a city with private money if you think the city has no future. The city has a future. The city is coming back. The first people to understand it are those who have the most to lose, private businesspeople who have put their money where their mouth is, which is what I am asking this Congress to do when it comes to our schools, to put their money on the summer program and not on vouchers, where it will have no measurable effect on the average kid in the District of Columbia.

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, you have never seen me give the rosy, merry picture of the District. That is why I have spoken about the frightening decline in the D.C. tax base. I have introduced a bill, as recently as last week, called the D.C. Economic Recovery Act that would give a tax break to District residents from their Federal income taxes. I come forward to do this for the District, recognizing it would not be done for others because the District is a special case and you have made it so, and it is so under the Constitution of the United States.

We have no State, Mr. Speaker. So that when residents leave the District, a very different phenomenon occurs than when they leave Baltimore or Richmond because when they take their money with them, there is no State to recycle their money back to the District of Columbia, as the State recycles money back to Baltimore and as the State recycles money back to Richmond. If there is no State to recycle the money back, then you say, ''Well, why don't you tax the people who come in every day to work here and use the same services that residents use here during the day?'' The reason we do not do so, Mr. Speaker, is because this body, and the other body, the Congress of the United States, has indeed barred a commuter tax.

So the District is left high and dry. People leave, no way to make up for them because no State to help make up for their flight, and no way to make people who come in and use our services pay for the use of those services because the Congress has barred a commuter tax. I am asking this body to help make up for putting your capital between a rock and a hard place, and I am pleased and may I give credit to the leadership of this body and of the other body for supporting the D.C. Economic Recovery Act.

Mr. Speaker, the figures speak for themselves. We want to hear them now so that we will not be the last to turn out the lights.

□ 1500

The figures speak for themselves. If we look at who the movers are, we see that 25 percent of them earn between $35,000 and $50,000, and 38 percent of them earn between $50,000 and $100,000. Mr. Speaker, those are middle-income taxpayers right there. That is 63 percent of the people moving in that core, prime middle-income group between $35,000 and $100,000. Those are the people who pay taxes to the District government.

If the District does not have people to pay taxes to the government, no amount of surplus can make up for the flight of its core tax base. That is why I have introduced the District of Columbia Economic Recovery Act, not as special treatment to the District, but to make up for the special detriment that this body has placed on the District because we believe that that is necessary because it is the capital of the United States.

Who is not leaving the District, Mr. Speaker? Those who make under $15,000; or put it another way, it is the poor. That is to say, under $15,000, only 3 percent left. The years I am talking about for these numbers, Mr. Speaker, are 1990 to 1996.

The very rich are not leaving in large numbers either. Only 10 percent of those who make $100,000 or more are leaving, and we are overly dependent upon these very rich people, and I love every last one of them, and I hope they do not go anywhere.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. NORTON. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I could not help but watch with interest the gentlewoman's discussion on the floor here today as the gentlewoman has been talking about her wonderful District, which is our Nation's capital, and I wanted to share with those who are focusing upon the presentation my experience in dealing with the gentlewoman regarding the city.

I first was drawn by way of attention when the gentlewoman mentioned David Gillmor, who is the housing director here and a fellow who we have both worked with, a fabulous public servant who is among those who is trying to make a difference in the Nation's capital and is making a very special contribution.

I also wanted to share with the gentlewoman and others the fact that just a short time ago I returned from a, not exactly a ribbon-cutting, but essentially that, at a Habitat for Humanity, location very close to the Capitol here, where in this case Freddie Mac was presenting a check for $1 million for a program that the gentlewoman knows as the House That Congress Built.

But as we were doing that, we were also expressing our appreciation for those who come together, in this case to help Ms. Christy Ingram and her family prepare to move in, probably sometime this summer to their new home here in the Nation's capital as a result of partnering that is going on in the city, that is designed to try to make a little difference here.

As the gentlewoman knows, I come from California, but when I am in the Nation's capital doing this job, I am a constituent of yours, for I live in the city. I am very proud that I do. It is a marvelous community that needs all the help that all of us together should and want to give it. But especially I just wanted to express my appreciation to you and to those of you like David Gillmor who are truly making a difference for all of us who live here.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) for taking the time to come to the floor. I do have to say to this body that the gentleman from California, who represents his own district with great energy and great distinction, nevertheless decides he always has to do good where he is and has initiated a program here that he is now spreading through the rest of the country. He came to me, imagine how I felt, when a distinguished and senior, not in age, but in longevity in the House came to me and said, we want to build a house by the Congress of the United States here in the capital of the United States, and I want to thank the gentleman for his work for the District.

NO WAIVER OF JACKSON-VANIK

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, 1 week ago the administration issued a waiver of the Jackson-Vanik amendment, opening the way for OPIC and Exim funds to filter into Vietnam. I was expecting this decision to come from the administration; however, I had hoped that common sense would guide that decision. Vietnam is a Communist country. Its citizens enjoy no religious freedom, little economic freedom, and no freedom to vote, and it is not getting better.

The recent promotion of a hard-line Communist to the Secretary General position, a man who once stated that his government has concerns that foreigners are somehow out to undermine Vietnam's independence, has stalled all hopes of changing the economy in Vietnam. Vietnam is not ready for OPIC. Your support or opposition to OPIC and Exim is not in question here. What is is the government subsidies for businesses in Communist Vietnam.

In anticipation of this decision by the administration, I introduced H.R. 3159, legislation which will now make this waiver null and void. The United States should not extend these benefits to a country that has done little in the way of granting freedom to its citizens. I ask my colleagues to cosponsor this important legislation.

WHITE HOUSE SILENCE: AMERICANS WANT THE TRUTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WHITFIELD). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) is recognized for 10 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, not far away in a United States Federal courthouse, a grand jury may hold in its

hands the fate of our President. Now, how it will end is anyone's guess. At this moment, fair-minded people are suspending judgment.

All we can say for sure is that the Presidency seems diminished by it. Republican and Democrat alike, we will all be happy to have this spectacle behind us, because for weeks I have withheld comment on the charges leveled at the President. I thought it only fair that he be given the chance to explain himself to the American people without any rush to judgment on our part. These are, after all, serious charges, and premature condemnations of the President would not be fair to him or to the public.

So I waited for the President to speak out, and I waited, and I waited, and I waited. But with each passing day, the silence emanating from within the White House grows evermore deafening. It is a silence broken only by the sound of character attacks launched at the President's accusers.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas will suspend.

It is not in order to refer to the President in personal terms. Discussion of ''charges leveled at the President'' dwell on personality and are not in order, under longstanding precedents of the House, which are recorded on pages 175 to 176 of the House Rules Manual.

The gentleman may continue.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I have checked the speech with the Parliamentarian and have gotten clearance from the Parliamentarian for this speech.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair is advised by the Parliamentarian's Office that certain recommendations for change in the text were not communicated.

The gentleman may continue.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, the President's own spokesman has said that he does not want to know the truth about this entire affair. He has also said that the truth may be very complicated, as it so often is with the President. But while the President's spokesman may not want to know the truth, the American public deserves to hear it.

The President's silence is a grave disservice to the American people who elected him. Twice a plurality of voters elected Bill Clinton to lead this country. Twice they put their faith in him to do the people's work. Well, Mr. Speaker, a Presidency enveloped in scandal is good for nobody, and the faith that the American people have put in President Clinton has been violated time and time again.

I sometimes hear that none of this has any relevance to public policy. The President's defenders point to the polls that show high job approval ratings. While this may be an appropriate defense for an administration guided by polls rather than principles, it fails to even scratch the surface of the true implications of this affair.

For most of this Nation's history, the American people have held a very high standard of conduct for the President of the United States. The reverence with which they held this office of the Presidency dictated this higher standard. Now it seems that the loftiness of the office is an excuse for a lower standard. He is the President. We should give him the benefit of the doubt. As long as the economy performs well, it does not matter how a President acts, or so the thinking goes.

Well, I disagree with that thinking. One should not be able to get away with more simply because of the office that he holds. The leader of the free world should be held to a higher standard, not a lower one. After all, the eyes of our Nation and of the world are constantly upon him.

Mr. Speaker, poll numbers are fleeting, but the tarnishing of the highest office in the land has permanent consequences, and as for the character and morality of our leaders, I do not see it as my duty as a Congressman to give frequent lectures on this subject. We are legislators, we are not preachers. And all of us are flawed. We have all made mistakes. But there comes a point when remaining silent becomes a breach of responsibility. I cannot remain silent any longer. To do so would be to forsake my duty as an elected voice of the people. I am a representative of the people, and it is on their behalf that I implore the President to come forward with the truth.

The charges against the President of the United States are very serious, and that is why Congress may have to act on them.

Aiding in his defense, the President is said to have the best political tacticians and consultants in the business. We see and hear from these consultants very often. They miss no opportunity to malign the motives of the independent counsel or belittle the investigation, or send forth into the airwaves any number of legalistic evations and desperate semantic stonewalls.

Ken Starr is just doing his job. The independent counsel is doing the job that the Attorney General of the United States and a three-judge panel has asked him to do. Yet, if we look at the charges made against him, one would think he was the devil incarnate.

It is always the same with these people. The spin, the whole spin, and nothing but the spin. Are these the best political minds in the business? I am not so sure about that. They certainly know how to buy time, but that only works for just so long. They may be able to obscure the truth for a while, but they cannot change it. Their act is wearing very thin with the American people. It only aggravates the offenses and postpones the day of truth-telling.

I cannot think of a better way to bring on formal congressional proceedings than to go on hindering, obstructing and belittleing the judicial proceedings that are now under way.

Now, if that is the current White House strategy, then they will not be first to discover that deceit is one offense our forgiving public will not abide.

□ 1515

We Republicans know something about this from our party's bitter experience just a generation ago. There is no more fragile construct than a stone wall. In any scandal, the shortest route to safety is always the truth.

It is worth recalling that many of these same people 6 years ago promised, and I quote, ''the most ethical administration in history.'' The troubling thing is that they still believe it. Six years and who knows how many scandals later, their moral self-assurance seems undiminished. Where does this self-assurance come from? It seems to arise from a profound understanding of everybody's misdeeds except their own.

No administration has ever been more demonstrative in acknowledging our national sins past and present than this one. This is the same President who has so touchingly apologized for the sins of racism, the sins of discrimination, the sins committed during World War II against Japanese-Americans, and so on through our entire checkered social history.

How easy admissions come when the wrongdoing is someone else's. How repentant they are when the guilt is broad and general and national and universal. But now the question is one of personal wrongdoing. A strange silence has fallen over the White House. Mr. Speaker, at the heart of this investigation are some very, very serious questions, and a shrug is not an answer.

The response that these are personal traits that the public was well aware of when it elected him, that times are good, and people just do not care, and so on, likewise, rings very hollow to me. We have heard this line many times from the commentators.

I must say it absolutely amazes me. It is not very flattering, no matter how you look at it. Surely it marks the first time a President's integrity has ever been defended on the grounds that our expectations were low to begin with.

I do not for 1 minute buy into the argument that the public does not care about integrity, because, like most of us, the public is clearly bewildered by all of this. I suppose you can add to that a certain public fascination with this spectacle.

But we have an administration that often seems to defy so many of life's rules: honesty is the best policy; character is destiny; whatsoever a man soweth, so shall he reap. We all grow up believing these rules were firm and inflexible. Yet, somehow this White House seems to have found a loophole in each one of them.

They shy from the truth. They attack the character of others as if to divert attention from their own. They sow shame and scandal. Up till now, it seems to be working. But all of this can only work for just so long. In politics, as in life, you cannot stave off the consequences forever.

My money is still on the old saying that honesty is the best policy. Where simple honesty is concerned, there is no such thing as executive privilege. Sooner or later, straight answers will have to come out. The longer the White House waits, the greater the harm to themselves and to their bond of trust with the American people.

The sooner we hear the truth, the sooner they will regain public trust and respect. Let me repeat that, Mr. Speaker, not mere approval or popularity but trust and respect. Leaders do not live by polls alone. Without trust and respect, they are nothing, and any title they hold is a mockery.

On his way to Washington for the 1993 inauguration, the President-elect, Bill Clinton, made a stop at Monticello to pay homage to Thomas Jefferson. It was Jefferson who offered, perhaps, the most prophetic comment of the next 6 years of this presidency. No man will ever bring out of the presidency the reputation which carries him into it.

Something is amiss when a president receives almost as many bills from his lawyers as from Congress. The judicial proceedings will run their course regardless of this White House stonewalling. But if the President would just tell the truth to the American people, it would go a long, long way toward bringing this ordeal to an end. The truth, the truth is the only thing now that can preserve the dignity of the presidency.

That is what it is it all comes down to, Mr. Speaker, is the truth. The Independent Counsel must pursue it. Congress must expect it. The public must hear it. The President must tell it. Then, finally, we can put this sad chapter behind us and move on.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. UNDERWOOD (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today through noon on Wednesday, March 25, on account of official business in the district.

Mr. MARTINEZ (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today, on account of an unexpected emergency.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

The following Members (at the request of Mr. PALLONE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:

Mr. FILNER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, for 5 minutes, today.

The following Members (at the request of Mr. TIAHRT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:

Mr. MORAN of Virginia, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EWING, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TIAHRT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. CHENOWETH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MICA, for 5 minutes, today.

The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

Mr. YOUNG of Florida and to include extraneous material notwithstanding the fact that it exceeds two pages of the RECORD and is estimated by the Public Printer to cost $1,055.

The following Members (at the request of Mr. PALLONE) and to include extraneous matter:

Mr. KIND.
Mr. TOWNS.
Mr. KANJORSKI.
Ms. STABENOW.
Mr. DIXON.
Mr. PAYNE.

The following Members (at the request of Mr. TIAHRT) and to include extraneous matter:

Mr. REDMOND.
Mr. PORTMAN.
Mr. BLILEY.

The following Members (at the request of Mr. PALLONE) and to include extraneous matter:

Mr. WEYGAND.
Mr. QUINN.
Mr. BLILEY.
Mr. KANJORSKI.
Mr. PORTMAN.
Mr. THOMPSON.
Mr. EDWARDS.
Mr. YOUNG of Florida.
Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado.
Mr. KIND.
Mr. DIXON.
Mr. HALL of Texas.
Mr. CLYBURN.
Mr. DOOLEY of California.
Mr. CLAY.

The following Members (at the request of Mr. DELAY) and to include extraneous matter:

Mr. MCCOLLUM.
Mr. FORBES.
Mr. MORAN of Virginia.
Mr. PORTER.
Mr. GALLEGLY.
Mr. MCDERMOTT.
Mr. WELLER.
Mr. SKELTON.
Mr. PAYNE.
Mr. MENENDEZ.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 21 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, March 23, 1998, at 2 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XXIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

8099. A letter from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Tomatoes Grown in Florida and Imported Tomatoes; Final Rule to Change Minimum Grade Requirements [Docket No. FV98–966–1 FR] received March 18, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8100. A letter from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Raisins Produced from Grapes Grown in California; Final Free and Reserve Percentages for 1997–1998 Crop Natural (Sun-Dried) Seedless and Zante Currant Raisins [FV98–989–1 IFR] received March 18, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8101. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Titanium Dioxide; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [OPP–300632; FRL–5779–3] (RIN: 2070–AB78) received March 18, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8102. A letter from the Deputy Executive Director, U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Distribution of Customer Property Related to Trading on the Chicago Board of Trade-London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange Trading Link [17 CFR Part 190] received February 23, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8103. A letter from the the Director, the Office of Management and Budget, transmitting the cumulative report on rescissions and deferrals of budget authority as of March 1, 1998, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 685(e); (H. Doc. No. 105—232); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

8104. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule—Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Veterans Employment Emphasis [DFARS Case 97–D314] received March 9, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on National Security.

8105. A letter from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, transmitting a report regarding actions to combat terrorism, pursuant to Public Law 105—85; to the Committee on National Security.

8106. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule—Housing Improvement Program (RIN: 1076–AD52) received February 25, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

8107. A letter from the General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Mergers or Conversions of Federally Insured Credit Unions to Non Credit Union Status; NCUA Approval [12 CFR Part 708a] received March 18, 1998, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

8108. A letter from the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting a draft of proposed legislation to repeal and streamline a wide range of programs of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.