to make another prediction that the budget is balanced by the year 2000, maybe even 1999 unless we go into another recession. To show just how far we have come, the revenue to the Federal Government has grown by an average 7.3 percent. If we look at how much came in last year and then this year, the average growth over the last three years was 7.3. Over the last 5 years the average growth was 7.3. Over the last 10 years it was 6.2, and over the last 17 years it was 6.8.

I throw all of these numbers out there just so the folks can see how fast revenue has been growing. In the budget we are projecting we are only projecting growth, not 7.3 or 6.8, only 4 percent. So I ask the question, the question goes like this: What if revenues grow by 6 percent? Still not as fast as they have been growing at 7.3, but what if revenues grow by 6 percent and we hold the line on spending. We do the spending projections on what we have just agreed to. In fact, if revenues grow by 6 percent and we meet our spending targets, we will in fact have a balanced budget and run our first surplus in the year 2000. What that means, if we can get the National Debt Repayment Act passed, that means in the year 2000, two-thirds of that $40 billion goes to debt repayment and another one-third goes to additional tax reductions.

So the tax cuts are not over. We have the possibility to go the next step and provide additional tax relief to the American people. I personally believe that anything we can do to allow the American people to keep more of their own money in their own homes and in their own decision-making realm, instead of sending it out here to Washington where it gets in the hands of people here to decide what to do with that, the more we can leave it in their own hands to make their own decisions, the better off we are going to be. That is why I find this so exciting, because by the year 2000 if we can get the National Debt Repayment Act into place, and I think we are going to, we can look at the next round of tax cuts for our working families in this great Nation we live in.

That is exciting to think about. I challenge the people that are going to get up early tomorrow morning and go to work, I challenge them to think about the next paycheck that they get, being able to keep an extra 50 bucks for the week in their own home because we reached this goal, because that is what this really means. We are now ready to go the next step and allow the American people to keep even more of their hard-earned money instead of sending it here to Washington. This is a tremendous change from where we were in the past and it is a very bright future for the future generations of America.

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, it is a powerful plan for the Republican Party that is moving this forward. It signals a day when we have moved the politics of pork out of Washington and put the American family first.

We are going to balance the budget in short order. If we have a strong economy, my colleague is right, we are going to see this budget balanced before the turn of the century. We are going to provide tax cuts for middle class families, we are going to offer hope and prosperity for those young children who are saddled today with a $200,000 obligation, long-term, to the current Federal deficit. We are going to resolve that for them before they get into their 30s.

It is a very powerful plan and program that the Republican Party has moved forward, and I hope that those handful of Democrats who are sincere about putting American families ahead of pork barrel politics find the courage to join us in this plan. Mr. Speaker, I am confident that some of them will, but we just need to keep talking about this over and over and over again. The American people are smart enough to figure out that this is to their advantage and they are going to be with us.

Mr. NEUMANN. Mr. Speaker, will it not be great as we go forward now toward the next election cycle, instead of having the discussion of class warfare that we heard earlier this evening, if instead of having that discussion, we talk about the failures of the past and how different it is today.

We are in the third year of our plan to balance the Federal budget. We are not only on track, but we are ahead of schedule. We have in fact curtailed the growth of government spending rather than raising taxes, and by doing that we are now in a position where we reach a balanced budget, probably sooner than projected, probably even sooner than the year 2002, and we are reaching the balanced budget while at the same time letting the American people keep more of their own money that they have earned. This is not a gift from Washington, it is their money.

What a wonderful vision. We have balanced the budget, we have preserved Medicare for future generations, and we are looking at additional tax cuts as we go forward. We look forward to a Nation where we not only have a balanced budget and reduced taxes, but we also pay off the Federal debt so we can pass this Nation on to our children debt free. I can think of no higher goal for our service here in Washington DC.

TAX RELIEF FOR AMERICANS AND SPENDING PRIORITIES FOR AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I suppose I would really be continuing the dialog that was began more than an hour ago by my colleagues in the Democratic Party and was just continued by two of my colleagues in the Republican majority. Nothing is more important than a discussion of the reconciliation package that will be voted on tomorrow, we hope, and the tax package that will be voted on. The budget and appropriations and taxes are the meat of government. Nothing is more important than what we do with the money of the taxpayers, and we cannot discuss it too much. I hate to be redundant, but I think we have to give due attention to that which is most important and hope that the American people understand that the final decision is in their hands.

It is a matter of common sense as to what we want to do with our money. It is the American taxpayers' money. The taxes do belong to them, my colleagues in the Republican majority are correct, and they ought to have more of their money to spend. The taxpayers should have their money.

It is very interesting, though, that my colleagues that were talking a few minutes ago from the Republican majority about guaranteeing that future generations will not be saddled with debt, guaranteeing that we will reduce the large size of government and the size of the budget, they voted for the continued funding of the B–2 bomber.

We just had an historic vote yesterday on the floor of this House where the B–2 bomber, which at a minimum will absorb about $27 billion away from domestic programs in future years, and force us to keep the budget at a higher level than it really should be, force us to give less money back to the American public, the B–2 bomber was discussed, debated on this floor for several hours. It was pointed out that the President says we should not spend our money on the B–2 bomber. The Joint Chiefs of Staff said we should not spend our money on the B–2 bomber. The Air Force says we should not spend our money on the B–2 bomber. The goals, the objectives that would be met by the B–2 bomber program can be met in cheaper ways. We have B–1 bombers, we have other ways to accomplish the same purposes.

All of it was stated quite clearly. But nevertheless, a majority voted to continue spending money on the B–2 bomber, the same people who said they want to save our children from having to live in a world where the Federal debt burdens them unduly.

We have contradictions here. Everything that is said here relates to everything. We cannot separate the statements about protecting children from future debts from the almost phenomenal intent to continue funding the defense budget at levels which are almost as high as they were in the cold war. We are spending more than all of the other nations put together for defense, and that certainly is driving a situation which denies a greater amount of tax relief for the American taxpayer.

On the matter of tax relief, we saw a clear statement here when my Democratic colleagues were on the floor.

They had charts here which were really compelling in their simplicity.

□ 2130

They say one picture can say more than a thousand words. Well, those two charts said more than 1 million words. They had two charts here, one which showed the nature of the Republican tax cut package, and the other the nature of the proposed Democratic tax cut package. You would think you were looking at some piece of modern art by Andy Warhol or some other experimental artist, and that some kind of trick was being played when you looked at those two charts. The two charts were mirror images, mirror images of each other.

The figures 91 and 19 stick out, 91 million and 19 million. If you look at the Democratic chart you can see a large chart on one side which says that most of the Democratic tax cut, as opposed to the tax cut package, most of the money goes to the 91 million Americans who are in the middle class. The 91 million who are in the middle class will receive most of the tax cut proposed by the Democrats. Only 19 million of the richest Americans would benefit greatly by the Democratic proposed tax cut package.

When you look at the Republican tax package, it is just the opposite. Nineteen million of the richest Americans would receive two-thirds of the tax cut, and 91 million in the middle class will receive only one-third; one-third, two-thirds, mirror images. For the Democrats two-thirds of the tax cut goes to the middle class, one-third to the richest Americans. The Republicans, two-thirds goes to the richest Americans, one-third to the middle class.

We could not get a more dramatic contrast than that. We could not get a simpler contrast than that. The contrast is obvious. The difference between the two parties, if you want it in summary form, you can see it in summary form right there without going into the details. But of course, there are more details to go into in terms of how do we spend that.

That is how we get the revenue. The tax package talks about revenue that will be no longer be collected. On the other hand, we have a reconciliation package which includes the expenditure side: How should we spend the money that will be spent in this year's budget. Again, we get a display of the difference between the two parties.

But I am not going to be redundant and repeat all of the things that have been said by the previous speakers in the previous 2 hours, but I do want to make it clear that what I have to say is related. It is related very much to it.

I have a hodge-podge of concerns tonight. One is the fact that today, in the New York Times, there were photographs of two very important African-American women, photographs of two very important African-American women. Both are related to very sad occasions.

We are saddened by the death of Betty Shabazz, whose photograph was on the front page of the New York Times today. Betty Shabazz was the wife of Malcolm X, and her life in the last 10 years or perhaps her life since the death of her husband has been like a Greek tragedy. She saw her husband gunned down in front of her eyes while her daughters were sitting there with her, in the great assassination that took place in Harlem when Malcolm X was killed. She has seen a lot of adversity since then.

Finally, the adversity reached its climax when she had received third degree burns over 80 percent of her body. She fought for her life for the past few weeks, and finally she gave up. It is most unfortunate. It is like, as I said before, a Greek tragedy. You would not believe it if you did not see it unfold before your very eyes, the incidents that led up to Betty Shabazz' final death related to her grandson and her daughter.

I will not go into all the details there, but she was a great lady. We will hear a lot about her in the coming next few days and weeks. The things that will be said about her by other people are not quite the same as the things that I have said.

She was a great lady because I saw her in a lot of places where there were no cameras, places where she got no credit, no glamor. There was no glamor there. I saw her in places where very few people bothered to go, for good cause. If there was a good cause there and she could do something to help, she showed up. Little people relied on her to do certain kinds of things, and she was always there.

You can praise people for their intelligence, for their education. She had a Ph.D. She educated herself after her husband's assassination. She raised her daughters, a model mother and all that. You can praise people for many reasons: intellect, education, integrity. There are a number of things you can praise people for.

I am impressed by all of those, but most of all I am impressed when people are good, basically good at heart. She was the kind of person who was basically good at heart. Deep in her fiber she wanted to do the right thing. You do not meet many people like that. Her motivation was to do good. She was a good person. Say all else that you want to say about her to glorify her, and there are many good things you can say, but underneath it what I appreciated most about Betty Shabazz is she was a good person.

There was another photograph of a black woman in the New York Times today. Nobody knows her name across America or in New York City or in the neighborhoods. I had just heard of her for the first time. Her name is Marsha Motipersad. Marsha Motipersad was a workfare worker. She was a workfare worker who died on the job at 50, a 50-year-old workfare participant who had a heart condition. Everybody knew it.

She had formerly been a secretary at the Children's Aid Society, and she had to leave her secretarial job in 1994 because she had had two heart attacks, two heart attacks. Here is a middle-class lady with skills in the work force who, for health reasons, was driven out of the work force, and I do not know what complications took place that led her to the point where all she could get was welfare. She ended up on welfare. The workfare programs come along, and despite her condition they said she had to go out and go to work in the parks department. With her heart condition and all the stress, et cetera, she dropped dead.

I want to talk more about her later, but it is interesting that on this day the New York Times has photographs of two African-American women. I thought that was worth noting.

I would also like to note some good news. On this day there was an announcement that Bill Gates, the millionaire, billionaire, multi-billionaire owner of Microsoft, announced a plan to give $200 million to libraries. He has already given money to libraries. In fact, one in my district in the Flatbush area is the recipient of one of Bill Gates' early grants, the Microsoft early grant.

Bill Gates clearly wants to build on the example set by Andrew Carnegie. Everybody knows that Andrew Carnegie built libraries all over America. More than 2,000 libraries were built by Andrew Carnegie and the Carnegie Corporation. Many are still standing. The legacy of Andrew Carnegie goes on.

Bill Gates wants to take one more step and bring those libraries into the age of cyberspace, and put computers and software in libraries. I can think of no more daring and productive innovation than that, to really put them in public libraries where everybody will have access to them.

I am particularly proud of that because I am a librarian by profession, and I worked in a public library. I spent my first 8 years in the work force in the Brooklyn Public Library. The Brooklyn Public Library is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year.

It all comes together. We go off into cyberspace training, and the complexities of trying to get low-income people in areas like my district the kind of training that they need in the area of computer literacy and computer utilization, nothing is more important than that, than that they are going to be able to be in a position to improve themselves. We need computer literacy in order to be employed, to gain promotions, and to go up in the work force today. What Bill Gates has done is a very practical thing, so it is good news.

I want to tie them all together, Mr. Speaker, the death of Marsha Motipersad, the good news that Bill Gates has, tie it all together in my discussion of the plan outlined by Speaker GINGRICH on June 18.

The Speaker responded to the President, who was taking a new initiative

on race relations in America. The President's initiative has been criticized as being hollow and of little meaning because it is all talk. But as I said last week, in the beginning was the word.

Words are very important. Words set in motion a chain reaction. They do not necessarily lead to productive action always, but no productive action takes place without words. There is nothing more practical than a good theory, nothing more practical than an idea. Ideas often take shape and they do not get any fulfillment, they never get realized, but you do not get anything realized unless it starts first as an idea, so words and ideas are very important.

I applaud the President's initiative in launching a discussion of race relations. By discussing, we may solve some problems. By discussing, we may get some new perspectives on the race relations problem in America. Discussion may stimulate some new visions, and certainly the President is to be applauded, because look at the results. Right away you get a reaction and a response from probably the second most powerful politician in America. There is the President first, and then we have Speaker GINGRICH. He responded. So you have the President launching the discussion and now Speaker GINGRICH responding, so we have a focus and a discussion on race relations that could not have been achieved in such a short period of time in any way, any other way.

So I congratulate the President. He is off and running, and I suppose if he has started the discussion and Speaker GINGRICH has responded, no other significant elected official and national leader can afford not to talk about this now. They cannot afford not to be part of the discussion.

Not only did the Speaker choose to respond, but the Speaker set forth a 10-point program, a very fascinating program. I agree with more than 50 percent of it, at least, at least 50 percent of it. The Speaker's 10-point program is worthy of discussion, and it relates directly to our vote tomorrow on the tax package, on the reconciliation package, on the expenditure part of the reconciliation package. It has a direct relationship.

There is a direct relationship to our vote yesterday, the vote on the B–2 bomber, the vote which failed. I voted against the continuing funding of the B–2 bomber. The B–2 bomber drains money out of a budget that now we are trying to balance by the year 2002.

If the B–2 bomber stays in the budget, it is going to offset and push out expenditures for education. It will push out expenditures for health care. It will force the party in power to play tricks with the budget the way the majority is playing tricks now with expenditures.

They say that we have a $16 billion program to provide health care for 5 million children. That was the agreement of the White House. But the way they are playing with those dollars, we have been told now on good authority that only 500,000 children would be covered, and we are not sure of that. Because of the way they choose to pass out the money to the States and the Governors, we cannot be sure that even 500,000 children will be covered by the program.

So those kinds of tricks and that kind of preoccupation with distributing money for political gain, or to reward your friends in your class, in your class, your category, they talk about class warfare, we are passing out money to certain classes of people all the time.

Who are the people benefiting from the B–2 bomber? Why did we have a majority of people on this floor vote to keep funding a B–2 bomber that nobody wants in Government? The President does not want it, as I said before, and the military people do not want it. It all relates.

The Speaker's 10-point program cannot be divorced from what is happening here on the floor.

□ 2145

He is the leader. He has command of the majority of the votes. Very interesting that the New York Times' account of the Speaker's 10-point program states that he gave the program at a meeting related to a foundation to help orphans. I will read from the article.

It appears in the Thursday, June 19, New York Times, if anybody is interested in the entire article. I will begin at the very beginning. It is an article by Stephen Holmes, and I quote:

> In the Republicans' first major response to President Clinton's recent speech on race relations, Speaker Newt Gingrich tonight sketched out a 10-point program to promote racial healing and black achievement that he said relied more on specific steps and less on theory, talk, and affirmative action.

The Speaker has taken a very ambitious step. He is going to promote racial healing and black achievement. I applaud that. That is a positive step forward. Let us join the Speaker in his attempt to promote racial healing and black achievement. I do not debate or doubt his sincerity.

How are we going to get there, is what I would like to see in his 10-point program. He lays out how he wants to promote racial healing and black achievement. Let us talk about that in detail in a few minutes.

Let me read more of the introduction. In his remarks, Mr. GINGRICH sought to outline an upbeat, can-do approach to solving the country's problems of race and poverty by focusing on individual achievement and not necessarily the advancement of any particular group. Mr. GINGRICH'S speech came 4 days after President Clinton used a commencement address at the University of California at San Diego to call on the country to engage in an honest conversation about racial issues.

By announcing his 10-point program, the Republican leader sought to paint a contrasting portrait between his remarks and the President's speech, which was largely devoid of specifics, aside from a defense of affirmative action and the announcement of a blue ribbon Commission to study race relations and make recommendations.

I am reading from the New York Times article of June 19. I continue. We thank the President for wishing to continue the dialog on race last weekend, Mr. GINGRICH said; but frankly, there has been much talk on this issue and very little action of the sort which will dramatically change people's lives.

Later in an interview, Mr. GINGRICH said he hoped to meet with the President's Commission soon and that he would urge its members to focus their attention on what he termed barriers to minority advancement.

I think that is also a very ambitious goal, a very ambitious statement by the Speaker. I applaud that. I certainly would like to do everything to help him accomplish that. He wants to meet with the Commission, just as I would like to meet with the Commission, a lot of other people. And I hope we will have the opportunity and pour out our recommendations to the Commission, but the Speaker is there first. I applaud his timeliness.

To continue quoting from the New York Times article, this is a quote from Speaker GINGRICH himself, what they really should design over the next year is, let us look at the specific pragmatic real changes and real barriers to participation. He said, if we could then knock down the barriers, as people participate, concerns about race will dramatically decline.

I am reading from the New York Times article. That was the Speaker's statement. To continue to quote the Speaker from the article: What I said last year was that we have to put in the context of a broader solution of affirmative outreach to individuals any effort to eliminate quotas and set-asides, he said. And I spent the past year, frankly, working to develop a program that was comprehensive.

In other words, Mr. GINGRICH's 10-point program is his alternative to affirmative action, his alternative to affirmative action and his proposal to do things, I am sure, beyond affirmative action. So the Speaker is to be applauded. He is on board. The President is to be applauded for initiating this activity. Let us all run to catch up with the Speaker.

Welfare reform is on the Speaker's list of 10 points. He proposes, in his 10-point program, that we should take the next step in welfare reform by fostering and promoting innovative local job training, welfare-to-work and entry-level employment programs to move welfare recipients into the work force. We have talked about welfare reform for, this is our third year of discussion.

Unfortunately, we passed, the Congress passed, I voted against it, but

Congress passed welfare reform legislation and the President unfortunately signed it. We are off and running. We are off and running now. And I do not find anywhere any details of any innovative local job training program. The assumption was there are jobs out there. You move people from welfare to work. If you are moving them to work, then work is there.

We have a great debate now here in the House and in the Capitol about whether these people who are moved from welfare to work are really employees. Can you imagine? We have talked for years about they should go to work. Once they go to work, we say, well, they are not really employees. Are we moving them from welfare to work, or are we moving them from welfare to some other category, something in between work and welfare? We did not know there was anything that existed. If they are going to work, they are employees.

Why are certain people insisting that they not be considered employees? Because if they are employees in the United States of America, there is a law called the Fair Labor Standards Act. Fair Labor Standards Act says if you are an employee, you have to be paid the minimum wage. If you are an employee, there are certain working conditions that you are entitled to. You fall under the OSHA provisions, Occupation, Safety and Health Administration. If you are an employee, you have certain rights with respect to discrimination in the workplace. You have certain rights with respect to sexual harassment. Employees in America have certain rights.

Part of the definition of being an employee in America is that all that is there to help protect you. The workplace is a place of privilege. The workplace is a place, as a result of the New Deal and all of the legislation that we formulated over the years, the workplace is not just a plantation. The workplace is something we try to make a place of fairness, a place where workers have a chance to earn a living without being oppressed and without being in any danger or harm and also being paid some kind of reasonable wage.

So welfare reform is off and running. Large numbers of people in New York City are on workfare. They are being moved out of welfare. They are already working. People who are adults without children have been forced into a program called WEP, the Work Experience Program. The Work Experience Program refuses to pay minimum wage.

This is a program that Marsha Motipersad was in before she died, Marsha Motipersad, a secretary of the Children's Aid Society until she had two heart attacks. She had to leave her job in 1994, and eventually she had no resource except to go on welfare.

So she died, working in the Work Experience Program, 22 hours a week. The requirement was that she work 22 hours a week to cover her cash and food stamps benefits. The cash and food stamps benefits that she received are equivalent to $250 a month, according to the New York Times article of Tuesday, June 24. I have not calculated this myself. I find it hard to believe, I find it hard to believe that we would require a person to work 22 hours a week for $250 a month; 22 hours a week means, that is 88 hours for the month, 88 hours for the month to earn to be eligible for $250.

So Marsha Motipersad, who dropped dead on her job, was being required to work 22 hours a week for food stamps and her cash benefits, which totaled $250 a month, according to the New York Times. This is the welfare reform that we have at present. The Speaker proposes in his 10-point program that we have a real program, innovative job training, entry-level employment programs. Where are they, Mr. Speaker?

How fast can we move? How rapidly can we put them in place? How many more Marsha Motipersads are out there? How many people have died already? Is there something wrong, Mr. Speaker, with requiring a person who has had two heart attacks to go to work for her food stamps? In the richest country that ever existed on the face of the earth, can we not have some provision to avoid having a woman who has had two heart attacks go to work for her food stamps?

Let me read to you from this article of June 24 in the New York Times. Quote: A 50-year-old workfare participant with heart problems died on the job, prompting questions about the city's ability to determine whether some of its workfare laborers might be too sick to work. The worker, Marsha Motipersad, whose heart disease had forced her to leave her job in 1994 as a secretary with the Children's Aid Society after 17 years, died of a heart attack on June 17. Ms. Motipersad, who had first been categorized as not employable, she had first been called nonemployable by the Human Resources Administration because of her health problems, but she was recently recharacterized as employable and ordered into the city's Work Experience Program.

Mr. Speaker, here is one reason we need to hurry and get a real system in place so we are not brutalizing people and making these kinds of mistakes. What we have is makeshift things happening out there. We rushed the welfare reform program into place so rapidly, it could have been made effective a year after the date of enactment. It could have been all kinds of things to phase it in. But we cared so little about the people on the very bottom, poorest people in America, that we rushed into a program that was bound to generate blunders and hardships of this kind.

Henry Stern, the City Parks Commissioner, reading from the article that appeared in the New York Times, Henry Stern, the City Parks Commissioner, said that Ms. Motipersad has been assigned to light duty and had worked as a timekeeper in the office, but that he had ordered an investigation into what work she had actually been doing.

In a blundering makeshift system, maybe somebody did do the right bureaucratic thing and note that she should not be given the hard work, but it is a blundering new system. People are thrown into the parks department where workers who are there, paid civil servants, are resentful of the fact that workfare people are being brought in to replace their colleagues.

The parks department has been downsized from 7,000 jobs to 4,000 jobs; 3,000 people who were full-time civil servants at one time are no longer there. And they have these thousands of people coming in as workfare participants, welfare recipients, working for almost nothing. So some of the people who are there, they resent these people. So she probably was deliberately not assigned a light job because there was resentment there that she was even there.

He ordered an investigation, the commissioner, into what work she had actually been doing. Others, including the woman's son and some of the workers that she worked with, said Ms. Motipersad had talked of having to occasionally pick up garbage on the beach and the boardwalk, and she said she told them she feared for her health as a result. She had to go out and work like the other workers in terms of picking up trash on the beach and the boardwalk, even though there was a notation in her file that said she should be assigned light duty.

Her son said, I told her not to do it, that I would help pick up the slack with the money; and she said she could not stay at home because she had to pay her rent. Evelyn Selby, a neighbor and WEP worker with Ms. Motipersad in Coney Island, said that they both had to rise at 4:30 each morning and they used to take three buses to get to their assignment.

Quote: I would have to wait for her as she climbed the steps and such. She was always behind.

This is what her friend and companion says about Ms. Motipersad, who had had two heart attacks. She had to get up at 4:30 in the morning. By the time she gets to work catching three buses, she is already so stressed out until it is amazing that she did not die in the first few days with this kind of forced activity.

Officials with H.R.A. said that Ms. Motipersad had within the last several months been reevaluated by a doctor with Health Services Systems, a privatized agency that had a contract from the city agency to evaluate these people to see if they were really sick when they said they were sick.

The official said that Ms. Motipersad had been denied Federal disability benefits, known as Supplemental Security Income, SSI, because she was not deemed disabled. Now, what is our Supplemental Security Income for? If a

person who is 50 years old, has had two heart attacks is not eligible for disability, then who is?

□ 2200

A person who is a secretary and was forced to give up her job as a secretary because of a heart condition, if she is not deemed disabled, then who is?

So the Federal bureaucracy has a role in failing Ms. Motipersad also. ''She had some health problems but was deemed stable,'' says Renelda Higgins, a spokeswoman for the Human Resources Administration. ''Life and Health Issues are not static.'' I am quoting the bureaucrat, Ms. Higgins. ''Life and health issues are not static. Individuals are reevaluated. She was on medication and she was taking her medication.'' She had two heart attacks and she was taking her medication. And they sent her out on the beach to pick up trash.

I had heart bypass surgery, and I do not want to go out on the beach and pick up anybody's trash. I know what would happen to me. I never had a heart attack, but I had a situation where I had heart bypass surgery. And I would not risk my life on a beach on a hot day picking up trash.

But she was evaluated by this bureaucrat who said she is taking her medication, let her go to work. Others, including her family and lawyers representing workfare participants and Acorn, a nonprofit group that is working with unionized workfare laborers, called into question both the adequacy of the health evaluation done by the city's contractor, the private contractor, as well as the wisdom of forcing Mrs. Motipersad to work for her benefits.

Mrs. Motipersad, according to Mr. Stern, worked 22 hours a week for her cash and food stamp benefits and they total about $250 a month. The city requires welfare recipients up to age 60 to work for their benefits. It says medical evaluations are done of all recipients in workfare who have a history of health problems. Part of the rationale for making such people work for benefits, city officials have said, is to obtain a straightforward return for their expenditure.

The city, in fact, has created a subcategory of welfare worker. It is called employable with limitations. Such recipients are supposed to be assigned office work. What recipients of workfare have said from its inception, they have complained that the city has hired doctors who did not seriously investigate real and formidable health problems.

People with asthma have been told of being put to work in office basements. And others talk of 3-minute examinations by this city-employed health evaluation agency without any acknowledgment of their own doctors' evaluations. The Legal Aid Society has filed suit on behalf of recipients who were categorized as ''employable with limitations,'' but nonetheless, they were sent to sanitation garages and the like.

Mrs. Motipersad was forced to give up her job at the Children's Aid Society, as I said before, in 1994, after two heart attacks. She briefly collected disability benefits, and her son yesterday produced notes from doctors recommending that she not work because she had coronary artery disease.

Here is an individual whose photo would never have appeared in the New York Times, otherwise a plain and simple person, a member of the middle class, worked 17 years as a secretary in a reputable agency and, because of circumstances related to her health, wound up in the workfare program. She was kicked off. She was told she would be kicked off of welfare, she would not get her $250 a month if she did not go out and work for the Parks Department.

So point No. 1, Mr. Speaker, welfare reform. Take the next step in welfare reform by fostering and promoting innovative local job training, welfare to work and entry-level employment programs to move welfare recipients into the work force, a systematic well-structured program to deal with trying to help poor people move from welfare to work.

We are all in favor of that. But the job has not even begun, Mr. Speaker. I urge you to use your power to implement your recommendation. It is here. It is part of your 10-point program. This is based on a list of the 10 points in the New York Times as excerpts of the prepared text of a speech by the Speaker.

Point No. 2: Civil rights. The Speaker says, ''We should clear the existing backlog of discrimination cases at the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission by enforcing existing civil rights laws, rather than trying to create new ones by regulatory decree.''

Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly agree with you. We should clear the existing backlog of discrimination cases at the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission. You have the power. You have the power over the appropriations process. The fact that they have a backlog is due to the fact that they have been downsizing, the number of employees have been cut. A proposal from this House could help to solve this problem right away.

I agree with the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. GINGRICH], we do not need to talk about race relations. Let us go ahead and do something practical to promote race relations. Clear up the backlog at the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission. It is a statement of the second most powerful person here in Washington, DC, the gentleman from Georgia, Speaker NEWT GINGRICH. Get on with the business. We will support the Speaker 100 percent.

The Speaker says we should have more home ownership, ease the path toward home ownership by giving local communities and housing authorities the flexibility and authority to more effectively efficiently house low-income Americans. We must also expand faith-based charities, such as Habitat for Humanity, which grow families as well as build homes.

I agree with the Speaker a hundred percent. We would like to ease the path toward home ownership by giving local communities and housing authorities the flexibility that they need. They also have to have increased funding to take care of the repairs, renovations of existing public housing. And we also have a shortage of housing in many cities.

The fact that large numbers of people are homeless can be related to the fact that we have built very little public housing over the last 10 years. As the rate of construction of public housing and the availability of opportunities and publicly subsidized housing went down, the number of homeless people increased. It is also more expensive in many areas to obtain a home either by rental or home ownership.

So this is on target, Mr. Speaker. Let us get on with it. You have the power. Recently we passed a bill here on the floor of this House related to public housing which went in the opposite direction. They reduced the funds available for public housing. And it gave a lot of power away to local housing authorities, but it gave them no new tools to work with, no new appropriations to help with the appropriation. You proposed to dump the problem on localities that are already burdened and could not provide any funding to deal with plugging the gaps in housing in their localities.

Another point, the fourth point made by the Speaker: Violent crime. Make our cities safe and secure places to live and work through community policing, through tougher sentences for violent criminals, and innovative anticrime programs. Dramatically expand the community-based antidrug coalition efforts and create a victory plan for the war on drugs.

We are a thousand percent behind you, Mr. Speaker. Innovative anticrime programs. Many Members of the Republican majority have ridiculed any discussion of crime prevention programs. We call them crime prevention programs. You call them innovative anticrime programs.

I think that, in the final analysis, those people that have expertise in this area would tell you they come pretty close to each other. If you are talking about innovative anticrime programs, you are going to end up with programs that focus on young people, because that is where the greatest volume of crime is.

The crime prevention programs that we proposed focused on young people. Let us have a meeting of the minds right away. If you want to move forward, you have the power, Mr. Speaker, to deal with violent crime in the way you stated should be handled here, you have our full support.

A fourth point made by the Speaker: Economic growth. Expand economic opportunities for all Americans by promoting continued economic growth

with low inflation and rising take-home pay through tax cuts, tax simplifications, litigation reform, less regulation, overhaul burden of Government and small businesses.

All in all, for welfare to work to be successful, work needs to be available. That is the point we made on this floor over and over again; work needs to be available. Expand economic opportunities for all America by promoting continued economic growth with low inflation, rising tax, take-home pay, et cetera. We are all in favor of that. Let us go forward.

Urban renewal is another point. The Speaker says create 100 renewal communities in impoverished areas through targeted program tax benefits. Regulatory relief, low-income scholarships, savings accounts, brownfields cleanup, and home ownership opportunities.

That sounds very similar to a program that the President talked about a few days ago when he talked about helping to revitalize our cities. The Speaker and the President seem to be using the same language. I hope they are on the same wavelength. They as the two most powerful people in Washington ought to be able to make things happen in the area of urban renewal. I certainly hope that in this area of 100 renewal communities in impoverished communities we can move off dead center and get an economic empowerment zone for central Brooklyn. We are busily at work trying to focus on putting together all the necessities to make an application for a new urban economic empowerment zone. But the economic empowerment zone has been left out of the budget agreement at the White House. We were brokenhearted, disappointed, to find out when that agreement was completed, there was no discussion of any additional economic empowerment zones.

Economic empowerment zones experiments that were proposed by my colleague from New York, Mr. RANGEL, many years ago, after he and Jack Kemp had worked on it for years and some other people had worked on it, it finally got down to a package that was passed finally which had nine empowerment zones only, six in urban areas and three in rural areas.

So we have right now in America nine empowerment zones, six on urban areas and three on rural areas. Most of them are deemed to be successful. I know of no great failure. If there is a failure, it is not being discussed. So if the economic empowerment zones have been successful, then why do we hesitate? Let us go forward.

The President now, in his speech a few days ago, proposed an additional 15 economic empowerment zones. I heard legislation that was proposed and many more was being drafted by certain people on the Committee on Ways and Means, but all of it has been put on hold, nothing is happening at this point.

An idea that combines government grants with private sector involvement seems to be the ideal that both Republicans and Democrats can agree on. If Republicans and Democrats agree that economic empowerment zones are good for the Nation, then why can we not have more of them? Why can we not in Brooklyn, have one in central Brooklyn, which encompasses my district, have an economic empowerment zone?

We have 2 million people. At least half are poor. We have the space. We have need to revitalize commercial areas, industrial areas. All of the conditions that are necessary, that are required for economic empowerment zones are there. But there is no legislation here. The nine that were created are all given away. We want to compete for whatever new number there is. I hope it is more than 15. But if there are 15, then no neighborhood, no community needs an economic empowerment zone more than central Brooklyn.

It is one of the Speaker's points. He has the power. Let us make certain that the President's 15 economic empowerment zones are combined with the Speaker's 100 renewal communities. And together we ought to, all who live in big cities, be able to get something out of the two packages that are proposed.

What I am talking about is the 10-point proposal of the Speaker designed to deal with race relations. He made the speech on June 18, and I am quoting from an article in the New York Times which talked about his speech. The Speaker proposes to move ahead of the President. He just does not want to talk about these things. He has a program. The President has appointed a commission, what he calls an advisory board. An advisory board will come back within a year with recommendations. The Speaker says you do not need to move so slowly. He sketched out a 10-point program to promote racial healing and black achievements. And he says he relies more on specific steps and less theory. He relies less on talk and less on affirmative action and his 10 points.

I have talked about welfare reform that he proposed. Innovative job training is part of his welfare reform. It is not happening. But he proposed he can make it happen. He has the power. The economic growth, attacking violent crime. Promoting home ownership, promoting civil rights, promoting urban renewal. And he has learning here as one of his 10 points. Learning.

And I will read that part of his speech: ''Create better opportunity for all children to learn by breaking stranglehold of teachers' unions and giving urban parents the financial opportunity to choose the public, private, or parochial school that is best for their children.''

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I am quoting the Speaker's speech. I want to do justice to what he had to say. Whereas I have agreed with all the points I mentioned before, basically I have agreed with him, I do not agree with his proposal as to how we should promote learning. I applaud the fact that he has put learning on the list, creation of better opportunities for all children to learn. The way he proposes to do it is, of course, what the Republican majority keeps insisting has to be done, that you have to have vouchers and private school choice. I am not going to even discuss that at this point. Let me just challenge the Speaker if he wants to create better opportunities for all children to learn, why not go in the direction where both Democrats and Republicans agree? Why not promote charter schools? Both the President, the Democrats in the House, the Democrats in the Senate, the Republicans in the House and Republicans in the Senate all agree that charter schools are a good idea. So while the great debate about vouchers goes on, why do you not accentuate the positive, Mr. Speaker? Why do you not come forward with an innovative, meaningful program to promote charter schools? The idea is out there, but we only have a handful of charter schools in the country. Only half the States have laws which allow charter schools and in those States that have charter schools, we have very few actual charter schools. It is a very embryonic kind of experiment that is going on. It will take another 20 years to evaluate whether it has any significance or not. There are a lot of innovations that need to take place. I have been on the Committee on Education and the Workforce now for 15 years. The institutional history of what we have tried, what is proposed, what the researchers say is all very much ingrained in my mind. There are a lot of innovative approaches to education which make sense. A lot should be going on right now. I say across the board we should have a comprehensive, overwhelming attack on the problems related to education. Reform and efforts to improve our schools ought to go forward on a massive basis. Maybe in 5 years we can look and sort out what really works best and begin to institutionalize what really works best to develop a first-class system, not a national system but systems which have similar components across the country of things that work. But if we are going to take an idea like charter schools, where everybody agrees that we should have charter schools and then we are going to have only minuscule testing of it, only a few here and a few there, in many States which allow charter schools, there are so many restrictions placed on them until we will not have many developed at all over the next 10 years. There is a need for somebody, and the Federal Government probably is the only entity that could do it, to break it loose and try to give incentives for experimentation on a scale large enough to be significant. We need a critical mass. Charter schools cannot be evaluated as to what impact they can have on the overall

education situation unless we have a critical mass. We need enough. One of the versions of charter schools is supposed to be that they will give competition to the traditional public schools.

What is the difference between charter schools and traditional public schools? It is not the funding base, because they both are supposed to be funded by taxpayers' money, fully funded. Charter schools are to receive a per capita amount, which is the same as the local education agency pays for their children. The only difference between charter schools and the local education agency's traditional schools would be in the governance and management. They would have to abide by all the rules and terms of any State requirements, requirements for integration, requirements for curriculum, everything would still be there for the charter schools. It is a matter of how they are governed and who is in charge of the management and what kind of things can you do if you are out from under the local bureaucracy and how much freedom for innovation will lead to real improvements, real change, and how much your freedom to govern as you see fit and manage as you see fit can allow you to do the things that have to be done to improve the schools without the burden of having to get approvals from people in the hierarchy on top of you. The great challenge is governance and management. Let us go on at the Federal level to create some incentives. Let us have a piece of legislation which provides incentives for charter schools. If the Speaker wants to do something about creating better opportunities for all children to learn, there is one area which there is agreement, charter schools, why do we not do something about it.

Opportunities to learn also involve, of course, children having a decent place to study. It is most unfortunate that the Speaker is concerned about creating better opportunities to learn for children and yet in the budget agreement that was made with the President at the White House, the initiative for construction of new schools and renovation of unsafe schools was taken out. $5 billion over a 5-year period. That is all they proposed. $5 billion over a 5-year period to help to renovate and repair and actually construct new schools. It would make a big difference in terms of opportunity to learn for all children. Because across America, according to the General Accounting Office, the GAO, $120 billion is needed for school construction in the next 10 years, to rebuild the infrastructure of public schools. We are not talking about colleges and universities. Just elementary and secondary schools.

Why can we not have in a situation where we are adding billions to the defense budget, and yesterday we voted to continue the B–2 bomber, while we refused to reduce the budget for the CIA even though the cold war is over, why can we not have $5 billion over a 5-year period for school repair, renovation and construction? If the Speaker agrees and if he has on his list of 10 things that need to be done to promote race relations, to provide opportunities for individuals, then why can we not have an agreement to put back into the budget the $5 billion initiative for school construction?

Another point, and I want to finish the Speaker's points and do justice to his points. Small business. Set a goal for tripling the number of minority-owned small businesses. I agree, Mr. Speaker, let us triple the number of minority-owned small businesses. He wants to bring successful small business leaders together to identify and then eliminate the government imposed barriers to entrepreneurship. That is what he says is the cause of the paucity of small businesses in the minority community. I agree with the goal. We need to triple the number of minority-owned small businesses. I do not agree with his concern about government-imposed barriers. I live in a community where small businessmen struggle all the time. I do not get any complaints about government barriers. The government does more to help than anything else. The complaint is against the private sector capital. They cannot get capital. Or they have to pass scrutiny that other businesses do not have to pass. All kinds of problems I hear about, I do not hear that the government has imposed barriers. That is an ideological blind spot that the Speaker is off into. It is not a minority business problem that we have too much regulation or government barriers. I have heard the speeches a thousand times about what is wrong with America. That has nothing to do with what is really impeding small business development in the minority community.

In summary, I think I have covered all the Speaker's points. His 10 proposals to improve race relations are to create better opportunities for all children to learn, to develop more minority businesses, to create 100 renewal communities, to clear the existing backlog of discrimination cases at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. He wants to make America a country, and I missed this one, he wants to make America a country with equal opportunity for all and special privileges for none by taking away all preferences, set-asides, and government contracts. We disagree on that one. That is clearly one we disagree on. I do not have time to explain why. The background of the history of the descendants of African-American slaves has to be considered when we talk about set-asides and special government programs for minorities. Racial classification is another he added here which I find very strange in this set of proposals. Racial classification. A first step should be taken to add a multiracial category to the census. He thinks that is very important to improve race relations in America. I have no problem adding a multiracial category to the census. I do not know how it is going to improve race relations, because in the history of America, they have always insisted that anybody who had one drop of black blood was African-American. If you had one drop of black blood, you were deemed African-American. So these race classifications seem to me to be no solution.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I applaud Speaker GINGRICH for his rapid response to the President's challenge. We need more discussion on race relations. We certainly need powerful people like Speaker GINGRICH to make proposals as to what it is we should do, what we should do concretely. There are people out there who are dying because we are not acting fast enough. The death of Marsha Motipersad is just one example of how there is needless suffering because we have rushed into public policies and programs that are harmful to people. It is more than race relations. It is human relations, it is human rights, it is concern for human welfare. All this goes together.

I want to end on a positive note. Overall, I applaud the Speaker. I hope he will continue the dialogue and he will go and meet with the Commission the President has set up and I will come right behind him. I think that there are many areas that we agree on and that the President's initiative has shown that it has paid off already. The dialogue has begun.

IN HONOR OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS, HIS EXCELLENCY IMATA KABUA, AND THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HIS EXCELLENCY PHILLIP MULLER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of our colleagues in the Congress to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, His Excellency Imata Kabua, and the Honorable Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Phillip Muller. Mr. Speaker, President Kabua and Foreign Minister Muller have been in Washington for meetings with the administration and our colleagues here in the Congress, representing the interests of the good people of the Marshall Islands.

His Excellency Imata Kabua was elected President of the Marshall Islands in January of this year. In his long distinguished career of public service, he has served as Senator in the Parliament or the Nitijela from 1979 to 1996, when he was appointed Minister representing the Ralik Chain of the Marshall Islands. President Kabua