

There was no objection.

MORE ON TAX RELIEF

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

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue on with the discussion that we had a few minutes ago just about this notion of the Federal Government, in fact, confiscating the wealth of American families through our excessive tax policy, bringing those dollars here to Washington and redirecting them to the charity of politicians' choices.

We hear all day long the discussions about whether we should spend money on one charity or another charity. These are all fine things. But the Republican vision and the Republican value, when it comes to this whole debate about taxation, is that we are the ones who fundamentally believe that every taxpayer, every family, every wage earner is eminently more capable of deciding how to spend those dollars in a free market economy than the government is.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX].

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to expand upon what the gentleman just said. The American people not only send their tax dollars here. We want to make it sure they get more of it back so they can use it for their families.

They also want a new IRS, one that is more taxpayer friendly, one that we would have under a taxpayer Bill of Rights 3 where we change the burden of proof. Instead of the taxpayer presumed to be guilty and the IRS commissioner presumed to be correct, let us switch those burdens and stop the abuses that have existed in the IRS so we make sure that we have not only fairness in our tax policy but fairness by the IRS.

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PAPPAS].

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for continuing this debate or this discussion about tax relief, which I believe is what the American people are crying out for. Most of the relief in this bill that we are speaking of is in the form of tax cuts directed at middle income wage earners, which includes families which earn between \$20,000 and \$70,000 a year.

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Lots of folks talk about how this is a tax cut for the rich. That is not the case. It is for middle class working men and women.

I see my friend from South Dakota is here, and would like to yield to him for any comments he might want to make.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for yielding, and to my colleagues on the floor this evening, we are talking about

something that is very important to the future of this country, and that is what we can do to balance this country's budget and to lower the tax burdens in America.

One of the things I think we are witnessing, and hopefully, if we do our job correctly, in the next couple of weeks, come the 4th of July we will truly have an Independence Day in this country because we will be witnessing a couple of historic firsts.

For the first time in 40 years we will have balanced this Federal Government's budget. That is a significant first. Very important, I think, to most of us who have kids and are concerned about the next generation. We will for the first time in 16 years have brought tax relief to the American families and the working American women of this country.

I think rather than have this debate become a focus of, and we will hear this, a lot of rhetoric over the course of the next several weeks about the politics of class warfare and the politics of division, the politics of despair and the politics of fear, that is not at all what this debate is about. This is about improving the quality of life for all Americans.

I think if we look at any objective standard and any objective measure about the benefits of this tax package and who really receives those benefits, we will find that 75 percent of the tax relief in this package goes to those who make less than \$75,000 a year, by any objective standard.

There will be a lot of juicing of numbers by opponents of this, and we are already seeing evidence of that, of padding the numbers and trying to create the perception that, in fact, this is an issue of class warfare, but it is not. It is about improving the quality of life for all Americans.

I think it is perfectly consistent with everything that we came here to do. So when we look at the Independence Day that is ahead of us and, hopefully, we will have completed work on this important project, but two important firsts: balancing the budget for the first time in 40 years, lowering taxes for the first time in 16 years, and saving Medicare for another 10 years and, hopefully, into the next generation.

Those are priorities that I will tell all my distinguished friends and colleagues who are here this evening that I came here to be about, and I think it is an incredibly historic day.

There is always room for improvement in any of these packages, and I would certainly hope that as we go through this process we will be able to address an issue that is important to my home State. There is a tax incentive in the law today that promotes ethanol, and that is something that I think is a good return for the taxpayer, and that is something I hope we can resolve and make this package better.

But in any case, there are so many provisions in here that benefit middle class families, I think really that is

consistent with the values, the philosophy, and with the beliefs and the convictions that most of us in the Chamber this evening hold.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield to one of my friends, any of whom is at a microphone right now.

TAX RELIEF FOR THE MIDDLE CLASS

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

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to speak on the same tune, but with slightly different words.

I think that we have been talking a lot about the importance of this to middle class families. We have been talking about the importance of this to what would be seen as kind of main line American families. But I have been very impressed that our Speaker, the gentleman from Georgia [NEWT GINGRICH], has joined with President Clinton to talk some about the problems of race in America and extending opportunity to all American citizens.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield a minute, I think it is real important what he just said and I want to slow up on it a minute. The gentleman just mentioned that the President and the Speaker are working together.

One of the things that is important for us to realize is that the Republican majority in the House and Senate was reelected but, at the same time, the same American voters reelected President Clinton. What they want is results. People are independent ticket splitting and they want results.

It is interesting that on issue after issue the gentleman is saying, race, taxes, balancing the budget, the Republican leadership is working with the President, and yet many detractors on the Democrat side, particularly in the House, cannot stand this; that President Clinton is working with Republicans.

I think the President has heard the message of the American people: They want a balanced budget, they want a smaller government, they want tax relief. And the President realizes that, unfortunately, his party is not going to deliver that, so if he wants to move in the direction of the vision of the American people, he has to work with Republicans rather than Democrats.

I think it is interesting the gentleman made this point one more time on race.

Mr. SOUDER. Well, I wanted to put into the RECORD a number of the things the Speaker said last night, because many of these overlap with what we are talking about here on taxes and providing economic opportunity.

He raised some questions that go beyond this: making sure civil rights are enforced, an importance on welfare reform, in reducing crime, as we work on