Then the third line of defense was, ''Well, yes, maybe it was wrong. But I will never do it again.'' And then the fourth line of defense is, ''Well, it is not my fault. We had to win, you see. We had to do anything, at any cost, regardless of the law.''

Well, we must, No. 1, uphold the law here in America. Because if there is no justice in Washington, DC, there is no justice in Wichita, KS, or in Florida, or Indiana, or anywhere in the United States. We must uphold the law of the United States of America in the States.

The campaign financing must start with the individuals. Rule No. 1, as was stated earlier by the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. SOUDER]: Follow the law. If we are ever going to find where we are going, we have got to find a place to start from. And that is the current law today, we must follow the law.

I guess the Democrat Party in the State of Kansas, the Teamsters, and the national party in the White House are tired of breaking old laws, so they want campaign reform so they get a brandnew set of laws to break.

I want to say in closing, we cannot write enough laws. We have proved that. We have laws upon laws, statute books upon statute books. People have to do the right thing. It is up to the American people to ferret out those who will misalign what they say and what they do and mistreat the taxpayers and the people of America by not doing the right thing. So voters need to find candidates that will do the right thing and support them so we can change America.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. TIAHRT] for his insights. And he is right, we have got to abide by the laws that we have already passed.

I have said for some time that for the Democrats and the President to talk about how they want new laws to be passed on campaign finance reform would be a lot like the driver of Princess Diana coming back from the dead and holding a press conference and demanding that the speed limit be lowered in the tunnels of Paris or that the alcohol level be lowered in Paris for DUI.

Abide by the laws that are on the books and nobody is going to get hurt. Regretfully, though, this is just another way that they can change the subject. And my colleague is right, it is shameful, a lot of the bobbing and weaving. I know the White House, the Vice President particularly said, ''I did not break the law. I did not do anything wrong. And I promise I will never do it again.''

It just does not make sense. The American people are being underestimated. They are smarter. When we see the scandals that are occurring, when we see the National Security Council, when we see money laundering with the AFL–CIO and the Teamsters, when we see the Energy Department being improperly used, the CIA, the NSC, the White House, the Vice President's office, it is time for us to do something.

I agree with the New York Times and I agree with editorial writers across the country, Janet Reno has no choice but to step up to the plate and hire an independent counsel, not a partisan Democrat, not a partisan Republican, but somebody that is independent that can look into this and look into the type of abuses, again, that the New York Times even wrote about this morning that the Democrats use State parties to bypass limits; that $32 million were sent to the local level, paid for by ads aiding Bill Clinton, possibly very, very illegal.

Somebody must look into this. We cannot allow the integrity of the American system to continue to be questioned like this. Let us get somebody independent in that can look at the law and apply the law equally to both sides. If that happens, America is the winner, not just Republicans or Democrats.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore [Mr. PEASE]. The Chair will remind all Members that they are to refrain from references to individual Members of the other body.

ELIMINATE MARRIAGE PENALTY TAX

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

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to report to my colleagues today about a project that the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. WELLER] and I have started in the last few weeks. I want to thank each of my colleagues who have joined us in cosponsoring our legislation to eliminate the marriage penalty tax in our Tax Code.

I first started focusing on this when I received a letter from a constituent of mine, Sharon Mallory, who lives in Straughn, IN. Sharon wrote to me about how she and her boyfriend wanted to get married, went to the accountant, and found out that she would have to give up her $900 tax refund and start paying $2,800 if they got married. Sharon closed her letter of last February saying, ''We hope some day the government will allow us to get married by not penalizing us. It broke our hearts when we found out we can't afford it.''

And it broke my heart to think that Sharon and those like her that want to get married and start families in this country are not able to because our Tax Code penalizes them simply because they are married.

I have started a project on my website, and I wanted to share the results of this with my colleagues. People, when they want to communicate with me about the marriage penalty, have started leaving me e-mails at my site, www.House.gov/McIntosh, where we have got a special page on the marriage penalty and what it means to people. So, if I may, let me show my colleagues the map of the United States and some of the dozens of responses that we have gotten.

My colleagues, these are just a few of the communities around the United States where people have written me these e-mails explaining to me what the marriage penalty has meant to them. Let me share with my colleagues a few of them.

Wayne Shelly, who lives in Dayton, OH, wrote this:

> Penalizing for marriage flies in the face of common sense. This is a classic example of Government policy not supporting that which it wishes to promote. In our particular situation, my girlfriend and I would incur an annual net penalty of $2,000 or approximately $167 a month. Though not huge, this was enough to pay our monthly phone, cable, water, and home insurance bills. Therefore, the net effect to us is that, if we remain unmarried, the United States Government will pay these four bills for us.

He might have gone on to say, conversely, if we do get married, instead of paying those bills, we are going to have to dig into our pockets and pay the Government that money.

A second message was from William Dixon of Osgood, IN.

> I was a single parent paying child support. I remarried in 1990. Because of my change of status, I owed a tax bill that I could not pay. I am still trying to pay these taxes and penalties.

Terri Wyncoop of Springfield, VA, wrote to me:

> I knew it was more than enough because I had never owed before I was married. However, when I married I owed every year. We could owe anything from $500 to $1,000. We both claimed zero, and took out an additional $25 weekly out of both of our checks and still owed. Unfortunately, our marriage failed because of financial reasons.

Does it not just break the hearts of my colleagues to know that there are American citizens like Terri Wyncoop of Springfield, VA, who attribute the breakdown of their family to the fact that this government penalized them for when they were married?

I can just picture the desperate straits of those two young people who want their marriage to succeed deciding, ''Well, let us take more out of our paychecks in order not to pay taxes at the end of the year,'' and to find themselves still penalized and hit with that terrible burden.

Now, those financial crises oftentimes come in at a time when young people are trying to make a new life together. And people say to me, how can that make a difference? Well, I want to share with my colleagues a few statistics of what has happened in this country since 1969 when we started penalizing marriages in our Tax Code.

The National Fatherhood Initiative reports that since the marriage penalty was created for the average American, the probability that a marriage taking place today will end in divorce or permanent separation is calculated to be

60 percent of those married. The percent of married couples households has plummeted from 71 percent to merely 55 percent of our households in America today.

In America, 1 out of every 11 adults is divorced, 3 times the proportion the year the marriage penalty first came into effect. So this penalty, as we can see from across the country, is having a devastating effect on American families. We must eliminate it from our Tax Code.

I am proud to say that the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. WELLER] and I have introduced a bill, along with now close to 200 cosponsors, that will do just that. We will not stop until we have succeeded in passing this legislation. I urge my fellow Members of Congress to join us in that effort.

SPIRIT WHICH REFLECTS AMERICA OF TODAY

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

(Mr. OWENS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, we have had a bit of a reign of pettiness over the past few weeks in the House of Representatives. Certainly it would appear to the general public that pettiness was in command, and much of the previous presentation that we have had was in that same spirit of pettiness.

I would like to talk about a different kind of American spirit, American approach, and commend to my colleagues in the Congress a different approach for the rest of what remains in this session, this first year of the 105th Congress, and to go forward into the next year of the 105th Congress in January with a different mind-set. Instead of the pettiness and the small-mindedness, we should look to inspiration from our past American heroes who have done things in a much bigger way.

I intend to talk about some very practical problems under this big theme of going forward in a spirit which reflects the America of today that should be. I think we ought to heed the call of President Clinton when he called for us to behave like an indispensable Nation, that we are the indispensable Nation, and we ought to behave that way as we go into the 21st century.

The previous discussion was an appropriate one in that it focused, to some degree, on the subject of campaign finance reform, but it was on petty terms. This is one example of how we fall off into pettiness. Pettiness prevailed yesterday as we were about to adjourn for the religious holidays, shouting back and forth on the floor about certain kinds of procedural items. It was generated by a bigger kind of pettiness that prevails as a result of the majority's insistence that an election was won in California by my colleague, the gentlewoman from California [Ms. SANCHEZ], that that election has to be investigated and reinvestigated despite the fact that she had a marginal 1,000 votes in that victory. Never before in the history of the House have we allowed this kind of petty investigation, subpoenaing of records and all kinds of harassment tactics to take place in connection with a disputed election.

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So that pettiness generated pettiness from the other side in terms of motions to adjourn and motions to rise, out of frustration on the minority's side to vent its anger through these methods. So we reduced to that, one sort of pettiness forces another.

When it comes to campaign finance reform that my colleagues were discussing before, we must realize that the campaign finance reform issue is an appropriate issue and ought to be discussed in a profound way. We ought to look at the reform of campaign financing in the most profound way. Do not call for a special prosecutor for one individual or one candidate or for the Vice President or for the President. Let us call for a thorough investigation of the whole campaign financing, the raising of money, the spending of money, by both parties, because I think the American people, in their wisdom and their common sense, understand that both parties have gone too far in raising funds for elections and that the real problem at the bottom of all of this is whether our democracy will be able to survive.

Can a democracy survive as a compatible partner with capitalism? Will capitalism inevitably overwhelm the capitalist economic system and inevitably overwhelm the Democratic governmental system?

In other words, if we have capitalism and we have freedom in the marketplace and we allow unbridled profits, and people become powerful in proportion to the kind of profits they make and the kind of money that they accumulate, if they are going to restrain themselves and not use that power to take over the governmental apparatus, can we have capitalism in a Democratic society and capitalism not move to take over? Can we have the rich not using their wealth to distort the democracy?

That is a profound question underneath all of this. Let us deal with it. Republicans and Democrats are guilty. Yes, the Democrats at this point are being exposed, there is more in the paper about them, because the focus is on the White House, a highly visible President and Vice President, but the pettiness of the arguments is being dismissed by the common sense of the American people. They are not impressed. They are not impressed with discussions with telephone calls and who made what telephone calls from where.

They are right not to be impressed, because in the final analysis it is a little absurd. Every Member of Congress knows that they have gotten telephone calls in their offices about fundraising. If they did not make them, somebody else made it to them. You cannot cut somebody else who calls you to talk about fund-raising. Every Member of Congress knows that they go home and they make a lot of telephone calls from home. That is perfectly legal.

Now, why do we not advise the President and the Vice President to go home to make their calls? If they do that, are they not still on Federal property? Does that not make the President and Vice President different and special? They are always on Federal property. They are home. They cannot make calls at home without being on Federal property.

It is a little ridiculous to insist that the President and Vice President have to be subjected to some kind of standard which is as stupid as that in terms of where you make a phone call from and insist that we should appoint a special prosecutor to focus on that.

We need an investigation. We have commissioned an impartial commission to look at campaign financing, the raising of the money and the spending of the money across the board. We might want to even consider privatizing that and giving a contract to Common Cause to take a thorough look at the whole thing, to pinpoint where some people have broken the law, the present laws, and to make sweeping recommendations for reform that the Congress might want to bind themselves to and on a fast-track basis.

We do trade treaties on a fast-track basis. We say we are going to accept the recommendations on an up-and-down basis, we are not going to amend it. Let us have a commission, either a private commission or an appointed commission, to look at the whole of campaign fund-raising and expenditure of funds.

Let us look at the relationship between Archer Daniels Midland and one of the candidates, the fact that a candidate's wife earned $1 million in speaking fees the year before. There are all kinds of things to be examined that a commission could look at fully.

If we focus on Republicans, we are going to find the same kind of problems that have been already exposed among Democrats. The process is tainted by the need to raise millions and millions of dollars, and we need to get away from that.

Underneath that, we need to find a way to deal with the problem of how we keep the capitalistic system which we all know is the system of the present and the system of the future. Capitalism is the only economic system that seems to work in the world, so how do we live with it, adjust it so that it does not take over?

We have laissez-faire, laissez-faire rules; a government will not interfere