

Unfortunately, after much personal harassment and great disruption and embarrassment to all of the members of the White House travel staff, the punishment did not end there. Mr. Dale was indicted for allegedly embezzling funds. But, as all of us now know the jury found him not guilty in less than 2 hours. As the distinguished chairman of our Judiciary Committee has noted yesterday, that is usually the amount of time it takes most juries to get organized. Talk about an open-and-shut case. That one was clearly it.

Mr. Dale said after his acquittal he was relieved and prepared to go on with his life. Unfortunately, that is not what happened. Within weeks the Watkins memo surfaced—and it squarely contradicted the sworn testimony of the First Lady before GAO investigators—and the Clinton damage control team went into a full-court press. The White House spin doctors, Anne Lewis, the Clinton campaign, and high-priced Washington lawyers, including Mr. Bennett, and even the First Lady herself in interviews, continued to make allegations that had been thrown out in the criminal proceedings against Mr. Dale and the White House staff.

I think enough is enough. The dedicated public servants who worked in the Travel Office have suffered enough. I think that this bill is a small gesture which would not only offer some consolation to these people, but help them get out of the financial hole this whole matter has caused them. It was with great disappointment that we learned that the other side has chosen to filibuster this. My only guess is that this is an effort to save the President the embarrassment of having to sign this bill.

I urged last week that the majority leader bring this bill to the floor so we could hear arguments against it on the Senate floor. I am still waiting to hear any compelling argument. I appreciate the majority leader having called it up. I hope that one of these days very shortly we can get on with doing a very simple act of justice by providing compensation for some of the expenses and costs incurred. I yield the floor.

Mr. GRASSLEY addressed the Chair. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I believe, considering the results of the last vote, where it is very clear that there is a filibuster by the opposition to hold this bill up, it is important that the public have a chance to weigh in because this is such a political issue here trying to avoid this bill coming to the White House to save the President the embarrassment of signing it. When there are this much politics in the issue, and the public at the grassroots weigh in, they can make a considerable impact on the legislative process here in the Congress of the United States.

This may be one of those times when the public can make a difference, because this is clearly such a political move by the other side of the aisle. If

politics wins out over right, then in the end wrong wins. It seems to me that the public will not want that to happen and they cannot allow that to stand.

This is such a clear-cut issue. First of all, there are seven employees involved that were fired. We have already taken legislative action for the others, but for Mr. Dale, no, because at the time we took action for the others, his trial was pending. Mr. Dale was subsequently then found not guilty by the jury.

So now we are taking action to do for Mr. Dale the same as we did for everybody else. There was not any debate in this body whatsoever over the action that we took on the others. It went through noncontroversial. The situation with Mr. Dale should be handled the same way. It should have gone through here in what we call wrapup at the end of the day and do it where we do all the noncontroversial measures.

But what we have seen today is politics at its best—politics at its best in the sense that the stonewalling is at its best, to see something that is right not to go on, not to go through, because there might be some embarrassment for the President. The Democrats want to protect the President from that embarrassment. Today what we have seen is kind of a drive-by sabotage of this effort to right the wrong that has been conducted against Mr. Dale, because he was unfairly, wrongfully fired.

Maybe there is no question he could have been fired, but the point is how the White House has tried to explain it and supposedly explain it away as a legitimate way of doing business. All the harm that has come to the family, not only of the employee who was fired, but the family because they have been wrongly treated, wrongly treated by a person who ought to know because he preaches the communitarian spirit that we ought to have one toward the other. That is what the President of the United States preaches.

We ought to have charity. This does not show the charity that the President preaches that we all ought to have one toward the other when somebody is wrongfully fired, when you bring the FBI and the Justice Department to bring a guy to trial. Then he has gotten off, and then we are trying to right that wrong by covering the legal expenses of Mr. Dale. It is wrong for the other side, acting at the behest of the White House, to avoid embarrassment for the White House for this all to go on and then at the other time preach a spirit of charity and communitarianism towards one another in this country.

The whole effort is being sabotaged. Worse yet, it is being sabotaged without even the other side engaging in much debate on the issue. They have really succeeded in legislative harassment of Mr. Dale, the same sort of harassment, just in another environment, that has been done against Mr. Dale by the White House, by the Justice De-

partment, by the IRS. Thus continues, as I see it, the White House campaign to avoid embarrassment on this issue.

It is very clearly a clear-cut, right-versus-wrong issue. Politics has won out this day. The President continues to avoid responsibility for his actions. The victims continue to be wronged. That is why when it is so clear-cut, when our judicial system has cleared somebody, then I think it is a time for the American people to weigh in.

I ask the American people to make their voices heard on this issue, to hold the President's feet to the fire. Even if you are a Democrat out there in Main Street America, it seems to me that you want your President to do what is right. What is right is to sign this legislation, to call off the hordes on Capitol Hill that are preventing this measure from coming to a vote, and have the President demonstrate his charitable attitude that he preaches. Tell the President of the United States to show moral leadership, to do the right thing, to sign this bill.

Lastly, if politics wins in this instance, then it wins over right. When that happens, politics wins over right, then wrong wins. The public cannot allow this to stand.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll. The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

REPEAL THE GASOLINE TAX

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, there is a growing concern in our country about the rise of fuel prices, the rise of gasoline prices. Obviously, the President shares this concern. We have committee hearings underway. We have studies. We have investigations.

We all know that there is only one thing we can do that is going to bring down gasoline prices immediately. In fact, we have the capacity, by acting now, to bring down the cost of filling up the gas tank on your car, on your van, on your truck. We can save you about \$1 a fill-up by repealing the 4.3-cent-a-gallon tax on gasoline that was adopted in 1993.

That gasoline tax increase did not go to build new highways; it went to general revenue. What we would like to do today is repeal that gasoline tax. We would like to repeal that tax on highway gasoline, on highway diesel fuel, on railroad diesel fuel, on inland waterway diesel fuel, on aviation gasoline, on noncommercial jet fuel, and on commercial jet fuel. We would like to repeal that 4.3-cent-a-gallon tax on each of those fuels, do it today and have that repeal in effect until the end of the year, giving us an opportunity to write a budget and to institute a permanent repeal as part of that new budget.

It would be our goal today to pay for this loss of revenue by cutting the overhead and travel budget of the Energy Department and by selling a very small part of the spectrum, something that the President has supported at a level of \$38 billion of sales, something that the Congress is on record in favor of. On a \$19 billion sale, we would have roughly a \$2 billion sale as part of this package.

If you want to bring down the price of gasoline at the pump, if you want, by Friday morning, to have every filling station in America going out, opening for business, bringing down their posted price by 4.3 cents a gallon, saving every motorist in America about \$1 when they fill up their tank, there is only one thing we can do, and that is repeal this tax on gasoline.

I hope we can do it today. I hope the House can act quickly, that the President will sign it, that we can grant relief. What a great thing it would be to do it on tax freedom day, when the average American family has worked from January 1 until today just to pay taxes.

For the first time this year, they are working for themselves. Today would be an excellent day to repeal this tax, to give relief to motorists and, in the process, let working families keep more of what they earn.

Mr. DOLE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GREGG). The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I particularly thank the Senator from Texas, who first raised this issue several weeks ago, and I thank him for his leadership. I think it would be an excellent day, since today is tax freedom day. Hopefully, we can reach an agreement here.

I think repeal of the gas tax will pass. The Senator from Texas has outlined how we pay for it—the spectrum sales, which is about \$2.5 billion in savings, and the Energy Department, about \$800 million over the next 7 years. This would repeal it through the end of this year, and the Budget Committee would then come forth with repeal thereafter.

I also add that, of course, it is tax freedom day, and a lot of people have noted that. I am not certain how many taxpayers have thought about it, but, as the Senator from Texas pointed out, tomorrow they are sort of on their own. For the first 128 days, they have been working for the local, State, and Federal Government, just to pay their taxes. That is on the average.

Since President Clinton came on board, we have added 1 week to that because of the big, big tax increase in 1993 of \$265 billion to \$268 billion. So it has already been extended. You have to work an extra week, after 3 years of President Clinton, to get to tax freedom day.

Some would say, well, 4.3 cents is not really worth it. I think that, from the standpoint of sending a signal to the

American people, we are serious about tax reduction, serious about tax freedom day. It is not just a day to make an appearance somewhere or make a statement on the Senate floor. We are serious about it.

As the Senator from Texas pointed out, this 4.3 cents is not going for highways, or bridges, or mass transit, or construction of any kind. It is going for deficit reduction. I have voted for tax increases in the past, as has been pointed out by my colleagues on the other side, to build highways and bridges. That is what we thought the fuel taxes were all about.

In 1990, for a very short period of time, we had to divide a 5-cent tax increase between the deficit and the trust fund so that we could get our colleagues on the other side to go along with the budget agreement of 1990. That would have expired at the end of 5 years. But before that expiration date occurred, the big tax bill of 1993 took that 5 cents and put it all in the trust fund, but then added 4.3 cents to deficit reduction. Therein lies the problem of today. We have a permanent 4.3 cents gas tax for deficit reduction.

The people who build highways, who travel our highways, and use mass transit can understand if you are doing it to make the highway safer, for better transportation, better highways, and mass transit, but not deficit reduction. So we need to cut taxes for the average family. We also need to go back and look at some of the things that were vetoed last year, such as the \$500-per-child tax credit, the expanded IRA's, tax relief for education expenses, estate tax relief for family businesses, marriage penalty relief, and a whole host of things we think are good incentives and should be adopted and would create jobs and opportunities.

American families—at least the ones I visit with—think they are paying enough in taxes. As I said, they are paying a lot more because of the legislation that was passed in 1993, without a Republican vote in the House or the Senate.

So today I am introducing, along with Senator GRAMM, and others, legislation repealing the 1993 gas tax hike. I am going to ask in a moment unanimous consent to bring the gas tax repeal to a vote on the taxpayer bill of rights. The taxpayer bill of rights 2 is pending at the desk. We can bring that up, offer an amendment, have 30 minutes of debate, and vote on it. It would then go to the House, and we will have repealed the 4.3-cent gas tax.

I hope we can have an agreement on this. It seems to me that we know it is going to pass. It is going to happen one of these days. It may as well happen today, as the Senator from Texas pointed out, on tax freedom day. So this would be a good day to indicate that we are serious about it.

There is some question as to whether the repeal would result in lower gas prices for consumers. On Friday, I was

in Virginia at an Exxon station with Senator WARNER, Congressman TOM DAVIS, and others, and we were assured by the owner of the station—in fact, he is the owner of several Exxon stations—that, obviously, it was their intent to pass the 4.3 cents on to consumers. That is how they do business. They know their customers, and the customers are going to know whether or not it has been passed on to them.

Our amendment is drafted to ensure that this happens by providing an immediate tax cut against other applicable excise taxes. We also require that the Departments of Justice, Treasury, and Energy study fuel prices in June, July, and August 1996, to determine whether the gas tax repeal is passed through to consumers. Those Departments would be required to report back to Congress by September 30.

We also propose a sense of the Congress that the benefits of the gas tax repeal be made immediately available to consumers. So we have listened to the concerns expressed by our colleagues. We had the same concerns. We believe the benefits will go to the consumers. Just to make certain and erase any doubt or skepticism, we have added these provisions.

Repealing the 1993 gas tax will cut driving costs for families who drive to work, to school, to worship, or on vacation. There are many reasons for the skyrocketing gas prices. Maybe they will go up. We are not suggesting that the repeal of the gas tax is going to put the halt to rising gas prices, but they will be at least 4.3 cents less. It is one way of cut driving costs for American families and businesses. I think it is something we should do, something we will do. Also, we would like to scrap—and at the appropriate time we will talk about it, later this year—the current tax system and replace it with a flatter, fairer, and simpler system that no longer discourages savings and investment, economic growth, and job creation.

So I urge my colleagues not to object, so we can get on with the work of debating this. It should not take long. It is a fairly clear-cut issue at stake. I will now propound the unanimous-consent request, and I understand the distinguished Democratic leader may have some request of his own. I propound this request.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST—
H.R. 2337

Mr. DOLE. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 374, H.R. 2337, an act to provide for increased taxpayer protections; that one amendment be in order to the measure, which will be offered by the majority leader, regarding the gas tax repeal; that no other amendments or motions be in order, other than a motion to table; further, that immediately following the disposition of the Dole-Gramm amendment, the bill be read