

1950. Now, over 40 percent of the family's income goes for local, State, and Federal taxes. And, for what? Intrusive regulation on small business, tobacco subsidies, snooping into tax records by Internal Revenue Service agents, duplication in the Federal bureaucracy, and an ever increasing agency bureaucracy that hinders rather than helps our local schools teach our kids.

According to a 1994 study by the National Taxpayer Union Foundation, the coming explosion in Federal entitlement spending could cause after-tax incomes to fall by as much as 59 percent over the next 45 years. We cannot stand a 59-percent increase.

The study shows that funding benefits and other Government services will require taxes of between 57 to 69 percent of our income. Mr. Speaker, the American family simply cannot survive and pay those kinds of taxes. At 40 percent we are close to the breaking point.

For 124 years the U.S. Constitution protected the American people against the expansion of the Federal Government and against unlimited taxes. It prohibited the income tax, and constitutional scholars stressed that Congress had only 18 powers that were granted specifically in the Constitution.

Ratification of the 16th amendment in 1913 authorized an income tax with no limitation. The result: With constitutional limits on taxes stripped away, Federal tax collections have climbed more than 175,000 percent since 1913. Now, let us go over that again. My colleagues heard me right. It has increased 175,000 percent since 1913.

It is time we restored constitutional limits on taxation. The tax limitation amendment is in the spirit of the Bill of Rights, which limits Government to preserving individual freedom. We must protect the people from excessive taxes.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, it is just too easy to increase taxes on the American people. During the past 30 years, of 16 votes to increase taxes, only 8 would have passed if the two-thirds supermajority requirement had been in place. In the 1980's and 1990's, more than \$660 billion in new taxes was passed by the slimmest of majorities. That is \$660 billion that taxpayers would not have had to pay if the tax limitation amendment had been in effect.

President Clinton's 1993 tax increase, the largest in our Nation's history, at \$275 billion in one shot, passed by only one vote in the House. That hammered small businesses, millions of people on Social Security and anyone who drives a car.

Opponents say that passage of the Tax Limitation Amendment would be fiscal disaster for our country. The facts just do not support that argument. Already 28 States have some form of limitation on taxes or government spending, and 13 of those States require supermajorities to increase

taxes, including my own home State of Washington.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the tax limitation amendment will help check runaway Federal spending because it is tougher to pass taxes. Congress and the President will need to make the tough choices necessary to slow the growth of the bloated Federal bureaucracy. Under our current system it is not easy to cut spending. Every line item expenditure has a constituency or interest group fighting to keep their pet program in place.

History has shown us that tax increases do not reduce the deficit, they make it worse by fueling more Federal spending. Example: In 1982, Congress passed \$217 billion in higher taxes with the promise they would match every dollar in new taxes with \$2 in spending cuts. In fact, spending skyrocketed and the national debt went through the roof.

Mr. Speaker, we must pass the tax limitation amendment today.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the House stands in recess until 12 noon.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 51 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 12 noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE) at 12 noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

Let us pray. We know, O God, that we need the power of the spirit to walk the paths of life and to do the work of justice. And so we ask Your guidance as we seek that way that honors our own creation and shows us the way of service to other people. Grant us strength for the task, wisdom for our minds, love for our hearts, and enthusiasm for our spirits that we will be the people You would have us be. Bless us this day and every day, we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. DEFAZIO] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DEFAZIO led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WORKING AMERICANS WAGE RESTORATION ACT

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

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, today taxpayers throughout America will do their civic duty by paying their Federal income taxes. The typical American family will pay more in all taxes than it spends on food, clothing and shelter combined.

Our colleague in the Senate, Senator JOHN ASHCROFT, and I believe this is too much, that working Americans know better how to spend their money than the Government does. So I am pleased today, with Senator ASHCROFT in the Senate, to introduce the Working Americans Wage Restoration Act.

This bill will allow American workers to deduct their share of Federal payroll taxes. These payroll taxes are inherently unfair because workers are taxed twice in the same income. They are taxed once as a portion of gross income for Federal income purposes and for a second time for the contribution to the Social Security trust fund.

By allowing workers to deduct on their income taxes their share of Social Security contributions, the Working Americans Wage Restoration Act will eliminate this double taxation and allow workers to keep more of the money they earn.

So I urge my colleagues to join with us in this bill in giving fair tax relief to the American workers.

LINE ITEM VETO ACT HELD UNCONSTITUTIONAL BY FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT

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

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, I am joining with three other colleagues in introducing a bill to give the President and Congress new, effective and, very importantly, constitutional powers to weed out wasteful Government spending.

As my colleagues know, the Federal District Court last week held unconstitutional, as it should have, the Line Item Veto Act that was passed by Congress last year and became effective the first of this year.

The bipartisan approach that I am taking today with colleagues is the introduction of the Expedited Rescissions Act of 1997, it will provide an effective tool for getting at those items of wasteful spending that sometimes get buried in appropriations bills, but doing so in a way that honors the constitutional principle of separation of powers that was central to the court's

holding of unconstitutionality of the line item veto last week.

This bill is similar to one that passed the House but was not taken up by the Senate in 1993. It will provide a very useful tool for getting at wasteful items in appropriations bills, and I urge my colleagues to consider cosponsorship.

STOP THE TAX RIP-OFFS

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, it is a sad fact that simply to mention today's date is to utter a phrase that most Americans find repugnant: April 15, tax day. The words just sort of lie there, cold and hard and ugly. We take a perfectly good month like April and we spoil it with this tax ritual, because the amount of money that the Federal Government takes away from working families is a scandal, the amount of money that the Federal Government spends and wastes is a scandal, and the arrogant, bureaucratic system by which the Federal Government takes that money is a scandal, too.

We have to change the system, Mr. Speaker. We have to get back to the idea that the bureaucrats work for the taxpayer, not vice versa. The presumption ought to be in favor of the taxpayer, not in favor of the Government. The presumption ought to be against Government boondoggles, like the National Sheep Industry Improvement Council. Not a single sheep is being improved but the taxpayer is being fleeced.

We need to end corporate welfare, we need to stop the government rip-offs, and we need to give the American people tax relief. Let us cut taxes now.

TRIBUTE TO JACKIE ROBINSON

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

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Jackie Robinson, Jackie Robinson, the man, the native Georgian. On this day 50 years ago this son of America, this citizen of the world, broke the color line in professional baseball.

He was a good athlete. He succeeded on the field and he was superb off the field. He was able to catch and hit. He was able to steal bases. He was able to run. But his greatest contribution was not baseball, his greatest contribution was to the cause of social justice. Through his actions he inspired hundreds to walk in dignity, to march for pride, to stand up for America by sitting in places where African-Americans had never been able or allowed to sit before.

For his action on the field, he opened doors that had been closed for generations. This one man, this one man,

Jackie Robinson, continues to inspire men and women, young and old, to strive to do their best.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we salute, we pay tribute, to a great American: Jackie Robinson.

IT IS TIME TO SLASH THE OPPRESSIVE TAX CODE

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, it is time to take a cue from Lorena Bobbitt. It is time to slash. We need to slash away at the crushing tax burden that is holding back the American economy, dashing the hopes and dreams of middle class families, and robbing millions of new college graduates of opportunities.

We can adopt the audacious strategy of boldness and with one stroke we can slash tax rates across the board, giving tax relief to all working Americans. Or we can adopt a more calculated strategy, and with systematic thrusts we can slash first the death tax, then slash the tax on capital gains, and then, just to be sure, slash the rates on personal income to complete the task.

Today, on April 15, is a reminder, it is the season to slash and cut. We must get to work now and slay the giant job-killer, an oppressive Tax Code that threatens us all.

PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT WOULD PROTECT CORPORATE AND SPECIAL INTEREST TAX LOOPHOLES

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, as we debate today, millions of Americans across the country are still laboring over their taxes. No one can argue that the current system is simple or fair. But today, under the guise of offering relief to average taxpaying hard-working wage-earning Americans, this Congress is going to consider a constitutional amendment that would make it impossible to close the loopholes and make other needed changes in the Internal Revenue Service and the Tax Code.

It would be more properly titled "The Corporate and Special Interest Loophole Protection Amendment." It would not allow us, except with a two-thirds vote, to close the loophole that allows 71 percent of the profitable foreign corporations in America to pay not a penny of tax in this country, and 31 percent of the largest, most profitable U.S. multinationals to pay not a penny of tax in this country.

Foreign firms filed claims on our precious minerals last year. A foreign company got \$13 billion of gold for \$13,000. We would not be able to charge them anymore without a two-thirds vote under this ridiculous amendment.

AMERICANS NEED A TAX CUT

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to increase the take-home pay of American workers. What could be done? We could cut the tax on job creation that would improve economic growth, create new jobs and more opportunities, or we could reform the Tax Code in a way that will give businesses a greater incentive to invest in new machinery and equipment that would improve productivity and raise wages. Or we could encourage greater investment in education and training, so workers could have more skills, be more productive, and earn higher wages.

But the best way to increase the take-home pay is to do so directly. This is not rocket science. Raise take-home pay by allowing workers to keep more of their money that they earn.

Mr. Speaker, millions of workers live paycheck to paycheck. A tax cut would allow that paycheck to go a little bit further, especially for those just getting by. It is time to give American workers a break. They need a tax cut.

NO EXTENSION FOR BUDGET COMMITTEE ON BUDGET RESOLUTION DAY

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

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, today is tax day, the deadline for all Americans to submit their Federal income tax returns. But there is another deadline today. April 15 is the day by which the House is statutorily required to have approved a budget resolution. The IRS generously allows taxpayers to file an extension if they cannot complete taxes by today. The House should not be so kind to the Committee on the Budget.

The American people sent us here with a mission to restore fiscal sanity to the Federal budget. Today only the Blue Dog Coalition has prepared a balanced budget proposal. Unfortunately, the Committee on the Budget has refused to tell the American people what steps it would take to eliminate the deficit by 2002.

In the absence of a budget resolution, the House has been brought to a grinding halt. Important legislation cannot move forward without knowing how much money is available. Decisions on priorities ranging from education to transportation have been put on hold.

The Committee on the Budget does not warrant an extension on Budget Resolution Day. Show us your plan and let us decide if it makes sense for the American people.