playing field for those who were not getting that opportunity. Unfortunately, once the Government got hold of it, that program which started out with the best intentions became a hire-by-the-numbers system involving quotas, set-asides, preferences, numerical goals, and timetables. What has been left out of the equation is the notion of individual merit, the important question of, Is this the best person for this job?

Today's affirmative action programs harm our society, both by lowering standards and by leaving the beneficiaries of the program to doubt their own ability. As a woman, I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that women can compete with any man on an equal playing field. I find the assumption that we need preferential treatment in order to succeed insulting.

Have women had a harder time advancing up the corporate ladder and getting access to educational opportunities? There is no doubt about that. But is affirmative action the way to create more opportunities for women, a quota here, a set-aside there, or should we be focusing on removing the barriers that keep women from advancing and succeeding on their own?

The Glass Ceiling Commission, started by former Labor Secretary Elizabeth Dole, takes a second approach. It has been tremendously effective. The Commission identified the barriers in the workplace that keep qualified women from moving up the corporate ladder. It then set about working with companies to find ways to remove those barriers, allowing women to advance on their own merit and qualifications.

Much of this process involves changing long-held beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices. Elizabeth Dole created the Glass Ceiling Commission from her firsthand knowledge of the kinds of barriers, both institutional and personal, that women face in both academia and the workplace. She was 1 of only 24 women in her Harvard law school class of 550, and I have heard her many times recount the disturbing yet not surprising comment made by one of her male classmates to her on her first day of class back in 1962. He said, ''Elizabeth, what are you doing here? Don't you realize there are men who would give their right arm to be in this law school, men who would use their legal education?''

Not only was this man's attitude toward women at Harvard law school wrong, but he was certainly wrong about Elizabeth Dole using her legal education. Affirmative action programs treat the symptoms. What we should be treating is the illness itself. The problem with just treating the symptoms of discrimination with further discrimination in the form of affirmative action is that you make the underlying illness worse. You intensify feelings of resentment and prejudice among the very people from which we need to eradicate it.

If women and minorities are to be treated equally, and with respect, too, it is time to stop dividing our country along race and gender lines. Let us get back to traditional forms of affirmative action involving nondiscriminatory outreach, recruitment, and marketing efforts, and empower all Americans by providing equal opportunity in an atmosphere of strong economic growth.

AMERICA'S FUTURE LIES SECURELY IN THE HANDS OF OUR FAMILIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCINNIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. HULSHOF] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of discussion about what came out of Hershey, PA. Of course, the tone of civility and discussion about civility was probably the predominant theme. However, there were matters of substance.

In fact, David McCullough, an award-winning author, provided some pretty inspiring comments for those of us who chose to attend. Mr. McCullough invited us, really, to take stock of history so we could get a perspective of where we want to go as a Congress and what agendas we wish to promote. Mr. McCullough pointed out that, of course, back in the 1860's when Abraham Lincoln was sworn in as President, as our 16th President of this country, the national agenda was focused around the civil strife that our country was enduring.

Moving ahead in history through the Great Depression, the national ambition was, of course, to pull ourselves out of the Depression, as well as with World War II and eventually the cold war with the growing Soviet menace. All those things had outside forces essentially dictating what the national policy was to be.

Mr. Speaker, now that the cold war is over, I think outside forces no longer are dictating our national agenda. I think we stand on the verge of a historic opportunity. I believe it is time, Mr. Speaker, that we create a new vision for this country. The newly elected Members of the Republican class of the 105th Congress have been speaking out in a positive way about the new vision that we hope to foster in the coming months and years ahead.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, Members may recall we focused as a class on community renewal. We touted real life success stories from individual districts that showcased creative ways that faith-based charities and private industries and communities were reaching out to the poor and needy, and ways to help the poor and needy, and ways Government could be a partner, rather than a parent.

Tonight, Mr. Speaker, our class has decided to focus on the family, and ways that this institution can help promote a family friendly agenda. We believe that strong families can make for a better America. In that fashion, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield to the newest member of our class who joined us after a special election in December. I yield to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. BRADY].

Mr. BRADY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, at the start of a school year, a teacher noticed that one of her students was particularly well behaved. Her manner was, in fact, exemplary. As the weeks went on she noticed even more because it stood out so much in her class. At one point she finally approached the young child and asked, Who taught you to be so polite and so kind-hearted? And the little girl laughed and said, really, no one. It runs in our family.

Enduring traits that built America run in America's families: That of individual responsibility, of caring for your neighbors, of contributing to the community in which you live and grow up and work, being involved in your church, in your Boy Scout troop, helping to build the community in which you live. America's future lies very securely in the hands of our families.

This year in the 105th Congress, the Republican leadership and the Republican Congress will take significant steps to make a real difference in our lives and in our families' lives. We will continue to bring the budget into balance, to rein in the IRS, and to lower interest rates. We must, because today most of us pay more in taxes than for food, clothing, and shelter combined. A balanced budget means lower rates on our mortgages, our student loans, and our car loans, and annual savings of about $857 for a typical American family.

It is also time, and we are going to work hard, to restore safety to our streets and neighborhoods by waging a real war on drugs and violent crime. We want parents to be able to spend more time with their children, so today we have passed a family friendly workplace policy that Members are going to hear more about tonight. We will work to ensure our children inherit a clean, healthy environment, and receive the quality education they need to survive and succeed in this increasingly competitive world.

We face a lot of challenges, but America is blessed with hardworking, sturdy families. I believe so strongly in families because my family believes so strongly in me. My dad was killed when I was young, and my mom raised five of us by herself. She taught us by her example to take responsibility for ourselves, to practice our faith each day, and to give back to the community in which we live.

In our family my mom is a true American hero. If you look around your family and around your dinner table, and around the gatherings during the holiday, and listening on the

phone when you visit with your family, you will likely see a hero or two whose personal sacrifice is the reason for your success and for the success of our country.

Tonight, in the next few minutes, we are going to hear from the Republican freshman Members from across this country, led by our President, who is going to talk about the changes and improvements we are going to bring to the quality of life of America's families. It is important because America's families are the foundation for America, and we can, with their help, we can meet every challenge America faces today.

Mr. HULSHOF. I thank the gentleman, and I especially welcome him to our group, and I appreciate very much the leadership that he has taken on this particular issue. I think his points are well taken. We have begun that road. We have got a great distance to travel, and we look forward to working with the gentleman during this 105th Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. PAUL], another Texan, and I do not know necessarily that Texans have a corner on family virtue, but I am happy to yield to my friend.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. I am delighted the gentleman has called this special order tonight, and I am pleased I can participate in it.

Earlier today we had a vote on the Working Families Flexibility Act. This came out of the committee I had been working on, and I was a strong supporter of this. We did promote this as a family-oriented piece of legislation.

As we all know, this piece of legislation allows more choices for the family in the way they can spend their overtime or their time off. Obviously, this is a benefit to the families. In one way I was a little disappointed that we had to go through it, because if we live in a free society it is assumed that you can make these agreements with your employer, but under the circumstances it was not available to many of our families unless we passed this piece of legislation, so I was delighted we were able to do that.

During that debate I mentioned that one of my favorite bumper stickers says simply ''Legalize Freedom.'' Any time we do that in this Congress, I am very pleased.

The other thing I would like to suggest, along with our nice title there, ''Strong Families for a Better America,'' I would like to put a subtitle there and say, ''Freedom is Family-Friendly.'' I think the more freedom we have, the stronger our families are.

We have seen a tremendous effort, sincere efforts, over the past 30 or 40 years with the promotion of the welfare state. It is always done in the name of helping people and families, but quite frankly, there is very little evidence to show that the $5 trillion spent on the welfare system has strengthened our families. As a matter of fact, I think it has done quite the opposite.

In the same sense, these many funds were spent to strengthen education, and if we look at our educational system, it has not helped. If we have an educational system that is not working hardly, are we doing much benefit to our families?

So, I think the opposite of the statement, freedom is family friendly, I think big government is not. I do not believe that if power and responsibility and authority and responsibility gravitates here to Washington that it is beneficial to the family. The more freedom we have, the more local options we have, the more choice we have for our families, I think the better off we are.

Obviously, families would have a lot more choices if they had a lot less taxes, so we have emphasized that as well. I think our reducing taxes on families and giving tax credits for children would certainly be a great benefit.

I would like to bring up very briefly one subject that is dear to my heart, because it involves families. It is generally believed by many in this country that the women's movement was the main reason why women went out to work. Quite frankly, I think there are a lot of women who were forced to work in order to take care of their families in the best way they can see fit. This to me was so often a reflection of inflation because of the cost of living. I believe that eventually we have to address this subject and deal with it to make sure our families have the greatest opportunity possible that we can provide for them.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman's points are well taken, particularly as far as the workplace is concerned. I think that of course when you have two-parent families and both parents are having to work to pay the tax bill, I think what we have done today, again, is a step in that direction as far as helping provide some balance in the workplace with more flexibility for employees, and again, this is just a step, I think, in the right direction.

I know that the dean of our Republican delegation, the gentleman from Missouri, JIM TALENT, who is the chair of the Committee on Small Business, also has measures that he will be addressing, like home-based businesses and really promoting ways that home-based businesses can help balance the job as well as family responsibilities.

□ 1845

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I think it is interesting to note that the workers in the public sector have already had this right. I think it was only fair that we give this to the individual workers throughout the country.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman is correct. I think that the misnomer, perhaps some of the misinformation about the flexibility act is that somehow it abolishes the 40 hour work week which of course it does not.

I see the gentleman from Alabama is in the well of the House. I yield to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. RILEY).

Mr. RILEY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding to me.

As most of my colleagues in the freshman class probably realize, probably more than I thought possible, how important my family is to me and how important it has been to me. One of the primary reasons I ran for this office was to protect my family. Primarily, my first granddaughter.

When she was born 2 years ago, she was $187,000 in debt. Today she is $200,000 in debt. We must come together on both sides of the aisle and produce a balanced budget this year, because we cannot continue to make our children and our grandchildren pay for the debts of our generation. We must allow them the opportunity to begin life with the same opportunities that we have.

Unfortunately, today working families across this country gather around kitchen tables each week and wonder why they cannot make ends meet. They wonder why they work longer, why they have to take second jobs. And they feel like they are literally running in place. Many families have given up the American dream that their children will achieve a higher standard of living than their parents or grandparents. In my opinion, the best way we in Congress can help the American family is to once and for all balance the Federal budget.

What will a balanced budget mean to you and your family? A balanced budget will result in no less than a 2 percent drop in interest rates. To put this in perspective, the cost of a $75,000 mortgage would be reduced by as much as $37,000 over 30 years. A family would save $2000 on $11,000 in student loans. The real beneficiary of a balanced budget, Mr. Speaker, would be the American family.

I guess that is one of the reasons that today I cosponsored the Working Families Flexibility Act, and I want to commend all of those who helped pass this legislation today. This will give the private sector employees the same opportunity as public sector employees to spend time with their families. By taking comptime from work instead of overtime pay should they choose to do so in this fast paced day and age where two-income families continue to rise, families will be able to increase this valuable time together because of the Working Families Flexibility Act.

My commitment to families is also why I cosponsored H.R. 902, the Family Heritage Preservation Act, which will repeal the estate tax. Most of the families in this country work hard all of their lives for two reasons: They want to provide a better standard of living for their own families, and they want to leave the fruits of their labor to their children and to their grandchildren. However, today many families are forced to sell off the family farm or the family business just to pay the Government's estate tax.

It is time we stopped the Federal Government from confiscating up to 55 percent of a lifetime's accumulation. Seventy percent of all the small businesses do not survive to the second generation because they have to liquidate all or a part of the assets just to pay the estate tax. Furthermore, 87 percent will never be passed on to the third generation.

Mr. Speaker, our families are and will continue to be the backbone of our society, and it is incumbent on each of us to help protect and preserve those who ultimately will decide our very future.

I call on the rest of my colleagues, especially in this freshman class, to support this family friendly legislation that the Republican Party has promoted this year and in past years.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the comments of the gentleman and know that prior to his election here to this esteemed body that he had quite a probusiness background and certainly a very successful career. We are glad and honored that he is one of our number, and we look forward to continued success in the well of this House.

Mr. RILEY. Mr. Speaker, we look forward to the gentleman's continued leadership. I want to take this opportunity to tell all the Members of this class how much they have meant to me personally and how I look forward to working with all of them in the days to come.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. BOB SCHAFFER].

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I cannot think of a better topic to discuss tonight, and I commend you on your leadership for bringing this topic forward and giving us this opportunity, because this whole topic of focusing on families and the impact that legislation that we pass here in Washington and what that means for families across the country is precisely the reason I came here in the first place.

I believe very firmly that we should be motivated in every piece of legislation that we pass, from the comptime bill that we dealt with today to balancing the budget and our assessment of tax policy and how we lead the country should be driven from the perspective of how it impacts families.

Clearly one of the pillars that many of us hold in common and bringing us here tonight is our belief that families represent the most central and essential social unit in American life. I know that is true in Colorado and in your home State as well. And for all of us here, having families regarded as a central social unit, essential in everything that we believe to be the focus of American life includes welfare, for example.

When we talk about welfare reform, when we saw this Congress, the 104th Congress pass welfare reform back to the States, once again we saw that maintaining the integrity of families was at the center of that effort.

What we are seeing right now in all 50 States is they deal with reforming welfare systems on a State by State basis, just as this Congress envisioned. We are seeing programs that encourage self-sufficiency, that encourage work, that reward honest hard work rather than dependency, that carry on a legacy that Americans have traditionally enjoyed, one that suggests that young children should have hope and should be able to aspire to have wonderful jobs, to be self-sufficient and to be able to take care of themselves.

When we look at health care, the clearest difference that I have discovered, as a new Member and a freshman, is the difference of opinion that we see here between those who believe on occasion that it is in the end the Government's responsibility to provide for the health care of individuals versus our vision that we wish to empower families to provide health care for their children and ultimately be responsible for the health of their kids. A clear difference, a clear distinction.

But I hope that we are successful in continuing to keep our family focus at the center of the health care debate, too. With respect to wages, it is we who believe that we need to find whatever strategy we can come up with here in Congress to increase the family wages and the earning power of American families, rather than have them continually look for more and more handout from their Government. So increasing wages, increasing the ability to seek opportunity is certainly essential to us.

And all of our efforts that deal with trying to strengthen our economy, be they our efforts to try to reduce capital gains tax or estate taxes that we discussed 2 weeks ago, all designed to try to increase the economic power that we enjoy as Americans and in America that promote and strengthen American families.

Public education is another topic that I know we are going to be dealing with quite a bit. Those of us here really believe that it is ultimately the responsibility of parents to teach their children. We bear the responsibility as parents, and we in fact employ public school districts and public school teachers to assist us in that job. That is again a focus that we need to maintain and be very forceful about here on the floor in every single bill that we pass.

Finally the institution of marriage, something that is ridiculed on occasion, something that comes under attack right here in this body and throughout the country. It is something that I know you share the same intent that I do, to restore the integrity of the institution of marriage, to realize that a family, two parents, a child with two parents has a tremendously greater chance of succeeding and surviving in American society than those who are struggling with families that are operating and trying to make a go of it singlehandedly. It is very difficult. We want to do everything we can to support them.

I want to share something with you and for the rest here, this is a picture of my daughter. If you have a chance to come to my office, you can take a look at it a little closer. My daughter Sarah is 6 months old, 6 months old.

Sarah, on the day of her birth, owed $19,000 to the Federal Government. That was her obligation to the Federal debt. That was her obligation to pay for things that, frankly, this Congress did not have the courage to pay for in years past. They did not think she would mind.

Well, she probably is going to be furious when she learns to discover this on her own and understand what that means. That is what she owed on the day of her birth. Over the course of her working life, the interest on that debt will amount to almost $200,000. It is quite a burden we have saddled this child with. I know I keep this picture with me. I refer to it often and look at this little girl because this happens to be my girl, but it could be anybody's child. It could be yours. It could be any child in America. They have no reason to grow up in a world where they are saddled with that kind of debt, with that kind of a burden that has been placed upon them.

I think we owe it to Sarah. We owe it to every child in America that hope and opportunity is something that will be closer and closer and a chance to achieve that and within their grasp. That is what I am committed to. I know you are committed to that, too, and the people in your fine State and the rest that are here today.

I just want to pledge to you and to all here assembled and all those who are watching this debate today and observing that not a day will go by that this U.S. Congress is in session and convened that I will not be fighting for everybody's American family, keeping little girls like Sarah foremost in my mind in how we conduct our business and keeping my family and your family and every American family first and foremost in our daily deliberations.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much the remarks, especially the commitment to family. I know the gentleman touched on through his remarks some discussion about relief, tax relief. And certainly I think that is, of course, what we are learning as new Members of Congress, that that is the challenge that lays ahead of us, trying to fashion some tax relief for middle income families and all Americans. I know estate tax relief, I think the gentleman referred to, is an area that I have a special interest in.

I also know it is something that our friend from Mississippi cares deeply about.

I yield to our new Member, the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. PICKERING].

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. HULSHOF for putting this

together for new Members of Congress so that we can talk about the importance of family and the importance of families to the success of our country.

I have four children, four boys, ages 7, 5, 3 and 1. Our campaign slogan was, ''If not your support, your sympathy.'' And tonight they are at home watching.

I miss them but I hope as they watch what I do here in this body and what I try to do to serve my country that at the end of my days they will see that what we were all about is not just about taxes and spending and the issues that come before us, but it is about strengthening and supporting and sustaining the key to our success, our family, of having a culture that discourages violence and crime, that promotes strong education, that seeks to remove the barriers and the penalties and the punishment that we now see too often placed on families. And if we can be a part of that, then I will be very proud of my service and that I hope my four boys will think that we did something to make their generation live in a free and prosperous and moral country.

In May 1988, President Ronald Reagan visited the Moscow State University and before leaving held a short question and answer session with some of the students. He made a statement that I think is appropriate tonight.

President Reagan said, ''Progress is not foreordained; the key is freedom.''

For our families to make progress and succeed, our families must have freedom. Freedom to grow, to prosper, to spend time with their children, freedom from an overly burdensome government.

Sonny Montgomery served in this district before I did. He met the challenge of his day helping build a strong defense and contain communism to give my children and to give us the freedom and the prosperity that we enjoy today. Men like Bob Dole.

I believe the challenge of my generation, the challenge that we face today is strengthening and providing the environment for families to prosper. We will have to make some tough decisions as we go forward. The American family today is gripped by taxation, regulation. It seems to punish those things we believe in: marriage, investment, work.

□ 1900

It seems to side against families trying to raise their families consistent with their faith and their values. We are trying to propose legislative solutions that help; that bring common sense and lift the load and the burden from the family.

What are some of the ideas that we are talking about, some of the solutions, the alternatives to the failed old policies that have mortgaged our future? What we want to do is provide hard-working families more time for their children and more money for their pockets, and the ability to pass on not only their good name but the fruits of their labor without the fear of the IRS.

We want to pass the Working Families Flexibility Act, on which we voted today. We want a balanced budget. We want to end the marriage penalty and to implement a family tax credit. We want to end the death tax, the inheritance tax.

Tonight I want to tell a few stories about families back home in my district. A man named Chester Thigpen, 85 years old, has worked his entire life to provide for his family, his wife Rosett and four children, two boys and two girls.

Mr. Thigpen's first day of work was back in 1918. On that day his labor yielded him 35 cents. Today he is a successful tree farmer, with several hundred acres of prime timberland. He has been a tree farmer for over 40 years and he has worked daily to ensure a bright future for his children.

He is an example of the American dream. He is the first African-American to win the honor of the Mississippi Tree Farmer of the Year and the National Tree Farmer of the Year.

But what threatens him and his family today? It is not pine beetles, it is not tornadoes, it is not termites. His farm is in jeopardy because of the death tax, the inheritance tax.

He has worked hard his entire life and would like to leave what he has done to his children, to give them the fruits of his labor. In Proverbs it says that a good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children. Mr. Thigpen wants to do this, yet our Federal Tax Code wants to confiscate it, to take it away. He has been successful, so our Government wants to penalize him.

He did not work his entire life to see his farm, his inheritance that he wants to leave to his children, taken away. The Thigpens say to their children, ''Let what you do be an asset to your community.'' They have lived that. They are testimonies and they are examples of that.

We need to stand for Mr. Thigpen and his family, to do away with an estate tax that punishes hard work, that takes away the inheritance he wants to leave his children. It is clearly the worst example that we have in our tax system, to tax people from their grave. Taxation without representation in its purest sense. It is a horrible, horrible example that must be changed.

I want to talk about hard-working families that now pay more in taxes than they pay in clothing, in transportation, in their mortgages and their rents. They pay all of that, more than that, in taxes.

In 1948, the typical family of four paid 3 percent of its income to the Federal Government in direct taxes. In 1994, the equivalent family paid 24.5 percent of its income to the Federal Government. We do not need another 46 years of growth in taxes, we need 46 years of growth in prosperity for our children and our children's children. This is our battle for our generation, to preserve the freedom, to support our families.

I will close with one last example of another family in my district from Pearl, Mississippi, Bobby and June Pickle. They have two boys, Brett and Lake. Mr. Pickle said, and I quote, ''Taxes eat us alive.''

When they had their first son, Brett, June, their mother, quit her job. She wanted to stay home to raise and nurture her family, but she could not afford to do so. The bills were too high, the taxes were too high, and she was forced to go back and work.

It is time to change our priorities. Family tax credits that we are proposing will help families who choose to have a mother or a father stay home with their children. Hopefully they will have the economic freedom to do that.

There are many things that are important in this Congress, none more important than supporting, strengthening and sustaining our families. The gentleman from Oklahoma, J.C. WATTS, is a good leader on the Community Renewal Act that will help us move families from welfare to work, that will help strengthen the values that we cherish, to look to nongovernmental solutions, faith-based and community-based organizations, to help strengthen families and communities. All this and more we can do to strengthen our families.

I thank the gentleman for granting me this time tonight and look forward to working with all the Members in this body to do everything we can to support our families.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for giving us some human faces and human life examples as to why we need as a Congress to create a new vision, I think, especially the story that the gentleman from Mississippi told about his constituent, Mr. Thigpen, and the estate tax.

Today in our committee hearing in the Committee on Ways and Means, we had several individuals who testified about the ravages of the estate tax. Certainly as the son, only son, of a Missouri farm family, I know firsthand whereof the gentleman speaks, of the plight of millions of Americans whose pursuit of the American dream becomes a nightmare when the realities sink in that a family business has to be liquidated, or perhaps a family farm has to be auctioned off on the steps of the courthouse just to pay the Federal tax.

I know our family as well as millions of family members across this country have invested not only money into family businesses but their hearts and souls. I know family businesses often take the risks and then navigate those treacherous straits of regulation. And just as open waters and calmer seas lie on the horizon, the Federal Government crashes a tidal wave over the bow of the boats of these family-owned businesses. I applaud the gentleman for his comments.

I also recognize my friend from New Jersey, who also is a leader in his community. I know that last week he provided some inspiring comments about success stories in his district about community renewal, and I am happy to yield to him now.

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding this time to me.

Mr. Speaker, most of us know the famous line from the movie the Wizard of Oz, where Dorothy clicks her heels together and says ''There's no place like home.'' Well, more and more business owners, just like Dorothy, are sharing the same sentiment that there is no place like home.

Over 14,000,000 business owners around this country work out of their home, Mr. Speaker. Each of us know people who work from their homes: consultants, salespeople, lawyers, doctors, accountants, graphic designers, bookkeepers, and the list goes on. But beyond their jobs, many of these people are parents. The advent of fax machines, the Internet and teleconferencing has literally changed the face of doing business. No longer are businesses confined to large office buildings.

Last week I announced that I have introduced legislation, H.R. 955, the Family Freedom Home Office Deduction Act of 1997 that, if enacted, will literally help America's families.

Seventy percent of all home-based businesses are started by women. I was pleased to announce the introduction of this legislation at the site of the New Jersey Association of Women Business Owners' State luncheon. I was joined by many business owners from the 12th District of New Jersey who successfully run home-based businesses.

Each of these people expressed support for the legislation, and many of them mentioned that running a home-based business gave them the opportunity to both work and take care of family commitments. While they could start and run a business, they could also go to doctors' appointments with their children, attend a teacher's conference or do numerous other things with their children.

Operating a home-based business takes away many of the constraints that currently prohibit parents from being able to attend to important events in their child's life.

As we were getting ready to make the announcement, a woman who has been active in the home-based business issue approached me. She had written a book about starting a home office, a home-based business, and expressed support for my bill. In fact, she autographed her book and signed it, ''To MIKE PAPPAS. There is no place like home.''

So many of the issues that we will take up this year, and so many of the proposals that private industry is undertaking, seek to create a more family-friendly work environment and promote family values. We have acknowledged so many times before that families are working harder and longer just to keep up as their tax burden has risen and college costs have soared through the roof.

Many parents spend every last minute, sometimes working two jobs themselves, just to pay the bills and try to save for their children's education. Sometimes, though, as they work so hard to provide and save for their family, they are unable to be there for the family members. How can we expect parents to monitor what their children are watching on television if they are not able to be at home? How can we expect parents to monitor their children on the Internet if they are not at home? For many, the simple solution is the home office.

Think about it for a second. Parents can still work, can still pursue greater prosperity and can do it while being at home with their children. Whether it is the father who wants to be there for his children or the mother who works as a consultant, working from home has become increasingly appealing.

The Tax Code should reflect the modern business environment of America and the IRS should recognize its impact on our future. Currently, the IRS severely restricts the ability of home-based workers to deduct the expenses relating to their home office.

I think that all of us, on both sides of the aisle, can agree that giving parents the opportunity to spend more time with their children would have a positive effect on America's families.

As we stand here tonight on the brink of a new century, dreaming of the future, embracing the next advance in technology, we must not forget and we must strive to maintain our country's greatest asset, our families.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's comments, and in looking about I am happy to see my colleague from Kansas.

If I could share this quick personal story, not to certainly comment upon my colleague's age, but I recall sitting in front of a black and white television set in the mid 1960's and watching the Olympics and cheering the gentleman on to victory and to an Olympic medal. It is an extreme honor to have the gentleman from Kansas joining us as a new Member, and I would yield to the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. RYUN].

Mr. RYUN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the time and thank him for yielding.

I also thank the gentleman from New Jersey for having mentioned the great State of Kansas in his comments about the movie ''Gone With The Wind'' and the ''Wizard of Oz.'' Kansas is a great State and I am pleased to represent the second District.

I am also pleased that my freshmen colleagues have chosen to come and speak on a subject that is dear to all of us, and that is the family. As a father of four children, ranging in ages from 21 to 26, I know how important this subject will be to them and their future families.

Normally, we send our children to school as freshmen, but in this case my family, our children, sent me to Congress as a freshman, and it is a pleasure to be here and serve the second District and to also speak on how important this issue is for families.

Mr. Speaker, it is important, I believe, that we look at the issue of balancing the budget, because what it does, it protects not only our children and our future children, but it protects our Nation. The current national debt is approximately $5 trillion.

Just how much is $5 trillion? Well, if we paid a million dollars a day for 365 days, that is every day of the year, it would take us 13,699 years to pay off our national debt.

It is also a terrible tragedy when we saddle our children born today with a debt. They owe the Federal Government $200,000 just on the interest on the debt alone. That is something we need to correct. That is why balancing the budget is imperative.

Balancing the budget would reduce the interest rates, according to Federal Reserve director Alan Greenspan, by as much as 2 percentage points. What does that mean? Well, that means that for a typical family, it would save them in these particular areas: Say a student loan, a typical student loan, it would save them $216 per year. It means if a family had a typical car loan, it would save that family as much as $180 a year.

For a family that is purchasing a 30-year mortgage on a $50,000 home, with 15 percent down, it would mean that it would save them $1,230 of their hard-earned money. It means that a family who would be purchasing, let us say, a $100,000 home, putting down 15 percent, again on a 30-year mortgage, it would mean a savings of $2,160 back to families, back helping them in the areas that they should be receiving an award.

We all agree we are facing a tremendous budget crisis. The reason we are facing the budget crisis is not because we are taxed too little, it is because the Government simply spends too much.

I know, Mr. Speaker, like all of us that are seated here, we have to learn to balance our checkbook. That is what we are really asking the Government to do, is not to spend more than it really has.

□ 1915

The $1.6 trillion in revenue that makes up the President's budget request is not the Government's money; it is the product of hard work and sacrifice that belongs to American families and Kansas families. It is hard earned money. They should be receiving their rewards. The Nation's capital does not create wealth. All the money that sits in the U.S. Treasury was taken from someone's pocket; that is, the hardworking taxpayers.

I would like to put that money back into the pockets of the American people, back to the people of the Second

District. They simply are taxed too much. We need to make those changes. Families deserve tax relief from this crushing tax burden. A $500 per child tax credit would benefit the families who need it. It would also help single mothers who have incomes less than $25,000 a year, helping them specifically.

A repeal of the estate tax and gift tax would enhance the chance for families, family farms and family businesses to succeed and pass it on to the next generation. Reducing the capital gains tax would simply create more jobs, it would help the economy grow, it would encourage better jobs for more people, it would encourage them to work and to save more and to invest more. Balancing the budget and relieving the American taxpayer, families in general, taking away that crushing tax burden is pro-life, Mr. Speaker, and it is imperative that we do it.

Mr. HULSHOF. I appreciate the inspiring remarks of the gentleman from Kansas and am happy to have him as a leader among our newly elected Members on the Republican side and of this House.

Again, Mr. Speaker, as we look for positive solutions to many of the problems that lie ahead and as we as a class forge our identity and we help to create the vision for the future, we are happy tonight to focus on the family, and in that way I yield to my friend from Alabama, Mr. ADERHOLT.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, this evening as some of my colleagues are doing, I would like to take a few minutes to share my thoughts about the American family.

I believe there is nothing more important than strengthening families in America today. As Representatives in Congress, we should ever be mindful of the role we play in supporting America's families. It is because of this belief that I intend to do everything in my power, the power given to me by the people of the Fourth District of Alabama, to take a stand on the issues that are affecting our Nation's families.

Two of the greatest gifts I believe that we can give our children are a balanced budget and lower taxes. We need to cut spending and reduce the tax burden to make sure that we have strong economic growth so that our children and our children's children can enjoy the same benefits that we have been given.

It is time for the Federal Government to take responsibility for its decisions and their effect on the American people. Federal spending should be reined in and controlled. Reducing the growth of Federal spending is the way to get a balanced budget, not by taking more money from hardworking people who are already struggling to make ends meet.

By balancing the budget, a middle-class family easily saves $1,500 per year. Who do you know would turn down having an extra $1,500 per year in their pocket?

Another pressing concern for families is taxes. The American family is the most heavily taxed entity in the Nation. As has been pointed out several times here tonight, the average family in 1954 were paying just about 2 percent of its adjusted gross income in Federal income taxes. Today that figure has soared to 25 percent. And when you add State and local taxes, the average family of four pays almost 40 percent of its income in taxes. Forty percent. That is more than most families spend on housing, clothing, and food combined.

The strain of meeting America's crushing tax burden has forced many homemakers into the work force, reducing the amount of time that parents spend with their children by approximately one-half. Part of the Republican agenda is to allow families the opportunity to spend more time together. By giving men and women the option to choose comptime instead of overtime, they are given the chance to spend more time with their families.

Last, tonight as we focus on the issue of abortion on the House floor tomorrow, an issue that greatly affects the very existence of families, I would like to state my unwavering commitment to restoring respect for human life, born and unborn, in the 105th Congress. As we consider the partial birth abortion ban, I ask my colleagues to consider the words of Mother Theresa, who once stated that abortion is the greatest destroyer of peace today. It is a war against the child, a direct killing of the innocent child. Let us put an end to this brutal procedure that has taken the lives of so many babies each year and every day.

In closing, recently I brought a resolution to the floor that would reaffirm the role of the Ten Commandments as a cornerstone of a fair and just society. I believe that this symbolic gesture is important in reaffirming the Judeo-Christian values on which this Nation was founded.

As Representatives in Congress, we should always be mindful of the role that we play in setting the course of the American family. This is an awesome responsibility. But with God's help to see the right, we can make this great Nation a city on the hill.

Mr. HULSHOF. I appreciate the gentleman's remarks and especially his efforts and was happy that his resolution the week before last did pass this body.

I am happy, Mr. Speaker, to yield to a good friend from Texas, Mr. SESSIONS. Of the 32 new Members on the Republican side, Mr. Speaker, 30 of us sought congressional seats for the first time this time. My friend from Texas and I, however, gave it a shot back in 1994.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the gentleman from Missouri for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, tonight what we are talking about in plain and simple terms is not only stronger families for a better America, but what we are talking about is how American families are going to survive in the 1990's and in the future. Tonight we have heard discussion after discussion, person after person offer an argument for the best thing that we can do for America's families. Of course, Mr. Speaker, I would say that that is that we need to balance the budget.

The last time the budget was balanced was in 1969, when President Lyndon B. Johnson was President. I know that we can improve the lives and the conditions for families through lower interest rates, on homes, cars, college loans and through more job opportunities, now and in our future. But it is time that we do that now, and it is now time that we say we must have a balanced budget.

The result of a balanced budget according to a DRI/McGraw Hill study is that there would be a drop in the 30-year Treasury bond rate to 4.5 percent. It is now over 7.5 percent, so you can see that that is an astonishing drop of 3 percent. This would cause fixed rate mortgages to drop by the rate of 2.7 percent which would cause housing starts to rise to 65,000 units.

What would this mean? For the people who I represent in Texas in the 5th Congressional District, this would mean that there would be a savings of over $1,230 a year on the average home mortgage, $216 for a student loan, and $180 on average for a car loan. That is why we must balance the budget. It will provide real savings for working families, and instead of taking a second job to meet the financial needs of the family, parents might find that they have more time to spend with their families.

What we do here in Washington does have a real impact on the lives of families throughout this country. We must show the courage and the discipline it takes to balance the budget. Our spending entitlements continue to grow each year. That means that money available for discretionary spending on programs such as education, welfare, Medicare, Medicaid, will continue to decrease. We simply cannot allow that to happen.

Reducing the cost of government means lower taxes for working families. It means preserving, protecting and strengthening Medicare and Social Security. It means returning enough money to my home in the State of Texas to cover the cost of a good education for all of our children and taking care of all of our citizens.

It is important that we constantly ask ourselves what we pass in the way of legislation, will that cause a burden or a reduction on America's families?

I am glad today that we voted for the Working Families Flexibility Act. This is exactly what we need to be doing. It will allow all workers to have the option of either overtime pay or extra time off. This would allow working mothers and fathers the choice of taking time off to do the following things: Perhaps to take their children to school for the first day of school, watching a school pageant, attending a parent-teacher conference, or staying

at home with a sick child. I believe we are on the right track. This bill would give greater freedom to families in Texas and also those all around the country to raise and educate their children.

Texans and Americans are counting on us to get the job done. If we can educate ourselves about the benefits of balancing the budget and the dire consequences of continuing these deficits, we will have the discipline to do the right thing. I say, let us balance the budget now.

Having laid out these facts for you tonight, for the American people, I would just like to leave them with a few questions.

First, how could your family survive year after year spending more money than it earned?

Second, what could your family do with extra money if at the time we balance the budget, we deducted $500 off the top 6 those families's taxes for each child that they are trying to raise?

And, third, what would you think of your Member of Congress if that person misled you and did not balance the budget?

Mr. HULSHOF. I appreciate the gentleman's remarks and his courage and discipline, not only for the Members of his district in Texas but for the country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. PEASE. I thank my colleague from Missouri for the leadership he has provided, not only this evening but throughout this Congress to date.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I had the opportunity to meet with some of my constituents from the Disabled American Veterans, Indiana Chapter. While speaking with them, Jim Powers, a disabled Hoosier veteran commented: ''Family is all that is important. Without it, nothing else aside from faith much matters.''

Jim was speaking from personal experience. Having been married for 38 years, he and his wife are fortunate enough to have their family close at hand in Indiana. One of the most important roles Jim has the opportunity to play is grandfather. He and his two granddaughters are fortunate that they see each other every day, and he is significantly involved in their personal development. He cherishes the closeness of his family. Though I wish this were true for every family, the statistics today are quite disheartening. Many, many individuals are disconnected from family members while others search for anything that remotely resembles a family unit. Those who lack a traditional family find themselves without the togetherness, stability and aid in times of need that faith and families provide.

In the past, the system to rectify this increasingly common shortcoming has been to increase Federal funding of welfare and social services. Unfortunately, this system of increasing Federal spending and trying to supplant the family unit with a bureaucratic machine has proven inefficient, ineffective and in many cases actually destructive of families.

Now the trend is moving many of these services away from the Federal Government to the States and local governments. While I do believe this is a step in the right direction, I am increasingly certain that it is not enough simply to shift these programs from Washington to the States and local governments, for in many cases the lack of a family unit, the real heart of our social problems, will still exist no matter which government spends the money.

We certainly cannot legislate a traditional family for all those who lack one. However, we can, through legislation, encourage and provide support for private charities and faith-based institutions to assist in the roles of support and family services which so many desperately need.

Tax deductions for charitable contributions must be maintained. And the implementation of tax credits for charitable contributions to organizations which perform social services can help those Americans who need a family unit or support for their existing families. Services such as counseling and educational funding, health services, youth programs and elderly assistance can all be administered through private organizations, such as scouting, YM and YWCA's and Habitat for Humanity, among others, and faith-based institutions.

□ 1930

The 105th Congress is taking measures to ensure the strengthening of families. One thing above all is clear. Our Government cannot and should not try to be a replacement for the traditional family. Instead we must call on our local charities, churches, and community organizations to expand their role in providing support to families in stress and to rebuilding families that have disintegrated.

The private partnership of neighbor helping neighbor has been one of the great traditions of this Nation. We in the Congress must find ways to strengthen, not supplant, that tradition. When we do, our families and thus the Nation will be the stronger.

Mr. HULSHOF. I appreciate the gentleman's comments.

Mr. Speaker, I know time is drawing short, and I yield to the gentleman from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE].

Mr. THUNE. I want to thank my colleague from Missouri and the many other of our freshman class who have joined us here this evening to talk about things that are important to the American family.

Mr. Speaker, the Declaration of Independence, our founders, articulated what is one of the most profound and simple statements of self-government that the world has ever seen, and yet they said that all men are created equal and they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights and among these are the right to life, to liberty, to the pursuit of happiness. In order to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

In that very basic statement, we have become the model for the world and people from all over the world come here; and as Bill Bennett has described the gates test, that is what happens when you open your gates; do people want to get in or do they want to get out? In America people are flocking to come here because of the things that we stand for and have stood for over the years.

I had the opportunity here a couple of weeks back to take my 9-year-old and my 7-year-old to the Lincoln Memorial, and as we went up the two flights of steps and there he was, honest Abe in all his glory, the big statue, my 7-year-old remarked, I did not realize that he was so big; and we had to explain that that was not his actual size, his feet really were not this long.

But as I thought about her statement, I thought to myself in many ways he was big. He was in terms of his ideals, his principles, his convictions. The things that he stood for are many of the things that motivated me to run for office, things like freedom, things like equality, things like a belief that government should not do for people. Only it should do for people only those things that they cannot do for themselves.

And we have heard this evening from a number of our colleagues talking about the important priorities that we see in terms of this Congress and the things that we can accomplish to advance freedom, freedom for families. We had a vote today on a bill that would give families more flexibility, more freedom, more opportunities to spend time with each other. We will vote tomorrow on a bill that respects the sanctity of life, one of those unalienable rights that we heard about earlier in the Declaration of Independence. And last year we had an opportunity and we are seeing the effects of it this year to vote on welfare reform, which in my judgment provides more freedom for families, it restores self-respect, self-sufficiency, independence, and I think we are seeing the fruits of that bill that was enacted last year. We have already seen welfare cases drop 15 percent between January 1995 and September 1996.

And so as we talk about these various issues throughout this Congress, I think those are the things that we as a class want very much to keep at the forefront of the agenda. We talk about the rights that we as a country enumerated and established when our founders and their great foresight laid down the Declaration of Independence. They talked about life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and that is really

what we are about is giving our children an opportunity to pursue happiness, to enjoy the freedoms and the liberty that we have in this country and to respect the right for life.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's comments.

Mr. Speaker, to conclude as we have discussed newly elected Republican Members, as we try to create and help fashion a vision for our country tonight, we have focused on strengthening the families in ways that this body can provide family friendly legislation such as the measure we passed today. Our message is rooted in hope and in optimism because that is indeed what our country was founded on.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Michigan). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, last night myself and other members of the Democratic caucus gathered here to discuss the issue of campaign finance reform, and we had a good constructive discussion, I believe, about what is wrong with the present system, and we again appealed to the Republican leadership of this House to put a campaign finance reform bill on the table for us to consider.

This morning, roughly about 10 hours after we concluded our special order, I picked up the Washington Post, and I read that the Republican chairman who is in charge of the partisan investigation into campaign fundraising has himself abused the system. According to the story on the front page, the chairman of the House Committee on Government Reform bullied a lobbyist for the Government of Pakistan for campaign money in the manner the lobbyist described as a shakedown. Not stopping there, the chairman then contacted the Pakistani Ambassador, complaining that the lobbyist could not raise him enough money.

My colleagues, this is just the kind of abuse the chairman himself has been empowered to investigate.

Originally I was concerned that these hearings would be too partisan, but after stories in this morning's Washington Post I now know that these hearings will not just merely be partisan, they are going to be a joke. How can the gentleman from Indiana hold the gavel and conduct these hearings in an objective manner?

In light of today's allegations the gentleman from Indiana should, in my opinion, recuse himself from the committee's investigation, and he should also open up his committee's probe to a much wider scope than the White House and include both parties in Congress.

Tomorrow the Republican majority of this House will likely ask us to vote and probably pass a $12 to $15 million budget that will be placed in Chairman BURTON's hands for this investigation, and how they can do that in good conscience after today's headlines really baffles me.

I want to say today our House Democratic leader, RICHARD GEPHARDT, because of his concern over the nature of this investigation and where it is going, the House Committee on Government Reform issued a statement, and I would just like to read from part of that statement. He says that the vote on committee funding scheduled for tomorrow sanctions the Republican leadership's decision to make 12 to 15 million taxpayer dollars available for a one-sided, open-ended investigation of White House campaign fundraising. This partisan investigation flies in the face of a unanimous vote in the Senate to broaden the scope of the inquiry into improper and illegal activities in Democratic and Republican campaigns in the last election.

Let me just for a moment not read from that statement anymore and explain that essentially what is happening here is that the Republican leadership and the chairman of the House Committee on Government Reform are suggesting that this investigation essentially be limited to the White House, and they are not interested in broadening the investigation, the way it was done in the Senate, to include both Democratic and Republican campaigns, congressional campaigns, Senate and House campaigns, in the last election. The budget granted to Chairman BURTON is $8 million more than the Senate investigation.

Further, the House investigation could go on for the duration of this Congress instead of the year-end resolution set to conclude the Senate investigation. Chairman BURTON has granted himself unprecedented subpoena power and refused to provide the Democrats on the committee any resolution on the rules of conduct that would allow us assurances of the same fair and balanced process that will occur in the Senate investigation.

Now the Republican leadership, as myself and other Democratic colleagues have pointed out many times on the House floor, has ruled out so far any consideration of a campaign finance reform bill, and they are preventing Congress from being included in the House investigation. Their action begs the question of whether they are truly interested in reforming the campaign finance system or merely bent on attacking a Democratic administration, and that I think is what this is all about. What the Republican leadership wants to do, what the Republican chairman of the committee wants to do, is limit this investigation to the administration, to the White House, to the Democrats in the White House and not consider what is going on in Congress on both sides of the aisle.

The gentleman from Indiana has also abused his power, and the Republican leadership has been a willing conspirator by allowing him to run over the rules of the House in this investigation. Improper or illegal activity, whether it occurred in the Democratic or Republican campaign, should be included in the House investigation. Anything short of that smacks of protecting our self-interest at the expense of rooting out the abuses in the entire campaign finance system.

Now in the statement that the Democratic leader put out today he also released a letter to the Speaker signed by the Democratic leadership and the Democratic ranking members serving notice that we, the Democrats, will oppose the committee funding resolution and use whatever parliamentary tools we have available to block its consideration unless he reconsiders bringing this resolution to the floor in its current form.

And let me repeat. All that we are saying is that this investigation should be like the one in the Senate. The Senate one makes sense. They are not limiting it to the White House; they are including Democrats and Republicans and congressional campaigns as part of the overall inquiry.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman should refrain from characterizing the Senate action.

Mr. PALLONE. Excuse me; thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Now the problems that I mentioned with regard to the gentleman from Indiana and the reason that we are gathering here tonight, or the reason that I am here tonight, and some of my colleagues, is because we want to see campaign finance reform. Again the Republican leadership is missing a great opportunity here because there are some serious proposals that have been introduced by Members of the House on the campaign finance reform issue. We may discuss a few of them tonight. On the Democratic side we have formed a campaign finance reform task force in order to review all legislative proposals for reform and to try to develop a consensus position, and I want to stress that many of my colleagues, including some of the Republicans, some of the rank and file Republicans, have introduced some good proposals in this regard.

There are bills out there that address spending limits, the role of political parties, political advocacy, tax-exempt organizations, contribution limits, greater disclosure, FEC enforcement, soft money, free commercial broadcast time, public financing, and the list goes on. But the bottom line is these bills mean nothing unless the Republican leadership of this House, which is the majority party, sets the agenda and decides to act.

I would like now to yield, if I could, to one of my colleagues who is here tonight to talk about some of the same concerns, the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE].