that we do in the area of business. Would the gentleman not agree with that?

The gentleman does agree. He is shaking his head.

Mr. DICKEY. That is correct.

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. That is a yes. They in fact look at us as role models for the most part. Is that not correct?

Mr. DICKEY. That is correct.

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. The gentleman would agree. We do not have companies and workers across the world looking at America saying we do not do our business correctly. For the most part, think we do a pretty good job at it.

Let me take the gentleman through the history of minimum wage for a second. It did not hurt then, and I would suggest to the gentleman it is not going to hurt now because, first of all, it is not going to take away the competitive angle of the work force. Individuals must still be competitive. They will be rewarded based upon their merits.

Public Law 75–718 was the first minimum wage law, 25 cents. Then in 1939 it moved from 25 to 30 cents. In 1945 it moved from 30 to 40, 40 cents. Then in 1950 it moved to 75 cents. It was still competitive then. Employees were still working and getting their just due in the merit system, and it did not have a devastating effect on the economy and certainly did not have a devastating effect on the American workers.

Let me ask the Speaker, inquire in terms of how much time the gentleman has remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MICA). The gentleman from Louisiana has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. Because I would like to yield 1 minute to each of the gentlemen and gentlewoman before I leave, before we close.

It moved from, I will put it in the RECORD, up to 1991, it moved from 25 cents in 1938 to $4.25 in 1991. And certainly the gentleman is not suggesting that employees are coming to work waiting for the Government to raise their wage and not working hard, not trying to be promoted on jobs and waiting for this Congress to raise their wage. The gentleman is not suggesting that.

Mr. DICKEY. I am.

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. If the gentleman is suggesting that, I would suggest that the gentleman is wrong.

I am going to yield 30 seconds to each of the gentleman and the gentlewoman for closing. I first yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. OWENS. It is an insult to workers who make the minimum wage to say that they are there because they are no good, they cannot improve themselves. My father is one of the smartest men I ever knew. He worked in the Memphis furniture factory all his life, never paid more than the minimum wage. He went to school to the sixth grade. He was the smartest man. When the machines broke down, he made them operate. He understood the mechanics. They had to come get him when they laid him off because of the fact the machines could no be run by anybody else, yet they still never paid him more than the minimum wage because the supply and demand was such that they could get people who would work for the minimum wage.

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas.

Mr. DICKEY. Mr. Speaker, I would yield my time.

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Let me thank the gentleman from Louisiana for this opportunity. I want to make sure that we are focusing and keep the minimum wage debate in a particular context. The context is, once again, the top 500,000 families, their net worth in 1983 in this Nation was $2.5 trillion. By 1989 it had risen to $5 trillion.

Those families, those business people, they witnessed an increase in their standard of living. They have witnessed an increase in their earnings and in their wage earnings. That is a crowd that paid $700,000 for golf clubs, $300,000 for fake pearls. They need to pay more taxes, which is good. It is American because they are benefiting from America.

At the same time, we need to raise the minimum wage of people who do not have the same opportunity that those 500,000 families do.

Before I yield back the balance of my time, I just want to show this.

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. The gentleman has no time.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. The distinguished majority leader has indicated he will resist a minimum wage increase with every fiber of his body. In light of the fact there are working people in our country that we upset about this, we ought to change that.

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Illinois, and I yield to the gentlewoman from Georgia.

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I say we need to increase the minimum wage to a livable wage. We need to protect workers' rights and jobs. We need to decrease taxes on middle and low income families, and we need to encourage not just personal responsibility but corporate responsibility, too.

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Georgia. I thank all the gentlemen and the gentlewoman for being here, and I want to especially thank the gentleman from Arkansas for being here tonight to participate in this colloquy. The gentleman certainly showed a lot of statesmanship and character in being part of this debate tonight, and I thank the gentleman.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I simply say that Members of this Congress, all who I serve with and all who I have a great deal of respect for, when we go home each day we take in $550. Each day we work we get $550. A person on minimum wage only makes $680 a month. I just cannot see why we cannot give them a small 40-cent increase 1 year and another 40 cents the next year, so that they can buy bread and milk for the same price that we buy bread and milk.

I want to thank the Speaker and I want to thank the gentleman and the gentlewoman.

THE REPUBLICAN VISION FOR AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. RADANOVICH] is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to come speak to the American people regarding the important issues of the day, and I would like to start off by commenting on how important words are, I think in conveying messages. In my short term here in Congress, I am a freshman, I have been here a little over a year, I have learned a couple of vital things, and that is that we have to be very, very careful about the words that we say to make sure that they are communicating exactly what we mean to the American people, because words are very important.

It is in that spirit that I offer the following vision, in an attempt to determine a way to communicate to the American people the role and the mission of the Republicans here in Congress. If we can say things and put them down into easily understandable terms, using very symbolic figures, it can go a long way to explaining to the American people how we would like to go and where we would like to take this country. It is in that spirit that I offer this following vision.

Let me use the simple symbol of a chair to illustrate where we are in America and I think where the Republican Congress would like to take this country. In starting with something such as this, I think it kind of illustrates where America is right now. I believe that before we can entrust or get the American people's trust in following us, we have to accurately describe where America is right now, and this portrait of this chair is a good illustration of American society. So welcome to America.

Basically we have an unstable chair, something that does not provide very much freedom, something that does not provide very much security. This is really the condition of our country right now, I believe. You will notice the chair has four legs, but the problem is that none of the legs are the same size as the other legs on the chair.

Look at the government leg, way too long. Look at the family leg. It would be very easy to sell the argument to

the American people that the family unit has basically been decimated over the last 30, 40 years with the notions of the Great Society and the Great Society mentality that this Congress has been operating under over the last 40 years. Business institutions and religious and civic institutions in this country are not operating up to their fullest capacity because of the large leg that knocks everything out of proportion and creates much instability and insecurity in the society.

Take the next chart to further illustrate this in a different way, and that is by saying I think that it is safe to state that in America today our institutions are disproportionate to one another, and that is the basis or the cause of a lot of our civil and financial problems in this country.

You will notice in the government institution, of all dollars spent on government, 70 percent of those dollars are spent at the Federal level, 30 percent of those dollars are spent at the State and local level.

Religious institutions and business institutions, as I mentioned, are not operating at full capacity due to overtaxation and regulation and problems with civic institutions that do not really fill their proper role in society, that basically have been taken over by the government institution.

The family institution has been decimated over the last 30 years.

There are two ways that we can solve this problem, because we believe that the American people sent us to Congress in this wave of the 1994 election to solve the problem of the reality that I just described. There are two ways that we can solve the problem.

This is not the way to do it. This somewhat illustrates the current efforts that we have been going through during the last year with our great deal and our determination to downsize Federal Government. What we failed to do, though, in chopping off certain responsibilities and lopping them out of the government sector, is to take into consideration how the downsizing of Federal Government would have an effect on the other institutions in the American society.

Now, I will say that Lyndon Johnson said it right. When he began to campaign for the Great Society in the early 1960's, he said ''Great Society.'' He did not say ''great government,'' even though that is what he did. He tried to solve all of society's problems through a great government, and it ended up getting us $5.5 trillion worth of debt and expanded the ranks of the poor and needy.

Everything that government got into basically in many of the areas of our lives has made the problems worse, not better. So I think what the Republicans need to learn is that in addition to our concept of downsizing, we have to think in terms of relationships, of how to build these other institutions in this country so that they can begin to fulfill some of the obligations that we feel government should no longer be in.

If Members would like to do it like this, we have a helter-skelter approach. It is not good for this country. Basically this is the result of a negative message, and anti-Great Society message, an antigovernment message.

I think what we would like to do, the Republicans would like to do, is to paint an accurate picture of what America would look like after using the balanced budget process as a blueprint to get to a better America. That can be accomplished, I believe, in two ways. One is through the legislation that we would be accomplishing on the House floor and in the Senate and through the White House, and the other would be to illustrate how the issue of personal responsibility ties into the reestablishing of the family institutions and the downsizing of Federal Government.

If we are to downsize Federal Government and take into consideration its effect on the other institutions in this country, and also build these other institutions up so that they are able to receive these responsibilities that we therefore determine are no longer the responsibility of the Federal Government, then it should occur in some of the following examples such as this:

There are many who believe that once government entered into the social programs, that they actually made them worse. The war on poverty is not over. There is more poverty since war was declared on poverty by the Federal Government in the early 1960's. Many of the concepts of the Good Samaritan I think people agree are found in scripture, not in the Constitution. They are better met by civic and religious institutions in this country.

We should begin designing tax overhaul problems in relationship to, with the objective, I should say, of shifting that responsibility from the institution of government over to civic and religious institutions. By that I mean providing generous deductions for contributions made to not only church groups but civic groups, nonprofit groups, private charities, anybody, any group that takes care of the poor and needy, so that as this fulfillment of that need to care for the poor and needy expands in this civic and religious institution, the social programs of the government are correspondingly reduced so that we can have a phaseout of government's participation, but the need is met and even met more effectively in this institution that begins to rebuild this one.

Deregulation and tax relief, a mantra of the Republican Party, and justifiably so, will reduce the amount of overhead of the Federal Government. Regulation costs money, and they have to raise taxes in order to make the money in order to pay for the increased regulation of government. That is, as it is shifted down, it begins to rebuild the business institution because business can expand when they get tax and regulation relief, so we have a downsizing of that institution and a beginning of the rebuilding of the business institution.

Third, an example of education and how much it can rebuild the family institutions is by making the point that the education system in this country must be answerable to the family unit, because parents are ultimately responsible for the education of their children, and not the government. I do not mean that everybody in this country should be home schoolers. What I do mean is that through local control of education, not Federal control, by the abolishment of the Department of Education, returning responsibility back to the community level, local control or a voucher system puts that responsibility back onto the family unit, so our parents can have more after choice in their child's education. It, too, reduces the amount of government.

□ 2230

On the issue of localizing, you have today 70 percent of all total dollars spent on the Federal Government, you have like laws that are current State level, and also local level. So it is to the benefit if you take all these programs and push them back down to the State level by block granting. Or if you push them down at the local level by further block granting to counties, you begin to reduce the amount of government by reducing the Federal Government's role in these problems, but still having government obligations met at the State and local level.

Mr. Speaker, these are indications of how we start downsizing in such a way that we begin to rebuild these institutions.

I want to make one point, and that is that we have begun to get some rebuilding of these institutions. But they are not operating at the full capacity that they could, and this will never occur at their full capacity without the issue of personal responsibility, which is the next slide, if you would like to go ahead and put that up there.

The issue of raising the conscience of the American people is really a very important key in bringing stability and actually recreating a free society in America, and that is not a role of the government institution. It is the role of religious institutions.

Now, civic organizations can take care of poor and needy, but it is the responsibility of the churches across the land to begin to raise the conscience of the American people so that they, the American people, can begin to operate effectively in these other institutions. By raising the conscience of the American people, it allows their capacity through religious and civic institutions to take over the social programs in this country. By raising the conscience of the American people in the family institution, it encourages personal responsibility so that parents are better parents, kids are better kids, marriages are not conducted frivolously, divorces are not conducted frivolously, people actually take serious responsibility within the family institution.

Raising the conscience of the American people allows the business institution to expand through two things, by encouraging less lawsuits and by the establishment of peer review. By peer review I mean that doctors police doctors, lawyers police lawyers, like-minded business policies like-minded business so that peer review, those of us judging each other, acts as a buffer between direct government control and no government control at all. It provides a cost-effective way by decreasing the cost of regulation, therefore decreasing taxes on business, to allow that business institution to expand to its fullest capacity.

So while you have downsized Federal Government, and the other issue is through raising the conscience of the American people, it allows us to flip this awkward percentage of large Federal, 70 percent being spent by Federal Government, and 30 percent at State and local governments, to be switched back down. Not only would we reduce the size of government, but that which we do spend is returned, 70 percent spent at the local level, 30 percent spent at the Federal level.

I cannot tell you how many times I heard on the House floor, especially when we were talking about block granting crime money at the local level, various Members standing up here, and we were arguing for no strings attached, let the local people decide how best to take care of crime in their various districts and people arguing that you simply cannot trust those local elected officials because they will go spend it on something else. My statement is, by raising the conscience of the American people, we can give more responsibility to elected officials in this country so that we can begin to attack the arrogant assumption that the only elected officials that you can trust are the 536 that are in Washington right now.

Through this idea I think what we begin to get is a proper vision of where we would like to take this country through a balanced budget process. And it is pretty much described in this one, which I call a free society, and that is where a Federal Government's role in this country is in equal proportion to the other institutions that form American society so that government is equal to religion, is equal to family, is equal to business. Not only that, but in a government institution the Federal Government's role in total spending is back to 30 percent, State and local control is the larger share of 70 percent.

Throughout history we have faced times of disproportionate institutions. Our country was developed because of the overly repressive monarchy in England, and that is what caused this disproportionate system for the Pilgrims to come to this new land. During the Industrial Revolution the business institution was disproportionate in its influence to other institutions in this country. During the inquisitions, an early church period, the religious institutions were far too disproportionate to the other institutions in this country. And in the last hundred years, through socialism, Communism, fascism we have experienced disproportionate government over the other institutions in this country. And in America we felt the ancillary effects of that through the Great Deal and also the Great Society.

So this is the vision of America: this is a free society. It provides the maximum amount of freedom and security for Americans so that they can go on to begin to pursue life, liberty and happiness with the surest amount and the greatest of success. What you end up with in relationship to my first slide was the result of that, and you can go ahead and change those, and that is a chair that works, a chair much like society in that both of them provide freedom and security so that you may sit in a chair, discuss, read, go about your business, and government is constructed in such a way that people can pursue life, liberty and happiness and not worry about insecurities or lack of freedoms.

Mr. Speaker, this is the vision of the Republican Party. This is a free society. This is when government is no longer any bigger than the religious institutions and civics institutions in this country, no longer bigger than the family institutions who have been restored to their full effectiveness, and no longer disproportionate to the business institutions providing a firm foundation for us to live on and experience the maximum amount of life, liberty and happiness in this country.

So I submit that to the American people and appreciate the time.

I do have time and want to yield to my friend and colleague from Maryland, Mr. BOB EHRLICH, who wants to begin a second portion of his presentation. I also welcome my friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from California, ANDREA SEASTRAND. So, BOB, I want to switch over to you and give you the magic wand, and I will be back up on that seat there.

Mr. EHRLICH. I thank my colleague from California. I also officially congratulate him upon his election to the presidency of the freshman class, and I welcome our colleague from California. Very well put, GEORGE, very well put.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the next half hour to engage my two colleagues in a discussion of what we see happening in America today, which is big labor bosses trying to buy themselves a Congress. I know the gentlewoman from California has some very, very strong views on this. I have taken the liberty actually of bringing my AFL–CIO report card, and blowing it up, and bringing it to the floor of this House because I know my two colleagues and I want to talk about exactly where big labor bosses are coming from the distinction of big labor bosses and how they have grown apart from the working folks in this country.

Mr. Speaker, what I would like to do, with the permission of my colleagues, is go over, one by one, the major issues on this report card. I am going to start with a favorite, and I know the president of the freshman class, my friend, the gentleman from California [Mr. RADANOVICH], is a businessman voting against an increase in the minimum wage. We have just heard an hour of discussion concerning the merits of raising the minimum wage. During that discussion I did not hear one sentence uttered about the ultimate irony of raising the minimum wage which is putting at risk marginal workers in this country out of work.

Every economic study I have ever seen, and, I submit, any economic study folks on the other side of the aisle have seen, holds the same result. When you raise the minimum wage, you automatically put *x* amount of marginal workers, unskilled, untrained, disabled workers, out of the work force, and that is compassion. That equals compassion. That is the traditional assumption that this majority challenges on this floor every day.

I know the gentlewoman from California would like to make a comment about that.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Well, I would also say that we came here to do away with unfunded Federal mandates, and if there was anything that was a mandate, it is to increase the minimum wage, and it is just artificial.

I say, why not raise it to $10 or $25? Why stop?

Mr. EHRLICH. We could really be compassionate, let us get real compassionate. Why not $20? Why not? We could put a lot more money in a few workers' pockets, and we would cause an awful lot of unemployment.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Well, I think statistics have proven over the years that a minimum wage will not create one job. Statistics prove that we lose jobs for those very people that we are trying to help. And you know none of us want to people to stay in a minimum wage job.

Mr. Speaker, I would just say my children, Curt and Heidi, worked their way through high school and college with different jobs. They depended on those minimum wages. You know, there are very few folks that really wanted to give them more. They were training, they were learning about getting to a job on time, learning what it meant to be there and to follow some of the rules and some of the basics.

Many of these minimum wage jobs apply to students across this Nation, both in high school and in college, and many of those students and young people are the very people, the minority students and such, that we are trying to help.

Mr. EHRLICH. Another irony at work here, and of course we have the President of the United States acting in a very compassionate way in this

election year, trying to sell the American people on the notion that he supports an increase in the minimum wage. Yet it is words, it is these words that keep rebounding against the President.

February 6, 1995, Bill Clinton: It, raising the minimum wage, is the wrong way to raise the incomes of low-wage earners. In 1995, a nonelection year; 1996, we see quite different words coming from this White House.

The gentleman from California?

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, my comment would be that the timing of this issue, at least in my view, and I have to let you know where I am coming from, and that is that basically I think that the establishment of a minimum wage really is a violation of the separation of government and business. I do not think that the Federal Government should be involved in the establishment of a minimum wage, No. 1.

No. 2, this issue was raised, and the comment about the President illustrates this point as a diversionary tactic, to divert the Nation's attention away from the real business at hand in Washington. That is balancing the Federal budget, getting our Federal act in order, learning how we can privatize certain things that government does, learning how we can localize.

This is a perfect example of things that probably should not be discussed on this floor of this House, is better left at the State level or even the local level for the establishment of minimum wages in States.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. If the gentleman will yield, we are going to be having an initiative on the ballot come November regarding the minimum wage. If there was someplace to discuss it, it would be at the State level.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out, I think the two gentleman would agree with me, that the irony is the President was in control 2 years. He had a House, he had a Senate. They could have increased the minimum wage, and instead we see comments such as on the board there, and they failed to do it, and you are right, he did do it for just getting us away from balancing the budget.

Mr. RADANOVICH. It is a political issue to divert attention away from the more urgent business at hand, and that is balancing the budget.

Mr. EHRLICH. Mr. Speaker, I think there is a far larger point here that I know many of us have discussed on the floor of this House. Should not words have meanings, even in this town, even on Capitol Hill, even in election years? It seems the institutional memory of this administration is quite limited. If you listen to the State of the Union, or you listen to this President, words simply have no meaning. An eloquent speaker, a wonderful speaker, charismatic, great on TV, yet the words are empty. The words have no meaning.

I think the American people want a little bit more out of their elected officials, both in the executive branch and the legislative branch. I know as I go door to door in the 2nd Congressional District of Maryland, people tell me they want their Representative to actually believe something.

It has become a traditional view of politics. You go get elected to anything, the State legislature or the county council, the Congress of the United States, President of the United States, because you actually have principles, because you are carried forward to public service on the philosophical foundation of things that you believe in and the vision you have for the country.

Mr. Speaker, words should have meanings.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. If the gentleman would yield, you mentioned principles. I know that, as we are discussing the minimum wage, we see polls where we see across America that perhaps Americans would like to see an increase in the minimum wage. But we came here as new Members to this Congress trying to change the policy, and I do not know about you, but I really cannot look at myself in the mirror to know that I hop on something that is popular instead of standing here and trying to share with the American people why this is not good policy and it is not going to be helpful to those people that we all say that we want to help.

□ 2245

It is not the compassionate thing to do. In fact, it is going to have the reverse. Here is an example where we might look at polls, but I think all of us came here to do what is right and not just what is correct for the next election.

Mr. EHRLICH. Which is a radical thought in this town. It is a radical thought in this town that politicians would act on the basis of what individually he or she believes is best for the country, and not on the basis of what the latest poll would dictate.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that is a radical thought in American politics. As I campaigned in my district, and I know you both find the same thing, people find that refreshing. They are stunned. Even people that believe in this opportunity agenda in the Congress of the United States still have a hard time believing that folks can go to Washington with ideas, with a philosophy, debate that philosophy, pass that philosophy, defend that philosophy, and actually believe in something, and not what the latest poll should dictate.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, you have your congressional report card there by the AFL–CIO. I just want to share with the two gentleman here today that I have the AFL–CIO news for April 22, and I will tell you, I made the front page, because I also have a picture here of my congressional report card with ANDREA SEASTRAND. It is the same report card. I guess, as I said, I made the front page. It says, ''Lawmakers don't make grade. Extremists feel the sting,'' that is you and me, you know, and ''Ready Smear Campaign.''

I would like to share with you the fact that that is not what I am hearing from the fellows and gals that belong to the unions in California on the central coast of California. I would just like to share the fact that I have a letter here from a gentleman from Santa Maria. I had also received one from Templeton, and a lady who is a firefighter from the northern end of the District, Atascadero, went on television and was upset with the way she is seeing her dues being spent.

This gentleman says: ''I see that the freshman congressional class is a breath of fresh air. I praise you and your fellow congressional Republicans for tackling head on many of the important issues of today.'' He said:

> I am a blue collar union member. Many in our union feel the same as I do on national issues. I am a registered Republican, but our leadership is rabid Democrat. They seem blind to the destruction that liberalism is causing our Nation. They use our dues without regard to if the membership wishes to attack our party. Many of us wish we could stop our leadership from attacking your platform, but are powerless in a very undemocratic organization. I understand these attacks on you must frustrate and anger you, but I plead with you not to look on all blue collar workers as mindless robots. We still vote our conscience. Our contracts with management are the way we ensure a decent standard of living and protection from abuse. Please keep going.

I would just say, I am sure that is what you heard. They had an 800 number to call us, the ads on television from the AFL–CIO. I am sure my colleagues from California and Maryland heard what I did. They used that 800 number and said, ''Please, do not give up. We believe in what the freshman class is doing. We believe in what this Congress is doing, and do not believe that all union workers feel the way that bureaucratic leadership in Washington, D.C. feels.''

Mr. EHRLICH. Mr. Speaker, I know the gentleman from California wants to add a point, but I have to add just a quick observation. The only thing left out of that letter, and that was very well written, was the fact that also many Democrat members of unions who are blue collar, who are conservatives, share that gentleman's views.

How ironic that the big labor bosses who want to buy this Congress, who are lying to the American people every day, many of them live out in nice valleys with big houses and make lots of money. I will bet you they are the rich. I will bet you they are rich people, and we hear a lot of demagoguery about class warfare and the rich on this floor.

I do not think, and I submit to the gentleman from California this observation, I will bet you a lot of those big labor bosses who are trying to buy this Congress make an awful lot of money, a heck of a lot more than that gentleman who wrote the gentlewoman from California.

Mr. RADANOVICH. I believe that is the case, Mr. Speaker. I think, too,

what the American people need to know when they are confronted with what I call fearmongering like this, all the F's that were on the report cards, and how you are against so many good things, reminds me of a scene in a jungle somewhere where a group of people, say 10 people, get stuck in a murky old swamp and they are up to their armpits in swamp water, and they are stuck in the mud and cannot get out. They have been in there so long, and by the way, the Great Society is the name of the swamp, and they are stuck in there and they cannot leave. They have been there so long that they cannot think that there is anything better than that swamp.

So finally a couple of people out of those 10 get the inspiration. They see a hill, a shining hill, and want to begin to stir the efforts of those to begin to get themselves out of the swamp, and you have people full of fear, so used to being stuck in the swamp that they cannot imagine anything different and do not want to take what even might be a perceived risk to get out of the swamp and change to a better country, which I call what the Republicans are trying to do.

That is a sad state of affairs when you have to defend the order that we are in this country right now, because many people feel, and many people believe that we indeed are stuck in a swamp. But many people believe that they would love to be inspired by that shining hill and make the journey out of the swamp and onto the hill. The people that attack you the people that give you F's, are the same people saying let us stay in the mud because we fear change. That is really what the big sin is.

One more point that I want to make, too, on the issue of minimum wage, standing up for families and seniors, and, you bad person who got the F, educational opportunities. All of those things are good things, but if we are going to change this country for the better, we have to start answering the question: If those are things of value to me, to ANDREA, to BOB, to everybody in this country, if they are so valuable to you, why on earth would you trust those things to a Washington bureaucrat?

Mr. EHRLICH. Mr. Speaker, I would ask the gentleman, is that a question?

Mr. RADANOVICH. Yes; answer me.

Mr. EHRLICH. The gentleman just used the term ''fear'' twice in the last minute. That is a great lead-in to category 2, issue 2, standing up for families and seniors. ''Ehrlich voted to slash Medicare and Medicaid,'' my personal favorite whopper from the big labor bosses.

How many times have you heard the word ''extremist'' out there in these ads? How many times have you heard the word ''slash,'' have you seen the word ''slash'' from the big labor bosses?

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Or ''gut''?

Mr. EHRLICH. The last time I checked, under the Republican budget reconciliation proposal, the Balanced Budget Act, Medicare spending per beneficiary was to increase from $4,800 a year to $7,200 a year. Yet they used the term ''slash and burn,'' and the fear and demagoguery. But do you know what, I do not think it is going to work, because the philosophical foundation of this tactic is that seniors are dumb. They have to think that the seniors of this country are dumb; that they cannot read; that the seniors will ignore the fact that the trustees just last week, and we have a quote coming up, I know, from my trusty assistant, reported just last week in the Washington Post, April 29, 1996: ''The Medicare trust fund that pays hospital bills for 39 million elderly and disabled people will go bankrupt sooner and accumulate far deeper deficits over the next decade than previously projected by the trustees.''

Now, short-term political calculations, which have ruled this town for 40 years, would dictate that the three of us ignore this language, because you know what, that will get you reelected. The folks on that side of the aisle know that. It kept one party in control of this town for 40 years on the basis of fear and class warfare. But I do not think that the seniors in the Second Congressional District of Maryland sent me here to be a politician.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I have a question. I hope I will get some answers here. Was I not mistaken? Did you not say that the current amount that a beneficiary gets from Medicare is about $4,800 a year?

Mr. EHRLICH. That is correct.

Mr. RADANOVICH. If I am to believe that you are slashing and burning Medicare, my assumption then would be that we must be cutting that, then, from $4,800 a year to, what, $2,300 or $2,200.

Mr. EHRLICH. Again, what was the budget figure that the Republicans propose for the next 7 years? Was it an increase of $7,200 in the year 2002, which was very close to the President's number, by the way?

Mr. RADANOVICH. I am confused. Is that an increase?

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, apparently the gentleman from California was brought up on new math. I would just say, we know there is a big difference, and the big difference has had a big plus sign on it, so we are actually increasing Medicare spending per beneficiary. We are also going to take in more people into the system.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Excuse me, you two, but that is very extreme, I want to tell you.

Mr. EHRLICH. There is that word again.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, I think, too, we talk about the seniors, but also our union members back home understand what we are trying to do. They are going to see through this.

I have a copy here of one of our local Capitol newspapers, the Hill. It says, ''Local unions take back in labor blitz.'' So the people back home are taking a seat, going in the back seat, while the union bosses here on Capitol Hill, big special interests that make those high-priced salaries and such, they are the ones calling the shots on this congressional report card. Our union people at home did not give this. This came all from a PR firm here in Washington, DC. That is what we are up against.

Mr. EHRLICH. Mr. Speaker, if the gentlewoman would yield, I know the gentlewoman and the gentleman are both familiar with the poll that was recently conducted, a nationwide poll of union members, workers, people that built this country: horrible results for the big labor bosses. I know the results, and I know my two colleagues are familiar with the results, but I would like to share the results with the American people tonight.

We are talking about union folks, working folks. Eighty-seven percent support welfare that requires work and is of limited duration. They also support a balanced budget amendment by a huge margin, with 82 percent of union folks in favor of a constitutional requirement that Washington keep its fiscal house in order.

More than three-quarters of union families in this country voiced their support for tax cuts for working families. Think about those numbers. Demagogues hate facts. That is why the big union bosses who love big government, who want to buy this Congress, issue ''report cards'' such as this one. They cannot stand facts. They cannot stand the light of day. They cannot stand the fact that people that work for a living, people that built this country, are not bought and paid for by the left wing of the Democratic party, as they are. That is why we have these report cards. They just cannot stand it.

When we see poll results like this, it makes us feel pretty good, does it not?

Mrs. SEASTRAND. What I found amazing about that survey is when informed about those Washington union bosses here on the Hill, when they found out, the union members back home found out that those bosses took their union dues to more or less come up with this demagoguery, the report card and the ads that are attacking us on television and radio, 59 percent said they want to ask for a refund for their dues.

Mr. Speaker, the folks that picketed me on this one particular day, it was interesting, because I found out that one came from Los Angeles, one came from San Francisco, another was from San Jose. One was the executive director, who is the paid bureaucrat. The regular union members who are making a living were out working.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Is the gentlewoman telling me those folks were paid to picket you?

Mrs. SEASTRAND. I would certainly say they must be on a payroll. They came from San Francisco.

Mr. EHRLICH. Paid protesters? It is good work if you can get it.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. A paid protester. We call them rent-a-protester. This is an interesting thing; that when union Members found out that their dues were even increased, and that they were used to attack the new ideas that we are trying to push through here and work through in Congress, 59 percent said they would ask for a refund of their dues.

The letter I read and the lady that appeared on a local television who is a firefighter, she says she is tired of her hard-earned money being used in such a way when she agrees with what we are trying to do in this different Congress; as I say, the Congress with a new attitude.

They want to see that balanced budget, they want to see a $500 tax credit per child, they want to see a line-item veto. They want to see a change in Washington, DC. It is those Washington union bosses that, you know, they are gasping. They are on their last legs. They know if they do not get control of this House once more, it is kind of gone for a long, long time. Their special perks, their large salaries—here is the president, $192,500 a year. A chauffeur is getting $53,143 for the union boss. These are people that are living off my folks, your folks in Maryland, and the gentleman from the central coast of California, they are living off of our blue-collar workers.

□ 2300

I think the moment many of these members find out more about this we are going to see a change.

Mr. RADANOVICH. I think you need to get back to the fact that when the gentlewoman from California, ANDREA SEASTRAND, was mentioning that the rank and file member, even the rank and file members of the unions, they want a balanced budget. They want welfare reform. They want these changes to the American society. Not because they want to give tax breaks to the rich, not because they want to promote class warfare to keep things the way they are, simply because they see that as the road to a better country, to a better America, not for certain people but for everybody so that everybody, depending on how they were born into this world and what their lot in life is, has the opportunity to better themselves.

That is what is so scary, I think, because after 40 years of operating things the way that they have been used to operating in this House, they love it in the mud and they do not want to change. It has become very comfortable. Change is scary, and you have got to learn a new way to count. That is not all that easy. Those are the things that we come up here—by the way, we are all freshmen and proud of it, and I think that those are the changes that scare the living daylights, not out of the American people, because they know what they want, they tell us what they want. They want a balanced budget. They want welfare reform. They want a better country as a result of that for them and everybody else. It is not that they are scared. It is those that have been hanging on to power and having been so used to having power for the last 40 years.

They cannot begin to grapple with the idea that maybe their philosophy was wrong to begin with and they have to begin to accept new realities. That is what the freshmen have done here in the new Congress. That is the beachhead that we have established. That is the change that is beginning to operate in this town finally.

Mr. EHRLICH. I would add this point, I want to get back to education and I want to get back to the TEAM Act. I want to go right to the balanced budget, because it includes my favorite whopper: the rich, tax cuts for the rich.

How many times do we see class warfare strategy utilized on the floor of this House? The bad news for the folks that we are talking about, the working people who built this country, what they do not know and what the bosses failed to tell them is that they are rich. They make $25,000, $35,000, $45,000 a year. They are rich. Do you know how you can prove it? How many times have you heard on the floor of this House, the Republicans are slashing Medicare to make tax cuts for their rich buddies? Do we hear that every day?

Mrs. SEASTRAND. We hear it day in an day out.

Mr. EHRLICH. Do we hear it on radio and TV? Depending on whose study you believe, every study I have been concludes that under the Republican sponsored bill, which is part of the Contract with America, between 60 and 70 percent of the families or the tax cut that we were talking about would go to families making between $30,000 and $75,000 a year, between 60 and 70 percent of that tax cut would get to families making between $30,000 and $75,000 a year. So these are facts.

If you place that fact next to what we hear on the floor of this House every day, one could only conclude, in a logical way, that folks who make between $30,000 and $75,000 a year are rich. And I am here to tell the big union bosses in this country that if they think the folks who sent me here who make $25,000, $35,000, $45,000 a year think they are rich, I would suggest those big union bosses leave their big houses out in the country and go talk to people who are still working for a living who must balance their budget, who believe the Federal Government is out of control, who understand our tort system is out of control, who understand the need for regulatory reform, and who understand the nature of government which will grow and grow and grow and grow unless the budget is brought back into balance.

Mr. RADANOVICH. I want to propose something here. Say for example person A paid $20 in income taxes to the United States Government and person B paid $10 in income taxes, and we in the Congress decide to give a 50 percent tax rebate. So the person paying $20 in taxes gets a $10 rebate. The person who pays $10 worth of taxes gets a $5 rebate. Now, that is basically because one person paid more and the other paid less. They get the equal amount in percentage backs.

My question is, if you believe that, do you really think that you want the Federal Government getting involved in income redistribution, which would mean that the person that paid in 20 does not get 10 back, he gets 5 back, and the person who paid in 10 does not get 5 back, they get 10 back? Do you really trust the Federal Government to start getting involved that closely in that detail in your life, and do you really believe in income redistribution? Is that what we are here to do? It is a simple fact that the person who paid 20 gets 50 percent back. The person who paid 10 also gets 40 percent back. That is not unfair. That is fair. You cannot call that tax cuts for the rich.

Mr. EHRLICH. You can call it that.

Mr. RADANOVICH. It is equal in its percentage of return. Only a bumblehead would buy the argument that that is tax breaks for the rich.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. I would just say, I guess he would be an extremist.

Mr. EHRLICH. My favorite term in this debate.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. I would like to say that it is interesting, because when we talk about these things, we see, we talk about being the freshmen here trying to change the way Washington has done business for all these years. I am in possession here of a Washington Post article where the headline states, ''GOP Freshmen Top House Democrats Hit List.'' It goes on about the AFL–CIO hit list. And I think that people should understand that when they see those ads on the central coast of California in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties on their local television sets, they should realize that my colleague in Las Vegas, JOHN ENSIGN, is hit with that same ad. That gentleman saying our congresswoman voted to cut Medicare and to gut education spending and so on should realize again high-priced PR firms from Washington, DC, ordered by those union bosses, they are after JOHN ENSIGN, they are after me. They are after—those union bosses are after RICK WHITE and RANDY TATE in Washington and JIM BUNN. the gentlemen might be amused to know that JIM BUNN from Oregon's ad was on my local television station in Santa Barbara. They sent the wrong video to the wrong place. I do not know where I was floating and where I appeared in this country, but it is very orchestrated and it is paid by those union bosses to a high-priced public relations firm.

I just think the people should know how their especially our union members that are in our districts, how their dollars are being utilized to fight what we are trying to do on this House floor.

Mr. EHRLICH. Of course, this whole debate is chock full of irony. You have big union bosses asking the working people in this country to take their hard-earned money to pay big time media consultants to run ads to defeat folks in this Congress who have an opportunity agenda which will benefit working people.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Not only advertising in the form of radio, television, but direct mail, phone banks, door-to-door campaigns. I have been under siege, as I call it, since last April, a whole year. Here is a local article from one of my local newspapers, Seastrand Under Siege. Not only do they do it in advertising and direct mail, but they are bodily sending people to protest at my office. But also there is a gentleman here whose picture, Tim Allison, who is my Project '96 coordinator. He is somebody who is coming from outside the district in my district to organize against me.

I say all is fair in love and war and politics. If folks at home want to organize against ANDREA SEASTRAND and say she is not doing it, that is the way it does go. But I think be you Democrat, independent, Republican, Libertarian, whatever your philosophy, I think we should all be outraged to think that that special interest money from Washington, DC is bringing in a gentleman such as this one, I do not know where he lives. They have done that in JIM LONGLEY's district in Maine. They have done it in many of our districts. In fact, some of our Members are trying to find out who their Project '96 coordinator is. Not only are they doing it in advertising, they are actually sending an organizer into the district.

Mr. RANDOVICH. I think you need to ask the question, why are they doing that? That is simply because they have had influence, a special influence on the Congress for the last 40 years. And they are going to do anything they can to get that special interest influence back. It is plain and simple. It is power and the loss of it.

We came here to undo things in Washington because of too much government and too much government control. And we are here to localize; we are here to privatize government. They do not like it because they like it when they had influence. And under the old administration that was here for 40 years, they ran this country into the ground to the tune of $5.5 trillion worth of debt. They want to get the reins back so that the can run us deeper into debt.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. I would just ask for the gentleman to continue to yield to finish my comments. It is just interesting, because I have list upon list here of union expenditures, whether it is the salaries, the chauffeurs or the big perks, the free rent, the big ticket perks, whether it is condos or purchasing videos or purchasing artwork or whether it is gifts, on and on, luncheons, meals, convention conferences, page after page where my folks at home are trying to do it with their blue collar job, they are trying to make a living, in many instances both spouses are working in the family, here the big union bosses living off more or less the fat of the land are upset because we are trying to bring some tax relief and some common sense for our folks at home.

So with that, I just enjoyed being with my colleagues today, and I thank you for letting me participate.

Mr. EHRLICH. We thank the gentlewoman.

I would just like to add one further observation. I hope we will be able to do this again in the near future, because this is fun. This is the fun part of the job. We can talk to the American people without anybody filtering our words, directly to the folks that sent us here.

I just need to, because it is one of my favorites from the report card, talk about the TEAM Act. We all received the same report card.

Protecting your rights as workers. Congressman Ehrlich voted for the so-called TEAM Act, which allows employers to, listen to the words, I would ask the American people to listen to the words here, which allows employers to control who represents employees in discussions about wages, hours and other working conditions, H.R. 743, September 27, 1995.

Now, we have made this point time and time again tonight. Demagogs hate facts. They hate facts. Because facts kill demagogs. The Protecting Your Right as Workers Act, H.R. 743, specifies the following: Organizations, these new organizations will not have the authority to serve as the exclusive bargaining representative of employees. Second, they will not be able to enter into collective bargaining agreements. Third, workplaces that already unionized are specifically exempted under the bill.

Now, we are going to, hopefully, I know we are running out of time, we will hopefully have time to go over the two categories that we missed. But the fact needs to be made to the American people, the facts are so dangerous even in this town.

One thing, just a suggestion I throw out this evening to my colleagues in front of me and to the conservative Democrats who supported us so much in these debates and to my Republican colleagues and to the American people is that facts always kill demagogs. One thing that we do in our office, when people call me up and they say, EHRLICH, you say X and GEPHARDT said Y, or GINGRICH said X and FAZIO said Y or HOYER said Y, I do not know what to believe. In our office, and I will throw this open to the folks in the second district of Maryland, all across the country tonight, do not believe us if you choose not to. If you are so cynical about politics, if you are so cynical about Members of Congress regardless of party, do not believe any word you have heard from the three of us tonight, nor should you believe what you hear from that podium day after day. Just get the facts. Call our office. I will send you the bill. I will send you the budget numbers. I am sure my two colleagues would agree with me. We will send you the raw numbers. We will send you the actual bills. You figure it out.

Because I will not run a campaign on the foundation that the American people are dumb, that seniors cannot read the newspaper, that seniors do not expect this Congress to save Medicare. I will not run a campaign on the basis of class warfare or generational warfare, where you turn grandparents against grandchildren, where the guy making $20,000 a year is encouraged to be jealous of the woman making $28,000. That is not the way you run an economy. That is not the way you run a House. That is not the way I am going to run my campaign.

Let the word go out to the big union bosses, class warfare, generational warfare, this phony stuff will not work because the people, the American people can read and they can write and they can learn and they know better. I thank the gentleman.

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Mr. RADANOVICH. Thank you very much, Mr. EHRLICH from Maryland and Mrs. SEASTRAND from California. In closing I would like to say that our case to the American people, and you are right, this is the opportunity for us to come unedited to the American people and let them know our opinions and let them judge for themselves, because through the ballot box, the American people are the ultimate judge of who should sit in this Congress and whose philosophy should prevail.

But I would say that we are here to do a job, and the job is not to promote class warfare, not to make the rich more richer at the expense of the poor, or the poor more rich at the expense of the rich. It is simply to build a better country. And we believe that by our efforts of balancing the budget, using the balanced budget as a blueprint to change this country, that we are changing America for the better, for the betterment of everybody, for equal opportunity for everybody. We are changing America for the better.

We are not playing silly games, and we are determined to do that, and that is our job. And I hope people will realize that the changes that we want to make through a balanced budget process, by localizing government, by privatizing government, will make America a better place, will make America a better place not only for you and I, but for every American in this country.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MYERS of Indiana (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) after 12:30 p.m.