

I am going to suggest respectfully that there is no energy policy. I have said it once and I will say it again. The only energy policy this administration has had is to be on knee pads begging OPEC to produce more oil.

That is not America. It is for us to set a policy, it is for the next President to set a policy to make sure that we are no longer dependent upon the OPEC countries.

Coal, massive amounts across the Nation and Alaska being discouraged. Nuclear is not being utilized. It is being shut down. Natural gas, the demand has gotten so high now gas has gone from \$2.15 a million to, in fact, \$5.40 today. Now, that to me is wrong.

If we can find, which we know we have when we are given the opportunities and areas are open, we can become at least 50 percent dependent upon ourselves. And my colleagues out there think businesses can be run with 57 percent of their companies owned by someone else, if they think they can do what they want to do when 57 percent is owned by someone else, they are sadly mistaken and know little about business or the economy.

And that is where the United States is today, 57 percent today, 60 percent by the year 2005 unless there is a change in the energy policy.

My State, yes, is an energy-producing State. Thank God for that. It was on this floor in the House right here in 1973 that we passed the pipeline bill that delivered to this Nation 16 billion barrels of oil spent in our country, not spent overseas, in our country. And to show my colleagues the results, the caribou herd is stronger, the environment is safer. And very frankly, this Nation needed it badly in 1973 because of the embargo; and it needs it today.

I ask America to wake up about energy. Think about where we are going to be if we do not change that policy. George W. Bush mentioned it last night in the debate. We must have an energy policy today that increases the development and the production and the ability to refine our energy policy.

NIGHTSIDE CHAT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TANCREDO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I have listened a good deal to the previous comments, and I was wondering if the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) could answer the question or go into a little more depth about the specific area in which this exploration has taken place.

It sounded as if it was in the middle of a national park in the middle of a wildlife refuge. I thought maybe it would be interesting to hear from the gentleman just the dynamics of Alaska, how much of the land is owned by Alaska, and maybe compare the size of Alaska to Texas for example. And so, I

think the comments of the gentleman are very appropriate.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I am glad he asked that question. Because the area which we are talking about, the area called the 10-02 Area in the Arctic National Wildlife Range, is a very small part of 19 million acres. It is approximately 1,200,000 acres. And of that 12,000 acres would be disturbed. But it is only 74 miles away from the existing oil field and pipeline, 74 miles, which is a very small distance to tie these two areas in.

It is an area that this Congress set aside when they passed the Alaska National Land bill by Senator JACKSON and Senator STEVENS because we knew the potential of the oil being there. And by the way, Mr. and Mrs. America, this is your oil. This is not the State of Alaska's oil.

My goal is to try to make us more independent so we are not dependent on the foreign countries. This very small area that is not, by the way, the pristine area that people talked about, it is probably the most hostile area. And that is why I referred to the picture that the gentleman spoke before me about ANWAR was a picture that was false, false, false.

I want people to remember that. It is a made-up picture or a picture taken in the southern part of that 19 million acres. And I ought to know because I live in that area. And so, when people say we are going to destroy the environment, and I listened to the Vice President talking about destroying the crown jewel, Alaska is the largest State, 2½ times the size of Texas.

We have more wilderness than any other area in the United States including all the States put together. We have more pristine areas in the State of Alaska than any other area. They will never be touched by man. But this one area has the potential, very small as it is, to provide for the Nation itself so we are not dependent upon the Saddam Husseins a million barrels a day for the next 100 years.

Now, keep that in mind what I have just said, by the next 100 years. Some people say I am exaggerating, that it is not true. This is exactly fact. And when someone says, we do not need the oil, it is only 6 months' times, that means we have no other production and would be totally dependent on Alaska and we never ever expected that. But we should be able to provide at least that million barrels a day so we do not have to buy it from Saddam Hussein. That is what is important to me.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman does not mind, as the gentleman knows, our colleagues that were up here spent most of an hour speaking about what a traumatic situation this was and how terrible this was going to be; and I do not think it was held in its proper perspective. So I think if the gentleman, for example,

would not mind going in a little more detail.

He said, when the original plan was drafted or the bill was passed, there was an area that was set aside for exploration. My understanding is now, when we talk about the 19 million acres, the gentleman said there is 1.2 million, but we are only talking about 12,000 acres of 19 million. Is that correct?

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. It would be 12,000 acres of 19 million will be totally disturbed by mankind. The rest of it is wilderness.

By the way, the Congress set this area aside because they knew the oil was there. And that is one of the reasons it should be opened up.

To give my colleagues an example, in the last 10 years we have lost actually 77 percent of our oil rigs because this administration has not promoted oil development. They have asked us to be dependent upon the foreign country. The domestic oil and gas industry has lost 500,000 jobs in the last decade.

It is ironic to me in this political arena in which sit, Mr. GORE, the Vice President, says, big oil, big oil is bad. Foreign oil is good. Big oil is bad. Buy it from the foreign countries and be dependent. That is good. Let us be domestically dependent on the other countries. No, that is bad.

So I am suggesting that Alaska wants to contribute to the ability of this country not to have to respond to the OPEC countries. And we are so close, 74 miles away. Remember, the pipeline is 400 miles long. We have the potential of 39 billion barrels of oil, and that is the largest reserve we know in the United States today.

And yet we have people talking about destroying the environment. The environment will not be destroyed. But keep in mind, what right do we have as Americans to buy oil from Russia, and yes, we are doing that; to buy oil from the OPEC countries? Do they have any safeguards? They do not. They spill more oil in Russia in one day in the pipeline than we did in the Exxon Valdez. And yet we want to buy oil from foreign countries to feed our appetites, that I would agree with. But each day we stop domestic production makes us more dependent, more responsive to the foreign desires. And they can run that price up.

If my colleagues want to blame somebody for the high price, blame this administration. Blame this administration for really discouraging domestic production. They do not have an energy policy, none whatsoever. And if they want to read an interesting book, read AL GORE's book. He wants to destroy the combustible engine, put everybody on bicycles, like they are in China. And yet the other day he said we have got to lower the price of gasoline because it is hurting our economy and the people.

The reason the prices are high is because the policy they have is to go to the OPEC countries and beg them to

produce more oil. If we were producing our own oil, then we would not have to beg, they would be producing at a level which we would be producing it and the price would be stabilized.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I might point out that while the Vice President has proposed in the last couple of weeks because, one, we are in a political season and, two, the price of gasoline has escalated rather dramatically, if we look at the Vice President's writings on his policy, his policy actually is to increase the taxes. It is clear. I am not taking this out of context. His policy is you raise the price, you put more taxes on gasoline; and that is the only real policy I have seen.

But let me shift gears for a moment. If the gentleman would not mind, I know I am taking the time of the gentleman, but I was wondering if the gentleman would not explain, when we talk to our colleagues here about the pipeline, if he would explain a little more about what the pipeline consists of, how that project was handled and how they addressed the environmental issues when they put in ANWAR. Talk a little bit about that just to acquaint our colleagues with what is going on in Alaska.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I was the sponsor of the pipeline bill; and it passed August in 1973 because we were in an embargo. The OPEC countries placed an embargo and our gasoline went from 23 cents to 54 cents, and we were frankly out of oil.

We passed it here in 1973. We told the companies to build it in 3 years, and they did; and in 1976 they had the first barrel of oil that flowed through that line. And by the way, it all went to the United States. It did not go to Japan. All of it went to the United States. And we have produced about 16 billion barrels of oil.

At the crisis of the Gulf War, for instance, we were producing 2,200,000 barrels a day. It averaged a million barrels a day. It has the capacity of 2 million barrels. But we put that pipeline in with all the safeguards that we can possibly have available in those days. That has been a long time, approximately 28 years ago.

We put crossings for caribou to cross over at the cost of about \$50 million. And by the way, they do not use them. They crawl under the pipeline because they like to be under the pipeline.

The caribou herd has increased dramatically many fold over. Actually, the wildlife all the way around has increased. We have had, they say, a thousand spills. That is pure poppycock if I may say so. Because up there they call it a spill and they are very good about reporting it. If there is one drop of oil somewhere from a squirt gun or an oil can or the bottom of a truck, that is reported.

There has been no major spill at all in this pipeline from the time it was constructed. The one people hear about is the Exxon Valdez. That was the re-

sponsibility of one man, one captain that made an abrupt turn; and why we will never know.

But in the meantime, I remind the American people that that oil which you receive is oil that we would not have to buy from the OPEC countries; and if we could produce 2 million barrels a day, which we could with ANWAR, and, remember, it is your oil, if we could produce 2 million barrels a day, that means we would be that less dependent upon those foreign countries.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, what concerns me about the discussions that we have been having on the Alaskan oil is that the emotions get in the way, I think, of looking at the facts. One, the fact of what are the requirements of the United States? What is the dependency of the United States? What happens if the United States becomes dependent, as we have seen, on foreign countries? What happens to our economy? What happens to everything from medicine and so on?

On the other hand, we need to not let our emotions become so charged with the price of oil that we ignore environmental safeguards.

And so, my reason in talking with the gentleman is for his explanations of the safeguards. And I think he has done a good job that, with the environment, we have spent \$50 million on the caribou for example. Well, that one was not justified because the caribou do not use it. There are a lot of environmental expenses that are taken into consideration and a lot of sensitivities that, rightfully so, are observed.

This is not a sign-off to some company to go up and drill where they want. This is probably the most scrutinized project in the United States I would guess.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I am glad the gentleman brought this up, because it is scrutinized Federally and by the State, the EPA, the DEC, the Corps of Engineers, the Coast Guard, and Fish and Wildlife; and it meets every criteria for safety in the promotion of wildlife.

I go back to this picture again. These are caribou, and this is the oil field. These are caribou and calves, and this is the oil field. And by the way, many times they talked about the caribou herd, the porcupine caribou herd and how their calving area will be disturbed. And I have said all along, caribou calve when they want to calve and where they want to calve. And guess what, the last 2 years they have not calved anywhere near this area we want to drill in.

The myth that is put forth by interest groups to somehow say we are better off buying oil from other countries where they do terrible damage environmentally with no safeguards when ours have all these supervisory agencies over them is wrong.

And each one of you, Mr. and Mrs. America, as you go up to that pump, you are paying the OPEC countries, you are not paying the United States.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) is reminded that he must address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Well, Mr. and Mrs. America in the gallery, then. I can address somebody I hope.

Mr. Speaker, I want to get back to the concept. Let us look at energy.

Now, you cannot conserve your way into prosperity, nor can you conserve your way into independence with fuel or energy. And that is the suggestion of AL GORE, we are going to have conservation that will solve our problem. Not as our population increases. That is an impossibility. It is not correct.

So I am suggesting we must think about where we find our oil and our gas. And we have it in Alaska. It can be done and has been done and is environmentally safe. We must allow this to happen for America. We must not allow the OPEC countries to control us, as they are doing now.

□ 1545

They are the ones that are pulling the strings; they are the ones that raise the price of gasoline at the pump with the taxes that AL GORE added. They are the ones that make you pay more as you go to work or you take your young son to soccer or your daughter to piano lessons or vice versa. We as Americans have to have a policy. I believe our policy on energy has to be one of production, one of discovery and one of refining.

I know I am going to introduce a bill the next session to give us an expedited process to build refineries. Because I have asked people, "Why aren't you building refineries?" They say, "We can't build refineries under the present delay factors of this administration." That means we have to buy refined products from abroad. Most of the gasoline that you burn in your automobile and heating oil that you are using and the northern reserve which we are going to have after this Congress passes it comes from a foreign country, which means we are dependent.

And so I ask you to make sure everybody understands this issue. Energy is the number one problem in America today and threatens our freedom and our security because in the last 8 years, we have allowed this administration to direct us with their policy to become dependent upon foreign countries. I am trying to offset that. Anybody that steps up here and talks about my State and how bad it is in ANWR and the Arctic wildlife range has never been there, they know little of it, and they are speaking the word of a written booklet from an interest group that wants us to become more dependent upon foreign fossil fuels. As we become more dependent, we have to respond to their desires. Maybe it could be negative to the American way.

I ask everybody to wake up, all of my colleagues, and support me in the development of not only the 1002 areas in

Alaska but the other fossil fuel areas in America. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. MCINNIS. I thank the gentleman for taking time this evening. I thought it was very appropriate for the gentleman to come over here because it seemed to be one-sided, the story we just heard.

I also would like to thank the gentleman with my colleagues here for the considerations and the courtesies that he has extended to the State of Colorado over the years. We appreciate his service and his courtesies.

Mr. Speaker, I interrupted my comments because I felt it was very important that we listen to the chairman of the Committee on Resources, the gentleman who has represented the State of Alaska for a number of years. Alaska is a wonderful, wonderful State. Most of Alaska, I think in the high 90s, maybe 96 percent of Alaska is owned by the Federal Government. I wish I had time this evening to talk to my colleagues about what happens and the differences between States that are primarily owned by government and States that are primarily owned by private individuals.

Many of my colleagues here on the floor come from States where their primary ownership in their State are private individuals. Many of us come from States where the primary ownership in our States is the Federal Government. In Colorado, for example, my district is the Third Congressional District of the State of Colorado. My district geographically is larger than the State of Florida. And on the eastern line of my district, which, very simplified, runs from Wyoming down I-25 to New Mexico, it exempts out the cities as you go down, but from that eastern border to the Atlantic Ocean, that land, there is very little Federal Government ownership of lands. Out here in the East, you have the Appalachias, you have the Everglades down there and then in a lot of States you have the local courthouse, you may have a park here and there; but the reality of it is if we took a map, for example, of the United States and we looked, obviously I am not an artist, but if we took a look at my eastern border, here is Colorado, the point I am making is from this point right here to the Atlantic Ocean, Federal ownership or government ownership of land is represented about like this, with the Appalachias here, the Everglades, the park up here in the Northeast. If you were to look from my border, this district, the Third Congressional District, and go to the Pacific Ocean, you are going to find out that government ownership of land looks like this. Obviously that is a rough drawing, but that is pretty significant.

There are a lot of differences between living in areas where the ownership of the land is by individuals and living out here where our zoning and planning commissions are dictated by decisions out of Washington, D.C. For example,

my colleagues that live out here in the East, those that represent States with very little Federal ownership, when they decide they want to build a new bridge or when they decide that they want to go and have a new building or some kind of adjustment in their county or some type of development, they go to their local county planning and zoning commission. Out here in these Federal lands, anything like that, they have got to go to their planning board which is in Washington, D.C. So there are a lot of significant issues that we ask for our colleagues in the East to have an understanding of what goes on out primarily in the West. Or have an understanding of what goes on in the State of Alaska.

For example, in my district, we are totally dependent, totally, not partially, totally dependent on multiple use of public lands, for water. Every highway that we have in my district comes across Federal lands. The water, when I go back to water, it is either stored upon, originates or comes across Federal lands. All of our power lines, all of our cellular telephone towers, all of this is on Federal lands. In my particular district of which we have the premier ski areas in the world, Aspen or Vail or Telluride or Powder Horn or Purgatory, I could go on and on and on, these areas are dependent, very dependent, our tourism dollars are very dependent on these lands. We are very, very, I guess you would say over a period of time we have become encompassed by the concept of multiple use.

I want to talk just for a moment about that concept of multiple use. What happened in the early days when our country was a young country, we basically had this as our country. Our forefathers, the leaders of our country, wanted to settle the land that we had purchased. In those days, possession, that is where the saying, by the way, possession is nine-tenths of the law, possession meant everything. In the early days of our country, if you did not possess the land, somebody else could come in and they did not care whether you had a deed or a document that said you own it, they came in, they sat there with a gun and said, "I own that property."

Once our country made purchases like through the Louisiana Purchase and things like that, what happened was, taking this out for a moment, they were trying to figure out how to get people to leave the relative comforts of the East and of the settled communities in the East, how do we get them out into the new frontier. How do we encourage people to go out there and set up a home or set up towns, because as a country we need to possess the lands like the Louisiana Purchase, or we are going to lose them to some other country.

So what they decided to do was let us give land. Everybody in this country, it is an American's dream to own a little piece of land, to own your own little house. It is the American dream. So

they used this incentive, go West, young man, go West. To do that, they said, let us have a homestead. You go out into Kansas, you go out into Missouri, you go out there, you find 160 acres or you find 320 acres, you farm it for enough years and you get to keep it. It is your land.

That worked pretty well. What we saw were fairly dramatic movements of population into these areas. But when they got to the West where it is very arid, we do not have the kind of water, it does not rain in the West like it does in the East, when they got out West, the crowd started going around. Nobody was sticking around in here. Why? Because they discovered in Kansas, for example, or Missouri or even eastern Colorado or down here in some of these States, in the Midwest States, Pennsylvania and so on, they were discovering that with 160 acres, you can support a family. You have enough acreage there to grow a farm. But they also discovered that when you got to the mountains, for example, or to the more arid acres, sometimes 160 acres would not even feed one cow. So the settlers were not staying there.

At the Nation's capital, they said, what do we do about this? How do we get settlers out here before we lose this land? How do we get them to move in there? Somebody came up with the idea, it takes 160 acres of good fertile ground in Missouri for a family. That is the equivalent in the mountains of Colorado, it might take 2,000 acres. So let us give them 2,000 acres. They thought about it, the policymakers back then, and they said, "Wait a minute, we can't give that away. That is too much for one person." Then the idea was born, well, let us go ahead and have the government retain the ownership. In other words, the government will continue to own this land out here, but let us let the people use the land. That is where the concept of multiple use came from.

When the gentleman, the chairman of the Committee on Resources, stands up and talks about Alaska and talks about your oil, that is why Alaska is primarily owned by the government, because of the fact of the differences between States in the West and States in the East. And so I think it was important. I acknowledge the gentleman and appreciate him coming to speak with us.

I want to address another point. I had the opportunity to come down and listen to some of my respected colleagues prior to my having the opportunity to visit with you. It sounded like it was the George W. Bush bash hour. What can we bash George W. Bush about? That seems to be a favorite thing by some of my colleagues here lately. What policy can we find of George W. Bush? Let's just bash him.

Somebody ought to stand up here and say a few things that George W. Bush is doing right and a few ideas that I think will work for this country on a bipartisan basis, that both sides of the aisle ought to acknowledge.

Let us take an example. Let us talk about Social Security, for example. Social Security, we ought to look a little at the history. We know that we had the Depression in 1929. In 1935, the President decided and this country, and this Congress on this floor, decided that we should have a national insurance policy, a social insurance. That is where Social Security came about. But there are a few factors to remember about Social Security when it was first conceived.

Number one, for every person that was retired in 1935, we had 42 workers out there working. Forty-two workers for every person retired. What has happened over a period of time is the number of people that are working has gone down in proportion to the number of people that are retired. Today, instead of being 42 to one, today it is three to one. It is three to one. That has created a problem for Social Security.

Number two, and this is good news for all of us, colleagues. This is good news. The modern medicine that we have developed and the vaccines and the ability to fight things like chicken pox and polio and things that were horrible diseases of the past and with god-speed we can find a cure for cancer in the future but these diseases have in a large part been conquered.

The average person in the United States in 1935 could expect to live, a male 62 years old, a female 65. Today, that is almost in the 80s. We have had a dramatic increase in the life span for our citizens in this country. Unfortunately, no adjustment has ever been made in Social Security, number one, because of the number of active workers that have been reduced and, two, because of the extended life span of these individuals.

So what is happening is today we have a Social Security fund which on a cash basis, means cash in the bank, is in the plus column. But when we look on an actuarial basis, and what do I mean by that word? I mean when we look into the future and say, okay, here is the money we have, here are our future obligations, do we have enough money to cover all of these future obligations? That is what is called actuarial thinking. On an actuarial basis, Social Security is bankrupt.

And who is the individual that is running for President that has stood up and I think in a bipartisan approach come up with a plan? Now, it is a bold plan. GORE and the President, they have called it a risky plan. You have got to take some risk. You have got a plan that is in trouble. Not in trouble for my generation. I am 47. Not in trouble for my parents. My parents are going to be guaranteed, any of the colleagues, any of your seniors, their money is not going to be interrupted. Really from about 45 on up, their money is going to be there. But the young people of this country, the people that George W. Bush has talked about, the people in their 30s, the young workers that are starting out in

their 20s, those are the people that are going to face the dramatic problem on Social Security if we do not take a bold move. You can call it risky as AL GORE has called it, but the fact is you have got to do something. That is what leadership is about. If you do not want to lead, stand aside. We are not going to leave you behind.

□ 1600

But you are not a leader. Somebody has to get out there with a bold plan. I can tell you that the plan that George W. Bush has proposed is not exactly in my opinion something that is novel.

You say, what do you mean novel? Well, I think that George W. Bush and his Social Security plan, they looked around and said, gosh, how do we test market my proposal? How do we test market something for the younger generation that will save Social Security?

You know what? They found it. It has been test marketed. It has been out there and used. You know what? It is working.

The logical question that one would ask is, well, where is this test market? Where are the results? Who is using the same type of basic plan that George W. Bush is proposing for all of America? Where is your test market on that? You know, when corporations or businesses or people want to try a product, they go out and test it first. So you prove to us, MCINNIS, where is this test market?

You know where it is? It is right here on the House floor. Us. You know what? We are treated differently than other Americans. Every Federal employee is treated differently than other Americans. How? We have our own separate retirement plan.

Now, we are participants in Social Security, and we do pay into Social Security, but, as you know, we have another plan. Every Federal employee, 3 million of us in this country, have been test marketed, and that plan is called the Thrift Savings Plan.

What is the Thrift Savings Plan? Number one, it is voluntary. You are not required to participate in it; exactly what George W. Bush is saying with the partial investment of Social Security dollars.

Number two, it gives you choice; exactly what George W. Bush is talking about when he talks about his Social Security plan.

Number three, it guarantees you a payment, regardless of the choice that you make; exactly what we have in our Thrift Savings Plan and exactly what George Bush has proposed in his plan.

How does the Thrift Savings Plan work? As you know, we get our check, and there is an automatic deduction taken out of our check for Social Security. There is also an automatic deduction taken out for our retirement. So, as a Federal employee, and remember, this applies to all Federal employees, not just to the Congress, but to about three million Federal employees, so they take out a small amount, or an

amount, out of your check for your retirement. You have no choice on that. You get no choice as to where it is invested. You do not get a choice as to whether it goes into the stock market or whether it goes into bonds. You have no choice on it. On the other hand, the trade-off is you are guaranteed a payment when you retire.

But, then, after that is said and done, you get to take up to 10 percent of your pay and you can invest it through the Thrift Savings Plan, and the Federal Government will match the first 5 percent. So you get to take 10 percent, they match the first 5 percent, and you get choice. You are not required to do it, by the way. And what kind of choices do we have?

Our choices are, one, you can go into savings accounts, which are guaranteed by the government, just like if you went to a local bank, FDIC approved. You get that. But the return is low. The lower the risk, the lower the return; the higher the risk, the higher the return. The very low risk option, zero risk, almost, and you get a low return. Or you can go into something like the bond or the stock market. You have that choice.

What is wrong with George W. Bush's proposal to give choice to the American people? What is wrong with our generation, the older generation, looking to the younger generation, like my children? My children are grown now. What is wrong with my generation saying to this generation, hey, you ought to have a little choice. We ought to give you a choice on some of your investment dollars.

George W. Bush has not gone out and said take all the Social Security dollars and let this young generation decide if they want to put it all in the stock market. Of course, that would be reckless conduct. That would be careless. There is not a financial mind in the world that would tell you that would be a smart thing to do.

What George W. Bush said is give them up to 2 percent. Let us try it out. It works for American government employees, why can it not work for the young generation; the women in this country that are young and just getting into the workplace; the young men and the families.

If we do not do something, do you know what the return is? If we stick with the status proposed, which seems to be what is proposed by the Al Gore policy? Here is what your return is: 0.09 percent. That is a rotten return. That is what you get to expect, assuming that we can keep it afloat.

So a young couple today, let us say a young lady named Joyce and a young man named John, and John and Joyce go out into the workplace, and their Social Security, if we do not change this thing, number one, it probably on an actuarial basis will not be there for them; and, if it is, if the stock market continues to boom, and we know, in case you have not read in the last few weeks, it has leveled off, but if it continued to boom, which it will not do

forever, then that is about what kind of return you can expect.

How can we do this? Come on. It is an obligation, it is a fiduciary duty on every one of us in this room, to stand up for this next generation behind us and the generation behind them and the generation behind them.

If we are going to have a Social Security program, let us give them a Social Security plan that works for the American people. Let us not make American Federal Government employees an exclusive set, where they have a little different arrangement than the very people who put us here. The people that pay our checks are the taxpayers. We ought to take that into consideration. We should not treat the taxpayers of this country, who are not Federal employees, different than we treat Federal employees.

Why not change Social Security? I see positive things. Instead of standing up here in a very partisan way and bashing George W. Bush, why do we not stand up here and talk about what I think are the good policies and the good recommendations that he has made? If he becomes the President, I think you are going to see a very positive change for Social Security.

Those policies will work because they have been test marketed. It is not new. It did not just fall out of the sky. These policies work, they have been tested, and they have been tested on 3 million people. And, do you know what? The participation rates are in the high 80 or 90 percent of Federal employees that want to get into this program. Because why? Because it works. That is why they want to get into this program.

Mr. Speaker, let me change subjects, because I heard some other Bush bashing going on, and I think once again somebody has to come tell the other side of the story. Paul Harvey, who by the way, I had the privilege of meeting Paul Harvey a couple of weeks ago in Pueblo, Colorado, where we honored about 100 Medal of Honor recipients, and Paul Harvey was kind enough to come out there at his expense to speak to us. But Paul Harvey has a famous saying, you have all heard it, "and now for the rest of the story." That is exactly why I am over here this afternoon talking to you.

You heard one side of the story, Bush bashing; Bush bashing on Social Security, Bush bashing on taxes. Bush bashing. Look, do you know what? There are a lot of good things in there. Why not look for some of the good, colleagues, instead of trying to spin it out of control because of the political necessities of an election coming up here in 4 or 5 weeks?

Let us talk about taxes, and let us talk about what the Republicans, frankly, with a lot of help from conservative Democrats, have done with their tax policy.

Number one, the Republicans, again with help from conservative Democrats, who came across the aisle, we

sent to the President of this country a death tax elimination. Now, whether or not you think you are covered by the death tax, I think it is a fundamental question.

It is the same thing, by the way, with the marriage tax elimination. The Republicans, with help from some conservative Democrats, sent to the President of the United States a marriage tax elimination, to eliminate the tax, because of the fact you are married, and to eliminate the tax because of your death. On both occasions, the President vetoed both of them.

Now, let us talk about it. The basic fundamental question you need to ask about the death tax and the fundamental question you need to ask about the marriage tax is should death or marriage, should those be taxable events in our society? You know what? The majority of us stood up and said no.

Unfortunately, the administration disagreed. They think that marriage should be a taxable event. They think that death is a taxable event. Not only do they think death is a taxable event, I sit on the Committee on Ways and Means. I know about finance and taxes. The President's budget, the President and Vice President, the Clinton-Gore budget this year not only did not even consider elimination of the death tax, they actually proposed an increase of \$9.5 billion, a \$9.5 billion increase in the death tax.

You should not increase it, you should not keep it. The death tax does not collect a lot of money. Let me tell you, when you hear, and I have heard this over and over again, when you hear, well, this only benefits the upper 2 percent of a community, wake up. It does not just affect 2 percent of the community. Let me give an example.

Colorado, you take a small town in Colorado. I have a small community in Colorado where somebody who, by the way, lived the American dream, started out with nothing, worked all his life. His entire dream in life was to be successful so he could pass it on to the next generation and spread it in the community. He had a construction company. By the way, to be eligible for the death tax on a construction company, if you own free and clear, if you own much more than a bulldozer, a dump truck and a backhoe, then all of a sudden you are facing the death tax. That is right, a bulldozer, backhoe and dump truck, and you are facing the death tax.

This individual passed away. From what you would hear from the people who think that the death tax is a fair tax, that it is fair to tax somebody on property they have accumulated that they have already paid taxes on, simply by the fact that they died, what you need to look at is what the impact is on a community.

What happened, when he died they took 70-some percent; 55 percent of it for the death tax, 22 percent on capital gains, or 28 percent, excuse me, on cap-

ital gains. And they took 70-some percent of that estate and moved it out of this small town in Colorado and they moved that money to Washington, D.C. to be redistributed by a bureaucracy.

You know what? The money in a community ought to stay in a community. I do not believe you ought to be able to tax death as a taxable event, but it sure would be a lot more liveable if you went to that small community and said, look, just in spite, you had somebody who was successful, so we are going to tax them on their death, but you get to keep the money in the community.

Remember, the death tax, where it came from. The death tax came as kind of a get-even tool with the Carnegies and the Fords and the Rockefellers. That is where that thing came from, from people who wanted to declare class warfare, who said, look, this is a great country, and we say if you invent the better mouse trap, you get to reap the reward, as long as you do not reap too many rewards, because then we are going to come after you. That is exactly what happened in the twenties and so on.

This is a tax that should never have been created. It is a tax that hurts our communities. It is a tax that hurts our environment. This is a country that ought to pride itself in encouraging its citizens, encouraging its families, to pass a business from one generation to the next generation.

What builds the strength of a country is family. That is what builds our strength. And for a government to go out and discourage and actually penalize the transfer of a business or the family farm or the family hardware store from one generation to the next generation is fundamentally flawed. It is flawed with the concept of what we have as government.

Now, maybe in a communist country or in a socialist country, where everybody is not paid on what they are worth, they are paid on what they need, so no matter what they do, it is not what they do for society, it is what they need. So you equalize all those payments.

That is what the concept of a death tax or a marriage tax comes from, especially a death tax. That is not what we want in this country. That is not what ought to be happening to our communities.

By the way, you heard me right when I tell you the death tax hurts our environment. You say wait a minute, how does the death tax hurt our environment? You know how it hurts it? In my district, in Colorado, a beautiful district, I live in the highest place in the Nation, the highest elevation in the Nation. If you have been skiing in the mountains in Colorado, if you have been in the mountains in Colorado, the essence is you are in my district.

The people discover the beauty of this. What happened is we have family farms and ranches out there, and what is happening is people are coming in

and the families are having to sell these. They want to farm, they want to ranch, they want to have that piece of land, but they have to sell it. You know where that land goes? It does not continue as a ranching operation. It does not continue as a farming operation. It continues as a few hundred more condominiums, or a few hundred more townhouses, or a brand new shopping center. That is what is happening to that land out there, and a lot of it is due directly to this death tax.

So do not stand here and bash George W. Bush because he wants to eliminate the death tax. Do not stand here and bash George W. Bush because he says marriage should not be a taxable event. What you ought to do is, as some of the Democrats have done, join the Republicans in our fight to get rid of the death tax. Join the Republicans, as some conservative Democrats have done, and get rid of the marriage tax.

Instead, what happened, unfortunately, we saw the majority of Democrats go with the President and support the President's veto of getting rid of the marriage tax and support the President on this death tax. I am saying to my colleagues, work with us in a bipartisan method. We can do something for Social Security for this next generation. We can do something about that death tax. We can do something about that marriage penalty.

□ 1615

Let me tell my colleagues, in a bipartisan direction, when we have worked together in the past, the Democrats helped us pass probably the largest tax break that we have had in 20 years or 30 years; although the people do not realize what we have done. The Republicans, about 3 years ago, 2 years ago went out and said the Americans dream is about owning their own home. So we think in most families, the ownership of the home is the largest asset they have; that is usually the largest asset in a family.

What we said, the Republican bill that we got passed, with some help from some conservative Democrats, on a bipartisan working effort, the bill we passed says that if you now own a home and you sell that home for a profit, I am not talking about equity, I am talking about net income, you sell it for a profit, your first \$250,000 per person, remember most homes are owned by couples, so it is the first \$500,000 per couple, but the first \$250,000 per person goes into your pocket tax free. You get to do that every 2 years.

That is an incentive for people to go out and own homes, and that was supported on a bipartisan effort. We had conservative Democrats who helped the Republicans pass that, and that gave the American people a tax break they deserved.

For some reason, there has been a misconception down here on this floor. We seem to think that the American taxpayers ought to pay and pay and pay, and somehow people, some of my

colleagues spin it out as if we dare talk about it, hey, maybe they put in too much. George W. Bush says take half of our surplus right away and put it to reduction of the debt; that should be our priority.

Reduce that debt, but you still have a little that you ought to put into some programs like education and healthcare, and you still have a small fraction of that you ought to give back to the taxpayer, pat them on the back and say thanks for what you have done. Thanks to the productive nature of the American people, the American taxpayer, this government is sitting pretty well.

This surplus was not created by the wonderful creative thoughts of your government. It was created by our constituents, the hard workers, the 8:00 to 5:00 people or the 8:00 to 8:00 people out there who produce and create capital. Government does not create capital. Government transfers capital. Government takes it from the workers' pockets, transfers it to Washington, D.C., and then hands it out as if they worked for it. That is not what the government is about.

What I am saying is do not be ashamed to talk about a tax cut. They ought to be reasonable tax cuts. Is it unreasonable to cut out the tax of death? Is it unreasonable to cut out the tax of marriage?

I was so excited last night in that debate. I wanted to be in that debate, not as a candidate but just to get up there and say, wait a minute, Mr. Vice President, what is wrong with the policy of cutting out a death tax? What is wrong with the policy of eliminating the marriage tax? What is wrong with the homeowners tax break that we gave 2 years ago? You did not try and spin it out of control then.

I am telling my colleagues from a bipartisan point of view, we owe respect to the taxpayer; and there is no reason to back off and be ashamed, because we talk about maybe we ought to thank the taxpayer and say we got enough to operate the government. The more the taxpayer provides for the government, the sloppier the government becomes.

Sometimes it is a good idea to tighten down on the budgets. That forces efficiencies. That is why I have taken this podium today, instead of bashing Bush all the time, which I heard minute after minute after minute earlier this afternoon, why do we not stand up and say, hey, here are some policies that we can work on in a bipartisan basis; here are some positive things that he has proposed.

There are very few of my colleagues out here who could look me right in the eye and arguably tell me that our plan, our Thrift Savings Plan, should not apply to the American people and should only apply to Federal Government employees. There are very few of you, I think, that could really look me in the eye and honestly tell me, Look, SCOTT, we ought to have a death tax.

How many of my colleagues really support a death tax? How many of my

colleagues really think people ought to be penalized in tax due to the fact that they are married? How many of my colleagues really think that this government ought to engage in discouraging families from passing their hardware store or their farm or ranch from one generation to the next generation? Not a lot of my colleagues, but my colleagues ought to be identified to the American people so they know exactly where we stand.

The taxpayer does deserve some courtesy. We obviously need to reduce the death debt. We have to take care of programs like education and health care which are fundamental for the survival of the greatness of this country; but the best way that we do it is we look at it in a positive sense, and I encourage my colleagues to do just exactly that.

CITIZENS' RIGHT TO VOTE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISAKSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, the 14th amendment of the Constitution of the United States guarantees every American citizen the right to vote.

When our country was founded, the right to vote was preserved for white men and property owners. It took the Women Suffrage Movement to enfranchise women and the Civil Rights Movement to fully enfranchise African Americans and other people of color in this country.

In the words of Susan B. Anthony, we, the people, not just the select few, but we, the whole people including all of us formed this union.

Today, we have awakened to a new challenge for this republic, restoring the voting rights of men and women who committed crime but have paid their debt to society.

While the Constitution takes away the voting rights of individuals convicted of serious crimes, the States are given the power to restore this right. Through our criminal justice system, hundreds of thousands of men and women have been politically disenfranchised, many of whom are poor and minorities who committed nonviolent crimes.

Many of these individuals have paid their debt to society; and yet some States have restored their right to vote automatically, while others hold this right hostage to politics. Laws governing the restoration of voting rights after a felony conviction are unequal throughout the country.

Persons in some States can easily regain their voting rights, while in other States persons effectively lose their rights to vote permanently.

Mr. Speaker, two States do not disenfranchise felons at all times; 46 States and the District of Columbia