them at 10th in the Nation and Rebecca Makris compiled an outstanding record, earning her a place as the 4th best debater in the competition.

Kristen Maar, director of the debate, states: "This is quite an accomplishment for the team and the University. The debaters that qualified for this national tournament were the best in the country, and to have Rebecca place fourth overall is a true achievement."

Coincidentally, the debate topic this year and the debate topic next year reflect some of my own interests in the Senate—the topics "United Nations" and "Education Reform."

This year's topic was "Resolved: That participation in one or more of the six principal bodies of the United Nations should be significantly restricted by altering the U.N. charter and/or rules of procedure."

The debate season will begin again in September, with the resolution dealing with education reform. The exact wording of the resolution will be released on August 1, 1996.

I want to commend the URI team for its excellent job and all the participants this year for their focus on the United Nations and key issues affecting our global future. I look forward to learning more about next year's debate. ●

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. CRAIG addressed the Chair.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho is recognized.

THE WELL-BEING OF THE AMERICAN FAMILY

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, while our leaders are deciding the outcome of the evening and, more important, the outcome of a most important vote on the repeal of the gas tax, I guess I am surprised that the minority would not allow us to go forward to consider H.R. 2137.

We talk about the lack of security within the American family today, be it income security or job security. I know one thing that the American family is extremely concerned about, and that is the security and well-being of their own children. The House overwhelmingly has just voted on a law that will deal with the issue of sexual predators, Megan's law. I am amazed

that we could not move swiftly, as the House has moved, to deal with this issue. I hope that we can deal with it.

I hope that the minority will not block us from dealing with it in the future. Clearly, it is something that has to be dealt with. The American people need to know that when these kinds of problems arise, and there are glitches within the legal system that allow young people like Megan to be destroyed, their lives to be taken by people who clearly never should have been let out of incarceration, that this Congress will deal with it.

Mr. President, on Monday of this week, I was reading in USA Today an article by Tony Snowe, where he was talking about the concern and uneasiness of the American family, whether it is the issue of sexual predators, or the loss of a job, or working a multiple of jobs to get ahead, or whether it is the fact that in his article the American family was experiencing income stagnation.

I thought it was interesting when he pointed out that prior to President Clinton being elected, the average family was looking at about 31.3 percent of the gross national product of this country being taken away in taxes. Now, that is up 1½ to 2 percent in this administration. And one of the greatest bites out of that, which dragged down the ability of the family to use their income or to use their salary increases, was the gas tax increase.

In my State of Idaho, with 1.3 million people, it is a big bite. This gas tax hike that, for the first time in our Nation's history, goes to welfare programs instead of roads, bridges and transportation systems, costs \$32.1 million. And, boy, anybody who serves large rural States like mine knows that it strikes right at the heart of the productive sector of my State, whether it is the farmer, rancher, or the people who commute long distances, as nearly everybody in my State does, to the supermarket, to the business center, to visit, and to work. Those who are the working people of our society are the ones that are now paying even more.

I am amazed that our administration keeps talking about sticking it to the rich, soaking it to the rich. I am amazed they do not say, "And we soaked it to the worker, to the wage earner because we are sucking away from them at the gas pump an ever increasing amount of their income."

I also find it uniquely ironic that while taxes have ticked up aggressively in this administration from 30 percent of GDP to 31.3, that candidate Clinton in 1992 said he opposed increasing a gas tax, that he opposed increasing those kinds of taxes, he said they were regressive and unfair to working families, I am amazed that he somehow through what he may think is slight of hand or subterfuge created an omnibus tax bill and then, of course, says the way you pay them back is to force everybody to pay higher wages.

In my State of Idaho, that does not work because most of the people did

not get higher wages, and a minimum wage increase would affect few of these kinds of people who are our farmers and ranchers and small business people and commuters who travel hundreds of miles daily, not 20 or 30, not down the street in the commuter bus, not on the Metrorail, but 50 miles one way to work and 50 miles home at night. And when it starts costing \$20 or more, or \$25 to fill the gas tank a couple of times a week, that is one very large bite out of the pocketbook of the American family.

I am amazed that this administration would even begin to drag its feet on that kind of reality. And while this Congress should be holding oversight hearings on the ramp up in gas prices, we ought to be responding immediately in the areas that we can respond in, and that is in the area of bringing this tax down and doing it in a way that makes sense.

I respect highly the move that our majority leader has made. That is the kind of responsiveness and leadership that we ought to be hearing from this Congress, and now we are locked up again, blocked, if you will, by the minority because they want it their way when the American people are saying: Wait a moment. Your way was to increase our taxes. Your way was not to give us economic opportunity. Your way was to create through the 1993 tax act and the budget an economy that did not produce like it should, that could have produced billions of dollars more, that lost 1.2 million jobs it otherwise would have created if the tax act pushed by, endorsed by, recommended by President Clinton had not gone through.

Now, that is from 1993 to 1996 that I use that figure. Those are real figures just being brought out by the Heritage Foundation. Absent the tax increase in 1993, this economy would have created 1.2 million more jobs. Last month, we did not create a job. Something is wrong in an economy, a growth economy like ours when our President says that the economy is good and we create no jobs, zero jobs.

I am sorry; I do not figure it the way you figure it, Mr. President. I look at these kinds of figures and while they may be statistics, in my State of Idaho they are real jobs; they are food on the family table; they are a little more gas in the gas tank; they are a few more dollars in savings; it is the new house purchased or the clothes bought for the kids. That is what job creation and economic vitality is all about.

When I mentioned 1.2 million jobs lost, not created by the tax increase, when we carry that through next year, that will be an estimated 1.4 million jobs. That is 40,400 new business starts that did not start, that did not happen. Those are real figures in this country. Why? Because the risk of taking that opportunity just was not there, the money was not available because it was drained into the public sector to go out in ways that some of us would question

whether it was productive or not. That is a loss of \$138 billion in personal savings or maybe 1.3 million new cars and light truck sales. If you sell the cars, you have to produce the cars.

That is what the economy now tells us could have happened had we had not taxed it at the rate that Bill Clinton and the Democrats taxed it in the 1993 tax act. That is \$42.5 billion in durable goods orders that were not ordered. The list goes on and on.

We have always known that the way you get out of the financial troubles our Government is in is to expand the economic pie, create new jobs and from that take a reasonable tax to pay for the largesse of Government while at the same time trying to reduce the growth rate, trying to control it. You do not continue to tax or you get the kind of uneasiness that I think is now being experienced by the American people when they say: Well, yes, I still have my job but the reality is I did not get a pay increase. More importantly, I still have my job but I am paying higher taxes with no pay increase. So what I have is less buying power, less ability to provide for my children, and in this instance for working women in our society they took the greater hit once again in a slow, flat economy of the kind that was produced by this tax increase.

So let us move on. Let us repeal the gas tax. Let us return billions of dollars to the American consumers, to the American entrepreneur, to the American small business person, to the job creators and to the workers of our society. That is where productivity comes from. That is what will grow us out of our problems.

I urge this Senate, most importantly I urge my colleagues on the other side to work with us to solve this problem, not to block us, not to force us into stagnation and not to say to the American people once again we hear you but we just do not feel your pain.

I yield back the remainder of my time, Mr. President.

Mr. FORD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, I will not take but just a moment.

REPEAL OF THE GAS TAX

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, earlier, we were required and asked to object to a bill being brought up without being notified, and that was Megan's law. We did not know anything about it until it was offered, at least I did not. We did not have an opportunity. What we do around here is hotline to see if any Senators have any objection or if they have any amendments. And so we knew that there were amendments and we would like to improve the bill. And so therefore we were required to object.

I do not think there was any motive there to stop the law. It will pass. We just had some Senators I think who wanted an opportunity to amend. And

so I think that is where we are on the debate here. We talk about the tax, 4.3 cents. You would think it was going to save the world. But the minute we take it off and we do not assure that the consumer will receive it, the oil companies increase it a nickel.

I bought gasoline last night, 2 cents higher today. We did not take the tax off and have not changed anything. We put the tax on 3 years ago, gasoline went down. They were telling us put on more tax; maybe it will be cheaper. Mr. President, 3.8 million barrels of gasoline is what is being used today, about 8.4 is the maximum amount of gasoline that can be produced in this country today. That is running it at full speed. And we have not had a new refinery in over 20 years.

So what you are going to find, taking the speed limit off, taking the speed limit off has helped. Four of every 10 vehicles purchased get only 14 miles to the gallon. And so regardless of what we do here, we lose.

Now, if we do not want to reduce the deficit, you have to offset it from something else. How are you going to offset it? They threw out slurringly on Sunday they were going to take it out of education—you know, I hate Government anyhow. That was the statement. Well, they had to retract that the next day. And how are you going to offset it?

So what we would like to do, or what I would like to do is to find out how you could assure that the consumer gets 4.3 cents because you are going to cut it someplace else. Once you reduce the 4.3 cents and not assure the consumer receive the 4.3, you are going to reduce the budget some place else because you have to have an offset.

So the consumer probably, with the approach here, is going to lose twice. One, they will not see the 4.3 cents, and you are going to cut the budget someplace else. So they get hit twice.

So I think we ought to be sure that when we reduce the gasoline tax—and I think we are going to be able to vote for that—but let us be sure that the consumer receives it and that the big oil companies do not have a windfall, because the 4.3 cents now is reducing the deficit. It has had 4 consecutive years in reduction of the deficit. We have about 8.5 million new jobs in a little over 3 years. Oh, I can hear the crocodile tears that, "We could do better if you would listen to us." I remember the 1990 tax.

If we are not reducing the deficit, how in the world are you going to get to a balanced budget? If the deficit went down, it was back when President Clinton took office—\$300 billion. If it was still there, and suppose President Clinton had not won and it was still there, under past procedures, under past administrations, it would go up \$300 billion a year. That was not under ours. You say, "Well, that is a Democratic Congress, and for 6 years you had it right here—control." I tell you, the President had the same kind of wet

pen that this President has, the same kind of wet pen on the same desk in the same room. All they have to do is speak to him to get 34. That is all he needs. But how many vetoes did we get?—caved in. He said it was not going to increase taxes, and did. All he had to do is put the pen to it. You fussed at the President for vetoing. Look at the mess we were in when you would not veto. So you can brag and plead and fuss.

I would like, if we could, to try to find some way to get this Senate back in order, to get it back on track, to try to do something that will help people and get a balanced budget up. We argue over these things that are sound bites. It is \$389 a page to have your speech put in the RECORD, and we will have 10 some mornings, and they will all say the same thing and cost the taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars; \$389 a page. That is when it is electronically. Otherwise, it is over \$400. Every time you make a speech here—and I do not make very many—every time you talk, the page in that RECORD is \$389. So I just want you to know that every time we hear 10 speeches, it costs tens of thousands of dollars. It has been hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars in speeches anti the President, and his popularity is better today than it has been any time. So keep knocking. I think you ought to keep knocking—sour grapes, you know.

I think one thing that we ought to do to get it on the right track is that they ought to run the race for the Presidency out in the field and not every little item that comes up here saying to the Democrats, you cannot vote, you cannot offer an amendment, you cannot vote on one of your amendments.

So we are going to have to start getting this place in a position where it is respected.

Are we limited to 5? I did not know that. I apologize to the Chair. I did not know we were limited to 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, there is an agreement on 5 minutes.

Mr. FORD. If I reached the 5 minutes, I did not want to charge the taxpayers any more than \$389. I hope I did not use up a page of the RECORD.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BENNETT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I will abide by the admonition of the senior Senator from Kentucky and make sure that I fall below the \$389 limit.

Mr. FORD. I just wanted you to know how much it costs per page.

THE DEFICIT

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I want to touch on a few issues quickly, some which the Senator from Kentucky referred to and some that we are talking about generally.

First, on the deficit being close to \$300 billion in 1992; it is half that now.