

that it is open season on others simply because they are of a different color or different sexual orientation? I do not believe we should engage in an exercise of self-flagellation, but I do believe it is incumbent upon each of us to examine the words we use, the statements we condone, the rhetoric of bigotry we sometimes hear and simply let pass without condemnation because we are preoccupied with other things. We must not tolerate a message of hatred in our midst. We must not give bigotry the fertile soil it needs to flourish.

A loving God has gathered Matthew Shepard to his bosom. He will never face such hate again. That same God may grant his mercy and forgiveness to those who killed him but a harsher justice awaits them in this life.

SCHOOL VIOLENCE

(Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN. Mr. Speaker, later this week the President will convene a conference to address the issue of school violence.

Mr. Speaker, we can reduce school violence if we have smaller classes where teachers can spend time with each student and identify those who need special intervention. We can prevent school violence if our schools are positive centers of learning and our children are given the tools they need to excel. And we can prevent school violence if our school buildings are just safe, clean and in good repair.

Mr. Speaker, we can get our arms around this problem and more importantly around our children if we pass bills that will increase the number of teachers, reduce class size and build or renovate our schools. We must save our children. We must pass the President's education budget.

TAX REDUCTION

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

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago this House passed a modest tax reduction for hard working middle class Americans. President Clinton and the Democratic leadership vigorously opposed the tax reduction. They said they opposed it because they incorrectly, I might say, claimed it would take money from Social Security. However, in the last minute back room negotiations on the omnibus appropriation bill, the President and Democratic leadership are not expressing any concern for Social Security. Instead they want to spend billions more of taxpayer dollars for foreign aid, for their favorite environmental programs and for the education bureaucracy in Washington while we want to send it to local school boards.

The President does not want to give the American taxpayers a small tax reduction. Instead he wants to keep the

tax dollars in the government and let them spend money on programs he wants. Once again the President and Democrat leadership say one thing in public but they demand something entirely different in private negotiations.

RECORD OF THE 105TH CONGRESS

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, in communities all over America, we are trying to support public education, involve parents, improve the quality of education, support professional educators. This Congress has not done its share. Indeed, when this Congress goes home, if we let it go without supporting public education and the Members of Congress wave bye-bye out at the airport, they will be recognizing about the only accomplishment of this Congress, which is the renaming of the airport here in Washington.

The reason nothing has been done is that the priorities greatly differ between Democrats and Republicans. Republicans want to abolish the Department of Education. Republicans want to take money away from public schools and give those monies, those public monies to elite academies.

We believe the time is now to stand for this Congress doing something positively to support local communities who want to improve the quality of public education. That is what this budget battle is all about. Let us stand firmly for public schools and stand firmly against a do-nothing Congress that has nothing at this point to point to as an accomplishment.

MORE ON THE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT'S TRAVEL PLANS

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

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, we have been working on education all year. Indeed in this budget it appears the amounts have been set and we are just negotiating the fine details of where it is going to be put.

The question is why we are here right now, since we knew we were going to come to these straits earlier on this year and we knew what our differences were earlier on. Saturday the President said in his radio address, I do not want to see this Congress walk away from America's school children. Then he went out to play golf for a couple hours. Then he walked away all of yesterday and into last night for two fund-raisers in New York.

Today the Vice President flew out down to Palm Beach, Florida for a fund-raiser down there. Then he goes to Miami for a fund-raiser. Then he goes to Coral Gables for a fund-raiser. In between he talks at a school in Miami

about the need for us to deal with school kids.

Mr. Speaker, the President and the Vice President should have been dealing with the education issue and working out the differences between an elected House and an elected Senate and an elected President and Vice President a long time ago, not trotting off and doing fund-raisers and press conferences.

THE REASON WE ARE HERE TODAY

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, the reason we are here today is because of the differences between the Republicans and the Democrats about our children's education. We believe, as the American people do, that our local districts need help in rebuilding crumbling schools, that our schools ought to be made safe, that children should no longer go to school in made-over closets and made-over teacher lounges, in made-over storage areas. They ought to have a safe and decent place to go to school.

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We believe that we ought to make every effort to try to help districts lower the teacher/pupil ratio so that teachers can spend more time with individual students. That is the important work that ought to be done here. It should have been done earlier, but the Republicans were so excited about impeachment that they forgot America's children. That work has to be done.

The problem is there are even differences within the Republican Party about this education program. We believe that this money ought to make sure that we can, in fact, reduce class size. We can, in fact, build new schools and repair schools and make a difference for America's children as opposed to trying to provide a program that allows governors to walk off with the money

BEST WISHES FOR FORMER CONGRESSMAN DANTE FASCELL

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, all of us in this chamber and back home in South Florida send our best wishes to our former House colleague, Congressman Dante Fascell.

For almost 40 years, Dante Fascell led the charge in the House of Representatives for respect for human rights internationally and fostering democracy and freedom throughout the world.

As chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Congressman Fascell worked tirelessly in a bipartisan manner to promote our American ideals of