Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, Mr. Bush and Mr. Reagan both went to the conventions of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Why is Mr. Dole boycotting this organization?

I come to the floor not to castigate the putative nominee but to ask him to change his mind. Could it be that the Dole-Canady bill is what is keeping Mr. Dole from attending the convention? That bill, of course, would abolish virtually all forms of affirmative action, and it is a tough sell to the NAACP audience.

On the other hand, I am certain that Mr. Dole would get a very polite reception. After all, it was he who saved goals and timetables in the 1980's. Throughout his career he has been a strong supporter of civil rights. It is certainly important that anyone seeking the Presidency of the United States, upon the invitation of the premier grassroots civil rights organization in the country, accept that invitation.

To be sure, the Dole-Canady bill is a grave disappointment to civil rights supporters. The bill is unnecessary, given what the Supreme Court has done to affirmative action. In order to apply goals and timetables, for example, with respect to women and minorities, there has to be a compelling government interest and goals have to be narrowly tailored, and so far we have not come upon that case, although we surely hope we will soon.

The Dole-Canady bill would not even permit affirmative action when that very narrow test is met, and it would not even allow the Supreme Court to use goals and timetables, for example, if the Court finds that a company had deliberately excluded women because they were women or had deliberately excluded blacks because they were blacks. The Court would be shorn of the ability to monitor progress in making up for that discrimination through the use of goals and timetables.

Interestingly, business says it is going to continue to do affirmative action anyway because it knows that it lives in a country where increasingly women and minorities are the majority in the work force. And, of course, business has used goals and timetables precisely because they protect business from liability. To the extent that they are correcting their own discriminatory practices, they do not face the certain probability of a lawsuit.

Most disappointingly, the Dole-Canady bill would set us back decades because it would allow the exclusion of women for certain jobs based on privacy concerns. Been there, done that, overcome that hurdle, do not need to go there again.

This is a disquieting time for race relations in this country. There is a spate of torching of black churches. This is the time for any man or woman who wishes to lead this country to go to black people and reassure them and their premier organization that the laws will be followed and that the laws will be executed fairly.

I come not to praise Mr. Dole and not yet to criticize him, because the convention is not over, but to say that I think there is still time to go and make an appearance before the NAACP to help dissolve some of the terrible racial polarization that is building up on both sides, because if he does become President, he will surely have to use that bully pulpit in order to try to do what he can on his watch, should it be his watch, to bring this country together racially.

We are all too comfortable in our black and our white sides of the country. This is one country. We have to come together and say that. Read my lips, we are all Americans. This is one country. Anyone who wants to be President of the United States should relish the opportunity to go before the NAACP and say those words.

FREEDOM RALLY IN OMAHA, NE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. CHRISTENSEN] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, I would like to take a moment to talk about an event we had this week in Omaha, NE, over the Fourth of July holiday. We celebrated what was called the Freedom Rally.

In a day of increasing cynicism, the Freedom Rally was intended to bring people together in a moment of faith. It was intended to honor our Nation, and it was also intended to honor a very special man, Pastor Elmer Murdoch. Pastor Murdoch and his wife Nancy founded Trinity Interdenominational Church over two decades ago. That church has grown to the ministry size of over 3,000 people.

The event was led by Pastor Al Toledo of Glad Tidings Church. We heard inspirational music by Wayne Watson and the uplifting words of African-American Kay James, who rose from the projects of Richmond, VA, to the corridors of the White House, where she last worked, and currently serves the State of Virginia as secretary of Health and Human Services there.

The Freedom Rally was a great success. The Governor of Nebraska was there, the mayor, myself, local officials. It was truly a bipartisan event where pastors and people of all of Nebraska came and prayed together for our country, prayed over the elected officials. It was truly an inspiring opportunity for all of us.

During that time Kay James had an opportunity to read during her speech a poem called ''I Am a Nation,'' which formed the central theme of the Freedom Rally. I would like to enter into the RECORD ''I Am a Nation.'' I do not know who it was written by, but I believe it echoes the sentiment of our country.

As a nation we face tremendous challenges. We face ever mounting debt that is strangling our future. We face terrifying crime that is dominating our streets. That is why on the Fourth of July we come together to commit to work hard to change our country.

We came together because we dream of the day when this country will no longer be spending away its children's futures. We dream of a day when out of control courts, and slick, rich criminal trial lawyers no longer seek to manipulate our justice system to free the guilty through legal loopholes. We want a country where children can play in parks again without fear and where adults can walk across those parks at night with ease, where working people are praised and not penalized by their Government. We want a country where the American dream is within everyone's reach.

At the Freedom Rally, we recognized that together we can put the country back on the right track. Together, with prayer, we can save the American dream. This Fourth of July our Nation came together to reaffirm its belief in its founding tenets. The Freedom Rally was one beacon of light in that great display. It was truly a privilege and an honor to be there and to serve the State of Nebraska and the Second District as its elected representative.

Madam Speaker, in addition to my thoughts on this past Independence Day weekend, today in the Senate they are discussing the minimum wage. I ran across a great article by a man from my district in the American Enterprise. Recently at a public hearing held by the Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress, entrepreneur and Godfather chairman, Herman Cain, delivered an interesting argument against the minimum wage hike.

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Herman Cain is probably most recognized for his taking on the Big Government health care, socialized health care program that Hillary and Bill Clinton tried to get through a couple of years ago. He took on the President in a debate that I think everyone recognizes as the keystone argument that probably defeated this bad idea to nationalize one-seventh of our economy.

Now Herman Cain has written this article about how forcing up the minimum wage hurts those who need the help the most. I would like to enter it into the RECORD, as well, so that everybody across this country would have an opportunity to read what Herman Cain says about the minimum wage.

Madam Speaker, I include the following for the RECORD:

I am a nation. I was born on July 4, 1776, and the Declaration of Independence is my birth certificate. The bloodlines of the world run in my veins, because I offered freedom to the oppressed. I am many things, and many people. I am the nation.

I am 250 million living souls—and the ghost of millions who have lived and died for me.

I am Nathan Hale and Paul Revere. I stood at Lexington and fired the shot heard around the world. I am Washington, Jefferson and

Patrick Henry. I am John Paul Jones, the Green Mountain Boys and Davy Crockett. I am Lee and Grant and Abe Lincoln.

I remember the Alamo, the Maine, and Pearl Harbor. When freedom called I answered and stayed until it was over, over there. I lift my heroic dead in Flanders Fields, on the rock of Corregidor on the bleak slopes of Korea, in the steaming jungle of Vietnam, and in the desert sands of Saudi Arabia.

I am the Brooklyn Bridge, the wheat lands of Kansas and the granite hills of Vermont. I am the coal fields of the Virginias and Pennsylvania, the fertile lands of the West, the Golden Gate and Grand Canyon. I am Independence Hall, the Monitor and the Merrimac.

I am big. I sprawl from the Atlantic to the Pacific . . . my arms reach out to embrace Alaska and Hawaii . . . 3 million square miles throbbing with industry. I am more than 5 million farms. I am forest, field, mountain and desert. I am quiet villages and cities that never sleep.

I am Eli Whitney and Stephen Foster. I am Tom Edison, Albert Einstein and Billy Graham. I am Horace Greeley, Will Rogers and the Wright brothers. I am George Washington Carver, Daniel Webster and Jonas Salk.

Yes, I am the nation, and these are the things that I am. I was conceived in freedom and God willing in freedom I will spend the rest of my days.

May I possess always the integrity, the courage and the strength to keep myself unshackled, to remain a citadel of freedom and a beacon of hope to the world.

This is my wish, my goal, my prayer in this year of 1996, two hundred and twenty years after I was born.

HOW FORCING UP THE MINIMUM WAGE HURTS THOSE WHO NEED HELP MOST

My name is Herman Cain. I am President of Godfather's Pizza, Inc., a 525-unit pizza restaurant chain headquartered in Omaha, Nebraska. I am also President of the National Restaurant Association.

There are nearly 740,000 food service units in this country, including everything from fast-food chains to fine-dining restaurants. We are an industry dominated by small businesses, and we employ a diverse workforce of over nine million people. Our employees are white, African-American, Hispanic-American, Asian-American, and more. We expect to employ 12.5 million by the year 2005, with the fastest growth coming in the category of food service managers. More than 30 percent of Americans under age 35 had their first job in the restaurant industry. Restaurants offer an important boost into the job market for millions, as well as a clearly defined career path for those willing to work hard and stay in the business.

There are numerous reasons why I firmly believe a minimum-wage increase is attacking the wrong problem. Allow me to list the three reasons I believe to be most important.

First, mandated wage increases reduce entry-level job opportunities.

A few weeks ago, a colleague in Oregon told me about a homeless 17-year-old he hired in the mid-1980s. He gave the teenager a job chopping lettuce, deveining shrimp, and sweeping floors. That 17-year-old has worked his way up: He's now the executive chef at the restaurant. But the job that brought him into the business no longer exists. When Oregon raised its minimum wage a few years ago and the restaurant owner looked for ways to cut costs, this job was one of the first to go. Now, my colleague buys lettuce already chopped from a nearby automated facility.

It's a good example of the split personality of the minimum wage. When you make it more expensive to hire people who lack basic work skills and experience, you risk shutting them out of the workforce.

My second point: A minimum-wage increase jeopardizes existing jobs by threatening businesses that may be marginally profitable. In my case, for example, Godfather's Pizza, Inc., has nearly 150 company-owned and operated units, and a few of them are either marginally profitable or not profitable at all. If you raise costs for the many thousands of enterprises like these, you risk shutting their doors permanently.

When you're running a restaurant that's on the edge, you're scrutinizing every penny. Can ninety cents an hour put me under? It could. Maybe not by itself—but when labor accounts for about 30 percent of my expenses, second only to my food costs, a mandated wage increase is one more factor tipping the balance. A mandated wage increase triggers wage inflation by rippling up through the entire wage spectrum and by causing increases in payroll-related expenses like FICA taxes.

Some people would say ''Just raise your prices.'' It doesn't work that way. In a competitive market, that's the fastest way to drive away customers with limited discretionary income. That can close a business fast.

My third point: A minimum-wage increase is an ineffective way to raise someone out of poverty. Most minimum-wage earners are part-time workers under age 25—mostly first-time workers, students, people holding down second jobs or supplementing the income of their household's primary earner. In my restaurants, for example, nine out of ten of my hourly employees choose to work less than 35 hours a week—even though full-time work is available. These are not the poor people policymakers most want to help. By shooting wide and hoping to hit the right target, you're taking a gamble with harmful side effects.

The best way to lift a family out of poverty is to get people into the job market and give them a chance to acquire skills. I think of my father, who worked three jobs until he was skilled enough to cut back to two jobs, and who kept going until his skills were good enough that he could support us on one hourly job.

There are other dangers with a minimum-wage increase. Like the fact that a federal mandate prescribes the same wage for a mom-and-pop restaurant in rural Nebraska as it does for a restaurant located in a high-cost-of-living metro area. It's not a good idea to try to overrule the laws of supply and demand that do a pretty good job of setting local wages according to the specific conditions of specific markets.

Congress has recently been playing close attention to the state and local officials—Democrats and Republicans alike—who say ''enough is enough'' when it comes to picking up the tab for unfunded federal mandates. Please give businesses the same hearing: An increase in the minimum wage is also an unfunded federal mandate. Someone has to pay—and it's usually the entry-level employee.

I urge you to look deeper for solutions. Some people lack the skills to make them competitive for entry-level employment. This is why we have tax credits to encourage businesses to hire employees who typically have a hard time gaining a foothold in the job market. This is why politicians are setting up empowerment zones to help businesses hire in impoverished areas. These programs rightly recognize that some workers may be overlooked if it gets too expensive for a business to hire them. Congress should be looking for ways to encourage people to work, and businesses to hire, instead of making it more expensive for employers to give the low-skilled a job.

You're getting a good dose of information lately on the theories behind successful welfare reform. In businesses like ours, real life crowds out theory. While our main expertise is in getting out good meals at good prices, as entry-level employers we've also become fairly expert at finding ways to help millions of troubled teens and troubled adults get beyond some daunting barriers to employment. We see that real entry-level jobs provide training in the fundamentals—reliability and teamwork, to name just two—and thereby yield long-term social payoffs that don't come in any other way.

Right now we have more than four million people earning the minimum wage in this country, 7½ million unemployed persons, and nine million adults receiving welfare payments. Tackle the right problems first. Focus on creating more jobs, not on raising the cost of entry-level employment and eliminating existing jobs. A minimum-wage increase doesn't attack the right problem. I urge you to reject it.

FACT AND FICTION ON THE MINIMUM WAGE

Minimum-wage workers are the most vulnerable Americans, right?

Actually, more adults who earn the minimum wage live in families with over $30,000 in annual income than live in families making under $10,000. Over all 22 percent of minimum wage earners are poor. The majority of poor Americans don't work at all, at any wage.

Minimum-wage work is undignified.

Fifty-five percent of minimum-wage workers are youths age 16–24. Many of these live with their parents. Only 2 percent of workers age 25 or older are paid the minimum wage.

You can't raise a family on the minimum wage.

Few have to: 89 percent of all workers now making less than the proposed minimum have no spouse or child depending on them as sole breadwinner. Of these, 44 percent are single individuals living with their parents or other family member, 22 percent are single individuals living alone, and 23 percent have a spouse with a paying job.

Minimum-wage jobs are a dead end.

Sixty-three percent of minimum-wage workers earn higher wages within 12 months. Seventy percent of the restaurant managers at McDonald's, plus a majority of the firm's middle and senior management, began in hourly positions. (This includes CEO Ed Rensi, who started at 85 cents an hour in 1965.)

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: Employment Policy Foundation; Wall Street Journal; industrial Relations and Labor Review.

INCREASE THE MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I just wanted to make reference to my colleague, who I greatly respect, who just spoke from the other side of the aisle to point out that we continue to see many Republicans, and most importantly I would say the Republican leadership here in the House, and to some extent also in the Senate, that continue to oppose raising the minimum wage. Although I respect what my colleague from Nebraska has said, I