

60 percent of those married. The percent of married couples households has plummeted from 71 percent to merely 55 percent of our households in America today.

In America, 1 out of every 11 adults is divorced, 3 times the proportion the year the marriage penalty first came into effect. So this penalty, as we can see from across the country, is having a devastating effect on American families. We must eliminate it from our Tax Code.

I am proud to say that the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. WELLER] and I have introduced a bill, along with now close to 200 cosponsors, that will do just that. We will not stop until we have succeeded in passing this legislation. I urge my fellow Members of Congress to join us in that effort.

SPIRIT WHICH REFLECTS AMERICA OF TODAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

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

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, we have had a bit of a reign of pettiness over the past few weeks in the House of Representatives. Certainly it would appear to the general public that pettiness was in command, and much of the previous presentation that we have had was in that same spirit of pettiness.

I would like to talk about a different kind of American spirit, American approach, and commend to my colleagues in the Congress a different approach for the rest of what remains in this session, this first year of the 105th Congress, and to go forward into the next year of the 105th Congress in January with a different mind-set. Instead of the pettiness and the small-mindedness, we should look to inspiration from our past American heroes who have done things in a much bigger way.

I intend to talk about some very practical problems under this big theme of going forward in a spirit which reflects the America of today that should be. I think we ought to heed the call of President Clinton when he called for us to behave like an indispensable Nation, that we are the indispensable Nation, and we ought to behave that way as we go into the 21st century.

The previous discussion was an appropriate one in that it focused, to some degree, on the subject of campaign finance reform, but it was on petty terms. This is one example of how we fall off into pettiness. Pettiness prevailed yesterday as we were about to adjourn for the religious holidays, shouting back and forth on the floor about certain kinds of procedural items. It was generated by a bigger kind of pettiness that prevails as a re-

sult of the majority's insistence that an election was won in California by my colleague, the gentlewoman from California [Ms. SANCHEZ], that that election has to be investigated and re-investigated despite the fact that she had a marginal 1,000 votes in that victory. Never before in the history of the House have we allowed this kind of petty investigation, subpoenaing of records and all kinds of harassment tactics to take place in connection with a disputed election.

□ 1115

So that pettiness generated pettiness from the other side in terms of motions to adjourn and motions to rise, out of frustration on the minority's side to vent its anger through these methods. So we reduced to that, one sort of pettiness forces another.

When it comes to campaign finance reform that my colleagues were discussing before, we must realize that the campaign finance reform issue is an appropriate issue and ought to be discussed in a profound way. We ought to look at the reform of campaign financing in the most profound way. Do not call for a special prosecutor for one individual or one candidate or for the Vice President or for the President. Let us call for a thorough investigation of the whole campaign financing, the raising of money, the spending of money, by both parties, because I think the American people, in their wisdom and their common sense, understand that both parties have gone too far in raising funds for elections and that the real problem at the bottom of all of this is whether our democracy will be able to survive.

Can a democracy survive as a compatible partner with capitalism? Will capitalism inevitably overwhelm the capitalist economic system and inevitably overwhelm the Democratic governmental system?

In other words, if we have capitalism and we have freedom in the marketplace and we allow unbridled profits, and people become powerful in proportion to the kind of profits they make and the kind of money that they accumulate, if they are going to restrain themselves and not use that power to take over the governmental apparatus, can we have capitalism in a Democratic society and capitalism not move to take over? Can we have the rich not using their wealth to distort the democracy?

That is a profound question underneath all of this. Let us deal with it. Republicans and Democrats are guilty. Yes, the Democrats at this point are being exposed, there is more in the paper about them, because the focus is on the White House, a highly visible President and Vice President, but the pettiness of the arguments is being dismissed by the common sense of the American people. They are not impressed. They are not impressed with discussions with telephone calls and who made what telephone calls from where.

They are right not to be impressed, because in the final analysis it is a little absurd. Every Member of Congress knows that they have gotten telephone calls in their offices about fundraising. If they did not make them, somebody else made it to them. You cannot cut somebody else who calls you to talk about fund-raising. Every Member of Congress knows that they go home and they make a lot of telephone calls from home. That is perfectly legal.

Now, why do we not advise the President and the Vice President to go home to make their calls? If they do that, are they not still on Federal property? Does that not make the President and Vice President different and special? They are always on Federal property. They are home. They cannot make calls at home without being on Federal property.

It is a little ridiculous to insist that the President and Vice President have to be subjected to some kind of standard which is as stupid as that in terms of where you make a phone call from and insist that we should appoint a special prosecutor to focus on that.

We need an investigation. We have commissioned an impartial commission to look at campaign financing, the raising of the money and the spending of the money across the board. We might want to even consider privatizing that and giving a contract to Common Cause to take a thorough look at the whole thing, to pinpoint where some people have broken the law, the present laws, and to make sweeping recommendations for reform that the Congress might want to bind themselves to and on a fast-track basis.

We do trade treaties on a fast-track basis. We say we are going to accept the recommendations on an up-and-down basis, we are not going to amend it. Let us have a commission, either a private commission or an appointed commission, to look at the whole of campaign fund-raising and expenditure of funds.

Let us look at the relationship between Archer Daniels Midland and one of the candidates, the fact that a candidate's wife earned \$1 million in speaking fees the year before. There are all kinds of things to be examined that a commission could look at fully.

If we focus on Republicans, we are going to find the same kind of problems that have been already exposed among Democrats. The process is tainted by the need to raise millions and millions of dollars, and we need to get away from that.

Underneath that, we need to find a way to deal with the problem of how we keep the capitalistic system which we all know is the system of the present and the system of the future. Capitalism is the only economic system that seems to work in the world, so how do we live with it, adjust it so that it does not take over?

We have laissez-faire, laissez-faire rules; a government will not interfere

with the economy, a government will not interfere with the marketplace. We do not have reverse rules, which says that the marketplace and the rich, the corporations, will not interfere with the government. That is the problem. We need some kind of way to guarantee that money will not be used to run our democracy, money will not be used to distort the democratic process. That is the profound question underneath of all of this.

Let us think big. In thinking big, I am drawn to the very stunning announcement that was made a couple of weeks ago by Ted Turner. I think it is a positive note to begin on. Ted Turner announced that he was going to give \$1 billion over the next 10 years to the United Nations, \$1 billion. That is a capitalist who has succeeded, and there is a capitalist who thinks in terms of the American approach to problems, and certainly the America of the 21st century. He opens the door to a new way of having people and corporations with big money behave. He has thrown down a challenge.

I think it is a great thing that Ted Turner has done. A lot of cynics will say, well, he is not really giving cash, it is stock and the earnings on the stock, it is spread over a 10-year period. Cynics can always find a way to tear down an idealistic gesture. Some people say, well, he is just looking for headlines. Well, OK, maybe he is, but that is a great way to get headlines.

If the United Nations gets the money or the profits from the stock and kids in Bangladesh get vaccinations, and Rwanda, they get a decent meal, if things happen all over the world as a result of him getting publicity, then that is great.

If he was unconcerned about publicity, of course, we know he could have taken the Dick Morris approach. Dick Morris says, when you do big things, do them in small pieces at a time, teaspoonfuls. Ted Turner could have announced a \$100,000 grant every week for the rest of his life and gotten plenty of headlines, it seems to me, if that was all he wanted.

He did things in a big American way. He did things in a way which is an example of the best spirit of the American approach to problems. It was the kind of spirit that an LBJ and an FDR and General Marshall of the Marshall plan were capable of, in their own sphere, not in the sphere of giving away money, philanthropy, but in their own spheres. We have had Americans do things in a big way, a profound way, that no other Nation or no other group of people have really been able to emulate.

Mr. Speaker, we have a Morrill Act that most people do not even know about or appreciate. The Morrill Act was the act by a Congressman named Morrill, M-O-R-R-I-L-L, because most people do not know about it, that created a land grant college in every State of the Union.

The land grant colleges were created with a specific mission, to provide

practical education to the citizens, and it set in motion the whole set of agricultural experiment stations, local county agents to carry out the results of the experiments. It set in motion all of the activities which generated an American agriculture industry which has still not been surpassed by anybody in the world. We feed cheaper, we feed more people cheaper, than any other nation in the world as a result of that base that was laid by the Morrill Act.

But, of course, it did far more than establish agriculture as an enterprise worthy of study, worthy of scientific nations. Those land grant colleges have become major centers of intellectual activity in all of the States.

So the Morrill Act was one of those big acts. Ted Turner acted in the spirit of Morrill when he did that.

I do not know which Congressman was responsible for the Transcontinental Railroad Act. A lot of people do not know that the transcontinental railroad, linking up the railroads from the East to the railroads from the West and establishing that line right across the whole country, that was not done by private enterprise, it was done with the money of the taxpayers. The taxpayers paid private contractors to build that transcontinental railroad. It was a monumental activity, a monumental kind of action taken on by the Government, that resulted in linking the east coast with the west coast and establishing this Nation as one whole Nation in a way that could not have been done without that transcontinental railroad linkage.

Then we had, of course, the New Deal by Franklin Roosevelt, which was a sweeping plan which looked at the problems that we were experiencing economically and said, we have to approach these problems in a way to try to get at solutions, and we have a New Deal which transformed the role of the Federal Government totally, and later on the Great Society of LBJ which established Medicaid and Medicare.

We are debating about the cost of Medicaid and the cost of Medicare, aid to elementary and secondary education. All of that came under LBJ, who thought in the vein of an FDR and a Morrill and moved in a way which came to grips with big problems, enormous problems, and had ideas and concepts and legislation which were big enough to take care of those problems.

Then we had the Marshall plan, George Marshall. His conception of how we get Europe out of economic chaos and save it from communism was an unparalleled plan, unparalleled generosity on the part of the American people in terms of giving of their tax dollars to help to rehabilitate the economies of Europe, big, sweeping activities that were conceived by Americans who thought big.

So when President Clinton calls for us to behave as we are citizens in an indispensable Nation, he is in harmony with a tradition that has already been established.

I was very impressed with the President's State of the Union address, and I entered a piece in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on February 4 which I am going to read at this point before I talk more about the spirit of Ted Turner and how that spirit needs to be applied, the spirit of the big American approach, the willingness to seize the issue and to move with an overwhelming game plan to deal with it. One billion dollars to the United Nations by Ted Turner is a big act dealing with a big problem that has repercussions and will generate positive by-products throughout the whole world.

□ 1130

First positive by-product of Ted Turner's gesture is, of course, it shows up the American Congress as a very petty body. We owe the United Nations \$1.2 billion. One or two people in the Congress have held up the payment of our dues to the United Nations. We are blackmailing the United Nations into doing what we want to do by holding up our dues, and here is a man in one fell swoop is willing to give a billion dollars. Why can the Nation not pay past dues of more than a billion dollars? Why do we have to insist that they reform first, when we know that any organization that has more than 100 people is going to have inevitable administrative problems?

We have an IRS that has problems. We have a CIA with big administrative problems. They lost \$4 billion dollars in a petty cash fund. We know that mankind is not an automatically administratively efficient animal. We have trouble administrating things. Administration is always a problem. Every agency and bureaucracy, every large construct will inevitably face problems.

So we should not put the United Nations in a category by itself and say we want them to reform all of their structural problems, we want them to solve all of their structural problems, we want maximum reform and then we will pay our dues. The world would not be able to run at all and would come to a standstill if we said that everybody had to be administratively efficient, every agency and department of the government must be efficient and effective before we allow the taxpayers' money to keep it running. It is ridiculous.

Mr. Speaker, Ted Turner's action to give \$1 billion to the United Nations, the first by-product is to show how petty our behavior is with respect to the United Nations.

When I was a kid, we collected nickels for the UNESCO and the United Nations was a great hope for the future, and now we have Members on the floor of Congress maligning the United Nations, which still is the hope of the future in terms of spreading the benefits of peace and prosperity throughout the world.

So in harmony with the President and in appreciation of the President's

State of the Union Address on February 4, I read the following into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. I made a statement and then I entered one of my rap poems to go with it:

Mr. Speaker, President Clinton's inaugural address was not a State of the Union speech obligated to provide substance for general proposals. Appropriately, the President used his second inaugural statement to set a tone for the next four years, the prelude to the 21st century.

America is a great country blessed by God with wealth far surpassing any Nation on the face of the earth now, or in the past. The Roman Empire was a beggar entity compared to the rich and powerful Americans.

God has granted us an opportunity unparalleled in history. President Clinton called upon both leaders and ordinary citizens to measure up to this splendid moment. The President called upon all of us to abandon ancient hatreds and obsessions with trivial issues. For a brief moment in history we are the indispensable people.

Other nations have occupied this position before and failed the world. The American colossus should break the historic pattern of empires devouring themselves. As we move into the 21st Century we need indispensable leaders with global visions. We need profound decisions.

Then, Mr. Speaker, I ended with the following rap poem:

Under God, the indivisible, indispensable Nation. Guardian of the pivotal generation. Most fortunate of all the lands. For a brief moment, the hold world we hold in our hands. Internet sorcery, computer magic, tiny spirits make opportunity tragic.

We are the indispensable Nation. Guardian of the pivotal generation. Millionaires must rise to see the need, or smother beneath their splendid greed. Capitalism is King, with potential to be Pope. Banks hoard gold that could fertilize universal hope. Jefferson, Lincoln, Roosevelt, King, make your star-spangled legacy sing. Dispatch your ghosts to bring us global visions. Indispensable leaders need profound decisions. Internet sorcery, computer magic, tiny spirits make opportunity tragic. We are the indispensable Nation. Guardian of the pivotal generation. With liberty and justice for the world, under God.

We are the indispensable Nation, and we ought to behave as leaders in the Congress like we are leaders of an indispensable Nation. Pettiness should be pushed to the background. We have problems before us which demand the best minds operating in a manner which seizes the moment and implies broad overall approaches and plans which get real solutions.

The President proposed a board on race relations. He tackled a huge problem which needs a lot of profound light, less heat and more light thrown upon it: The problem of race relations in America. It is a huge problem.

The board that the President has appointed has an opportunity to deal with the problem like they are profound leaders of an indispensable Nation, or they can allow it to crumble away into pettiness and small talk. They can get caught up in running away from controversy to the point where they run away from relevance. That race board is a good idea that needs to think in more profound terms about what it wants to do.

We have a problem with our Internal Revenue Service which has been highlighted in the past 2 weeks. The Internal Revenue Service is a necessity to have someone collect the taxes, and it is most unfortunate that Congress has over the years not applied and used its powers of oversight on a more regular basis. The oversight powers of Congress have really not been used in monitoring the executive branch of Government in general. It has always been a political thing, where one party in charge will zero in on just those items and those agencies which give them some political advantage from year to year. They neglect an ongoing master plan to oversee and look at what the Government is doing everywhere. The IRS is long overdue for some critical examination.

The problem with the present examination is that it is moving toward triviality. It is not trivial to deal with the problems in individual taxpayers' experiences with the IRS. Everybody who has faced the tyranny of IRS and found themselves being victimized deserves to have some relief and deserves to have the attention of Congress.

But what we have to understand is that the systemic problem, the systemic problem generates the specific problems, and nobody wants to deal with the systemic problems of IRS; that the system itself is based upon the assumption that we can collect more taxes, gain more revenue, please bosses at the top, if we go after small people who do not have defenses, if we collect from people who cannot hire corporate tax lawyers and who cannot bring in reams and reams of files and books and overwhelm us. The IRS agents can quickly show that they are doing something. Each agent, each department can collect taxes faster from individuals and families than they can from people who have the real money, corporations and the very rich who have the networks of investments.

We have had in the past, at least on two occasions, I think, administrations which have sent memos and they have been allowed to leak or we found out what they were saying, which in essence said: Go after the middle class. Tell the Internal Revenue if the collections are down, it is because they keep wasting time with the corporations. Go after the middle class because we get a quick return. They have the money and they are not going to put up any defense, so collect most of the taxes from the middle class.

Mr. Speaker, the systemic problem is the problem we ought to be dealing with. What is the result of that kind of approach of collecting most of the taxes from the middle class? We have in America a clear pattern. I used to bring a chart here. I do not have it today, but the chart showed that in 1944, corporations were paying a far greater share of the taxes than individuals and families. Corporations were paying almost 40 percent of the taxes and individuals and families were down much lower, 27, 28 percent.

Over the years, that has reversed and corporations now pay, I think, 11 or 12 percent now of the overall income tax burden, while individuals and families are paying 44 percent. Now, that is the result of a systemic problem, the problem of the philosophy of the IRS to collect money where it is easy to collect money. It is easier to collect money from the middle class than it is from corporations.

Mr. Speaker, we need to go after the systemic problem. Let us approach the IRS and the revamping of the IRS a profound way. What we are doing now is having a process where we intimidate the IRS and we highlight their activities in a way that only forces them to do more of what they have always done, and that is they will continue to try to avoid controversy by going after those who are most vulnerable. They will only come up with some public relations schemes now to hide the fact that they are doing it.

Corporations at this point are paying a smaller share, not only because of the way the tax laws are written but because of the way the IRS collects taxes. We have highlighted on this floor a profound problem that nobody wants to deal with. I have written to Mrs. Richardson, the previous tax commissioner before she resigned. I have written to Secretary Rubin. We talked about section 531 and 537 of the Internal Revenue Code. That section, to summarize, says that if corporations buy back their own stock illegally, that is, the Code says they cannot buy back their own stock except for certain purposes, and if they buy back the stock for purposes other than that, they have to suffer a penalty, and the penalty is something like almost a 39 percent penalty. It is on the books.

Mr. Speaker, I am not on the Committee on Ways and Means. I did not help write it and I do not help to monitor it at this point. But I am fascinated by the fact that we have corporate welfare in this country in several forms. One form is that corporate welfare flows through the IRS. The IRS, in its attitude and its refusal to enforce the Internal Revenue Code with respect to corporations, provides a subsidy to corporations that individuals do not get. Individuals are put on the spot more because the IRS is not doing the job it should be doing with the corporations.

Mr. Speaker, that is not an idle charge. We can back that up with some statistics which I will not go into now. I have admitted it into the RECORD before. I have put a whole set of arguments into the RECORD. I have listed corporations that are buying back their own stock in ever greater amounts. And when a corporation buys back its own stock, it does two things. It is violating section 531 and 537 of the Internal Revenue Code, which nobody seems to care about because they are afraid of corporations, but it is also denying the shareholders the profits. By making the decision to buy back the

stock, the corporation hoards unto itself the wealth.

If it were to pay in dividends the money that it uses to buy the stock, then individual shareholders would benefit from that. I wonder what the mutual fund groups really think about this and why they are allowing it to happen year after year. What it does is keep the prices of stock up. If corporations buy back their own stock, that guarantees that there is a fund there ready to swoop in the minute the stock begins to go down and buy the stock so that the price goes up again.

Mr. Speaker, that, in my layman's mind, borders on manipulation, and that is part of the reason why the law was made the way it was made, to forestall excessive manipulation of the market. I wonder how much of the market's soaring prices is due to the fact that corporations have a fund ready always to buy stock as it goes down, and then it goes back up.

But in the meantime, what does that mean for the shareholders who are in it for the short-run, long-run, it does not matter. If shareholders do not get the dividends, they are deprived of the choice of spending their money and their profits some other way.

As we investigate the IRS, the IRS ought to be investigated with greater profundity than I hear now being exercised. The Committee on Ways and Means of the House is about to start its own investigation, its own hearings. Let us ask the question: Why have receipts from corporations over the years gone down drastically, while receipts from individuals and families have gone up? Explain that. Tell us how it is done.

We know the IRS cannot share with us the records of individual taxpayers or individual corporations, but they have statistics which show, and that is how we are able to say this, there are statistics that show that corporations paid a far smaller proportion of the overall income tax burden than they paid in 1944. We had a switch, so why did that take place?

Mr. Speaker, let us approach this like leaders, profound leaders in an indispensable nation, and deal with a systemic problem of a system so we correct the system and move it toward a more just method of tax collecting, instead of wild charges being made about abolishing the IRS, going to a flat tax system, doing all kinds of things which will make the rich even less vulnerable to taxes while poor people will be saddled with greater taxes. The flat tax, all the schemes that we have seen, they let the rich off but they do not do much to help middle-class taxpayers.

So in the area of tax reform, the IRS, let us move in the spirit of Ted Turner instead of the spirit of Mickey Mouse. The Mickey Mouse spirit is gnawing away at the agenda in this Capitol. Everybody wants to do things in a small way, and then blow them up with headlines and get a lot of credit for having done something. It is not important

that we highlight the fact that individuals are being abused unless we deal with the system and corrections of the system.

□ 1145

I have talked about campaign finance reform being dealt with in a most profound way so that we have an investigation that runs across the board and deals with the problem and comes back with real recommendations that Congress agrees to enact, recommendations which will protect the American democracy, the democratic form of government from our capitalistic economy. There is a simple problem. If there are rich people in a society, are they going to use their wealth or be allowed to use their wealth to distort the democratic process? That is the problem and that problem has to be dealt with.

I have also talked about the President's Race Relations Board. Is the Race Relations Board going to deal with petty problems of attitudes that people may have and names that people may call each other and a lot of things that are going on from now until the world comes to an end or are they going to take this initiative to really provide us with some background information on what it is all about?

What is race relations all about in America, the core of race relations, the race relations between African-Americans and mainstream Americans? That is the most sensitive problem. That problem has its roots in a thing called slavery. If the Race Relations Board is not going to deal with some factual analysis on the history of what slavery was all about, of what 232 years of economic denial, of not being able to own anything, for 232 years the ancestors of slaves were not able to own anything, they could not own property. They could not pass anything down from one generation to another. So we descendants of those slaves ended up without having the benefits.

We are unlike any people anywhere in the country because we did not have anything to bring over from the Old World with us. They did not allow us to do that. Then for 232 years they exacted labor from the slaves without paying them, without allowing them to own anything. If you do not establish what that means, if you do not really use your resources to delve into that and to make the American people understand the consequences of a people being deprived for 232 years of livelihood and being able to pass it down. The wealth of America and the rest of the world is primarily inherited, it is passed from one generation to another. If you interrupt the flow of wealth from one generation to another for 232 years, what does that mean? So much is attached to income and wealth. There is a correlation between income, wealth, and education. There is a correlation between income, wealth, and the ability to cope with the problems of our modern society. There are cor-

relations that cannot be ignored. If you do not have the wealth, you are not allowed to pass down even modest amounts of money from one generation to another. What is the consequence?

So the Race Relations Board appointed by the President needs to attack that in a big way. Then I said the IRS and the investigation of the IRS needs to be put in a new light and approached in a more profound way.

Now I would like to conclude by focusing on the most important subject of all, and that is approaching education in a way which is consistent with the spirit of Ted Turner's billion dollar gift to the United Nations, approaching the education problem in a way which is consistent with the New Deal, the Marshall plan, the Great Society, the Morrill Act, the transcontinental railroad. I forgot to mention the latest act which I consider on a plane worthy of being compared to the Morrill Act or the New Deal, and that is the Federal Communications Commission, Federal Communications Commission establishment of a universal fund for schools and libraries. The Federal Communications Commission established a fund for telecommunications at schools and libraries that will begin with \$2.2 billion per year to go to schools and libraries in the form of discounts for services. The discounts will range from 20 percent for the richest school districts and schools to 90 percent for the poorest school districts.

In other words, in my district many of the schools who have large numbers of poor students who receive school lunches, they qualify for a 90 percent discount. If the telephone bill is part of the plan, they would only pay 10 cents on every dollar, a dollar's worth of telephone service they use. If they are on the Internet, whatever the charge is on the Internet, they would only pay 10 cents on the dollar because of the fact that this fund, the universal fund established under the order of the FCC, will take up the balance.

The universal fund was mandated by Congress. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 mandated that the Federal Communications Commission must establish some way to help schools and libraries. That was a great act of Congress. It was one of the acts worthy of an indispensable Nation, worthy of the leaders of a Nation going toward the 21st century.

So finally, the universal fund for schools and libraries fits into the whole school reform effort that ought to be moved up to a higher level. We are talking about school reform now again in very trivial terms. The approach to school reform has lapsed into pettiness. Pettiness, headline grabbing is what generated the stampede into testing. We stampeded a proposal for national testing, leaping over agreements that had been made by Congress that we should have three approaches, where the Federal Government was involved in education reform in three major ways. They were to deal with the national curriculum, deal with national

testing standards, voluntary standards. Not a national test, but national testing standards were to be developed with the leadership and input of the Federal Government, and we had opportunity to learn standards as a part of that. Of course, because it grabs headlines and it does not cost very much money, testing has gotten pushed out of proportion to everything else.

It is that kind of pettiness, refusal to look at the problem in terms of the 21st century approach and think big about education reform. Education reform is a great challenge that we face now, probably the greatest challenge the Nation faces. We know there are things that are radically wrong and they can be corrected, we have the resources to correct them. We must go forward to deal with those corrections. We should not hesitate to apply the great wealth and the great know-how of the American Nation to the problems of education.

I talked before about Ted Turner, but there are a couple other examples of acting on a big scale that I would like to mention also before I conclude with the discussion of education. There are some other people other than Ted Turner who understand what the 21st century, as we go to the 21st century, how we should behave. Ted Turner set a new standard for billionaires, but not by himself. There is a guy named George Soros who also is a billionaire. He is funding several projects that are very critical in terms of analyzing what can be done about certain kinds of problems and in terms of allowing certain approaches and solutions to go forward so that they can be studied, and many of them are controversial. George Soros moved from Eastern Europe, where certain governments have kicked him out completely, to controversy here in America with the drug problem and the problem of what to do with our cities, a problem of anti-immigration attitudes, lawmakers and a few others. So George Soros, even beyond Ted Turner, is using his billions to get involved in controversy, to take on what other foundations have always backed away from; that is, using their dollars in areas of great controversy.

There are areas of controversy which need the help of most. Solutions to the problems that are considered controversial are solutions that are needed most. But we have not had the benefit of corporate money and foundation philanthropy because of the fact that everybody was afraid. So George Soros, in that new area, moves in a new direction.

In the area of education, we recently had an announcement by the Democratic task force on education which I want to applaud. It is a step forward in terms of clearly outlining what they are recommending that the Democratic Caucus members do. As such, it is a recommendation for all people in America interested in education reform. My problem is that it does not go

far enough. It is not petty. It is profound, but it falls short of some problems that we are facing.

The Democratic Caucus plan includes the following set of principles. I applaud these principles. They call for first-class public schools that emphasize academic excellence in the basics. They call for well-trained, highly motivated teachers to help children achieve high standards. They call for the use of public dollars to improve public schools rather than private school vouchers and at public expense of a Federal role in education that supports local initiatives for strong neighborhood public schools. They call for the empowerment of parents to choose the best public schools for their children, and they say that every child should have access to a safe, well-equipped public school. They expand that, in the area of every child should have access to a safe, well-equipped public school, by focusing on the problem at the heart of all the problems of school reform; that is, they call for relief from crumbling and overcrowded schools. They call for a replacement of crumbling, overcrowded schools with schools with well-equipped classrooms and the kinds of resources that all children need. Five billion dollars to repair crumbling schools and provide new construction to relieve overcrowding and reduce class size, and they call for the assisting of schools to wire classrooms so that they are able to make use of the funds that I talked about before, the FCC universal service funds for schools and libraries.

I applaud the Democratic Caucus task force on education for what they have done. I think it is great that they have focused on one practical thing that is doable. The President proposed a \$5 billion construction package and then in the negotiation process it got lost. It is well-formulated. It is in a bill. I think more than 90 Members of Congress are on the bill. It is a practical piece of legislation. It is a practical proposal that could move in the 105th Congress. Maybe not this year, this year of the 105th Congress, but early in the next Congress it could move. I think it could move better if it is part of an omnibus education program.

We should not hesitate to come forward with an omnibus education package in the next year. We should spend the rest of this session at least in outlining some of the things that ought to be included in that package, but at the core of an omnibus education package there should be a construction initiative because construction is at the heart of school reform. In my district when I talk to teachers and principals about we want to wire the schools for the Internet, make use of the universal fund that has been established by the FCC, they look at me, it is funny, it is a joke because they have a problem of roofs leaking and walls crumbling on the top floors of the schools. They have a problem with enough chalk. They

have a problem with old blackboards. They have a problem with lack of repairs of the seats in the school. They have a problem with too many children.

The schools of New York are still overcrowded. We are in the midst of a mayoral election and you would not know it because everybody in the press and the media, working very hard to reelect the present mayor, so all of a sudden the problem we had in the fall of 1996 where 91,000 children did not have a place to sit—we have a school system of a million children and it boggles the mind when you start talking about the New York City school system, but there are a million children, more than a million children, 1,100 schools, 60,000 teachers, and it is overwhelming. But the system has failed to keep pace with the enrollment and you have last fall, in 1996, an admission of the fact that 91,000 children did not have a place to sit when school opened. This year it is an election year, and all of a sudden the problem seems to have gone away. The press and the media refuse to acknowledge we still have a massive overcrowding problem. There are schools which will tell you, we do not have an overcrowding problem, yet they have now 1,500. If you were built to hold 700 and you have 1,500, you have an overcrowding problem. They say they do not have an overcrowding problem. And you say, how many lunch periods do you have? They will tell you we have three. Some kids in some schools are forced to eat lunch at 10 in the morning because they have so many youngsters the cafeteria will not hold them all and they have to move in relays.

When you have to make a youngster eat lunch at 10 in the morning, you have a crisis. The last youngsters to eat lunch eat at 2. You have a crisis on both ends. It is child abuse, but those things are going on.

In the New York school system there are still almost 300 schools that have furnaces that burn coal. In the middle of a big city you have school furnaces burning coal. That is a crisis. We have the highest asthma rate in the country, one of the highest. The children are directly affected by the inability of the system to provide adequate facilities.

□ 1200

They not only have to live near those furnaces burning coal, they have to go and sit in classrooms in the schools where the coal is being burned.

We have a crisis. We have a crisis, and it is not just New York City's crisis, not New York State's crisis alone. The State, at least, has belied up to the problem to the tune of placing on the agenda for a referendum vote a bond issue which will raise \$2 billion to build schools, build, repair and renovate schools. That is a first step forward. I applaud my colleagues in the New York State legislature. They have taken the first step.

New York City, of course, the mayor, in this election year, has found funds to do repairs here and there. Everywhere we go we have some visible signs of the mayor's office, which cut the schools by \$1.5 billion in the past, now discovering that education is important and producing funds and results.

Over the summer we had junior high schools throughout the city each receiving computers. I am glad we are having an election year because education is getting the attention in New York City that it should get. But we need a more profound response.

The State of New York, with its bond issue, needs help. Even a well meaning administration who really wanted to do something about education in New York City needs help. Why not get the help from the Federal Government? That is where most of the money is. The Federal Government has a responsibility, which is a moral responsibility.

It is not in the Constitution that the Federal Government is responsible for education. Most States have that in their State constitution. But it does not matter, we have the money and the resources. The money does not come from Federal sources because there are no Federal citizens in America. Maybe the citizens of Washington, DC, who have now been taken over again by the Federal Government, are Federal citizens. But the rest of us are citizens of States and we are citizens of cities and towns. We pay income tax from those cities and towns and States into the Federal Government. So the money comes from the local level, all of it does, and there is nothing wrong with having the money go back to take care of crisis situations.

The crisis now in America is not just in New York City but, according to the General Accounting Office, we need \$120 billion for the infrastructure and repair programs of school systems throughout the whole Nation. It is not a local problem.

So at the heart of this education effort of the Democratic Caucus, I am glad to see they place school construction as the most specific area that they are approaching.

The caucus also has focused widely on well-trained teachers. I think there is agreement among Republicans and Democrats that we need well-trained teachers. I think there is agreement among Republicans and Democrats that we need to have more effort to wire the schools to make use of telecommunications and technology.

I think there is one other area of agreement, which I am afraid the Democratic task force did not mention, and that is charter schools. We have backed away from any mention of charter schools.

Now, why are charter schools important? Charter schools are important because of the fact that there is agreement on charter schools among Democrats and Republicans. There is agreement that both unions, both big na-

tional unions, the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers, both have agreed charter schools are a good idea.

We are going to be debating on this floor next week a bill concerning the D.C., District of Columbia, appropriations, and there is a very controversial item in that bill. That bill has an item which deals with the D.C. schools being forced to implement a voucher program. The D.C. schools in that bill are going to be forced by Congress to implement a voucher program.

Now, vouchers have not been implemented anywhere else in the country as a result of Federal funding or Federal intervention. This will be the first case. This would be Congress exercising its overwhelming powers over the District of Columbia to bully them into accepting vouchers.

It does not matter to the people who offer this amendment to do this that citizens of the District of Columbia had a referendum. They had a referendum, and they voted that they did not want vouchers. The citizens specifically voted not to accept vouchers. They do not want vouchers. It was put to the test in a democratic election. They voted that they do not want vouchers. They are embracing charter schools.

The District of Columbia has taken steps to embrace charter schools in a way no other locale has. The District of Columbia has established a board for charter schools. They have called for applications for 20 charter schools.

Now, here is a point of agreement where the Democrats agree and the Republicans agree, AFT, UFT, that charter schools are not a bad idea. I do not think charter schools will ever overwhelm the traditional public schools. I think the future of good schooling for most of America's children, the future is in the public schools.

The public schools, however, need to have a stimulant. Some people say they need competition. And the bureaucracies that I have encountered, certainly the bureaucracy of New York City, does need competition. We need ways in which we shake up the smugness among administrators and principals and superintendents by showing them that all the things they say cannot be done; there are some people who can do them using the same amount of money that they have.

Charter schools are public schools. Charter schools would take the same amount of money per child that the traditional public schools have, and the charter schools would use that amount of money per child to provide an education in accordance with the accountability standards established by the State. They would have to meet the same standards as the traditional public schools.

The difference between charter schools and the traditional public schools, however, would be the governance and the management. They would have more flexibility and more freedom because they would not be a part of a

hide-bound bureaucracy. They would do things that we cannot do in a bureaucratic system, which insists everyone has to do the same thing everywhere regardless. They would do things without having to run up a chain of command for approval. They could take some risks, and they would probably have some failures as a result, but they might have a lot of successes. At any rate, they could tackle the big problems.

They say in the public schools that they cannot have disruptive children, they cannot have children coming from certain kinds of backgrounds, with problems at home, et cetera. Let us throw that child into a charter school and tell the charter school board of directors, who should be a group of people who come together and are pledged over a long period of time to work with the problem of schooling, and not a fly-by-night operation where somebody wants to experiment for a little while, maybe while their child is in the school, and then they will drop it. We need a solid board of directors for these charter schools, and they ought to tackle some real education problems.

At any rate, the District of Columbia has made its decision. The District of Columbia has a charter school board. They are calling for the establishment of 20 more charter schools. Next week, as we debate the appropriations provision which will force them to install vouchers, we should look at charter schools as an alternative. We should tackle the whole problem of education, at least.

It requires a movement on a broad base. There are a lot of components of education reform, but there are several components of education reform which now we can move forward on them because it is possible to reach agreement.

There is agreement that we need more training for teachers and that the resources ought to be provided partially by the Federal Government. There is agreement on that. We ought to be able to move forward there.

There is agreement that technology and wiring for the Internet will greatly improve education in our schools. We have a universal fund established for that. We should move forward on that.

There is agreement on charter schools, that charter schools are a good idea. Right now, in America, we have less than 800 charter schools. We have 86,000 traditional public schools. So when we look at 86,000 versus 800, we know charter schools are not about to overrun traditional public schools. Even if we had 10 percent, it would not overrun traditional public schools. So traditional public schools are not threatened by charter schools.

Charter schools represent an experiment that we ought to try. Charter schools represent an experiment which is far superior to vouchers. Vouchers carry us into another realm of private education where people who accept public money can tell us that they are not going to do things except their

way. They have our money, our taxpayers' money, but they are going to do things their way.

They are honest enough to tell us that up front. They are not going to change their curriculum. They are not going to change their culture. They are not going to stop giving religious instruction, if they give religious instruction. That is what they are set up to do. They are honest enough to say that if we give them the money, they are not going to change or let us dilute their integrity.

So private schools or religious schools will operate as they have always operated. So let us not give them public money. Public money should go to public schools, and charter schools are public schools.

I want to conclude by saying that nowhere is the need greater than in the area of education, that we understand that we are leaders in an indispensable Nation. We are leaders in an indispensable Nation. We are the pivotal generation. If we are petty at this point, when our resources are greater than ever before; if we are petty at this point, when we do not have any global crisis, there is no world war, there is nothing attracting the attention of the American leaders and American resources as much as education should; if we at this point will not shift the tremendous amounts of dollars that we have spent on the cold war and on military defense, shift some of that money into education to meet the recognized crises in education, then we are petty leaders in an indispensable Nation, and the great indispensable Nation will lose its place in the world.

I have said before that compared to the United States of America, Rome was a little village. The Roman empire, with all its splendor, was nothing compared to the kind of colossus that America has at this point. But the minds of the American leaders are not measuring up to the size of the Nation and the mission of the Nation. We need a generation of profound leaders who act in a way that this indispensable Nation requires.

Ted Turner, in the area of billionaire philanthropy; George Soros, in the area of billionaire philanthropy; they have shown the way; Reed Hunt, at the Federal Communications Commission, has shown the way in the new guidelines for universal funds. There are many places where there are Americans who think like FDR and LBJ and they know we have to tackle big problems with big solutions. And in the area of education, we need to understand that we have a big problem that needs big solutions.

Part of that solution should be the training of teachers; part of that solution should be the upgrading of our schools with technology; part of that solution should be charter schools. And underneath that whole set of those subparts, there has to be a massive program to build schools. The construction, the bricks and mortar, comes first in this particular case, but in this indispensable Nation, we need an indis-

pensable school system with universal quality education for all.

DESIGNATION OF HON. EDWARD A. PEASE TO ACT AS SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE TO SIGN ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS THROUGH MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1997

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 1, 1997.

I hereby designate the Honorable EDWARD A. PEASE to act as Speaker pro tempore to sign enrolled bills and joint resolutions through Monday, October 6, 1997.

NEWT GRINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Without objection, the designation is accepted.

There was no objection.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MINGE (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for September 30, on account of medical reasons.

Mr. ROTHMAN (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for September 30, on account of attendance at funeral service for Florence Rothman.

Mr. McNULTY (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for October 1 after 2:20 p.m., on account of personal business.

Mr. SAXTON (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for September 30 until 2:45 p.m., on account of attending a memorial service.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for September 30 after 3:30 p.m., on account of official business.

Mr. WAMP (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for October 1 after 1:45 p.m., on account of a death in the family.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. BALLENGER) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. McKEON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCINTOSH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HILL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. METCALF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. LEACH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DOOLITTLE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PAXON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HUTCHINSON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GUTKNECHT, for 5 minutes, today.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Oversight, reported that that

committee had examined and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 394. An act to provide for the release of the reversionary interest held by the United States in certain property located in the County of Iosco, Michigan.

H.R. 1948. An act to provide for the exchange of lands within Admiralty Island National Monument, and for other purposes.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The SPEAKER announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 996. An act to provide for the authorization of appropriations in each fiscal year for arbitration in United States district courts, and for other purposes.

S. 1198. An act to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to extend the special immigrant religious worker program, to amend the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 to extend the deadline for designation of an effective date for paperwork changes in the employer sanctions program, and to require the Secretary of State to waive or reduce the fee for application and issuance of a non-immigrant visa for aliens coming to the United States for certain charitable purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, October 6, 1997, at 12:30 p.m., for morning hour debate.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING

U.S. CONGRESS,
Office of Compliance,
Washington, DC, September 30, 1997.

Hon. NEWT GRINGRICH,
Speaker of the House, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to Section 303 of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995, 2 U.S.C. §1383, I am transmitting the enclosed notice of proposed rulemaking (proposing amendments to procedural rules previously adopted) for publication in the Congressional Record.

The Congressional Accountability Act specifies that the enclosed notice be published on the first day on which both Houses are in session following this transmittal.

Sincerely,

RICKY SILBERMAN,
Executive Director.

OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE

The Congressional Accountability Act of 1995: Amendments to Procedural Rules.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING

Summary: The Executive Director of the Office of Compliance is proposing to amend the Procedural Rules of the Office of Compliance to cover the General Accounting Office ("GAO") and the Library of Congress ("Library") and their employees. The Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 ("CAA"), 2