

Next, we can decrease expenditures, that is, lower benefits; or we can have deficits, as the gentleman alluded to under option three of this commission; or we can have a combination of those three things.

Now, the President appointed a commission that was supposed to deal with this. Unfortunately, the commission's charge was not to stabilize the financing of the most successful social program in the history of the United States. The charge of this group, and every single member was hand-picked because of this, was to privatize the system, to begin to undermine that system for the future. That was their charge. And even there, they really kind of failed.

Now, they are led by the CEO of Time Warner, of course, who has a vital interest in the future of Social Security. He had to divert part, part of his bonus last year to buy a winery in Tuscany. Imagine that, he had to spend part of last year's bonus for that, so he is vitally concerned. He knows some day he will need that Social Security, like tens of millions of working Americans.

Then we have a former Democratic Senator who used to say that raising taxes was the answer, but late in his career he changed his mind and said privatization was the answer. So their pronouncements are sort of a mix here. Actually, all three of their solutions worsen the financial situation of Social Security. Is that not interesting, a commission to solve the problems of Social Security, but since they were charged only to privatize it, they did not even deal with the financing problems?

In their first solution, they would bring us insolvency 5 years sooner than the current system. They would reduce benefits under the premise that people's benefits are being reduced but they will gain more with their diverted investments. But if the investments do not pan out, well, hey, that is the way it goes. Mr. Parsons will be living on his vineyard in Tuscany, and they will be down at the local Dumpster trying to find food.

Now, we could go with the second option: a 4 percent diversion of trust funds. Then they would change the way they index future benefits, reducing the benefits for everybody in the program, even those who do not choose the option of the 4 percent diversion; and they would have to inject general funds, that is, subsidize Social Security, beginning in 2025. That means insolvency comes 30 years sooner than under the current system.

Finally, in their last option, which no one can describe, the Wall Street Journal said, for option three, "Suffice it to say, it is so complicated we are not even sure we understand it," but it does have a combination of a benefit reduction, of benefit reductions, increase in age of retirement, and huge trust fund transfers from the general fund.

There is a much simpler solution; but this commission, this President, will

never touch it, because it revolves around tax fairness.

Americans only pay the regressive Social Security tax on the first \$850,400 of income. So that means someone who earns \$160,000 pays Social Security taxes at half the rate of someone who earns \$80,000 or half the rate of someone who earns \$10,000 a year on every dollar they earn. If they earn twice that, it goes down to a quarter.

Now, one simple solution would solve the problem of Social Security forever: have every working American pay the same tax on every penny they earn; that is, Mr. Parsons, the CEO of Time Warner, would contribute the same percentage of his income in taxes as would the minimum wage worker.

It is fair, and the Social Security trustees tell us that in fact that is more money than we need to assure the future of Social Security forever. Unfortunately, this commission and this President will never go there.

REPUBLICAN GIVEAWAYS TO INSURANCE COMPANIES AND LARGE CORPORATIONS DO NOT SOLVE AMERICA'S ECONOMIC CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, 3 months ago today, as we all know, was September 11. That afternoon, gas stations, some number of gas stations all over the country raised their prices to \$4 and \$5 and \$6 a gallon. We all remember that. Most of us would call that war profiteering.

However, others around the country, the great, great majority of people in this country, came together. They put out their flags, they gave blood, they volunteered, some went to New York to volunteer, went to the Pentagon to volunteer, and schoolchildren all over the country collected pennies, nickels, and dimes to send to the victims and their families.

But something else emerged in Washington, not war profiteering in the simple sense of raising gas prices, but a more sophisticated kind of political profiteering: this Congress, pushed by the President and the Republican leadership in this Congress, first of all gave a huge multi-billion dollar bailout to the airlines, requiring nothing from the airline executives, requiring nothing for airport security, requiring nothing of airline safety.

Then this Congress turned around and gave tax cuts for the largest corporations in the country: a check, a tax refund to IBM, a check from the Federal Government for \$1.4 billion; \$1 billion to Ford; \$900 million to GM, and the list went on and on and on.

Then, this Congress gave a huge bailout to insurance companies, insurance executives who usually preach "We want government off our backs, we be-

lieve in free enterprise, except when we have our hand out and want money from the Federal Government."

Then last week this Congress, with unemployment creeping upward to the highest 2-month increase we have seen in 21 years, with the anxiety that people have about their jobs, with LTV workers and other steel industry workers losing their jobs around the country, this Congress passed, at the behest of the Republican leadership and the largest corporations in the country, Trade Promotion Authority, which will send more of our jobs ultimately to Latin America and around the world.

My dad used to talk about World War II and shared sacrifice, about war bonds and WAVES and WACs and victory gardens and scrap metal drives. But instead, this Republican Congress and this President demand tax cuts for IBM while ignoring 100,000 airline workers, doing zero for them. This President and this Congress demand a bailout for the insurance companies while ignoring workers who have lost their jobs and not trying to help them with any health insurance and any health care costs.

Instead, instead of shared sacrifice, this Republican Congress and this President demand of Congress that we pass Trade Promotion Authority, instead of providing public investments for our broken-down schools and broken-down infrastructure and broken-down highway and rail system.

□ 1300

Imagine though, Mr. Speaker, if the President and the Republican Congress called on us like in World War II for shared sacrifice. Imagine if the President called on young patriotic Americans to enlist in the Army or the Peace Corps, to enlist in the Navy or Americorp, to enlist in the Air Force or Teach for America. That is what waving the American flag is all about.

Imagine if the President said to his friends, and the Republican leadership said to their friends in the drug industry, no more special favors; we are not going to allow them to charge American consumers and America's elderly more for prescription drugs than anywhere else in the world; we are not going to allow that anymore in this Congress. That is what waving the American flag is all about.

Imagine if the President called on Americans to volunteer for Meals on Wheels or cleaning up the neighborhood or tutoring children that are having difficulty keeping up. That is what waving the American flag is all about.

Imagine if the President would say to his friends in the oil business, imagine if he would say we are going to wean ourselves off Middle Eastern oil, we are going to find a way to help Americans conserve and get better gas mileage and turn their thermostats down and all the things the President could do to appeal to Americans, to appeal to his friends in the corporate boardrooms and the oil companies, to wean ourselves off that Middle Eastern oil. That

is what waving the American flag is all about.

Instead of this Republican President and Republican leadership bestowing tax cuts on the wealthiest Americans, imagine if we helped those who needed help the most, and imagine, instead of the President and the Republican leadership bestowing tax cuts on the largest corporations in the world in this country, imagine instead if they appealed to the best in America.

Imagine.

RECESS

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

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

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

Dr. Lloyd J. Ogilvie, Chaplain, United States Senate, offered the following prayer:

Gracious Father, whom to know is to love and whom to love is to serve, we ask for a fresh empowering of Your Spirit today. Renew in us the excitement of being partners with You in bringing Your best for America. We are here by Your divine appointment. Therefore we need not fear. You will supply exactly what we need each hour of this day. Replenish our enthusiasm. May we do old duties with new delight. Revive our expectation. You have plans for us and power to accomplish them. Regenerate our hope.

Make us hopeful people who expect great strength from You and attempt great strategies for You. Fill this Chamber with Your presence and each Representative with Your power. Replenish their inner wells with Your peace that passes understanding. We claim Your promise through Isaiah, "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God, I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE)

come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CASTLE 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that she will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6:30 p.m. today.

RICHARD B. RUSSELL NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH ACT AMENDMENTS

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3216) to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to exclude certain basic allowances for housing of an individual who is a member of the uniformed services from the determination of eligibility for free and reduced price meals of a child of the individual.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3216

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN MILITARY BASIC ALLOWANCES FOR HOUSING FOR DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEALS.

Section 9(b)(3) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758(b)(3)) is amended by adding at the end the following: "For the two-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this sentence, the amount of a basic allowance provided under section 403 of title 37, United States Code, on behalf of an individual who is a member of the uniformed services for housing that is acquired or constructed under the authority of subchapter IV of chapter 169 of title 10, United States Code, or any other related provision of law, shall not be considered to be income for purposes of determining the eligibility of a child of the individual for free or reduced price lunches under this Act."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) and the gentleman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3216.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Delaware?

There was no objection.

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, to address the decline in the condition of military family housing, the Department of Defense initiated a housing program which would allow commercial contractors to replace traditional base housing with newly built or renovated privately managed base housing, so-called privatized housing.

Yet as this program is being implemented, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) brought to my attention a serious and unintended consequence of the program, children of junior enlisted personnel living in privatized housing were being denied free or reduced price meals at lunchtime. Due to DOD accounting changes, servicemembers receiving a housing allowance under the privatized housing program were being treated differently from those who were assigned traditional housing and not paid an allowance. This is because the income-based National School Lunch Program considered the housing allowance, but not the actual house income. For this reason, servicemembers living in traditional base housing at no cost were presumed to have less income than servicemembers of the same rank who received a housing allowance, but used those funds to pay a private contractor for rent and utilities.

Unfortunately, this distinction caused military families in privatized housing to exceed the income-based eligibility requirements for the school lunch program, and it resulted in the loss of the free or reduced price meals for their children. DOD intended the privatization housing program to provide quality housing at no out-of-pocket expense for servicemembers and their families. Unfortunately, these families are now finding that they will have to pay approximately \$75 per child per month to replace the benefit that they received previously under the school lunch program.

This problem is further compounded by the fact that numerous State and Federal education, nutrition and technology programs are contingent on the number of children eligible for the school lunch program. As a result, entire school districts could be affected.

To adjust these problems, my legislation, H.R. 3216, amends the school lunch program to exclude the housing allowance of servicemembers in privatized housing for the determination of eligibility for free and reduced price meals. Although this only affects families at about 15 military installations currently, that number is expected to increase to about 70 installations, encompassing 70,000 housing units, including 450 units at the Dover Air Force Base in Dover, Delaware.

Our uniformed services are being asked to make tremendous personal sacrifices to ensure the defense of our Nation. I believe we should do all we