The last day of the session, a hearing was held for a very brief period of time. The meeting was adjourned when I tried to ask questions. It was a farcical charade, and now we see the result of it. The results are very clear, and someone has to take the responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, the leadership is not just Mr. PORTMAN from Ohio, Mr. MILLER from Florida, Mr. ZELIFF from New Hampshire, Mr. CLINGER from Pennsylvania, Mr. MICA from Florida. The leadership starts at the White House, the highest level.

Tomorrow I have to do something that I wish I did not have to do, but as chairman of the House Civil Service Subcommittee that overseas our Federal employees and our Federal work force, I have to hold hearings tomorrow on the question of the employment of individuals to the highest office of the land, the White House.

We are not talking about some little remote Arkansas community or some Third World country. We are talking about the White House, the highest office in this land. I am holding hearings tomorrow to find out why our chief law enforcement agencies, the FBI and the Secret Service, became so concerned about people who were coming into this administration, who were not taking background checks, who could have access to national security, who could be advising the Chief Executive of the land who makes the decisions about what we do on an instantaneous basis, what prompted them when they testified before us that these folks that were coming in had recent histories of not just—we are not talking about marijuana 20 years ago. We are talking about hallucinogenic drugs. We are talking about cocaine. We are talking about hard narcotics and subverting the process. Do we need a law to protect us from this type of situation?

So I will chair that hearing, but it is with great dismay that I have to examine the highest office of our land in this fashion and bring this into question but provide in fact, as my responsibility as chair of this committee, as part of the oversight responsibility of this Congress, to see what is going on in the highest office of our land, and to see that our national security is protected and to see that future White Houses have the respect of this Congress and of every citizen. If our highest office sets our lowest standards, what have we come to in this Nation?

So, again, I commend the gentleman. He has been outspoken. He has been persistent. He has been productive because he has helped get the attention of the Congress, of the leadership. He has helped us put Humpty Dumpty back on the wall and back together again; and, hopefully, hopefully, my children and children of people around this country will have a safe street; will have safe schools, where we are not employing another law enforcement officer at the school and following the arts teacher and the music teacher and the teachers that we need; where we can walk our streets as free Americans; where seniors do not have to fear walking outside in their own streets and neighborhoods and only go out in daylight.

So I thank you for shedding light and for the leadership of the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. PORTMAN]. I thank my colleague, my dear friend from Florida [Mr. MILLER], for his leadership and I yield back.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MICA] for putting this in perspective for us and also for all the time and effort that he has put into this issue. He has become a true expert on it. He is one of our leading policy makers on this issue now, and I wish him luck in his hearing tomorrow in getting some answers.

We have a little time left, and I would like to yield to the other gentleman from Florida who has joined us.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, my friend from Florida was talking about the tie-in between crime and drugs and the need for the leadership at the top. When the President of the United States, as we have said, laughs about whether he would do it again, he says, sure if I could, I tried it before. When the spokesman for the White House says, when asked about marijuana, quote: I was a kid in the 1970's, did I spoke a joint from time to time? Of course, I did.

They do not say it is wrong. They do not say it was a mistake. They do not apologize for it. They just kind of laugh it off.

Starting with marijuana is where we have to attack the problem, and that is where moral leadership is so important. There was a study out by Joseph Califano, the head of the center on addiction and substance abuse. He was Secretary of HHS under Jimmy Carter, a Democrat. A teenager who uses marijuana is 85 times more likely to graduate to cocaine than those who abstain. The percentage of children who are using marijuana that graduated from high school in 1992, 22 percent of graduating seniors had used marijuana during the past year. Last year, in 1995, that increased to 35 percent, going from 22 to 35 percent in 4 short years.

Mr. Speaker, let me read what Joseph Califano said, quote: The jump in marijuana use among America's children from 1992 to 1994 signals that 820,000 more of these children will try cocaine in their lifetime. Of that number, about 58,000 will become regular users and cocaine addicts.

It is terrible what is happening. I wish the President would put as much focus on drugs as he does on tobacco. Tobacco is wrong. I oppose some of the programs in tobacco, too, but focus on drugs that are killing people at the youngest age and that is cruel to the kids and the families and the communities today.

I thank my colleague for having this special order. I appreciate the possibility to have been able to join with you.

Mr. PORTMAN. Let me add, Mr. MILLER, what I view as a hopeful statistic to those that you have mentioned. That is, if you can keep a kid drug-free until that kid is 19 years old, then he or she has a 90-percent chance of being drug-free for the rest of his or her life.

Those are those critical years, those teenage years. This is why, as I said earlier, it is tragic that this drug use is occurring at an earlier and earlier age. We talked about the eighth graders. In a typical class of eighth graders, five kids have now tried marijuana. What we have got to do is address this problem at every level. Mr. MICA talked about it in terms of interdiction, source country, treatment, our criminal justice system, and finally prevention and education.

Mr. Speaker, I would again like to close by saying that it is my view that part of what we need to do is to increase our efforts at the community level, the grassroots level. It is a philosophy that I think is very consistent with where this Congress is headed in terms of giving people more a sense of personal responsibility, the sense that our communities are where we are going to solve a lot of our problems.

Certainly, the drug problem is one of those. I urge all of my colleagues to do whatever they can, not only at the national level where it is very important but also in their communities, in their homes, in their neighborhoods, in the school districts they represent, to attack this problem. We know it can help. We know it can begin to reduce the dramatic increase in drug use that we have seen since 1992. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the remainder of my time.

IMPACT OF CHERNOBYL DISASTER ON NATION OF BELARUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COBLE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I know that I will be joined by some other colleagues to talk about education cuts and the effect of Mr. Dole's economic plan on education programs in the Nation.

Before my colleagues join me, I would just like to take some of the time here during this 60 minutes to talk about another issue unrelated to the issue of education but an important issue to many constituents in my district.

This Saturday I will be appearing at a dinner sponsored by members of the Belorussian community in my district in New Jersey. They will be raising money for the victims of Chernobyl, of the Chernobyl nuclear accident which took place about 10 years ago now.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to detail, if I could, for about 5 minutes some of the problems that resulted from the Chernobyl disaster in the country of

Belarus and also talk about some of the problems that that nation now faces to its very independence.

On April 26, 1986, reactor No. 4 of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant caught fire and caused an explosion of epic proportions. This explosion measured 7 on the 7-level scale of nuclear accidents in comparison to the Three Mile Island accident, which measured 5.

Although one decade has passed since this explosion, the aftermath and truth remain very clouded about what happened. Even though this explosion spewed highly radioactive elements into the atmosphere, the Soviet Union, or the government of the then-Soviet Union, remained largely silent. Twelve hours passed before the Kremlin leadership created a government commission to respond to the blast. It took an additional 24 hours before they began to evacuate the nuclear plant's company town.

□ 1630

And 48 hours after the meltdown, the government publicly announced the Chernobyl explosion. This announcement told the victims very little. It was not until August of that same year that the Soviets announced that 50 million curies of radiation had been released by the Chernobyl nuclear reactor. Current research states that the actual amount of radiation spewed by the power plant ranged from 150 million to 200 million curies. In comparison the Three Mile Island accident released a mere 15 curies.

Years have passed and the Soviet Union is no more, and Belarus and neighboring nations such as the Ukraine are still suffering from the sickness and misery from that accident. I am particularly concerned about the state of the millions of children who suffered and continue to suffer from the effects of radiation and who will probably suffer most of their lives from the long-term effects of radiation. The medical, environmental, and psychological effects still plague the affected regions which, as I said, include parts of Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia. A study in the Nature Journal states that children born in Belarus in 1994 to parents who lived in the area during the meltdown suffered from twice the normal rate of a specific type of mutation. Germline mutations, found in sperm and egg DNA, are being passed on from generation to generation. The World Health Organization speculates that one in every 10 children living in the irradiated zones during the summer of 1986 have contracted thyroid cancer.

In addition to the medical effects, the impact of the environmental damage is still felt today. The 1986 meltdown contaminated 100,000 square miles of once arable farmland. This encompasses approximately 20 percent of all of Belarus, 8 percent of Ukraine, and 1 percent of the Russian Federation. The irradiated soil poses seemingly endless problems for these countries' agrarian communities.

I do not want to keep talking about this terrible disaster and its effects all day. I think that it is, it is really important and it is certainly commendable that my own constituents who are Belarusan Americans continue to make the point that we must address the problem of radiation in the aftermath of the Chernobyl explosion. They continue to raise money for the victims. They continue to be concerned about the victims and help them with medical supplies and other needs. That effort needs to continue. This country certainly, both on a government and on a nonprofit private basis, needs to continue to help the victims and their children.

I also wanted to point out today, though, just as we must continue our international efforts to assist Belarus in the aftermath of Chernobyl, we must show our staunch support for that nation's independence. Belarus does not receive much attention in the media. Many of, most Americans probably, maybe not, maybe they do not even know where it is. But a recent New York Times editorial underscores the imminent dangers posed by the President of Belarus, Mr. Aleksandr Lukashenka.

Shortly after Belarus freed itself from the oppressive clutches of the Soviet Union, this newly independent nation began its transition to a stable democracy. This 5-year political and economic progress may come to an abrupt halt if we do not press the current President to change his ways. President Lukashenka has actually proposed the reintegration of Belarus with Russia.

In response to this new reintegration plan, 15,000 members of the Belarusan Popular Front marched in opposition to the threat of reintegration. These marchers fear that President Lukashenka will in fact relinquish Belarus' current democratic sovereignty.

I just wanted to read, if I could, some sections of the New York Times editorial that was dated August 31 of this year that is entitled ''The Tyrant of Belarus.'' It talks about the undemocratic manner in which President Lukashenka is conducting his leadership in the country.

Last year Interior Ministry troops broke up a parliamentary protest against the President's leadership and bludgeoned 18 lawmakers. Imagine for those of us who are Members of the House of Representatives and who really do not have to even fear, I do not think in most cases, the possibility of being attacked, in this case the executive of the country actually came into the parliament building and was attacking lawmakers.

This President has thrown political opponents in jail, closed independent newspapers and reimposed Soviet era restrictions on travel abroad. Fearing imprisonment or worse in this new police state, two opposition political leaders recently asked for political asylum in the United States and Washington promptly granted the request to ensure the safety of the two men.

I am not sure I am pronouncing it properly, but they are Zenon Paznyak and Sergei Nayumchik. Essentially, I am proud of the fact that the United States did grant them asylum. Mr. Lukashenka is also rolling back many of the economic reforms initiated in the first months of Belarusan independence. He has frozen the Government's privatization program and slapped banks with strict state controls threatening to nationalize many of them. These measures can only further destabilize an economy that shrank 10 percent last year and has left many Belarusans impoverished. The debt relief and economic bailout Mr. Lukashenko hopes to get from Russia are not likely to materialize, and alarmed by developments, the International Monetary Fund has sensibly delayed a $300 million loan.

Just one more section from the New York Times article editorial. They say:

> It may be too much to expect Boris Yeltsin and his colleagues in the Kremlin to press Mr. Lukashenka to change his ways, but the United States and democratic nations of Europe should make their concern plain to him. The rising of a new dictatorship in the heart of eastern Europe must not be ignored.

We certainly do not intend to ignore it, and it is one of the reasons that I am here today pointing it out. As a Congressman representing a large Belarusan-American community and a supporter of those members of the Popular Front, I strongly believe that we must act to prevent this new union of Russia and Belarus. We cannot allow a new autocratic regime to rise up in the midst of Eastern Europe's struggle toward democracy.

I recently introduced House Concurrent Resolution 163, which supports the newly independent and democratic Belarus for which generations of Belarusan patriots fought and died. This resolution urges Members of Congress to unanimously call upon the entire population of Belarus and all Belarusans throughout the world to defend statehood and democracy of Belarus, help sustain the country's Constitution, prevent the loss of its hard won nationhood and encourage its chance to survive as an equal and full-fledged member State among the sovereign nations of the world.

I promise to continue to support Belarus in its advancement toward stability and democracy, not the turn that its current president has taken us.

EDUCATION CUTS

Mr. Speaker, with that, I will end my discussion of Belarus and the concerns that I have expressed and turn to the other issue that I would like to discuss and I believe we have some of my colleagues that will be joining us later. That is the issue of education cuts and the impact of the Dole economic plan on education, on Federal education policy.

If I could just take a minute, Mr. Speaker, and point out that earlier this

week, we received another indication of not only Mr. Dole but also the Republican leadership's view of Federal education programs.

On Tuesday the Senate majority leader, TRENT LOTT, denounced congressional Democrats for their push to restore $3.1 billion in education and job training funding, saying ''I cannot, as leader of the majority, allow the minority to throw out their political garbage one after the other and expect our people to just bat it down repeatedly with votes.''

Mimicking the process which characterized last year's budget debate when extremists shut down the Federal Government two times, Republican leaders are now backtracking from Senator LOTT's statements and reportedly are considering a watered down version of the Democrats education agenda.

My point, Mr. Speaker, is that education should be a priority for this Congress and for the Federal Government, if we are going to talk about our future as a country and the future of our citizens, education and the role of Federal education is very important, the role of the Federal Government and our ability to influence and help States and local governments at the secondary school level and also our ability to help those who would like to go on to college or to university for either undergraduate or graduate degrees. Senator LOTT'S statement indicates that when it comes to the Republican leadership on education, the old adage about teaching old dogs new tricks is true. It simply cannot be done.

They essentially tell the American people that they understand how important education is and they rail against the Democrats for accusing them of not wanting all Americans to be educated, but then they push plans to gut education programs.

I only have to reflect back on what has happened over the last 2 years to give an indication of how the Republican leadership has deprioritized education in this Congress. We can even really skip over the cuts of 1995 and just talk about the current year 1996.

In the fiscal year 1997 budget resolution that would essentially take effect October of this year, 1996, funding for education and training programs is essentially frozen below the previous year's fiscal year levels for 6 years. So what we have is essentially that when adjusted for inflation, we have a 21-percent reduction in Federal funding for education over the next 6 years, by the year 2002, providing no assistance for helping schools meet projected enrollment increases of 12 percent over the next decade. So what the Republican leadership is saying to us is, even though they understand that there are going to be more students, there is going to be a larger enrollment, that they are going to freeze funding for education programs.

In other words, the Republican plan is basically to provide less as the demand for education assistance increases around the country. In many school districts, such as New York City, where the school year opened with closets doubling as classrooms due to a lack of space, there is already immense suffering from skyrocketing enrollments.

It is not the time to cut back on education funding or even freeze funding at previous fiscal year levels. The House-passed fiscal year 1997 education appropriations bill includes cuts spanning the entire spectrum of Federal education programs from preschool students trying to get a jump on life through Head Start to the high school student looking for some assistance to get to college.

Under the bill, funding for title I supplemental education services would be frozen, denying assistance to 150,000 fewer children than in fiscal year 1996, simply because the same services will cost more in 1997. The Goals 2000 education reform program, which President Clinton has talked about and basically introduced, would be eliminated, denying reform grants to 8,500 schools serving 4.5 million children across the country.

At the same time the Republicans attacked the President on the issue of drug abuse, and we have heard that repeatedly today, they continue to push an education bill that cuts the safe and drug free schools program by $25 million, weakening our ability to educate our children in safer, drug free environments.

I am sick and tired of hearing my colleagues on the other side of the aisle talk about funding for drug abuse and then come in here and cut the very programs that would prevent drug abuse, particularly on behalf of the young people.

With respect to higher education, the Republican bill allows for a mere 1.2-percent increase in the maximum Pell grants award compared to the administration's proposed 9.3-percent increase. Federal contributions for Perkins loans would be eliminated, thereby denying low-interest loans to 96,000 students in the coming year.

These are the very programs that allow students who cannot afford to go on to higher education, Pell grants, Perkins loans, and also the AmeriCorps Program. The AmeriCorps Program was a program that was proposed and enacted into law under President Clinton that basically allows students to do volunteer service in the community, and that service is used to pay back their loans. It is a new source of funding to pay for higher education. But the AmeriCorps Program would be terminated under the Republican appropriations bill. Through the back door the GOP would realize its long desired dream of effectively ending the Direct Loan Program by reducing the funds to administer it. The Direct Loan Program is another innovative program that instead of going through lenders, banks, to get a student loan, the university administers the loan program directly. It allows for more students at various colleges and universities to get loans, basically expanding the amount of loans that are available because you do not have to use the middle person. Again, they are trying to reduce that, reducing the funds to administer. That would mean that a lot of colleges and universities simply would not be able to have the direct loan programs.

These programs that I mentioned, the ones that give our youngest children an early start on life, that teach our disadvantaged students how to read and write and solve mathematical problems, that keep drugs out of our schools, that expand access to higher education and that send our children to college, are the ones that Republicans would have you believe are, to use the words of the Senate majority leader, ''political garbage.''

I obviously could not disagree more with that statement. They are not political garbage. It is important that the funding be increased for those programs in this year's appropriations bill, and it is important that over the long term, that we expand educational opportunity through student loans and the rest of these devices.

I just wanted to say a little bit about what the Republicans have been trying to do since they controlled Congress. On the other hand, we see the President and congressional Democrats coming up with new ideas to try to expand educational opportunity and provide good funding and new innovative programs to expand educational opportunities.

□ 1645

Just to give you an example of that, and I have talked about it before on the floor, in July the administration announced a school construction initiative to improve the physical infrastructure, the actual buildings in which our children are taught over the next 5 years. Last month the President announced the America Reads challenge, which proposes to make every child in the country literate by the third grade. And then the congressional Democrats have the Families First agenda that basically provides American families a $10,000 tax deduction for college and job training, and we have also proposed to provide a $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college for students who work hard, keep a B average and basically stay off drugs.

What we are doing as Democrats essentially is trying to see how we can come up with innovative ways, whether it is through the Tax Code, whether it is through loan programs, whether it is through grant programs, to try to expand educational opportunity, and I think it is quite clear that there is a major contrast between the President and Mr. Dole on this issue.

I see that one of my colleagues has joined us, Mr. HINCHEY from New York, and I would be glad to yield to him at this time.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I was listening to the remarks that the gentleman was making about education and the need for improving the quality of our education here in United States, and actually that is an ongoing process. Improving the quality of education is something that has been happening here since the very beginning, and it is an evolutionary process and will continue to be so. We will never be at a condition when we have done everything perfectly with regard to education, but the fact of the matter is that in this particular Congress, over the course of most of the last 2 years we have seen a compilation, frankly, of what can only be called a shameful record on the issue of education.

Just for example, last year the congressional leadership here in this House produced a budget resolution that called for the largest cuts in Federal funding for education and job training that we have ever seen in the Nation's history. Also, that same budget resolution attempted to sharply limit access to student loans, making it much more difficult and in some cases, many cases, frankly would have made it impossible for young people to get a college education.

The Federal Government shut down in part last winter because the majority party here insisted on cutting elementary and secondary education programs by $3.3 billion, and they did that in order to finance a tax cut for the wealthy. The Government shut down because the President said no to that. The President said that it would be a shocking retreat from our education responsibilities to cut back on the Federal funding of education by $3.3 billion. Not only would that make education more difficult and less meaningful and less accessible to millions of American children, but it would also force up local real property taxes around the country.

In New York and in New Jersey education is financed in large part, frankly too much, by the real property tax, and whenever the Federal Government cuts back on its funding, its contributions to elementary and secondary education, the result is that education suffers but also real property taxpayers, senior citizens on fixed incomes, end up paying more that they cannot afford. So it is really a transfer of taxing obligation from the Federal Government to the local government, from the broad-based Federal taxes which are much fairer.

I mean, no one likes taxes. Taxes are never popular. But at least the taxes levied by the Federal Government are in almost every instance broad-based, progressive and much fairer than local real property taxes. And so when you have this transfer of obligation for funding from the Federal Government to the local government, you also have a shift in taxing obligation, and you shift the cost of education from the broad-based, more progressive Federal taxes to the more narrowly based, more regressive local real property taxes.

That is another aspect of this budget resolution that the President vetoed and the majority here insisted upon for week after week. Ultimately they lost because the President would not give in to them, but they attempted to blackmail the minority here in this House, they attempted to blackmail the President into signing those terrible budget bills which would have done the things that we are talking about here.

So that is part of the record here. And then, furthermore, still ignoring that quality education is a top priority for America's parents, Congress passed a budget resolution in 1996 that will result in a real cut in educational services all across the country by 20 percent over the next 6 years.

Now that is the attitude that this majority has in this House on education. That is the record, and I think it is a shameful one. The House leadership has turned the 3 R's of education, which are reading, writing, and arithmetic, into retraction, reduction, and retreat. That is what they would do with the educational system here in our country. Fortunately, we were able to prevent them from doing it by the President's veto and our ability to sustain that veto. So by putting a freeze on Federal education spending, we would be denying our children opportunities to succeed in the workplace.

Now supporters of the fiscal 1997 budget resolution and the House-passed appropriations bill are ignoring the realities of education today, and what are those realities? First of all, enrollment in elementary and secondary schools will grow by 7 million students between 1993 and the year 2005. So the burden on elementary and secondary schools is not going to decline, it is going to increase. We are going to have more students in school, and we need to educate them. That is a basic responsibility of any society, to educate the next generation. This government, this majority in this House, wants to wash its hands of that responsibility completely and pass it on to somebody else.

What else? United States schools need right now $112 billion to repair or upgrade dangerous facilities. That is not to make the schools shining and perfect and lovely, as we all might want them to be. That $112 billion is the cost of repairing facilities so that they would no longer be dangerous.

Our young people face a job market that is more competitive, more technologically advanced than ever before. We should be preparing our children to meet these challenges, instead of removing critical funding from our school system and slashing student loans.

The Senate has one last chance to keep the doors of educational opportunity open for our children and maintain our investment in the future. Follow the lead of Senate Democrats and restore $3.1 billion in education and job training funding to the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. That is what you support, that is what I support, that is what most of us in our party in this House support, and that is what I think we need to do.

I call on all of the people in this House to break with the extreme agenda of the leadership here and listen to what American families are saying. Education is a top priority in households across the country, and it should be a top priority here in Washington. We are doing precisely the wrong thing by reducing funding for education, if that is what they succeed in doing. They would be doing exactly the opposite of what we ought to be doing. We ought to be promoting the best quality educational system that we can afford. We should be ensuring that every child has access to good quality education from Head Start through college and on to graduate education, if they have the ability and the interest to do so. Advanced degrees are going to be critically more important in the future.

My 9-year-old daughter will be engaging in various kinds of activities in whatever professional pursuit she follows, things that we can hardly imagine today, because of the technological advancements that we are experiencing. We are moving into an era that is less and less dependent on natural resource industries and more and more dependent upon intellectual resource industries. We need the next generation to be highly educated and well trained and sophisticated in their approach to the job market and the marketplace, and we have a responsibility now, those of us who are serving in these positions now have a responsibility, to ensure that they have those opportunities, and if we fail to meet that responsibility, then our country will be a much different place as we enter the 21st century.

Mr. PALLONE. I thank the gentleman for joining me and pointing out not only what we have seen in the last 2 years under this Republican leadership in Congress and the negative impact on education programs, but also how important it is for the future to make sure that education remains a priority for the Federal Government in Federal funding.

And one of the reasons that I took to the floor this evening, and I know you did too, is because of our concern that if you look at Mr. Dole's economic plan, that it would force even further reductions in education spending and again deprioritize, if you will, education in terms of the Federal role.

Just to give an indication of that, there was an independent analysis of Mr. Dole's economic plan by Business Week, the Concord Coalition and others, that showed that his risky plan would require 40-percent cuts in a broad range of domestic programs, including education, and what they are saying is that a 40-percent cut in education and training would mean 300,000

children could be denied Head Start preschool opportunities, 5,800 local school districts could be denied safe and drug-free school services, 9.700 young people could be denied AmeriCorps national service opportunities and 1.5 million students could be denied Pell Grant scholarships.

So what we would see, the very concerns that we have over what is happened the last 2 years with some of these important education programs, would only be magnified much more if Mr. Dole's economic plan was put into place, and I do not see how the Federal Government can essentially get out of the role of helping with education programs and leave that responsibility in terms of the funding to the States and the local governments, because, as you say, the end result would be that State and local taxes could simply increase, particularly local property taxes, because so many States, including my own State of New Jersey, rely primarily on local property taxes to pay for education programs, and if they do not get Federal help to supplement State help, they would just either have to cut back significantly or raise their local property taxes in order to pay for those same programs just to keep going, just to keep the existing programs going.

Mr. HINCHEY. No question about it. I mean the interesting thing about—actually there are many interesting things about Mr. Dole's proposals—one of the interesting things about his proposal for an almost $550 billion tax cut comes about when people ask him how is he going to do that: How will you cut taxes by $550 billion? What are the programs specifically that you will cut?

Well, he does not come up with specifics. He does not tell us what he is going to do. What he says is: ''Trust me, where there is a will, there is a way.''

And I have heard Jack Kemp say that exactly that way: Where there is a will, there is a way. And Bob Dole has the will; I do not doubt that. I do not doubt that for one moment. I am convinced that Bob Dole has the will to cut Medicare so that it no longer is able to serve our elderly citizens' health care needs, to gut Medicaid so that people who need health care, around-the-clock supervision in nursing homes, people who are elderly, frail elderly, people with total disabilities will be thrown out on the street. I do not doubt that he has the will to do that.

I do not doubt, either, that he has the will to cut education, because they have tried to do it. They have tried to cut education. We have seen them do it in this Congress here this year and last year. We have seen them try in every way they could. We stood in their way and prevented them from doing it, but they tried everything they could to cut education.

One of the things about that that astounded me the most was when they tried to cut the Eisenhower Teacher Training Program. That has been around for a long time. I was a sailor, a white hat sailor on a tin can destroyer in the western Pacific sailing in the Straits of Taiwan when the Soviet Union launched something called sputnik. It was the first satellite ever launched. Dwight Eisenhower was President of the United States, and it was a wake-up call to the President and to this Congress back then in the late 1950's.

□ 1700

What they did was they decided that they needed to concentrate more on education, and particularly on education in mathematics and science, in physics. So the Eisenhower education program was started to do a very good and very important thing. That was to ensure the best quality teachers in our high schools to teach young people in mathematics and algebra, in calculus, in trigonometry, in physics and basic physics and applied physics. and in other scientific pursuits, so that we could not only compete with the Soviet Union, the then Soviet Union, but surpass them.

As a matter of fact, that program was successful, because we did precisely that. We went on not only to catch up to the Soviets in the space program, but to go far beyond them, surpass them by leaps and bounds. Now the situation is that we are cooperating with them in space today.

But that cooperation would never have come about if the initiative had been left to them. That cooperation has come about only because we surpassed them, because we were better than they were. We then invited them to participate with us, as this very generous Nation had done many times in the past with other people.

But now this Congress wants to eliminate even the Eisenhower education program. That has been a target on their cuts. One of their Presidents, one of their heroes, one of the people that the American people elected who served us well for 8 years in the Presidency in the decade of the 1950's and established this very foresightful, meaningful, important and successful educational program, they want to cut that as well. That is ow far they will go. It is astonishing, I think.

Mr. PALLONE. The amazing thing about it, too, is that it is not that the Democrats do not want to see tax cuts. Essentially, the difference is that we are talking about targeted tax cuts, or tax credits that would actually improve education, in other words; and I know the gentleman shares my feeling. We feel that if there are going to be tax cuts or there are going to be tax credits, they should be used in a very targeted way to help, to help education, to help with environmental concerns, and that what we do not want to see is just tax breaks that primarily go to wealthy individuals and do not help the average person.

When I was talking about these two tax cuts, the Hope scholarship for the first 2 years of college that the President has proposed, $1,500 for your first 2 years, and the $10,000 tuition education tax deduction, when I talked to my constituents about those kinds of tax breaks, they think they are great, because they know that paying for higher education is very difficult. They see that as a way of the Federal Government actually using the Tax Code, if you will, to help improve education and educational opportunities.

Democrats would like to see tax cuts or tax initiatives that actually give a break to individuals, but we want to use them in ways that are going to help our constituents, and not just throw money toward the large corporations or wealthy Americans.

Mr. HINCHEY. That is exactly right. It is the kind of thing we support. I think that is intelligent. I think it is intelligent to provide tax support for people who want to provide their children an education to be able to deduct those costs.

The cost of a college education, I think, makes eminently good sense, obviously, for the young person in that family, for the family itself, but also, very importantly, for the entire country, because our society benefits every time we graduate another person from college, another person with an advanced degree. That person goes out, applies that learning, and it is a synergistic effect.

It is a situation where all of this education coming together, working out there, higher and better education all the time, creates a circumstance where the whole is more than the sum of the parts. It is a very good investment, indeed.

But these guys here, the Gingrich crowd in this House, they have never seen a problem that a tax cut for a millionaire would not solve. They have never seen a problem that they do not want to throw a big tax cut out to the wealthiest people in the country. Their solution to every problem is, find the richest people you can in the country and cut their taxes, and that will solve your problem, because it is the people that they represent.

They have turned their back on middle class America, they have turned their back on the working people of this country by trying to cut their health care and the health care for their parents and grandparents, they have turned their backs on them by trying to cut the educational opportunities for their children, but they never turn their backs on the millionaires. They are willing to cut taxes for them every opportunity they get.

Mr. PALLONE. The amazing thing, too, if I could add, is that the President has been expanding these educational opportunity programs, you know, starting AmeriCorps, the National Service Program, moving to a direct lending program, increasing the amount of money for Pell grants, at the same time that he is reducing the deficit. The deficit, the actual deficit,

has actually been going down every year since he has been in office.

The reason you can expand programs, I will use the direct student loan program as an example. I think we talked about it before, how you are actually eliminating the bank as the middle person, so the money, if you will, that will have gone to pay for the bank's administration of services now goes to the college or university directly to pay essentially for more students to get a loan. So you are actually saving the taxpayers money.

You are eliminating the special-interest middle person, if you will, and the reason that the Republican leadership has been opposing that is because they get money from the special-interest bank or savings association, whatever it is, that actually is making that extra dollar; and, instead, you could abolish the middleman, save money for the taxpayers, probably millions or billions of dollars, and give more students direct loans.

That is what is amazing to me, that you have seen this administration actually expand the programs and give more educational opportunities at less cost and bring the deficit down.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. PALLONE. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's leadership, and that of the gentleman from New York, and the work they have done on continuing to get education finally on the right track in this country.

We as a nation have come to a consensus pretty much about the role of local, State and Federal Government in education. No one in this body, certainly on the Democratic side, but I think on the Republican side, too, thinks that the Federal Government should come in and take over the schools and run all the schools' programs. But we have come to a consensus in that local government, by and large, controls the schools.

State government does much of the funding for education. But the Federal Government's role is very important and very precise. It is some support for Head Start, it is student loans, it is programs like drug-free schools. It is helping community colleges from time to time with Federal money. But it is limited.

What we have done is, we have protected, tried to protect that consensus. The leader of the other body, Mr. LOTT's comments were particularly amazing when he talked about education and job training as garbage amendments that Democrats want to put in bills. I do not quite understand what he meant, but I understand his attitude.

His attitude is that programs like drug-free schools and programs to help community colleges, like Lorain County Community College in my district, which is really the jewel of our county in terms of training a lot of people that are not just in their teens but in their twenties and thirties, going back, working full-time, going back to school and preparing for the future. That is so important.

We are finally, with the President's leadership and people like the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. PALLONE, and the gentleman from New York, Mr. HINCHEY, in this House, aiming education in the right direction: giving tax breaks to people for college tuition, so middle class families can send their kids on to school; providing student loans and strengthening the direct loan program, as you suggested, Mr. PALLONE, so the middleman is cut out, and we can give those loans directly and not see banks and others basically take their cut off the top of these student loan programs or of these student loans.

One of the things that the President said, I think that makes the most sense with the Families First agenda and in the President's agenda, in the President's plan, is a 2-year college scholarship for students who maintain a B average.

In Elyria, OH, in my district, there is Lorain County Community College. That opportunity for students has given Lorain County the highest rate of 2-year associate degrees of any county, I believe, in all of Ohio. It has prepared people for all kinds of good employment, given people all kinds of opportunity.

I also know people that are going to LC, to Lorain County Community College, that have really struggled, because they have not been able to put together the money and raise their children while they are working. They have done all they could do to come up with money to go to school. They sometimes have been in and out of Lorain Community College and not been able to continue their education, uninterrupted.

The President's program will make sure that we are on the right track to be able to do that, so Lorain County Community College can continue to provide the sort of opportunities to get people, to get them into the middle class, to allow them to continue to stay in the middle class when their job is downsized and their company cuts back, as is happening all over this country.

For us to follow Mr. LOTT, the Republican leader of the other body, his idea to just junk some of these education programs and this job training, makes no sense. If we are going to compete internationally, if we are going to compete around the globe, we cannot cut education. We cannot end the student loan program. We cannot cut out the Pell grants. We cannot cut out the drug-free school programs and defund Head Start and some of these programs that have really simply provided an opportunity for America's middle class and poor kids.

There is nothing more important that government can do than provide opportunity, nothing. The best programs that come out of this institution, the best direction of government, is to help people have opportunity. Lorain County Community College has done that in Elyria, OH. All kinds of community colleges and other schools around the country have done that.

We have no business ever restricting opportunity. We should work toward expanding opportunity with student loans and tax breaks for parents in middle-class families to send their kids on to school, whether it is a 4-year university or a community college. It just does not make sense to do anything otherwise.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I agree. The amazing thing about it is that we continue to hear statements during this presidential campaign from Mr. Dole saying how he is going to be the education President, or that he is going to prioritize education.

Yet we know from his own record that he has consistently voted against expanding education programs and that the President, President Clinton, in the last 4 years has probably done more to expand educational opportunities, particularly at the higher education level, college and for graduate programs, than anybody else.

I just saw it myself, but twice he came to my district in the last 3 years or so and talked about, he was at Rutgers University on both occasions, and talked about the National Direct Student Loan Program, the AmeriCorps Program. I have actually witnessed students that are involved in these programs, and they are just very helpful. They are not only helpful in terms of helping the students, but they also help the community.

For example, we have AmeriCorps students in some of the secondary schools that are basically supplementing the programs, the normal education program students get in school; you know, basically providing them with extra instruction after school or whatever. We have AmeriCorps students that have been working on clean water projects, basically testing the water in the Raritan River and looking for ways to try to do better, further cleanup.

So that program, just as an example, is one where students get money for college or pay back their loan. They are working in the community, so they build up a community spirit. At the same time, they are actually accomplishing something that helps people.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, the gentleman said this benefits the community at large. There are about 40 million Americans today who have gotten some student loan or grant assistance from the Federal Government to further their educations. Some 40 million Americans have gotten this, whether it is the GI bill, Perkins, or some other program, direct loan, through the Federal Government, sponsored by the Federal Government, whatever.

Think, if the Government had not been involved in any of these, the GI bill or the student loans of any kind, or Perkins or whatever, think how many of those 40 million would not be able to contribute to the community the way they are doing. They are scientists, teachers, nurses, people who are working as electricians, people doing all kinds of things to make this society a better place.

If we had not provided those loans from the 1940's on, or those grants from the 1940's on, where would we be as a society? For us, all in the name, as Mr. HINCHEY said, in order to give tax breaks to the richest people in those countries, the only way to pay for those tax breaks, as the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] has said on the floor, would be to cut Medicare, cut student loans. It is unconscionable.

To give tax breaks to the tune of $500 billion, as Mr. Dole is suggesting, or the $300 billion that the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. GINGRICH] has suggested, and tried to get through this House time after time after time, and actually shut down the government over, to give those tax breaks to the wealthy, the only way to pay for it is cuts in Medicare and student loans.

Why would we sacrifice potentially tens of millions of students who could benefit in the next decade or so, who could benefit from student loans, direct student loans, and various kinds of Federal grants and loans, why would we sacrifice them so we could give a tax break, mostly to people who do not need it, people making $250,000 to $300,000 a year?

Also they could give this break and really restrict the opportunity that millions of Americans, middle-class Americans and poor kids, would have in the next decade or so.

Mr. HINCHEY. There is an irony here also that should not be lost. There are a great many people in this Congress, including a great many who are advocating the abolition of student loans, or to make student loans more difficult, or the abolition of Pell grants, or to make Pell grants more difficult, or cutting of education in various ways, who themselves would not have had the opportunity for education if it had not been for the GI bill, say, for example, or Perkins, or a Pell grant, or something of that nature.

There is something terribly ironic and difficult to understand about that, how people who are here by virtue of the fact that they had help from the public purse in some way, at some point in their life, to expand themselves, to expand their careers and expand their opportunities, now want to deny that to another generation.

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I think that is terribly perverse at best. The example of student loans is just another one that I think just cries out for understanding. Where is the logic here, unless it is that you just want to provide a few extra dollars to some banker to make it more costly for a student to get an education, to make it more costly for the taxpayer to help provide educational opportunity for the next generation of Americans. And in denying that taxpayer the opportunity for a little lower taxes and denying the student the opportunity for education, you simply are just transferring that benefit to some banker who does not need it, by introducing some third party into the student loan process.

I think that making the student loans direct was one of the simplest yet one of the most effective things that the President has done with regard to the availability of higher education. I applaud him for it. I think anybody who recognizes the value of that program does the same.

Mr. PALLONE. I know from my own experience that there was no way that I would have been able to go to college or law school or graduate school without a combination of the student loan program, scholarships from the college or graduate school that I went to as well as the work study program. In fact, when the session began 2 years ago, the Republican leadership was also talking about either abolishing or cutting back significantly on the work study program. Again, how absurd.

Mr. Speaker, here we have students working their way through college. You would think that would be the epitome of a type of program we would want to keep, a work study program, but they were talking about cutting back on that. Plus a lot of people will say to me, particularly if they go to a private school, they will say, I got a scholarship from the private school or from an individual that donated money to the private school. But the fact of the matter is that a large portion of the money, whether they are private or public institutions, given out in scholarships, in other words, when a student gets a scholarship from the university, be it private or public, a lot of that money is also coming from the Federal Government. So it is not just the Pell grants, the Perkins loans, or the student loans. Even the money that is coming directly in scholarships from the college oftentimes a lot of that is coming from the Federal Government as well.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. It is so shortsighted to think about making cuts in education, whether it is the student loan, the drug free schools program that, while Senator Dole runs around the country talking about drugs and illegal drugs that we have got to deal with it, and he votes and leads the charge against with Mr. GINGRICH, the leader of this House, to try to cut back on the drug free schools program, it is just so shortsighted.

When you think of what, as a nation, are we going to do if we cut these kinds of programs, these kinds of opportunities for kids to go on to school, whether it is a 2-year school, a 2-year community college, or 4-year degree at a State university or whatever. Interestingly, one of the things, as Mr. Dole has gone around the country talking about his $550 billion tax break, which is going to make these education cuts even worse that Mr. GINGRICH and Mr. Dole have already tried to pass through this institution that the President has vetoed, but as he has gone around the country talking about this $550 billion tax break, mostly for the wealthy, he has also promised group after group after group that he is not going to cut them.

He has said to military groups, I am going to increase military spending. He says to veterans groups, I am not going to cut you. But the other day he said most interestingly, I am going to double the amount of money that the Federal Government spends on prisons. So he is going to keep increasing this, this, this, and this, and what is left to cut? The only thing left to cut unfortunately is Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, student loans, environmental protection. That is about all that is left in all the things he has talked about because he has promised every other group he is not going to cut them.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to juxtapose cutting education, putting it next to increasing money on prisons. If we are going to cut education, we are going to have to build more prisons. If we are going to restrict opportunity for middle-class kids, for working class or poor kids, we just better start planning to spend more money on prisons, more money on alcohol abuse programs and drug abuse programs, and all of that if kids do not have the opportunity when they are 18 or 22 years old when they finish school. Again, it is so shortsighted. To restrict kids' opportunity, to restrict people when they are 30 years old that are working in a job, and trying to go back to Lorain Community College or somewhere else and simply cannot scrape the money together, and the Government is not interested in helping. What are people going to do to stay in the middle class, to achieve middle-class status and lifestyles and stay in the middle class?

To me, our country in all the opportunities we have provided with things like the GI bill are to build a strong middle class. If we are going to just throw up our hands as a government and say, sorry, no more, the Government is no longer on the side of helping to provide opportunity for young people, we are just going to give up, give tax breaks to the wealthy and forget about opportunity and forget about education, I wonder what is going to happen to this country. It is a scary thought.

Mr. PALLONE. I agree. I know we do not have a lot of time left. I guess maybe we should wrap up at this point. I am just so glad that both of you came here and joined me to talk about this, because I know that Congressman BROWN kept using the term educational

opportunity. I think that is really what it is all about. We are not talking about handouts here to people who do not want to learn. We are talking about providing an opportunity so that everyone in this country can get an education at the highest level that they want and that they deserve and that they are willing to work for. That is what it is all about.

That is the promise, if you will, of America. If that promise is not there anymore, it makes it much more difficult for us to talk to our constituents or our children about equal opportunity. The equal opportunity just will not be there anymore. That is why I think it is really important that we continue to work toward that equal opportunity goal, particularly when it comes to education, which is so important for the future. I want to thank both of you for joining me.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to take up a cause that is the No. 1 concern of millions of working parents and is an issue that the Republicans have called garbage. I am talking about the education of our children. I am talking about the future of our democracy and how we as a nation will take on the challenges of the 21st century. Let's look at the record of the Gingrich Congress. In 1995, the Republican Congress voted for the largest education cuts in history—slashing education programs by 15 percent or $3.6 billion. They voted to eliminate the funding for Goals 2000 School Reform which sought to raise the achievement levels of 44 million children. They voted to cut the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program by 57 percent—denying 23 million students services that keep drugs and violence away from children and their schools. They voted to cut Head Start by $137 million.

All of these cuts were in the face of the largest school enrollment in the history of our Nation—this is the time of the baby-boom echo. these are the children of the baby-boom generation that Republicans want to face their future with less resources for their education.

Finally, yesterday, the Republicans could no longer take the heat that they were shortchanging our Nation's schoolchildren and are now prepared to restore $2.3 billion of education cuts they took out of President Clinton's proposed spending for schools in fiscal year 1997. They now want to bury this issue and go home and try to forget about how they have done our children the worst disservice possible. How they want to forget that there are fewer teachers in the classrooms this fall because of what they did last year. They want to wash away their guilt when they see classrooms in school lunchrooms and even closets. We need to be increasing education funding, in light of growing school enrollments—not cutting. We need to invest more in our future and the future of our children.

Still, Mr. Speaker, Republicans have had the audacity to call our efforts to increase spending for education political garbage. Well, is it political garbage for working parents to see Republicans cut valuable funding for basic reading and math skills, Head Start, summer jobs for kids, school-to-work initiatives and Pell grants for college students. It may be garbage to them, but it's the key to our future.

So, don't be fooled by these 11th hour Republican conversions. Republicans can't go home now and undo the damage they have done to our schools. We have to keep up the pressure—Republicans can't be trusted with our children's education. This November, let's throw out the real garbage.

Democrats have a real agenda for working families that helps them to prepare their children for the challenges of the 21st century. Our Families First Agenda offers a brighter path for the future education for our children. It offers a better chance for helping get our kids to college.

With stagnating household incomes and the ever-increasing costs of a college education, American families are worried about how they are going to send their children to college. And what have the Republicans done to help? They have voted again and again over the last 2 years to slash student loan programs and to eliminate direct student loans. They have also voted to cut back on Pell grants and Perkins loans. All of this in the face of a fact that every working person knows—a college degree is a ticket to a higher income. It is a ticket to a better life and a life that is becoming more and more out of reach for greater numbers of people every year.

Families First Agenda includes a HOPE Scholarship Program that President Clinton offered in June. It would provide all students with a $1,500 refundable tax credit for full time students who keep up their grades. The HOPE Scholarship Program tries to make 2 years of college as universally accessible as high school is today.

This Democratic Families First educational initiative also includes a $10,000 tax deduction for education and training expenses. This deduction is up to $10,000 a year for each family. It would be available even for families that don't itemize their deductions. And this is in addition to the tax credit which is $1,500 for each student. It all adds up to help for families that want to see their children get a college education and have a better life.

Mr. Speaker, education is the key that will unlock our potential for the country's future. We have to at least help our families put the key in the door. Congress should not go home without giving our children a chance at a better life. We need to provide for safe and drug free schools and for strong investments in education and training of America's young people and workers. That, Mr. Speaker is the right way to prepare our country to compete in the world economy of the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, we have finally gotten the Republicans to see the light. Quoting from the Washington Post of September 18, 1996:

GOP RESTORES $2.3 BILLION IT CUT IN EDUCATION FUNDS—REPUBLICANS WANT TO AVOID PREELECTION GRIDLOCK

Bombarded by Democratic charges that they were shortchanging the country's schoolchildren, Senate Republicans agreed to match President Clinton's proposed spending for schools by restoring $2.3 billion that Republicans had cut from education accounts for next year.

The GOP concession on education spending came only minutes before Democrats were prepared to offer a proposal to add $3.1 billion for education and job training to an Interior Department spending bill. Before they could offer their proposal, Lott told reporters Republicans were prepared to add back $2.3 billion for education alone.

CORRECTION TO THE RECORD OF SEPTEMBER 18, 1996, PAGE H10580, SPECIAL ORDER OF THE HONORABLE SONNY CALLAHAN

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE TOM BEVILL AND THE HONORABLE GLEN BROWDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCINNIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. CALLAHAN] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

WATCH FOR ELECTION-YEAR SPIN IN HOUSE FLOOR SPEECHES

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, it must be confusing to the people who are watching this, both in the gallery and on C–SPAN, about what we are talking about today. During this time of our political careers in history, it is an election year. It is like selling Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola. You have one side that says Pepsi-Cola is better, and one side that says Coca-Cola is better. What we do is create spin efforts. We try to convince the American people that one side is going to do all of these evil things, and the sky is going to fall if indeed a certain individual is elected President.

You hear things about cutting Medicare. There is not a provision anywhere in Washington where anybody has introduced or even suggested that we cut Medicare. All of this is partisan politics, trying to convince you, trying to manipulate you, the audience, into believing their side or our side of any particular issue.

They just talked about the environment. We are not going to destroy the environment. Not one individual in this entire body wants to do anything to do harm to the environment.

So as you go through these little periods of speeches on the floor of the House, keep in mind that it is that time of year. You are intelligent people. You can make your own mind up. Base it on character, base it on history, base it upon the future, base it on whatever you want. But keep in mind that these are like television ads. They are just a few minutes dedicated to the Members of the House to come here and express their views, and to try to convince you that the future lies in someone else's hands, or the future lies in the hands of those that have it today.

Spin is interesting here in Washington, because, you know, I heard the Secretary of Defense went over to Kuwait. I think all of us in the House knew, and certainly everybody in television land knew, and certainly, Mr. Speaker, you knew, that the Kuwaitis decided they did not want us there, even though we sent 500,000 men over there to save their country. When we tried to send 3,500 men there, they balked. But in any event, the Secretary went over there and he explained it. Finally, they let us come in.

But the spin that came out of it, and I quote the Washington Post, Mr.