

and we will be at the end of the fiscal year, with miles to go and much to do in order to fulfill our most basic responsibility, and that is to pass 13 appropriations bills.

As co-chair of the Women's Caucus, along with the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. NANCY JOHNSON), I am pleased that the House has gotten through four of the seven priority bills chosen by the Women's Caucus. That brings credit to this House. I hope that the House also will bring itself credit by the way it treats the capital of the United States.

The District's appropriation is one of those left hanging and unresolved. The city is not a Federal agency, and when it is on tenterhooks wondering whether its appropriation will go through or, as in the case of the CR, held to last year's spending limits, a living, breathing city suffers.

The problem with our bill comes from 10 hours during which attachments of every kind were put on our bill, attachments at war with the democratically voiced views of the residents of the District of Columbia: Adoption forbidden for unmarried couples, even though we have children languishing in foster care; vouchers once again put on our appropriation, although the President had not 3 months prior vetoed such a bill; a police helicopter of the Park Service funded out of D.C. funds; advisory neighborhood commissions defunded entirely, though they are the lifeline of neighborhood life in the District of Columbia to keep the services coming at the neighborhood level. The District deserves better.

This Friday, the District is about to break ground on a new convention center funded entirely by the private sector. Most such centers in this country are funded with public funds.

The schools have shown enormous progress. We now have perhaps more charter schools per capita than any other jurisdiction in the United States. We had a magnificent summer school called Summer Stars. To make sure that we eliminate social promotion, children went not only to catch up but to get ahead. Test scores were up significantly on the Stanford 9 even before summer school—scores up in every grade.

We have a new vigorous control board that is keeping the District's feet to the fire and preparing the District for the return of home rule. This is a city that has come back. We have just had an election with fresh leadership promised next year, vigorous new leadership committed to getting the city's House in total order, even more than is being done now.

This is the kind of progress that one would think that the Congress would want to encourage. Ten hours of attachments to our appropriation did just the opposite. It dispirited residents who have suffered greatly in the past few years and have taken great pride that their city is coming up and coming alive.

This is a time for the House and the Senate to encourage the capital, it is not the time to punish the residents of the Nation's capital. By October 1st we hope that this body will have shown that it does indeed take pride in the progress the Nation's capital is beginning to make.

#### ISSUES THAT CONCERN AND SOMETIMES CONFUSE THE AMERICAN PUBLIC

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EWING) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, I come here today with some concerns. We all, over the weekend, had maybe time to watch the reporting of political events in America, and I come here, I guess, to speak to the people of this great country and to the people in my district about things that concern me; things that are going on in America today that concern all Americans.

There is in the political system today the effort by many, on both sides of the aisle, to put their spin out on what is happening in America. I guess the first point that bothers me is the spinning of all these issues. We want the American people to understand that we are here to do their business and to uphold the law. The American people, I believe, want justice and fairness. They want the laws of this country to be applied to all of us, equally. And sometimes, with all that is going on, we might find that the American public is confused about whether that is happening and whether, in fact, it will happen.

Our system works. We must give it time to work. I would like to say to people that I am talking about the debate here on the House floor, and the political rancor that sometimes seizes the Capitol and the parties. This is where we make our decision. This is where we decide where the compromise is. This is where we decide what is fair. We do not, any of us in this body, worry that we have to look down Pennsylvania Avenue and see tanks rolling up the street because someone in power decides that they are being unfairly treated by this body. This is where our system works.

The bottom line on the first point I want to make is, too much spin from any source, on any side, of what is going on in America today is wrong, and I believe and hope that the American people can see that.

The second point that I thought was brought up a lot on the Sunday talk shows dealt with attacks on the Congress. Some of those attacks came from the First Couple, attacks made mostly at fund-raising events around the country.

A little aside. My wife traveled to Washington on Friday evening, because we were in session, and her plane was delayed for several hours because of the arrival in Chicago of Air Force

One. That is disconcerting. This is one of the major airports in America, and we appear to have an imperialism that affects the chief executive. The rest of the country can cool their heels and wait while the First Family or the President comes in for a fundraiser. I think we should watch that in America.

We do not want an imperial presidency, we do not want maybe 1200 people going to China at the cost of \$40 million or more. We have to watch that. And it is very easy to get into a pattern where that becomes more and more the norm instead of the exception.

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But some of the criticisms leveled at the Republican Congress dealt with education, improving education, affordable child care, expanding health care, protecting the environment, stabilizing the international economy.

I would just like to talk about each of those points for just a minute, to answer the criticism of the administration in regard to that.

Improving education. I would like to know what Dollars to the Classroom is, if that is not a big improvement to education. I can imagine that almost every teacher in America will be glad to see \$400 average go to their classroom for education. What we are doing with the reenactment and the renewal of the higher education bill is indeed very important. What we are doing with the \$500 child tax credit certainly makes child care more affordable.

Expanded health care. We passed a bill out of this House that provides more health care for more Americans than ever before, and we hope the Senate will soon move on that.

In closing, there is much been said about attacks on this Congress. I think there is much to be said for what we have done, and I appreciate the time to come here and speak about it.

#### HIGH CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETRI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I come here on the floor today to talk about the definition and the meaning of "high crimes and misdemeanors." The Constitution states that the "President and all civil officers of the United States shall be removed from office on impeachment for conviction of treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors."

This is the standard under which the House Judiciary Committee is currently evaluating Judge Starr's report. But Mr. Speaker, what exactly are high crimes and misdemeanors? To define "high crimes and misdemeanors" is to