

What I found overwhelmingly was a feeling on the part of my constituents in my district in New Jersey that this House of Representatives and this Congress under the leadership of Speaker GINGRICH and the Republicans is not getting the job done.

My constituents expressed concerns about health care, whether or not they were going to have affordable health insurance or any health insurance at all; they expressed a great deal of concern about the environment, because we are now getting close to the summer season. My district is very dependent on shore tourism. For the last few years we have seen significant, at least in the last 10 years, we have seen significant improvement in our water quality, and they do not want to see the clock turned back on environmental protection.

They are also concerned about education. Today in my district in New Jersey we vote on the school board elections and the budgets. Property taxes are going up in many municipalities, and there is concern about a lack of State and Federal aid to help and provide property tax relief.

They are also concerned about jobs. They are concerned about whether or not pension, health care benefits, are going to be available, and whether they are going to have a job at all.

I ask the Members of this House, I ask the Speaker, what is it that this Congress under the Republican leadership, under Speaker GINGRICH and the rest of the Republican leadership, have done about any of these issues? And the answer is pretty much nothing.

We are back now for a 6-week session. I understand that the House Republican leadership under Speaker GINGRICH is going to propose some bills that are essentially, in my opinion, nothing but smoke and mirrors, an effort to sort of suggest that they are going to address education, environment, and health care issues, but that they really will not be addressing those issues in a significant way.

Let me just talk a little bit, if I can, about what is missing from this Republican leadership or Gingrich agenda. First of all, the education element. We are continuing to operate now as we have since the beginning of this fiscal year on what we call continuing resolutions. In other words, we have not passed a budget, we have not passed appropriation bills, to keep the Government going, and I know we have had actually at least two Government shutdowns because of the inability, if you will, of the House Republican leadership to pass legislation to keep the Government operating.

But a big part of these continuing resolutions or stopgap spending appropriation measures that have been passed here have actually implemented major cuts in education funding, for title I and other programs that are important to our school districts.

What that means is that when those school districts do not get the edu-

cation funding to hire teachers or to pay for teachers' salaries or whatever, they either have to lay teachers off, as many have now or give notice of layoffs, or increase their local property taxes to make up the difference.

That is what is happening in the State of New Jersey. Many of our constituents are going to be going to the polls today voting on school board budgets that are higher because they cannot expect the Federal aid that they normally would have. What that means is that property taxes go up for many of them and property taxes are already too high. There has been a lot of talk about taxation by the Republican leadership around here, but they have not mentioned the fact they are actually increasing property taxes because of the cutbacks in education funding.

On the issue of the environment, as you know, next Tuesday, or next Monday I should say, will be Earth Day. We will be celebrating, I believe, the 26th Earth Day. Over the last 25 years, on a bipartisan basis, there were major accomplishments to protect and improve the protection of the environment. Water and air quality have improved. But if you look at the record of this Republican Congress and the Gingrich agenda over the last year, they have tried significantly to turn back the clock on environmental protection. They introduced and passed in this House what I call a dirty water bill, which eliminates a lot of the protections to improve water quality, particularly with regard to enforcement. The spending bills, the same stopgap spending bills that have major negative impacts on education have also had negative impacts on environmental protection, to the point where the EPA cannot do inspections, cannot do clean-up of hazardous waste sites pursuant to the Superfund Program. Grants that would go to municipalities and counties to upgrade sewage treatment, to make sure our water continues to be clean, have been cut back significantly.

What I have always said is it is very nice to have environmental laws on the books, and we do have some good ones, but what is the point if you do not have the money to enforce those laws?

So I would just conclude, Mr. Speaker, and say that this House and this Republican leadership needs to address the real issues that face the American people, and not operate in this smoke and mirrors agenda.

TRIBUTE TO GAIL DOBERT, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF BUSINESS LIAISON, AND LONGTIME AIDE TO SECRETARY RON BROWN

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

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity. I take the

floor today to pay tribute to a young woman, a young woman by the name of Gail Dobert. Gail Dobert was lost by us on April 3 in the tragic airplane crash in Croatia that took the life of Secretary Ron Brown and 33 others. This morning I take the floor to talk about Gail and the promise that Gail represented.

Mr. Speaker, literally tens of thousands of young people come to Washington, DC, every year, with the hope of promise for the excitement and the opportunity to be part of this Government. Whether it is the government of Ronald Reagan or George Bush or Jimmy Carter or Bill Clinton, they come to this town because they are caught up in the excitement of a living and vibrant democracy and wanting very much to be a part of that democracy.

I rise today to pay tribute to Gail. Gail Dobert was a Department of Commerce official. Her family of Moriches, Long Island, a very wonderful family, who described themselves as Kennedy Democrats and said that they are thrilled by Gail's participation in the political process. Along with many of my neighbors on Long Island, I was deeply saddened when we learned of the loss of Gail and Secretary Brown and so many others on that tragic day.

But today we are here to celebrate the life of Gail and what she meant. So many individuals search their whole lives through to try to make a lasting contribution to the world, to their communities, to their Nation. I think it is fair to say that Gail Dobert, in her very short 34 years, made a tremendous contribution, not only to the political process, but enhancing our own democracy and to working for the concerns that brought her to Washington.

Gail was born in Oneonta, NY, on April 12, 1961, the same day that headlines were made when the Russians had somebody orbiting the Earth. She grew up in St. Johns Street in Sayville, Long Island, and, ironically, she died on St. Johns Hill in Croatia. As a Long Islander, she loved the ocean, the warm breezes and the beaches that she came to love after her experiences every summer on Fire Island with her family. Rehoboth Beach, of course, became her favorite getaway beach from the rigors of Washington.

In 1979 she graduated from Connetquot High School in Long Island and left to attend Bucknell University. She was the beloved daughter, a I said, of Ken and Maureen Dobert, two individuals who describe themselves as Kennedy Democrats. She is the devoted sister of Ray and Darla, granddaughter of Helen, and I might add that this family's tragedy has only been enhanced because Gail lost both her grandmother and her grandfather, Maureen's parents, earlier in the year.

She is the adored niece of Regina and James and Elizabeth and cousin to Michael, Jennifer, Christopher, and Janice.

Prior to coming to Washington, Gail worked for Philip Morris and the New

York Daily News to help those two organizations with their summer jobs program that aided economically disadvantaged young people to find employment opportunities during the summer in New York City. Her first job out of Bucknell was as assistant director of public relations here in Washington for the Sheraton Hotel chain. She did press, marketing, and events planning. But she could not fight that desire to come up here on Capitol Hill, and finally she landed a job as a senior legislative assistant to Pennsylvania Congressman Gus Yatron, a Democrat of Pennsylvania.

Following President Clinton's election in 1992, the road led Gail to four intense months as deputy director of operations for the inauguration. This appointment came as a result of her diligent and enthusiastic work under Ron Brown during his leadership as head of the Democratic National Committee. She served as budget manager for the Victory '92 Campaign, convention coordinator for all operational events, and corporate fundraiser at the DNC from 1990 to 1992.

After a 5-month recreational hiatus at various beaches in the Caribbean, Gail was persuaded to join Secretary Brown and did so in the Office of Business Liaison at the U.S. Department of Commerce as a confidential aide, deputy director, and, at the time of her unfortunate death, as acting director.

Under Secretary Brown's leadership and working closely with him, Gail helped to develop U.S. business interests abroad, and in fact she was able to organize and coordinate Presidential business development missions to Russia, South America, China, Ireland, India, Turkey, the Middle East, Africa, Bosnia and Croatia. These trade missions promoted export-related activities for specific business ventures by American companies. They developed over \$44 billion in American opportunities abroad for businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the memory of Gail Dobert be recognized by this House and by the Nation at large.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ECONOMIC RECOVERY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, as this body is aware, it has imposed a Control Board on the District of Columbia, which has become insolvent. The only reason there are not more cities in this category, of course, is because most cities have States. Nevertheless, New York, Philadelphia, and Cleveland, long before the District became insolvent, themselves became insolvent and had control boards.

Control boards, of course, are necessary, because insolvent cities cannot borrow. One of the first things such

cities need to do is to downsize their governments. That is exactly what is happening in the District of Columbia as I speak.

The fact is, however, that every other city that has become insolvent had a dual strategy or they never would have become solvent. The State provided either some direct aid, as in the case of Philadelphia, or a takeover of functions and aid, as in the case of New York City.

The District is a unique entity, and I have proposed a unique bill, the only alternative I can see, that provides any realistic way to counter the serious problems of the capital of the United States.

The unique fact about this city, of course, to face first and foremost, is that it has no State to help it in any way. The Congress, which, of course, has an obligation to help it with a payment in lieu of taxes, because we cannot build on the best land in the District, has not raised the District's Federal payment in 5 years.

Now, costs have gone up enormously in 5 years, so that means that the Federal payment is taking a loss every year that it is not raised. Congress, if anything, made it worse this year by shutting down the Government for a week and by delaying the full Federal payment for 6 months, just digging the hole deeper.

The Congress says the District cannot impose a commuter tax, even though 2 million people come in here using our facilities and walk out everyday without leaving a thin dime to support the city.

If you look at no State to help us, no Federal payment increase in 5 years, no commuter tax, you end up with no way out. It is the obligation of this body, that has constitutional responsibility for the capital of the United States and for every responsible person in this city, to think through how the recovery in fact is going to take place.

Step one is in place. The District is going to reduce its work force by 10,000 people in the next 4 years. That is a 25-percent reduction in its own city government work force. I challenge any Member to show me any government that has had that kind of reduction in so short a period of time. Indeed, the District is halfway there, because of the 10,000 positions that will go, it already has eliminated more than 5,000 of them. And yet this year, before half of the fiscal year was over, the District was down \$100 million. You do not get out of insolvency that way.

So yesterday on Tax Day, I introduced the District of Columbia Economic Recovery Act. It adopts the approach that Members on both sides of the aisle want the Congress to adopt, tax cuts for the District of Columbia, rather than direct aid; tax cuts in order to encourage middle income residents who live here now to remain, and others to come.

In other words, the city would be able to support itself the old-fashioned

way, because there would be enough middle-income taxpayers to pay for what needs to be paid for. There would be a flat 15 percent rate that would have a progressive effect on the income scale, giving substantial Federal tax reductions to D.C. taxpayers.

By the way, there is much to learn from my bill, I think, for the States. If you want to keep folks in New York, Newark, Chicago, and Los Angeles, perhaps the States should try reducing State income tax on taxpayers that remain in those cities, rather than allowing those cities to become what everybody knows they are becoming as I speak, and that is basket cases.

You cannot afford to have the proud capital of your country become a basket case. You are going to pay one way or another. Let us pay for it by letting D.C. residents keep their own money. There also would be capital gains exemption for D.C. residents who invest in the District of Columbia.

Yes, this is a unique remedy for a uniquely handicapped city. Read this morning's Washington Times editorial, "A Serious Plan for What Ails the District."

TRAVEL AND TOURISM IN AMERICA

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

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Speaker for the good job he is doing in the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Thank you sir. You are not doing so badly yourself.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, I am excited this morning. We now have 219 cosponsors to the Travel and Tourism Partnership Act. That means that we have more than a majority of the Members in the U.S. House of Representatives that have signed onto this legislation, and it is only appropriate that it happened on April 15—tax day. That is the day the American people focus on how much it costs to run their Government.

The American people know that travel and tourism is the second largest industry in America, and it is going to be the largest industry in America in only 4 years. What this means is that one out of every nine Americans who works, works in the travel and tourism industry.

Travel and tourism has only one problem: The people in the industry do not know how powerful they are politically. So the people that work in travel and tourism, that work in our hotels, motels, and our restaurants, small businesses up and down Main Street, America, they work hard and they pay their taxes. They do not do a lot of screaming. So whenever a tax bill comes to pay for more and more taxes, the American Congress puts it on the hard-working people that work in travel and tourism. Because they are so