

our parents and our educators are telling us.

At the White House today the President and the First Lady are convening a session on what we do and how we help our families get this information out there even more. But here in the House of Representatives, yesterday in our Committee on Appropriations, the Republicans proposed to slash WIC programs, which are for education and nutrition and development for our children and our families. What better contrast between the White House and our House of Representatives.

Let us invest in our children.

DOING THE RIGHT THING

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, today, Speaker GINGRICH is doing the right thing. The reimbursement that he is paying is not a fine. The committee itself makes it clear that the reimbursement of legal expenses are for costs only. The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct imposed no restrictions on how the reimbursement could be paid. Speaker GINGRICH could have used campaign funds to reimburse the committee. Others have done this, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. GEPHARDT], the gentleman from Texas [Mr. FROST], former Congressman Rose.

Speaker GINGRICH could have used the NEWT GINGRICH trust fund approved by the committee for the stated purpose of paying the reimbursement. Instead, the Speaker chose to do the right thing by reimbursing the taxpayers and taking full responsibility with borrowed money under his own name. I commend Speaker GINGRICH for the effort that he is putting forward.

PUT EDUCATION FIRST

(Mr. ETHERIDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on the people's House to put education first on our Nation's agenda.

As a former two-term State superintendent in North Carolina, I know firsthand what can happen and what a difference a strong educational system can make in the lives of our people. My State has proven that bold, visionary leadership can make a difference tangibly in the lives of young people when we do the right thing.

Mr. Speaker, when students, parents, teachers, and communities get involved, strong improvement is the result of what happens. Several weeks ago, the rigorous NAEP scores came out, and in our State, North Carolina, students came out near the top in this country.

Mr. Speaker, as the first member of my family to graduate from college, I learned long ago the value of edu-

cational excellence. As a Congressman, I know how important education is to my constituents and to this Nation. We must provide safe healthy schools and we must do it now.

NEW DAY IN CONGRESS

(Mr. SOLOMON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, today represents a new day in this Congress. The Speaker has accepted full responsibility for the reimbursement that is owed to the American people. It is now the duty of this Congress to move forward with our agenda, an agenda that the American people have asked us to implement.

That agenda signals a desire to put the country on a new path, a path of greater freedom, more personal responsibility and less interference from Washington. This represents a change in direction, Mr. Speaker. Most Americans agree that the country has been moving in a direction of bigger Government, higher taxes and a decay in the American spirit of unlimited possibilities.

I want to renew that spirit. It is a spirit that attracts over 1 million immigrants to our shores every year. It is a spirit that animates freedom lovers from Tiananmen Square to Moscow. It is a spirit that tells all American children that they can dream their dreams and grow up to be whatever they wish to be and soar to whatever heights their talents and efforts take them. Mr. Speaker, now let us move forward with that renewed spirit. I thank you for your leadership.

SPECIAL INTEREST MONEY IN THE PEOPLE'S HOUSE

(Mr. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, when will it ever end? When will it ever end with respect to special interest money and public policy in the people's House. Later today we will learn that Speaker GINGRICH will pay his fine for lying to Congress by borrowing it from Bob Dole, Bob Dole who was recently hired by big tobacco to get a settlement in the Congress of the United States for all of the people that tobacco has injured because of addiction and the cancer causing agent. We now have the chief lobbyists for big tobacco financing the payoff of the Speaker's fine for lying to the Congress.

Is there nothing that we cannot do without special interest money? Is there nothing that we cannot do that is on the level? Do we now have to bring in big tobacco to rescue the ethics of the Speaker of the House of Representatives?

This is a very sad day for the House of Representatives when the tobacco

industry is paying the legal fines of Members of Congress.

DO THE RIGHT THING

(Mr. PAXON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAXON. Mr. Speaker, the American people have just witnessed a good example of how difficult it is in the environment of the House of Representatives on some days to do the right thing.

The Speaker is going to come to this floor very shortly and do the right thing, set the highest possible standard. He was not required to repay this reimbursement, not a fine, reimbursement for expenses, out of his own funds, but he is going to do so today to move this institution forward on the important agenda of the American people.

Now we just have a Member of this House come forward who decides he is going to continue this battle in the days ahead. That is a mistake. The gentleman who was just at the well is the man who said, NEWT GINGRICH has command and control of the Republicans and we are going to take him out.

Well, they did not take him out and the bitterness is showing today. Mr. GINGRICH, our Speaker, is stepping forward once again to set a high standard of personal responsibility, to pay this reimbursement out of his personal resources. I believe that every Member of this House should step forward and commend the Speaker for his action.

NO PRICE ON HONESTY

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, it has been said that no price can be placed on honesty, not \$3, not \$300,000.

After 3 months of carefully calculating every angle, of exploring fully the political calculus of every other alternative, the Speaker has reluctantly decided to do what law violators do in America every day: pay the fine for an offense on which a guilty plea was entered and a conviction found.

This decision, though belated, should be accepted by this House on both sides of the aisle, accepted but not applauded, not applauded any more than we would applaud the decision of a major polluter who had injured the public health and welfare through its pollution and then paid a fine for the conviction.

For pollution is what has occurred here, lies and deception that threaten the very fabric of our democracy. Nor does this payment remove other offenses that are still pending, some over 18 months. There is nothing noble about the payment of the fine. There is

something very ignoble about the conduct that produced it.

PRIDE IN THE SPEAKER

(Ms. DUNN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I must say, this is a fascinating debate. Finally we have somebody in this political maelstrom who does the right thing, who goes above and beyond fairness and does the right thing, as the Speaker of the House, and the other side cannot stand it.

I want to tell my colleagues, I am proud of the Speaker. I am proud to be associated with him. I am proud to be part of his leadership team. He did not have to pay this reimbursement for legal services, but he has chosen to do that to set a new standard.

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It seems to me when we have a Speaker of the House that is willing to set a standard in the House of Representatives, maybe a standard the White House could take a little information from, we ought to praise him.

I tell my colleagues it is time for the American people, who have helped us to come to this decision, to come back with us and mesh in a partnership, take back the agenda of this House, get the problems solved, the problems we know that are hurting America today, and get off this politicized ethics process. We need to get back to the work at hand.

I call for bipartisanship, I call for great praise of the Speaker of the House.

ATTACKS ON ATTORNEY GENERAL JANET RENO UNJUSTIFIED

(Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I will do exactly as the gentlewoman suggests. I rise today to speak out for an honest woman, our Attorney General, Janet Reno. We have continued to expect much of her and she continues to conduct herself with grace under pressure and courage under fire.

I understand that many are concerned about her decision not to seek a special prosecutor at this time and, of course, that is their right, but I must speak out against the unjustified attacks on the Attorney General's motives.

Janet Reno knew that her decision would be controversial, so she has relied on the advice of a universally well-regarded team of career attorneys. She has resisted pressure from both sides, declining to act hastily. She has not shut down the investigation, which continues. In short, she has not rushed to judgment, and neither should her critics.

We are indeed fortunate to have a woman of such integrity, an honest woman, leading our Department of Justice.

SPEAKER GINGRICH TO COMPENSATE TAXPAYERS FOR COST OF ETHICS INVESTIGATION

(Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I am one of the freshmen here. I have been here on the job for 4 months, and I had hoped to come to Washington and deal with the matters that my constituents and the people of the country expect us to deal with, cutting taxes, providing tax relief, balancing the budget, returning authority back to the States, and doing things of a noble nature, noble causes.

Instead, I have come here and heard the other side berate our Speaker day after day and try to discredit the institution of Congress for what I consider to be, instead, a rather noble cause and a courageous response.

The Speaker taught a college course on American civilization and disclosed the terms of that course to the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, apparently not to the satisfaction of the committee. He reached an agreement, and in the process of that agreed to compensate the taxpayers for the cost of the hearings and the investigation.

He stood up to the task and he agreed to participate and to compensate the taxpayers: A courageous act. I ask the American people to contrast that act of courage with the cowardice that we have heard from those who would oppose the Speaker.

SPEAKER SHOULD NOT BE APPLAUDED FOR VIOLATING ETHICS LAWS OF HOUSE

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe what I am hearing today from my Republican colleagues. The Speaker brought discredit upon this House; he admitted that he lied to the Congress. Republicans are celebrating the fact that the gentleman from Georgia, NEWT GINGRICH, is paying a \$300,000 fine for lying to Congress.

There is nothing to celebrate, my friends. The Speaker should not be applauded for violating the ethics law of this body. He should not be applauded for paying this fine after delaying for 4 months. Any American citizen would have had to pay that fine immediately.

The facts on his payment remain sketchy. Is it a loan or a \$350,000 gift from the chief lobbyist of the tobacco industry? Let us not forget, let us not forget that the Speaker pled guilty. It is nothing to celebrate. It is, in fact, a

sad day for the House of Representatives.

SPEAKER GINGRICH DID NOT LIE TO CONGRESS

(Mrs. FOWLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. FOWLER. Mr. Speaker, I have to take umbrage with the comments from my good friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO]. She is totally inaccurate. The Speaker did not lie to the American Congress.

The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct found that the Speaker broke no rules, broke no regulations. The only thing was that due diligence was not exercised in committee correspondence. That is all. This is a fact. Read through the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct finding.

This is a reimbursement for the expenses incurred by that committee, and I commend our Speaker. It is a courageous step he has taken today to accept full personal responsibility, reimbursing the expenses of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct out of his own personal funds. I think this is a great step for him to take. He has said as Speaker that he has the responsibility to do the right thing and to serve the American people responsibly.

Senator Bob Dole, who was given the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Clinton, has stepped forward to help a friend. And Bob Dole is not a registered lobbyist, contrary to what the other side has been saying today. He is helping a friend.

So we all need to get together now and move forward and do the work the American people sent us here to this Congress to do.

CONGRESS SHOULD DO A BETTER JOB FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there is a need for us to do a much better job on behalf of the American people.

Monday, the Speaker of the House attacked the integrity of the Attorney General because she refused to appoint a special prosecutor, when it was clear that there were individuals with integrity in the Justice Department doing the right thing.

Then on Wednesday, in this House and in a committee, we provided for 350,000 children not to have food by voting against an increase in the WIC Program.

Now, on Thursday, we come today to find that Members have risen to the floor of the House to say that the Speaker has not violated any rules; that there is no problem with the way