As further evidence of his desire of this administration and Secretary Bruce Babbitt in particular to play politics with parks and disrupt the lives of persons who wish to visit and enjoy our Federal lands, consider how the Secretary has dealt with park concessioners.

The Assistant Attorney General memorandum of August 16, 1995 provides guidance on the scope of permissible Government operations during a lapse in appropriations, including explicit detail on the process to be used in determining who are the emergency employees which should be retained on duty during a budgetary shutdown. The memorandum states that such a determination should be made on the basis of assuming the continued operation of the private economy.

The opinion goes on to State that such an assumption is the reason for determining that air traffic controllers, Federal meat inspectors, and other such personnel are emergency.

Using those criteria in the Attorney General opinion, Secretary Babbitt could permit the private businesses which operate park concessions to remain open to serve the public, and then declare those persons necessary for safe operation of the concession as emergency personnel.

That is precisely what the Forest Service has done. Not one single Forest Service ski area, resort, or even a single outfitter or guide on Forest Service land has been told to shut down. Every single one of them is open, serving the public as we debate this bill today.

Even the concessions at the Smithsonian Institution remain open on the same basis.

However, Secretary Babbitt is so driven to public disservice that not only has he shut down park concessioners, but last week he tried to get the Forest Service to close all their ski areas and other concessions fearing it would expose his unnecessary closure of park concessions. I pay strong tribute to the former Member of this body, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman, for rejecting those attempts by Mr. Babbitt to further disrupt the American people and attempting to serve the public in the best possible way during this difficult period.

There is one final irony to this issue of closing park concessions. Secretary Babbitt has closed these concessions primarily because he felt he did not have adequate personnel on duty to supervise their safe operations.

Yet, when we, our committee, called a dozen parks around the country during the shutdown last November, we found just as many park rangers on duty during the peak of that shutdown as there was prior to the shutdown. The only difference was that none of these rangers were serving the public because the parks had been shut down by Secretary Babbitt.

I hope this country will never again have a Secretary of the Interior so driven to public disservice as Secretary Babbitt, but as long as there is the possibility that we will have another Secretary more interested in playing politics than carrying out his duties and serving the public in the best way possible, this legislation is essential that we are working on.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

MAKING POLITICS FOR THE RICH ONLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CAMPBELL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, today the common sense of the ordinary American people came home here to the Chamber, and a fraudulent campaign reform bill was voted down by the majority of the Member of this House. It was a fraudulent bill. It was an insult. It was an insult to common sense, and I think most of the Members joined the American people in exercising some common sense.

It was a bill to make politics the province of the rich in America. Under the guise of campaign reform, we would have had advantages all given to the richest Americans while disadvantages would be compounded for the poorest. I think that the majority of the Members did not see themselves going back and facing their constituents with that kind of fraudulent construction. So common sense came home and common sense is rising from the great masses out there and more and more is beginning to infiltrate into Washington and infiltrate into this Chamber. People are beginning to understand that the mass of Americans have this quality of understanding of what is really going on.

They understand that they are in an economy which is booming for a handful of people, relatively speaking, the top 20 percent in America, while it is stagnating or even declining for the bottom 80 percent. They understand this. There is no way you can get around that with your statistics and your charts and your graphs. That cannot get you around the basic common sense understanding of the people of this Nation that the economy is locked into a number of contradictions.

They understand that something different ought to be happening. They do not know what it is, but they understand.

They understand that the Republican majority which came into power at the beginning of this session has moved in very extreme ways to make life more difficult for the average American out there. They understand this. They understand that at this point as we are nearing the end of the most active part of the 104th Congress, we still do not have a minimum wage bill. We do not have a minimum wage bill yet.

They understand something is radically wrong if you cannot increase minimum wages by 90 cents over a 2-year period from $4.25 an hour to $5.15 in a 2-year period. if we cannot do this as leaders of this great Nation in a time of great prosperity where corporate profits are higher than ever before, something is radically wrong. Common sense tells the American people something is wrong here in this Chamber.

They understand that a group of leaders who took control of Congress and chose to wage war, and I am using the Speaker's terminology, that politics is war without blood. Speaker GINGRICH has said that several times. The way this House has proceeded in the 104th Congress, it certainly is evident that there is a belief that politics is war without blood, and war is being made on the least powerful in our Nation.

The people who are the most vulnerable, the poorest, they are the victims of this war. They understand that the Republican majority first declared war on schoolchildren who needed lunches, fee lunches. Federally funded free lunches were attacked first, and the American people understand that that was the beginning of a highly visible exposure of where the mean-spirited Republican majority was coming from.

□ 2045

It was a mean-spirited act. They understood that. They understood later on when proposals were made to eliminate the Department of Education, because education is for poor people. Public education is for poor people, and for the majority of the people, the 80 percent. The preoccupation of this particular leadership in Congress is not with the 80 percent, it is with the 20 percent of the elite who can afford to to go private schools. They understand that war on the Department of Education hurt the vast majority of our people.

They understand that when you cut title I, the $7 billion Federal aid program, the only major aid program of the Federal Government that goes to elementary and secondary education, a program that impacts and has some small part of its benefits in 90 percent of the school districts in America, they understand that when you attack that kind of a program, you do not have the best interests of the average American at heart. Common sense has come home to illuminate what other people have shrouded in very complex statistics.

We have heard the majority of Republicans stand up with their charts and show how they are really not cutting school lunches. We have heard the majority stand up and say education will not suffer if you cut title I. They even went as far as to cut Head Start about $300 million. Ronald Reagan, that was one of his favorite programs. No other President since the inception of Head Start had ever proposed cuts in Head Start. In fact, as I said before, Ronald Reagan increased the Head

Start budget. But this group decided to cut Head Start. The average American out there understands what this says and what revelation this is about the heart and soul of the majority in this House.

The majority of Republicans are elitists. The majority of Republicans do not represent the majority of Americans. They understand this. Of course, I think that the commonsense wisdom of the American people came home to the majority of Republicans. They retreated. They did not cut Head Start after all. They did not cut title I by $1.1 billion. They did not cut a number of education programs, including Goals 2000, in the first budget of this session. They finally backed down. The cuts are in there again for Goals 2000 and a few other programs, but there is no proposal now to cut Head Start. There is no proposal to cut title I again.

The common sense of the American people resonated, came home, and the leadership of the Republican majority understood that. They are not tampering with education anyone. There is no more talk here in this House about the eradication of the Department of Education. There is no more talk about wiping out the Department of Education. We would be the only industrialized nation or one of the only nations in the world, really, of any substance—even the developing nations have departments of education. Whereas we do not have a Department of Education as big as Japan's or as big as Germany's or as big as France's, we do not want to have that kind of centralized bureaucracy running education in all parts of the country. We are a long ways from that, and to eliminate it totally would be to go to an extreme. Maybe France, Germany, Japan, their bureaucratic structure for centralized education departments is at one extreme, but to have none would be at another extreme.

We do not spend but 7 percent of the education budget. The only percentage of the education budget that is really covered by the Federal Government at this point is 7 percent of the total amount spent on education. That means that the States and the localities finance most of the education in America. If you want to increase the Federal participation by some additional percentage, even get it up as high as 25 percent, that 25 percent Federal participation in the funding of education would still be a small percentage. The 75 percent controlled by the State governments and the local governments would mean that just as they are putting up 75 percent of the funding, they have 75 percent of the control. If you had a greater participation of the Federal Government in the funding of education, it would not mean that education is controlled by the Federal Government. It still would be controlled by the States. It would be controlled by the localities.

So we could afford to spend much more. Not only should we not be contemplating elimination of the Department of Education, we should be contemplating a greater participation in education. I think most Americans understand that.

As the members of the Republican majority have gone home and really talked about their extreme proposals in education and some other areas, the people out there with common sense have educated them. So it goes on.

We are in a period now where Medicare cuts are still on the drawing board. I cannot say that there has been a retreat; just as they have retreated from cutting Head Start, that they have retreated from cutting Medicare. No, Medicare cuts are still on the drawing boards, and most people should understand that. Medicare cuts are on the drawing board now. They are still proposing huge cuts for Medicare. At the same time, they are proposing to give back taxes to large numbers of rich people. A large percentage of the people who pay the highest taxes will get a tax cut. The tax cut and the Medicare cut are very close to each other in terms of it is robbing one in order to fund the other. That is a fact we pointed out a long time ago. It is still the case.

So common sense on Medicare still has not come home. They still do not understand that the average American knows what they are doing when they talk about great cuts in Medicare. In the name of saving Medicare from bankruptcy, they are proposing huge cuts. At the same time, they are proposing that there be huge cuts in the taxes of the richest people. They are correlated. You do not have to be a genius to make that correlation. The American people have a grasp of that, but somehow that has not come home yet. There is a need for more people to communicate with their legislators what the commonsense position is, to let them know we understand that Medicare is being threatened, still.

Medicare is little more than 30 years old. We had this past summer a birthday party for Medicare in about 10 senior citizen centers in my district. We made up a little card, which actually had the bill, a photostat of the bill, signed by Lyndon Johnson 30 years ago.

People have Medicare very much on their minds now. I hope they still remember that the fight is not over. This present Republican budget, this present Republican-controlled Congress, in their appropriations bills they are still going after Medicare. Medicare is still on the chopping block. The commonsense wisdom has not come home to the members of the majority. They still do not understand that the American people know what they are doing. You have to talk a little louder, I guess, scream a bit.

They are obfuscating the problem with medical savings accounts and all kinds of language about going bankrupt, and they are going to save us from bankruptcy. But look at it straight. I have used several times the example of the sophomore who came home from college, and he was sitting at the table, and his very ordinary working-class father was at the table, and the other kids, and the mother was there.

The sophomore wanted to show off his knowledge of philosophy. He told his father that, really, you know, there are two chickens on this table. I can prove to you, Dad, there is not one chicken on this table, there are two chickens. I can prove that to you, Dad. It is all a matter of your a priori assumptions, and if you get into the right syllogism and we move from the hypothesis to the conclusion, et cetera, and he was going on.

His father said, wait a minute, son. Hold it for a minute. If you can prove there are two chickens on this table, why don't we just eat this one, and we will leave the other one for you to eat. That is the simplest way to solve the problem. I think that kind of commonsense wisdom is out there. It is a feature of American society. There are senior citizens who understand, you are taking our Medicare money and you are moving it to give a tax cut.

There will be another example tomorrow on the floor of the House. I understand that the comp time bill that was postponed today will be up tomorrow. Comp time means compensatory time for your overtime. A better way to state what is happening tomorrow is that the same Republicans who went after the school lunch program and the Title I program, the same Republican majority that tried to cut Head Start, the same Republican majority that went after Medicare, is still going after Medicare, they now want your overtime pay. The Republicans are coming for your overtime pay. That is what the comp time bill tomorrow is all about.

Instead of paying you for your overtime, as is done in private industry and has been done for years, and the whole economy of working-class people is structured on how much overtime can I make, how much cash can I bring home in my paycheck to pay for some shoes and to pay for a new refrigerator; you have to have cash to meet necessities, it is not a luxury, where you can afford to take it in comp time, have a bank of comp time.

You work so many hours this week, so in 6 months we will give what you accumulated this week and what you accumulated next week, give it to you all in one lump sum, and you can go off in the wintertime, when the factory is slowed down and our inventory is high, we do not need you, and we will give you time off, or you can take a long vacation. But you do not have any money.

The Republicans are coming for your overtime, because if they do not pay you cash, they may set it up so their friends, the elite that already earn the highest incomes—and the people who own the factories are not making minimum wage, the CEOs of corporations

who will benefit from this, they are not making minimum wage, they are making very high salaries—they are going to take your overtime, what they should have been paying you in cash, and keep it and invest it.

They can have a whole lot of things: Stocks can be bought, bonds can be bought, speculation; various things can happen with the money they normally shell out to you in overtime. In the meantime, you are left in anxiety about maybe you will get your overtime in compensatory time, maybe you will not, because there are no safeguards in this bill that is coming up tomorrow against bankruptcy. If a company goes out of business, how do you get your overtime? You just lost. You can go to court and sue, but try suing a bankrupt company.

Many corporations disappear. Small businesses, the smaller they are, the more likely they are to just disappear. All kinds of things happen with your compensatory time. There is no protection in the bill that is going to be on the floor tomorrow about that. It is just one more piece of evidence of the heartlessness of this Republican majority, the heartlessness which common sense can clearly understand. Nobody out there needs to be told that your overtime is needed to buy shoes, to buy the things that you need right now.

There is another provision that says, well, this is voluntary. If you work in private industry and you now are paid dollars for your overtime, you do not have to agree to a provision that you have to take it in comp time; instead of you taking dollars, you can take time off later on. You do not have to agree to that; it is voluntary.

Common sense will tell anybody who has ever worked in a real job that you do not confront your foreman or the owner of your company with an unpopular preference. One way to lose your job is to say, well, you want me to take overtime, but I choose not to, and law says I do not have to take compensatory time. I can take it in cash. How long will the employees who choose to take their overtime in cash last on the job, versus those who choose to cooperate with the management and take compensatory time?

You do not have to be a genius, you do not have to major in psychology, you do not have to study Machiavelli, to understand that here is a policy situation. The owner of the factory, the boss, is in a situation where if he says, ''I suggest strongly that you take your overtime in comp time instead of in cash,'' 99 percent of the employees who need their jobs, and most people who are working, they need their jobs, they will agree, oh, yes, we will take it in comp time.

There is a provision in the bill which says that the choice of when you take your comp time has to be mutually agreed upon by the worker and the person who owns the business or who is in charge. So how many of you think that if you choose to take your comp time in July, when your children are out of school and you want to go on a vacation and you prefer the sun instead of the snow, but the inventory is such that it is to the best interests of the company to keep you working, that you are going to work out a mutual agreement whereby the company will let you go at a time which is disadvantageous to them?

When your kids are in school in January and the snow is on the ground and you cannot take the kind of vacation you want to take, but the inventory is high, the company will choose to tell you, that is the best time for you to take your comp time. If they have this kind of wisdom that they offer you, how many employees are going to argue with the management and say, no, I want my comp time in the summertime. I want to go swimming, I want to go the beach, I want to be with my kids? How many employees, for how long, will be able to take advantage of this so-called mutual agreement, this voluntary arrangement?

If we look at the bill that is going to be on the floor tomorrow, which is a revision of the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, which was established by Franklin Roosevelt under the New Deal, there are a lot of provisions in there, but one provision is clear: Anybody who works more than 40 hours during the week is eligible for overtime, overtime pay. Overtime pay is time and a half. That is cash.

□ 2100

There has a lot been made about the fact that in the public sector, municipal government, State government, Federal Government, we have comp time provisions now already. Comp time provisions are there, they have always been there because the government is not in the business of earning a profit. The government does not have any extra margin. The government for various reasons is not in the same position as private industry.

People who go into government traditionally have accepted the fact that you do not have the same provisions that you have in the private sector because the government has been traditionally a more secure place to work. Security was traded for the paycheck advantage that you have in the private industry. So having the security of a long-term Government job, having the pensions that Government jobs had, having the health care plan that a Government job had, there are a number of reasons people traded off and decided not to worry about being paid in cash.

What is happening nowadays is that the municipal systems and the State governments and the Federal Government are becoming less and less secure. We are behaving more and more like private industry, so it is probably altogether fitting and proper that we change and have government pay overtime in cash. We are going the wrong direction. We are not going to give people job security. Their pensions are no safer because we are playing around with pensions in some government units. Health care we want to tamper with. If we are going to behave as the private sector behaves, then maybe everybody should be paid in cash instead of having this tradeoff where you accept the situation of comp time. But we are going the opposite direction. We are about to move in to take the overtime away from working people in an atmosphere which is hostile.

I serve on the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities which is responsible for this particular provision of the law, the Fair Labor Standards Act. In fact I am the ranking Democrat on the Subcommittee on Workforce Protections which is directly responsible for this piece of legislation, and there are some adjustments that probably could be made. I do not think that we should ever pour concrete over any set of rules and regulations. I do not think we should ever be so inflexible that we cannot adjust anything. But in the present atmosphere where the Republican majority has attacked working families and workers consistently since January of 1995 when they came into power, there is no reason to believe that there is a good faith glue that might help make some of the onerous provisions of this bill better. There is no reason to take anything for granted. If you do not have protections for people who are working overtime and prefer to have cash instead of comp time, if there is no way to guarantee that they have an equal choice there and that the management cannot bully them, then why go into it? If there is no way to guarantee that they are going to be able to take the comp time off when they want to or reach some kind of reasonable settlement or agreement with the management, then why go into it? Why in a period where we have a party in power operating on behalf of an elite business community which refuses to give us 90-cent increase in the minimum wage over a 2-year period, which attacks the Occupational Safety and Health Agency, Americans across the country benefit from the provisions of OSHA. That was attacked, I forgot to mention. Very early OSHA was put under attack. One-third of the budget was cut in the bill that the President vetoed. Finally they brought the cut down. There is still less funding for OSHA now than there was before the attack was launched by the Republican majority. Davis-Bacon provisions are under attack still by this Republican majority. Why in an atmosphere where the National Labor Relations Board, they proposed to cut its budget by one-third and they backed away from that but there is a cut and there are less resources now for the National Labor Relations Board than there were before. In an atmosphere where every organ of government that benefits working people is under attack, why should we accept any proposal for a good faith effort on taking away your overtime?

The Republicans are coming for your overtime and you should be aware of that. Republicans are coming for your overtime. You should send a commonsense message to the Congress, Republicans and Democrats, that you understand what is going on.

I understand that the focus groups, the polling groups and all the experts that politicians pay large amounts of money to, they are reaching the conclusion that I discussed here 6 months ago, that common sense says we have a party in power that cares very little about working people. Common sense says that we have a party in power that wants to help the rich to get richer. Common sense says that the gap in the incomes of the richest Americans which has greatly increased over the last 10 years is not just some piece of statistics on a paper, it is symbolic of the kind of anxiety that American families feel. Common sense says that people who brought us streamling and downsizing, common sense says that the same people who are tampering with our pension funds in corporations, common sense says that they cannot be trusted to give us a new deal on our overtime and it benefit the workers. It will not benefit the workers. The workers are under attack and the tampering with the Fair Labor Standards Act that is being proposed tomorrow on this floor is just one more example of how the Republican majority has not gotten the commonsense message yet fully. They have gotten it in education, so they modified their approach on education cuts. But they have not understood that the average constituent out there understands that these are policies which benefit an elite minority. These policies which support streamlining, downsizing and now want to take your overtime pay, that is one more piece of money, pot of money that whey will have to invest. Your overtime pay, instead of being given to you, will be invested somewhere by the people who are already earning a great amount of money off their investments. Common sense says no. You need to communicate that.

They are getting the message slowly here in the Chamber. The vote on the Campaign Finance Reform Act says that it is coming home. Common sense is telling the legislators that you cannot swindle the American people. You cannot set up a system where the richest people are given free rein to spend as much money as they want to, to contribute to campaigns in greater numbers, and the poorest are confined to raising the money within their district. If you happen to live in a poor district, you are going to have to raise money just in that district. At least half of the funds have to come from there. There are various mechanisms which are thrown out there which look good on the surface, yet when you look behind it and you understand that the cap is being taken off the rich and they can spend more and more to influence the way our democracy works. It does not take a genius to understand that kind of swindle.

Mr. Speaker, I received a fax last time, I receive lots of faxes after the comments I make on these special orders, but the last time, it was very interesting, I received a fax from some gentleman who said in the fax, ''You are a true believer. You are dangerous because you really believe in what you are saying. You are naive but you believe what you are saying.'' That seems to shock him that I should believe.

That night I talked about the Families First agenda and I talked about the fact that the critical problem is jobs and the companion problem is education, the two inextricably interwoven. When I came to Congress, I asked to be placed on the Committee on Education and Labor because my district needed jobs more than anything else, and I understood that they would not be able to get jobs unless they got better education and you had to mix the two.

So I was talking about jobs and education. I talked about that segment of the Families First agenda, and he said, ''You really believe that stuff.'' Yes, I do believe it. It is not just a construct that minority leader DICK GEPHARDT put together. It is not something that is out there swinging in the wind as a slogan to attract, as bait to attract people who would vote for Democrats. It is common sense that nothing is more important at this particular juncture in our society than jobs and education, and the two go together. Nothing is more relevant than jobs and education.

I have some people in my district who talk about, you go into these special orders, what does it have to do with a poor person in your district? I have a district which is not all poor, there is some diversity, but two-thirds of the people in the district are poor. Those who are working are making minimum wage. What relevant does this speech have? Well, it has a great deal of relevance. I am concerned about jobs and the failure of our economy to create more jobs for people who are poor, who do not have education, who would have to take entry level jobs, as we call them. I am very concerned about that. I am concerned about the fact that those entry level jobs get more complicated all the time and that really if you want to help somebody to get out of poverty, they are going to have to have more education. It has a relevance to the people in my district.

The poorest parts of my district need jobs and there are ways to create those jobs, and I am concerned about the fact that what goes on down here in Washington does not address those needs. At the same time that the Republican majority was proposing to eliminate the Department of Education which would greatly hurt the people who want education back in my district, at the same time they were proposing to do that, they cut out the Department of Tourism in the Commerce Department, a very small unit. Of all the industrialized nations, we had the smallest effort going forward in terms of promoting tourism.

Tourism is a gold mine for a Nation like this which is admired throughout the world. Tourists want to come from all parts of the world. There are many municipal governments that understand this and they are working hard to attract tourists. There are many States that understand this and they are working hard to attract tourists, tourists from one part of the United States to another and tourists from overseas. Tourists are a very important part of New York City, probably the largest industry in New York City, at least the second largest. It changes. The finance sector may have the largest one year, tourism another.

But tourism is a huge industry, an industry that does not require pollution. You do not have to have big factories polluting the air. It does not require natural resources being located nearby so you can haul the iron ore and the coal and mix them together and get a product. Tourism is a very unique kind of industry which has a great growth potential in a place like New York City and most of America.

People want to see the Grand Canyon, the cities out west, small towns, all kinds of things are on the agenda for tourists within the country and tourists from outside of the country. Most people want to see America at one time in their lifetime. They cannot do it unless they belong to the middle class. The middle class groups are the only ones who have the leftover income, that discretionary income that can allow them to travel. But the middle classes across the world are increasing.

I give the example to the people in my district. It is relevant to New York residents that the tourism trade flourish, because when people come to a big city like New York, they all eat in restaurants, so the jobs in the restaurants, whether it is washing dishes or cooking, all those jobs increase; waiting tables, all those jobs increase. When people come to New York, they go to the stores and buy retail products. Those jobs increase. When they come to New York, they go to places of entertainment, small and large. Those jobs increase.

So the person in my district, whether they are uneducated and have to take an entry level dishwashing job or whether they have some skills and can take a job as a chef in a hospital, it is very relevant.

In fact, there was a young man that I have known for a long time who recently told me about his catering business. I saw him about 4 years ago and he was down and out, working hard, going to work every day, but he was depressed. Even his physical demeanor communicated depression and defeat, the same kind of defeat and depression that so many black males feel in America. There was an article in the Washington Post yesterday about suicide

among black males which was astonishing, shocking, frightening. Suicide among black males has greatly increased in the last few years. I am black, I have been black all my life, born black, and in our folk culture, we swear that black folks do not commit suicide. No matter what happens, we adjust, we cope, we love life. We do not commit suicide. Well, that is just one of those pieces of folk wisdom that has gone by the way. The statistics are there, they are horrifying, large numbers of black males are committing suicide. They are depressed. Whatever the reasons, I will not go into this point, it is a subject for a later discussion.

But here is a black male in his thirties, early thirties, two kids, a wife, going to work every day, not getting anywhere, he decided to go to school, get a food handler's license, then go further, get training. Now he is a chef, a chef at a hospital.

□ 2115

In addition to being a chef at a hospital, he is developing his own catering business. The difference in the demeanor, the sunshine that comes out of his face and the change in his voice, everything is a transformation.

He is going places, his catering business is going places. He has to rent kitchens on the weekend. In New York, they have lots of people and people are always eating, so the catering business is a good business. More tourists come, of course there will be more people who have to eat, various kinds of functions. There is a future there, great future.

So what I am saying is relevant to him. The more tourists we get, the more our economy grows, the more people there are to feed in situations which require caterers. It is relevant. Everything all falls in place.

It is relevant that he had an opportunity to go to school. He had to pay for the courses himself. He chose to make that investment, but he has become a chef. Beyond being a chef, he is going to be a businessman.

I say all this to say that the person who said to me, you are a true believer, you are dangerous, and some other people say what you say on the floor of this House, this empty Chamber, is not relevant, is very relevant. It is relevant because we are in a transition period in this Nation, and what we do here in the House of Representatives and what we do in the other body, and we are not just a few people around talking, we are very powerful people.

If you look at the 100 Members of the Senate and 435 Members of the Congress, you are talking about 535 people who are like vice presidents of the world's most powerful corporation. People like to play games out there and talk about we spend too much money on our mail, we spend too much money on our phones, we rent cars for too great an expense. They like to play around the edges and like to trivialize the Members of Congress, as they do all politicians. But we are very powerful people. We make decisions which are life and death decisions.

We are at a critical period in this country where we have people in power who are making the wrong decisions, and it is important to take advantage of the opportunity at least to have a discourse, and if you can, do nothing more than point it out and verbalize it, talk about it.

I want to talk about the great mistakes that are being made. It was a mistake to talk about abolishing the Department of Education. We have backed away from that. We abolished the Department of Tourism and the tourism unit in the Department of Commerce, how small it was, has been abolished. That was a great mistake.

We are making humongous errors in not going forward to fund higher education at a higher level, escalating level. We need to be investing tremendous amounts of money in all education, and certainly in education, in higher education, but right across the board our investment in education should be escalating instead of stagnating and actually suffering cuts in many ways. We are at a period in history where if we do not take the flood, as Shakespeare said, there is a time when you have to act.

We are at a critical period where 80 percent of the population is getting more and more anxious, and some elements of the population are getting angry. Some elements of the population are committing suicide because they are bottled up in an economy and they see plenty all around them advertised on television, millionaires and CEO's making fantastic salaries.

The anxiety and the tension is unhealthy for Americans in general. People who have something now still have anxiety because they see it slipping away.

We are in a period where we need to take a bold step and say the salvation of this society is education. The salvation of this society is an explosive investment in education which will also be followed by an explosive investment in new kinds of jobs that people can qualify for.

There have been two periods in American history where we have been fortunate enough to have visionaries on the scene and listened to those visionaries long enough to let them put in place a revolutionary concept that has transformed the nature of our society.

People do not talk much about the Morrell Act. The Morrell Act created the land grant colleges in all the States. The Morrell Act guarantees that every State would have a college, a university which was committed to practical education. The Morrell Act was a revolutionary idea.

Thomas Jefferson, when he founded the University of Virginia, spoke in terms of he would like to see every State have a university, but he was in no position to act upon it.

Morrell, whose name very few people know, the act very few people know about it, created a situation where the Federal Government invested in higher education in every State of the Union. Every State has a land grant college or university. They went beyond that and gave a mission to these colleges and universities, so the universities spawned experiments in agriculture.

Experiments that took place in agriculture in the theoretical structure of the university, and then they developed agriculture experimental stations, they developed the county agents who took what the agriculture experiment stations had learned and took it out to the farmers, into the fields, and showed the farmers how to apply it, and as a result, the one place where this Nation has been unchallenged for the last few decades, nobody comes close to America in terms of its production of food. Our agriculture industry stands alone. We have the cheapest food in the world. We export food. It all started with education, folks.

Nobody understands it is not just that our soil is better than the European soil or our rain is better. There are some advantages that a few places in the country have, but we have suffered floods and famines and all the folks' problems that they suffer in other countries, but the wisdom which led to the application of the principles learned in the classroom to experimentation and then down to the actual farmer's field, that has made all the differences in the world, the Morrell Act, an act of Congress that very few people understand which transformed education in America.

In addition to agriculture, engineering is what you will find in every land grant college. Very early they went into engineering and the kind of industrialized might that Adolf Hitler had to face when America entered the war did not happen overnight. It was built up through the complex of education institutions that had been developed long before a world war was ever contemplated by any American, the Morrell Act.

Another great revolutionary act that is not given due credit is the GI bill of rights. When the large numbers of soldiers returning from the Second World War were given the right to go to school, not just to college, but also to trade schools, not just to college, but also to trade schools, and any soldier had a right to go to school and the Federal Government would pay for most of that education, that was another revolutionary act that you do not understand. Large numbers of people were interjected in our society with educations to keep building our industrial base in very sophisticated ways.

The Soviet Union never knew what hit it when it began to rival the United States in production, in achievement, scientific engineering achievement. It had to face the combination of the Morrell Act and the GI bill of rights, a

massive infusion of dollars for education which produced the desired results, the massive number of educated people. We are at a period now where that kind of transition is what we need. So it is relevant.

Democrats talk about paycheck security, helping families to get the paycheck they deserve. They are not just talking about tomorrow's fight on the floor of the House to keep the Republicans from taking away the overtime cash payments for people. We are not talking just about that; we are talking about paycheck security in terms of providing for people to upgrade their skills, to get more education in this complex society.

Probably education has to be a permanent feature of the life of every family, of every person getting more education to stay up, to keep up. That is absolutely necessary. So paycheck security is relevant to everything else I have been talking about. It is relevant to keeping the Department of Education and the Department of Labor active so that they can stay on top: What kind of training do we need for the year 2000? How are we funding that so that it is not just an elite minority that gets help, not only people who are going into academic training but the guy who wants to be a chef?

There are more of them out there and they are needed. The people who want to go into electronics, we are going to need more and more people who can really fix computers, VCR's. Half the families I know who have computers will tell you they are not working or one part of it is not working, they are using only a tiny part of the capacity because part of it is not working or they cannot figure out how to work it. So there are large numbers of possible job opportunities out there for people who go into electronics and deal with these gadgets and keep up with the complications that have developed, are developing all the time.

Auto mechanics are not what they used to be. They have to be very well-educated and deal with very complex systems. You think you are talking to a physics professor sometimes when you go into a garage. This is the way things are now, the way they are going to be.

If we do not give the educational opportunities, if they are not there, we are going to have a society that is crippled, because we have great needs out there that cannot be met in terms of functions. At the same time, we have a need for people to earn a living.

The welfare bill that we passed last week, when we start talking about welfare reform now, people's eyes glaze over. Nobody wants to hear all the detailed discussions.

But the problem with the welfare bill is at the heart of the bill that calls for reform, to put people to work, is a big lie. The provisions for work are not there. The provisions for the development of jobs, the provision for job training, the provisions for child care for people who go into job training or work, they are not there.

The Congressional Budget Office has said we need $9 to $10 billion to just do what you say in that bill. The Republican bill has language, they have rhetoric in there about work and job training, but if you do what you say you are going to do, you need $10 billion more over the next 6 years. This is not the wild-eyed liberal from New York, MAJOR OWENS, talking. This is the Congressional Budget Office.

The Congressional Budget Office did not say it that way, but that there is fraud in the whole construct. Every time we hear people talk about welfare reform, they talk about putting people to work, and yet the provisions for guaranteeing that the people are given skills that they need and the competencies they need in order to match up with the jobs that are available, it is not there. The provisions for the creation of new jobs is not there.

We need lots of things in this society. There are jobs out there, there is work to be done, but if you do not pay for it, it is not a job.

The Federal Government needs to pay for the building of schools during this transition period, so a lot of people get work building schools. The Federal Government needs to pay for some of our infrastructure improvements in terms of highways and roads. More needs to be done that would provide jobs during this transition period. All of these things are necessary to make work a reality.

There are no jobs in Brooklyn. There are no jobs in my 11th Congressional District. Every time somebody announces a job, long lines of people form, and only a handful can get the few jobs that are available.

There are jobs that are being lost in my congressional district. Every hospital is laying off people. The largest employer in the 11th Congressional District in Brooklyn that I serve is a hospital. The biggest hospital in Brooklyn is Kings County Hospital. It has been in existence for more than 100 years. They are talking about closing Kings County Hospital. Thousands of people work there in many different capacities.

Do we need fewer hospitals? Maybe we do, but there is a wholesale movement on to rush into privatization of health care that is going to destroy those jobs before we are really certain as to what is going to replace them.

These are things that are happening. We need ways to train the new medical personnel if we are going to have personnel in a different setting. The people will not go away. They still have health care needs. You need new kinds of people to carry out those health care needs.

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What I am saying is that it all holds together. What I talked about is practical. It applies to people in my district who are suffering from a lack of jobs and job opportunities. We have taken some steps in my district to combat some of the hysteria surrounding the move for privatization.

The Republican majority here in the Congress is not alone. There are Republicans in city hall in New York, there are Republicans in the Governor's chamber in New York, and because people have come alive, because common sense in New York is manifesting itself and communicating itself, we have just gone through the passage of a State legislative budget where no further cuts in tuition at any of the State colleges will take place. The City University of New York, the State University of New York, a total of more than 400,000 students, they will not have to face another tuition increase. That is a victory, because the projections were they were going to have to face new increases.

Certain hospitals projected to be closed by the Governor, one in my district, Kingsborough Psychiatric Hospital, serving 2.5 million people, the only one in the district, 2.5 million people need a psychiatric hospital. They were proposing to close it down, because the people have become aware, because common sense has said ''no,'' they backed down. They are not closing that hospital.

So we have a check that is built into democracy. If it can operate fast enough, the common sense of the people communicates to the leaders, who are off in their own extremist dream land agenda, and the leaders, if they are listening to the people, they respond.

There is a correction. There is a need for a great correction in course. We have been pushed off course by the philosophy that politics is war without blood; have been pushed off course by the philosophy that you need to attack and eliminate a whole segment of society. We need to wipe out labor unions, organized labor, workers, the power that workers have to make decisions.

That is the wrong way to go. We need a correction. We need to recognize that we are going into a transition, and that kind of foolhardy approach, that kind of extremist approach, only moves us away from the building of a kind of Great Society that we wanted to build.

The families first agenda addresses this by trying to bring the extremists back down to earth. We talk about paycheck security, about healthcare security. Healthcare security means you have to stop tampering with Medicare. The medical savings account is a way to erode Medicare, take away the healthiest people from the pool and guaranteeing that there will be a collapse in the Medicare system, if you only have to pay for the sickest people. Healthcare security is a very vital part of the families first agenda.

Opportunity is absolutely vital. Educational opportunity, making college and vocational schools tax deductible and other ways for parents to make sure their kids get better paying jobs.

Educational opportunity means that you should not have as many college students who are going back to college in the fall now facing situations which are more difficult with respect to getting loans. We want to eliminate that.

We want to latch on to the proposals that have been made by the President for tax deductibility and for tax credits related to education. We want to adopt the President's proposals about merit scholarships.

All of this is part of the understanding that we are in a transition period and we need to have a different set of priorities. We cannot pour another $13 billion into defense while we are cutting the education budget.

I want to close by saying that I am a believer. The Families First agenda, which emphasizes security, opportunity, responsibility, is a practical agenda. It is worth fighting for. It is an agenda which is humane. It is an agenda which develops human beings and promises a society which is just and fair for everybody. It is an agenda which will bring us prosperity and growth.

Prosperity and growth is directly linked to the number of people educated. Nothing is more important to our society than an educated population. The educated population has to be a healthy population. We cannot say we care about people if we are willing to take away their food stamps and to deny Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

I think most people out there do not understand that Aid to Families with Dependent Children, what is normally called welfare, is about 1 percent of the total Federal budget. More important, most people do not understand that Aid to Families with Dependent Children is part of the Social Security Act. It started with the Social Security Act, as a part of the Social Security Act. It is all under the Social Security Act. That is where Medicare is also under. Medicaid is also under the Medicaid act.

I get senior citizens that say to me, ''Please don't let them touch my Social Security.'' There is no direct assault on what you call Social Security, your check that comes in the mail, yet. The fact that welfare in the form of Aid to Families with Dependent Children is going to cease if this bill passes and the President signs it, there will be no more entitlement for Aid to Families with Dependent Children. That is a part of the Social Security Act that has been chopped away.

That sets up the stage for more of the Social Security Act to be chopped away. We do not talk about that, but I think you ought to come to that realization. If they are willing to go after Medicare, if they are willing to transfer the dollars in Medicare to provide for a tax cut for the rich, then they certainly eventually will not mind chopping away at Social Security. Let us get ready.

If they are willing to go after young children and declare that we have no responsibility for them as a Federal Government anymore, the entitlement is gone. They are setting up a situation where the governors will be able to not only play with the dollars that are given for Aid to Families with Dependent Children, but the governors want to play with Medicaid money. There is not enough money in Aid to Families with Dependent Children, so there is a move to get their hands on the dollars in Medicaid, to take the money meant for the poor and do other things to meet the needs at the state and local level.

I am going to conclude with a little rap poem I wrote sometime ago in connection with the way we are treating children. There is a great deal of clamor about choice versus the right-to-life. I wish we would care about life for the children who are already here. This little rap poem, which I already have placed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD some time ago, which is called ''Message From the Newborn to the Fetus.'' The newborn is talking to the fetus.

MESSAGE FROM THE NEWBORN TO THE FETUS

Man stay in there
The womb is where its at
Until tots slide out and breathe
The right-to-life is guaranteed
You never had it so good
Out here in America
They don't treat us
Like they promised they would
Right away at the hospital
They put us out
Cause my welfare Mom
Didn't have no clout
Stay where you are man
The womb is where its at
A smart fetus can live
Like a rich lady's cat
No food stamps for immigrants
But long picket lines protect
Our pre-birth rights
The womb they glorify
Outside they watch us die
The womb is where its at
Curled up in that nice nest
You always get the very best
But out here only fear
They'll take my entitlement
Man stay in there
Cash in on this fetus fetish
Be a hero embryo
Pro-life politicians
Offer nine months of love
But at birth's border
Immigrants from heaven
Receive a hellish shove
Until tots slide out and breathe
The right to life is guaranteed
Long protest lines protected
Our pre-birth rights
We crave the medals they gave
When we were hidden
Intimately way out of sight
The womb is where its at
Safely grow soft and fat
Immigrant school lunches are now gone
Budget cuts down to the bone
Newborns sound the trumpet
This land is littered
With ugly infant tombs
Babies must unite in battle
Make war to regain
Our wonderful respected wombs
The womb is where its at
Until tots slide out and breathe
The right-to-life is guaranteed
We appeal to the United Nations
We cry out to the Almighty Pope
The holy right of return
Is now our only hope
Man stay in there
The womb is where its at.

REVISED LEVELS OF NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY AND OUTLAYS FOR FISCAL YEAR 1997

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

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I hereby submit the following revised levels of new budget authority and outlays for fiscal year 1997. These levels supersede those printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on July 10, 1996, in compliance with section 606(e) of the Congressional Budget Act. Section 606(e) of the Congressional budget Act provides for the revision of the budgetary levels established by concurrent budget resolutions and accompanying reports to accommodate additional appropriations for continuing disability reviews under the Supplemental Security Income Program. The revised levels of total new budget authority and total budget outlays printed in the RECORD on July 10 were not based on the appropriate levels in the fiscal year 1997 budget resolution conference report (H. Rept. 104–612).

For fiscal year 1997, the revised level of total new budget authority is $1,314,785,000,000 and the revised level of total budget outlays is $1,311,171,000,000.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. COLEMAN (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for Wednesday, July 24, Thursday, July 25, and Friday, July 26, on account of illness in the family.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. MASCARA) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. FILNER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MASCARA, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WISE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. GUTKNECHT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHADEGG, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GOSS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GUTKNECHT, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)