

hear of the struggle of Kashmiri freedom fighters." These are the same freedom fighters who carried out the atrocity against the Pandit villagers, including the little girl, that same night.

Mr. Speaker, India and Pakistan have fought two wars over Kashmir. Last summer Pakistan initiated a border skirmish last year across the line of control that separates the two sides near the town of Kargil. Most news accounts indicate that General Musharraf and the other military coup leaders were behind the planning and execution of that disastrous campaign.

Fortunately, the United States and the rest of the world community recognize Pakistan as the aggressor. President Clinton prevailed on the civilian leadership of Pakistan, and I stress, civilian leadership of Pakistan at the time, because the civilian government was still in place, to withdraw its forces.

A few months later General Musharraf overthrew Pakistan's civilian government, and the government in Islamabad has been escalating the threatening rhetoric and destabilizing actions ever since.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. has not done enough, in my opinion, to show its opposition to the military takeover in Pakistan. A House resolution that condemns the coup has come out of committee. The problem is that the military government has no legitimacy, and can only stay in power as long as it whips up hatred against India by citing Kashmir. That is why the generals started the Kargil war, and that is why they encouraged the hijacking of the India Airlines plane last December. That is why they continue the campaign against a multi-ethnic and religious state in Kashmir, and contribute to the murder of innocent Kashmiri Pandits. The end result of the generals' provocation would be another war with India over Kashmir. The problem is that the generals now control nuclear weapons they could unleash in such a war.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. must send an unequivocal message that this continued provocation in Kashmir by the Pakistan military regime is unacceptable. At a minimum, the President should not visit Pakistan during his trip to South Asia in March. The State Department should declare Pakistan a terrorist state, and make it clear there will be no further contact with the Pakistani government until it stops its provocative actions in Kashmir and takes steps to restore democracy in Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO IMPLEMENT THE EXECUTIVE ORDER ON FEDERAL WORKFORCE TRANSPORTATION IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing, along with the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS), a bill which will require the President to issue the Executive Order on Federal Workforce Transportation in the National Capital Region.

No single action will do more to reduce traffic congestion and improve the quality of life of the people who live in the Washington metropolitan area. This Federal order, which has been held at the White House for over 6 months, would help alleviate traffic congestion in Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia for all people, those who work for the government and those who work in the private sector.

The order would reduce traffic by requiring all Federal agencies to provide a monthly transit benefit to their employees. Currently less than 20 percent of the Federal work force is eligible to receive transit benefits. This action would encourage Federal employees to use mass transit, and could take thousands of cars off the street every day. The order would expand the use of telecommuting and telework for Federal employees, which would also take cars off the road, give Federal employees the opportunity to telework, where they can have more choices and opportunities, and make it a better environment.

Lastly, the order would increase car-pool benefits, shuttle service between mass transit points and agency work-sites, and allow for alternative work schedules.

Mr. Speaker, I think we all agree that the Federal government has a responsibility to help reduce air pollution, and that motor vehicle traffic is the major source of pollution in this region. This Executive Order would take cars off the road, help clean up the air, and yet the White House is sitting on it.

Let me read exactly what the Executive Order says about air pollution. It says, "In furtherance of the purposes of the Clean Air Act and the Federal Employees Clean Air Incentives Act, the Federal government, as the largest single employer in the Nation's Capital Region, has a responsibility to reduce the traffic congestion and motor vehicle-generated air pollution. . . ."

This Executive Order for the most part is an environmental document, and yet the Clinton-Gore White House is refusing to approve it.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to read from the implementation requirements, which state, "For several years, there have been increasingly dire warnings about the negative consequences of traffic congestion and air pollution in the Capital region. Studies show that adverse impacts on the economy, quality of life, energy resources, environment, and public health."

Why is the White House sitting on the Executive Order which they know will benefit the health of the people who live in the region, but also give

Federal employees control over their own lives, and also take automobiles and cars off the streets of Maryland and Virginia and the District of Columbia so people can get back and forth to work and spend more time with their families?

It is a quality of life issue there. The simple fact that this order would reduce traffic congestion in our region is reason enough to sign it. Now we learn it will help with regard to the environment.

The document is important. The action is needed for now. Yet, this has been sitting on the President's desk for over 6 months. The bill will go in today. We will attempt to pass this bill. But I would hope and ask the White House to sign the Executive Order so we can give Federal employees this opportunity, give them opportunities to telework, but also take cars off the streets whereby we can have a better quality of life in this region for everyone who drives.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

O gracious God, we remember with compassion and empathy those members of our community who have suffered great loss and have walked through the valley of the shadow of death.

In our grief we look to Your spirit, O God, for healing and hope, for strength and meaning, for peace and assurance.

May the bounty of Your love and the majesty of your whole creation ever remind us of the wonderful gifts of faith and hope and love and may these gifts continue to live in our hearts and minds now and evermore. This is our earnest prayer. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TRAFICANT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE NEIL ABERCROMBIE, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NEIL ABERCROMBIE, Member of Congress:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 3, 2000.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to formally notify you, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that a staffer in my Honolulu, Hawaii district office has been served with a trial subpoena for testimony, directed to me and issued by the U.S. District for the District of Hawaii.

In consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will determine whether compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

NEIL ABERCROMBIE.

END THE MARRIAGE PENALTY

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, nearly a half century ago, Albert Einstein said that the hardest thing to understand in the world is the income tax. Since then, our income tax system has not gotten better; it has gotten worse.

Today, American taxpayers, including myself, just cannot understand why married couples must pay more in taxes simply because they are married.

Mr. Speaker, in my home State the marriage tax penalty robs over 290,000 Nevadans every April 15. While I welcome the President's support for marriage penalty relief, his proposal sim-

ply does not go to the heart of the problem. His proposal fails to help all of America's hard-working couples.

The Republican plan will provide over the next decade \$180 billion in marriage penalty relief to 25 million couples, including millions of middle-class Americans hit hardest by this unfair tax burden.

Mr. Speaker, one thing is clear to me: it is time that we right this wrong and provide real marriage penalty relief for America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back this corrupt burden of our Internal Revenue Code.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1996 TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, we all know that monopolies do not serve the public interest; they keep prices high, limit consumer choice, and fail to innovate. In 1996, in an effort to break up the entrenched local phone monopolies, Congress overwhelmingly passed the Telecommunications Act. I am happy to commemorate the 4-year anniversary of that Act.

The theory of the 1996 law is simple: in order to encourage local phone monopolies to open their local networks to competition, the Bells would be permitted to enter the long-distance market, but only when their local markets were open and competitive. Four years after its passage, there is substantial evidence that the 1996 act is working. But the local phone market is still not as competitive as we would like. There are competitive local carriers growing rapidly, both in terms of revenue and market capitalization; but they still compromise only 5 percent of the market. And worse still, the Bells even refuse to provide competitors with the necessary network access.

JOIN CONGRESSIONAL LIFE FORUM WEDNESDAY TO HEAR DR. JOSEPH BRUNER

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I direct the Members' attention to this photograph of the little hand of Samuel Armas and the larger hand of his surgeon, Dr. Joseph Bruner.

Samuel Armas was still unborn when this was taken. He suffered from spina bifida, a disabling illness that affects one or two of every thousand babies.

Look at Samuel as Dr. Bruner finishes this prenatal operation procedure that will help Samuel after he is born. While still in the womb, before the doctor sews up his mother's womb, he sticks out his arm and his little hand grasps the finger of the surgeon, Dr. Bruner.

When this picture was taken, Samuel was 21 weeks old. What an example of

the humanity of the little unborn child, as if he is saying thank you, I am okay.

Samuel was born on December 2, a healthy little baby boy. Thanks to Dr. Bruner, he has a chance to live a full and productive life. Mr. Speaker, life is precious.

The man who showed us this picture a couple of years ago, Dr. Bernard Nathanson, is coming back tomorrow at noon to speak to the Congressional Life Forum and Cannon Caucus. Everyone is welcome to attend.

INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY SHOULD BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR IRS

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, in 1997, the IRS seized 10,000 properties. After Congress changed the law and shifted the burden of proof to the IRS, last year, the IRS seized only 161 properties; 161 from 10,000. But guess what, the IRS wants the law changed back. They say it is too costly. Unbelievable.

If the IRS had their way, last year 9,840 American families would have lost their homes and their businesses. Beam me up.

Listen. If innocent until proven guilty is good enough for mass murderers, it is good enough for Mom and Dad, and it is good enough for the IRS.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the tears and whining over the IRS.

MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

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

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I think my colleagues on both sides of the aisle would agree that we may never have a perfect tax code, but it should at least be fair. That is the essence of any voluntary tax system.

How can we in this body make our tax system more fair? We can start by passing the marriage tax relief bill. Last year, nearly 50 million Americans, including more than 200,000 of my fellow Arkansans, paid extra taxes just because they were married. These folks do not pay just a little bit more in taxes; they paid an average of \$1,400 apiece.

Our government is discriminating against married couples by forcing them to pay an extra fine of more than \$1,000. This is not fair, and it should end.

Whether it is in a church or in a courtroom, couples have to usually pay some type of a fee for the marriage ceremony. But while it may cost money to get married, it should not cost money to be married.

I hope all of my colleagues will join me in standing up for married couples and in voting yes on the Marriage Tax Penalty Relief Act.