They know now what we knew before, that education is the key to the future. But, too many of our colleagues have closed their eyes to the past.

Instead of upholding our brilliant past, they want to push us deeper into a dark future.

But, there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

The Senate by a wide margin, Democrats and Republicans, have voted to restore education cuts.

The House should join the Senate.

In addition, the President has submitted a budget, indeed a balanced budget.

The President's budget continues investments in education.

While some would cut the education budget by 20 percent, the President proposes to increase the budget by 20 percent over its 1993 level.

While some would cut the education budget over 7 years, the President invests $61 billion more in that budget.

The President would invest $1 billion more in title I education funds for basic and advanced skills assistance.

The President's budget increases Pell Grants, Safe and Drug Free School Funds, Charter Schools, the School to Work Program and Goals 2000.

The President's budget invests $2 billion in Technology Literacy Challenge—bringing to the fingertips of every child in America access to computer training and learning.

And, the President's budget provides a $10,000 tuition tax deduction to help working families afford college.

I urge my colleagues to join the Senate and join the President.

Now is not the time to give up on our children.

America's future should be as bright as its past.

COMMENTS ON CORRESPONDENTS DINNER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I had no intention really of using this time today. It is more by circumstance that I take it.

Last night, after our long day's work here, I went home. I was having my dinner with my wife, and we turned on the TV and I was checking on C–SPAN to see if in fact we were having any further floor action on subjects that interested me. I got into the Correspondents Dinner downtown in Washington.

I believe that is a dinner traditionally where the correspondents and the top leaders of our country get together and, in a good natured and good humored way, poke fun at each other; they get together and have some time of friendship and fellowship, take time out from their schedules. It is usually an enjoyable circumstance.

I would say that I thought that President Clinton did an extremely good job of carrying the mood, making a fine presentation. I enjoyed what he had to say. I think everybody there did. I think Speaker GINGRICH did also. I thought his remarks were appropriate, on target, amusing, and it was a good thing going on.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we had a monologue from a gentleman, who I guess is a talk show host, named Don Imus, that I think went well beyond anything that should be tolerated on the public airways. I realize it is a free country, and I am in no way suggesting that people do not have a right to say or do what they want, to speak what they want. I would never take that right away from Mr. Imus.

But I certainly feel that what he had to say went beyond inappropriate. It was excruciating, it was embarrassing, it was certainly blood sport. It was far more mean than it was amusing. I consider it not washing dirty laundry, but reveling in dirty laundry. And I wonder why anybody would take joy or have any particular participation in something that certainly went beyond decency and went beyond respect, particularly when we are talking about the President of the United States and the Speaker of the House, of this institution.

I make these observations because I hope that the people who organize this dinner in the future will get principal speakers who will deal with the spirit of what this evening was supposed to apply itself to, which is in fact some good natured time of fellowship among people who have tremendously difficult decisions to make, tremendously difficult jobs here, who work long days at great personal sacrifice.

I think we are certainly all human beings and we all have our little failures, but to go and systematically try and demean people, which is what the purpose of the monologue was, seems to me to be immensely disrespectful, and, again, I hope those folks will not have a speaker like that again. I think it ruined the evening.

Fortunately, this is a free country. We are very happy that this is a free country. We just passed in this body something called the V chip, so we do not have to watch violence on TV. My TV set has a V chip already. It is called an off button, and, as a free citizen in a free country, I exercise my prerogative to turn off Mr. Imus. I hope others will do the same if they feel the same way I do about his performance last night.

GUN CONTROL AND CRIME CONTROL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. BUYER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to talk about the vote that we just had here recently on the repeal of the assault weapons ban and measures to enforce statutes with regard to criminals who use a weapon in the commission of a crime. I want to talk about our judicial system at the Federal level and how it impacts at the local level.

During the debate, I only had about 30 seconds. It was a limited debate. This was a debate that could have gone on on this floor for a long time, so I understand why the Committee on Rules had to limit the debate.

But one thing really I believe is very clear, is that there are, and I do not question the sincerity from two different groups that we saw in this debate, you have got those people who believe with all their heart that if we just get all the guns off the streets, that there will be no crime in our society. Then there are those, of whom I am in the camp, that believes gun control is not crime control, and understands the right of free citizens to own and bear arms and the protections of the second amendment of the Constitution.

But, folks, I do recognize, and those of us who live in this town in Washington and have to work here, that when you go out in those streets and you see those homes and you see the businesses here in the city whereby it is illegal to possess a handgun, and in those homes and in those businesses are citizens who live in fear, it is clear that the wrong people are behind bars in this town, as the thugs continue to roam the streets. So as we live in a free society, if in fact you live in fear, you are not free.

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This bill was about giving law abiding citizens the opportunity to live in freedom and not in fear.

What did not get sufficient time in the debate, what I believe was the substance of the bill, was increasing the penalties for the use of a weapon in the commission of a crime. In the last session of Congress, there was a great debate about increasing the penalties on criminals that use a firearm, and it was knocked down in the 1994 crime act. I was very upset that that happened. Let me talk for a moment about that.

In this bill, what we have done is, if a thug walks into a 7-Eleven and he has got, stuck in his pants, he has a handgun right here, for the fact that he just walks in there and he has it and if his buddy pulls his gun, they both are arrested. For the fact that he had possession of a firearm in the commission of that crime, even though he never pulled it, it is a mandatory minimum of 5 years. I believe that deterrent is very important. If he pulls that weapon and he brandishes that weapon to incite fear in that individual, to rob them or hurt them or maim them, even to threaten to kill them, minimum 10 years. If in fact he discharges that firearm, 20 years.

You might say, my gosh, Congressman, that is very harsh. You are right. That is harsh. Because there are those of us that believe if you use a weapon in the commission of a crime, it better be a harsh penalty. And let us send