What we tried to do with the timber amendment that we had was to give the Forest Service the tools and the responsibility to move into the forests and move out the dead and diseased trees. The President today in his veto message said, and I am quoting, ''I have done more for logging than any other single person in this country.'' Well, the President told us his first term here in 1993 that he was cutting the budget deficit with his $100 billion tax increase; then he came to Congress and said he was increasing the deficit by over $1 trillion in his 4 years in office. He told us that he was working to balance the budget, and he did not. He has told this Congress many things. His story in foreign policy and Bosnia has changed no fewer than six times just in the last few weeks, so when he says that he has done more for helping the forests, the unemployed forest people in the Pacific Northwest or other parts of the country, it should be taken with a grain of salt by now. Certainly if you ask the forest families, the tens of thousands of people who are unemployed because of his misinformation and policy he has put in place in the Pacific Northwest, they will tell you very quickly how much he has done for the resource in this Nation

So, those of us in Congress by a vote of 277 in the House, which is almost two-thirds of this body, spoke out for forest health, and today the President has vetoed that.

It will come back to him. It will be back if there is another rescission package brought forth. It will be back in the Interior appropriations bill, because those of us that recognize the true science in silviculture, the health of our national forests, and recognize the phony misinformation that the President is getting, is wrong, we are going to see that that legislation is put back before him again and again.

His closing statement in his veto message was that we had with our timber amendment abolished all environmental legislation. Clearly, he could not have studied this himself. He took this right out of the radical environmental fringe that houses itself in Washington and puts out so much misinformation. It is ludicrous to think that a timber salvage amendment could abolish all of the environmental legislation that this country has passed in the last 20 years. It boggles the mind to think that we could even do it, much less have done it.

So I would ask the President to go back and reconsider what he has just said and the misinformation, and sign this bill for the families of America and the resources of this country and our forest health.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. HUNTER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. HUNTER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

CONSTITUENTS INTERESTED IN A BALANCED BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, during the 10 days that we were home for the break, the many constituents that I met with had concerns on a lot of different subjects, budget matters, they are very concerned about us balancing the budget. I said many, many times over the last 10 days that the third largest expenditure of our national budget is interest on the debt. And in 2 years that interest on the debt will exceed all military spending, all of the expenditures for the Coast Guard, the Army, the Navy, the Marines, and the Air Force and so forth. We will pay more money, more interest money to the bond holders on the national debt than we will for all of the armed services. I think this is absolutely atrocious, and found that most constituents agree. They want us, they are screaming for us to balance this budget. They realize that there will be some reductions in spending, some reductions in projections, and some elimination in consolidations of various programs, and yet what the folks of the First District of Georgia are saying is if you are going to balance the budget and you are going to do it across the board, that is fine. Do not do it on the backs of the veterans, do not do it on the backs of elderly, do not do it on the backs of children, do it across the board.

When I explain to them the Kasich budget proposal, in most cases people said that is a balanced approach, that is the way to handle this tremendous problem, because as we look at spending over a trillion dollars more than the current budget allocation in the next 7 years, people understand that in many cases we are not talking about budget cuts but we are talking about reducing the projected increase.

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And yet people want that budget balanced.

They are also interested in this tax relief. It is a shame that the United States other body on the other side of the hall has not quite caught on the American people are sick and tired of paying taxes.

The average middle-class family paid a 2 percent tax burden in the 1950's as a percentage of Federal income tax. In the 1970's, that 2 percent went to 16 percent. In the 1990's, it is 24 percent.

The middle-class families of America today are paying 40 to 50 percent of their income in taxes, and they are sick and tired of it. they cannot afford it.

And most families, both spouses are working simply because of the economic necessity of paying taxes. It does not get them ahead, it just keeps them standing still and breaking even.

The middle class needs relief. The tax relief bill passed by the House actually benefitted 75 percent of the American people in the middle-class category.

We have got to help the middle class, and our package does that. But more importantly than that, giving the people their own money back, not confiscating it from them in the first place, allows them to buy more hamburgers, more CD players, more cars, more houses. When they do that, businesses expand. They create jobs. New workers create new revenue. History shows, and I went back to 1956, the Treasury Department numbers, and looked at it. Our revenues have increased every time taxes were low; the revenues to the national budget actually increased.

And what is so important about that is that our projection is that if the economy grows over 1 percent more than the current projection, then in the next 7 years we will have another $640 billion of revenue added to the current budget, and if that is the case, it will be a lot easier to balance the budget without further reductions and caps and so forth.

Although many people are saying, ''Do not worry about those cuts,'' because one of the major objectives we want out of the 104th Congress is to reduce the size of government. People are tired of government micromanagement. They are tired of Washington bureaucrats telling them how to run the show. They are saying, ''We can handle our problems just fine on a local basis. Let our local nonprofits or our for-profits handle it. Let our local city councils and county commissions handle it. Let State governments do it. Take things, particularly major decisionmaking, out of Washington.''

Another thing I found that the folks in the First District of Georgia are very concerned about is welfare reform. Simply put, they just do not want people who are able to work paid for not working. The middle-class families are out there working 40, 50, 60 hours a week, breaking their back. They are tired of doing it for the benefit of a huge Washington bureaucracy and able-bodied public assistance recipients. They are tired of it.

If somebody needs a helping hand, we want to help them. But if they are just going to take a free ride, then it is time to tell them to get off the train and help start fueling the engine with the rest of us.

Madam Speaker, I found these things over and over again, not just during the current district work break but all along as I have been in public office, that people are saying this is what we want, this is what we want out of Washington, ''We want less; we want more personal freedom.''

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to: