

this House about that? Would Jesse Jackson, who has now involved himself in this whole thing, would he have been there if one of those students had been carrying a gun, even if no one had been hurt? I think not.

So is the real issue school violence? Are we really worried about juvenile violence? Are we trying to do something about violence, or are we just trying to look at the political advantage we can get out of the "gun issue"? How come there has not been an outrage voiced in this House about Jesse Jackson's involvement in this thing and his attempt to intimidate the school board to put these kids back in school when they did the absolute right thing in throwing those kids out of school.

If I had had time, Mr. Speaker, we are at the closing minutes of this session, perhaps days, I do not know how long we have, but I know it is not going to be too long, but if I had had the time, I would have issued a resolution commending the school board for their actions. Because, of course, that is the kind of thing that can help us avoid the next Columbine tragedy, the absolute avoidance, the zero tolerance policy for any sort of violence on a school campus or at a school event. In this case it was at a game.

I do not know if my colleagues saw the videotape of this, but I can assure them that this was not just a couple of school bullies roughing up some of their classmates. These were very violent young men. And as I say, I thank God they did not have a gun or some other weapon, and I thank God today that there was not even severe damage done even without the use of a firearm. But the fact is that there should have been just as much outrage expressed in this House at any attempt to quiet that school district or to intimidate that school district into putting those kids back in school. But no, we have not heard a word about that.

Well, I would tell my colleagues they did exactly the right thing, and I commend the school board for it and I hope they stick to their guns and do not be bullied by Jesse Jackson. They did what is right. They should keep those kids out of that school. Those are the things that can help us, Mr. Speaker, those and hundreds of people, thousands of people, millions of people around this country changing their own hearts, connecting back with their own families, thinking more about how they raise their own children, and what can be done not just maybe for our children but for our Nation's children and becoming a community again.

All these things matter more than this bill would have ever mattered, but it was a stab at it anyway. It was killed by Democrats because they want issues not solutions.

OPTIMISTIC ABOUT SECOND SESSION OF 106TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EWING). Under the Speaker's an-

nounced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the emotion of the previous candidate, the previous speaker, and I think that it is altogether fitting that we not come to the floor and waste the time of anybody unless we do feel strongly about what we have to say, and I certainly feel strongly about the remarks I intend to make at this point.

We are nearing the end of a session, it is a matter of hours now, and I think all of us feel very strongly about what was or was not accomplished during this first session of the 106th Congress. I think we should look forward to the second session of the 106th Congress with optimism. I am optimistic about the second session of the 106th Congress, and I am going to talk about the reasons why I am optimistic.

I regret greatly the fact that we have not dealt with very crucial issues. We did not even put the minimum wage increase on the floor for a discussion. We refused to have a dialogue and to share with the American people the concerns of many of us that in a time of unprecedented prosperity, when great amounts of money are being made by the top 5 percent of the population, the population with the income in the top 5 percent, we are not willing to give an increase of \$1 an hour over a 2-year period to the people who are at the very bottom earning a minimum wage. I regret that greatly.

I regret the fact that we have not done an HMO patients' bill of rights.

I regret the fact we have not dealt with campaign finance reform. This House at least passed a bill, and the other body did not deal with it.

I regret the fact that we are still refusing to come to grips with the magnitude of the problem with education. Everybody talks about education, but we have just been allowed to play around at the fringes by the Republican majority this year.

We did at least deal with reauthorizing Title I, which is the most stable Federal participation in the elementary and secondary education process. We did at least tinker around with that.

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We tried to make it worse by reducing the amount of funds being directed to poorest children. There are some problems there. But at least we put it on the table, we brought it to the floor, and we dealt with it. We have not dealt with school construction. We have not dealt with the magnitude of a kingpin problem.

If we do not deal with the physical infrastructure of the public education system, we are sending a message that we really do not care about the system. All the other things we do will not matter if the physical infrastructure cannot carry out the task that we have set for our public education system.

But I am optimistic about that. I am optimistic about the fact that we will

come to grips with the problem of school construction and the large amounts of resources that are going to be needed for that. The fact it is going to require billions and billions of dollars is no reason to back away from it. Because we are able to come up with billions of dollars for an interstate highway system and the continuation of the highway program.

We authorized \$218 billion in the last session of the 105th Congress. We saw the problem as being big. And despite the fact that nobody wants to be tagged with the label of being a big spender, that highway bill certainly spent large amounts of money to deal with a monumental problem.

We should look forward to the second session of the 106th Congress with optimism. Because the fact is that the public out there clearly has made it obvious what their priorities are. And eventually the Republican majority is going to respond to what the public is saying through the polls and through the focus groups and understand that next year's election cannot go forward with a record of ignoring what people are saying over and over again about education, about Patients' Bill of Rights, about the minimum wage. All these things have to be dealt with.

I am optimistic about the year 2000, our first year of the 21st century and the second session of the 106th Congress. I am optimistic about it because of the fact that it is a presidential election year.

Presidential elections are always pregnant with surprises. I am optimistic that we are going to have some positive surprises. We can have negative surprises, too. We do not want another presidential election year where a Willie Horton commercial surfaced and the whole spirit of that Willie Horton commercial pervades during the campaign and the electorate is treated to an appeal to go down to the lowest common denominator and racism becomes an overriding factor in the election.

Or the election that Ronald Reagan kicked off at Philadelphia, Mississippi. When Ronald Reagan ran for President, he went to Philadelphia, Mississippi, the place where three civil rights workers had been slain; and he kicked off his campaign there sending a message, which later was communicated in terms of the new position of the Republican party.

They abandoned the civil rights partnership that they had up to that time with the Democrats, and they became the party which promoted anti-affirmative action and a whole series of things that led downhill, to the point where when Ronald Reagan left office and George Bush became President, there was a burning of churches throughout the South.

We had generated that kind of spirit at the time. I hope that we do not have those kinds of surprises. I hope that we will be able to not spend all the time fighting a rear-guard action, a defensive action, and can focus on positive

matters. We could have some positive surprises. We could have some positive surprises which create a dialogue in this election which allows American people to really take a hard look at where we are now and where we can go in the 21st century.

The first year of the 21st century can be seen as a gateway into a new way of governing, a new way of dealing with the problems, an intellectual and mental opportunity to set our sights differently; and it could end up with some real positive achievements as a result.

First of all, I want a positive and adequate response to the number one concern of the American people. And that is education. We want a real adequate response, not a tempered nickel-and-dime response.

The response has to include not only the obvious problems that we need with respect to more funds for more teachers, more funds to deal with computers, but also the tremendous amount of funding that we need in order to deal with infrastructure problems, the construction repair, modernization, making schools more secure, et cetera.

The polls indicate a demand for this kind of action, and we are going to have to respond. There can be some other positive surprises that are taken which redound to the credit of the whole process and the American people could benefit.

Every presidential candidate, and there are more of them now, and as we get more presidential candidates, then we have more ideas introduced. I do not think that this is a bad thing. I think each presidential candidate may be good for one idea.

I want to disclose the fact right away that I am an early AL GORE supporter. I am not going to hide that from people listening. But I think that the other candidates can have some good ideas.

I think Mr. Buchanan is a candidate I can never live with because Mr. Buchanan has declared that American should be a white Christian country, which means that he really does not think there is a place solidly for me and my children and my grandchildren; and he says a lot of other things that I could never agree with.

But Mr. Buchanan should be applauded for his idea on trade, that this American Nation occupy a kingpin position, where we can almost dictate the terms for world trade, has given in over and over and over again to demands and rules that tie the hands of American workers.

We have negotiated our trade policies for the benefit of their top 5 percent, the top income bracket. They have done very well on the kinds of things we have negotiated with world trade.

Now we have a new agreement with China, which compounds the problem and we go on into the same abyss. I cannot agree more wholeheartedly than any Buchanan supporter with that particular aspect of his platform that trade is a bit of a sell-out for the

American worker and we must do something to stop that. He has that one good idea. I would like to identify with that.

I would like to identify with Mr. Bradley's proposal that the Federal Government should be about doing things that are big and all encompassing. That certainly is something I would like to see Mr. Bradley develop in more detail.

I do not want a health care plan of the kind that he proposes where he wants to get rid of Medicaid. I think that is ridiculous. That is being big and stupid. That is being big and destructive. This is a big idea that could really cause a lot of suffering among people who are on the very bottom and among many of my constituents.

If you get rid of Medicaid in the process of trying to improve health care, you are going backwards and not forward. So I do not agree on that with Mr. Bradley.

But I hope he has some proposals on school construction and what the Federal roles should be in education, which are comparable to the role that they would be playing in a thing as important as education. I hope that Mr. Bradley will challenge the other candidates to come forward with big ideas.

We had a big idea when we decided to build the Transcontinental Railroad. The Federal Government built the Transcontinental Railroad, not private industry. We subsidized it. It was a big idea when we decided to create the land grant colleges and universities. Big idea. The Federal Government pushed that and created it. Big idea with the GI bill that offered education to every returning GI after World War II. Those big ideas paid off.

Medicaid was a big idea. Social Security was a big idea. All these big ideas, by the way, have been pushed and sponsored mostly by Democrats. And Democrats again should step up and provide the big idea at present.

We have to look at the school construction problem as being in the same category as the Transcontinental Railroad, as the interstate highway. We have to move in that way.

Mr. GORE, of course, has many ideas that I identify with. Mr. GORE has been there as we have had this transition of our government taking a very active role in the transition of our society into a sort of cyber-civilization, a new kind of civilization based on the Internet and computer and all the things related to that; and they have made proposals that have been very worthwhile for education and for our school system. I would like to see that continue.

And even bigger things should be made to happen by a person with Mr. GORE's background and experience and record. The track record is that the E-rate, which provides a 90 percent discount to the poorest schools for telecommunication services, was a product of this administration, which Mr. GORE is part of. The whole wiring of the schools and certain technology, lit-

eracy programs, have all come out of this administration that Mr. GORE has been a part of. We want to continue that kind of massive transformation of education and of society in general.

So I was talking about positive surprises that we may see in this election year, new kinds of activities to create a more dynamic dialogue, new ideas. And I have covered Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Bradley, Mr. GORE. And finally we come to Donald Trump, who recently made his entry into the presidential race.

I want to applaud Mr. Trump for producing an idea. I certainly am still a GORE supporter, but Mr. Trump has an idea which deserves examination. Mr. Trump has an idea which really is a blockbuster, it is revolutionary, it is sweeping, and it deserves to be considered.

Mr. Trump's idea is not so authentic that I can say that nobody else has thought about it at all, but he goes much further than most of us have gone. Certainly his idea that we should have a greater amount of tax on the richest Americans. Mr. Trump wants to impose a tax on the people who have assets above \$10 million.

Now, stop and think how many people do you know would be affected by that kind of tax. He wants to tax only people who have assets above \$10 million, and he wants to tax them one time at a rate of 14.5 percent and use the money realized from that tax to pay off the national debt. And then he wants to take the money that was being used every year to pay the national debt and funnel that into the system to cover the needs of Social Security; and there would be additional money left over, of course, for the safety net, Medicare, schools, education.

It is an idea which is quite broad and sweeping and has received quite a bit of ridicule by the people who have reacted immediately. However, before we dismiss it as being ridiculous, I think we ought to take a hard look at it.

I certainly find that it is compatible with a bill that I introduced a few months ago, H.R. 1099, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide more revenue for the Social Security system by imposing a tax on certain unearned income and to provide tax relief for more than 80 million individuals and families who pay more in Social Security than they pay in income taxes.

Now, I did not go as far as Mr. Trump did. Mr. Trump wants to tax unearned income assets. He wants to tax them far more broadly than I have proposed. And he wants to do that in order to get rid of the national debt.

I only propose a slight increase in taxes of people who have great assets, unearned income; and I wanted enough to be able to have that 80 million group of individuals and families who are paying now more Social Security tax than they are paying in income taxes.

Over the last two decades, the biggest percentage jump in taxes has been

the payroll tax. The Social Security tax, the Medicare tax, combined, they have created a larger percentage increase in taxes than income taxes have increased. That means that the people at the very bottom who have no choice but to pay the payroll taxes are paying a greater percentage now than they were paying 20 years ago. They got the biggest percentage increase. We need to have some relief for those people.

That was my concern when I introduced H.R. 1099. I said the way to deal with that is to tax the unearned income, the assets of the richest people in order to get enough money to provide the relief for the poorest people. Mr. Trump says he wants to provide relief for the middle-income people as well. If you have a 14.5 percent tax on the assets of all people who have more than \$10 million in assets, his economists calculate that would be enough to pay off the national debt. And once the national debt is paid off, you can use the interest we pay each year on the national debt in order to certainly make Social Security more secure and also to provide additional money for the safety net programs, including education and Medicare.

He wants to demand some things for that. He wants to get rid of the estate tax and do a few other things. But one should not lightly dismiss his proposal. Some people have said already, why do 14.5 percent one time? If it is a good idea, maybe you could do it over a 10-year period less, and it would not be such a shock to the economy. That makes sense. But the principle is established. The principle he is establishing is that the richest people in America can afford to come to the aid of the economy and the country and set a whole new standard, a whole new pattern for the way we deal with the budgeting in America. It is as revolutionary almost as Thomas Jefferson. The King of England thought Thomas Jefferson was a nut when he proposed that all men are created equal, that that was ridiculous. The one time that Thomas Jefferson had a chance to have an audience with the King of England, the King of England turned his back on Jefferson. He would not even talk to him. That revolutionary idea that all men are created equal was considered ridiculous in 1776. Now Trump says all rich people should step forward, and he is rich himself. He says that he is worth \$5 billion, that his assets total \$5 billion. He says that he would have to pay almost \$700 million in this new tax that he proposes. And he is willing to do it. He says there are many other rich people who could do it, too, and never know that they lost that amount of money. They would never know it is gone.

I heard on a talk show in New York City yesterday, a couple of other rich people called in and said that they do not mind some version of this, they would not mind paying more taxes if it will help provide for decent health services and decent educational serv-

ices. It is something that the rich can ponder. They would be indeed history-making. Never before in the history of mankind have those with wealth and means come forward and said, we will make a revolution from the top, from the top we will begin to deal with a problem of the redistribution of the tax burden. We always talked about the redistribution of the wealth and it would scare the hell out of people. They say you are a Communist if you talk about redistribution of wealth too loudly. But here is a rich man who says, let us redistribute the tax burden, let us have the people who are mega-millionaires and billionaires, making so much money now that it is hard for us to comprehend.

What is Bill Gates worth? Every day it jumps by billions. At the end of last year, I heard he was worth \$40 billion. But he agreed to give away \$40 billion a few months ago. He must be worth \$60 billion now, some people estimated yesterday in the talk show. I do not know. I doubt if he knows. Because of the nature of wealth creation, it is not dependent on oil in the earth, the number of barrels that can be pumped, it is not dependent on mining gold, it is dependent on intellectual capital, people buying intellectual products, his software, his various other ventures. It is mushrooming all the time. Of course if you get a trade agreement with China, with more than 1 billion customers out there, a certain percentage of those are middle-class, well-educated, they are going to use computers too, and software, et cetera, et cetera. There is no end, it is infinite, the possible wealth of Bill Gates and the people in the various information technology industries, Cisco, ITT, it goes on and on. Wealth being created on a scale that we cannot even comprehend. If we are at this point in history accumulating wealth at that scale and most of the wealth, a large percentage of it is redounding to the United States population, 1 percent, 5 percent, the people at the very top, then is it not in order to stop and think about the fact that these people can never spend it, that it would be no harm to them to pay a greater percentage of this money than they now pay in taxes?

The Roman Empire at the point when its armies were bringing in large amounts of booty, large amounts of treasures were won by war, violence. They brought back the treasures, they made Rome rich beyond anybody's comprehension at that time. The Roman Empire leaders decreed that all the citizens of Rome should be paid. Because they had so much money, they got rid of all the taxes and they said they should be paid a certain amount of money every year, every citizen. They had that much money. And the citizens of Rome were defined in a small category. As soon as they started that policy, all the suburban Romans and all the rural Romans and everybody nearby moved into Rome. Of course it went bankrupt. It was a pol-

icy that was doomed to failure because if you define citizens of Rome as the people who live there, more people are going to come in to live there, and the booty, the treasures that they brought back from their violent conquests was not infinite. There was not a Bill Gates Windows 95, Windows 98 and other software products which as long as there are human brains and there are human brains out there working together, they will keep producing intellectual products for sale. There is a limit to how much violent conquest can produce. So the Roman policy failed. But it was a revolutionary kind of policy, to think that the treasury of a government is so great that we will give every citizen some part of it.

What Donald Trump is saying now is that we have such prosperity now and the people in his class, the billionaires and the mega-millionaires, are making so much money until they would not really miss it if you were to tax them 14.5 percent of their assets and get rid of the national debt overnight and use that interest you pay on the national debt for other things.

I think you can see now that an idea like that arouses great optimism in me. I am optimistic if that is going to be interjected into the debate in this presidential election. All we have been hearing so far about taxes is the flat tax, and everybody that I know, every honest economist has said that that is a Steve Forbes rip-off, that the flat tax will produce definitely more money for the people who have the most money already. Unfortunately, the other candidates have not talked loudly about taxes at all because the word "tax" is something we politicians try to avoid. Just by itself the word "tax" arouses great animosity among voters. Here is a man who announced his candidacy by talking about taxes. I think it is so significant that it should not be ignored. We should use it as a key for a new kind of discussion. It should set the tone for a new kind of discussion.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to submit for the RECORD the article that appeared in the New York Times on November 10 which discussed Mr. Trump's launching his presidential career by proposing a new tax. I am going to just read a few excerpts from it before I submit it. This is an article by Adam Nagourney on November 10, 1999, in the New York Times:

"Trump, describing the first proposal of his exploratory presidential campaign, said the government should impose a one-time 14.25 percent tax on the assets of individuals and trusts worth \$10 million or more. That would raise \$5.7 trillion, he said, enough to pay off the national debt in a single year. And eliminating the debt, Trump explained, would save the Nation \$200 billion in annual interest payments, money that he said could be used for tax cuts and ensuring the stability of the Social Security system.

"The New York developer chose an unusual forum to unveil what he describes as a policy cornerstone of his

prospective campaign: a rolling series of radio and television interviews." In a rolling series, he will deal with these proposals again and again.

"Trump's plan met a response that ranged from incredulity to ridicule from a number of economists Tuesday. They suggested that a 14.25 percent tax would be impossible to get through a Republican-controlled Congress that has previously championed a \$792 billion tax cut this year. Beyond that, they said that even if it passed, it would be problematic to measure net worth and then to tax it."

And on and on it goes. There could be many objections made to this proposal. Mr. Trump said himself that his own net worth is \$5 billion and that under his plan, he would owe \$750 million in taxes in this one year. But he would profit, it says in parentheses, because a part of his plan calls for a repeal of the 55 percent estate tax. I mean, there are some pieces in there where you are going to be trading off for this plan.

Now, why am I trumpeting it here and do I think it could ever occur? I do not think so, but why not a modified version of this? Why not take a hard look at the assets of the billionaires and the mega-millionaires? I think Germany already has an asset tax, an asset tax of, I think, 1 percent. So an asset tax is not out of the question. But can we change the dialogue? The dialogue now says we will never have universal health care. We cannot even have a decent patients' bill of rights because it costs too much money. The dialogue now says we can never have all the money we need for education. Even the improvement of education in small ways costs so much money that we are retreating from that. They wanted to move away from the President's proposal to give more teachers for the classrooms and to bring down the ratio of children in the classroom to the teacher. After agreeing to that last year, they now want to bring it down very low, and with the recent proposals that have been discussed in these budget negotiations I understand have been concluded, they will honor the pledge and we will have that program restored at a slight increase, \$1.3 billion I hear instead of \$1.2 billion but they are going to have a proviso that allows them to take part of the money and do other things with it.

Mr. Speaker, \$1.3 billion is a lot of money. I do not take lightly sums of money when they get to the million dollar mark. It is hard for me to conceive of a million dollars. I am the son of a poor factory worker who all his life worked for minimum wages. So it is all important. It is all big. But when you look at the needs that are there and you look at the needs that are there in education in modern terms, 50 years ago we would not think of spending \$3.5 billion on an aircraft carrier. Fifty years ago nobody would have thought of an F-22 system, a series of planes that would cost billions and billions of dollars, or a B-1 bomber. You

would not have 50 years ago talked about being able to conceive of a CIA, a Central Intelligence Agency which costs \$30 billion a year to run. So in modern terms to spend \$110 billion over a 10-year period to build schools is conservative, not radical. We need that kind of money. And if we happen to get that kind of money by having new taxes, the only taxes we should think about are taxes on the people who can afford to pay more taxes.

I am optimistic that the debate cannot be avoided. I am optimistic about the fact that each presidential candidate's campaign will have to step up to the plate and talk in new terms about the way we fund our government and offer new kinds of excuses about not being able to provide a decent health care system as well as a decent education system.

I include the entirety of this article for the RECORD, Mr. Speaker.

[From the New York Times, Nov. 10, 1999]

TRUMP PROPOSES CLEARING NATION'S DEBT AT
EXPENSE OF THE RICH
(By Adam Nagourney)

Preparing to embark on his first trip as a prospective candidate for president, Donald J. Trump Tuesday presented a plan that he said would pay off the national debt, bolster Social Security and slash taxes by billions of dollars. Trump promised to accomplish all this at no cost to ordinary Americans, by forcing the rich to pay for it.

Trump, describing the first proposal of his exploratory presidential campaign, said the government should impose a one-time 14.25 percent tax on the assets of individuals and trusts worth \$10 million or more. That would raise \$5.7 trillion, he said, enough to pay off the national debt in a single year. And eliminating the debt, Trump explained, would save the nation \$200 billion in annual interest payments, money that he said could be used for tax cuts and ensuring the stability of the Social Security system.

The New York developer chose an unusual forum to unveil what he described as a policy cornerstone of his prospective campaign: a rolling series of radio and television interviews. The proposal comes a week before Trump is to fly to Florida for a series of campaign-style events in Miami, the first of three such trips planned for the next month. "The phones are going off the hook," Trump reported, as he combined a discussion of his economic ideas with a description of what he described as the public's giddy reaction to his foray into economic policy-making. "I've never seen anything like this. Do you make Page 1 with this one?"

As a matter of politics, Trump's proposal—simple in its concept and framed in populist terms—seems aimed directly at the people who have supported the Reform Party since Ross Perot first called it to arms with, among other things, a call to wipe out the national debt. Trump, should he run, said he would seek to become the Reform Party's candidate for president.

It also had the advantage of lessening any liability Trump might believe he could suffer because of his own reputation as a man of wealth. The developer put his own net worth at \$5 billion, and said that under his plan, he would owe \$750 million in taxes (though his estate would ultimately profit if another part of Trump's plan were enacted: the repeal of the 55 percent estate tax).

Trump's plan met a response that ranged from incredulity to ridicule from a number of economists Tuesday. They suggested that

a 14.25 percent tax would be impossible to get through a Republican-controlled Congress that championed a \$792 billion tax cut this year. Beyond that, they said that even if it passed it would be problematic to measure net worth and then to tax it.

"I don't think the plan makes much economic sense," said Stephen Moore, director of fiscal policy studies at the libertarian Cato Institute. "The fact is that most people's wealth that has been built up over 10, 20 or 50 years is wealth that has already been taxed."

Trump's main opponent for the Reform Party nomination, Patrick J. Buchanan, offered a harsher assessment of Trump's plan. "This is serious wacko stuff," Buchanan said by telephone from Albany.

Buchanan predicted that Trump's plan would cause the wealthy to move their holdings beyond the reach of the Internal Revenue Service. "I can't think of a better idea to cause capital flight out of the United States," Buchanan said.

Trump said he had come up with the idea on his own and worked out its details with some private economists. He declined to name them.

He rejected criticism of his idea, demanding: "Where is Gore's plan? Where is Bradley's plan? Where is Bush's plan? They don't exist."

Still, it was clear that some parts of Trump's proposal remained unformed. For example, of the \$200 billion in interest costs that would be saved, he said he would apply half to the Social Security system and the rest to tax reduction.

Trump said that \$20 billion of that would pay for eliminating the inheritance tax. Asked how he would allocate the rest, he responded: "All different taxes across the board. That would be determined and worked out."

I also want to just backtrack a minute and say as we close out this session, I talked about a number of things that I wish we had covered that we did not cover.

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I was delighted when this morning I saw them put on the calendar a bill which dealt with something which I was concerned with some time ago and never saw any action on. Suddenly I got a notice that we had put H.Con.Res. 128 on the calendar, and that is a resolution to express the sense of Congress regarding treatment of religious minorities in Iran, particularly Members of the Jewish community.

Now, I said to my staff, I want to go over and speak on that. I have been waiting for that. Back in August, on August 28, I read an article in the paper and it talked about the fact that 13 Jews would not be tried in Iran as spies for Israel, and I talked to some people on the Committee on International Relations, and they said yes, we are going to bring up a resolution to deal with that, and it never happened.

In August of this year, we were still very much preoccupied, of course, with Kosovo and ethnic cleansing. One article I read, not the one I read in the paper, but a larger article in a magazine, it talked about the fact that in Iran and Iraq and the Arab countries, there was massive removal of Jewish communities going on for the last 25

years. Large numbers of Jews in large Jewish communities in these countries had been moved. Nobody ever brought forth an international outcry about ethnic cleansing, but ethnic cleansing of that kind has been going on for a long time. Now we only have tiny Jewish communities, very small amounts of Jews still in countries like Iran and Iraq, and here is a situation where a small group has been singled out for persecution.

On August 28, the article reads as follows: "Iran's courts are prepared to try 13 Iranian Jews on charges of spying for Israel. Israel has repeatedly denied any link to the 13 who face a near certain death sentence if convicted under a 1996 law punishing spies for Israel or the United States." The case took on a new gravity after an official was quoted as saying "the accused belong to a spy network directly linked to Israel and that they were spying for the United States." Quote, "This regime was definitely involved in the spying," end of quote, an unidentified official said in today's issue of the conservative Tehran Times, which is close to Iran judiciary and intelligence services.

The newspaper said the official had also alleged that the 13 were spying for the United States. The official was also quoted as saying "an unspecified number of Muslims had also been arrested in connection with the case. The charges mean that the defendants are likely to be tried in one of Iran's hard-line revolutionary courts."

That was August 28 of this year. Today we put on the calendar a resolution regarding the treatment of religious minorities in Iran, because I hear that those 13 are still awaiting trial and the trial will take place soon. I do not know why we took that off the calendar. It is very important now because this week we have had to see the phenomenon of the joyous approval of an agreement with China, World Trade Organization agreement; China is going to be admitted to the World Trade Organization, and all of the persecutions of the Chinese Communist government and all of the things that they have done, suddenly they have been pushed in the background.

Mr. Speaker, I would hate to see the day arrive when we are going to allow Iran to join the World Trade Organization and we are going to negotiate a trade agreement with Iran and not deal with all of these problems.

Today there is an article in The New York Times about the wartime accounts found in Swiss banks. Instead of them being a small amount that Swiss banks agreed to, they said they only had 755 accounts of Jews who were killed in the Holocaust; yet it turns out that they have 45,000, 45,000 accounts that they now admit were accounts of the Jews in the Holocaust. Are we going to talk about prosecutors and Swiss bankers at the world court tribunal the way we are considering the prosecution of people who are re-

sponsible for the massacres in Kosovo and Bosnia?

Mr. Speaker, I just think that as we close out, there should be room on the calendar, and I hope that if there is going to be any more business unrelated to the budget, but certainly we will bring back that resolution as we close out and let the world know that the ethnic cleansing, we do not have to send bombers and we did not send bombers a long time ago to bomb Iran and we have not advocated that activity and I certainly do not propose that we do that, but our moral authority should be brought to bear another kind of ethnic cleansing that Jews have been doing in all of these Arab countries, especially in Iran, and now the continuation of it in such a bold way certainly ought to be brought to the attention of the American people and the Congress ought to weigh in and give its own moral opinion.

Mr. Speaker, I want to continue the train of thought that I set forth before that we are closing out the first session of the 106th Congress with great disappointment, but I am optimistic that the second session will be very productive, because I think the stage for a second session which is more productive will be set by the presidential debates and the presidential contests, as well as the contest for a new Congress. I do not want to imply that I do not think that the contest to elect a new Congress is less important than the presidential election.

We intend to have a Democratic majority, and that Democratic majority will be based on the fact that the people look at the lack of achievements of the first session of the 106th Congress and begin to demand a change and vote for a change.

It is certainly of great need in my district, New York City. It seems that the newspapers and the powerful people that control decision-making have suddenly discovered that the board of education in our city is on the verge of collapse, and that education, the educational deficiencies that we have talked about for many years are true.

All of this is being brought to a head by a class action suit that is now going forward in the Federal court at 60 Center Street in New York. The Federal court is hearing a case brought by a group called the Campaign for Fiscal Equity, and the case is being brought against the State of New York because the conditions in the city schools are partially that way because of the lack of fair State aid, or fair distribution of State aid.

New York City, with 38 percent of the children in the State, receives only 35 percent of the State aid money; and that is a great improvement over the way it was 5 years ago. Over the years, the gap has closed. There was one point where we received far less in State aid where communities outside of New York City and upstate received a far greater percentage of State aid per pupil. The court case, the plaintiffs are

charging, and rightly so, that we do not get enough money to live up to the requirement of the State constitution that all children be educated adequately. We need more money in order to provide adequate education.

They have gone further and said that the schools that are suffering either in New York City or in the big city of Buffalo, big cities like Buffalo and Syracuse are in some of the suburban schools. Those schools are all schools that have minority youngsters, either African American youngsters or Hispanic youngsters, so that there is a racial component. The suit is charging two things, not only that the State has failed to provide the funds necessary for an adequate education for all children, but the State is also discriminating, because the pattern is that the places that are getting less money per pupil, per child, happen to be places where we have concentrations of minorities.

Now, that court suit has generated more attention from the press to the great problems that exist in New York City schools. As a result, one day last week we had the New York Post carry articles about the fact that the cafeterias of certain schools in the poorest areas had rats and roaches, signs of rats and roaches in the cafeteria. The same day there was a big article in the Daily News about the fact that in those same schools where the minorities are concentrated and of course youngsters are concentrated, up to half of the teachers are not certified to teach. Where we need the best teachers we have the worst teachers because of the problem of the lack of certification.

The problem of certification of teachers goes on as being discussed, and I welcome that discussion in the newspapers. We cannot really take full advantage of the President's fight that I think now has been won, the battle has been won, to provide more teachers to the classroom who are qualified if we do not have certified teachers. So it is imperative that the unfinished business of this Congress be followed through next year by providing more funds and more programs to generate more teachers. We have to have a greater pool of teachers because we are in a situation now where because there is a great shortage of teachers, the best teachers, the teachers who passed the tests and are certified, they leave New York City and go to the suburbs, and we are left with those who are unqualified and are not certified in large numbers.

This is just one of the many problems. The New York Times has an editorial which talks about the bidding for teachers.

Now, am I laying this problem solely on the doorstep of the Federal Government? No, I am not. But bidding for qualified teachers requires more funding. Most of that funding would not come from the Federal Government. So I would like to add that it is very important for the Federal Government to

continue its role as a stimulus. The Federal Government's role in education is a very small one proportionally. We only provide 6 or 7 percent of the total education funds in this Nation, and that includes higher education. So the other 93 percent of the funding for education comes from the States and from the local governments.

We must set standards for the States and local governments in certain critical areas and force them to spend more of their money on education. In my own City of New York, last year they had a surplus of \$2 billion, more revenue was collected, \$2 billion more than was spent. But the mayor of the city and the city council has to bear part of the blame for this also, chose not to spend a single dime on education. We cannot blame the Federal Government for that.

These problems that are being unearthed with respect to lack of certified teachers, poor conditions in the cafeterias, et cetera, they must be approached from the city level as well, and the State level; the State Government had a \$2 billion surplus also.

These are very prosperous times, and we had surpluses. The New York State legislature, both the legislature and the assembly, passed a bill to spend \$500 million to repair schools, for schools that need repair most. There are schools that still have coal-burning furnaces; there are schools that have asbestos problems; schools that have lead in the pipes. They wanted to deal with some of those problems, but the Republican governor vetoed a bill to provide \$500,000 for that.

So we cannot blame it totally on the Federal Government, but the example has to be set by the Federal Government. The role of the Federal Government in education, as small as it is, has been a very positive one because they have stimulated new standards at the State level, new kinds of competencies. We never had State education plans before the Federal Government got involved under Lyndon Johnson. We never had standards, discussions about standards in curriculum. There are a whole set of positive things that have happened in education as a result of Federal leadership. Federal leadership provided the impetus, and that is as important as any other thing that the Federal Government does.

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If we make them, expose them to their own constituencies, the States and cities will spend more money for education, but we can only do that if the Federal government takes a greater initiative.

I have always said that at the dawn of the 21st century we should see ourselves as creating a new cyber civilization. That cyber civilization demands that there be more brain power. Brains are going to drive the next century. Everybody agrees on that, and if that is the case, we should give our highest priority to the development. No indi-

viduals in America should be left in a situation where they do not have the fullest opportunity to develop their brain power.

To do this, we need to launch a highly visible effort to revamp the infrastructure of the school systems of America. H.R. 3071, a bill I have introduced which calls for spending \$110 billion over a 10-year period, is the kind of adequate response that we need to the problem of decaying infrastructure.

Me and my colleagues who were here 2 hours ago speaking on the floor talked about the atrocities with respect to overcrowding in their schools across the country. We can only deal with that if we have a massive Federal intervention which, in addition to providing the funds needed to build some schools, would stimulate the States and cities to also participate.

I am optimistic about next year. For those people who called me and said, well, they are closing out the year and you have no money for construction, are you not sad, no. I never expected this year to end with new money for construction. Even H.R. 1660, offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), which all members of the Democratic Caucus support and we have been pushing, even that token response was not allowed on the floor.

I am not surprised. Next year the Republican majority will have to respond. Next year the candidates for president will have to respond. The American people want and demand that our education systems be revamped. We have to start with a substantial action like school construction and repair, and new school security.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to call attention. Earlier this afternoon there were speakers on the floor who challenged a press conference that was held this morning. I wanted to, and my colleague, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY), wanted to try to set the record straight on this press conference.

In fact, there were several of the Democratic women who today unveiled a sad symbol of this Congress' inaction on the very important issue of gun safety, gun safety legislation. The Columbine clock was unveiled. It ticks off the days, the hours, the minutes, the seconds since the Columbine tragedy, which was at 1:30 p.m. on April 12, 211 days ago, 211 days and 3 hours.

It represents the inaction of this Congress on an issue of absolute importance to American families, to their families and to their children.

Since April 20, many of my colleagues, many of the Democratic women in this House of Representatives, have worked hard to address the issue of gun safety and gun violence in a very thorough and thoughtful way,

but for the last 7 months the Republican leadership has consistently obstructed every single attempt to pass meaningful gun safety measures in this body.

This is done so despite overwhelming support among mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, grandmothers across this great country of ours to pass sensible measures: child safety locks, closing the loophole on background checks at gun shows, banning the importation of the high capacity ammunition clips.

This is legislation that was passed in the Senate, a bipartisan piece of legislation, a compromise piece of legislation. We are asking that the Conference Committee on Juvenile Justice which takes up the issue of gun safety please meet, do something, respond to the will of the people in this country. In fact, it is a conference committee that has met one time, one time; no debate, no discussion, no clarity of thought on what direction we take on gun safety measures in this country.

No one here is grandstanding. No one here is saying, let us not have a piece of legislation because what we want to do is to keep this issue around. That is not why we were sent here. We were sent here to do the people's business in the people's House.

Every single day 13 children die from gunfire in this country. It is wrong. That is why we had the clock, as a way to say the days, the hours, the seconds, the minutes are being ticked off and our kids are dying. Guns are getting into the hands of criminals and children. It is wrong.

If we are not going to do anything about it in this final day, these final days of the 106th session, we commit to the American public that we will spend every single day, minute, hour, and second of the next year of this session working hard to pass gun safety legislation in this country to protect our families and protect our children.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I am optimistic about gun safety passing, and it is because of the gentlewomen here.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY).

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, hopefully we will bring this issue up next year and work for it and get it passed.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to address some of the things said earlier in this Chamber and try and set the record straight. Number one, there is an awful lot of us that do not want this to be a political issue.

I personally do not think it should be a political issue. To me, it is not a Republican or a Democratic issue, it is the issue of the American people. That is why we had the clock, the Columbine clock, to remind people, because there has unfortunately been that terrible incident that woke up the American people to the gun violence that we sit here and talk about.

I of all people certainly do know what it is to remember the violence in

this country. In a couple of weeks, it will be the 6th year anniversary of the Long Island Railroad Massacre, where my husband was killed and a number of my neighbors were killed, and my son was injured, and an awful lot of people were injured on that.

We do not want the American people to forget the pain that is left with so many victims, so we here in Congress are trying to stop future pain to our children and to American citizens.

It can be taken off the table as far as a political issue. Let us all meet together at a conference. That is all we have been asking for. We are hearing this and that. I am on the conferees, and we have not met.

I have to tell the Members, if the NRA amendment had passed in this House, it was more than just being imperfect, it was dangerous. If the NRA amendment had been law over the first 6 months of 1999, 17,000 people who were stopped by our current background check system would now be armed. In fact, if the 24-hour policy had been in effect, we know of cases where murderers, rapists, and kidnappers would be walking around with guns.

This has nothing to do with second amendment rights, this has to do with keeping guns out of the hands of criminals. That is what we are supposed to do. But fortunately, and I will say this, Republicans and Democrats did work together, and together we prevented the NRA amendment from becoming law.

I think that is important here, because when we speak to the people, the American people, and it does not matter whether they are Republicans or Democrats, they want something done. That is what this House is supposed to be doing.

That is why we had the Columbine clock, to remind the American people that we still have time to do something before we leave. I know there are many of us that are willing to work through Thanksgiving, through Christmas, to make sure that our citizens are safe.

We have all tried to work in a bipartisan manner. We certainly have had people on both sides of the aisle support my amendment, which would have closed the gun show loophole, made sure that criminals and especially children do not get their hands on guns. I think that is what we have to do.

We should have passed safety reform in this Congress, real gun safety reform that keeps the guns out of the hands of felons. That is what we did not do in this Congress, and I am sorry for that, because each day that we have not done something we continue to lose victims across this country. We continue to see too much pain. That is not what this country is about.

I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) and I thank my colleague, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), for letting us answer these questions.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for joining me.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EWING). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DREIER) at 11 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.

TICKET TO WORK AND WORK INCENTIVES IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1999

Mr. ARMEY submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 1180) to amend the Social Security Act to expand the availability of health care coverage for working individuals with disabilities, to establish a Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program in the Social Security Administration to provide such individuals with meaningful opportunities to work, and for other purposes:

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 106-478)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1180), to amend the Social Security Act to expand the availability of health care coverage for working individuals with disabilities, to establish a Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program in the Social Security Administration to provide such individuals with meaningful opportunities to work, and for other purposes, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the Senate amendment, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the “Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999”.

(b) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—The table of contents is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Findings and purposes.

TITLE I—TICKET TO WORK AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND RELATED PROVISIONS

Subtitle A—Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency

Sec. 101. Establishment of the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program.

Subtitle B—Elimination of Work Disincentives

Sec. 111. Work activity standard as a basis for review of an individual's disabled status.

Sec. 112. Expedited reinstatement of disability benefits.

Subtitle C—Work Incentives Planning, Assistance, and Outreach

Sec. 121. Work incentives outreach program.

Sec. 122. State grants for work incentives assistance to disabled beneficiaries.

TITLE II—EXPANDED AVAILABILITY OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES

Sec. 201. Expanding State options under the medicaid program for workers with disabilities.

Sec. 202. Extending medicare coverage for OASDI disability benefit recipients.

Sec. 203. Grants to develop and establish State infrastructures to support working individuals with disabilities.

Sec. 204. Demonstration of coverage under the medicaid program of workers with potentially severe disabilities.

Sec. 205. Election by disabled beneficiaries to suspend medigap insurance when covered under a group health plan.

TITLE III—DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS AND STUDIES

Sec. 301. Extension of disability insurance program demonstration project authority.

Sec. 302. Demonstration projects providing for reductions in disability insurance benefits based on earnings.

Sec. 303. Studies and reports.

TITLE IV—MISCELLANEOUS AND TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS

Sec. 401. Technical amendments relating to drug addicts and alcoholics.

Sec. 402. Treatment of prisoners.

Sec. 403. Revocation by members of the clergy of exemption from social security coverage.

Sec. 404. Additional technical amendment relating to cooperative research or demonstration projects under titles II and XVI.

Sec. 405. Authorization for State to permit annual wage reports.

Sec. 406. Assessment on attorneys who receive their fees via the Social Security Administration.

Sec. 407. Extension of authority of State medicaid fraud control units.

Sec. 408. Climate database modernization.

Sec. 409. Special allowance adjustment for student loans.

Sec. 410. Schedule for payments under SSI state supplementation agreements.

Sec. 411. Bonus commodities.

Sec. 412. Simplification of definition of foster child under EIC.

Sec. 413. Delay of effective date of organ procurement and transplantation network final rule.

TITLE V—TAX RELIEF EXTENSION ACT OF 1999

Sec. 500. Short title of title.

Subtitle A—Extensions

Sec. 501. Allowance of nonrefundable personal credits against regular and minimum tax liability.

Sec. 502. Research credit.

Sec. 503. Subpart F exemption for active financing income.

Sec. 504. Taxable income limit on percentage depletion for marginal production.

Sec. 505. Work opportunity credit and welfare-to-work credit.

Sec. 506. Employer-provided educational assistance.

Sec. 507. Extension and modification of credit for producing electricity from certain renewable resources.

Sec. 508. Extension of duty-free treatment under Generalized System of Preferences.

Sec. 509. Extension of credit for holders of qualified zone academy bonds.

Sec. 510. Extension of first-time homebuyer credit for District of Columbia.

Sec. 511. Extension of expensing of environmental remediation costs.