

which would cost a staggering \$300 billion over the next 5 years. Who benefits from these cuts? The wealthiest 5 percent of Americans. And who pays for these cuts? Working families.

Do not just take my word for it. USA Today estimated on Monday that it would cost the average American family \$400 a year to pay for this tax windfall for the wealthy.

It is time to stop proposing huge tax breaks for those who need it the least and to start providing targeted tax relief for those who need it the most: Middle class American families.

REDUCTION OF TOP RATE OF CAPITAL GAINS TAX FROM 28 TO 14 PERCENT

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, Democrats and Republicans. I have to do that, after having heard the vitriolic attacks that are emerging from the Democratic side attacking us for what clearly will be the single most important thing that we can do for working families in this country, and that is reducing the top rate on capital gains from 28 to 14 percent.

I am very gratified that we now have, I think it is 127 Democrats and Republicans as cosponsors of this measure. Why? Because Democrats and Republicans know that it is going to benefit working families. It is going to, based on every shred of empirical evidence we have, increase the flow of revenues to the Federal Treasury, as it has always done when we unleash that \$7 to \$8 trillion of locked-in capital that people are concerned about selling because of that rate that is so extraordinarily high.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join as cosponsors of H.R. 14, Democrats and Republicans.

BAN HANDGUN POSSESSION BY ANYONE UNDER 21

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

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Speaker, do my colleagues know children in the United States are 12 times more likely to die because of a firearm than children in every other major industrialized nation? And that the United States has the highest rate of gun-related child homicides and child suicides of 26 major industrialized nations?

Over the last 30 years the percentage of murders committed by people under 21 in my hometown of Chicago went from 10 percent to nearly 40 percent. Over that same 30-year period, the number of murders committed nationally by those under 21 increased 5 fold.

Mr. Speaker, when we consider these facts, there can be only one conclusion: Our children are all too often the perpetrators and the victims of handgun violence.

Mr. Speaker, we in America need to ban handgun possession by anyone under 21. I have introduced a bill that would do exactly that, and I urge my colleagues to support me in this effort.

A NEW DEFENSE TO CRIMINAL PROSECUTION?

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

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, perhaps as a former U.S. attorney and a Federal prosecutor, I am particularly sensitive to new defense theories when they arise in court cases. I was mystified yesterday, though, to see a new defense to criminal prosecution raised by none other than the Attorney General of the United States.

In her letter in which she refuses to appoint an independent counsel to investigate allegations of wrongdoing for which there may be a conflict of interest or an insufficient basis, she says that the Vice President's admitted use of a telephone in the White House and the OEOB to solicit funds was not a crime because the use of the phone for something that is otherwise permissible is OK.

I can see the next time the U.S. attorney has to exercise prosecutorial discretion involving the use of a phone by a drug trafficker, and I suppose now that the Department of Justice will have to decline such prosecutions because the use of the phone is otherwise permissible, and therefore even if it is used to solicit drug monies, that is OK because use of the phone is for otherwise legal purposes.

It is a sad day indeed.

FACING BIGOTRY AND HATRED

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

Mr. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, my remarks today are timed to coincide with tonight's television showing of the film "Not In This Town," about hate groups and racial bigotry in America.

I speak on this topic because I was in Billings, MT, just prior to what happened to Tammie and Brian Schnitzer and their family, after it had become known they are Jewish, an identity which ought to be an occasion of immense pride.

Mr. Speaker, Billings, MT, is not the only city where such events occur. In fact, in Santa Barbara, CA, where I live and work, a community forum was held just last Saturday night because of a recent incident in a local high school. Participants included Babatunde Fofayemi, Judith Meisel, Michael Caston, the superintendent of schools,

the Reverend Sara Moores Campbell of the Unitarian Society, the Reverend Rueben Ford of St. Paul A.M.E. Church and other community leaders.

The Santa Barbara News Press gave very extensive coverage to this event, demonstrating that a newspaper is a powerful educational instrument.

Mr. Speaker, right now, before Passover, following Easter, we must recognize that bigotry and hatred are challenges faced by the entire human community.

LET US BRING JUSTICE TO THE COMMANDOS

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

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to an injustice suffered by over 300 men of the Vietnam war, an injustice that spans three decades.

During the war, the United States Government trained a number of South Vietnamese commandos to infiltrate North Vietnam Communist operations. Many of these commandos were captured and brutally tortured during their years of imprisonment and sustained long-term injuries.

There are about 300 commandos currently living throughout the United States. It is now time for our Nation to recognize their heroic war efforts and compensate the few surviving commandos and their families.

The Pentagon has failed to carry out the unanimous will of the 104th Congress to pay these brave men an average of \$40,000 each for their time in captivity. In fact, while the Pentagon has delayed, three of the commandos have perished.

The House Committee on Appropriations has the opportunity to fully recognize their service on behalf of the United States as they consider the supplemental appropriations bill this week. It is the least we can do to recognize their enormous sacrifice.

Let us not turn our backs on the commandos.

100 DAYS OF DOING NOTHING

(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, today is the 100th day of this Congress. Today marks 100 days of doing nothing.

The Republican leadership has no agenda. The Republican leadership has no budget, no education bill, no children's health care bill. Why do we not have a budget? Why do we not have a children's health care bill? What can be more important? Instead of doing the people's work, we are spending our time on busy work and political posturing.

What have the Republicans done about a budget? Nothing. What have

the Republicans done about children's health? Nothing. What have the Republicans done about education? Nothing, nothing, nothing.

Mr. Speaker, 100 days of nothing is enough. It is time to address the concerns of American working families. It is time for this do-nothing Congress to do something. Get to work.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 112 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 112

Resolved, That it shall be in order at any time on Wednesday, April 16, 1997, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules. The Speaker or his designee shall consult with the minority leader or his designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The gentleman from California [Mr. DREIER] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my friend, the gentlewoman from Fairport, NY [Ms. SLAUGHTER], pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

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Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, in a statement that is more prophetic than he might have imagined when he made it at the time, President Woodrow Wilson said,

"It's not far from the truth to say that Congress in session is Congress on public exhibition, while Congress in committee rooms is Congress at work."

It is the work of Congress that we hope to accomplish with adoption of this rule. It makes in order at any time today, Wednesday, April 16, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules. The rule further requires the Speaker or his designee to consult with the minority leader or his designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to the rule.

The bills that will be considered under suspension of the rules as a result of adopting this rule are noncontroversial and very narrowly tailored, thus making it impractical to bring them up under the order of business resolution from our Committee on Rules. However, scheduling them for consideration today is necessary to ensure that our colleagues are here to do very important committee work.

The Committee on Banking and Financial Services is holding an important markup on public housing reform. The Committee on the Budget members are in important negotiations with the administration over the outlines of our balanced budget proposal. The Committee on Commerce is marking up the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund Amendments Act. Even our own Committee on Rules will have a hearing tomorrow on improving civility in the House, which is critical, as we all know, to the proper functioning of this institution.

Mr. Speaker, for those of our colleagues who are concerned with the pace and direction of our agenda in the House, adoption of this rule is a precondition to ensuring a productive and successful first session of the 105th Congress.

Also, Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that for 2 years during the 104th Congress, we constantly heard complaints from our friends in the minority that the committee system was being bypassed to expedite major legislation. We now have the opportunity to let our committees deliberate openly and do their work, and they are able to have the full participation of the members of their committees.

Mr. Speaker, this is obviously a totally noncontroversial rule. I hope that, unlike last week, we will proceed in a very, very amicable and noncontroversial way as we proceed with this. I urge adoption of the rule.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California [Mr. DREIER] for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the rule serves no purpose other than to require the Members of the body to spend another day voting on measures which are noncontroversial and which could easily have been disposed of on the regular suspension days of Monday and Tuesday. Meanwhile, the real business of the House remains neglected.

As we all know, Federal law requires Congress to produce a budget resolution by April 15, 1997. That was yesterday. Well, yesterday came and went without the majority having even proposed a budget or holding a single committee vote on a budget. Nor has the majority taken any steps whatsoever toward enacting campaign finance reform.

Our constituents might wonder what has Congress been spending its time on? Well, the answer is precious little. Today marks the end of the first 100 days of the 105th Congress. Yet the House has barely been in session. This year the House has taken 2 days off for every day it has worked. In fact, the House has been in session for only 33 of the first 100 days of this Congress. Essentially, we took 2 of the first 3 months off. Hardworking families all over the country must look at us and

wonder who we think we are. Is this really what we were elected to do?

Since the 105th Congress began, more than 300,000 children have lost their private health insurance. Yet the majority has refused to act on legislation to help families get health coverage for their children. More than 200,000 students have dropped out of high school. But what is our leadership doing to improve public education? More than 1,000 children have been killed, and yet the majority has yet to schedule any floor action for legislation on juvenile crime and drugs.

This Congress took only 60 votes, that is 60, in the first quarter of 1997, 60 votes in the first 90 days. Less than a vote a day, and that is counting all the votes on noncontroversial measures like those to honor democracy gains in Guatemala and Nicaragua and to thank former Secretary Warren Christopher for being Secretary of State and 11 votes for various States for voting term limits.

Now, I am not saying that those measures were unworthy of our votes, only that they do not really constitute heavy lifting. Yet the majority insists on dragging out for consideration these noncontroversial measures day after day, week after week.

Mr. Speaker, why could we not have considered the suspension bills scheduled for today on Monday or Tuesday of this week? Why are we not using the remainder of the week to work on more meaningful legislation like a budget resolution and campaign finance reform?

The rule is disrespectful of the voters we represent and their tax dollars. The majority spent a lot of time on the floor this week talking about taxes. Well, I remind my colleagues, as I did last week when this House considered an identical rule, that it costs the taxpayers of the country \$280,000 each week to bring all of us back to Washington. We ought to at least give them their money's worth and get on with the business of passing a budget and enacting campaign finance reform.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question, and if the previous question is defeated, I intend to offer an amendment that would require the House to consider campaign finance reform before Memorial Day, May 31, so that a final campaign finance reform bill can be sent to President Clinton before July 4.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WISE].

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, here we are, another suspension day. This is one body that just seems to be in constant suspension. I do not know exactly what that means except nothing is being done. We have got some significant bills, as the gentlewoman just said. This Congress has passed bills honoring Warren Christopher for his service as Secretary of State, commending Guatemala for possibly venturing toward democracy; a whole list of things. Yes,