

the Maiden was played by a doctor who is a participant in torture in an unnamed Latin American country. He plays the symphonic piece as he tortures people, to torment them.

In the play, a lawyer who has been named to a commission to examine what has happened in the country previously with respect to those who have been arrested and tortured and killed, disappeared, indicates that the reason that the regime was able to accomplish this in the first place was the abandonment of habeas corpus; that is to say, the capacity of the individual to be able to take a case to a Federal judge, in the context of the United States, to ask that judge to determine whether or not he or she is being fairly held.

□ 1545

As my good friend from California, Mr. MILLER, said to me just very recently in discussion about these remarks and positions on the bill, the loss of our rights and our privileges do not come in grand sweeps. They come by degree, they come by circumstances that are deemed at the moment more than sufficient to erode that particular right.

And so I asked friends at the Library of Congress to provide for me a copy of the playwright's essays. Ariel Dorfman, the Chilean writer, is the author of the play "Death and the Maiden," and he has written a book of essays or compiled a book of his essays called "Some Write to the Future." I recommend it to the Speaker and to others who are concerned about this. I realize it was an agonizing vote for many.

But in the process of commenting on Chile, the country from which Mr. Dorfman comes, he wrote an essay once called the Political Code and the Literary Code, the testimonial genre in Chile today.

In it he says, in that essay:

Terror, then, has a public character. As such, it leads to a great ideological operation, which authorizes, in the name of Western, Christian values, a purifying crusade against the forces of the Devil and of the antination. The principal obsession of authoritarian politics is to suppress history and those who could modify it, postulating an unchangeable and superior reality, God, fatherland, family, to which one owes loyalty.

What is paradoxical about this ideological framework is that it excuses a repression that, in fact, is never admitted by official channels. Memory of the suffering must survive in gossip, in rumor, in the whispering of what they did, and even in official threats, but at the same time, in each concrete case, in each undeniable and undocumented case, with damaged teeth, genitals, and ribs, in spite of each relative's identification, in spite of the cries of pain, the truth of the violence is denied. The people are punished, but in the long run the relationship is made benevolently and paternally innocent, translating it into terms that are almost familial and intimate: expulsion and exclusion of the wayward, the recalcitrant, the disturbers of public order; reintegration, of the misguided and the repentant. Neo-colonial fascism takes the bourgeois dream to its totalitarian culmination.

Mr. Speaker, in that context we see, then, that to eliminate habeas corpus does damage to the Constitution beyond repair.

MILLER EXPRESSES CONCERN REGARDING TONGASS AND REPUBLICAN MASQUERADING ON EARTH DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETRI). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, the Tongass National Forest in southeast Alaska is one of the jewels of the American forest system. It is America's only temperate rain forest that is intact, that can be protected and that can be preserved. It is also the subject of a rider on the appropriations bill to do great damage to the Tongass, contrary to the law that was passed a couple of years ago to reform the forest practices on this forest.

The gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON], the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, has asserted that the provision that is now in that legislation in fact is a decrease in the number of board feet eligible for cutting from 450 million board feet to 418 million board feet. The fact of the matter is that that is not accurate. The Tongass Reform Act of 1990 eliminated the 450 million board feet mandate for these lands and protected over 1 million acres from the forests for logging, reducing the amount of old growth timber that is eligible for harvesting by 51 million feet annually.

The number of board feet eligible for cutting is currently 399 million board feet. The rider would increase that by 19 million, to 418, which is over 100 million board feet above the average cut in the last decade.

The fact of the matter is that the rider is very detrimental to the future of the Tongass forest. It asks for cutting that is not sustainable, that will ruin this forest, that will put it into history, and far exceeds what the Forest Service just came out with today in terms of its preferred plan.

In fact, what it is, the Forest Service preferred plan, after going through the planning documents and how to sustain this forest for future generations and continue to be able to timber it, is 172 million board feet less than the 418 that the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON] is talking about. That is because the rider is proposed to circumvent the public planning process, the public input into this process, and have the legislation dictate that cutting no matter whether it ruins the forest or not.

They say they are green, they say they honor the environment, they say they want to protect it, but do not look at what they say, look at what they do. This is another example. The law does not do what they say. In fact, it is very detrimental in this case to one of our prized national forests.

That is why today earlier Minority Leader GEPHARDT and many of my colleagues issued a warning, warning the American people to beware of Republican candidates coming to your hometown between now and election day saying that they support environmental protection, but who in fact have voted repeatedly in this Congress against environmental protection. These are Republicans practicing ecofraud. The only thing green about these Republican candidates is the camouflage they are using to mask their antienvironmental record and the money they take from special interests to gut environmental measures of this Nation.

To the Republican leadership and to those who follow them in this Congress, today we issue the following challenge: Stop your assault you are leading on the environment, stop the masquerade you are playing out on Earth Day to appear environmentally friendly, and work with us to protect those environmental laws that protect this Nation and to improve those that do not.

But do not pretend that because you bring to the House floor two minor bills that everybody supports, when you have voted in the past to destroy the basic environmental laws of this country, that somehow you are now pro-environment. You are not. Do not pretend that planting trees or cosponsoring a trails bill or a 1-day cleanup of the beach, as your campaign advisers have told you to do, makes you an environmentalist. It does not.

You cannot vote day in and day out, as you have in the Congress of the United States, to gut the Clean Water Act, to gut the Clean Air Act, to bankrupt the Environmental Protection Agency, to destroy the national parks and the public lands, and the forests of this Nation, and to give away those resources that belong to the taxpayers and the people of this Nation to the special interests. You cannot do that and then for 1 day dress up and pose as an environmentalist.

The fact is you will not get away with it. You will not do well on Earth Day, and you certainly cannot come to the well using the Republican Environmental Task Force to provide you cover, when the average environmental vote of the members of that task force is only 18 percent. That is the average vote. Think of how low you had to start at the top to get down to there.

The people will judge you by what you do and not what you say, and what you have done so far to lead the most comprehensive assault on environmental protection. The American people hold these values dear. They hold the protection of our air and our water to be very important. They will not give it away to a 1-day masquerade on Earth Day by the same forces who have gutted the essential environmental protection laws of this Nation.

CONGRESS ATTEMPTS TO COMBAT SCOURGE OF ILLICIT DRUGS

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

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, first I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. CLINGER], the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

Mr. CLINGER. I thank the gentleman very much for yielding to me, and I would just, No. 1, commend him for holding this special order, and the gentleman from New Hampshire [Mr. ZELIFF] and the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. SOUDER]. You are three of the four Members who participated in what I consider to be perhaps the most significant and important congressional delegation of this year, certainly in terms of the work of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight. This was an enormously important and very, very revealing, I think I might say, congressional delegation.

You visited five countries, and each one of them for a very specific purpose. In Mexico, because 70 to 80 percent of the drugs that enter this country come across that border, I think it is something that we need to be focused on. How can we do a better job? What are the problems that we are facing there, and how must we deal with them?

You visited Panama, which has major money laundering problems, and shares an uncontrolled jungle border with Columbia. And of course Colombia, which is the world capital, if you will, in terms of the supply of cocaine worldwide; Bolivia, which is the second largest producer of cocaine after Colombia; and Peru, which produces two-thirds of the world's supply of coca leaf. I know, because the gentleman from Illinois has briefed me very thoroughly, as has the gentleman from New Hampshire, on this trip.

I must tell you I have been dismayed and really disappointed at some of the media coverage of this trip. If we indeed are going to assume that no congressional travel has any merit, and that is what seems to me that the press is deeming in this case, this was an incredibly active, vigorous CODEL. You did not engage in, quote, junketeering. I think it is fair to say you were all exhausted by the time this trip was over, because it was very intense, very focused and extraordinarily productive.

I look forward to the report that will come out of this matter, and I look forward to perusing the results of this special order. I again commend the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT] as a leader of the delegation for the very excellent work that was done on behalf of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

Mr. HASTERT. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

One of the things that we wanted to look at is what are the contributing

causes to something that would kill 10,000 people in this country, many, many of them our youth, our college students, our high school students and yes, even some of our junior high students. One hundred thousand deaths because of some unseen, unknown culprit, \$300 billion in the 1990's alone, the cost and the deaths that have resulted by this phenomenon.

What is the phenomenon? It is drugs, it is speed, it is crack, it is cocaine, it is heroin. Where does it come from? Why is it here? Those questions are pretty relevant, especially if you are a family across this country that has had a child involved in drugs or a death in your family because of drugs, or you have had your home burglarized or your person held up because some drug addict had to get money to get a fix. Then you are drawn into this whole idea of where drugs come from and why they exist and what is the whole issue and mechanics that move drugs from South American countries and southeast Asian countries into our borders.

If you live in a neighborhood that you are imperiled to go out at night because you are afraid you might be mugged, held up, or somebody is on crack cocaine or on heroin and you feel that you or your family may be accosted, the reason is that we have drugs in this country. We are the demand source for literally billions and billions and billions of dollars of drug trade.

In our emergency rooms every year, in our hospitals, and we have just moved a health care bill through here, but clearly 500,000 emergency room incidents in this country alone come from drug abuse. There are 250,000 Americans serving time in our prisons, both in our Federal prisons and in our State prisons, because of drug law violations. Unfortunately, drug use is involved in at least one-third of all our homicides and assaults and property crimes.

□ 1600

Now, something that would cause, and we do not have the exact numbers because it is pretty fluctuating, but something that would cost between \$70 and \$90 billion to the people in this country every year, the net, and that cost piles up day in and day out, that is pretty important.

I think it is pretty important for this Congress, who initiated a pretty strong drug policy in the 1980's and has gone from a Just Say No policy to "just say nothing" government over the last few years. I think we need to examine ourselves. We need to examine where the cause of this problem is, examine our problems in trying to stop the demand in this country, but, most of all, we need to find out where this comes from and stop the growth of coca leaf, the growth of heroin poppies, the manufacture of speed or methamphetamines. That is what this endeavor was about. Where does this come from? What do we do? How do we find out about it?

This chart right here shows the toll of drug abuse's estimated cost in the United States. The cost of illness is over \$8 billion. The cost of death is over \$3.4 billion, if you can put a price on death. The cost of AIDS, \$6.3 billion, AIDS that people get through use of intravenous needles and passing those needles around from drug addict to drug addict. And the direct medical costs in this country are \$3.2 billion. But the big cost is crimes and misdemeanors to the American people because of drug use is over \$46 billion.

Now, if you want to count all the victims of crime and people who have been assaulted and people who have been beaten up, then you can move this cost of nearly \$66.7 billion probably up to \$97 billion. It depends on the accounting method you use.

But if we are going to do something and impact upon the value and quality of this life this country is going to have, then we are going to have to start doing something about one of the main reasons that this problem exists.

Now, when you start to look at what the costs are to the American people and look at what the costs are to what this Congress is trying to do, let us take a look. Some \$13.2 billion expended. Where does it go? State and local assistance, almost 10 percent. Other law enforcement, the FBI, DEA, others, about 2.5 percent. The research and development to find out what drugs do is another 4 percent. Drug abuse prevention, which is a good program and certainly gets into our neighborhoods and schools, it is almost 14 percent. Drug abuse and treatment for those people who have been into drugs and need to be led back and hopefully on a path that will rehabilitate them, although it does not have very good results, 20 percent of our budget. Interdiction of drugs, where we go out and try to catch the drugs moving through other countries, coming into this country, and drugs moving in this country, is roughly under 10 percent of our budget. Regulatory and compliance 0.38 percent, investigations, 13 percent, international involvement, 2.3 percent.

Now, remember, almost 90 percent of the drugs coming into the United States of America come from other countries. Our international involvement is 2.3 percent. Prosecution, it passes a lot of money, it takes prosecutors and district attorneys and States attorneys to prosecute drug thefts and drug crimes, 6.4 percent every year. Corrections, the costs that we have in this country to keep people in prisons, is 15.5 percent. Intelligence, to find out on the street where the drugs are coming from, who is selling them, where it is being put together, where drugs are manufactured, are 2.3 percent. And the State and local assistance we give to cities and States is nearly 10 percent. So that is almost \$3.5 billion that every State and municipality has to dole out to find the reason, to find the solutions.

Now, why did we take this trip? It is a good question. I think we need to answer it. Because in this country, when we look at Mexico, and if we would take Mexico as a V or triangle and look over here in Mexico, we have four huge drug cartels. Coming up through the area of the Gulf State area, it comes into southern Texas. We have the problem of drugs coming up through the cartel zone in Sonora, which is along our Arizona border. We have drugs coming up along the Tijuana cartel that comes up into California. We have drugs coming up into the Juarez area, it goes into El Paso, TX, and up through that area.

So we have four huge cartels. Where are they? Not United States cartels, they are Mexican cartels. So nearly 70 percent of all drugs that come in, that are grown in Peru and grown in Colombia and manufactured in Colombia and grown in Bolivia, come up either through Colombia or up through the airways and land in those cartel areas in Mexico.

Well, we had a meeting with the Mexican Congress, and we stressed to them that it was important that in Mexico, we better start doing something, they better started doing something, on a cooperative basis.

What should be done? Well, we need to have good legislation, and the Mexicans understand that, and they are stating to do that. So they have money laundering legislation so that they can start to find the money that comes in these cartels, and they can start to trace where it comes from. And it does not just come from Mexico, folks. It comes from New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. So we can start to stress where that money comes from, because if we can take money out of the drug equation, that is the most important thing to the drug traffickers and the drug pushers and the cartels and the Mafioso and the street gangs that all make their money off drug trafficking. If we can take that money away, find the way that they launder that money we can begin to solve the problem. We can begin to deny those people from the end results, from all the trouble they get in with drugs in the first place.

We also need to have wiretap authority so those criminals who do the drug deals, especially in Mexico, that Mexico has the ability to tap in and find out who they are and what their deals are.

We need to have anticorruption legislation and antiorganized crime and asset forfeiture. If you find a drug cartel or pusher that is moving drugs up into the United States, so that they can take their planes and automobiles and haciendas and those things away, deny them the tools that they use to move drugs into the United States. And we need to aggressively pursue the narco-traffickers.

These are things we stressed to the Mexican Congress and things they

pledged to us they will begin to work on in the next year.

Mr. ZELIFF. I would just like to first, Mr. HASTERT, thank you for the leadership that you provided to this effort. Our overall leadership asked us to put this thing together. We have worked on this effort now for a year and a half on the drug issue, and started back in March 9, 1995.

Before I get into what we have done as a committee, I would just like to mention one other thing in Mexico. As you know, the Clinton administration just certified Mexico and decertified Colombia. So one of the things we looked at down there and some of the things that were brought out, the President of Mexico has made a major commitment that drugs and crime are now their No. 1 issue, their No. 1 threat. I think we are starting to make some progress. We are starting to see the beginnings of a process. When the President of Mexico starts to send that signal all the way through they are going to get serious on it, then we are starting to turn the corner.

The other thing I would just like to mention in addition to certification and the President, we talked about NAFTA has an impact here, economic development has an impact. But there are many things we looked at throughout all these countries.

If I can, can I just mention a few things that the committee has done as we led up to this trip.

We started out with Nancy Reagan and her effort back in the Reagan administration on "Just say no." That, of course, affects the demand side. We had Judge Robert C. Bonner, former Director of the Drug Enforcement Administration, testify; Bill Bennett, Co-Director, Empower America; Hon. Lee Brown, former Director, National Drug Control Policy, testified; Thomas Hedrick, vice chairman of the Partnership for a Drug-Free America; Mr. James Copple, national director of CADCA; Mr. Robert Heard, director of program services, Texas War on Drugs; Adm. Paul Yost, former Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard under the Reagan and Bush administrations.

We have had several hearings with Dr. Brown. I traveled to Boston with him. We went into Framingham Prison for Women. That certainly is a scary effort, where we talked to several women who hit the bottom due to drug abuse and alcohol abuse. We have learned a lot from that as well.

We went into treatment centers, and we have done a trip with this subcommittee with the Coast Guard in the interdiction zones. If you want to use an example of a narco democracy where the country has lost control, take a look at St. Kitts. That is what the problem here is. Mexico is starting to realize if they do not get serious, they can lose control of their country. The same thing with Peru and Bolivia and other countries we visited.

I would like to also just, if I would, mention Bob Kramek, the Commander

of the U.S. Coast Guard. What a great job they have done.

One other thing is we are working very closely with Barry McCaffrey, the new drug czar, former 4-star general in the Army, doing a great job in putting this thing together.

We are just very encouraged that we are starting to get our arms around this thing, but we cannot do it from Washington, DC. We have got to get out on the front lines and see what is working and what is not working.

Manchester, NH—Peter Favreau, the chief of police in Manchester, NH, had Operation Street Sweeper. He recognized how serious this issue was. He called in help from the Attorney General's office. We also got help from Federal, State, and local police forces that all worked together as a team. They are getting crack off the streets. They are closing down crack houses. They are sending drug sellers to jail, getting them off the streets. They are taking back their streets, taking back their community. We are starting to see evidence of people starting to wake up and realizing the significance of how important this thing is across America, across all these countries and throughout the world.

Mr. HASTERT. Before you stood up, I wanted to congratulate the gentleman and his subcommittee work on the intervention and looking at the oversight. You have the oversight responsibility in the Committee on Government Oversight. You have done a very good job. You have set up the premise on this action and this joint teamwork we are going to do.

The first step is, of course, laying out what the problem is. The second step is to take a look at it and try to find some solutions to it. You also were instrumental in bringing the former ambassador of Colombia with us, and he paid his own way to be a part of this, to try to solve the problem; former ambassador Morris Busby, who did an invaluable service trying to lay out what the predicate was and trying to move through this whole process.

But I commend the gentleman, and you certainly have done a good job. But we have a lot of work to do.

Mr. ZELIFF. We sure do. I would throw out one other thing you have been a big help with. We started a congressional breakfast, where we have 40 to 50 Members of Congress working with CHARLIE RANGEL, both sides of the aisle, from New York. He has been a big leader in this effort as well. We have had meetings with Louis Freeh, Director of the FBI; Tom Constantine, DEA Administrator. We have great respect for both of those gentleman. Now, Barry McCaffrey most recently. We are going to keep our Members updated. There was a lot of concern and a lot of commitment. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. HASTERT. I would like to wrap up a little bit what we did and saw in Mexico. We have done five countries. I would like to yield some time to the gentleman from Indiana first.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I briefly wanted to say here at the beginning, too, I wanted to thank Mr. ZELIFF, the chairman of the subcommittee, for raising the issue of the drug war and the battle that we need to do, because we had abandoned it for some time, and say what a privilege it has been to work on his subcommittee, to do the hearings over time, and to initiate this trip.

We really had a strong team. Mr. MICA, who had experience as a staffer, as an international businessman, and on the plane we could work together, and in your skill as a Representative of leadership and for them to know that they had the subcommittee chairman of multiple committees.

It was amazing as we went into some of these countries, they heard of Mr. ZELIFF. They said, "Oh, yes, he is the person who has brought drugs back in front." I heard several leaders of those countries take them aside. Your smoothness when we went into Mexico, it was a difficult situation. They had just had the immigration border incidents that we were there on a narcotics mission, but in fact it turned into a very touchy diplomatic mission as well in a lot of these countries.

I want to commend the gentleman as to how he smoothly handled that as we met with the Members of Congress there for dinners and President Zedillo and the foreign minister, because these turned, in Colombia and other countries we will talk about here, and particularly in Mexico, into potentially explosive international incidents that we were able to help facilitate.

□ 1615

Mr. HASTERT. I thank the gentleman for his contribution. I would also like to recognize our good friend and fellow traveler, Mr. MICA, from Florida.

Mr. MICA. Well, I want to, first of all, Mr. Speaker, thank Mr. HASTERT for his leadership. When this trip was originally planned, about 11 people indicated they were going to go; and as it turned out, Mr. HASTERT, Mr. SOUDER, and Mr. ZELIFF, and myself were the only Members that went.

I want the Speaker and my colleagues to know that, and listen to this, despite cables indicating 22 deaths from terrorist bombings on April 10, that is just before we left, in Columbia, and the discovery of dynamite at the Colombia Supreme Court, also on April 10, codel members stood by their commitment, and those who stood by their commitment are on the floor.

This trip is a culmination of some of the efforts that I and a few others, CHARLIE RANGEL, BILL RICHARDSON, on the other side of the aisle, have attempted to get the attention of this administration and this Congress on this issue. In the last Congress I had over 100 Members sign a letter to the former Democratic chairman of the Government Operations Committee asking for an oversight hearing on our national

drug policy, and two farcical abbreviated hearing were held. Nothing was really held, until Mr. ZELIFF took over this position. Mr. CLINGER and Mr. HASTERT have also shown their leadership.

I would say that required reading, and I have seen on the floor for this, this committee is taking this very seriously, and they have produced a document that every American parent, every Member of Congress, and every member of the media should look at, and this details the epidemic drug situation in this country. It is not just with adults, it is with our children. Every single drug, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, designer drugs, are absolutely just going off the charts. This is a national tragedy. We have 70 percent of the people in our jails and in our prisons that are overloaded with people who are convicted of crimes that have some drug relation to it.

We have an epidemic in this country and no one, except some of these Members, is paying any attention. And these Members risked their lives and also time with their families to go on this visit to see firsthand. The first codel in my memory in the last 3 or 4 years, and certainly in this administration.

Then, also in required reading, I ask everyone to get a copy of this trip report, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues. This is an unclassified report. I know the media could not care less about it, but it details what is going on in the drug war and where we are. We have the report that details the failure, we have the report that details this delegation's travel to these countries and why they traveled to Bolivia, to Peru, to Colombia, to Panama, and to Mexico.

First of all, in Bolivia and Peru, they have nearly 100 percent of the cocaine being produced. If my colleagues want to hear some shocking news, we learned in Colombia, which was originally a transit zone, even though now they are producing some cocaine, but every American, every Congressman, and the Speaker of the House should be concerned about this, there are 10,000 hectares of poppies being grown there. Heroin will be on the streets of this country in tremendous amounts.

What is another concern, we learned from some agents that we met with that for the first time in Peru they found some cultivation of poppies. So we can see that we have a long way to go.

Part of the history of how we got in this situation is the administration shifted most of its resources to drug treatment, which is at the far end. Anyone who looks at the problem of drugs in this country knows that we must have a four-pronged approach. It must be, first of all, interdiction, which is dramatically decreased in these countries. We must have enforcement. In this administration the number of prosecutions has dropped dramatically in drug prosecution. We

must have education and then we must have treatment. But it must be a four-pronged approach, and we are losing the war.

These people met with the leaders and other people who are involved in this war. And I must take just a minute, too, if I may, to tell the Members of Congress, Mr. Speaker, and the American people, that we have some dedicated people out there. I am still itching from bug bites. Our staff, almost all the staff got sick. The DEA agent that traveled with us had to almost be hospitalized by going into some of these areas, getting sick and bitten, but we came back. The good news is we came back.

The other news that everyone should know is that we have hundreds of dedicated Americans, our ambassadors, our Department of Defense employees, these young men and women who are out there in the jungles working with these people that are dedicated young Americans, committed to this fight. The Department of State employees in the narcotics assistance unit.

I am one of the biggest critics of AID, Agency for International Development, and a lot of their programs was wasteful, but down in these countries they are trying to work with crop substitution and other programs where we should be putting our emphasis, not on giveaway programs where we can make a difference.

And the DEA people. I met a DEA agent who has been in DEA for 12 years, 6 years in South America, his name is Bill, and he is a committed person. And I cannot single out all of them, but we have dozens of these people who are out there in the jungle working every day trying to stop this narcotics trafficking, when sometimes the administration or Congress undermines their efforts. So there are American heroes, our Customs people and intelligence agency people, that are also involved and should be recognized.

Mr. HASTERT. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. MICA. So that is the problem, that is where we are, and I wanted to shed that background of what we are trying to do and what some people are doing out there in the field.

Mr. HASTERT. I thank the gentleman. What I want to do now is take a few minutes and sort of let the Speaker, and the Members of Congress know exactly what we did, where we went, what we found during that period of time, and we will try to move through that as quickly as possible and then come up with wind-up remarks on this.

As I started out and talked about Mexico, I think the key thing is in our meetings with the President of Mexico and with the Ambassador, Mr. Jim Jones, a former Member of Congress, that we found out in discussions with the President, that he thinks that the drug problem, the trafficking problem up through Mexico is really Mexico's number one problem, because it is a

false indicator on their economy. The money laundering, which only forces legitimate people out of business, and the tremendous amount of drugs that move up through Mexico really cause violence and shooting and some guerrilla activity.

For instance, in the last few years, deaths in Mexico because of this grew 145 percent, and there were over 2,000 speed or what we call speed or methamphetamine-related deaths between 1991 and 1992, even in the borders along Mexico, in Los Angeles, and San Diego, and San Francisco alone.

So the incidence of increase and literally trainloads of marijuana, thousands of pounds of cocaine and crack, and literally thousands of pounds also of heroin that is moving up through Mexico is not only a United States problem, but the Mexican President in our discussions has admitted it is the number one problem in Mexico as well.

The next place that we stopped was in Panama, and we met with Ambassador Bill Hughes and the new Ambassador to Colombia and the country team there. Then we met with the SOUTHCOM, which is the U.S. command that is out of Panama City, that is literally the source that we can send our AWAC planes down to Colombia and off the Andes area in Peru and Bolivia and we can actually see foreign flights coming up and the flights that deliver and drop—pick up the cocaine or coca paste and bring them up north either into Colombia or then into Mexico to be processed. That is a very sensitive place.

But Panama itself has a problem because they are in a very precarious position and a vulnerable position. The city on the north coast, on the north part of the Panama Canal that empties into the Atlantic Ocean, has the free trade zone in that area, has virtually been overtaken by Colombians, and literally hundreds of tons or pounds of cocaine and coca leaf and coca paste move through that area; and they understand a country without a military, with just a police force, that they have to do a better job of cracking down on that.

Also, Panama has over 400,000 shell companies or paper companies that are used as fronts to launder illegal drug profits. In talking with the Vice President of Panama, he admitted this and said this is one of the most important things that they need to do and they need to try to control. They know that Colombia is a primary drug transit zone.

The United States is currently in the process of turning over military bases to the Panamanians, and that is a sensitive thing to the United States. I think Howard Air Force Base, where we base our P-3's and our helicopters, and is the repair base for many of the operations in South America, was very important to the United States in drug control. So that is something else the United States has to deal with in the next couple of years.

But Panama has no military. It has not been eligible for the military sales systems. And in the last couple of days we have passed a piece of legislation in this Congress to allow the Ambassador to be able to use some of that money to work on the counternarcotics in Panama. Panama can and will be likely the gateway for the overtake of the narcos if we do not get something done there and if we do not beef up our activities.

Now, people talk about, well, how come we are sending money to Panama or Mexico. We are not sending money, we are sending people; those people who on the ground can make a difference. We are sending intelligence officers, members of the DEA, so that they can actually get in and find out where the source is of the storage, where the transshipment is, where the manufacturing of these narcotics is, and they are doing a good job. But we cannot shut that faucet off, because if we do shut that faucet off, we will see a huge increase of infusion in drugs added to the drugs that we already have in this country.

I think the next place that—I know the next place that we went was Colombia, and I would like to have Mr. MICA from Florida give you a little bit of a review on what we found in Colombia.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman for yielding and, again, we wanted to trace the trail of illegal narcotics coming into this country. As you know, Colombia traditionally has been one of the major transit areas. We have had a program to eliminate some of the kingpins, and the Colombians have been very aggressively pursued, destroying both the Cali and the Medellin cartels.

In Colombia, under some pretty heavy security I might add, the Congressmen and the other members who traveled with us of our staff met with our Ambassador Myles Ferchette, who again I commend on his efforts, his incredible living conditions; as well as Defense Minister Esguerra, and Commander of Armed Forces Delgado.

As I mentioned, too, nearly several dozen police officers had been killed just prior to our arriving, and I understand another several dozen people have been killed in incidents down there just the past few days, plus other terrorist activities. So you can imagine the conditions that our representatives and Ambassadors are under.

It was necessary for this tight security to meet in our embassy. We met there and conversed with our DEA agents and others who were involved in the various projects.

Two of the Colombian leaders, and I must say that there are questions surrounding some of the drug relationships to the current President of Colombia. There are 109 members, I understand, of the Colombia's Congress, over 100 members of the Colombian Congress that may have some problems, and there are some investigations going on there.

□ 1630

But we met with 2 stars in their drug war, who have done an incredible job, and one is the national police chief, Mr. Serrano. He told us that they have lost over 3,000 officers in this war.

As you know, the drug cartels have killed judicial members, they have killed members of congress, they have killed hundreds, literally thousands, of police officers in their struggle.

We also had an opportunity to meet with defense minister and commander of the Colombian Armed Forces Admiral Delgado. So we had an opportunity to hear firsthand what they are doing, some of the problems.

I might say that one of the problems that we had in 1994 this administration reversed its policy on the drug shutdown policy. They stopped giving information and intelligence and radar to the Colombians in the Andean countries through a liberal interpretation of one of the attorneys in the administration.

As you may know, Members of Congress, Mr. TORRICELLI, Mr. RANGEL, others on the Republican side, Mr. GILMAN, raised extreme concerns with the President, the vice president, the national security adviser. Congress did amend this, and there have been some changes. But some damage was done in the program.

The Colombians do not shoot the planes down out of the skies with drug traffickers, but they do shoot them when they reach the ground. One of the problems that we have now is that some of the shipments are being shipped around Colombia directly into Mexico, and Mexico is now one of the greatest transshipment areas.

Another problem that we have are these small cocaine producers. With the drug cartels being destroyed, we now have small producers. And they discussed that problem. They do need our assistance, continued assistance in this war, additional equipment and supplies. There are people there that are willing to fight, and they have seen how it has destroyed their country.

So those are a couple of the things that we saw in Colombia.

One other thing that I must mention again is the alarming news of 10,000 hectares of poppy growing, and they are now producing heroin there. And as you know, they have a great flower production, probably the flower capital of the world, and poppy is another flower.

So they have an unbelievable capacity to produce a new, inexpensive, illegal narcotic, and it is flooding our schools and our communities and our society, and we will probably see even more of it.

So those are some of the folks that we met with, some of the heroes I talked about, and some of the leaders in Colombia who are helping in our effort.

Mr. HASTERT. I thank the gentleman from Florida. We also want to mention that in our time in Mexico, we

were joined by Senator COVERDELL of Georgia, who also has taken, in the other body, a great interest in this issue.

Now I would like to yield some time to our good friend from Indiana, who has done a great deal of work on this narcotics issue, Mr. MARK SOUDER.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you very much for yielding.

I want to first just sketch a little bit of the problem. The United States is basically up here in relationship to this map, with Mexico and Panama and Central America coming down into Colombia, Peru and Bolivia. It does not take a genius to figure out what is going on here.

One hundred percent of the cocaine coming in from outside the United States is coming from here. Roughly 60 percent is now coming from Peru, which we will hear more about in a minute. About 30 percent of the growth is in Bolivia, with some in Colombia. Not only that, it is coming from basically two places just on the other side of the Andes in Peru and in Bolivia. Bolivia has been growing; Peru has been slightly declining.

Furthermore, we are seeing more of the processing. As the pressure goes on in Colombia, the processing starts to move to these two countries in these two valleys. Not surprisingly, as you put the pressure on, and this is a chart that shows some of the success in the Chapare region of Bolivia, that they have had. You can see that they seized aircraft, they have seized coca leaf, they have seized coca-based paste and base. They have eradicated crops. They have made a major effort in this zone to try to crack down.

If you look at this third chart, what has happened, and this shows the Mexico through Central American areas we were in, as they put the pressure in the air, it starts to move to maritime.

What we were in was literally the jungle, the rivers areas that were feeding into the Amazon River Basin. It was very disturbing, quite frankly, as somebody who, in spite of the earlier comments, does care about the environment, and I am a Republican; it was very disturbing to see how the rivers were being killed by the chemicals from the cocaine labs and what that was doing to the wildlife.

We hear a lot of times about cutting down the Amazon rainforest, and we get many letters from schools. But we could see it burning in different places, and we could see it being cut so they can put cocaine labs in.

I want to show, if I can have the pictures now, what we did in Bolivia. After we had our country team briefing, we flew up in a C-130 Vietnam-era transport plane up into the Chapare region to meet with the Puma powers, the soldiers who are busy working in the fields. We did a helicopter, a Huey helicopter, overflight where you can see they have had success in converting things into banana production, pineapple production and others.

You could also see that they were hedging their bets, and some places underneath the banana plants you can see the coca. But they were working to eradicate that. They passed tougher laws.

Then they took us back in after we had had lunch. They landed us in helicopters. We took four-wheel-drives. We went back down dirt roads. The day before, they had a tip, and they took down a primitive lab.

Here what you see is the lab where they are turning it into paste. Here you see we got to witness them blowing up a lab, watching it burn. This is very dark because it is a jungle. It is the literal Amazon jungle. You cannot see it from an airplane overhead. They find six to eight of these a day that they destroy in the jungle that these troops are going through.

Here you see leaf that has been pulled up, green leaf that is planted.

Later on in the day we stopped at a local market, walked in and there the coca leaf was for sale in those markets, not converted to cocaine where we were.

Here you see the coca field that is feeding into this particular lab and the soldiers destroying it.

In the back part of this field there was a small area where the little coca plants were planted that would then continue to feed this field.

In my home area in Fort Wayne, IN, there are kids dying. You do not see the blood on the coca plants, but there are kids dying; they are shooting each other; they are destroying each other because of the coca plants that are coming in from these countries.

What they are telling us, however, is also it is not all our problems, you can see their troops here, you can see their airplane flights and crops being destroyed. We listened to their governments.

It is their police that are dying as we heard in Colombia how many are dying. And they are saying, you know, we would not have this problem if you were not consuming it all in your country, too, and you are bringing the problems into our country. It is twofold. We need to stop the interdiction, we need to put more money into these efforts, because our kids and people are dying in our country, and back up the people there, and at the same time we need to work at the demand reduction on our side.

Mr. HASTERT. I appreciate the gentleman yielding back for a second, but he makes very important points that the reason we are doing this is our children. Kids in the streets of the United States and our neighborhoods, both middle-class neighborhoods, upper-class neighborhoods, lower-class neighborhoods, are being effected by this.

If a kid uses crack cocaine, he only has to use it twice, and he gives up his free will for the rest of his life. Now that is something that is pretty important. I think parents and teachers and community leaders need to understand that.

Only two times do you need to use the crack cocaine, the pictures that Mr. SOUDER showed us, and a kid is hooked for life, and what an expense, what a waste of human life, what a waste of the human vitality that we have in this country and the potential that every kid has in this country to be a better person, to make a living, to raise a family and to be an American.

So that is really the issue there, and, Mr. SOUDER, we really appreciate the work you have done on this.

Now I would like to yield to the gentleman who really has been at the crux of this whole issue, driving it forward for a number of years and working on his committee to bring this issue forward, and certainly a great American, somebody that we have all looked up to on this issue, Mr. ZELIFF of New Hampshire.

Mr. ZELIFF. I feel awfully good that as we have come back and renewed our commitment, we are pleased to have the opportunity to talk to Members of the House, both the Senate and the House, talking to Barry McCaffrey, the drug czar, and hope to visit with the President, as well, and get his commitment.

We need to renew the commitment to the drug war because it is vital, it is the most important single thing that we have facing us. Crime, drugs, and terrorism are all one, and it is costing us far too much in terms of the next generation.

I just would like to talk a little bit about Peru. Saturday morning we met with the President of Peru, quite a guy; our Ambassador Adams in the country team in Peru. We met with them all day Saturday afternoon and evening. What a guy; the President of Peru is totally committed. Two-thirds of the world's cocaine is produced in coca leaf form right here, and this photo right here, these are the coca fields, this is a plant, and these are the coca leaves themselves. But the field is two-thirds of the world's cocaine, produced in Peru.

Now, what has happened with his policies, frankly, it is called a very effective shutdown policy. If they have intelligence that a plane is loaded with cocaine, they will address that plane, send two fighters up, have the plane be warned, have them bring it down. If they do not come down, they shoot it down.

Now, what happens is that the 50 percent pure flights on the air bridge, and you got now, you have got in Bolivia, you got Peru, Bolivia and Colombia. The air bridge goes through all three of those countries in terms of bringing the product up. So we basically have closed down 50 percent fewer flights in the air bridge and are now forced to do alternate routes, either into Brazil or boat by boat, up along the tributaries of the Amazon. We now have to ship policies and resources. There are small boats, small craft, and we need now to make sure we can fight the fight on the water as well.

The pilots before were making \$25,000 a flight to fly a planeload of cocaine. Now, because of the shutdown policy, it has grown up to \$200,000 a flight. And what is happening, by keeping the pressure on, the farmers have abandoned 20 to 40 percent of the coca fields in Peru. Peru and the United States have a delicate window of opportunity, while prices of coca are down and the risk of production is high, to get farmers out and start working with alternative crops. And this is true of Bolivia as well.

One of the things that I have to say is I was pretty biased, based on the GAO reports that we read, and we were told that programs and source countries eradication programs were badly managed and were not effective. Well, this may have been true a few years ago, but I believe, and I think all of us agree, that we are starting to see some signs, some light at the end of the tunnel, where programs are effective.

Mr. HASTERT. I think an important point that you started to bring out is that not only did the Peruvian campesinos or farmers start to abandon their fields, but the price of cocaine in Peru went down tenfold, and all of a sudden it was so cheap that they could not afford to grow other solid anymore.

So I think that is an important issue of the whole supply and demand, but it was directly because of Fujimora's actions.

Mr. SOUDER. He is a real hero in our books. I think we are all very impressed when we left, and we told him that.

And I think the other thing that we have to look at, an AID program and foreign policy programs need to be geared toward economic development, infrastructure improvements. And what is happening here is that if you leave it to their devices in working with the jungle, that is where the terrorism is. If the towns and the regular government give up the area, then we lose the war.

Let me just trace a very interesting article in the Union Leader back in February 26, an article, and I give him a lot of credit for bringing this out, and I believe that they are committed to this in a very strong way, Sissy Taylor, "Cocaine's Deadly Journey, Trip to New Hampshire Long and Costly." Just go through a little bit of how it all works.

□ 1645

I will go through a little bit of how it all works. Coca leaves are bundled. Again you have the field. Coca leaves are bundled into bags. The bags are brought to pits where the processing begins.

This is the pit. This is about 4- by 12-foot long. The bottom is lined with a filtering canvas. They dump the leaves in, add lime and kerosene or diesel fuel, sulfuric acid, then grind them together with the leaves. A paste is then formed and dried and then washed

again with either ether, diesel fuel, or kerosene and then washed again. At this point it becomes coca base.

Then the base is bundled and flown or transported into clandestine air strips in Colombia. It is then transported to processing laboratories in the jungles. It then undergoes another chemical process before it becomes cocaine hydrochloride or powdered cocaine.

It is packaged into kilos, kilo bags, weighing a little bit more than 2 pounds. The farmer gets about \$2,500 a hectare, and a hectare is 2½ acres, so he does not get much for growing the crop. Then it goes into Bogota as processed cocaine, worth \$500 a kilo. Then that is transported either to New York, Miami, or Manchester or other cities around the United States, and it could reach as much as \$20,000 a kilo.

There is so much money in it. What is happening here in each of these countries—President Fujimori of Peru, the President of Mexico, a lot of the areas in the Caribbean, and I want to mention the great Governor of Puerto Rico and some of the fine work he has done—but what happens here is they are afraid of losing control of their countries, losing control of democracy, losing control to drug traffickers, and frankly the drug traffickers are the scum of the Earth. We have got to wake up.

Let me just read a note. I met with the Governor of Puerto Rico yesterday, who is leading a valiant effort. We are going to be doing two more hearings, one in Puerto Rico in July and one in the district of the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. SOUDER], in Fort Wayne, and one in the district of the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT], in Chicago that day if we can work it out. We need to get on top of it.

What he said:

I want to say a few words about Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico, along with Mexico, is a major transshipment point for Latin America's illegal drug cartels. Eighty percent of all the drugs that get into Puerto Rico end up in the continental U.S.

There is no customs. It goes right through.

But Puerto Rico is ahead of the curve under the Governor's leadership. In 3 years, he has shown what a good Governor can do. He has implemented an effective prevention and law enforcement strategy, and rescued 23,000 public housing units. He has used the National Guard effectively, and brought 16 different State agencies together to make Puerto Rico more secure.

Governor Rosello's model is key, because other Governors and leaders have to realize that we are now confronting what is clearly a national security threat that has gotten into every State in our Nation.

I also hope that the Governor's Conference in Puerto Rico this July will focus on the leadership that this Governor has shown. But more—the drug issue must be front and center with all of us.

If Congress, this President and all of the Governors of the United States make this number one, if we can put a man on the Moon, we can win the war on drugs.

Mr. HASTERT. I thank the gentleman from New Hampshire. I just

wanted to make another couple of comments.

When we saw what was going on, the results of President Fujimori's shutdown policy in Peru, what happens is that cocaine piles up there and now they are trying to take it out in the river system. So another country which has been involved somewhat unwittingly is out in the Amazon Basin of Brazil, and so many of those flights now, because they cannot fly up through Peru and through Colombia to get into Colombia, now what they do is they go around through Brazil. That is a real job for our ambassadorial corps and others, to make Brazil aware of the problem that they have with drug traffickers moving that cocaine supply out of Peru and out of Bolivia and on up into Peru through the river system and ultimately through airways.

Mr. SOUDER. If the gentleman will yield, I want to make one additional point on the pictures the gentleman was just talking about. To give you the scale of why the best drug prevention program is interdiction and as we get into some of the things we need to do, that third picture, that is on fire, and the fourth picture. We took down around 100 crack houses in Fort Wayne last year. That is how great our problem is in a city the size of 300,000, roughly, in the metro area. That little fire there would be the biggest drug bust in the history of Fort Wayne, and they can make it in those little labs, starting for \$500. We destroyed the biggest drug bust in the history of Fort Wayne. If we can get it there and reduce the supply, it has a major impact on our cities.

Mr. ZELIFF. But if the gentleman will yield, it has got to be balanced. We have got to do education, prevention. We have got to do treatment, interdiction. We have got to do source country eradication programs. If we do not, if we skip 3 or 4 of these pieces, then we lose. We have got to do it in a balanced program across the board.

Mr. HASTERT. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MICA. I want to follow up on what the gentleman had said, Mr. Speaker. This strategy has to start right at the top. It has to start out at the White House.

Listen to this. The President has really hardly talked about the issue for the last 3 years. Of the seven major addresses to the Nation in 1993 and 1994, President Clinton mentioned drugs in none of those addresses. In 1993, he gave 1,628 statements, addresses and interviews, but mentioned drugs a total of 13 times. In 1994 there were 1,742 presidential statements and he referred to the drug problem 11 times.

This has to be a national priority from the administration. We have a new drug czar. He has been great to work with so far. We have a great working relationship with him. As the other Members have seen and as I saw, we need the cooperation of many agents, we need the cooperation of

many committees of Congress in both bodies and everyone working in the same direction.

We also must look at how we are spending these resources, and when you see that most of the drug treatment and abuse programs, at the very end, they are failures. Very few of them have any success rate whatsoever. Then the international program is 2.34 percent, and you dismantle an interdiction program at this critical juncture, you are making a mistake as far as your priorities. It has to be interdiction, enforcement, education, and there must be treatment also.

Mr. ZELIFF. If the gentleman will yield further, one of the things we are finding out in Manchester, NH, again I cite Peter Favreau, who has done a great job along with the Federal, State, and local agencies that have worked with him. But we have worked with courageous people in the school systems. You can put a policeman in a school yard but we have to get inside the schools, work with the kids and be role models.

It is not just the President, it is all of us individually. We have got to get the media to wake up and pay attention to this. We have got to start talking to parents. Parents have to start talking to their kids. Business people have to be involved, communities have to be involved. We have to reconnect with basic values. If we do not, we are going to lose big time and we will not have anything left.

It is time now, and hopefully with the leadership of the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT], you might just describe what we ultimately want to try to do here. We are trying to bring it all together to show to everybody the importance of this issue, and we really appreciate your effort.

Mr. HASTERT. Reclaiming my time, we have used the word "balance" a number of times, but this is a balance purely between supply and demand. We have to do our part. We promised those Presidents and those Congresses in those Central American countries of Mexico and Panama, and certainly in the Andean countries of Colombia and Bolivia and Peru, that we would work in our country to try to hold down that demand.

That is partly a result of the government. If we take this chart, we can see that from basically 1980 the demand for drugs, the kids' usage of drugs in this country had fallen rapidly until 1992. All of a sudden, the demand for drugs and the use of drugs goes up.

This chart here shows exactly what happens. Twelfth graders, in 1980 the use started to go down. In 1992, it went up. Tenth graders, it went up. Eighth graders, it went up. I am sure if you have a chart there, you will find that sixth and fourth graders' use went up too.

We have to change from a government that used to say "just say no," and we had good results during that time, to a government which has lately

just said nothing, and we need to work and develop that as a huge issue in this country. Parents, and as the gentleman from New Hampshire [Mr. ZELIFF] said, everybody has to work together. I am sure we can get the job done, but it has to be a country effort. And we have to work in those countries that produce this, work with their governments, work with their presidents who are willing to work with this country and try to eradicate the supply side of this, as well.

You can see in these charts it is there. They are doing it. They are doing it today. Farmers are planting cocaine seedlings on sides of mountains, under the brush in Bolivia and Peru, and we have to help stop that.

I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. SOUDER. I am not necessarily known as "Mr. Internationalist." In fact, I authored with the gentleman from New Hampshire [Mr. ZELIFF] an amendment that said unless Mexico worked harder in this effort, that we were going to cut off funding and support. I have been critical of a number of the trade missions.

One thing I have seen, and we did not shy away from communicating this to them, that all the issues that we are dealing with are related to narcotics in our country. At the same time we need to acknowledge that we have leaders around the world, as you said earlier, who are committed to democracy, who need our support, or we are going to lose the best chance for freedom around the world.

Mr. HASTERT. In closing, I thank all the gentlemen who have worked on this, the gentleman from New Hampshire, Mr. ZELIFF, who has taken the lead in committee, our friend from Indiana, Mr. SOUDER, and of course my friend from Florida, Mr. MICA. I thank the gentlemen.

RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I come tonight to the well to talk about an issue really of great importance for working middle-class families in this country.

Mr. Speaker, America needs a raise. I call on Speaker GINGRICH to take a pause from the Republican revolution and allow the people's House to vote on raising the minimum wage now.

The Nation's minimum wage today is a paltry \$4.25 an hour. I am proud to join with my Democratic colleagues and President Clinton to sponsor legislation to boost this wage to \$5.15. It is the least we can do.

Hard working American families need a break. The minimum wage has lost 27 percent of its value over the past

15 years, and now stands at a 40-year low. It buys less groceries. It buys less gasoline. It buys less clothes for the children of these hard working families than it has in four decades.

These statistics are particularly troubling considering the fact that corporate CEO salaries have risen at the fast clip of 9 percent a year since 1990. In fact, last year the median compensation for CEO's was a staggering \$2 million a year. That's more than 200 times the salary of a minimum wage worker.

A recent poll in my home State of Connecticut shows that a full 80 percent of the people support raising the minimum wage—four out of five Connecticut residents favor this measure. A New York Times poll reports that 94 percent of Democrats, 86 percent of Independents, and even 71 percent of Republicans support raising the minimum wage to \$5.15 an hour.

Yesterday, a brave group of my Republican colleagues joined the Democratic call for a vote on this issue. I congratulate my colleagues for having the courage to challenge Speaker GINGRICH's wrongful opposition to giving minimum wage workers a modest raise in pay. But the bottom line is the Republican leadership refuses to bring this legislation to a vote. It's all talk and no action. The Republican leader has said the minimum wage increase will come to this floor over his dead body.

This morning's Congress Daily reports Speaker GINGRICH's latest cynical ploy to stiff working Americans. "We're going to look at it," Speaker GINGRICH is quoted as saying, "There should be hearings."

Hearings. The revolutionary Republican leaders just 3 days ago wanted to rewrite the U.S. Constitution without a single hearing.

Hearings. The revolutionary Republicans last year passed \$270 billion in Medicare cuts to pay for tax breaks for their rich political contributors—all without a single hearing. And now that the American people are making their voices heard in support of raising the minimum wage, Speaker GINGRICH promises hearings.

Talk is cheap, Mr. Speaker, and so is the minimum wage. So too unfortunately is the cynical way the Republican leadership is treating this modest proposal. Forget the hearings. I call on Speaker GINGRICH to allow this House to vote to raise the minimum wage now. It is a no-brainer. We should do it without further delay.

Mr. Speaker, a livable wage is not exactly a revolutionary concept, but the American people need a raise nonetheless. If we are truly to move people from welfare to work, we must make work pay.

A great American once said, "No man can be a good citizen unless he has a wage more than sufficient to cover the bare costs of living . . . so that after his day's work is done he will have time and energy to bear his share in the management of the community,