

did little as a population was devastated.

As these memories stay eternally fresh in their minds and hearts, the people of the Armenian Republic continue to suffer. In recent years, attempting to establish their independence from the former Soviet Union, Armenia has suffered a series of setbacks, including an earthquake in 1988 and a Turkish-led economic blockade that has prevented humanitarian aid from entering the country.

Despite these tragic circumstances, the Armenian people continue to be an inspiration to people around the world. Indeed, last July's democratic elections and new Constitution are evidence of the Armenian devotion to democracy. At the same time, the Armenian community in the United States and in my home state of Rhode Island continues to enrich our society and culture. They have brought with them their unconquerable spirit, patriotism, and valor. Furthermore, they remind us that we must never forget those who perished 81 years ago. Along with the lives that were lost, the Armenian genocide resulted in the destruction of a society and a culture.

It is the memory of those whose perished that we remember today, but it is also those who have carried on, that we must honor. We know too well that history can repeat itself, and that the problems of far-off nations are often overlooked in the face of larger global issues. While nothing can undo the crime of the Armenian genocide, we can do our best to establish a new future.

I urge my colleagues to join me in this commemoration to remember the victims of this holocaust, pray for those who continue to suffer, and honor the truly inspirational spirit of the Armenian people. We must continue to stand side by side with the Republic of Armenia in her quest for democracy while ensuring that tragedies like the genocide never happen again.

□ 1830

ON THE MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. (Mr. MILLER of Florida). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I also want to join briefly, although I will talk about another subject, want to join my colleagues in respect for the human dignity of the Armenian people and hopefully that the tragedy and the history of that event will teach us as public policymakers that we should make sure that that does not happen again.

Mr. Speaker, over the past several days, the public has been privileged to hear the views of Members—from both sides of the aisle—on the issue of raising the minimum wage.

This is a good and healthy exercise.

Some of what the public has heard has been fact. However, some has been fiction.

This evening, I would like to address some of the major arguments that have been made and repeated during this debate and attempt to separate the fact from the fiction.

Some have suggested that most minimum wage workers are teenagers, working part-time. That is fiction. Most minimum wage workers are adults—7 out of 10 of them—and most are women—6 out of 10 of them. That is fact. But even if most minimum wage workers are teenagers, should they not be paid a fair day's wage for a fair day's work?

Many maintain that jobs will be lost and prices will rise with an increase in the minimum wage. That is fiction. But many more, including prominent economists, throughout the United States, have effectively disputed the job loss argument.

None on the other side have successfully challenged the three economics Nobel Prize recipients and the more than 100 economic scholars from every corner of America—all who maintain the job loss argument is without foundation.

And, on the issue of rising prices—first, prices have already risen, many times over the past 25 years, while the minimum wage has increased but once.

To the minimum wage worker, price increases combined with no increase in wages has meant more obligations, less money and more misery.

But, second, the claim that an increase in the minimum wage will mean higher prices for goods fails when examined against the experience in New Jersey.

New Jersey, like eight other States, now has a minimum wage higher than the Federal minimum wage.

It has been documented by empirical study, however, that when New Jersey raised its minimum wage, prices were not affected in any measurable way.

Price increase claims are fiction.

A few have stated that raising the minimum wage is a liberal Democrat idea—fortunately, that is fiction.

Both Speaker Gingrich and Majority Leader Dole voted for the only minimum wage increase in this quarter of a century in 1989—that is fact.

Moreover, twenty thoughtful Republicans in the House have joined the 113 Democrats in the call for a minimum wage increase—that too is fact.

Mr. Speaker, when the fact is weighed against the fiction, that fact rises and the fiction falls.

An increase in the minimum wage is not a gift—it is not charity. It is just and due compensation for work performed.

How is the value of work measured? That is a difficult question. I can, however, tell you what makes work seem valueless.

Work seems without value when, after doing a job, promptly and thoroughly, an employee earns less than

what is required for basic needs—something to eat, something to wear, a place to stay.

If we are serious about moving citizens from welfare to work, we must make work pay. The public debate over the minimum wage has caused some to rethink their opposition to this vital matter. That is good.

This debate will go on—it will not go away.

Those who continue to watch as corporate profits soar, as the salaries of business managers spiral and as working America suffers, are missing an important moment in history—they are lost in fiction.

An increase in the minimum wage is justified, it is necessitated by conditions and it is the right thing to do—that is fact.

REPUBLICAN PLAN FOR RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today we have learned that not only are the Republicans opposed to the minimum wage, but their leadership in a joint statement issued today said that they will simply not allow the minimum wage to come to the floor of the House. Instead they will have a substitute package that prevents, prevents millions of Americans from ever getting an increase in the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, if you are a student who is working while you are going to college to help pay for your college education, under their plan you will never get an increase in the minimum wage. If you are a single person who is working at the minimum wage, today you are working 8 hours a day, you are working 40 hours a week, and you are still ending up poor under their plan, you will never get an increase in the minimum wage.

If you are a working person with a child or working person with two children, you will get an increase but you will not get it from the people you are working for. You will get it from the taxpayers, because the Republicans have decided, rather than ask the employers of this country to pay a livable wage, to pay an increase in the minimum wage, what they are going to do is ask the taxpayers to subsidize those jobs for those individuals who are working.

Mind you, today for an individual working at the minimum wage, a single parent with one child, the taxpayers are already paying \$175 a month in AFDC payments, \$28 a month in food stamps, \$179 in EITC, and they are losing \$56 on Social Security. We are already subsidizing low wage jobs in America. Rather than have the marketplace, which so often we hear people pledge their allegiance to, rather than