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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 21, 1997, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leader limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR] for 5 minutes.

UNFAIR LABOR PRACTICES CHARGE UPHELD BY FEDERAL COURT

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I want to show a headline in the Detroit Sunday Journal. It says, "Guilty, Judge Rules Paper Calls Strike. Ten Unfair Labor Practices Charge Upheld."

For almost 2 years now, over 2,000 families in Detroit have been on strike or have been locked out by the two largest newspaper chains in the country, the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press, represented by Gannett and Knight-Ridder, 2,500 families, not able to support their families, feed their families, live a normal life. This strike has torn apart our community.

But it is the community that came together over this period of time culminating in the verdict that was handed down by this Federal judge that said that these two large national corporations, Knight-Ridder and Gannett, violated, violated and were guilty of breaking the law and unfair labor practices.

What was the response to that? Well, the response, Mr. Speaker, was that last weekend Action Motown put together a teach-in at Wayne State Uni-

versity that was packed, overflowing crowds. The next morning we went out and we protested at the homes of the CEO's who lived in Grosse Pointe. We protested at the police station in Sterling Heights, MI, where those police officers engaged in brutality against the workers who were striking at the plant.

Then, Mr. Speaker, after these actions, over 100,000 people, we expected 50,000, but over 100,000 came out and marched in the streets of Detroit culminating in a rally in downtown Detroit where speakers from all over and workers from all over the country came. They came from Hawaii; farm workers came from California; steelworkers came from Pennsylvania; teachers came from New York, standing together in solidarity with their brothers and sisters who are trying to give their children the hope and the dignity of being afforded the opportunity to be represented in this society.

We are losing our economic democracy, if we indeed have ever had it in this country. Little by little, benefits for people are being chipped away. They are being taken away in terms of health benefits. Mr. Speaker, 3,500 kids a day in America lose their health insurance because these types of corporations, the transnationals, the multinationals, the big corporations, are dropping health insurance. They are losing their pension benefits. Wages for 80 percent of our people in this country have been frozen for about the last 20 years. The top 20 percent are doing well, but the rest are lagging behind.

So, Mr. Speaker, we said in this march and in this rally that we are coming together. It is happening all over the country. It is an untold story out there that people are organizing, whether it is in California with the strawberry workers or the poultry workers in North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, whether it is textile workers in the

South or manufacturing workers or steelworkers in West Virginia or Ohio, or those at Caterpillar in Decatur and in western Illinois, people are coming together to recognize what is happening in this economy. Those in the top are doing very, very well, but the other 80 percent of America is struggling.

So, I want to commend those who put on Action Motown, those who came together to organize on behalf of their brothers and sisters. They made a difference. They made a big difference. The Free Press' and the News' circulation has dropped by more than 50 percent since the strike began. Since the strike began, it has dropped more than 50 percent. They have lost over a half a billion dollars.

When people act in unison, they have power. What we have to do is empower the people, the workers. They have a voice and they should be heard and they were heard this past weekend.

So, I want to say to the Tom Bray's and the Joe Stroud's and the Jaske's and the Vega's and the Giles's and all the top executives at Knight-Ridder and Gannett: Obey the law, obey the law; you have been found guilty. Put those people back to work so they can take care of their families so we can bind the wounds in our community.

Mr. Speaker, this is not me speaking; these were community leaders that were there. There were religious leaders there. There were labor leaders there. There were people who want to bind the wounds in our community. Obey the law. They were proven guilty. They should obey the law and put these people back to work.

TRIBUTE TO IDAHO NATIONAL GUARDSMEN KILLED OR IN- JURED IN FLOOD RELIEF EF- FORTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS). Under the Speaker's announced

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Idaho [Mr. CRAPO] is recognized during morning hour debates for 3 minutes.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks, Idahoans have banded together to save homes and neighborhoods and communities from encroaching flood waters. We face what is literally the flood of the century and maybe the flood of the last 200 or 300 years.

But, Mr. Speaker, I am saddened to report that last week during the assistance efforts, two Idaho Air National Guardsmen were killed and one seriously injured when the helicopter they were in crashed. Maj. Don Baxter and 1st Lt. Will Neal were killed when the helicopter they were in went down. CWO Shelby Wuthrich survived the crash and was pulled from the wreckage by a local citizen, Sherry Lang.

Major Baxter had just taken command of the Idaho National Guard operations to assist in the flooded areas. His brother tells me that Don died doing what he loved most, flying and serving other people.

Will Neal also was an exemplary guardsman and was enthusiastic about assisting others in trouble. I was able to visit with Shelby in the hospital this last weekend, and the doctors are still determining the extent of his injuries and rehabilitative efforts; but he has a tremendous will and spirit, one that will help him to come to resolution with this tragedy.

I also want to commend all the others who responded to the crash site. Their quick response is a strong testament to the community's spirit.

The thoughts and prayers of all Idahoans are with the families of these three men. They were performing a great service, working for the good of the community and helping others in trouble when this tragedy occurred. I know that all the Members of the U.S. House of Representatives will join me in sending their prayers and in keeping their thoughts and prayers focused on these men and sending our condolences to the Baxter, Neal, and Wuthrich families. Truly, this is the kind of rugged individualism, the kind of integrity and character that Idahoans and Americans exemplify when facing disaster threats.

AMERICANS FAVOR TAX RELIEF FOR MIDDLE CLASS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] is recognized during morning hour debates for 3 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, later this week, this Congress will make a choice about the future of America. As we debate the tax bill, we will have to make a choice between the Republican plan that assumes that the rich do not have enough money and that working families have too much, or we can choose the Democratic plan

that believes what we ought to do with the tax cuts is try to help working families educate their children, take care of their children, provide for child care, and reinvest in America. Those are the two visions: The Republican plan that will give people who earn more than \$250,000 an average benefit of \$27,000 and will cost people that are earning \$17,000, \$18,000, and \$20,000 real money.

That is the difference in a vision of America. To take people who now have done very well in the stock market and decide that, when they had no expectations of capital gains, we should provide them a reduction on the profits that they make, while we should not provide tax relief to low-income working Americans.

That is the choice and a vision of America. We have got to decide whether or not we are going to use the resources that we have saved as a result of the balanced budget efforts that we have made over the last 5 years, whether or not those should be shared with working families in this country, or whether or not they ought to be lavished on the rich who simply do not need it. It is a matter of how we use those resources and how we promote families.

We clearly know in this Congress what the American people want. They have said it over and over again in the polls that they want us to use the resources of the country to improve the educational opportunities for their children, to reduce crime, to protect the Medicare benefits for the elderly, and to balance the Federal budget. But that is not the choice that the Republicans are taking this week.

In fact, what they are doing is racing to pay back those who have supported their campaigns by lavishing reductions in capital gains tax, estate tax and getting rid of the corporate alternative minimum tax which says that for those large corporations that have huge write-offs, even they must pay something for the privilege of being in America. Then we will go back to the days when corporations pay no taxes no matter how much money they make. That is not equity. That is not fairness. That is the not the choice of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, we need to provide more equity, we need to provide more fairness. The No. 1 thing that the Americans demand of their Tax Code is fairness so that we know that everybody is contributing their fair share to making this the greatest country in the world. But that is not what the Republican tax bill does. The Republican tax bill heads off in another direction. It decides that those who are the wealthiest, those who are the richest should get the most, and those who are working hard, young families to raise children, should get the least. Somehow that just is not fair.

TAX CUTS SHOULD GO TO MIDDLE CLASS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentlewoman from Michigan [Ms. STABENOW] is recognized during morning hour debates for 3 minutes.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, I rise also to strongly support the middle-class working families of my district in Michigan getting a tax cut at the end of this week. When all is said and done and we have debated fully the question of who should receive tax relief this week, my vote will be with the middle-class working families in my district.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased as a new Member from Michigan to have been a part of this historic balanced budget agreement, and in that agreement we carved out a net \$85 billion to be given in tax relief. The question now before us is where that goes. While we came together in a bipartisan way on the issue of balancing the budget, we now see great philosophical differences as to where to put tax relief. This is where the big split in terms of vision between the parties comes.

The Republicans voted a bill out of committee that targets the relief, the majority of the relief, to those receiving more than \$250,000 a year with the outdated notion that, if you give to the wealthy, it will trickle down to all of us. That happened in the 1980's and did not work.

The policies of the 1990's under President Clinton have been to focus dollars directly into the pockets of middle-class workers and those who are working hard to get into the middle class, and I truly believe that is how we provide economic stimulus in the country and that is how we make sure that those who need tax relief receive it.

Mr. Speaker, the people in my district would like some tax relief help in sending their children to college. They want to make sure once they are there, they are not penalized; that they can protect the equity in their home and, if they sell it, they will not be taxed. They are concerned about child care for their children, that they receive some help for child care; that if they have a small business that they have worked all their life for, that the capital gains relief will be targeted to small businesses; and, if they pass away, that the estate tax relief will be targeted to small businesses, family-owned businesses and family-owned farms.

Mr. Speaker, I want very much to take that tax relief and put it directly in the pockets of people who are working hard to care for their families, working hard for a good quality of life and people who have worked hard all of their lives to contribute to create jobs in the community and to contribute to a business or a family-owned farm. That is the way we will keep this economy in America going. If we do not have a strong middle class, we will not have a strong economy.