

CLOSING

In closing, I want to make clear what I am for and what I am not for. As I stated at the start of my remarks, a lot of what the spending process includes is prioritizing. By providing the needed and long overdue support for educational programs, job training programs, and programs for children, we invest in this country's future. Cutting these opportunities is clearly in the wrong direction. We must not retrench on our commitments to young people and American families.

Mr. President, before the celebrating of the contract and the first 100 days begins, the American people need to understand who's been invited to this party. If you are a billionaire, or part of the small percentage of the super-wealthy elite in this country, your invitation has been signed, sealed, and delivered.

For the rest of American people—the children, students, or hard-working, middle-income Americans—I dare say, your invitation has been lost in the mail.

EXHIBIT 1

CITY YEAR CHICAGO—COMMUNITY SERVICE
UPDATE—AS OF MARCH 1995
THE ALTER GROUP TEAM

The Alter Group Team is working with Bethel New Life, a Community Development Corporation in the Garfield Park neighborhood. In the mornings, the Alter Group Team members participate in a variety of group and individual projects under the direction of Bethel New Life staff. Corps members are designing and piloting a computer-literacy program for adults; organizing community improvement and gardening projects; helping to organize a volunteer week and other community events; and assisting in the renovation of both a hospital which will become senior housing and a school which will become transitional housing for battered women. In the afternoons, the team members tutor students in the after school program in Bethel's affiliate elementary school.

THE FIRST CHICAGO/HARRIS/LASALLE/NORTHERN
TRUST BANK TEAM

The Bank Team is running a City Year in Schools Program at the Brian Piccolo Elementary School in West Humboldt Park, a public elementary school serving approximately 966 African-American and Latino students. Each team member works as a teaching assistant in a classroom, tutoring children with special needs, assisting in bilingual classes, or helping to implement special art or physical education programs. Corps members also act as role models for the young students by establishing an environment of common goals and values and promoting the City Year values of team work and inclusivity. When the school day is finished, the team continues working on a project designed to improve students' self-image and enliven the school environment through the creation of inspirational banners.

THE AMOCO TEAM

The Amoco Team also works in partnership with an elementary school: the John Spry Community School in Little Village. Spry is a pre-kindergarten through eighth grade school with approximately 1,300 students. By working individually in classrooms as teaching assistants, City Year corps members are helping to give students the con-

fidence to excel academically. They lead small groups in math and reading, work closely with troubled students and teach lessons in English as a Second Language and art. The Team also participates in such special programs as the celebration of Young Readers Day, for which corps members rotated classrooms and read to over 700 children. The creation of perfect attendance and honor roll certificates for the entire school, and the renovation and reorganization of the Spry School Library for reopening can also be credited to the team members. The Amoco Team is currently working on a violence prevention curriculum, which the team will take to classrooms throughout the school.

THE RONALD MCDONALD CHILDREN'S CHARITIES
TEAM

The Ronald McDonald Children's Charities Team is helping to run an after school club at the Chicago Youth Centers-Lower North in Cabrini Green for over 100 children. The team's service is focused on expanding the curriculum offered at the youth center and strengthening the educational components of the program. The team members not only tutor the young children in the program, but create and run after school clubs such as Arts and Crafts, No-Bake Cooking, Tumbling, Volleyball/Softball, Basketball, and Chorus. Along with their work with the After School Club, the team is succeeding in changing the face of the Youth Center. The team has painted most of the building's interior surface, repaired the outside fence, created a mural in the gymnasium, and completed many other physical service projects at the Center. When not at the Center, the Ronald McDonald Children's Charities Team works in partnership with Careers for Youth and Uptown Habitat for Humanity on the West side. They are painting and installing light fixtures in a two-flat apartment building, so that a family can move in this Spring.

THE DIGITAL EQUIPMENT CORPORATION TEAM

The Digital Equipment Corporation Team runs an after school club for approximately 80 children at the Price School in the Grand Boulevard community through Chicago's Youth and Family Resource Center. Under the supervision of the Digital Team, the children study and work on their homework for two hours tech day. Corps members give the special attention and individual tutoring that is often difficult for teachers to provide in a classroom context. Following completion of their homework, the children can participate in one of the Digital Team's After School Clubs: "An Exploration of Culture;" Art; Rap Session (a discussion group); Dance; Music; Reading and Writing Workshop; and Athletics. The Team also works with Habitat for Humanity/Careers for Youth doing renovation and carpentry for low cost housing on the West Side. In addition, Team members work with the Chicago Historical Society's Neighborhoods; Keepers of Culture Exhibition, a project created to collect, interpret and exhibit the histories of four Chicago neighborhoods. The entire Digital Team is also being trained as AIDS Counselors, and this Spring will begin doing AIDS/HIV outreach in the Little Village community.

(Mr. FAIRCLOTH assumed the chair.)

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. Mr. President, I would like to take up another subject that is probably as controversial as the Contract With America and what has happened in the last 100 days.

I recently met with a group of concerned women in Illinois to discuss the continued relevance of affirmative action. The idea of the meeting arose quite naturally. As with any other debate that is happening here in Washington, I try to reach out to those in my State who will be impacted by changes that Congress might make, in order to get the input of their collective wisdom.

The meeting was arranged when we, at last, had a few days to spend back in the State. As you know, Mr. President, we have not been able to get back home as much as we would like. So the meeting was arranged somewhat hastily; we did not have a great opportunity to plan for it. Nor were we able to provide interested parties with much in the way of advance notice.

However, as it turned out, the meeting was a resounding success. Frankly, I do not think I could have even imagined how successful it would be, or how many people would rearrange their plans to meet with me on a moment's notice.

My office was filled with women who spanned the political and economic spectrum. There were women who had spent their lives doing grassroots political organizing, and women who had spent their lives working in corporate America. There were women who had started their own businesses from scratch, as well as women working in unions and associations. Many of the women present had also spent years exclusively as homemakers.

Despite the diversity of viewpoints and backgrounds represented at the meeting, there was a near unanimity of response. The women in that room wanted to know why Congress would choose this moment in time to turn its back on the promise of equal economic opportunity, when so much work remains yet to be done; at a time when, despite all of our efforts, a glass ceiling still works to prevent qualified women and minorities from making full use of their collective talents.

The women at the meeting wanted to know how Congress could ignore the overwhelming evidence that affirmative action benefits not only individuals, but employers and society as well. Finally, they wanted to know what they could do to help preserve this country's commitment to equality, opportunity, and fairness.

Every woman at that meeting agreed that she would have been denied opportunity in the absence of affirmative action. Every woman agreed that she had been provided with opportunities because the climate created by affirmative action helped to encourage diversity and inclusion, and helped to open up fields of endeavor that might have otherwise been closed to her. And, more importantly—or as importantly—every woman there could recall a roadblock that had been placed in her way

as she tried to become an equal participant in the marketplace.

The barriers to equal opportunity, and the roadblocks that one runs into because of gender are not subjects that most women generally discuss. Frankly, most women would prefer to meet the potholes and the ruts in the road, to confront them head on and overcome them, if possible, and then move on. Yet every woman present agreed that congressional efforts to repeal affirmative could only serve to put cement on the glass ceiling, and to make those hurdles higher. If that happens, Mr. President, these women will come out of the woodwork. Letters and phone calls will pour in from across this Nation, Mr. President, as women tell their stories. The sentiment in that room can be summed up quite simply: Women cannot, and will not, turn back.

The simple fact is that many of these women were in professions that women could not even enter 20 years ago. Many of the women in the room had been hired for jobs or had received promotions that would have been unthinkable in 1965, or even 1975. And all of them felt that the existence of affirmative action in the laws and in executive orders in this country had opened doors, had created a climate of diversity, had created an environment for their inclusion.

Finally, despite the progress they had made, all of these women felt that there were still barriers to their advancement, that the glass ceiling was all too real. They concurred that efforts by this Congress to retreat from the commitment to equal opportunity in the workplace would have the effect of putting cement on that glass ceiling, and make it much more difficult for women to participate in the economic, political and social life of this country.

Given the enthusiastic reaction at the meeting that took place in my office, I was frankly not surprised to learn 2 days ago that a Coalition for Equal Opportunity is being formed in Illinois. At a press conference on the 17th of April, more than 40 women's, civil rights, labor, religious, and business organizations will announce their intentions to work to preserve equality and fairness in Illinois and throughout the Nation. They announced their intention to begin to galvanize and work to explain to women what affirmative action really means—the truth of it.

I gave a statement on the floor the other night, Mr. President, in which I went some detail about the truth of affirmative action—what the myths are, what the realities are, and how women and minorities will be affected by efforts to repeal it.

For those who may be wondering if the reaction of that group is atypical, I can assure you, it is not. There is a tendency in Washington to get wrapped up in what is happening here on the Senate floor. Sometimes, we can lose sight of what people are saying out there in the real world, what is actually going on in communities.

It is interesting to note that there is an old expression, "How does it play in Peoria,"—a town that is, of course, in my State of Illinois. How does it play in Peoria? This is a short-hand way to cut through the beltway issues and get to what the people out in the heart of the country think about the issue.

There was a major story that recently appeared in the Peoria Journal Star, a major newspaper in Peoria, that gives us a sense of how this issue, the affirmative action debate, is playing in Peoria.

The headline of the article is entitled, "Toward a Middle Ground: Re-Think Affirmative Action, But Don't Kill It; Issue Demands Caution."

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the article be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 1.)

Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. I would like to discuss a few points made by that article, because I think it is helpful for those of us in this body to be aware of how some people in America's heartland feel about the affirmative action issue.

First and foremost, the people in Peoria are echoing the conclusions reached last week by the Department of Labor's glass ceiling commission: affirmative action makes good business sense. As the article states:

A half-dozen Peoria area employers and educators contacted over the last week said they make special efforts to promote diversity not because the Federal regulators are on their backs, but because it's in their interest. In some circumstances and with some individuals, a black cop or teacher can be more effective than a white one. A rape victim may be more willing to tell her story to a female reporter. A Hispanic salesman may be better able to reach that market. It's not just black students who benefit from attending college; whites are more fully educated—wiser if you will—for having black classmates and roommates.

Mr. President, these are businesses in Peoria, not New York or even Chicago. This is Main Street, not Pennsylvania Avenue. And these Main Streeters recognize that affirmative action is more than a private benefit; it is a public good. If we can open opportunity to a student or a job applicant who has been previously excluded from consideration, obviously, that person benefits. What is less obvious, but just as important, is that society benefits as well.

The Journal Star's article continued on to point out that, while America has made great strides in equal opportunity, there is still much work to be done. The dream of America as a color-blind society has not yet been realized even though all of us want, I think, to move in that direction. There are still entire professions, entire companies and even entire industries that remain virtually off-limits to women and minorities, particularly in the upper-levels. The glass ceiling report reached that conclusion after years of painstaking research; in reality, all people

need to do is look around their boardroom or their classroom to figure out what is really going on. As Clarence Brown, personnel director at Peoria's Bradley University, stated:

Everyone still believes the Government is forcing businesses to hire minorities—it's not. At every workshop, somebody brings that up. We say, look around you, and in most of those workshops there are no minorities at all, and most of the people there are white males.

Mr. President, as I have said before and will say again, I agree that all affirmative action programs should be subject to review. Everything that we do in Government, if the Government is to function effectively, from time to time, be subject to scrutiny and accountability. But there is a difference between review and retreat. In fact, the issue we are facing right now is that we make certain that retreat does not mean retrenchment. It is important that efforts to promote diversity are fair to everybody. It is important that the affirmative action initiatives do what they say they do and that we weed out the companies that run amuck and bureaucrats that run amuck and make a rash of regulations that are illogical.

So review in and itself can be an opportunity for improvement of affirmative action but it should never be used as an excuse for retrenchment from our commitment to fairness.

As the Peoria Journal Star article concludes:

It would be a mistake to abandon the broad commitment to act affirmatively to make for a more inclusive America: To recruit, to recognize the value in diversity, to provide more opportunities to those, regardless of sex or color, who have too little from the moment of birth.

In other words, an absence of discrimination is not enough. The Federal Government, employers, and our universities must reach out beyond the traditional groups and ensure that all people are given the opportunity to succeed in America.

Some have argued that, even if the Federal Executive order on affirmative action is repealed, businesses will continue to seek out diversity because it is the right thing to do. It affects the bottom line in a positive way. That is possible. But I do not think promotion of diversity would proceed as rapidly in the absence of legal guidance. Indeed, it is likely to slow down and some of the evidence suggests that where the legal requirement has changed affirmative action efforts have slowed down.

The more probable scenario is described this way in the article from the Peoria paper:

The other possibility is that ending Federal affirmative action mandates will make our workplaces and campuses look more Germanic than American. The commitment to minority recruiting will fade as time passes. Blacks shackled by poor schools and single-parent families will be more disadvantaged than they already are in competition for

spots in good colleges, necessary to put them in competition for good jobs. Minorities and women who would be otherwise competitive will run up against the good-old-boys network and the human tendency toward the familiar—to give the job to somebody who looks and things as you do.

Is that what we want from America? That scenario runs counter to the American dream, the dream of opportunity for everyone, the dream of traveling as far as your abilities will take you; or, as many parents put it to their children, the dream that any one of us could one day grow up to be the President of the United States. If that dream is to have any basis in reality, we cannot retreat from our commitment to affirmative action. To those who will easily dismiss the Peoria Journal Star observations, and my remarks on this subject, again I have already made one more detailed speech about this issue, and I intend to make others about this issue to focus in on particular parts of the debate and particular issues going to the facts of this issue, I would like to remind whoever is listening that Illinois has long been a bellwether State on the issue of equal opportunity.

As far back as 1914, a woman's organization known as the Kappa Suffrage Club realized the link between equality of women, and equality for minorities, and worked for the election of the first black alderman in the city of Chicago. The League of Women Voters was founded in Illinois in 1919 by Carrie Chapman Catt, who stated at the time that "Winning the vote is only an opening wedge, but to learn to use it is a bigger task."

I know that there are attempts by some to turn the affirmative action issue into a cynical debate about race. We cannot allow that to happen. There are too many problems facing this country—problems of job creation, deficit reduction, education—that need our collective energy. To divide Americans one from the other is not only counterproductive, it is irresponsible, and I submit irresponsible debate. Affirmative action is about opportunity, and affirmative action is about giving our country the ability to compete in the world economy, in this world marketplace on an equal par and with the capacity to tap the talents of 100 percent of the people of this country.

As our country is able to tap the talents of 100 percent, we grow stronger as a nation and we are better able to participate and to compete. To close that door to, put cement on the glass ceiling at this point in time, it seems to me, turns this country in the absolute wrong direction and will put us on a course that I hate frankly to imagine.

I hope that over the months as we discuss this issue that people who care about it will, one, focus in on the fact and, two, hear the voices of reason coming from the America's heartland. We all stand to gain from the wisdom of people who are out in the real world trying to make our country work as one America.

If any objective should command our complete consensus, it is ensuring that every American has a chance to succeed. And in any event, the facts will not support tagging blacks and other minorities with any failures of affirmative action programs.

Mr. President, I will close on a note of caution from the Peoria Journal Star:

There are fewer threats to the Nation's future that a wide divide between angry whites and disenfranchised blacks.

Those who would seek to enlarge that divide by using affirmative action as a racial "wedge" issue may score short-term political points; but they do so at the expense of America's long-term future. Before we travel down that road, I urge everyone to consider the voices of reason coming from America's heartland. We all stand to gain from their wisdom.

Thank you very much, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

EXHIBIT 1

[From the Peoria Journal Star, Mar. 12, 1995]
TOWARD A MIDDLE GROUND: RETHINK AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, BUT DON'T KILL IT; ISSUE DEMANDS CAUTION

Call it the revenge of the angry white guys.

Claiming white males denied access to a janitorial training program, the United States Justice Department last week sued Illinois State University. ISU President Thomas Wallace responded that the program has been set up to integrate a largely white, male work force. White men weren't precluded from joining, Wallace said. But the Justice Department alleges none were among the 60 people trained and hired between 1987 and 1991.

It's not often lately that the feds have gone to bat for white guys, especially those who allege they are being denied an opportunity to become janitors because of gender or skin color. Before affirmative action sought to put the power of programming behind the pledge of opportunity, most of the positions that paid Buick-buying money went to white men. Why would they mind if custodial jobs went to blacks?

We have come not quite full-circle in the 30 years since President Lyndon B. Johnson committed the country to guaranteeing black Americans "not just equality as a right . . . but equality as a fact." What followed was a host of federal programs—the Library of Congress lists 160—which seek to increase the number of minorities and women in college and medical school, behind jackhammers and at the knee-hole side of vice-presidential desks. That it did, though imperfectly (women benefited more fully than blacks) and with fallout.

The fallout is the growing resentment of whites. Only a few take their cases to court: the Colorado contractor who lost a federal highway job to a minority firm which submitted a lower bid and the white school-teacher, hired on the same day as a black, who was laid off when her employer opted for diversity over a coin-toss.

More often, white males who believe they've been victimized take their cases to their buddies: They can't get hired, they can't get into law school, they don't have a shot at a promotion because they are being discriminated against. But with some notable exceptions, it's not the best case. For the work force, especially at higher reaches and in the professions, remains predominantly white and largely male.

"Everyone still believes the government is forcing businesses to hire minorities—it's not," says Clarence Brown, Bradley University's personnel director. "At every workshop somebody brings that up. We say look around you, and in most of them there are no minorities at all and most of the people there are white males."

Yet most employers and universities do make special efforts to make their offices and their student bodies look more like America.

A half-dozen area employers and educators contacted over the last week said they do so not because federal regulators are on their backs, but because it's in their interest. In some circumstances and with some individuals, a black cop or teacher can be more effective than a white one. A rape victim may be more willing to tell her story to a female reporter. A Hispanic salesman may be better able to reach that market. It's not just black students who benefit from attending Bradley; whites are more fully educated—wiser, if you will—for having black classmates and roommates.

A colorblind society, free from all discrimination, is a wonderful goal, but it's not the reality. And so most of those questioned say they'd remain committed to the wisdom of diversity, in the absence of legislation. That's one of the arguments made by those who call for dismantling federal affirmative action programs.

But it's also an argument that ends up running in circles. To wit: Race and sex should not be considered. Laws that require their consideration should be repealed. Without laws, employers and institutions will continue their voluntary efforts to attract more minorities because a diverse work force is in their interest. Hence, race and sex will be considered—and all those white guys who think that's why they failed to get hired or promoted will be angry still.

The other possibility is that ending federal affirmative action mandates will make our workplaces and campuses look more Germanic than American. The commitment to minority recruiting will fade as time passes. Blacks shackled by poor schools and single-parent families will be more disadvantaged than they already are in competition for spots in good colleges, necessary to put them in competition for good jobs. Minorities and women who would be otherwise competitive will run up against the good-old-boys network and the human tendency toward the familiar—to give the job to somebody who looks and thinks as you do. There will be fewer black doctors and business executives and teachers.

All this is a long-winded way of saying that affirmative action is an extraordinarily complex and explosive issue. It's admirable that we want to be a society free of racial or sexual bias, but we are not. What to do about that remains a huge and divisive issue.

A story in this newspaper a couple of weeks ago reported that President Clinton had decided to review all affirmative action plans to search for a middle ground: "Affirmative action review carries a no-win risk," read the headline. Yet a compelling case can be made for an effort to find a middle ground on this issue.

The House began last month by repealing legislation that granted tax breaks for companies that sell broadcast stations to minorities. No sound argument could be made for filling the pockets of rich white men so blacks could get into broadcast. Minority set-asides deserve a look; so do bidding rules that result in more expensive contracts because race or gender offset a low bid.

But it would be a mistake to abandon the broad commitment to act affirmatively to make for a more inclusive America: to recruit, to recognize the value in diversity, to provide more opportunities to those, regardless of sex or color, who have too little from the moment of birth. There are fewer threats to the nation's future than a wide divide between angry whites and disenfranchised-blacks. If ever an issue demanded a middle ground, free of reckless passion, this is it.

Mr. FEINGOLD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COVERDELL). The Chair recognizes the Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. FEINGOLD. I thank the Chair. I thank the Senator from Illinois. I appreciate hearing her remarks, particularly on affirmative action.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FEINGOLD. I thank the Chair.

ALLOWING GIFTS AND SPECIAL BENEFITS

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I want to state first of all that, as we get to the end of the Republican contract of 100 days, it is time to take stock. Everyone is taking stock of what is in the contract, what is passed, what has not passed, what is not in the contract.

The piece I want to discuss today is something that just is not included; that is, whether we are going to ban the practice of allowing gifts and special benefits from private interests to Members of Congress.

I want to thank my colleague, the Senator from New Jersey, Senator LAUTENBERG, and the Senator from Minnesota, Senator WELLSTONE, for keeping up this fight during a series of months when in effect it appears that the effort to ban the gifts has been ruled out of order. It is not part of the contract. So we do not come out here and talk about it.

This came up in the very first week when we addressed something that Democrats have supported that was included in the Republican contract—there have not been many—namely to make sure that Members of Congress have to live by the rules that we make for everyone else. It makes sense. It passed overwhelmingly, if not unanimously, and a lot of us thought—certainly the three Senators behind the gift ban—what a perfect opportunity the first week to get rid of this outrageous practice.

So we tried to put it on the bill. We were defeated by almost a pure party line vote.

It is not very surprising in light of the fact that the new majority wanted to set the agenda. I understand that. We protested. But I certainly did not see it as outrageous given the fact that it was the first week and that there would be other opportunities. At that point, though, we received something that I think most of us perceived as an assurance that the gift ban issue would

come up in a timely manner. This is not something that needs to be evaluated at length anymore such as welfare reform or the whole issue of how to cut the Federal deficit. Those are very complicated subjects. This is an easy subject. It is not the kind of thing that should wait until later this year or the end of session. It is important that the gift ban be enacted now so that the negative effect it has on this institution and the perceptions of this institution are mitigated now. But that is not what has happened.

The distinguished majority leader on January 10 said that it was his intent to try to move the bill as quickly as he could. He said:

I am not certain about any date. I am not certain it will be May 31. It could be before, maybe after May 31.

Some of us hoped at least the end of May would be a good target time to solve this problem, certainly by the Memorial Day recess.

Unfortunately, Mr. President, that is not the position now. We have received a list not too long ago of must-do items entitled, "The must-do list for Memorial Day Recess, nonexclusive."

Among the items listed on there are some very important items: The defense supplemental appropriations bill, the line-item veto, which we have taken care of in this House, regulatory moratorium bill, which we have moved out, product liability, the self-employed health insurance extension—we have taken care of that—FEMA supplemental, which we are dealing with now, crime bill, budget resolution, telecommunications bill, and various other items are listed as likely.

Nowhere on that list is there any suggestion either that we will be taking up the gift ban, or that we are likely to take up the gift ban before the Memorial Day recess, so I am beginning to get concerned. The majority leader had given us what I thought was a pretty strong commitment this bill would be taken up in a reasonable time but we are not getting that indication now. And I am beginning to wonder why.

Mr. President, a lot of things have not surprised me about these first 100 days of the Republican contract. That does not mean I like them, but they did not surprise me. I am not surprised that the House of Representatives, that talked so loudly about deficit reduction, yesterday passed a \$200 billion step in the wrong direction in the form of tax cuts for everyone including some of the very wealthiest people in our society. I am not surprised. The Republican contract was voodoo mathematics from the beginning. It is about having your cake and eating it, too, saying you are for deficit reduction, saying you are for balancing the budget and then as fast as you can trying to make sure that everybody in the country is happy with you by giving you a tax cut that you cannot afford. I am not surprised by that.

I was not surprised but dismayed that the Republican contract does not

even mention campaign finance reform. The American people want campaign finance reform, but it is very easy on that issue to confuse people, to say that if the Democrats write the bill, it is going to help out the Democrats; if the Republicans write it, it is going to help the Republicans. And it is terribly confusing because it involves so many different issues of PAC's and campaign limitations, contribution limitations. I think it is a tragedy that it was not a part of the contract and before us. But that does not surprise me. I would have expected that especially after the effort to kill the campaign finance reform bill in this body last year.

I am not surprised about the complete ignoring of the whole health care issue in the Republican contract, which everybody in the Senate said was an important issue; everybody said they wanted universal coverage somehow and acknowledged the 40 million Americans with no health care coverage. Everybody said we have to deal with it somehow, but there is no action on it. There is hardly mention of it.

Again, though, Mr. President, I am not surprised. I saw that one coming. Health care became a symbol of something that Government should not get involved in at all during the 103d Congress, and I think that is a regrettable result.

What I am surprised by, Mr. President, is that the folks running the Republican contract believe that it is just fine to not include the gift ban and not take it up in a timely manner. It is not important enough apparently to be handled in the first 100 days. I thought it was just too obviously inconsistent with the tone and the spirit of the Republican contract and the November 8 elections to ignore the fact that the gift ban is one of the greatest symbols of the corruption that exists in this town. That is what I would have thought. After eliminating the free gym, the free health care, the special stationery, and all the little perks that certainly should go—and I am glad they are gone—I would have thought it was just incredible that either party felt safe and secure not trying to get rid of the use of gift giving to Members of Congress. It seems like just offering up raw meat to the folks who do the "Prime Time" television show, begging them to come and photograph Members of Congress on tennis trips paid for by special interests.

That is what I would have thought. But that is not the perception. That is not the approach. The approach is to stonewall the gift ban issue. And why would Members of Congress continue to allow that perception to exist? Well, I guess the conclusion I have come to is because the giving of gifts to Members of Congress by private interests, by special interests—not by the Government—is not any old perk given by the Government like the haircuts and