

did little as a population was devastated.

As these memories stay eternally fresh in their minds and hearts, the people of the Armenian Republic continue to suffer. In recent years, attempting to establish their independence from the former Soviet Union, Armenia has suffered a series of setbacks, including an earthquake in 1988 and a Turkish-led economic blockade that has prevented humanitarian aid from entering the country.

Despite these tragic circumstances, the Armenian people continue to be an inspiration to people around the world. Indeed, last July's democratic elections and new Constitution are evidence of the Armenian devotion to democracy. At the same time, the Armenian community in the United States and in my home state of Rhode Island continues to enrich our society and culture. They have brought with them their unconquerable spirit, patriotism, and valor. Furthermore, they remind us that we must never forget those who perished 81 years ago. Along with the lives that were lost, the Armenian genocide resulted in the destruction of a society and a culture.

It is the memory of those whose perished that we remember today, but it is also those who have carried on, that we must honor. We know too well that history can repeat itself, and that the problems of far-off nations are often overlooked in the face of larger global issues. While nothing can undo the crime of the Armenian genocide, we can do our best to establish a new future.

I urge my colleagues to join me in this commemoration to remember the victims of this holocaust, pray for those who continue to suffer, and honor the truly inspirational spirit of the Armenian people. We must continue to stand side by side with the Republic of Armenia in her quest for democracy while ensuring that tragedies like the genocide never happen again.

□ 1830

ON THE MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. (Mr. MILLER of Florida). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I also want to join briefly, although I will talk about another subject, want to join my colleagues in respect for the human dignity of the Armenian people and hopefully that the tragedy and the history of that event will teach us as public policymakers that we should make sure that that does not happen again.

Mr. Speaker, over the past several days, the public has been privileged to hear the views of Members—from both sides of the aisle—on the issue of raising the minimum wage.

This is a good and healthy exercise.

Some of what the public has heard has been fact. However, some has been fiction.

This evening, I would like to address some of the major arguments that have been made and repeated during this debate and attempt to separate the fact from the fiction.

Some have suggested that most minimum wage workers are teenagers, working part-time. That is fiction. Most minimum wage workers are adults—7 out of 10 of them—and most are women—6 out of 10 of them. That is fact. But even if most minimum wage workers are teenagers, should they not be paid a fair day's wage for a fair day's work?

Many maintain that jobs will be lost and prices will rise with an increase in the minimum wage. That is fiction. But many more, including prominent economists, throughout the United States, have effectively disputed the job loss argument.

None on the other side have successfully challenged the three economics Nobel Prize recipients and the more than 100 economic scholars from every corner of America—all who maintain the job loss argument is without foundation.

And, on the issue of rising prices—first, prices have already risen, many times over the past 25 years, while the minimum wage has increased but once.

To the minimum wage worker, price increases combined with no increase in wages has meant more obligations, less money and more misery.

But, second, the claim that an increase in the minimum wage will mean higher prices for goods fails when examined against the experience in New Jersey.

New Jersey, like eight other States, now has a minimum wage higher than the Federal minimum wage.

It has been documented by empirical study, however, that when New Jersey raised its minimum wage, prices were not affected in any measurable way.

Price increase claims are fiction.

A few have stated that raising the minimum wage is a liberal Democrat idea—fortunately, that is fiction.

Both Speaker Gingrich and Majority Leader Dole voted for the only minimum wage increase in this quarter of a century in 1989—that is fact.

Moreover, twenty thoughtful Republicans in the House have joined the 113 Democrats in the call for a minimum wage increase—that too is fact.

Mr. Speaker, when the fact is weighed against the fiction, that fact rises and the fiction falls.

An increase in the minimum wage is not a gift—it is not charity. It is just and due compensation for work performed.

How is the value of work measured? That is a difficult question. I can, however, tell you what makes work seem valueless.

Work seems without value when, after doing a job, promptly and thoroughly, an employee earns less than

what is required for basic needs—something to eat, something to wear, a place to stay.

If we are serious about moving citizens from welfare to work, we must make work pay. The public debate over the minimum wage has caused some to rethink their opposition to this vital matter. That is good.

This debate will go on—it will not go away.

Those who continue to watch as corporate profits soar, as the salaries of business managers spiral and as working America suffers, are missing an important moment in history—they are lost in fiction.

An increase in the minimum wage is justified, it is necessitated by conditions and it is the right thing to do—that is fact.

REPUBLICAN PLAN FOR RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today we have learned that not only are the Republicans opposed to the minimum wage, but their leadership in a joint statement issued today said that they will simply not allow the minimum wage to come to the floor of the House. Instead they will have a substitute package that prevents, prevents millions of Americans from ever getting an increase in the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, if you are a student who is working while you are going to college to help pay for your college education, under their plan you will never get an increase in the minimum wage. If you are a single person who is working at the minimum wage, today you are working 8 hours a day, you are working 40 hours a week, and you are still ending up poor under their plan, you will never get an increase in the minimum wage.

If you are a working person with a child or working person with two children, you will get an increase but you will not get it from the people you are working for. You will get it from the taxpayers, because the Republicans have decided, rather than ask the employers of this country to pay a livable wage, to pay an increase in the minimum wage, what they are going to do is ask the taxpayers to subsidize those jobs for those individuals who are working.

Mind you, today for an individual working at the minimum wage, a single parent with one child, the taxpayers are already paying \$175 a month in AFDC payments, \$28 a month in food stamps, \$179 in EITC, and they are losing \$56 on Social Security. We are already subsidizing low wage jobs in America. Rather than have the marketplace, which so often we hear people pledge their allegiance to, rather than

have the marketplace provide livable wages, rather than have McDonald's or Burger King increase the minimum wage, what they have decided is they are going to provide a government subsidy to those employers.

What that means is never again will McDonald's hire other people other than a single worker because those workers will never be entitled to an increase in the minimum wage. If they hire somebody that happens to have a child, they will know that whatever increases in living standards those people acquire, it will be acquired from the taxpayers, not from their hard work, not from the sweat of their brow and not certainly from their employers.

This is a complete capitulation to the special interests, the restaurant association, the fast food industries, and so many others opposed to an increase in the minimum wage. But now we find out that the Republican leadership in the joint statement of the Speaker and the House majority leader who said they will not bring the minimum wage to the floor of the House of Representatives. They have said that they are also going to go on the attack against the 8-hour day, the 40-hour work week, the Fair Labor Standards Act that protects people that, if you work more than 8 hours a day, if you work more than 40 hours a week, you are entitled to overtime compensation for that work.

What they are going to do is get rid of that standard. They have already done it in the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities where they have voted out legislation to deny people the guarantees of the 8-hour day, the 40-hour work week, and people ought to understand this.

Mr. Speaker, they have also decided that they say they are going to try and protect individuals' pensions. This comes from the same people who just a few months ago allowed people to raid the pension funds of employees. How are they going to provide this increase in the living standards of people who work at the minimum wage? They are going to increase the taxes on low income single working people, on low income students who happen to be single. They are going to tax those individuals, take away their earned income tax credit and give it to poor working people, poor working people who happen to have children.

So we are going to tax the poorest people in the country who are working every day. We are going to tax them and give that to other working poor people who happen to have children. We are going to do that under the Republican plan rather than ask the employers to provide an increase of 90 cents in the minimum wage over 2 years or \$1, as some of our Republican colleagues have suggested, over 2 years.

This is a massive subsidy to employers who choose not to pay the minimum wage. The employer need not show that he cannot pay the minimum wage, that he cannot afford to pay the

minimum wage, that their business would go on the rocks. There is no showing at all. You simply do not pay the minimum wage, and the taxpayers come in and subsidize your place of employment. You simply choose not to provide a livable wage to a single person, and that person has no right to any further remuneration because of their work or because of a loss of purchasing power that we have seen people who are currently at the minimum wage.

So what we have is we had a promise by Majority Leader ARMEY that he would fight the minimum wage with every fiber of his being. And now that we see he is carrying out that promise and that promise is in his joint statement that the minimum wage will not come to the floor of the House, they will not allow us to vote on it.

Mr. speaker, we are entitled to that vote. We should have a clean vote up or down on the minimum wage and give the American hard-working people the minimum wage that they need. They need a raise.

GREGORY PECK, FILM LEGEND,
SAYS IT ALL

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

Mr. DORNAN. Mr. Speaker, I would title my short remarks today, "Gregory Peck, Film Legend, Says It All." Here is a small article from a paper last week that film legend Gregory Peck says there is no place for him in Hollywood any longer because today's movies are too full of sex and violence.

The 80-year-old star, looking 10 years younger if not more, still elegant, whose last movie was "Cape Fear," says he is finished. Peck blasted new films for containing gratuitous violence, overt sex, and the massacre of the English language. Even though I know it is all fake, I still do not like to see a bullet going through someone's eyeball, generally in slow motion. He said today's movie heroes are sleazebags. They are motivated by hatred, greed, violence. They are all rude, vulgar, ill-educated, and incapable of making an effort because they are totally selfish and devoid of moral values.

□ 1845

He had especially harsh words for Joe Pesci, the star of "Good Fellows" and "Casino." "He is so far on the anti-hero side that he is almost not human. I myself have played gunslingers, sailors, intellectuals, peasants, and adventurers. I have played Abraham Lincoln and the terrible Dr. Mengele of Auschwitz, as well as a few drunks and bad boys, but generally, like James Stewart and Gary Cooper, my characters were dignified and brave men who did their duty."

Peck said there is only one decent hero in recent movies: Babe the Pig. In

every sense, I thought Babe was a beautiful young lady pig. He said he is in every sense an old-fashioned hero.

Well, I would recommend to Mr. Peck that he see "Braveheart," the film which won Best Director for Mel Gibson and Best Movie of the Year. There, too, was a film where the hero was truly a hero who died with a beautiful word on his lips: freedom.

Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have left? 2½ minutes?

Mr. Speaker, I want to make brief note of something tragic that happened today in the legislative process. Bill Clinton, who successfully avoided serving his country three times, and the last time shamefully, had suppressed and politically destroyed his induction date to the U.S. Army. The exact date is July 28, 1969. He had it politically obliterated by a Senator, a Governor, and by compromising politically the draft board and by completely raping the truth to Col. Eugene Holmes, the head of the ROTC in Arkansas, the University of Arkansas.

So it is particularly offensive to this Air Force officer that my leadership caves to a threat of Bill Clinton back on February 10 when he signed the defense authorization bill and stripped out three of the best provisions to defend this country in that bill, taking out ballistic missile defense to defend America, our homeland, stripping out the language that no U.S. service men and women would serve under foreign commanders without benefit of treaties, Senate approval or training together like NATO, and that he took out the congressional privileges of this House to decide when men go to fight in World War I or World War II or Somalia or Haiti or Bosnia or Desert Storm or Tibet tomorrow, if that is his whim, to sent the 82d Airborne or the 101st Air Mobile Division.

He said on February 10, after stripping those out, that there was one thing in the bill he was going to encourage disobedience toward, encourage people in the military to sue, and said Janet Reno, his Attorney General, would not enforce the law, and that was BOB DORNAN's language, to mercifully, with medical benefits and an honorable discharge, give about 1,000 people who played Russian roulette with drugs or unsanitary sex, most of it heterosexual, in Navy ports of call with prostitutes around this now very unsanitary world. He said, "That I will undo."

And because of weak Republican leadership and with my own, some of my leaders, telling me, "But it was authorization on an appropriation conference bill"; no, it was not. It was law. It was a few lame-duck Republicans in the other Chamber and Democrats who are catering to the homosexual lobby not realizing that most of these people are heterosexual victims of HIV that will eventually die of AIDS. They undid law. That is authorizing on an appropriation bill.

So of course I will have to vote against the bill tomorrow. But here is