

many allegations of criminal wrongdoing will the executive branch of this Government respond to with, "I don't know"? Well, maybe this Congress should instruct the Centers for Disease Control to investigate the rampant selective loss of memory in this administration.

However, Mr. Speaker, I am here to say enough is enough. American people deserve the truth. I urge Attorney General Reno to appoint an independent counsel to investigate the alleged wrongdoings of Secretary Bruce Babitt.

VOTE AGAINST FAST TRACK

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against giving the President fast track authority in order to ensure that new trade agreements advance the interests of U.S. workers as well as the health and safety of all Americans.

My opposition to fast track is based on our experience with NAFTA, which I believe has been a dismal failure. In 3 years since NAFTA was implemented, the U.S. trade deficit with Mexico has skyrocketed, leading to the loss of hundreds of thousands of U.S. jobs. Environmental problems along the border with Mexico have gotten worse. Drug trafficking has increased. The public health in the United States has been threatened by the importation of tainted food.

The President made all kinds of promises with NAFTA a few years ago and is making more promises now. But these promises in the form of NAFTA side agreements on the environment and labor have not been kept. I urge my colleagues to vote against fast track. Do not be led astray by false promises again.

MIDDLE-CLASS TAXPAYERS NEED IRA EXPANSION

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

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I have spoken on a number of previous occasions on the need to expand IRA accounts. Today I would like to cite the need for middle-class parents to save for college education as an important reason for further IRA expansion.

Earlier this year, I introduced a bill to expand IRA income caps and deductions to permit penalty-free withdrawals for a number of purposes, including college education. And I am very pleased that the tax bill we passed last summer lifted some of the income caps to benefit more middle-income families.

Although good progress has been made in the expansion of IRA eligibility for college expenses, much more is needed. The main problem is that

IRA deduction ceilings remain, and have remained so for some decades, at \$2,000. It is inadequate. The solution is to increase IRA deduction. My legislation would increase it \$500 annually for 10 years, ending up with a \$7,000 cap. Perhaps a more aggressive schedule could even be kept and it would be possible if current budget trends do result in a budget surplus.

GLOBAL CORPORATE TRADE THREATENS NATIONAL SOV- EREIGNTY

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, Congress is being asked to give away our national sovereignty in the name of global corporate trade. Fast track legislation furthers the role of the World Trade Organization, an intertribunal of unelected, unaccountable trade experts with the authority to overrule the U.S. Congress, to overrule our national, State, and local laws. The WTO can overrule laws which include job creation legislation, consumer health and safety protections, and environmental protections.

The fast track vote is a vote on the preservation of our national sovereignty, our ability to determine our own destiny. Fast track is an assault on our American political traditions and foundations. It establishes the right of the citizenry to have democratically elected officials be able to make the laws here and the standards we live by.

Fast track gives the World Trade Organization the right to overrule this Congress. We begin these sessions of Congress with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag and to the country for which it stands. And if we are to remain one Nation, under God, indivisible, we must stand for liberty and justice and we must reject fast track.

UNITED STATES IS EXPORTING JOBS

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, while we are playing around with fast track, our neighbors to the north are eating our economic lunch and stealing our job growth. Let me give my colleagues a couple quotes, first from the Washington Post. "Because of a recent free-trade pact between Canada and Chile that lowered tariffs between the two countries, Caterpillar is beginning to lose sales in Chile to a small Canadian competitor."

"If Caterpillar finds that it is seriously disadvantaged in Latin America by the absence of free-trade agreements, the company would consider shifting production out of the United States and into the region, or to places such as Canada or Mexico that already

have duty-free arrangements with much of Latin America."

Some other U.S. companies are investigating whether their Canadian subsidiaries and plants should now handle their business with Chile in order to profit from tariff breaks.

Ford Motor Co. says it is beginning to examine the feasibility of shipping its popular F-series pickup trucks to Chile from Canada. More than 50 Canadian-Chilean joint ventures are already operating, and some of those are already shipping to other Latin American countries.

Mr. Speaker, as the AFL-CIO sticks its head in the sand, we are exporting jobs.

FAST TRACK SHIPS JOBS OVERSEAS

(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, I am opposed to fast track. When American workers are serving Mexican tomatoes and Canadian beef at Burger King and Bob Evans, something is very wrong. The American workers are not dumb. They are fed up, they are sick and tired of unemployment compensation, sick and tired of retraining, sick and tired of promises. They are sick and tired of politics. They are busted, disgusted, and cannot be trusted to vote for cerebral politicians who continue to ship their jobs overseas.

Now, as far as I am concerned, I listened to all this "bridge to the 21st century" business. I say the bridge to the 21st century is turning into another bridge over the River Kwai. Beam me up. Bridge this, Mr. President.

□ 1245

SUPPORT H.R. 1129, MICROCREDIT FOR SELF-RELIANCE ACT

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I urge the House today to support H.R. 1129, the Microcredit for Self-Reliance Act which is up on suspension today. Microcredit is one of the universally recognized U.S. programs that has produced incredibly significant and positive results. This bill introduced by the gentleman from New York [Mr. HOUGHTON] and the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HALL] will continue the great work that has been done using this economic assistance plan.

Microcredit provides small loans to people who want to start a business but would not be able to secure normal financing. It has worked well in Africa where it has been successfully used in many countries. It is especially effective in promoting women's rights and family development. I would also like

to recognize our own U.S. microcredit programs initiated by groups like Results of Miami, which has helped so many young women start their own businesses.

Minorities in the United States benefit greatly from microcredit programs. In my hometown of Miami, Jamaican-Americans have started Caribbean food product stores, Haitians have opened acrylic nail shops which are so popular, Cuban-Americans have set up mom and pop hardware stores. It has been a success in Miami. It can succeed in your town, and we can export it across the oceans.

HANDSHAKES DEFEAT CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM 1-0

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

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Speaker, in June of 1995 in a very famous handshake, the President and the Speaker of this House shook hands and committed themselves to campaign finance reform. I can speak since then on the commitment of our President to campaign finance reform. I know he would support that bill because in Arkansas he took it to the streets to get signatures on campaign finance reform for Arkansas and was successful.

What has happened since then? Nothing. We have had no bills come to the floor of this House for a vote. Here we are halfway through the session at the end of the year, we are going to adjourn probably tomorrow and what is the final score, Mr. Speaker? The final score is handshakes 1, campaign finance reform nothing. That is a poor record for this Congress. It is a poor record for the Republican leadership of this Congress. Next year we need to do better.

IRS REFORM

(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, polls have shown that the American people no longer trust their government to do, quote-unquote, the right thing most of the time. In fact, just over the last 3 decades this country has changed so dramatically in that regard. Under President John F. Kennedy, approximately 7 out of 10 Americans trusted their government. Now only 1 out of 10 Americans do. Only 1 out of 10 Americans trust their government to any degree of satisfaction. This is deeply disturbing. I think restoring trust in government must be a top priority for this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the corruption, the politicization and the general abuse of the IRS plays a major role in this change of attitude on the part of the American citizens. When a government agency has the power to bully citizens, to operate with vir-

tually no accountability and to make a mockery of our constitutional right to due process, it is no wonder that the citizens have grown to distrust their own government. I believe that if IRS reform is not passed in this Congress, many Americans will consider the 105th Congress to be an overall failure.

FAST TRACK

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

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, every Member of this House should oppose fast track because of labor standards, environmental standards and human rights. But there is another very valid reason, that of food safety and pesticide use in foreign countries on food coming into this country.

Since the last fast track legislation, NAFTA, it limited our right to make border inspections of imported food. So what has happened? Food imports are up, inspections are down. What will happen with this new fast track deal is more countries will be shipping their food into this country. We have not addressed the infrastructure to provide a safety net to protect American citizens from food coming into this country. That is why in 1997 we have had 3 major outbreaks of disease in this country from imported food.

What do they tell you when you go to foreign countries, Latin America and South America? Do not eat the food, do not drink this, do this, get a hepatitis shot. So what are we going to do? Have more food come into this country and less inspections. Over 3.3 million trucks every day cross our borders into this country, many of them carrying food products. That is 9,000 trucks per day. One percent is inspected. Let us not risk our families' health. Vote no on fast track.

TAXES, LIBERALS AND BUREAUCRATS

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

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Clinton's recent remarks that he thinks taxpayers who are in favor of tax cuts are selfish is a truly stunning remark to me. It is stunning to think that that is how the President and his liberal allies think about those who think that Government can get by on a little bit less so that families can have a little bit more. But one point that is often missed about the tax dollars that are sent to Washington, DC, is the much more fundamental point of who gets to spend your dollars. The liberal elite is uncomfortable with the idea that you should get to decide what to do with your money. They think that the politicians who claim to adhere to a higher moral standard have a higher claim on your money and that they can use your money in better ways than

you can and more fairly and more in line with the liberal vision of the elite. That is why they have a government knows best attitude and, incredibly, a boundless faith in the Federal bureaucrats in Washington to do the right thing.

Do the right thing? Mr. Speaker, I do not think so.

FAST TRACK

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we will vote on fast track, expanding the North American Free Trade Agreement to dozens of other countries. NAFTA cost tens of thousands of American jobs. So does fast track. NAFTA threatens the safety of our food supply. So does fast track. NAFTA weakens our environmental laws. So does fast track.

To get fast track through Congress, Speaker GINGRICH and President Clinton are wheeling and dealing like we have never seen before: deals on the census, on family planning, on health care and campaign contributions. Let us reject the wheeling and dealing by Speaker GINGRICH and President Clinton. Vote no on fast track.

IRS REFORM

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

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, for years citizens have been complaining about the IRS. Honest citizens faced with an audit, a problem, confusing changes in the Tax Code and bewildering instructions about their tax return have cried out for reform to their representatives in Washington, radio talk show hosts and newspapers across the country. But nothing seems to change. To add insult to injury, the IRS responds to all these complaints by defending its actions, assuring citizens everywhere that the IRS is improving, the IRS is reforming itself and honest taxpayers have nothing to fear from an audit. If this is not the perfect example of an arrogant bureaucracy that is out of touch, I would like to see a better one. Arrogant, out of touch and unaccountable, these are the hallmarks of a Government that abuses its power, a Government which makes ordinary citizens feel powerless and fearful.

Mr. Speaker, the IRS must change big time, not cosmetic changes that mean business as usual but a top-to-bottom overhaul that does not put honest taxpayers in the same boat as tax cheats. The IRS needs to give taxpayers the respect they deserve.

FAST TRACK

(Mr. STRICKLAND asked and was given permission to address the House