

For 40 years before that, the other side controlled this Congress. When they began their reign in 1955, Americans paid about 10 percent of their income in taxes.

Today, thanks to their pattern of continuing tax increases, for the first time in American history the average family spends more in taxes than they spend for food, clothing, and shelter combined.

When we look at the record, this shows which party has real credibility on this issue. The other side fights tax cuts today by calling them tax cuts for the rich. Who are the so-called rich that the liberals refer to? They are talking about foundry workers, schoolteachers, machinists, and police on the beat. This is who they deem to be the rich. This is why they intend to deny tax cuts.

This has to end. We have to give people back more of the money they have earned, and give families the freedom to spend that money on their children. Republicans will end the wrong-headed practice of taking money from working families and sending it to Washington.

That day of financing every liberal wish list at the expense of working families will be over, Mr. Speaker, when the Republican tax cut takes effect.

FAIRNESS TO FARMERS

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

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, today we will consider an issue of fairness to farmers who have invested for generations in their crops, and who for generations have fed their families, paid their bills, and put their kids through college when possible; farmers who, by the sweat of their brow on hot and humid days like today, are out there toiling in the sun; who suddenly might suffer a natural disaster at no fault of their own, as happened last year, when all eight counties in my district in southeastern North Carolina found that their crops were destroyed by hurricanes; small family farmers who should not bear the brunt of someone else's political agenda.

If we take away crop insurance from our tobacco farmers, we punish them for making an honest living from the soil of the Earth, we punish them by keeping them from getting bank loans, and we punish them again if disaster strikes. Do not do it. Do not take away their chance to make an honest living and be able to provide for their families.

THE GOP TAX BILL PROVIDES TAX RELIEF TO HARDWORKING MIDDLE-CLASS FAMILIES

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, this is the end of the week. By now we have heard all the exhaustive cries of our liberal friends over here that the Republican tax bill provides tax cuts for the rich and, as they will have us believe, the rich do not deserve a tax break.

However, a close look at who they label as "rich" is very revealing. In fact, it reveals a tale of deception on every American worker. According to a recent independent study, the Democratic definition of rich is the total income of any household making more than \$56,200 a year. They contend, therefore, that 1.7 million union members are too rich to deserve tax cuts, 2.4 elementary and high school schoolteachers are too rich to deserve a tax cut, 8.1 million government workers, 4.2 million mechanics, repairmen, and construction workers, and the list goes on and on and on.

Mr. Speaker, the Democrats complain, and they claim that the only equitable way to provide tax relief to the American people is to allow those who pay no taxes to receive a bigger refund. Mr. Speaker, the Republican tax bill provides that much-needed tax relief to hardworking middle-class citizens of this country. I urge all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill.

ORDINARY HARDWORKING AMERICANS WILL RECEIVE NO TAX RELIEF THROUGH THE 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, the Republican con games continue, convincing the American people they are getting a tax cut by giving a majority of the tax breaks to the richest people in America; complain that the Democrats are engaged in class warfare, while the Republicans practice it.

Yesterday I spoke about Al. He works in a factory, supports his wife and two kids on his \$25,000 salary, and he gets absolutely nothing from the Republican tax bill.

Today I want to tell Members about Mary. Mary is a single mom. She will struggle to raise two kids on her own. Mary works 40 hours a week as a secretary for \$12 an hour. That is a little less than \$25,000 a year. Mary works hard and pays thousands of dollars in taxes. What does Mary get under the Republican tax bill? Nothing. Zero. Zip.

What do Speaker GINGRICH and the Republicans say about Mary? They say Mary is on welfare. Huge tax breaks for millionaires, nothing for Mary, nothing for Al. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans should come clean with the American people and tell the truth.

PORKER OF THE WEEK AWARD

(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, an investigation by the inspectors general of the Department of Health and Human Services found that a \$15.3 million training program based at the University of Mississippi, underwritten with Federal tax dollars, was only 8 percent effective. The goal of this program was to help participants earn the equivalent of a high school diploma, the GED.

Yet, for all the money spent, just 720 of the 4,300 participants even took the GED exam. Of those, only about half passed and went on to receive the GED diploma. The final price tag, now get this, for each GED diploma was \$40,584. That looks like the cost of a 4-year stay at a State-run college, rather than a remedial education effort.

Why do we keep spending tax dollars on feel-good programs that are not working? It appears these folks could use a little education in the arithmetic category. They simply are not making the grade. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services gets my Porker of the Week Award.

A NATIONAL COMMITMENT TO REPLACING OUTDATED LIBRARY BOOKS

(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, books have the power to bring the world to any child, but it is an obsolete world children see in 75 percent of the books in Chicago public school libraries.

Here is a sample of what students learn from many of these books. Russia is still part of the Soviet Union. The Berlin Wall is still standing. And some of these books boldly predict that one day man will actually walk on the Moon.

A recent study showed that 65 percent of the 100,000 public school libraries do not have adequate book collections. Recently the gentleman from Delaware [Mr. CASTLE] and I circulated a letter signed by 70 Members of Congress urging a strong new commitment to replacing outdated library books.

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There is good news. Earlier this week a congressional subcommittee agreed to invest \$350 million to help public school libraries. That is an investment, Mr. Speaker, that will help take our public school libraries out of the dark ages and bring them back to the future.

DRUGS IN FLORIDA

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

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, over the last 4 years an increasingly permissive attitude, even a tolerance in some circles, of illegal drug use has regrettably developed. The lack of institutional leadership from the President and from the media on this issue is reflected in the dramatic increases in the use of marijuana and other drugs by our young people. Overall drug use by teens in America has more than doubled since 1992, more than doubled. We need real leadership and we need it now.

Today Speaker GINGRICH will join the Florida delegation in a hearing to look at the troubling reemergence of Florida as a major drug trafficking route. This hearing is an important step in fighting the complacency and focusing, once again, on winning the war on drugs rather than settling for a stalemate or a draw. I hope the administration will join us in renewing our effort to kick our Nation's drug habit. We could use the help in Florida.

REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans are beginning to fear that they are not going to be able to win the President's support for their tax cut plan for the rich. So what do they do? They threaten to shut down the Government again.

Many Americans remember in the last session of Congress when the Republicans did not get their way and so they decided to shut down the Government. Now the Speaker fears he will not get his way with his tax cuts for the rich so he wants to hold the Government hostage once again.

Mr. GINGRICH told a meeting of Ways and Means Republicans Wednesday that the GOP-controlled Congress would not send any appropriation bills to the President for his signature until the President signs a Republican tax cut plan. This is according to two GOP sources that spoke to Congress Daily.

Mr. Speaker, the Democrats have been working hard to push our plan that would truly benefit middle-income families. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership is not honoring the agreement they made with the American people. First they broke their promise to middle-class Americans, and now they want to shut the Government down again.

PROMISES AND ASSURANCES

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

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, this is going to be a big week for Americans. We want to talk about tax cuts and what we can do to help children. But Carol

Browner, Director of the U.S. EPA, is at it once again. She has made her final ruling, with agreement by the White House, that there are going to be some new ozone rules.

They did not look at the sound science. We know that from George Wolf that heads up the subcommittee. They did not release the information when we asked for it. Now in fact they might have cut some deals across the country that some areas do not have to go under these new rules, but they will not tell us whether they have or have not.

We need the truth, Mr. Speaker. The American people need the truth. These policies are not going to help people with respiratory problems. They are simply going to throw people out of work.

Most important, Mr. Speaker, this is the United States. It is time, no matter where we stand on these issues, that we do not let unelected bureaucrats decide national law. The people send Members of Congress here to talk about national law. The Director of the U.S. EPA is trying to mandate that we will do a certain policy without addressing the give-and-take of talking to the Congress.

Mr. Speaker, we have got to get behind the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. KLINK] in his efforts.

NO TAX BENEFIT UNDER REPUBLICAN PLAN FOR MIDDLE-INCOME AMERICANS

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the real question this morning is, what do the schoolteacher, the police officer, the firefighter, the bus driver, and the single working mother have in common? No tax benefit under the Republican tax plan.

Many will say that absence makes the heart grow fonder. Let me say, not so. The Republicans have absented themselves from the 1994 Contract on America, which says that they would give a tax refund to those who pay income tax, those who receive an earned income tax credit, and those who pay payroll taxes. Not so.

They all signed it. They have all forgotten. Now they call the schoolteacher, the police officer, the firefighter, the bus driver, and the working mother, they are on welfare, because they do not want to give them a child tax credit.

Absence does not make the heart grow fonder for the working people of America. The Democratic alternative recognizes when you go to work every day as a bus driver, a schoolteacher, a single working mother, you deserve a tax credit for your child. That is the plan that is for all working Americans.

TAX CUTS

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

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I hope the American people that are observing this debate over taxes now realize why tax cuts come so slowly in this Congress. There are some elitists in this Chamber and a lot of egos that think that Washington can spend your money better than you can.

The tax bill currently before Congress is going to benefit every American, whether it is a \$400 more in your pocket or \$1,500 more in your pocket. Middle class working families are going to gain a little bit from this tax cut. But this tax cut is just a little bit. Compared to the \$250 billion tax increase that we just had 4 years ago, this is an \$85 billion net tax cut, just a portion of the huge tax increase that just happened a few years ago.

If we are going to have a country that has been as successful as we have, we have to get back to a system where we let the people keep more of the money in their pocket, where we reward the people that work hard, that try, that save, that invest, and the people that work hard are better off than those that do not.

IN SUPPORT OF TAX FAIRNESS FOR WORKING AMERICAN FAMILIES

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago the Republicans signed a contract with the working families of America and promised to provide them with tax relief. They proposed a law called the American Dream Restoration Act, which calls for a \$500-per-child tax credit for families making up to \$200,000. This was item 5 on their Contract With America.

Amazingly, the Republicans will give a \$500-per-child tax credit to people making \$200,000 but they want to deny this tax relief to families making \$20,000. Yesterday the New York Times reported that the Speaker of the House might finally give the child care tax credit to all working families. Then he changed his mind.

My colleagues, what is going on here? Are the Republicans going to keep their promise or not? Are the Republicans going to make good on their contract they signed or is this just another case of promises made, promises broken?

BOGUS AIR QUALITY STANDARDS

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

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we had the administration officially come forward with its national ambient air quality standards,