

year's level. There were 510 fewer assault weapons traced to crime in the first 8 months of 1995 than were traced during the same period in 1994—an 18-percent reduction over a 1-year period.

I seem to recall that my Republican friends across the aisle want to base every judgment about Government programs and agencies on statistical data. Well, the statistical data proves that this is an effective law.

I also seem to recall that my Republican friends across the aisle like to think they are members of the law-and-order party. Well, law and order from coast to coast favors maintaining the assault weapons ban.

It is time that Republicans live by the standards they impose on themselves and maintain the assault weapons ban.

GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS ON THE BUDGET

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I think we should sort of start with positive news, and the good news is that the President gave us a budget that balances in 7 years.

Mr. Speaker, I was trying to remember what was happening just 2 years ago, what the Democrats, what the liberals, what the tax and spend people were saying. I looked up in the Committee on the Budget records of what Leon Panetta said. He said that we are heading toward down as low as a \$70 billion deficit, or overspending, by the year 2003, and that is where we should be.

The good news is that we have changed the debate in Washington. Now everybody is saying yes, we need a balanced budget. It is the right thing to do for the economy. It is the right thing to do as far as our kids and our grandkids. I think it is interesting to note in the President's budget that he has \$234 billion more taxes than the Republican proposal. He has \$357 billion more spending than the Republican proposal. It tends to be tax and spend. It is balanced. Although President Clinton often says there is not a government program for every problem, he has incorporated most government Washington solutions in his budget.

THE GUN DEBATE IS REALLY ABOUT MONEY

(Mr. ROEMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, we are going to have a debate today about banning or removing the ban on such dangerous weapons as streetsweepers and AK-47's. But I, sadly, think the debate is not about the substantive issues that we are going to hear about and the danger of these guns and the safety of

the citizens, but it is going to be about one thing and one thing alone. It is going to be about this; money.

It is going to be about the old adage: bought lock, stock, and barrel. Locking up people's election, getting stocks and putting them back in this Chamber and stuffing money down the barrel of their guns.

Now, we can either have new politics and reform about the public interests or we can continue to have these same old debates about special interests. We can either clean up our campaign coffers and get political reform, or we can continue to see the same old politics and the same old thing.

THE WERNLE HOME

(Mr. MCINTOSH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise with a report from Indiana. Today's report lists the Wernle home in Richmond, IN, that Ruthie and I have visited. It was founded over 100 years ago by the Lutheran Church as an orphanage. Today Rev. Paul Knecht and Mike Wilson run the Wernle home as a home for young boys and girls, many of them from abused families, to give them a chance for a better life. For older children, they are prepared for independent living and GED testing, and children learn responsibility.

They have a chance to earn a \$5 allowance each week by performing tasks around the Wernle home. They are also taught community skills as they play and work together in their daily lives. The Wernle home receives a lot of support from local businesses in Richmond, IN: the McDonald's, the local newspaper, the Palladium-item, Van's Meats, the symphony and many other business and community groups.

It is the children at Wernle home, children who come in all sizes, races, and religions who those men and women are working to give a better life. The good folks at the Wernle home are Hoosier heroes, and I raise them up today and commend their efforts. The magic of the Wernle home is a smile in the child who is loved.

REPEAL THE ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN? A POLITICAL DEATH WISH

(Mr. SKAGGS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, the House votes today on a bill to repeal the assault weapons ban, a political death wish in the most literal sense possible.

Please think about what Dion, Ty, and Aaron would say about this.

One night in 1993, these three high school students from Westminster, CO, were driving home, minding their own business, when out of the dark, without any warning or cause, another young

person in a car pulled up beside them and started firing.

Dion was hit five times, Ty twice, Aaron once. Luckily, none of them died. But they were all shot, and shot so many times, because the person shooting at them had a AK-47.

Mr. Speaker what in the world is a weapon like that doing on the streets of Colorado?

It was not there because any hunter needed it. It was there because the gangs and the criminals and the psychos want to use it to kill as many people as they can and to outgun the police.

In September 1993, one of them was used on these three young men. Please, for God's sake do not repeal the ban on these awful weapons.

WELCOME TO A NEW DEMOCRACY

(Mr. FUNDERBURK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Mr. Speaker, the Chinese civilization is the world's oldest continuous one. The Chinese are rightfully proud of their civilization and culture. This weekend the Chinese people on Taiwan will undertake a historic event that has never occurred in 4,000 years of Chinese history. For the very first time, the Chinese on Taiwan will vote directly for its president. I heartily applaud this act of self-determination. This act of popularly electing a president is in accord with the very principle of democracy.

Mr. Speaker, I want to extend my most heartfelt congratulations from one of the world's oldest democratic republics to one of the youngest. To this end, I have submitted a House concurrent resolution extending our congratulations to the free noncommunist republic of China on Taiwan.

THE ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN

(Mr. ACKERMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in utter amazement that we are even going to consider repealing the assault weapons ban. Here are provisions of law designed to keep weapons of war off of our streets and to prevent citizens from being slaughtered and our law enforcement officials from being outgunned. Yet the majority party insists we would be better off without the ban. I find that difficult to believe.

Mr. Speaker, when President Bush banned the importation of assault weapons in 1989, the number of such rifles traced to crime dropped by 45 percent. In the year of the ban on domestic assault weapons, the effect of such attacks has dropped an additional 18 percent. Despite these encouraging results, assault weapons still pose a major danger to Americans, particularly to our law enforcement officers,