of the Community Caring Counsel is if there is anybody in need or got a problem, we have got tentacles in the community that are going to find out about it and know about it and address those problems. And as the gentleman suggested, we are not perfect in all respects, but we do try.

And I think that you have articulated here so beautifully, so well, a spirit that lives out there in the minds and the hearts and the souls certainly of southern Missourians and, I think, of most Americans, and I wish that you could have given your speech here at the beginning of the day when every Member might be present rather than at the end of the day and the end of the week because I think you have delivered a very, very inspirational message here that everyone needs to be familiar with, and I commend you on your outstanding service in presenting to us, as you have, this wonderful activity that went on in Springfield, and I hope it can become a role model for a lot of other places. Thank you, MEL, for what you have done.

Mr. HANCOCK. I thank the gentleman.

The point I am attempting to make, not that I think that, in fact I know Springfield, MO, does not have an exclusive franchise on this, but the fact is that we need to. I am hoping other communities will emulate what they have started there in Springfield, but it is the positive thing that I want to stress.

I have been up here for almost 70 years. I mean it is negative, and I will say that you have to look at the negative side before you can come up with a solution, with positive solutions. You do not want to be blindsided, but this is positive, this is something that people can do.

Now, the ones that count are the ones that do their volunteer work, and probably all they get, they get the thanks in the way they feel inside rather than getting their name in the paper or that unknown person out there, and it just was absolutely amazing. Over 7,000 people showed up on a Saturday afternoon.

Mr. EMERSON. If the gentleman would yield further, let me encourage him. The Community Caring Council, which I mentioned as an entity in Cape Girardeau, has been in existence for some time, and other communities throughout southeast Missouri are emulating that entity, and I dare say that as other communities in the southwest are familiar with that is going on in Springfield, they will want to be a part of it as well because there is not, you know, a lot of difference between the folks in Joplin and Springfield and Poplar Bluff. They all want to be in there doing their part to make this world, this country and our region a better place.

Mr. HANCOCK. Mr. Speaker, is it not great that we live in a country where we do not have to work 14 hours a day just to get enough to eat or 18 hours a day just to get enough to eat?

You know we can spend a little time, and maybe quit watching so much television, and start doing a little volunteer work, and helping out our fellow man a little bit. That is positive, that is not negative.

THE AGRICULTURAL REAUTHORIZATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, we have just passed the Agriculture Reauthorization Act that reauthorizes farm programs, and I think it is very important to take note of an unprecedented development. We had a bipartisan breakthrough of the truth in respect to agricultural subsidies and the agribusiness welfare program in America, and this deserves to be noted. Been a lot of frustration for a long time experienced by those of us who recognize the fact that the agribusiness among all the recipients of Federal subsidies was the one that was most hypocritical. It received great amounts of money for a small number of people, and they made lengthy speeches about getting government off their back and not being a part of a welfare program. So we finally made a breakthrough, I think, in that not any great changes were wrought.

The bill that passed has a lot to be desired; the bill that passed is loaded with agribusiness welfare. The bill that passed is not a great reform measure, as it is touted to be. The bill that passed will probably be vetoed by the President. It pleases only segments of the population. Large numbers of the people are displeased with it.

But the phenomena that took place on the floor of the House yesterday is what I am rejoicing about. I rejoice that truth broke through and there was a real honest discussion of the nature of the welfare subsidies that have fueled the agribusiness for the last three decades. The truth broke through, and there were very close votes. We almost got rid of several subsidies that were terrible and have been going on for some time, and, most important of all, it was not partisan. You know, you could find no pattern of partisan voting. Both sides supported a breakthrough of the truth.

The debate was a real debate in that it was not locked into some kind of ideological dogma, it was not a ceremony where, no matter what you said, one side or the other side was not listening. I think for the first time, for one of the few times on the floor the House, the minds of some Members were actually changed by the course of the debate.

So we rejoice that the agribusiness is now being honestly examined, and the agribusiness and the tremendous amount of corporate welfare that the agribusiness has enjoyed is now up for scrutiny. The common sense of the American people can be allowed to examine it, and I expect that you will have an escalating amount of concern from ordinary people that common sense is now going to take hold of the situation, and we are going to have a real look at the kind of money that has been poured into the agribusiness empires over the last three decades.

Of course, you know most people do not realize that this bill, which was mainly focusing on cash subsidies and the details of crops and particular commodities, this bill does not even touch the surface of some of the most generous corporate welfare that has been heaped upon the agribusiness. We were not talking about the Farmers Home Loan Mortgages. We were not talking about a whole set of loan programs that feed into the farm economy.

And they say farmers. I think it is a misnomer to call anything related to agriculture now on a large scale farmers. They are not farmers. It is agribusiness. The farmers long ago were moved from the land.

You know when Franklin Roosevelt, the greatest Democrat probably in history, when Franklin Roosevelt conceived of the crop support programs and provided support for poor farmers across the Nation, if was very much needed and very much in order, and for a long time it did serve the purpose of keeping the family farm alive, allowing poor farmers to survive. It was very important.

But long ago the agricultural subsidies ceased to keep family farms alive and provide help for those that needed it most. That ended a long time ago. That is not the case any more. It is a great business, a great corporate welfare program, and some of us have complained about it for years. It has a dual evil. The taxpayers are forced to pay for the agrabusiness program subsidies, the corporate welfare, on the one hand. On the other hand, the fact that they pay for them to keep the prices up means that the people in other parts of the country that are not farmers pay higher prices for foods and commodities than they would if they were not propped up with special programs.

We had a command and control structure for agriculture second to none. I think the Soviet Union bureaucrats would probably envy the command and control structure of the Department of Agriculture and how agriculture over the years has evolved into this kind of protective command structure with farmers home loan mortgages and all kinds of goodies being fed to farmers and agribusinesses and establishing their own standards. We had situations were $11 billion over a 5-year period, $11 billion in loans, were forgiven under the farmers home loan mortgages program.

□ 1715

When you try as a citizen or as a Congressman to find out exactly what

criteria was used and who authorized the giveaway of $11 billion of American money, you know, they forgave the loans over a 5-year period to the tune of $11 billion, and the process of forgiving, writing down, adjusting is still going on. We have delinquent loans outstanding right now related to agriculture which reached the proportion of $11 billion or $12 billion, more than $10 billion, right now outstanding in delinquent loans for agriculture.

The giveaway took place more than 5 years ago, so that brought down the outstanding delinquencies greatly, but it was as high as $23 billion at one time. I have some statistics here. They are not always easy to read, because the way they give it to you, they do not clearly explain themselves. You have to read between the lines.

The various farm loan programs, they call farm programs direct loan fund activities. This is a report that took me some time to get. It is still very incomplete. At one point the outstanding delinquencies were up to $27 billion, as high as $27 billion, the outstanding delinquent loans. They forgave a lot of these loans, forgave them. If you forgave $11 billion worth of loans in New York City to homeowners and the owners of property and buildings, that would be a great boost to the economy of the neighborhoods. I find it hard to conceive of the Government giving away $11 billion to any group, but this was done and it has never been discussed.

Congress, I thought, would at least have hearings on it, when we first brought it up as a result of an article which appeared on the first page of the Washington Post, which talked about the $11 billion which had been forgiven in loans. They talked about four or five of the recipients of the loans that had been forgiven. They talked about the fact that they were millionaires. Several were multimillionaires that have been the recipients of this generosity of the American taxpayers. I thought we would have hearings. I thought—you know, Whitewater is dealing with $60 million. We are talking about $11 billion.

I thought we would be inundated with hearings, the Committee on Agriculture, the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on Appropriations. I thought all the committees would want to know how was $11 billion of the taxpayers' money forgiven, and why were millionaires involved in receiving these loan forgivenesses, the generosity of the loans, and what was the criteria. You still find it sort of like the savings and loan swindle. It is one of those things that got swept quickly under the rug. All our numerous media outlets and commentators and analysts, all of a sudden they just lost interest and it never surfaced. To this day it has not surfaced.

So anything related to agriculture has been sort of mysterious, and it has sort of been out of the reach of ordinary people. For that reason I was quite pleased that we made the breakthrough, and yesterday for the first time the Congress came to grips with the corporate welfare program that feeds agribusiness. We ought to be applauded. It was a bipartisan activity. I hope that it certainly continues.

My frustration began some time ago, and I thought I would go back and take a look at some of the things that I had said over the past. One of the items that I have placed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to lament my pain and suffering as a result of watching the agricultural lobby and the agricultural complex ride herd over us, I went back and pulled it out of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

On July 20, 1990, I think it was the day after, I was very frustrated when I saw on the floor a bill which was a very reasonable bill which called for farmers, agribusiness earning more than $100,000 a year to be dropped from the subsidy program. I thought that my colleagues who were interested in saving money and streamlining Government and guaranteeing that the waste would be removed and that every dollar taxpayers pay would be spent wisely and efficiently and effectively, I thought my colleagues would rally to that; but, you know, when the gentleman from New York, CHUCK SCHUMER and I proposed the bill, we were shocked with the number of votes that we received. As a result of that, I wrote my lament.

I am just going to re-read that, because today is February 29, 1996. This was written July 20, 1990. I spoke at that time. I am quoting from my entry into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD: ''Mr. Speaker, during the deliberations on the Schumer-Armey amendment,'' and it is very interesting that at that time it was also a bipartisan attempt, and of all people, you had the gentleman from New York, CHUCK SCHUMER, the New Yorker, on one end of the spectrum, with the gentleman from Texas, DICK ARMEY, honestly waging war against waste in the U.S. Government through the agriculture program.

I said: ''Mr. Speaker, during the deliberations on the Schumer-Armey amendment to the Food and Agriculture Resource Act of 1990 (H.R. 3950), I joined with a number of other colleagues in seeking to convince the Congress that the time has come to use common sense and make some reasonable changes in the farm subsidy program. Although numerous changes are needed in the obsolete subsidy formulas, the amendment proposed only one small correction. Farmers earning more than $100,000 in adjusted gross income would be dropped from the subsidy program and would no longer be eligible for a government check of up to $50,000.

''Despite the fact that the authors of the amendment could prove that no family farmers would be hurt; despite the fact that less than 3 percent of the present acreage would be impacted by the change; despite the fact that it was demonstrated that the people in greatest need within our country—the children, the homeless, and the unemployed—are not eligible for $50,000 government checks; despite these and many other illuminating facts, the Agriculture Committee refused to accept the amendment. On a floor vote, the committee was overwhelmingly supported by the Members of Congress.

''* * * it is obvious that we have learned nothing from the pattern of massive waste in military spending and the monstrous giveaways to the savings and loan crooks. ''There was a clear statement to the electorate of America. Let the people suffer but we have to do our deals.'' That was the statement.

I offered the following as a concession speech to the powerful Agriculture Committee, and I added a little rap comment here which I call Let the People Suffer.

LET THE PEOPLE SUFFER

(A concession speech to the powerful Agriculture Committee)

Let the people suffer!
But we got to do our deals
When hungry babies holler
Make them swallow bitter pills.
We got to do our deals:
Family farmers are really quite rare
But lawmakers never despair
We let millionaires profit
From the myth that farmers are there.
Let the people suffer!
Subsidize fat farmers
Guarantee corrupt banks
Cut kids' anti-viral vaccinations
But we must maintain our tanks.
Let the people suffer!
They fully understand
Why all our foreign embassies
Are built to look so grand.
Let the people suffer!
Let the children feel the pain
Government can't do it all,
So leave the homeless in the rain.
Let the people suffer!
But we have to do our deals
Leadership lacking strong wills
Rule against creative minds
Then stumble into old binds
This budget is stale stew
Nothing is really new
Our current game Is still insane
The present message
Is too much the same:
Let the people suffer!
But we have to do our deals.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, that was the result of my frustration on July 20, 1990. I am happy to report that some movement has taken place since the awesome power of the Committee on Agriculture came down on that amendment on that day before July 20, on July 19. The agriculture lobby came down and squeezed the opposition to death. I think we got less than 60 votes for that amendment, which said simply that any farmer which had an adjusted gross income of $100,000 would not be eligible for the subsidy program.

Then again on March 7, 1995, I wrote a piece, placed a piece in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, which also reflected my continuing frustration over the power of the agribusiness lobby and the agribusiness empire, the agribusiness

industrial complex. On that day, Tuesday, March 7, 1995, I said: ''Mr. Speaker, American agribusiness is one of the most successful industries on the face of the earth. Due to the vision and foresight of the Congress which enacted the legislation which created the land grant colleges, the agricultural experiment stations, and the county agents, government research and development made it possible for our farmers to leap way ahead of the rest of the world. No other Nation's agricultural industry is even close to the U.S. when it comes to farm output and efficiency. Let us applaud the Department of Agriculture and all of the nameless workers who over the years have done such a magnificent job in supporting our farmers.

''But now, Mr. Speaker, most of that work has been done. The mission has been accomplished. We have a monumental success and we can relieve the taxpayers of the burden of helping the agriculture industry, especially the rich corporate farmers. Let's have a means test and from now on let's support only the few remaining poor farm families. Let's stop the indiscriminate subsidies. Let's end the crop insurance. Let's stop the special mortgages. Let's leave the marketplace alone and end the crop subsidies and price supports. Let's get the fat farmers off the dole. The time has come to drastically downsize the Department of Agriculture. We must end farm welfare as we know it. We owe it to the American taxpayers. In this Congress let us work hard to get fat farmers off the dole.''

The following poem summarizes and conveys the seriousness of the situation. I call it ''Farmers on the Dole.''

FARMERS ON THE DOLE

Republican patriots
Come play your role
Keep fat farmers
On the dole
Helping cuddly honey bees
Coddling cattle grazing fees
Meat a city orphan
Never eats
Dole for welfare
Dole for cheats
Congress sink your fork
Deep into Republican pork
Hypocrisy over all
Drives you up the wall
O beautiful spacious skies
Small town editorials
Festering full of lies
Farmers on the dole
Farmers on the dole
Hi-ho the dairytake
Rich farmers on the dole
Decades over
And over it repeats
Dole for welfare
Dole for cheats
The story's never told
About farmers on the dole
Seeds not sown
Wheat not grown
Plow the dollars
Deep in the dirt
Hide the shame
Cover hypocrisy's hurt
Farmers on the dole
Farmers on the dole
Confess to free money's role
Rich farmers on the dole
Mortgage the barn
Until it drops
Timid taxpayers
Insure the crops
Rural swindlers
High on the hog
Food for the homeless
Thrown to the dog
The story's never told
About farmers on the dole
Republican patriots
Come play your role
Keep fat farmers
On the dole.

Mr. OWENS. At that time, Mr. Speaker, there was a partisan defense of farm subsidies. I am happy to report that yesterday on the floor that partisan defense crumbled, and we had legislation, amendments being offered by both sides of the aisle which sought to break through the hypocrisy of corporate welfare for agribusiness.

Common sense is on the rise, you know. We should be pleased. In this great democratic process, common sense raises its head from time to time, and common sense is our greatest hope. If this great democracy of ours is to endure, and I think it will endure, because of the fact that built into the structure are opportunities for common sense to come forward.

I think the fact that our legislators and Members of Congress have gone home and spent several weeks at home had something to do with the fact that there was a breakthrough and a recognition that agriculture, the agribusiness, is corporate welfare, and that we should get off the dole. Billions of dollars down the drain, billions of dollars down the drain, in contradiction of marketplace, the marketplace economy; a command structure similar to the Soviet Union's command structure. The problem is the Soviet bureaucrats would end it.

But there is still much work to be done. Until we are able to deal with farmers' home loan mortgages and other farm loans out there to the tune of $10 billion or $11 billion that are going to be forgiven, we have only begun to scratch the surface. I think we ought to cancel the Whitewater hearings, cancel the hearings on the travel office at the White House, cancel the hearings on the travel problem at the Department of Energy.

I do not say there is not a problem there. I am not going to get involved in trying to deal with the complexities of the White House travel office and the fact that the spoils system, which has been practiced for the entire time this Nation has existed, went into motion in a very crude kind of way, and has become a big, big, problem. Taxpayers' money should no longer be spent to probe the travel office at the White House, when we have $10 billion or $11 billion outstanding in the farm loan programs.

□ 1730

We ought to focus. The same committee responsible for investigating and probing in great detail the travel office problems, scandal, whatever they want to call it, that same committee is responsible for oversight for the Department of Agriculture loan programs. In fact, I first learned of the great outstanding number of delinquent loans in the farmers' home loan mortgage program and other programs as a member of that committee sitting there and hearing them talk about it. I was almost certain that we would have a return of the people who were there from the Department of Agriculture to tell us more about all of those billions of dollars, all those billions of dollars of outstanding loans.

It seems that there are certain places in our United States Government and our executive branch and here in Washington where billions of dollars misused, abused do not matter. You have $60 million at stake in Whitewater. The taxpayers have to shell out $60 million as a result of the collapse of the Whitewater bank, a savings and loan venture which, in the constellation of savings and loan operations, was tiny, you know. We had one that collapsed that owed the taxpayers $2 billion. The taxpayers had to bail it out for $2 billion. One in Denver, CO, almost $2 billion.

Quite a few collapsed for almost $1 billion, another $900 million. We have a whole lot of savings and loan collapses that we have not even discussed that we ought to be really examining. But the committee chose to deal only with Whitewater for some reason.

I said before I had a report, one of several reports that has been done on the savings and loan scandal, and one is the Department of Justice Financial Institution Fraud Special Report put out by the special counsel for financial institution fraud. And they give actual case histories in here, case highlights of things that happened during the saving and loan investigations and the kind of results that they got.

There is a piece in here, a case history, on Charles Keating. It is called ''The High-Flying Financier.'' Charles Keating, sentenced to over 12 years in order to pay $122.4 million for costing the taxpayers $2 billion. Keating was sentenced to 12 years and ordered to pay $122.4 billion. And it goes on to tell in summary what happened to Keating. Then there are other examples of great amounts of money lost, and finally what happened in most cases, we lost the money as taxpayers and it was not recovered.

Keating will stay in jail for less than 12 years, and when he gets out, he will find a way to pay some of his $122.4 million. I am sure he has money salted away in various places, and he will live happily ever after. But he is one of the few that was even prosecuted. He is certainly one of the very few in the billionaire category that received a jail sentence. So there is a lot of unfinished business that we should be addressing in Congress in order to deal with the fair dispensation of the taxpayers' money.

I do not want to dwell on that too long. I just want to make the connection between the excesses in the agribusiness and the corporate welfare subsidies for agribusiness and the other excesses that our Government, we have permitted, and now common sense is moving to address. I mentioned common sense before, I think, in connection with the phenomenon that has happened in the Republican primaries.

Normally I do not comment on the other party's primaries and I will minimize my comments. But the phenomenon of Pat Buchanan is everybody's business because Mr. Buchanan offers a very unusual development. A new dynamic has taken place within the Republican primary, and part of that dynamic relates to the fact that only Mr. Buchanan among the candidates has bothered to talk about what has been happening to workers in America, what is happening with respect to the average middle-class family. The Republican majority speaks incessantly about its concern for families. ''Families'' is a code word used over and over again in a thousand different ways. But when it comes to the economic security of families, the economic opportunity for families, what Mr. Buchanan has demonstrated is that there is a great vacuum. There is no discussion out there of the insecurity that families feel, that middle-class families now feel.

I have a great proportion of my district of people who are poor, working-class people who were actually quite poor and they felt insecurity all their lives. In certain communities in this country, the Depression never went away. It has been there since 1930, and the pain and the struggle is there on an ongoing basis. But there are large numbers of middle-class families, both black and white and various ethnic groups, middle-class families who have been enjoying a measure of security. They worked at a plant 15 years. 20 years, they could look forward to staying there and retiring and being able to spend their old age comfortably. They could look forward to having their children come behind them and get similar jobs, and it went on for a couple of generations. But now the person has worked there for 15, 20 years, finds that there is a threat to their pension funds. They cannot even look forward to retiring without problems, or they are suddenly dismissed at just the point where they qualify for the pension funds. All kinds of tricks are played and that dream is shattered. Then many others find that they will not get close to the retirement age because the streamlining and downsizing has begun to take place in large corporate organizations.

Streamlining, downsizing, is said to be necessary in order to make corporations more efficient, more effective. Streamlining and downsizing are necessary in order to maximize profits so that on Wall Street the stock offerings will be more attractive. Streamlining and downsizing accomplish all of those things, of course. Streamlining and downsizing is really seldom for the purpose of ending a structure, eliminating positions. Actually, they are going to hire new workers in most places. They are going to hire workers at much lower wages. They are going to hire workers that do not have seniority and have not accumulated certain benefits. Many of the downsizing and streamlining organizations are going to hire, rehire workers, but they are going to rehire them at much lower wage levels. Others are not going to rehire workers in the United States. They are going to hire workers in foreign countries. They are going to hire workers in Mexico. They are going to hire workers in Bangladesh. They are going to contract out to China certain parts of their processes. Whatever the reason, there is a great dislocation in the economy created as a result of the behavior of these corporations. The Democrats know it, Republicans know it. Members of Congress certainly know it. And yet we have not placed it high on the agenda. Oh, yes, there are some Members of Congress who have placed it high on the agenda. It is the leadership, it is the majority who have not. But the Progressive Caucus for some time has been talking about the need for a jobs program, a job creation program, a job training program. We have been talking for some time about that. We put legislation in.

One of the first questions I was asked by my constituents was where is the Democratic program? Why doesn't somebody match Pat Buchanan's interests and his concern? Why doesn't somebody indicate that they understand that there is a wage gap, there is an income gap that keeps growing; that while 10 or 20 percent of Americans are making more than they made for great amounts, their incomes are escalating, they are getting more wealthy all the time. The rest of the 80 percent are in a stagnant position, they cannot gain on the cost of living. Cost of living is way ahead of them. Insecurity is there for a good reason. Those who have jobs are actually not able to maintain the standard of living they had before. Those who have jobs are very anxious about their ability to keep those jobs.

We have been aware of this, and there are many voices raised that are concerned. Certainly DAVID BONIOR here in this House among the Democrats led the attack on NAFTA and the consequences that NAFTA would bring, and there were nearly 175 Democrats who consistently voted against all provisions related to NAFTA, and then they followed the same pattern with GATT. We understood that NAFTA and GATT were being stampeded through in order to guarantee that there was a minimum discussion of consequences. NAFTA and GATT, we knew, would bring problems. Not all of us. I think most of us were not trying to turn back the clock and back away from the globalization of the world's economy. Most of us were not trying to turn back the clock, as Pat Buchanan wants to do, and throw a ring around the United States, build walls, tariff walls, and resort to measures that are kind of crude and would maybe do more harm to the economy of this country as well as the world than they would do good. Not all of us, not most of us were concerned about those kinds of measures. We were concerned about the fact that the steamrolling of NAFTA and GATT would result in a dislocation for large numbers of American workers. We were concerned about the fact that nobody was willing to discuss building into the provisions for NAFTA and GATT some safety nets for workers in terms of education, in terms of opportunity. We were concerned about the fact that the technological revolution which rolls on, technological revolution which is fueled by the taxpayers' research and development efforts 20, 30 years ago, that that technological revolution would be to the benefit of a handful of people and that no provision would be made for the other people, the other Americans who certainly participated and were a critical part of the process of creating the technology which is so beneficial to the telecommunications industry and the computer industry and the information industry. We were concerned about the fact that human beings and human resources were the lowest thing on the list of the people that were pushing for the approval of NAFTA and the approval of GATT.

We were right. The problems have only been compounded. And now as the problems are compounded and workers found an opportunity, middle-class people who are concerned found an opportunity to express it, even one election in New Hampshire, immediately we have some visibility for the issue. Immediately there is a discussion on ''Nightline,'' there is a discussion on all the Sunday talk shows, everybody suddenly has discovered there is a problem in America. There is a problem of anxiety. There is a problem of insecurity. There is a problem of seeing no effort to deal with the losers. There is a problem with the concept of inevitable losers. The people who negotiated GATT and the people who negotiated NAFTA will tell you, well, we knew there would be losers. There will be some workers who are going to lose their jobs, some entrepreneurs put out of business. There are going to be losers.

What is happening now is that the losers are revolting and saying we did not volunteer to lose. We have not accepted the status of losers quietly. We are Americans. We helped to build this country. We helped to build this economy and we do not want to be thrown overboard casually by people who say there have to be some losers.

Now, there are nations and there are economies, there are societies that do not accept the theory that there have to be losers. They do not accept that

theory in Japan. You want to know the difference between the Japanese negotiators at the table dealing with GATT or dealing with bilateral trade agreements between the United States and Japan? The great difference is that every one of the negotiators from Japan knows that they are at the table to protect every strata of their society. They do not want to have losers. When they negotiate agreements, they are protecting small merchants, they are protecting categories of workers. The pattern of Japan has been quite pronounced. It is not a subtle thing anymore. Everybody knows that Japan negotiates to protect its own interest and it considers its human beings, the workers, the merchants, the small business people, the corporations, you know, but mainly the folks who need the most protection are the small business people.

□ 1745

Consumer prices are very high in Japan. The price of a pear or an apple or a piece of fruit is very high. The price of rice is very high. You know, it is a commodity that everybody needs and uses. They keep certain prices high, and they keep certain things in place in order to guarantee that certain classes of people are not ever in need of a safety net. They erect barriers in terms of inspection of our products, in terms of licensing, in terms of requirements of safety. They do all kinds of things to keep our products from flowing in rapidly into their market, because they are protecting their people. They do not want losers.

Japan probably does it better and has done it better than any other economy. But they certainly do it in France, they do it in Germany. The negotiators at the table who are negotiating GATT for all the other countries, or NAFTA for all the other countries, they made certain their people were protected. So we do not want to accept the premise that there have to be losers. The losers happen to live in my district. I do not want to be the district where the losers are. They have been losers for too long in the 11th Congressional District in New York. They have been losers for too long in Brownsville. They have been losers for too long in Bedford-Stuyvesant. They have been losers for too long.

I would like to have a government dedicated to the proposition that we want to protect them as much as we want to protect corporate interests.

So what I am saying is nothing new. We were aware of the problem, and we have introduced legislation. I myself introduced several pieces of legislation, and one of them I introduced at the request of the progressive caucus. The progressive caucus has worked on the problem of insecurity among workers, of dislocation of workers, lack of jobs, for some time, and we developed a whole set of legislation.

One of the pieces that I was asked to introduce was the Job Creation and Invest in America Act of 1995, the first year of the 104th session of Congress. I introduced the Job Creation and Invest in America Act of 1995. That is there with a proposal for creating jobs in every area, for dealing with the needs that exist in our economy, for infrastructure changes, infrastructure improvement, surface transportation improvement, aviation improvements, railroads. We go into the nonphysical sector and deal with the need for post-secondary education training lifelong learning and the need to fund that and provide jobs in that area while you are providing more services, the need for early childhood, youth and families to be taken care of, the need to improve the health and environment. It was a comprehensive bill, came out to a lot of money.

But at the same time we were preparing this bill, we read Japan had proposed a bill similar. It is a stimulus. It is a stimulus bill, a job creation, a job training bill, an education bill all wrapped in one. But overall it is a stimulus package. Japan introduced a stimulus package at the same time, and their economy is much smaller than ours, for $90 billion. They have introduced a $90 billion stimulus package, which was going to do similar things, focus on improving their infrastructure, because when they improve railroads and highways and airports, they know that it is going to redound to the benefit of the economy eventually anyhow. So it is not a waste.

So Japan was doing something similar. But we were not without ideas here in Congress. The progressive caucus and myself have repeatedly discussed after the introduction of this bill ways in which some portion of this stimulus package might be introduced.

There is a Federal Housing Trust Fund Act that I introduced which called for some new ways to get affordable housing by changing the way we finance housing, low-income housing, and it would create jobs as well as create housing.

There is a Creative Revenues Act that I introduced, Economic and Educational Opportunities Act, several acts that I have introduced and other people have introduced which deal with education and deal with job training. And, of course, the Congressional Black Caucus alternative budget focused primarily on opportunity, job opportunity, job training, and education.

We had a 25-percent increase in the education budget bill into our Congressional Black Caucus alternative budget. We were pleased when the President announced that he, too, would make education a priority, and there is a great increase, I think, in the President's first 7-year budget. He had $47 billion in increases for job training and education over a 7-year period. I was quite pleased.

I was shocked, then, when I found out, of course, just before we went on recess, that an agreement had been made for an extension, continuing resolution, which actually agreed to the cuts that the Republicans had proposed for certain critical education programs. They cut title I by $1.1 billion by saying that it had to come in at 75 percent; it could operate only at 75 percent of previous funding. That was a 25-percent cut.

They cut Head Start. They cut other programs. The Summer Youth Employment Program is still a shadowy kind of commitment. We do not know exactly how much money is there for it, and I mention these programs over and over again because they are critical. They are very important.

If we do not have job training programs, as meager as the Summer Youth Employment Program, job training and provision of income for the lowest-income families in the country, if we do not have that, then we are not moving at all to fill up the vacuum that Pat Buchanan has exposed.

The least we could do is keep programs alive which exist already. The least we could do is to energize our job training programs that are already in existence while we try to convince the Congress and everybody related that we need a massive education program, we need a massive job training program, we need a massive undertaking to deal with the fact that we are in a transition.

We need a program which deals with something as basic as minimum wage. You know, that is a tiny step. If we cannot get a massive response to the kind of dislocation and anxiety that exists, then certainly we ought to take a small step. The meager step of an increase in the minimum wage, common sense says that we ought to do that.

All of the polls taken in this country have shown repeatedly that Americans favor an increase in the minimum wage. They want to move the minimum wage from $4.25 an hour up in various parts of the country; it varies as to how they want to move it.

But the meager proposal, the basic rock-bottom, proposal made by Congressman GEPHARDT, our minority leader, that has also been endorsed by the White House, has been an increase of 45 cents an hour per year for 2 years, 90 cents an hour over a 2-year period.

Now, the least we could do for our workers is to indicate that we recognize that $4.25 an hour is no way to try to earn a living in this present economy. That comes out to about $8,400, I think, a year for a person who is working 40 hours a week. And you bring home $8,400 gross pay, you cannot support a family on that.

But common sense says we ought to change it. Why does the Congress not listen to common sense? When are we going to have a breakthrough.

I am optimistic now. We had a breakthrough yesterday. Suddenly, we could see that corporate subsidy for agribusiness is bad, suddenly we do not want to face the American people again and try to convince them we should pay farmers who earn $100,000 or more,

$50,000, for doing nothing. Suddenly, we made that break. I am optimistic.

I think in the next 30 to 60 days we may have some real movement on a minimum wage increase. The power of common sense is pushing from the bottom. The power of common sense says that no legislator can stand before his constituents and make an argument with a straight face that the minimum wage should not be raised.

I know there are some legislators, some Members of Congress who have said that the minimum wage will be raised ''over my dead body.'' There are others who said we cannot afford to raise the minimum wage because you are competing with the workers in Mexico, we are competing with workers in Bangladesh and China. Common sense says in this economy, if you are going to have some kind of semblance of order and law and justice, you ought to pay people a little bit more than $4.25 an hour.

Common sense has broken through at the local level. There is an article here that states, and this is from the Wall Street Journal of Friday, February 23, ''Minimum wage issue heads to the ballot box. Supporters of an increase skirt the unfriendly Congress.''

What they are saying in this article in the Wall Street Journal on February 23, 1996, is that in towns and cities and States people are taking steps to increase the minimum wage. They are disgusted with the lack of concern and the failure to act on the part of Congress. So you have, in a place like California, a coalition of unions and community groups gathering signatures to place a measure on the November ballot that would raise the minimum wage, which is now $4.25, to $5 in March 1997 and $5.75 a year later. That is an issue being brought, an initiative being brought in California.

In Idaho, the State AFL–CIO has filed an initiative to raise the minimum wage, now $4.25 an hour, by 50 cents for each of the 4 years beginning July 1, 1997. A separate bill to raise the minimum wage has been introduced in the State legislature. The AFL–CIO has filed the initiative. They are going to try to get the voters to do it. The State legislature has gone ahead in Idaho to file a bill to raise the minimum wage.

In Minnesota, the State legislature is considering a measure to raise the minimum wage, now $4.25, to $5.35.

In Missouri, the community group ACORN is gathering signatures for a State initiative in November that would raise the minimum wage, now $4.25, to $6.25 an hour in January 1997 and by at least 15 cents annually thereafter.

In Montana, a coalition of labor and community groups is collecting signatures to place a proposal on the November ballot to raise the minimum wage, now $4.25, for all workers to $6.25 an hour by the year 2000.

In Texas, a rare State in which cities hold authority over the minimum wage, Texas, the cities actually govern the minimum wage, signatures are being gathered in Texas for a November ballot initiative in Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, and El Paso to raise the base pay for all workers in those cities from $4.25 to as much as $6.25.

In Washington, the State of Washington, Gov. Mike Lowry backed legislation raising the minimum wage from the current $4.90 to $5.30 an hour. But this month business interests killed the measure. Supporters are likely to counter the business killing of the measure with a ballot initiative for November.

Common sense is breaking through. The people are forging forward to make this democracy work for all of the people. Common sense.

There is every reason to be optimistic that common sense will prevail. It moves slowly, and there is a lot of suffering that takes place because we have people in power who have been elected by the people who do not have common sense. But common sense eventually breaks through. Common sense has broken through, and common sense prevails in a number of areas, like Medicare and Medicaid.

The people who want to cut Medicare and Medicaid will do so at their own risk. The level of common sense is so great until they are likely to punish those who disobey the loss of common sense and persist in those cuts.

We should not have to have a demagog like Pat Buchanan to raise the level of visibility for issues of this kind. We should not have to have a demagog like Pat Buchanan to bring to our attention the fact that here in Washington we are ignoring common sense. The Washington wisdom is stuck in the rut. The Washington wisdom is obsolete.

Conventional wisdom here just does not seem to understand. The danger of having a Pat Buchanan as the general on the white horse riding out there to defend the interests of the middle class and the workers is great, because this is a general who is a deceptive general. He does not really care enough about the workers to provide the solutions to the problems that he highlights. Pat Buchanan has raised the issue of the income gap, but he does not want to deal with the problem of the minimum wage. He is not proposing a raise in the minimum wage.

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Unless he has done so within the last 24 hours, Pat Buchanan has not addressed the issue that we want a simple two-step increase in the minimum wage. He is not dealing with that. Pat Buchanan is not dealing with the fact that corporations are paying a very small percentage of the total tax burden, the income tax burden. Corporations now pay about 11.4 percent versus the tax burden borne by individuals, which is at 44 percent.

He talks about corporations taking jobs overseas, which we applaud. We applaud him for his ability to command the media and make the media pay attention to the injustices and the foolishness, the wrecking of the economy that takes place as a result of taking jobs overseas while you do not deal with compensating workers, while you do not deal with the adjustments necessary and the kind of transition program that you need.

Pat Buchanan does not really deal with the workers in this country in terms of the environmental laws that are necessary, in terms of the attack by his party on the Occupational Safety and Health Act. He does not deal with the need to guarantee that workers are safe. He does not deal with the Striker Replacement Act, the fact that the right to strike has been abrogated, almost wiped out, by the striker replacement phenomena taking place across the country where management replaces strikers. Although they have the right to strike, collective bargaining is a right under law, if the strikers can be replaced, how can we argue that they have a right to strike?

So Pat Buchanan is not the answer. So I close by indicating that the hypocrisy of Mr. Buchanan when it comes to concern for individuals and concern for workers is revealed in his own statements. He has not denounced himself, he has not walked away from his own statements that have been repeatedly made.

The people on the bottom are of no concern to Pat Buchanan. I have a number of quotes. I do not have time for all of them. In the days ahead we should pay attention to what Pat Buchanan has said about justice, we should pay attention about what Pat Buchanan has said about immigrants, about African-Americans, and understand that this general on a white horse will lead the troops into great danger. This general on a white horse does not care about the majority of American people. This general on a white horse waves a flag that is a hypocritical flag.

Certainly when it comes to African-Americans, Pat Buchanan, according to the Daily News of October 1, 1990, made it quite clear where he stood. He was a White House advisor to President Nixon at that time, and in a memo to President Nixon about the visit to Coretta King, who was the widow, of course, of Martin Luther King, on the anniversary of the assassination, Pat Buchanan advised Nixon not to visit Mrs. King. He said a visit to Mrs. King would ''outrage many, many people who believe Dr. King was a fraud and a demagog and perhaps worse. Others consider him the Devil incarnate. Dr. King is one of the most divisive men in contemporary history.''

That quote appears in the New York Daily News on October 1, 1990. Buchanan has repeatedly insisted that Ronald Reagan did so much for affirmative action that civil rights groups no longer need to exist.

Pat Buchanan said, ''George Bush should have told the NAACP Convention that black America has grown up,

that the NAACP should close up shop, that its members should go home and reflect on John F. Kennedy's aspiration, 'Ask not what your country can do for you, but rather ask what you can do for your country.'" That quote is in his syndicated column of July 26, 1988.

There are many, many quotes that show that Pat Buchanan is not the person to lead the people who are suffering in America, those who are insecure and uncertain. You cannot be led by a demagog who makes these kinds of statements and called Capitol Hill "Israeli-occupied territory" in the St. Louis Dispatch in October, 1990. He referred to Capitol Hill as "Israeli-occupied territory."

In a 1977 column, Buchanan said despite Hitler's antisemitism and genocidal tendencies, he was an "individual of great courage. Hitler's success was not based on his extraordinary gifts alone. His genius was an intuitive sense of the mushiness, the character flaws, the weakness masquerading as morality that was in the hearts of the statesmen who stood in his path." The Guardian of January 14, 1992, is the source of that quote.

I cite all of these because we are at least making the breakthrough on the issues. But the issues would be thoroughly confused, the issues that relate to working people, the issues of concerns to those people who are experiencing anxiety and who are the victims of the dislocation, the people suffering because our Government is guilty of great waste.

Our Government is guilty of continuing corporate welfare for agribusiness, guilty of continuing to overfund the defense industry. Our Government is guilty of continuing to fund an overbloated CIA that loses $2 billion in its petty cash fund. Our Government is continuing to not pay attention to the kind of priorities that common sense has set forth.

Common sense says we should put more money into education, we should not be cutting title I by $1.1 billion. We should not be cutting Head Start, we should not be dillydallying around with the Summer Youth Employment Program. Common sense says we ought to maximize our programs for educational opportunity. Common sense says we ought to maximize our job training programs. Common sense says we ought to pay attention to the fact that a technological revolution is going to cause a lot of suffering, and no one has a right to make a judgment that some people are expendable, that some people should be thrown overboard, that in the process of streamlining and downsizing, either the Government or in the private sector, human beings do not matter. Common sense says no.

I am happy that common sense is on the rise. That common sense in the final analysis will save this democracy. This Nation will probably endure for 1,000 years because of the fact that there is a process built in which allows common sense to percolate and allows common sense to rise to the top. Ever so slowly the process takes place, but it is underway, and I think that it will have an impact; a revolution that is underway, pushed by the Republican majority, will hear from the people out there who will fall back on the wisdom of common sense. That common sense will prevail.

PRESIDENT GAGGING WITNESSES BEFORE CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. WELDON] is recognized for 15 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening for a brief period of time to discuss an unfortunate incident involving the Clinton administration. As the chairman of the Research and Development Committee for the Committee on National Security, my responsibility is to oversee the funding for the research and development component of our national defense. That amounts to approximately 30 billion-odd dollars a year.

One of our top priorities, Mr. Speaker, is to review the missile defense capabilities of this country, to provide for the common defense of the people of this Nation from a deliberate or accidental launch of a cruise or ballistic missile from any place or spot in the world. It is a very important topic, and one that resulted in strong bipartisan support in the 1995 calendar year, as Democrats and Republicans joined together in providing one of the single biggest differences in the Clinton administration's defense request.

In the House committee, our bill, which plussed up the missile defense accounts by $800 million, the bill passed by a vote of 48 to 3. On the House floor, in spite of what the President had requested for missile defense, Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives and moderates, joined together with a 300-vote margin in approving the changes we provided for in the committee. So there was strong bipartisan support in this Congress.

In the end, Mr. Speaker, however, the administration and the President vetoed the bill, because he said what we had done in the area providing a national missile defense would in fact violate the ABM Treaty. That was not in fact true, and we knew it at the time, but the President said it will anyway.

Starting this year, Mr. Speaker, we agreed we would bring in the witnesses from the administration to tell the story as to whether or not we could build a system that was within the ABM Treaty, at a relatively low cost, that was doable and would protect the American people.

Mr. Speaker, today we were scheduled to hold a hearing, my subcommittee, at 10 a.m. A total of 12 members showed up, 10 Republicans and 2 Democrats, and zero witnesses.

The witnesses who were supposed to be at the hearing included Gen. Mal O'Neill, who heads the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, Clinton's point person on missile defense, General Garner, who is the Army's missile defense spokesman, and General Linhard, who is the Air Force's point person on missile defense.

Interestingly enough, Mr. Speaker, they were all anxious to testify. In fact, I have their testimony. Each of them submitted it to us as if they were there. As I hold up the testimony they were going to give to us, it is very interesting. In fact, I will provide this to any Member of Congress, and anyone who is watching us today, Mr. Speaker, can obtain copies of this testimony, because it is unclassified, from any Member of Congress who would in fact contact my office or the administration to get it.

But they could not show up. Why did they not show up and why could they not? Because the Clinton administration imposed a gag rule. Unbelievable as it may seem, Mr. Speaker, today for the first time, to my knowledge, in the history of this country, the Pentagon and the administration and Bill Clinton imposed a gag rule on generals in our Army and our Air Force who were asked to come before this Congress to talk about an issue of vital concern to this country, and that is missile defense.

Now, why would not these generals have been allowed to come forward to this hearing to testify before Democrats and Republicans? Was there some reason? Well, Mr. Speaker, there were two issues that were cited, and I would like to refer to both of them.

First of all, the administration claimed that they could not come forward, they were not allowed, and this was not decided until yesterday late in the afternoon, because, as Deputy Secretary of Defense White said, we did not want anyone on the Hill from the Pentagon testifying prior to Secretary Perry and Dr. Kaminski coming in and testifying before the Congress on this year's fiscal request. That was what they said was the reason why they could not appear.

That is somewhat unbelievable, Mr. Speaker, because yesterday the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Owens, appeared before the Senate Committee on National Security, gave written testimony, and answered questions about missile defense. So the policy in fact was not upheld, and that was merely an excuse by the administration to try to justify why they would not let these three generals come in.

Now, the second reason they gave, Mr. Speaker, was that they were willing to give us a briefing, but not allow testimony to occur. In fact, the only briefing that took place this week was the briefing of administrative officials