The Founding Fathers did not give Congress the authority to punish the President. That is for the judicial system to decide. The question before the House is, is this President fit for office? Has he disqualified himself to continue to lead this Nation?

The decision for the House is whether to impeach or not to impeach. The decision for the Senate is to remove from office or not to remove. Any action to punish this President, any deal cut that short-circuits the constitutional process, is unconstitutional, and I will fight for the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the time to abandon our Constitution. I urge my colleagues to read the Constitution, to support the process, and resist the temptation to cut a deal with the President.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE VIC FAZIO

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the gentleman from California (Mr. VIC FAZIO), who has been a very effective Member of this institution, both as a leader and as a member of the Committee on Appropriations, and as a great Californian.

We have been very lucky in California to work with the gentleman from California (Mr. FAZIO), someone who has always been helpful in securing funding for our State, particularly for water projects. I know, because I have called on him for assistance many times in his role on the Committee on Appropriations. I thank the gentleman from California for being so respectful to all of our needs, for being receptive, hardworking, dedicated and fair in making sure our requests are fulfilled.

I thank him, too, for his hard work in fighting for women's rights. He has been a staunch defender on many fronts, supporting the Equal Rights Amendment, arguing for women's reproductive rights, and opposing discrimination against women in the work force, the military and the courts. As a member of the Democratic leadership, the gentleman's outspoken activism has brought needed attention to these causes.

I do not know what we will do without the gentleman from California (Mr. VIC FAZIO). He will be missed.

THE BEST USE OF THE BUDGET SURPLUS

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, according to my colleagues, Republicans want to waste the budget surplus on tax cuts. But let us take a closer look.

The President announced in his State of the Union Address that every penny of the surplus is to be dedicated to saving Social Security. But what the President said does not appear to be what he is really doing.

In fact, the President has proposed to spend billions of dollars on more government programs and services with dollars from the budget surplus. He wants our troops in Bosnia paid with surplus dollars. He wants to replenish the IMF and address the Y2K problem with surplus dollars. He also wants to address embassy security with surplus dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I thought when the President pledged ''every penny'' of the surplus to Social Security he meant it. I guess his pledge really depends on his definition of the word ''penny.''

Republicans want to give the American people a tax cut, and we tell them our plan up front. Why cannot the President tell the American people the real funding source of his agenda? For those who think character does not matter, think again.

THE BUDGET SURPLUS SHOULD GO TO SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans are moving full steam ahead with their plan to raid the budget surplus to pay for tax cuts, instead of putting that money where it rightly belongs, into Social Security.

Make no mistake about it, Mr. Speaker, the Republican tax bill is a direct assault on Social Security. The budget surplus the Republicans want to use to pay for their tax cuts do not exist. The only portion of the Federal budget that is in surplus is the Social Security Trust Fund. In fact, without Social Security, the Federal budget would still be in deficit this year.

Mr. Speaker, hardworking American families deserve tax relief, there is no doubt, but we should not be gambling with the Social Security Trust Fund to pay for it. Let us put every penny of this surplus back where it came from and keep it there until we are sure we have protected Social Security for the long haul.

Let us show seniors and future generations that we will be disciplined with the money Congress has been charged with managing for their retirement years. Let us stop the GOP's $80 billion assault on Social Security dead in its tracks. I would urge all my colleagues to vote no on this irresponsible Republican tax plan.

AN HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY FOR CONGRESS TO ABOLISH THE MARRIAGE TAX 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, this Congress has an historic and exciting opportunity to do something it should have done a long time ago, abolish the marriage tax penalty. Many young couples are surprised to learn that government actually penalizes people for getting married; yes, an average of $1,400 per year for middle class income earners.

People have long known that government does not do a lot of smart things. In fact, it does a lot of dumb things. Even liberals have to admit that government has thousands of stupid regulations, programs that actually make things worse instead of better, and inefficiencies that seem to be immune from reform.

But the marriage tax penalty is just plain wrong. It stands as an ugly symbol of everything that is wrong about government that has gotten too big, too arrogant, and too out of touch with what it is like for an average person who struggles every day to get ahead, to make ends meet, to build a better life for themselves and their families.

Why does the government make it so much harder for people who want to get married? I urge Members on both sides of the aisle to do what is right to correct this wrong.

SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUNDS DIVERTED

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, with the national news media focused on ''all Monica all the time,'' any attempt here in Washington to address some of the real problems American families are facing is disdainfully disregarded as a mere diversion.

This week we actually have a diversion underway, a very real diversion. It is the diversion of Social Security trust funds to pay for Republican electioneering. With the Nation distracted, our Republican friends are seizing the moment to seize Social Security trust funds in order to provide election eve tax breaks. When will they learn that the Social Security trust fund is not a slush fund?

Let us keep the faith with the people that paid into the trust fund their payroll taxes and are paying in today, and apply any surplus that is finally generated after almost 30 years to save Social Security first.

Let us act to protect those who have paid into this trust fund, and avoid a Republican campaign ploy.

THE 90–10 PLAN SAVES SOCIAL SECURITY AND ENDS THE MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

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

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, we have an opportunity this week to focus on the people's business. We have an opportunity to adopt what has already

been nicknamed the 90–10 plan, a double win, a win-win for the taxpayers, a plan that sets aside $1.4 trillion for Social Security, twice what the President originally asked for, and sets it aside for a long-term plan to save Social Security.

This plan also works to eliminate the marriage tax penalty. I have often asked, is it right, is it fair that under our tax code, that a married working couple with two incomes pays higher taxes than an identical couple that lives together outside of marriage; that they pay higher taxes just because they are married?

We know that is wrong. We have answered that with this 90–10 plan that saves Social Security, and of course, the centerpiece is an effort which will eliminate the marriage tax penalty for a majority of those who suffer.

Our friends on the other side of the aisle, they talk about the Social Security trust fund. Judith Chesser, deputy commissioner of the Social Security Administration, when asked in the Committee on Ways and Means last week if this tax cut impacts the Social Security trust fund, her answer was simple: No.

Let us pass it. It deserves bipartisan support.

SAVE SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Speaker, this Congress made a commitment to save and protect Social Security for the future. It is one of the most successful domestic programs that has ever been created, but now, according to my Republican colleagues, we have a surplus, which means that we can then provide a tax cut, while at the same time continue to hide the real deficit with Social Security funds.

To make matters worse, it is estimated that the proposed tax cut would benefit mostly those who earn over $100,000 a year. To spend this illusionary surplus is wrong. We need to remove Social Security from the budget and pay down the national debt.

Let us be honest, we do not have a surplus if we do not include Social Security in the budget. What we have is borrowed money from the Social Security trust fund, and this money will have to be paid back—every penny of it. This surplus should go to the Social Security trust fund and not a tax cut, because there is no surplus.

TIME FOR REFORM FOR THE SAVANNAH DISTRICT OF THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, here we go again, a different constituent, but the same old shenanigans, the Savannah District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Jim Davis buys a house on Lake Thurman, so he can enjoy the beauty and recreational opportunity that this part of Georgia has to offer. That sounds easy enough, does it not? Yet, when the Corps gets involved, it is never easy, it is a pain in the neck.

The Corps will not approve Dr. Davis's permit for lakeshore use until he replants trees within the underbrush area that was cut down some 25 years ago. It is not even his property, it is public property. That is fine, if Dr. Davis had been the one to cut down the trees, but he was not. He just bought the property. So the Corps, which obviously has nothing better to do than to harass my constituents, hassles a man who is simply trying to mind his own business and follow some commonsense rules.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the Corps to reform its bully mentality and its ludicrous shoreline management plan. If they cannot manage people, they cannot manage property.

ILLEGAL TRADE PRACTICES BY THE CHINESE BALLOONS THEIR TRADE SURPLUS

(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, China's trade surplus has ballooned to over $1 billion a week, and China is doing it illegally: prison labor, slave wages at 17 cents an hour, illegal dumping, trade barriers. When confronted, China thumbs their nose right in our faces.

□ 1015

In fact, they now say the real trade deficit in America is only pennies on the dollar with China. I ask today, who is teaching those communist accountants? The Internal Revenue Service?

Beam me up.

Mr. Speaker, I say this: Congress should stop coddling China. This is not about trade anymore. It is about national security. And a communist nation is ripping off Uncle Sam.

90–10 TAX RELIEF

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, right now, senior citizens are losing their Social Security benefits because they just want to work and earn a living. Right now, seniors can earn only up to $14,500 before they lose some of their benefits. This is an earnings limit that discriminates against senior citizens.

Is it not outrageous to penalize seniors for working? The Taxpayer Relief Act would raise the limits and give essential tax relief to working seniors. It also sets aside $1.4 trillion, which our colleagues fail to understand, to protect Social Security. That is 90 percent of the total surplus.

President Clinton does not want to help working citizens. He calls our plan ''a gimmick to please people.'' I urge my colleagues, do not believe him. The President has proposed to spend billions from the surplus on bigger government. He is the one with the gimmicks.

We can protect Social Security and give tax relief. Let us just do it.

NORTH KOREA'S RECENT TAEPODONG I MISSILE LAUNCH

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

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, on August 31 of this year, the government of North Korea tested its first three-stage missile over Japan. The missile, a modified Taepodong I, which traveled approximately 1,500 kilometers, landed in the Pacific, northwest of Misawa U.S. Air Force base in Japan.

Mr. Speaker, despite horrific famine, devastating floods and economic quarantine, North Korea has demonstrated its ability to strike targets in Japan and beyond. Missile defense experts have cited that this test is a key milestone in North Korea's efforts to develop their long-range ballistic missile that could conceivably place Alaska, Guam, and possibly Hawaii within the cross hairs of North Korean aggression.

Today, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and I are introducing a resolution which condemns North Korea for this act of international recklessness. Mr. Speaker, let us being honest here. This resolution will not stop North Korean missiles from being developed or exported. It will not compel an apology from Kim Jong Il. But what it does do is announce to the regime in Pyongyang, in no uncertain terms, that we are watching and we are taking notice of their actions. I urge my colleagues to please support this resolution.

IN SUPPORT OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN THE MALDIVES

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of the persecuted Christians in the Republic of Maldives. Reports indicate that on June 18, 1998, police searched foreign workers' homes and confiscated passports, correspondence, books and other possessions.

Approximately 19 foreign Christians were forced to sign statements and were expelled for life from the Maldives. In addition, Christian Maldivian citizens have been arrested and put in prison. Authorities have denied these individuals visits from their