

discriminated against, that you be disadvantaged. If in fact you had those requirements, those prerequisites, then Charlie Hayes was indeed your champion and your leader.

Charlie Hayes served gallantly in this Congress. He was the first trade union leader to become a Member of Congress. He served gallantly on behalf of the people who reside in the First Congressional District. He was indeed a man whose every step was on behalf of the poor and the downtrodden, whose every act as a Member of this body, whose every act as a member of the trade union leadership movement, whose every act as an adult individual, his every act was characterized by his commitment to humanity, to the upliftment of humanity.

Mr. Speaker, I am very, very saddened as I stand before this body to deliver these few words of announcement that my friend, your friend, your colleague, Charlie Hayes, has passed on.

Mr. Speaker, as I sit back and I reflect for a moment on what Charlie is doing now in the assembly of God, in the heaven, I too know that he is looking here among us, and he is seeing and observing some of the things that are occurring here. I know that he is particularly saddened by that. I can just vividly imagine hearing his voice from the heaven calling down upon this body, addressing us all and saying, "Friends, colleagues, regular order."

SUPPORTING COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN LABELING LEGISLATION ON IMPORTED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Ms. KAPTUR] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, at a later point I will have something to say about our distinguished colleague, Mr. Hayes of Illinois, with whom I had the great pleasure of serving for many years.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to inquire of families in America that if they this past week bought strawberries in the grocery store and then one of their children became ill from eating those berries, would they be able to find out, as a U.S. consumer, where those berries had been produced and who had processed them? The answer is no, they would not be able to find that information out, when in fact consumers in our country have a right to know where their food is coming from.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a country-of-origin labeling bill on imported fresh fruits and vegetables. I also rise in support of labeling for frozen fruits and vegetables. Our distinguished colleague, the gentleman from California, Mr. SONNY BONO, has introduced the Imported Produce Labeling Act of 1997. I am pleased to join him as an original sponsor on that bill, to require all fresh fruits and vegetables to be clearly identified as to their country

of origin. With all the pesticides used in other places and the difficulties with border inspection, this is the least we can do for our people.

Also, we have written this week to the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Rubin. The Treasury Department has been dragging its feet for well over a year on the labeling of imported frozen items, which of course these particular strawberries, on which hundreds of our people have become ill, were imported berries that were processed and frozen. There is absolutely no reason that as we approach the year 2000 we cannot take better care of the American people.

A recent poll showed that nearly 70 percent of our people want to know and favor country-of-origin labeling for both fresh and frozen commodities.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. SMITH] for giving me the opportunity to place this on the Record.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of country of origin labeling on imported fruits and vegetables—both frozen and fresh.

Nearly every consumer product has origin labeling except the produce we eat.

Consumers have a right to know where their food is coming from.

The use of pesticides in other countries and border inspection practices raise even more questions in the minds of consumers about the quality and health risks of imported fruits and vegetables.

I am pleased to be a sponsor of the Imported Produce Labeling Act introduced by our colleague from across the aisle Representative SONNY BONO. This bill strengthens existing law to require all fresh fruits and vegetables to be clearly identified as to their country of origin.

This bill simply closes existing loopholes that allow fresh fruits and vegetables to be exempt from country of origin labeling requirements, by requiring that the products themselves—or the bins, display cases or containers holding the commodity—be labeled at the retail level with their country of origin.

It is critical that we clearly define the country of origin on all fruits and vegetables coming in this country so that we can effectively trace back bad lots.

The press has been full of reports about frozen strawberries with misleading country of origin information which were associated with an outbreak of hepatitis among school children participating in the National School Lunch Program. Commodities purchased for the lunch and breakfast programs are required by statute to be grown in America, unless no domestic product is available. Based on news reports, it appears that the processor may have falsified documentation to make Mexican strawberries appear to be American produce. As a result of this deception, thousands of children are threatened with disease.

On April 3, I wrote the Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin to urge him to proceed with the enactment of a final Customs Service Regulation which would clarify the requirements for country of origin labeling for frozen imported produce.

Last July, Customs published a proposed regulation clarifying that frozen imported

produce be clearly labeled as to country of origin on the front panel of packages, in permanent ink. In its Federal Register notice regarding the proposal, Customs declared that the clarification in policy was necessary because current standards allow variations in labeling which could create confusion or be misleading.

Current law requires imported frozen produce to be clearly labeled as to country of origin. But it appears to be a common occurrence for frozen produce that is brought into the United States to be repackaged without the required labeling. In other instances in which packages are labeled, the size of type, or poor quality of ink, make it impossible for consumers or Customs inspectors to verify compliance with the law. Customs has warned that their responsibility in verifying that all packages sold in this country comply with the law is made extremely difficult in the absence of clear standards for where the country of origin label is to be displayed.

Despite the importance of this issue and the right of all Americans to be informed about where the produce they buy for their families is from, Customs' proposed regulation received little public attention and few public comments during the comment period last summer. In fact, only about 50 individual comments were received: the majority of these were from food growers and processors in other countries.

However, American consumers and American food growers and processors appear to feel strongly about this issue. In fact, a recent national poll conducted after the comment period closed found that nearly 70 percent of American consumers would favor a Government regulation requiring country of origin labeling, and 73 percent stated that they would most likely notice the label if it appeared on the front panel of package. Perhaps most importantly, the survey found that 83 percent of consumers had never noticed a country of origin label on a package of frozen vegetables. These facts would seem to make the case for enactment of the Customs proposal crystal clear.

The recent news reports of thousands of American school children put at risk of hepatitis from frozen strawberries, imported from Mexico but misidentified as being product of the United States, serves as a dramatic reminder of how important it is for all American consumers to know where the food they eat comes from. The Customs Service must enact country of origin labeling on frozen fruits and vegetables immediately.

□ 1615

SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JENKINS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. SMITH] is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, for everybody's information, I will be taking slightly less than 20 minutes for this presentation. I think this is the time of year when every American, Mr. Speaker, should be looking at their income tax returns and seeing how much they pay in taxes. They should be looking at their payroll check, if

they have payroll deductions, to see how much is deducted from that check for taxes for Government.

Right now if you are an average working American, Government taxes 41 cents out of every dollar you make. Government, in their thinking that they can make decisions of how to spend the money you earn better than you can, have simply decided to keep increasing the size of Government, doing more things, making more promises.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to talk for a few minutes today on one of those promises, which is Social Security. Now, politicians have promised more than they can deliver on Social Security. The official estimate of the Social Security Administration is that Social Security is going bankrupt. This first chart that I have shows that there is going to be a slight surplus of money coming into Social Security until approximately 2011. After that, the taxes coming in that pay for the benefits going out are going to not be enough to adequately supply the existing benefit grant level. So the red part of this graph shows how much deficits are going to increase if we are going to keep our commitment under the existing Social Security benefit plan.

We have a serious problem in Social Security. It was decided in 1935 to have, if you will, a Ponzi game, a pay-as-you-go system where existing workers pay in their taxes and those taxes are immediately paid out to existing retirees, a pay-as-you-go program. That is the way it is today. That is the way it has always been since it was devised in 1935. Not a very good way when we consider the fact that we have a declining number of people working to pay in those taxes and we have an increased number of retirees, because they are living longer, for one thing, to receive those benefits.

Mr. Speaker, this chart shows that in 1950 there were 17 people working paying in the Social Security tax for every 1 retiree. Today there are three people working paying in their Social Security tax of 12.4 percent to supply each retiree that is on Social Security. By 2029, the estimate is that there will be only two people working to pay in those taxes. Of course what we have done is simply increased the taxes that the fewer and fewer number of workers pay in, not fair to the young people of today.

We need to start having something like generational accounting, how much are we taking away from our young people in terms of the taxes, in terms of the borrowing that we are doing today that we are, in effect, using the money they have not even earned yet because somehow we have decided our problems today are important enough that we are going to take the money that they have not even earned yet and make them pay back the debt that we are now imposing on them.

Mr. Speaker, this chart shows what is happening in terms of the cost of So-

cial Security. It is hard to conceive \$350 billion. So what I did is I broke this down to how much does Social Security cost per minute. This year Social Security is costing \$700,000 a minute. Last year it cost \$660,000 a minute. But look what is going to happen by the year 2030. It is going to cost \$5,700,000 per minute. That is because more people are living longer, plus we have got the baby boomers that are going to start retiring in the year 2011, 2012, 2013.

The baby boomers of course was the huge increase in the birthrate that happened after World War II. Everybody thought the economy is great, we are coming out of this war as national heroes, we are going to have children because we can take care of them.

This shows the chart, the graph of the life expectancy of senior citizens. When Social Security started in 1935, the average age of death was 61 years old. The retirement age was 65. Of course what that means is most Americans never lived long enough to earn any of the Social Security benefits, so it was easy to balance the system in those days when most people were dying off before they even became eligible for Social Security. The estimates are now that, when you are born, on the average you are going to live to be 74 years old. But if you reach 65, the current age for total full eligibility for Social Security benefits, if you reach the age 65, now on the average you will continue living until age 84.

Some estimates are as high as, by the year 2030, one-third of the population will be living to be 100 years old. Of course what that does is mean more Social Security recipients depending on those workers, if we continue the existing system, to pay in their taxes, to pay for the existing benefits.

Here are just two charts. It shows between now and the year 2040 seniors will increase at 108 percent, coming to 71 million, where workers will increase only 23 percent of the population. That means fewer workers like we showed on the chart supporting with their taxes for more and more retirees.

So the question is, should we yet again increase taxes on those workers? This chart shows how we have increased taxes over the years. So every time there was a little money needed in Social Security, we increased the tax on workers. Of course when it started out, it started out at 2 percent on the first \$3,500 of earnings. Now it is 12.4 percent on the first \$62,000 of earnings. And that base of \$62,000 is automatically indexed to go up every year.

Listen to this. Mr. Speaker, we have increased taxes on workers 36 times since 1971, more often than just once a year. We cannot increase that tax on workers anymore. It is not fair. Taxes are already getting too high. What this next chart shows, if the next chart is in order, and it is not quite in order, is how long it took to get everything back that you and your employer paid in Social Security taxes.

If you happened to retire back here in 1940, of course, it only took 2 months to get everything back you put in. Taxes were very low and the program was just starting. If you retired in 1960, it took 2 years to get back every tax dollar that you put in, that your employer put in, plus compounded interest. By 1980, it took 4 years after retirement. Look at 2 years ago. In 1995, you have to live 16 years after you retire to get the money back that you and your employer put in. Not a very good investment.

Some people say, look, if you go to a private investment, it is risky. Nothing is more risky than the existing system because you are going to be very, very lucky if you get back what you put into the system in taxes.

In 2005, which is 8 years from now, you are going to have to live 23 years after retirement. By 2015, you will have to live 26 years after retirement to get back just what you and your employer put in in taxes.

Today 78 percent of American workers pay more in the Social Security tax, the 12.4 percent Social Security tax, than they pay in the income tax. That tax is high enough.

Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a little time with this last chart. This last chart is a pie representing how the Federal Government spends its money. Last year we spent a little over \$1.5 trillion. Look at the large piece of this pie, how much Social Security took out of the total spending of Federal Government, 22 percent.

If we go around, we are looking at Medicare, Medicare is an amendment to the Social Security Act that was amended in 1965 to say, let us expand the Social Security Program to cover health care for senior citizens. Medicare is growing at almost the rate of 10 percent a year, and pretty soon Medicare is going to be a larger, huger problem than Social Security.

We have got to somehow take our heads out of the sand and start dealing with some of these tough issues. I know for politicians it is easy to put those decisions off. Maybe you say, look, I am only going to be in office another 2 years or 4 years, let the people after me deal with these tough issues. They are tough. How are we going to solve the problem?

I want to point out that interest on the public debt of the \$5.2 trillion that we have overspent, annually we overspend, and that is called the deficit. You add all those deficits up and now it comes to \$5.2 trillion. It takes 15 percent of the total budget just to pay the interest on that debt nobody down here in Washington is thinking about anyway or any possibility of paying that debt back. We are leaving it up to the young people to say, somehow you solve this problem later on.

We have got to quit this kind of Ponzi game like we have in Social Security. We have got to start having generational accounting. We have got to have the kind of decisions in Washington that do not take the chances

away from our kids and our grandkids to have the same kind of opportunity, to have the same kind of standard of living that we have had.

I have introduced a Social Security bill. It makes a lot of modest changes. It does not increase the tax. It does not affect existing retirees. In fact, it does not affect anybody over 57 years old. But it gradually slows down the increase in benefits for the higher income recipients. It adds one more year to the time that you would be eligible for Social Security benefits.

It makes a couple other small changes. I say, and it has been scored to keep Social Security solvent forever; I say, let us run this proposal up the flag pole. Let us start looking at ways we can improve it, but let us not any longer pretend that the problems, that the problem does not exist. I say, if we have any regard for our kids, we are going to do two things: We are going to give them a good education and a good opportunity. We cannot give them a good opportunity if we continue to go deeper and deeper in debt and expect them to pay for it. We cannot give them the opportunity if we continue to increase taxes, thinking that Government can spend a worker's money better than they can.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ON TAXES

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

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I want to say some last words on taxes.

In 1947, the Federal budget represented 12 percent of the total economy in the United States. In other words, the Federal budget was 12 percent of GDP. We have expanded that. As politicians find that they are more likely to get elected and reelected if they make a bunch of promises to people, we have had too many promises, because what it takes to keep those promises is increasing taxes and increasing borrowing.

Though young people today should be up in arms about what Congress is doing to their future, everybody should be looking at what they are paying in taxes at the local, State and national level.

Look at payroll deductions. If we did not have automatic deductions on paychecks, the people of America would not stand for the kind of taxes they are paying to let somebody else decide how to spend their money when they could make a much better decision to help their family.

□ 1630

H.R. 864, THE MARIAN ANDERSON CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 7, 1997, the gentleman from California [Mr. BROWN] is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman in the well, Mr. SMITH of Michigan, for his eloquence in maintaining the floor for such a period of time to protect me and my interest in getting here.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include therein extraneous material on the subject of my special order this afternoon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JENKINS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the centennial of the birth of Marian Anderson, one of the world's greatest singers, a champion for civil rights, and a leader in the advancement of global peace.

One hundred years ago, on February 27, 1897, Marian Anderson was born to a poor family in Philadelphia, PA. She died at the age of 96, on April 8, 1993. She was a master of repertoire across operatic recital and American traditional genres.

When one of her music teachers first heard her sing, the richness of her talent moved him to tears. One of the greatest conductors of opera and symphonic music who ever lived, Arturo Toscanini of Italy, claimed Marian Anderson had a voice that came along only once in a hundred years. But because of her race, her prospects as a concert singer in the United States seemed limited.

However, the magnitude of her talent eventually won her broad recognition all over the world. She became the first black singer to perform at the Metropolitan Opera in 1955. By the time she retired in the mid 1960s, Marian Anderson was recognized as a national treasure.

No one could have foreseen such a destiny for this girl born of a poor family in Philadelphia. Her father, an ice and coal salesman, died when she was a child. When her mother could not find a job as a teacher, Marian Anderson became a cleaning lady. She scrubbed people's steps to earn enough money to buy a violin. There was no money for piano lessons, so she and her sisters taught themselves to play piano by reading about how to do it.

Marian Anderson received her first musical training in the choirs at the Union Baptist Church in Philadelphia. The members of her church raised the money she needed to study with good music teachers. By saving money and getting a scholarship, she was able to study in Europe.

A century after her birth, Marian Anderson remains a model for all citizens of the world and one of the greatest

treasures of our country. However, we should not forget that she had to fight hard to win her place in history. Although she won a first prize in a voice contest in New York in 1925 and made an appearance that year with the New York Philharmonic, she was still unable to find operatic engagements and within a few years her career came to a standstill.

It was only after she toured Europe to great acclaim in the early 1930's that the American public began to pay attention to her. Even after her artistry was recognized, in her home country she faced racial prejudice on a more mundane level. Well into her career, she was turned away at restaurants and hotels. America's opera houses continued to remain closed to her for a long time.

Yes, it was Marian Anderson who first broke the color barrier for Western classical musicians of African descent. There had, of course, been distinguished black musical artists before her, but it was she who accomplished what no one else had. With the gifts of her talent and determination, she established beyond dispute that African-American musical performers could be more than adequate to the task of excelling in the most demanding concert and operatic venues.

Marian Anderson not only played a vital role in the acceptance of African-American musicians in the classical music world but also made a valuable contribution to the advancement of the arts, the status of women, civil rights, and global peace.

In 1939, the Daughters of the American Revolution, DAR, refused to allow Marian Anderson to sing at Constitution Hall because of her race. As a result of the ensuing public outcry, Eleanor Roosevelt resigned from the DAR and helped to arrange a concert at the Lincoln Memorial that drew an audience of 75,000, an audience far larger than Constitution Hall could ever have accommodated.

Mr. Speaker, I have brought this Special Order to the House floor this afternoon because 58 years ago today, on Easter Sunday, April 9, 1939, Marian Anderson gave that concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. No other occasion could be best suited for us to pay a tribute to the centennial of the birth of this great American.

In my opinion, the one event for which Marian Anderson is most remembered in the public mind is her 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial, which became a landmark in the fight for civil rights. At 5 o'clock in the afternoon on that day, a crowd of 75,000 people assembled at the feet of the Great Emancipator while radio microphones waited to carry her voice to millions across the land. As the sun suddenly broke through clouds that shadowed the scene all day, Marian Anderson began singing "America the Beautiful."

The concert has been likened in impact to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s