

again, Friday, fundraising. I understand now the American people are waking up a little bit. Here is what one of the picket signs said as the President entered a fundraiser in Ohio: "Fundraising? Is this the people's work?"

I am starting to ask the same thing. In 1997, President Clinton spent 111 days on the road on domestic travel. He has already surpassed that in 1998 with 114 days. In 1997, he used at least 28 of those trips for fundraising. Through September of this year, President Clinton has already used at least 37 of those days for fundraising.

That is part of the story, but here is the rest of the story that really concerns me. Do you know how much it costs to fly Air Force One? Mr. President, in 1992 figures it was \$42,000 an hour. Mr. President, that is for you and the entourage. How do you balance that off between important domestic travel and fundraising? I hope you are keeping an accurate record, or the taxpayers will be paying a phenomenal amount for our President to be out of the White House.

President Clinton was out of town 149 days in 1997; 155 days through September of 1998. The President spent a total of 304 days outside of Washington in just the last 21 months.

The reason I come to the floor this morning to talk about the President's travel schedule is to bring some substance to the seaminess of a comment a week ago that this is the do-nothing Congress. You might have grounds to make that kind of an argument if you had been sitting down at the White House with a phone in your hand working with us to try to resolve the budgets, to try to get out our appropriation bills, to try to do the business of this Government. But you have chosen not to do that. You have been out and about the country and the world at a record pace, and at the expense of the American taxpayer.

I understand by news reports today the President is in town for the week: Mr. President, welcome back to Washington. I understand that you are going to be here for a week, hopefully to work with us in finalizing the work of Congress to get our budgets complete so we can leave town—most important, adjourn the Congress and go home as the American people would expect us to do and turn off the expense clock.

I also think it is important, Mr. President, that you do, in fact, recognize that our country and our world is just in a little bit of an economic crisis and you are finally willing to cancel a few travel schedules and stay home to see if we can work out our problems.

So, Mr. President, welcome home. I am going to be watching very closely and giving reports from time to time as the President spends the American public's tax dollars to travel around the country. Here is the travel log, and it is growing. Here are the charts, and they are growing. Call us a do-nothing Congress, Mr. President, and I will call

you AWOL because you won't be here; you will be off flitting around the country, either fundraising or staying out of Washington because the heat is too hot in the kitchen.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HUTCHINSON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Arkansas.

THE TAXPAYER RELIEF ACT

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I rise in support of tax relief for the American people and in support of the House-passed legislation that will provide taxpayer relief today.

Tax collections, it is estimated, will exceed over \$8 trillion in the next 5 years. An \$80 billion tax cut—that is what the House of Representatives cut—an \$80 billion tax cut amounts to about one penny savings on every dollar paid in to the Federal Government. I don't believe that is too much out of this surplus that we are realizing because of a robust economy and because of restraints on spending, as much waste as therestill is. We have slowed the growth of Federal spending and, as a result of that, for the first time in 29 years, we have a balanced budget, we have a surplus, and it is only right and it is only proper that a portion of that be returned to the American people.

I think the only problem with the House-passed tax cut is that it is too little, but we should at least bring it forward, and we should at least have that debate on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

Under the Clinton administration, taxes have risen to the highest level in peacetime history. If Ben Franklin was right, that the only thing that is certain is death and taxes, this administration has made it equally true that nothing is as certain as spending and overtaxation. We have the highest tax rate in peacetime history. Taxes are at a historic high at a level of 21 percent of the gross domestic product.

According to data from the OMB, total Federal receipts will amount to 19.9 percent of the GDP in 1998 and 20.1 percent of the GDP in 1999. That tells me one thing. That tells me that even under a Republican-controlled House and Senate, Government continues to grow and Government revenues continue to grow as well.

In my home State of Arkansas, this amount of taxation translates into \$7,352 in taxes per capita in 1998. That is an onerous burden to put on a low-income State. It is a heavy burden to place upon people anywhere.

In Connecticut, the tax burden is \$15,525 per capita.

The typical American family sees 38 percent of its income going to pay for taxes, as opposed to 28 percent for food, for clothing, for housing and only 3.6 percent going to savings—38 percent for taxes—Federal, State and local level—28 percent for food, clothing and housing.

Mr. President, it is time to stop picking the pockets of American taxpayers, and it is time to put money back in their pockets and untie their hands. The Taxpayer Relief Act does just that by giving the American people a tax cut of \$80.1 billion.

Couples today who want to be responsibly married, to share their lives together, have a slap in the face immediately from the Federal Government. Twenty-one million couples pay an average of \$1,400 extra in taxes for pursuing the right course of marriage.

The Taxpayer Relief Act takes away this stinging insult by allowing married couples who file jointly to claim a standard deduction twice the amount of the standard deduction for a single taxpayer. It also increases the basic standard deduction for married taxpayers who file separately to equal the basic standard deduction for singles. Even as they try to raise a family with limited resources and increasing costs, parents strain under this very heavy burden of taxation.

The House-passed bill protects important tax credits, including credits for children, the \$500-per-child tax credit, new credits for adoption and education, and reduces the alternative minimum tax as well.

All of these are important steps. They are, I believe, the right course for this Congress to take. I regret the President's commitment to veto any tax-cut legislation this year.

American farmers and ranchers have had to face a terribly hard time with unpredictable and damaging weather trends that have destroyed their harvest and livelihood, only to face income erosion from unpredictable and damaging tax regulations as well. The House-passed bill would provide greater stability amidst this turmoil by income averaging, currently set to expire in the year 2000, and it would make that permanent. Farmers and ranchers would be able to benefit from the 100 percent health insurance deductibility. All of these things would provide relief for the agricultural community.

Men and women attempting to manage their money wisely find the Government chipping away at their savings, through taxation on interest and dividends, and the Taxpayer Relief Act will exclude the first \$200 in interest and dividends that they receive. We say we want the American people to save and invest, and yet we penalize them with our Tax Code. Some say the \$200 exclusion is not very much. That exclusion will eliminate all taxation on interest and dividends for 32 million people in this country.

When taxpayers become senior citizens, their Social Security earnings limit will be increased under this legislation, between full retirement age and age 70, from \$17,000 in fiscal year 1999 to almost \$40,000 in fiscal year 2008.

These are important provisions, certainly not the least of which is the accelerated relief that will be provided from the death tax, a heinous provision

in our Tax Code that says if you work hard enough, save enough, invest well enough, Uncle Sam is going to reach into your grave, reach into your pocket and take 55 percent of what you own. The American dream is to work hard enough, invest enough, and pass them on to your children and give them a little better start than you had.

The death tax is just the opposite. It is one of the most anti-American dream provisions in the Tax Code. The bill passed from the House would accelerate raising that exclusion to 41 million. It would be a small step in providing relief from the death tax.

There are those who say we can't cut taxes this year; we have to give it all to Social Security. It is interesting to me that those who argue that have yet to come forward with a save Social Security plan. They have yet to come forward with a Social Security reform plan, but they have advocated billions of dollars in new spending.

Mr. President, I wish I had much longer to elaborate on this, but I quote the President when on May 26 of this year, he said:

We can use these good times to honor those who've put in a lifetime of work and prepare for the future retirement of the baby boomers by saving the Social Security system for generations to come. Or we can give in to the temptation in this election year to squander our surpluses the moment they start coming in.

Do you get the picture? If you take the surplus and spend it on new spending programs, that is good, but if you return it to the American people in the form of tax relief, that is squandering. The very President who made that statement has advocated billions of dollars in additional spending—\$5.8 billion already spent—and a request in supplemental funds for \$14.148 billion, including almost \$2 billion for Bosnia. That is coming out of this sacrosanct untouchable surplus.

The Taxpayer Relief Act just says let's return \$7 billion of that surplus in the first year, 1999, to the American people. I believe that is what we should do. Instead of enacting \$150 billion in new spending programs, we should return one penny on the dollar, which is what the Taxpayer Relief Act does, out of what they are paying into the Government back to them in the form of tax relief.

The debate hasn't changed: higher taxes and more Government; lower taxes and less Government. We were given that mandate by the American people, and we should enjoin that debate by passing the Taxpayer Relief Act this year, sending it to the President and letting him decide whether or not he will give the American people the relief they so much deserve.

I thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KYL). The Chair, in his capacity as a Senator from the State of Arizona, suggests the absence of a quorum. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MACK. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MACK. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. MACK pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 286 are located in today's RECORD under "Submission of Concurrent and Senate Resolutions.")

Mr. MACK. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—CONFERENCE REPORT TO ACCOMPANY H.R. 4101

Mr. MACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 2 p.m. today the Senate proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 4101, the Agriculture Appropriations bill, with the reading of the conference report being waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MACK. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRAMM. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HUTCHISON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

WHITE HOUSE PROPOSALS TO SPEND THE SURPLUS

Mr. GRAMM. Madam President, I have come over today to respond to the Office of Management and Budget and to the White House in relation to comments they made about our weekly radio address, which we made in response to the President's radio address and which I had the privilege to make on behalf of the Republican majority in the Senate.

What I thought I would do is simply take a little bit of time and review what I said in the radio address because it is relevant, obviously, to the response by OMB and the White House. I would like then to respond to the comments they made. And I will try to do it as quickly as possible.

Madam President, in the Saturday radio address I tried to make several simple points, the first point being that we all can remember vividly, when the President gave his State of the

Union Address, in probably the most dramatic statement made by any political figure in 1998, the President proclaimed: "Save Social Security first." He then set out a prescription for Congress, and the prescription basically boiled down to: "Don't increase spending; don't cut taxes; take every penny of the surplus and save it for Social Security."

The President kept delivering exactly the same message over and over and over again through February, into June; and then all of a sudden, during the summer and into the fall, the President's message started to change. And the President's message started to change because he started leaving out the part of the policy prescription that had to do with not spending the surplus.

What the President is now saying is that Republicans are wrong in trying to cut taxes, eliminating the marriage penalty, providing some tax relief to farmers and small business and to senior citizens—that Republicans are wrong in doing that in the House because it takes \$6.6 billion away from the surplus. And then the President last week said if you take a little of the surplus here and a little of it there on tax cuts, then you don't have the money to put Social Security first.

The problem is that at the very moment that the President is saying to the Republicans in the House not to use \$6.6 billion to fund a tax cut, the President is proposing to Congress, in the strongest possible terms, that we spend up to three times that amount—roughly \$20 billion this year—on a series of programs, most of which have nothing whatsoever to do with emergency spending by any definition that we have ever used for emergency spending.

So the point I made, in very simple terms, was the President is not living up to his word. He is not putting Social Security first. The President is pretty clear about not wanting Republicans in the House to cut taxes and to use \$6.6 billion of the surplus for that purpose. But the President is now actually threatening to veto bills and to shut down the Government unless we spend up to \$20 billion of additional money this year, every penny of which would come out of the same surplus that the President is saying to the Republicans in the House, "Don't dare touch that surplus, don't take \$6.6 billion to cut taxes."

The White House decided, over the weekend, that they wanted to respond to what I had to say. And I want to respond to a lady, Linda Ricci, who is the spokeswoman for the Office of Management and Budget. She made two statements that I want to respond to.

Let me read you from the Reuters wire service story:

Linda Ricci, spokeswoman for the administration's Office of Management and Budget, noted the actual additional spending request is roughly \$14 billion, and said such emergency packages have become a normal part of the budget process.