

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. John Huang was not hired to raise money for the Boy Scouts; John Huang was hired to raise money to help China. I yield back the balance of all of this mess.

URGING MEMBERS TO DEFEAT AMENDMENTS WHICH WOULD ATTEMPT TO REWRITE THE FARM BILL ON AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS LEGISLATION

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

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, I come here today because today or tomorrow we are going to be taking up the agriculture appropriations bill. There will not be a rule on this bill, and the reason there is not a rule is because the appropriators and the authorizers are together. We know what is good for agriculture.

But there are those in this body who want to rewrite the farm bill on the agriculture appropriations bill, and at the expense of American farm families. In the name of cutting Government, cutting expenses, when the farm bill passed no-cost programs to the Government, they want to change those no-cost programs. That is substantive legislation on an appropriation bill.

Agriculture groups and Members of this body who have agricultural interests in their districts have come together to support America's farming men and women. I hope we will deny those Members their success on those amendments.

□ 1115

REPUBLICAN TAX BILL

(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, it is time for Republicans to come clean about their tax bill. Republicans want a tax cut for people working on Wall Street, not people living on Main Street.

Let us take an example. Al works 40 hours a work at the factory. Al works hard and supports his wife and two children on his \$25,000 salary. He pays thousands of dollars in taxes. What does Al get from the Republican tax bill? Nothing. Zero. Zip.

Democrats want to give Al and millions of other working families a tax cut. These are the people Democrats want to help. What do the Republicans say about Al? They say Al is on welfare.

Billions of dollars in tax breaks for millionaires. Nothing for Al. Nothing for millions of hard-working American families. That is the Republican plan.

LIBERAL CLASS WARFARE CONTINUES

(Mr. ROGAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, in response to the preceding speaker, the gentleman from Georgia, I would suggest to him that there are very few people in this country earning \$40,000 to \$50,000 a year who are employed as the rich on Wall Street. Yet that is exactly how the Democrats in this House view people who earn that much money—rich.

There are two competing philosophies between the major parties. Republicans believe that individuals who work for a living ought to be able to make the decisions on how to spend their money. Democrats who controlled this House for 40 years believe that families do not have the compassion or the wisdom to make those spending decisions, and that we should send more of their money back to Washington so bureaucrats can make those spending decisions. That is their legacy to America during the 40 years they controlled this Chamber.

In each Congress that the Republicans have controlled this Chamber since we took control in 1995, we have cut taxes for American families. That is our legacy to America. It is a legacy that continues with our present tax cut proposal.

INVESTIGATION OF LABOR UNIONS

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

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, in January of this year I became the ranking member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. I had the promise of the chair of that committee that we would work together closely, that we would coordinate the activities that the Republican majority wanted to pursue.

And thus far, I have gone along. I have cooperated. I have allowed the Republican majority to follow whatever agenda of investigation they wanted to pursue. It was basically a crossroads investigation to see whether money in education and labor were being wisely spent on the idea of what works and what does not work.

Suddenly a week ago we are told that the Committee on House Oversight of the whole House of Representatives has authorized my committee \$1.4 million for an investigation that has never been raised in my subcommittee. We have never spent 1 minute on it. I am not against investigations. If there is corruption, let us go after it. If there is abuse of power, let us go after it. But let us not waste taxpayers' money for sheer partisan political purposes.

STICKING IT TO THE MIDDLE CLASS

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

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to those on the other side who would like to turn Medicare and Social Security into another welfare program. Are they seriously suggesting that the tax credit should count against the payroll taxes that are paid by American workers?

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if the liberals who are proposing this understand the consequences of what they are proposing. They are proposing that the politicians in Washington, get this, should create a brand new entitlement, the greatest something-for-nothing entitlement of all time.

So instead of people paying their way during their working lives so that their retirement and health care needs will be met in old age, they should not have to pay into the system at all. Let us recap. Pay nothing but collect hundreds of thousands in benefits from a system that everyone else has to support.

Payroll taxes are not income taxes, Mr. Speaker. Payroll taxes are for Social Security and Medicare. Let us not turn Social Security and Medicare into a massive welfare program that sticks it yet again to the middle class.

CAMPAIGN TO INTIMIDATE LABOR

(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, last week the Republican leadership engaged in a back room deal to spend \$1.4 million in taxpayer funds to investigate labor unions. This funding came from the \$7.9 million emergency slush fund which we can now see was set aside by Republicans to finance purely partisan projects.

This abuse of taxpayer funding is intended to intimidate, to coerce and to harass political opponents, Americans who just do not happen to share the same views as the Republican leadership. It will be used to punish working men and working women who depend on employment protection provided by labor representation.

A recent Washington Post poll said that most Americans believe politicians in Washington waste too much time and money in trying to dig up dirt on their opponents. It is no wonder the Republican Congress is better known as the witch-hunt Congress.

SUPPORT H.R. 1333, THE WORKING AMERICANS WAGE RESTORATION ACT

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

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to issue a challenge to all Members on the other side of the aisle who wish to target tax relief to middle-income Americans. We have heard a lot about that this morning and in the

past few weeks. You may be surprised to learn that 72 percent of working American families pay more in total Social Security payroll taxes than they pay in income tax.

So I commend to my colleagues a bill that I have sponsored called the Working Americans Wage Restoration Act, H.R. 1333. This bill would allow workers earning less than \$65,400 to deduct their portion of Social Security payroll tax from their Federal income taxes. This would eliminate the current double taxation of the Social Security tax and put workers on the same level as businesses which are allowed to deduct the payroll taxes as a business expense.

According to the Joint Committee on Taxation, my bill would provide the average two-income family with an additional \$1,200. It covers all workers. So I invite my friends on the other side of the aisle, Members who are so concerned about middle income Americans, get on this bill. H.R. 1333.

THE REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, the American people are saying in a clear voice, cut us in or cut it out. That is exactly what the Republican tax plan does. It cuts out millions of working people in favor of the rich.

The Republican plan cuts out Ms. Smith who works all day long in a nursing home in Chicago, but cuts in Mr. Jones, a millionaire. The Republican plan cuts in the 5 percent of the wealthiest people in this country while significantly cutting out the other 95 percent.

I say Ms. Smith deserves a break. Under the Democratic plan Ms. Smith would get that break, along with 91 million other low- and middle-income families.

The Republican plan cuts out children, college students and workers who earn less than \$250,000 a year. Under the Democratic plan, these groups are cut in. The Republican plan can be summed up in four words: Show me the money. Those who have it get cut in; those who do not are cut out.

NATO EXPANSION

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Budget Office has estimated that NATO expansion is going to cost U.S. taxpayers at least \$4.7 billion. Some estimates are much higher, with many analysts suggesting that \$15 to \$20 billion over the next few years is more accurate. And these estimates were made before it was announced a few days ago that France is not going to pay its share of expansion costs.

All of this really to obligate us to more Bosnia-type situations in the future. Already we have spent many bil-

lions over and above our regular foreign aid in Bosnia, Haiti, Rwanda, Somalia, and other places where there was absolutely no threat to United States security.

If you oppose NATO expansion you are called names like "isolationist," but name-calling is simply a way to avoid the merits or lack thereof. Let us be friends with every nation, but this does not mean we should have to pay the bills for every nation. With a \$5.5 trillion debt, we simply cannot afford to do this.

As columnist Amos Perlmutter said in yesterday's Washington Times, the debate on NATO expansion should "alert the American people to the futility, the dangers, and the high cost of this experience designed to establish the President as a great foreign policy leader at the expense of the national interest."

RESERVE FUND

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, if it operates like a slush fund and is administered like a slush fund, then how should we refer to the leadership reserve?

Last week in an a total sham process, the Committee on House Oversight steamrolled through a \$1.4 million allocation from the leadership's \$7.9 million slush fund to investigate organized labor's political activities. The reserve fund is supposed to be used under House rules in, and I quote, "extraordinary, emergency, or high priority circumstances."

The Committee on House Oversight decided not to fund this request in March. What has happened? I ask my friends, what is the emergency? For whom is this investigation a high priority? Is this strictly a research endeavor, as the majority says? Why then a communications director for \$70,000 and a media assistant for \$25,000 and four additional attorneys for the committee?

I do not have all the answers but I will ask one more question: If it walks like a witch hunt and talks like a witch hunt?

MEDICARE

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

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, we have heard other speakers try to explain in simple terms exactly why Medicare is going bankrupt. Today I would like to take the next step: Explain what can be done about it.

First I would like to start with a fundamental principle, a principle that reflects my values and the importance that I would attach to freedom. That principle is: Other things being equal,

individual choice is preferable to collective choice. Said another way, I think I know what is best for me and my family better than the government does. It means that I can spend my money better than the government thinks they can spend my money.

Another principle stems from this principle: To override individual choice requires a compelling reason.

So the first step to reform Medicare is to apply those principles to the system. That is why the first reform is to allow seniors more choices in their Medicare and the option in one case to choose medical savings accounts or MSAs. MSA is the best option for many seniors, and they ought to have the opportunity to choose that. I ask my colleagues to help pass this first test, essential Medicare reform.

THE REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN

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

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, the Republican majority has approved a tax plan that ignores the facts and ignores the wishes of the American public.

When a U.S. Treasury report revealed that the Republican plan was light on relief for working Americans and heavy on tax breaks for the rich, the Republican response was that the Treasury Department had somehow cooked the books, and they marched on with their plan. When Democrats and 15 million taxpaying families were being cut out of the GOP tax plan, the Republican response was to redefine these families as welfare families, and they marched on with their plan.

House Republicans are marching by themselves. A recent Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll shows more Americans agree with the Democrats than the Republicans on the budget and tax negotiations. This finding was supported by a recent Washington Post/ABC News poll.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the only thing being cooked are the tax plans, the GOP tax plans that hurt working Americans and tell untruths about hard working American families. Tax plans that hurt American families shall be rejected by Democrats and America.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ELECTION RESULTS

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

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Republican Conference it is my pleasure to announce that we have two new members of our Republican leadership team.

At a conference of Republican Members this morning, we elected a new vice chairman of the Republican Conference, the gentlewoman from Washington, Ms. JENNIFER DUNN. And we