present through hearings and ultimately at the end of May for a vote in early June, a budget resolution which will show the American people just exactly how we can get to a balanced budget after 7 years.

TRIBUTE TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ENSIGN). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it's been nearly 2 weeks since a terrorist's bomb ripped a hole in the Murrah Federal Building and ripped a hole in the heart of the Nation. The images of bloodied children being carried from the rubble will stain our collective memory for a long time to come. How could it happen here, we asked.

Through media reports, we have come to know the children who were so brutally murdered—we know their names and faces—Baylee Almon, Colton and Chase Smith, Aaron and Elijah Coverdale and Ashley Eckles. They have become our children, too.

And, we have learned about other victims of the bombing, as well. We know that more than 500 people who were working in the Murrah Building on that awful day were federal employees. Many were killed. Federal employees were at the Social Security Administration, helping seniors in their retirement; they were there at the Housing and Urban Development Office, helping families find affordable housing; they were there at the BATF and the Secret Service helping to enforce our laws and protect our people.

To understand the scale of this tragedy, one need only to talk to employees at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which had approximately 90 workers in the building at the time of the attack and suffered the greatest loss of life. At last report, 32 HUD workers have been pronounced dead, two are hospitalized and another 3 are still missing.

To understand the scale of this tragedy, talk to employees at the U.S. Secret Service. All six of their employees assigned to Oklahoma City are now gone: Mickey Maroney, Alan Whicher, Kathy Seidl, Donald Leonard, Cynthia Brown and Linda McKinney. Together they leave behind 6 spouses, 6 parents and 11 children.

Too often, we in this Nation, and, in particular, in this body, have been guilty of forgetting who these people are—they are not nameless, faceless bureaucrats. They are husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, and they are parents.

One of the 32 HUD employees who did not survive the Oklahoma blast was Lanny Scroggins. Lanny was a decorated Vietnam veteran who spent the last 23 years as a Federal employee, helping others. How is it that Lanny Scroggins could survive the jungles of Southeast Asia, but be taken by a terrorist's bomb while at work in America's heartland? No one has the answer.

But, while Federal employees were the victims in Oklahoma City, they were also the heroes: Federal employees from FEMA pulled survivors from the wreckage and helped feed the hundreds of rescue workers.

Federal employees from the FBI, BATF and Secret Service launched a swift and sweeping investigation that brought the primary suspect into custody within hours of the explosion.

But Federal employees are heroes every day. Every day they work to take care of our seniors, to house our poor, to enforce our laws, to bring food, shelter and clothing to those stricken by natural disasters and manmade atrocities, like the one in Oklahoma City.

And, yet, for these heroes there are no Congressional Medals; no parades down Main Street; no statues in town square. Instead, these heroes too often are belittled as bureaucrats. In debate on this House floor, Federal employees have been the target of overblown political rhetoric, on both sides of the aisle.

We don't know what impact our words have on deranged individuals or the lunatic fringe groups we've read so much about over the past few weeks. We do not know. Wouldn't it be best to err on the side of caution? Let's not rely on others to do the right thing, let us do the right thing and leave nothing to chance.

Make no mistake, there are groups in this country who are waging a war against Federal law enforcement. For many of these fringe groups, law enforcement has become the enemy. They are not ''jack-booted Government thugs,'' as the National Rifle Association asserts. And they deserve better than to have voices of hate on our airwaves advising listeners about ''shooting them in the head.''

We need to have congressional hearings in the wake of the Oklahoma bombing on the increasing threats against Federal employees. By doing so, we don't politicize a tragedy. Rather, we live up to our responsibilities to address this tragedy and make sure it doesn't happen again.

And, we also need to look at the words we use. All of us in this body want to cut the size of the Federal Government. But our goal in reducing the size of Government should be to make it work better for people. We should be able to make those arguments based on the facts, without demonizing Federal employees—without belittling their contributions.

The Federal employees who were killed in Oklahoma City dedicated their lives to serving us. Now we should serve their memory by standing up to the forces that seek to divide us with words of hate.

DISTRICT APPROVAL OF FIRST 100 DAYS OF 104TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LATHAM] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to take the opportunity tonight to reflect a little bit as to what we heard back on recess. I personally, in my district in northwest Iowa, which is primarily agricultural, held 16 town meetings and attended four agricultural hearings. And, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you, the people in the Fifth Congressional District of Iowa are 100 percent behind what we did in the first 100 days in the new 104th Congress.

People told me to keep going, do not give up the fight, continue the ideas and the motivation behind the Contract With America. They were very, very pleased to hear what we did on the very first day as far as reforming this Congress itself, how we do business, cutting the number of people in committee staff, cutting the number of committees, limiting the terms of the chairs of the committees and subcommittees, limiting the term of the Speaker himself, and, most importantly, on the very first day when we passed the Shays-Grassley Act, it held Congress subject to the same laws that the rest of the country has to abide by.

Also, we received tremendous support at every meeting for the items in the contract itself, when you talk about the balanced budget amendment, the welfare reform, doing away with the outrageous regulations that we have had in the past few years, having the first vote forever in this body on term limits, something that people have tried for years and years and it was never allowed to happen before.

But, again, Mr. Speaker, the people in the Fifth District of Iowa told me to continue the fight. They believe that it is a refreshing wind blowing through Washington when you have a group of people who go to Washington and work very, very hard to make real change and reform, and, most importantly, to keep their word as to what they said during the campaign. It is a major change. People are responding. People do not believe the liberal pledge that they are getting from Washington. They know the facts.

I have another gentleman here, would you like to comment, the gentleman from Georgia?

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

I, too, have a district which is somewhat similar to the gentleman's. My district, which is in the very heart of the State of Georgia, stretches from the middle of the State all the way to the Florida line. I have three military installations in my district, two Air Force bases and a Marine Corps logistics base, and the balance of my district is made up primarily of agriculture and agribusiness industry as

well as some heavy manufacturing industry.

You know, we cover 32 counties in my district, and I did not get to all of them during the 3 weeks, but I got to most of them. I had a representative at some 15 town hall meetings that we did and another probably eight or nine civic club speeches that we gave. And everywhere we went, I heard the same echo of what you have just said, and that is we appreciate what you folks did during the first 100 days. We are proud to see that Congress has finally done something in the first place, but, more importantly, has done what it said it was going to do.

I talked a lot about the fact that on September 27 of last year, we on the Republican side of the aisle made history in American politics. We not only made promises to the American people, but we were willing to put those promises in writing. For the first time in a long time, a group of politicians, the first time ever in American political history, a group of politicians came together and made promises to the American people and did every single thing we said we were going to do. And I kept hearing that over and over again in my district, not only that you made those promises and we are proud you kept them, but also, like you said, we do not want you to quit doing what you did. You have made a great start, but in order to get this country turned around, we have got to keep putting common sense back into Washington. Something that has long been missing up here. By doing what we did, we put a lot of common sense back into Washington, and I made a pledge to my folks in the Eighth District of Georgia that we are going to continue to do that.

There were a couple of things that were of particular importance to the folks in my district. No. 1 was the balanced budget amendment. They were extremely disappointed that the Senate was unable to pass the balanced budget amendment, which is so crucial to the financial stability of this country. Congress over the past 25 years has shown it cannot balance the budget itself, and the people of this country demanded that a balanced budget be passed, and unfortunately we were not able to do that. But they have encouragement because of the fact that we in the Republican Conference have made an unconditional pledge that we are going to balance the budget of this country by the year 2002. While the folks in my district do not like to have their programs cut, nobody does, the folks in my district are willing to share in the reforms that have got to be made in order to get this country back on track and in order to get to that glide path to a balanced budget and in order to ultimately balance that budget by the year 2002.

The other program that is extremely important to the folks in my district was the welfare reform bill we passed here in the first 100 days. I think, and the folks in my district absolutely wholeheartedly agree with me, that that is the cornerstone of the contract, and that is the most important thing that we did during the first 100 days. We have too many people in this country who need to go to work, who would go to work if work were available and if they did not have the incentive to stay on welfare, and folks out there are absolutely tired of the failed and dismal welfare system that we have in this country.

□ 1745

They were really pleased and encouraged by the fact that finally a group of Congressmen were willing to stand up and say, by golly, we are going to reform this program, and we are going to put dignity back in the welfare system. And we are going to require those folks who can work that are on welfare, that are getting food stamps, to go to work. And the blue-collar folks out there, the white-collar folks, all the way up and down the line, the folks who work hard every week and pay taxes every week are simply tired of that system, and they were extremely encouraged by what we did with our welfare reform package.

And I made another promise to them, that we are going to continue to work on that type of reform in this Congress.

Mr. LATHAM. I yield to the gentleman from San Diego [Mr. BILBRAY].

Mr. BILBRAY. Thank you very much. I represent the 49th District of California. It is a beautiful district that stretches from my home town in Pearl Beach on the Mexican border up north to the beautiful wooded hills of La Jolla, from the communities of Ocean Beach and Pacific Beach on the blue Pacific to the foot hills of the Sierra Nevadas, what we call the San Diego foot hills.

And I was greeted by citizens at every community that we were visiting, very, very encouraged with the factors that my colleagues have said, that there was some credibility given back to Congress, something that had been lacking for so long; the fact that promises were made, promises kept, something that was rare and unseen for a long time.

And one of the encouraging things was the fact that we have actually heard people say that there may be concerns about our legislative agenda, about specifics, but at least they feel that Congress cares and that Congress is listening. And I think that one of the things that shocked the people I spoke to was that rather than what has happened for the last 100 years in this country, where freshmen were brought in and stuck in corners and not allowed to speak, that the new voices of the people's concerns were muted, this time for the first time in the history that anybody remembers, the freshmen, the new wave of fresh faces was not only not stopped, they were absorbed and they were actually embraced. Many of us in the freshman class have been encouraged to participate on this floor the first day, allowed to serve on committees and actually had chairmanships, which really kind of astonished people, that the voices of the American people are being heard and are being incorporated and that we do not fear the change for the good.

Frankly, I have got to point out that one of our frustrations was that, as I came in to San Diego and enjoyed the beautiful blue waters of the Pacific, we also are reminded what a failure our Federal Government has been at times, especially with issues of environmental quality which are very, very important to those of us in San Diego and California for good reason. We are blessed by the Lord of having one of the most beautiful environments in the world. But at the same time that I had to state how much we enjoy our environment, I have got to point out that we were greeted this week to over 30 million gallons of untreated raw sewage from a foreign country, Mexico, that our State Department and our EPA department found reasons to ignore and not to stop, that you or I would be fined very quickly by our own Government and by our own Federal agencies. But they have turned their head on a major environmental disaster that is occurring again and again and again for those of us that live along the border.

All I would say is that next week, when we talk about the Clean Water Act, that we start recognizing that the Clean Water Act, for those of us in San Diego County, is a misnomer. We look at the Federal bureaucracy and the Federal agencies that have administered it, too quick to fine American citizens, too quick to find fault with other people, and too seldom are willing to tackle the real tough problems like 30 million gallons of raw sewage pouring from a foreign country, polluting wildlife preserves, killing wildlife in an area of endangered species that is quite critical and closing almost 10 miles of California beach front.

So I hope that those of us, as we next week start addressing the Clean Water Act, will be brave enough to have the guts to rise up and say, it is a good start, but we darn well have to improve this act to make sure it protects the environment and that the agencies that are working on this must be held responsible for pollution problems such as we face in San Diego County.

Mr. LATHAM. I thank the gentleman.

I, like both of you, I think when I was back at my meetings, the balanced budget amendment was paramount. Very disappointed what happened in the Senate, encouraged by the idea that it will be brought up again and probably passed in the next 60 to 90 days. If not, it will be brought back again next year.

In my district, in the 30 counties in northwest Iowa, it is absolutely essential that we have a balanced budget

amendment. And I thought it was interesting, when we had a lot of discussion on welfare reform, how far ahead the people in my district are compared to what is being spewed about on the floor here in the House about supposedly cuts in funding for school lunch programs.

Every meeting I said, OK, how many here raise your hands if you believe that a 4.5-percent increase is a cut? And obviously we had no hands go up. Apparently the new math that has taken place in Washington has not hit Iowa, because we still understand what real math is and what the truth and the facts of the matter are.

And people tell us, if you do anything else, get rid of the failed welfare system that we have in this country and bring back a system with accountability and responsibility and give the people opportunities for the future and do not keep them tied into a system that takes away hope for their families and their future.

Mr. BILBRAY. In San Diego, this has been a real tough battle for almost two decades now where San Diego County has a welfare system larger than 32 States of the Union. It is 2.6 million with a very large welfare problem. And every time we try to do something, the Federal Government was always in the way of the people of San Diego trying to reform and restructure this. And in fact, I point out that in 1978, the people in San Diego were called ruthless and heartless and cruel because they came up with a radical idea, they said, that was cruel called ''workfare,'' in 1978. And just the last few years, to show you how frustrating it is working with the Federal Government, when you are trying to make some sanity out of this situation, that when we found there was welfare fraud, we realized we wanted to put a picture ID on a welfare card. And Federal agents were saying, we do not think you can do that because we think it may violate the privacy of the welfare recipient. I have to say that any person who truly is in need, any person who really wants to participate in a good program would obviously not be opposed to having their picture on the welfare card. In fact, I think any of us who has any kind of identification, driver's license, do we feel our privacy has been violated because we have a picture?

I think that gives you an example of how we have got to break up the concept that Washington is the only well of knowledge and compassion, that the local communities do have the ability to address these problems, to straighten out these problems, if we must give them the right to do the right thing. That is really what my people in San Diego keep crying for us to do here in Washington.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. I think you make a good point there, the fact that I have confidence in the local people in my home county and every single one of the 32 counties in my district that they can do a better job of running local programs than a bunch of bureaucrats in Washington can. That is the whole concept behind what we are doing now. The block granting that is going to be taking place is being done in a very thought-out manner. It is not being done hastily. It is being done only with programs that we have given serious consideration to, have listened to serious testimony about and have made conscious decisions that local folks are better able to spend their own tax money on their own programs than somebody in Washington.

And I heard that time and time again. Thank goodness the folks in my district for the most part had seen through the school lunch debate before I ever got there. When I got to my town hall meetings and talked about school lunch programs, we had nothing but compliments for the fact that we are willing to give the local folks credit for the fact that they are capable of running these programs. They are the ones that run it anyway.

Mr. BILBRAY. I was in a community called Navajo where the lady who runs the school lunch program came forward and said, I did not know about you Republicans. I was not sure. But thank you for giving us the program so we do not always have to have Washington tell us how to do it. We can serve kids more lunches and be able to serve the kids better because you are getting the Federal Government off our backs so we can do it. She said it quite clearly. She said, what do you people in Washington or the people in Washington think, that Washington cares more about our children than we care about our own children?

I think that was probably the best message we could receive.

Mr. LATHAM. And it goes back, another subject that came up many times in my town meetings, and it goes back to the idea of local control again, is education. People are outraged today in the 5th district of Iowa that they want to put together basically a Federal school board to tell our local school boards exactly what they can and cannot teach, what restrictions they can put on and what restrictions they cannot. Everybody believes that there is a role for the Federal Government as far as ensuring that every one has access to education, that because of race, creed, color, handicap, whatever, that you are not deprived of that opportunity. But everyone also believes that it is the State's responsibility to fund education in our State and also the control has to stay with the local school boards.

And I had a vote down in Boone County. It was interesting. I asked, after we had had this discussion, I said, how many of you want to do away with the Department of Education? And the vote was 38 to 2 to do away with the Department, to bring back the responsibility at the local level, to not put it away to some bureaucrat here in Washington today, let the people at the local level make the decisions for their children's education because they do know best and they are going to be able to help them the most and ensure a quality education.

We are not going to do it again from Washington.

Mr. BILBRAY. I had it pointed out to me that the more money that we have spent on the federal Department of Education, the more the test scores of our students in this country have dropped. I do not believe that you can blame it on the Department of Education, but I think that what it tells us is just throwing money at a Federal agency will not help to educate our children.

It is the teachers and the parents of America that will educate the children. And what we need to do in the Federal Government is get out of the way and let them do what they do best, take care of the children. If any of us had a vehicle where we spent more money on the vehicle and the vehicle ran worse every time we added money, we would kind of think twice about the idea of how much money we are spending here and maybe we should try a different vehicle.

I think the best vehicle is allow parents to do what parents do best, allow teachers to do what teachers do best and get off their backs and let them get the job done.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. My wife has taught school in the public school system in Colquitt County, my home county, for in excess of 20 years. My daughter is in her first year of teaching kindergarten in the public schools. I see what both of these ladies do on a weekly basis as far as teaching kids. That is where the core of our education system is. They do not go home at 3 in the afternoon. They are there until 5 or 6 in the afternoon. They are there at night. They are there on Sunday, working, preparing to teach those kids because they love what they do.

That is what makes our education system in this country so great. It is not the bureaucrats in Washington that contribute to the positive side of the education system in this country, and that is what the folks at home are tired of. They are tired of bureaucrats in Washington dictating to them not only what their children will eat, but what school books that folks can choose from, what curriculum they will be taught and how they will be taught it.

It is absolutely time that we did what the Founders and Framers of the Constitution of the United States intended, and that is to return the government of this country to the people of this country. And education is a prime area where I look for the Republican side of the House to really step forward and to do that, because by dismantling the Department of Education, which I am advocating that we do over some period of time, we are going to return the education of our children to the folks in the States and

in the local communities. That is were it ought to be.

We do owe an obligation to the school systems of this country to help fund them. That is what our tax money needs to be spent for. But the folks on the local level need to be making decisions about how their children will be taught.

Mr. LATHAM. I think it is very unfortunate that so much of our resources in the schools today, and I heard it time and time again, are going to help children who are not now motivated to learn English and that is the town of, and I am sure it is a big issue with you, in the town of Storm Lake, IA today we have 22 different languages in our school district. In Sioux City, IA, we have 18 different languages.

I heard time and time again in the town meetings that English should be the national language, and we should encourage every one to learn English, that that is the thing that holds this country together. And rather than being a melting pot like we used to be, we are a tossed salad, that we need English, we need English as the thing to hold us together.

You look at the resources we are expending today, just trying to have a special teacher going through with each, like in Storm Lake, 22 different languages.

Mr. BILBRAY. As somebody who was raised in a very multicultural neighborhood, my home town was very, very multicultural. The fact is that we have got to remember that language is one of the bonding elements that hold us together. Common culture, common language, common economics. We can share other cultures.

My community, we celebrate September 16 or Cinco de Mayo just as much as anybody else would.

□ 1800

It is one of the joys. The problem we get into is when people want to destroy that common ground where all Americans can meet, and that common ground, one thing that is very critical is language. We should learn from what is happening in the Continent of Africa and what has happened in Yugoslavia, where people have drawn lines and maintained separate lines just to make sure they do not communicate. Language is absolutely essential, not just for the culture, but for the individual.

In my community and my district, a lot of Mexican nationals send their children up into the United States to be educated, and their first priority is for their children to learn English, because even in Mexico, language, the English language, is essential if you want the economic and social prosperity for your children. Those of us that love our children should do no less for our future generations than to make sure that everyone, everyone in the United States has the right to proficiency in the English language.

That has not necessarily happened. In certain segments where English is not a major part of the educational system, and where it has not been well implanted, the dropout rate is over 50 percent. We are denying these individuals the potential for free access, the right and freedom of the pursuit of happiness.

I think we really need to raise this issue of saying we want to do this as a compassionate step so we have equal opportunity, and we cannot have equal opportunity in any society unless there is a common language. I think it is quite clear.

The people of California, though, I want to point out, have passed a citizens initiative that identifies English as the official language, and let me point out that those of Latino extraction actually were major supporters in the voting ranks for that, because they, more than anyone else, understand that you have to have that common bond. That English language is our common language.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Switching subjects, TOM, but along that same line again of reducing the Federal bureaucracy and particularly taking the Federal Government out of our daily lives, one thing that I heard at every single town meeting I went to was the flat tax. Folks want to know ''tell me about the flat tax: Do we really have a chance of getting the flat tax passed?'' Without even knowing all the details of the flat tax, the reason I found that people were so excited about the flat tax is that it reduces the Government involvement from the standpoint of the Internal Revenue being less involved in our daily lives.

I use an example. I carry a 3 by 5 card with me, this is not exactly 3 by 5, but I use that example of taking your W–2 form and using the gross receipts that you received on your W–2 form, multiplying it by 17 percent, and you come up with a figure, you write the Government a check for that amount of money, you sign it. That is your tax return.

The reaction I got on that was just extremely positive, because that is what has people in this country excited about this term of Congress. We are doing some things to finally dismantle the Federal bureaucracy, and to get things back to where the Founders of this country intended for them to be to start with.

I do not know whether you heard anything about the flat tax or about the consumption tax, but I have sure heard a lot about it.

Mr. LATHAM. I have had questions asked me at every meeting on the same subject, at each of the 16 meetings, talking about the flat tax and a national sales tax. There are reservations about the flat tax, that maybe some group is going to get away a little better than what they currently are, and the national sales tax, as far as the possibility that it would maybe be regressive for some groups, but the idea, the beauty of the sales tax, would be, and I am still listening to the people at home on this, but there is a real underground economy, a cash economy, in this country.

If we would tax consumption, that would be a positive step forward as far as getting benefit from that underground economy and making sure that everybody, even if it is illegally gotten money, that they are going to pay some tax on it as they go ahead and buy things in the future.

Mr. BILBRAY. I heard that from a tax consultant in my own living room, actually in the kitchen.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Where you spend most of your time, right?

Mr. BILBRAY. You have your kitchen Cabinet, I have mine. But the fact is, as this tax consultant pointed out, is that if Members of Congress could see what the average American citizen has to go through every April 15, or to get ready for April 15, if the average Member of Congress saw what happens to the citizens, this cruel and unusual punishment that we call the IRS taxing system, the income tax process, that there is no way morally you could stand up and defend the existing taxation structure.

In fact, this consultant said flat out that she would prefer to be put out of business and go to a consumption tax or a flat tax, I think she favors a consumption tax, because the argument is everybody should understand that we all pay taxes. There are certain people on public assistance who we say ''do not pay any taxes,'' but we all do, directly or indirectly. One thing about a consumption tax, it makes everybody on U.S. territory who buys anything pay part of that.

I will tell you, the greatest speech I probably ever heard about taxation happened that day. She said, ''Put me out of business. I do not want to be part of this cruel punishment of the American citizens that we call the income tax system.''

Let me point out, that tax consultant was my wife, and all I said to her is ''Karen, we need you to testify before Congress, because I think it says a lot when a business person says 'The system is so rotten that you should put me out of business.'" I think if you talk to most people who work in the tax business, they are frustrated with the fact that the system is neither equal nor fair, it is cruel, and it does not do the job properly, and it does not do it in a way that I think we can be proud of as American citizens.

Mr. LATHAM. My district is made up of thousands of small businesses and farmers, and you are talking about putting somebody out of business. One thing that I heard time after time after time was ''thank you'' for doing something about the regulatory burden we are putting on small businesses and farmers in today's environment with the Federal Government.

It is outrageous, I think, when a small business person on Main Street is more concerned about somebody coming in his door from the Government,

supposedly to ''help them,'' than they are about any competitor down the street. They can compete with that other person, they can offer a better service, they can work harder, they can give a better quality of product, but they absolutely feel helpless with someone from the Government coming in and dictating to them exactly what they can and cannot do.

If I heard one thing time and time again, it is ''thank you for trying to at least start some regulatory relief to get the Government off our backs. It is bad enough they are deep in our pockets, but please help us get the Government off our backs. Let us operate, let us grow, let us prosper. We will be responsible, because our children live here. We are going to take care of things to make sure that we have a good quality of life and a safe working place, but this regulatory overkill is simply stifling business and stifling opportunities in my district.''

Mr. CHAMBLISS. TOM, that was not only true with the large manufacturers, whom we think of as being the ones who have the major problems with regulation by OSHA or EPA or whoever. Virtually every town meeting I had, and again, I had small business men, I had farmers, just folks on the street complaining to me about the various regulations that the Federal Government has issued that they are having to comply with, and they make absolutely no sense at all.

Unfortunately, that is the shift which we made in this country over the last several years. We have gotten to where we have overregulated every segment of our society, and again, I heard the same thing you did.

Folks are just so pleased that we have started moving in the right direction, that we again bring common sense back into the regulation industry in this country, and whether it is EPA, clean water, clean air, whatever it may be, we have to use common sense in adopting these regulations and allowing our agencies to issue these regulations. People were just extremely pleased that we are moving in that direction.

Mr. BILBRAY. I heard a lot of frustration with what we call the Federal bureaucracy. I think one of the things I tried to do is to make sure I clarify that they should not blame the agents.

The fact is the blame for the absurdity of the Federal Government and the abuse of the Federal Government rest with Congress, and it is our responsibility, it is the President's responsibility, it is the Senate's, but we are the ones who bear the responsibility.

The people who are out there working for the Federal Government are taking a very hard hit from a lot of different directions, when in fact it is our obligation to straighten this out. I think if there is anything else, that we really planted the seed out there, that there is hope that the Federal Government will soon come back to the position of being an ally and an aid all the time, so Congress makes things change.

That is a real goal that we have as freshmen, of bringing that dose of reality in from the streets of America and implanting it here in the Chambers of the House of Representatives, so that when the laws leave here, when the regulations are made, they are made always remembering we are here as servants of the public. We exist for the public, the public does not exist for the Federal Government.

That is really our jobs, especially as freshmen, this new breeze that has blown through this facility, that we have to remind our senior Members on both sides of the aisle that we serve at the pleasure of the public, and the public is why we exist, and why we need to continue to listen to their concerns, and not just try to shut them off.

Mr. LATHAM. I think you have hit a fundamental point, and that is is the Government a servant to the people, or as it appears today, that role has reversed, and almost the people today are servants of the Government? It is wrong. The Government is here only to serve the people. It is a free country.

Talk about regulatory relief, in my district wetlands is a huge issue, where today we have people from the Government coming out and delineating a small pocket or pothole in a farm that has been in production for 90 to 100 years, and their forefathers—my own farm has been in our family for 105 years. A lot of that ground was hand tilled, dug by hand 80 or 90 years ago.

Now someone is coming in and telling us how we can and cannot use that land, because somebody somewhere in Washington or wherever says that that eighth of an acre there is an official wetland. By some of the definitions today, over half of my congressional district in 1993, the flood year, could have been a permanent wetland by their definitions.

It is absolutely outrageous, and I am very proud of the fact that we put the pressure on the administration to finally get a moratorium as far as wetlands delineation.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. The wetlands issue, as you mentioned, is a classic example of overregulation by the Federal Government. Right now if you have a wetlands problem in a particular area in any county in the United States, any one of four agencies, the EPA, the USDA, Fish and Wildlife, can come in, and the Corps of Engineers can come in, and make a determination on that as to whether or not it is a wetlands, and what you have to do about it.

Why should you have four Federal agencies involved in one issue like that? The sad part about it is that you may get four different answers from all four of those agencies. I had one gentleman at one of my town hall meetings who gave me a personal experience of exactly that, that he had all four agencies involved in his particular wetlands issue, and he got three different—he didn't get four, but he got three different answers to a question that he had about his wetlands problem.

Mr. BILBRAY. What we really have to look at, too, though, is that it is just not about protection, because many times, if not most of the time, when a regulation is overkill and inappropriate, it is not only hurting the individual and taking away precious rights, but it is also not protecting the wetlands it was meant to protect.

The people in my neighborhood would love the Federal Government to do something to protect the estuarine preserves in the Tijuana Valley, but when it goes beyond finding blame and you have to find answers, the agencies just tend not to be so inspired.

I think we have to get back, it is our responsibility to help redirect this, to make sure that our regulations not only have compassion, but are smart and get the job done, because my district wants to see the environment protected, but every time we waste our resources on protecting something that should not have been done or a regulation that is being implemented inappropriately, that is that much resources that could have gone to the wildlife and to preservation that is not going to go there.

Mr. LATHAM. That is an excellent point. There is no one more concerned about conservation, the environment, than these farmers that these regulations are just strangling today. These are the people who want to pass their land on to the next generation. They are the ones who are raising their children on a farm that are drinking the water out of the wells that are being regulated.

They are the ones who want to preserve the quality of the soil itself, because that is livelihood. They are the ones directly concerned, and it would impact them greatly if it is destroyed. There is no farmer anywhere who is going to pollute his well and make his children drink that. It is simply outrageous.

No one in agriculture is saying that there are not wetlands out there, and that they should be preserved, because there are. People want—they love to hunt in my district, they love to fish, they love to see the ducks come in, even if you do not hunt, but to have someone come on your farm after it has been in production for 80 or 90 years and tell you then that you can do longer use your land anymore is simply outrageous.

It is not a matter of people being against the environment, but it is absolutely overkill by the Federal Government, and that is what people are so outraged about.

Mr. BILBBRAY. We have the frustration, the misinterpretation of the Endangered Species Act, where we have children who were forced off of their Little League park by one Federal agency, and have been waiting for 2 years to get to be able to move onto an area that was farmed for 100 years, but

they have been made to wait just because they need this test to see if a pocket mouse is in that area.

The frustration here that the kids do not understand and the parents don't understand is ''Wait a minute, I thought that the private citizen was innocent in our society until proven guilty.'' However, with many of these regulations, the way they are being administered, and we need to address this, they do not have any rights until the Federal agency says ''OK.''

I think we need to look at that. We are a Jeffersonian democracy. We are a democracy who believes that the individual is a premier element of our society, and that the individual's rights desperately have to be preserved and cannot be trod under by a well-intentioned but misguided majority.

I do not think any of us that ever supported environmental regulation or environmental preservation expected the Constitution to be destroyed in the works.

□ 1815

Mr. LATHAM. The gentleman is absolutely right.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. I think it is very remarkable that here, TOM, you are from Iowa, BRIAN, you are from California, I am from Georgia. We represent three different parts of the country, East to West and in the middle.

I think it is very interesting that all three of us have heard the same concerns from our constituents over the last 3 weeks. Basically they are the same things that we all campaigned on last summer and that are contained within the Contract With America.

It is exciting to me to see the people all over the country as excited about politics and about what is going on in Washington as they are. Obviously we all shared the same experiences concerning these issues.

I think that is very interesting, and again goes to reinforce that the American people did speak on November 8, that the American people want changes, and even though they may not agree with every single thing we are doing in Washington right now, they understand we are doing something.

I heard that again time after time: ''We may not agree with everything you're doing, but by golly, you guys are doing something, you're making progress, and just keep at it.'' That probably was the most constant theme I had the whole time I was home.

Mr. BILBRAY. My district has over 10 naval military facilities there, in fact, one of them North Islands where I was born. That just shows you, you may think Californians move around a lot, but I am still living in my district.

The fact is the military is learning, in San Diego, in California, across this country, a new reality. They are changing, adapting, becoming progressive, looking at ways of doing more with less. I think it sets an example for those of us in Congress and the way we look at our laws.

The fact is there is a new progressive change that has taken over here. A lot of people call it conservative, but the fact is if you look at this by definition, you have citizens who are saying, ''We want you to do better. We want you to be brave enough to try new things.''

The new majority, and especially led by those of us that are freshmen, are the progressives who are willing to say the old was fine for them, but not for the future. We not only have a right to change things for the better, we have a responsibility to do that.

I would like to thank you two gentlemen for participating in part of the revolution that is moving this progressive agenda along.

Mr. LATHAM. I thank the gentlemen for this great conversation.

I just want to say, I pointed out at every town meeting that I had that the Contract With America was not passed just with the 53 percent in the House here that is Republican. On the average, in total, 78 percent of the Members of Congress supported items in the Contract With America.

It is not a partisan issue. The change and reform, new ideas, and the idea of bringing back responsibility and accountability to the Government is not a partisan issue. It is on both sides of the aisle, when you have over three-fourths of the Members supporting what was in the Contract With America. Obviously, there are some things that we differ on, but the American people know who is on what side. They will remember next year, whatever.

Again, we have all mentioned it, but the thing that I was told time after time after time was, ''TOM, keep it up, don't let up. You have just started to turn the wheel of this great aircraft carrier we call the Government. It is just starting to turn, but there is a lot of work out there ahead. Keep up the pressure, redouble your efforts.''

We are going to do that. As freshmen Members, we are going to keep up the heat, continue the efforts, and, folks, you haven't seen anything yet, like they say.

EIGHTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORBES). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I intend to use some of this 60 minutes for myself, and then yield to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] and the gentleman from California [Mr. MOORHEAD], who are here. We are here basically to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide.

Mr. Speaker, April 24, 1995, marked the 80th anniversary of the unleashing of the Armenian genocide. Each year, Members of Congress from both the House and the Senate take time to honor the memory of the Armenian men, women, and children who were slaughtered by the Ottoman Turkish Empire.

I am proud to continue this proud congressional tradition today. In my capacity as the cofounder, along with the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, I will be working with many of my colleagues on behalf of continued support for the people of Armenia and for the significant Armenian-American community. I will also work to continue to press for the modern Republic of Turkey—a NATO member and recipient of hundreds of millions in United States aid every year—to finally accept responsibility for this crime against humanity and express its sorrow and contrition. I also believe we should continue to use the means at our disposal to force modern Turkey to lift the blockade it has imposed on Armenia. I know many of our colleagues feel the same way.

Mr. Speaker, today's occasion is, of course, a time for solemn reflection on the suffering of a people, the Armenians, as well as the larger question of humanity's capacity for evil. Yet, it is also time for us to celebrate the human capacity of resilience, the ability even of people faced with the most unthinkable disasters to rebuild their shattered lives. This capacity to overcome unimaginable horrors can be seen on the individual level in the faces of the survivors, a group of whom attended a very moving reception here on Capitol Hill today. On the national level, the struggle for survival and the sense of hope for the future can be seen by the very existence of the independent, democratic Republic of Armenia.

On April 24, 1915, 200 Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders from Istanbul were arrested and exiled—in one fell swoop, silencing the leading representatives of the Armenian community in the Ottoman capital. This date is thus the symbolic beginning of the genocide. Over the years from 1915 to 1923, 1.5 million men, women, and children were deported, forced into slave labor, tortured, and exterminated.

What happened in the Ottoman Turkish Empire during the years 1915–23 was more than a series of massacres in a time of instability, revolution, and war. It was the first example of genocide in the 20th century, a precursor to the Nazi Holocaust, and other cases of ethnic cleansing and mass extermination in our own time.

But, unlike the case of Germany, which officially accepts its guilt for the crimes against humanity committed by the Nazi regime and has made restitution to many of the victims, modern Turkey continues to deny that the Armenian genocide took place. There were no Nuremberg trials, no concerted effort to aid the survivors and let them give their testimony. While various Turkish sources express the view that certain unfortunate incidents took place, it denies that any