

Madam Speaker, we often talk about the progress we have made. Yet, according to the Washington-based tax foundation, taxes at all levels now consume 39 percent of the average dual-earners' family income. This is more than the amount that serfs were obligated to pay to their mid-evil lords. This, simply put, is wrong.

As we enter into the final stages of the bill's passage that is being debated in conference committee today, I implore the Congress to stand firm in our commitment to working families. The House bill was a great start, but it is the bare minimum of what we can and should accomplish.

The decision to scale back tax relief over the next 10 years means that less than 25 percent of the surplus will be returned to taxpayers. Therefore, it is not only important, but imperative that we lower marginal rates on income if we are to improve the economy's lagging performance.

It does not matter how you look at it, Madam Speaker; the tax burden is excessive and tax rates are too high. Now is the time for across-the-board reductions in the rate of taxation.

While some argue that a 3.5 percent reduction in the top tax rate is adequate for what ails our economy, history tells another story. Woodrow Wilson once said, "The Congress might well consider whether the higher rates of income and profit taxes can in peace times be effectively productive of revenue, and whether they may not, on the contrary, be destructive of the business activity and productive of waste and inefficiency. There is a point at which, in peace times high rates of income and profit taxes discourage energy, remove the incentive to new enterprise, encourage extravagant expenditures and produce industrial stagnation with consequent unemployment and other attendant evils."

Woodrow Wilson was right. During the 1920s, Wilson's leadership led to massive tax rate reductions. Amazingly, revenues actually increased. This is a fact that continues to resurface throughout the taxation history of this country.

The tax cuts which President John F. Kennedy passed in the 1960s ignited a huge economic expansion. The economy grew by more than 40 percent and tax revenues climbed by more than 62 percent.

The effects of the Reagan tax cuts, Madam Speaker, were just as impressive. The economy was pulled out of a severe downturn and a 7 year economic boom of record growth took its place.

During the 1980s, the goal of tax reformers on the left and the right was to reduce marginal rates as much as possible. At the beginning of the 1980s, the top marginal income tax rate was 70 percent; by the end it had fallen to just 28 percent. Support for low marginal tax rates was so widespread that virtually every major nation followed the United States and cut marginal tax rates in the 1980s.

The reasoning behind this phenomenon is simple: If history has taught us anything, it is that a high top rate reduction seldom produces much revenue. The principal effect is to make higher taxes on the poor and the middle class more palpable. In fact, because of inflation and real growth in the economy, in just a few years tax rates originally imposed on the rich often apply to those with middle incomes. The rich, meanwhile, often evade higher rates by making increased use of deductions and other legal tax shelters. In short, Madam Speaker, higher rates tend to encourage the government to add new deductions to the already too-complex Tax Code.

Tax relief, Madam Speaker, could not be a more bipartisan issue. President Franklin Roosevelt warned of an increase in rates when he said, "Taxes are paid in the sweat of every man who labors because they are a burden on production and are paid through production. If those taxes are excessive," President Roosevelt said, "they are reflected in idle factories, in tax-sold farms, in hordes of hungry people trampling the streets and seeking jobs in vain."

Madam Speaker, we must pass this tax relief for all Americans.

TRIBUTE TO FALLEN HOUSTON LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise this morning with a heavy burden for the Houston community and Harris County. I want to offer my deepest respect and sympathy to the families and friends and community of two very brave law enforcement officers, who lost their lives in Houston, Texas, Harris County, this week.

First, Harris County Sheriff's Deputy Joseph Dennis, 35 years old, was shot to death just a couple of days ago. Then, following his tragic death, Albert Vasquez, along with officer Enrique Duharte-Tur, were shot. Officer Duharte-Tur was injured and is now in critical condition, but, sadly, we lost our brother, Albert Vasquez.

It is important to realize that as we are a Nation of laws, we commit ourselves to being law-abiding, and respect the fact that our officers are there every day, men and women, to protect us. And we recognize that though we may have discussions on the best way to uphold the civil liberties of all Americans, we certainly do not in any way take away from the ultimate sacrifice that these brave men and women are willing to commit.

So let me offer to the families, there are no words that can replace a loved one, particularly one who has gone off to do his or her duty, in the line of danger, and does not return home to wife and children, and mother and father, aunts and uncles and cousins. These

were tragic incidents, ones that I am appalled at.

It certainly speaks to the issue of where we go in this country; the proliferation of guns, the tragedy of young people who have lost their way and would be, if you will, directed to, inclined to, do such violent and terrible acts.

We hope the perpetrators are quickly brought to justice in this community. But as we move into Memorial Day, I would offer to say that these very fine gentleman should be acknowledged, appreciated, and their families prayed for.

Might I also add that this is Memorial Day weekend, and I would like to say to America, but particularly my community, because I am so much reminded of the men and women out of the Houston area, the 18th Congressional District and the State of Texas who gave up their lives in the line of duty in the militaries of the United States of America.

So as we leave this place, I would say to all, there may be those who are about to join their families for a good time, but I am very much aware that we should also be joining our families and appreciate the freedom that we have in this country. We have it because of the men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice, whom we should be honoring on Memorial Day and every day, as those men and women gave their lives for us.

Freedom is not free, and we hold these truths to be self-evident, that we all are created equal, the men and women who have offered themselves in service and ultimately did not return to us, that we appreciate this Memorial Day weekend.

It is my privilege to serve in the United States Congress, but that honor and the right to engage in democratic principles and debate is all because military men and women serve around this Nation, even today, but, more importantly, that they fought in wars, like World War I and World War II, the Korean War, conflicts, and Vietnam.

So it is my special privilege to be able to say to them, thank you, thank you, thank you, for ultimately we all are better off because you lived.

Might I finish, Madam Speaker, because this is a serious time in our country, many have watched the happenings of the last era, or the last 24 hours, and they watched it with surprise. But might I say to the American people and to my colleagues in particular, bless us for having a democracy that allows change to occur peacefully.

I am disappointed that we would take this wonderful time in these few closings moments of this Congress before the Memorial Day holiday to deal with issues like tax cuts, that really do not address the people I have just spoken to, the people who need. I would have hoped we would be addressing the questions of protecting and providing better energy services for our country.

But I hope we will be able to do that as we return.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

AMERICANS AFRAID OF THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. TRAFICANT. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the minority leader and his young floor man, Dan, who does a fine job and a fair job, for giving me this opportunity to speak. Many of the American people know that I go without a committee, but I am a Democrat.

I want to talk about several issues here today that I think are very important. I very seldom take a special order, but while the Congress is involved in negotiations on an important bill affecting the lives of many people, I decided to take this time.

I heard my very good friend the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS), a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, talking about the energy problem, and I could not agree with him more. His wisdom and wisdom like that is needed in this Congress. But I also have a different view that goes a little further.

I have a bill in that says that if there is price gouging in America, there should be a \$100 million fine for any company that gouges American consumers of petroleum products. Mobil merged with Exxon; BP with Amoco. Competition is down. I think they are gouging us, and I think a \$100 million fine for anybody artificially raising prices, 9 cents more on the weekend, come on. They get hit once in the pocketbook, and it is all over.

Another thing before I move off that energy issue, I think it is time to tell these monarchs and dictators who control oil overseas that next time they are attacked by Saddam Hussein, call the Welcome Wagon, because Uncle Sam is not going to show up, and we will see those prices go down.

But I am here today to talk about a serious problem in America, a dangerous problem, one that I have seen. Many Americans see it and feel it and may not realize it or come to speak about it, or maybe just whisper it. Many Americans are afraid of their government. They look at the government as a separate entity, the people and the government. It was not designed to be that way. I personally believe the psychology of this change occurred in 1963 with the assassination of President Kennedy. If you believe what the government has told us about that, you believe in the tooth fairy.

But I want to get down now to some specifics that bother me. Before a subcommittee of the Committee on Government Reform of the United States House of Representatives, the people's House, testimony just brought out that four men 30-some years ago were convicted for murder. They were sentenced to life imprisonment. Two of those four convicted murderers, supposedly, died in prison. The other two, Salvadi and Limone, were recently released, because the FBI finally admitted they had exculpatory evidence that Salvadi and Limone were not the killers, and they protected their valuable informants who did the killing.

When the FBI agent was asked if he had any remorse, his answer was, "What do you expect, tears?" Thirty years, ladies and gentlemen, for a murderer they did not commit.

Now, let us look at FBI agent Hanssen; 15 years selling our secrets to the Russians. Do you honestly believe he could do that in the structure of the Federal Bureau of Investigation with no one else knowing it? Come on now.

Now, how about the case in Boston, Massachusetts, where the FBI agent-in-charge has now been indicted? He has been indicted for overlooking murder on behalf of his informants. And guess what the FBI agent-in-charge said? "I was told by my superiors to lie."

Now let us take a look at Waco, David Koresh. They could have arrested him any morning out jogging, but they wanted a sensational bust. Eighty-some Americans killed. Tanks. Thirty children. They could have arrested him any morning. They wanted a sensational case; they now have sensational headaches.

But how about Randy Weaver and his family? I did not agree with his politics. He was a white separatist. But his 14-year-old boy was shot and killed by Federal agents. His wife, holding her infant child, standing in the doorway, horrified over the scene she was witnessing, was shot by one of the FBI's best sharpshooters. Put your finger right between your eyes above your nose. And the court ruled accidental shooting. Why, then, did American taxpayers give \$5 million to Randy Weaver? Was it for justice, or to shut him up?

But now I take you to northeast Ohio. I am the Member that is under indictment, the only American in history to have beaten the Justice Department in a RICO case, pro se, without being an attorney, through a full jury trial. Experts say my chances are 1 in 5 million. Well, there are 275 million Americans. That means I am one of about 55 Americans that have a shot. I am going to take that shot.

Now, here is why: In the early eighties, a man named Charles Carabbia, an underworld figure, was killed in Youngstown, Ohio. Subsequent to that, the FBI said the second most important Mafia informant since Valachi, a man named Angelo Lonardo,

gave the government, the FBI, information in 1984, and then gave this same testimony to a Senate subcommittee of the United States Senate.

Angela Lonardo, the underboss of Cleveland, was credited with helping to take down the Mafia in Kansas City and in New Orleans. But listen to what he told the U.S. Senate in 1987, and that he had told the FBI in 1984.

He said two underworld figures by the name of Joseph Naples and James Prato came to him in the early eighties and asked permission to kill Charles Carabbia. He and his boss met with them personally and they said no, work it out. He later testified they come back and said they met with the Pittsburgh Mafia and the Pittsburgh Mafia wants Mr. Carabbia killed. They said no, work it out.

Then Mr. Lonardo, not through Mr. Jones getting information, Mr. Lonardo testified that he heard that Mr. Carabbia was missing and feared murdered. He said several weeks later he got a call from Mr. Prato and Mr. Naples, and Mr. Prato and Mr. Naples met with Mr. Lonardo and his boss, Mr. Licavoli, in a restaurant outside of Cleveland, and said, "We killed Charles Carabbia, and we apologize for leaving his car in the Cleveland area."

Ladies and gentlemen on the House floor, there was no grand jury investigation into the murder of Charles Carabbia. Joseph Naples was murdered in the early nineties by a mob rival and James Prato died of old age, and now affidavits and documents reveal the Youngstown office of the FBI was on the payroll of the mob, Naples and Prato. Documents also show that Assistant U.S. Attorneys were on the payroll of the mob in Cleveland, Ohio.

What has happened to our country here? How did the FBI, the IRS, the EPA, get so strong that we fear them? Who elected them? It is up to Congress to take our country back, so help me God. But there are several things that I have done since my first trial.

So the bottom line is, maybe the government can notify you, and by that I mean the real government, the middle management bureaucrats that are not elected, and if they do not like a Member of Congress, they will go after them. Think about that.

But, you see, since those incidents I have tried to crack down on some of the power. Since being in Congress, I passed four specific laws to deal with the IRS.

The first one said they have to treat us courteously across cultural lines. They have a training program with their agents about taxpayers' rights. They oppose that. They oppose that. We finally passed it. After I threatened a bill and killed a Treasury appropriations bill, they came to me and said, "We will build you a courthouse if you do not do that anymore." I said, "Go right ahead, but put my language in the next bill," and they did. Now they have to have a training program.

The next year I came back and said, what good is a training program if they