law. This painless collection method was described by one Senator as the best way to ''get the greatest amount of money with the least amount of squawks.''

Unfortunately for us all, he was right.

In fact, a recent poll showed that 54 percent of America's taxpayers have no idea how much of their income is withheld. It is the ultimate hidden tax, the best way to obscure the truth about taxes and the best way to obscure the cost of governing.

I want Americans to see what their Government costs. So I've introduced legislation that would allow workers to pay their taxes monthly, writing a check to the IRS just like they pay their mortgages, their car payments, and their rents.

In this way, taxpayers could see how much the Government is taking from their paychecks and how expensive their Government is. They would be able to determine for themselves whether or not they are getting their money's worth.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation, which simply lets the taxpayers see how much their Government really costs.

AMERICANS HAVE WON A VICTORY WITH REGARD TO BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, the American people have won a victory with reference to these budget negotiations. We are reversing the deficit spiral under Republican administrations in the 1980's. We are making continued progress toward balancing the budget. It is, as my Republican colleagues have said this morning, a historic moment. It is just that they miss what the historic moment is all about. For, as my colleagues can see, all of this could have been accomplished last year without the Gingrich goofs, without the Government shutdowns that cost the American people $1.5 billion, without the pain that that caused people all over this country.

Today we have achieved this negotiation without taking cops off the street, as they wanted to, without savaging the School Lunch Program, without wrecking the environment. We have accomplished this because the American people have spoken out and said they have had enough of extremism. We Democrats did not have a majority of votes to accomplish this, but we had a majority of right on our side, and thanks to the involvement of the American people we have said no to the Gingrich extremisms and achieved a victory.

VIETNAM VETERANS AND MEN OF CONSCIENCE CANNOT VOTE FOR THE APPROPRIATIONS BILL

(Mr. DORNAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DORNAN. Mr. Speaker, item in this week's April 29 U.S. News & World Report. ''Clinton Won't Dodge Vietnam.'' That is their word, ''dodge,'' not mine.

Although Bill Clinton went to great lengths to avoid going to Vietnam during his draft age years, try three times, the President, who made a round-the-world swing last week, has put the southeast Asian nation, that is Communist Vietnam, at the top of his must see list next year if he gets reelected.

Then the paragraph closes, like every other recent President, Clinton, they say, wants to be remembered mainly as a peacemaker. Well, at Oxford, ditching classes and flunking out and not getting his degree, he made sure that the killing fields would prevail in Cambodia and Laos and 68,000 of our friends would be executed in Vietnam.

I cannot vote, Mr. Speaker, for the appropriations bill today, not because my HIV language was taken out. I would have traded that off for the two great pro-life provisions, but Clinton thinks with his infanticide vote he has locked up all the abortion industry. He wanted to get back the homosexual industry. It is this POW bracelet. Any veteran or man of conscience cannot vote for the appropriations bill today.

WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 4(b) OF RULE XI WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 412 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 412

Resolved, That the requirement of clause 4(b) of rule XI for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported from that committee before April 27, 1996, and providing for consideration or disposition of any of the following measures:

(1) A bill making general appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, any amendment thereto, any conference report thereon, or any amendment reported in disagreement from a conference thereon.

(2) A bill or joint resolution that includes provisions making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 1996, any amendment thereto, any conference report thereon, or any amendment reported in disagreement from a conference thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Colorado [Mr. MCINNIS] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY], pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. MCINNIS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 412 is a simple resolution. The proposed rule merely waives the requirement of clause 4(b) of rule XI for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House for resolutions reported from the committee before April 27, 1996, under certain conditions.

This narrow, short-term, waiver will only apply to special rules providing for the consideration or disposition of measures, amendments, conference reports, or items in disagreement from a conference that: make general appropriations for fiscal year 1996, or provisions making continuing appropriations for fiscal year 1996.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 412 is straightforward, and it was reported by the Committee on Rules with unanimous voice vote. The distinguished Member, Mr. MOAKLEY, stated in the Committee on Rules that he had no objections to this rule. The committee recognized the need for expedited procedures to being these legislative measures forward as soon as possible. Simply put, we must move quickly before temporary spending authority expires at midnight tonight. Mr. Speaker, we have reached an agreement with the White House and it is time to move forward.

The agreement we reached last night will result in 1996 discretionary spending being $23 billion less than last year's level, and the additional funidng for the administration's programs is offset by reductions and saving in other areas. I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 412.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Colorado, Mr. MCINNIS, for yielding me the customary one-half hour and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this rule waiving the two-thirds requirement for same day consideration of a bill will finally enable the House to bring up the omnibus appropriations bill.

After 6 months of waiting for my Republican colleagues to pass the 13 appropriations bills, we are finally going to be able to bypass their Appropriations Committees and get our Government back on its feet.

Federal workers won't have to worry about being furloughed; military retirees won't have to worry about their benefits; and students headed for college won't have to wait any longer than they already have for their student loans to be processed.

I support this two-thirds rule, Mr. Speaker, because I wouldn't do anything to slow the appropriations process any more than it already has been

but I believe my Republican colleagues have behaved very irresponsibly on this budget and I hope next fiscal year will be different. The American people have suffered from their political games and it is no way to run a government.

But this rule doesn't go far enough. So, I will oppose the previous question in order to offer an amendment to the rule which would make in order a new section in the rule. This provision would direct the Committee on Rules immediately to report a resolution that would provide for consideration of a bill to incrementally increase the minimum wage from its current $4.25 an hour to $5.15 an hour beginning on July 4, 1997.

This will not slow down the continuing resolution, Mr. Speaker, it will allow the House to vote on a separation measure to increase the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, my Democratic colleagues and I believe very strongly that American workers deserve a raise and we will continue to fight until they get one.

With CEO's of major corporations getting raises of millions and millions of dollars a year, I certainly hope my Republican colleagues will agree with us that average working people deserve a $1,800 raise—enough for 7 months of groceries.

We are not talking about a lot of money, Mr. Speaker. But we are talking about a lot of people, 12 million people who work very long hours and still live below the poverty line.

It has been 5 years since the last increase in the minimum wage, 5 years, Mr. Speaker. Its value has plummeted to a 40-year low. People on minimum wage only earn $8,400 a year.

That means that someone who works just as long—and I would argue just as hard—as those CEO's does not make enough money to feed and house their family.

Any Member who disagrees with me, any Member who does not think we should raise the minimum wage to $5.15 an hour should vote for the previous question.

I urge everyone else who believes hard-working Americans should be able to support their families on their income to defeat the previous question.

Let's give hard-working Americans a raise.

□ 1130

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentleman will state it.

Mr. MCINNIS. I think it is in order, Mr. Speaker, to request a copy of the proposed amendment to the rule from the minority in order to determine whether a discussion of it is germane to the debate on this particular rule. Otherwise, I will be forced to raise a point of order against any further debate on a nongermane amendment to the rule.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MCINNIS. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, the amendment is being worked on. It will be in the gentleman's hands very shortly.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am thrilled. I cannot believe what I have just heard. My good friend from Massachusetts, is the gentleman in fact suggesting that we bypass the committee process and bring directly to the floor his particular amendment? I think this is the very side that I get hammered time after time after time again with these rules, what about the committee process?

Mr. Speaker, I am certain that the gentleman and my friend from Massachusetts overlooked this, and I am certain that in order to stay consistent with what their side on a continuing basis continually talks about, that he will rescind his amendment and proposal to offer an amendment and take it back to the committee process.

I think it is also important for us to realize it is an election year. How can we tell it is an election year? Where has this group, where has the minority been? They held the majority in the House. They held the majority in the Senate. They held the Presidency for the first 2 years I was here. Not once, not once in committee, not once on the House floor did we hear any discussion about minimum wage. In fact, I found it kind of interesting. Time, February 6, 1995, now the President wants to make work pay by raising the minimum wage. Yet, more than 2 years ago he said that raising the minimum wage is, and I quote from Time magazine ''the wrong way to raise incomes of low wage earners.''

If we want to help the low wage earners in this country, get Government off their back. Do something about the taxes on these people. Do something about the child tax credit. That is how we are going to help the working poor in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman, my colleague, my friend, is right. Maybe we should have addressed minimum wage. But as he knows, we had other things on our pallet. We had the health care bill that took a lot of time. We had the budget bill. We had the appropriation bills that the Republicans did not let come out through the proper process. So we really were distracted doing other things. But now we are looking clear eyed at the minimum wage, and maybe we should have done it before.

Having said that, we have just received notice from Speaker GINGRICH that he does not want to allow the minimum wage to go forward, so we cannot rely upon the ordinary committee process. This is the process we have to take.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO].

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, today I call upon my colleagues to defeat the previous question so that we can go back to the Committee on Rules and have a vote on raising the minimum wage. My colleagues and I have been trying for weeks to convince NEWT GINGRICH and the rest of the Republican leadership to allow a vote on raising the minimum wage, a mere 90-cent increase for the hard-working men and women of this country at a time in our Nation's history when we are looking at corporate CEO's who are making on average $2 to $3 million a year, and working Americans have not seen a raise in their income in the last several years. They scramble every week to try to pay their bills.

Mr. Speaker, last month I went to the Committee on Rules, and I testified in favor of allowing a vote on raising the minimum wage. My request was denied. On this floor the next day my Democratic colleagues offered a motion to allow a vote on raising the minimum wage. Again, our effort to give working families a raise was denied. As a matter of fact, the House Parliamentarian ruled that the Republican leadership was using an invalid procedure to kill that vote. After denying us the right in this body, the people's House, to raise the people's interests, we were not allowed to have this come up for a vote.

Yesterday the Speaker of the House said that it is not his intention to schedule a vote on the minimum wage. He refuses to do it. Yesterday or the day before yesterday, the third ranking member of the Republican leadership in this body said that the minimum wage families do not exist. There is a movement here and a pattern to not allow us to be able to vote in this Nation on the minimum wage. Eighty-four percent of the people in this country want us to increase the minimum wage.

Stop playing parliamentary games with America's working families. Please, give them a simple yes or no vote on raising the minimum wage in this country. Stop denying hard-working families, people that we ought to honor for taking on the personal responsibility of working hard every single day. All they want to do is to get their kids to school. They want a decent retirement for themselves. That is all they are asking for. And they make $8,500 a year.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell my colleagues in this body, during the shutdown in the Christmas holidays, Members of this body made more than minimum wage workers made in 1 year. It is unfair. Let us vote now, let us vote right away, an up or down vote on raising the minimum wage in this country.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would be interested later in the debate perhaps to hear from the gentlewoman from Connecticut about the President's comments that this is the wrong way to raise the incomes of the low-wage earners. Perhaps the gentlewoman from Connecticut before she leaves the floor today on the debate would like to come down and talk about the President's own chief economic expert, economist, who says that the higher minimum wage does not seem a particularly useful way to help the poor.

Why all of a sudden the change? Why all of a sudden the reverse? I will tell my colleagues why; it is show and tell for election year.

Mr. Speaker, this debate is about a rule. That is what we are talking about. We have come to a resolution on this budget. We have cut the rate of growth by $23 billion over last year. Let us get on with the business. Do not let them divert by talking about something that they have plenty of opportunities to do something about but all of a sudden, lo and behold, and I am sure by coincidence right before an election shows up, they come to the floor and they pound the podium and they talk about the minimum wage. They cannot explain the President's comments who says it is the wrong way to help these, the low-wage earner. They cannot explain the chief economist over at the White House when he says it does not work.

Where were these people? Where was the gentlewoman from Connecticut? Where was the gentlewoman from Connecticut when we had, for example, just a couple of weeks ago a limitation on the taxes in this country?

My bet is that the gentlewoman probably voted against it. I think it is important, if we want to help the working poor of this country, let us talk about taxes. Let us do something to control the taxes.

Nothing helps them more than taking a look at the heavy, heavy burden of taxes. Do you know that the average working person in this country has to go in and spend 2 hours and 45 minutes of their working day, the first 2 hours and 45 minutes of their working day just to pay the taxes? If we want to do something to help these people, cut that 2 hours and 45 minutes and let some of that time go right into their pocketbook. The average person in this country works from January 1 to May 6 every year, every hour during that period of time just to pay their taxes.

Mr. Speaker, the point here is very important. That is that today we are engaged in a debate on the rule, a rule which would allow us to get this compromise put into law, which will allow this budget to go forward. This is a good budget. We have come up with. This is a budget that will allow the Federal Government in Washington, DC, to reduce its spending by $23 billion. That is a very, very significant step forward. Let us do divert. Let us not dilute it by bringing in what I consider, frankly, frivolous timing on this debate.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR], the minority whip.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, who are these people that work on the minimum wage or for the minimum wage? Three of them are testifying out in the swamp triangle in front of the press right now about earning the minimum wage and trying to raise a family. So they indeed do exist.

Mr. Speaker, they are the people who take care of our mothers and our fathers and our grandparents in nursing homes. They are the people who clean the offices. They are people to clean the airports. They are the people who are breaking their backs to raise their kids every single day in America.

Do we know what happens when we pay them $4.25 an hour? They cannot raise a family on that. They end up sometimes working two jobs, three jobs, overtime. What does that mean? That means they are not there for their kids in the evenings. A mother is not there to teach her kids right from wrong. She is not there to read them bedtime stories. A father is not there for a PTA. He is not there for Little League games. He is not there for church. He is not there for dinner conversations. And the whole fabric of civil society starts to breakdown. That is what we are talking about here, paying somebody a decent livable wage so they can live a decent livable life.

Mr. Speaker, that is what we are talking about, basic economic justice for people. Let me put the Republican position on the minimum wage in perspective. A person making the minimum wage, as I said $8,500 a year, the average CEO in America today makes about $12,000 a day. I wanted to repeat that, $12,000 a day.

My friend from Colorado talked about taxes. Let me tell my colleagues about taxes. Under their tax plan, if you do the math right, every CEO in America would get a tax break of about $8,500 a year. In other words, the Republicans spent the last 16 months trying to give CEO's a tax break equal to the amount a minimum wage family earns in an entire year. Where is the economic justice in all of that?

This is an issue which is supported by over 100 economists. It is an issue that is supported by three Nobel Laureates, by 80 percent of the American people. We ought to move on this and move on it today. We have an opportunity on this previous question to vote it down so we can bring up the opportunity to have a real debate and a real vote on a critical issue for this country.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans on this side of the aisle and in the other body have embarked upon a strategy of ducking this issue as the Speaker indicated the other day in a press conference, blocking it, as the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY] indicated, said he would fight it with every fiber of his being; burying, as Senator DOLE intends, to do by attaching it to extraneous matters in the other body. This strategy of duck, block it, delay it, bury it, is not what the American people want. They want us to move on this issue because they know it is a matter of economic justice.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say in conclusion that we have got 12 million people in this country who are doing tough work, tough work. They have made a choice to do work over welfare. If we want to solve this welfare issue, we have got to make work pay. That is all we are asking. The minimum wage is at an almost 40-year low, 40-year low. People made more on the minimum wage in the 1970's and in the 1980's and in the 1960's than they would even if we raised it 90 cents an hour.

□ 1145

Let us do something for these folks. Let us raise the minimum wage. Let us give them the respect and the dignity that they deserve, and let us send a message to America that work pays.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am interested by the gentleman from Michigan's comments. I wonder where the gentleman's vote was on the largest tax increase in the history of this country about 2 years ago, and I do not want the gentleman to come back and say, well, as my colleagues know, we just increased taxes on the wealthy people in this country.

Our colleagues increased taxes, as the Democrats, on this House floor on everybody in this country that buys a gallon of gasoline, 4 cents a gallon. Our colleagues have continually thought the response to aid Washington, DC, is to tax, tax, tax.

If our colleagues want to help the working poor in this country, if our colleagues are really sincere about it and not playing election-year tactics, if our colleagues really want to help them, do something about the burden of taxes in this country.

I have said repeatedly from this microphone every person out there trying to work, trying to stay off welfare, still has to spend their first 2 hours and 45 minutes of every working day just to pay their taxes.

Now, how interesting, and I will not yield, now, how interesting it is that the gentleman from Michigan and the gentlewoman from Connecticut talk about how their party wants to help the working person. Well, maybe one of them, and they have not done it yet, maybe one of them would be kind enough to explain the President's comments, and I will quote it again from Time magazine. When the President directly addresses and states his position on minimum wage, and that is, ''Minimum wage,'' and I quote, ''is the wrong way to raise the incomes of low-wage earners.''

Our colleagues are hurting these people. That is what we are trying to say to them, they are hurting the very people that everybody wants to help. If our colleagues were serious about it, they should have supported, and some of you actually did, but we should have had more support from our colleagues' side of the aisle to put a tax limitation on the bureaucracies in Washington DC. But they did not support that.

And, by the way, they did not hesitate to support the largest tax increase in the history of this country. That is what is key here. If they really want to help the working people, let us shift this debate.

By the way, the debate should not even be on this. The debate should be on the rule. But our colleagues continue to try to divert it over to this.

So let us shift the debate where it ought to be, and that is the tax burden that their party primarily in the last 40 years has been responsible for placing on the working people of this country. Not just the working poor, but every working man, woman, and child in this country, lives under their tax burden.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DOGGETT].

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, in a few minutes all of America will be able to see a vote on whether or not the people of America, the working families of this country, will get the increase in their wages that they deserve, get a raise.

I believe American working families deserve a raise, and finally this morning we are going to have a vote on that subject. And if my colleagues believe that way, all of America will be able to see that they voted against this call for the previous question and we have finally an up-and-down vote on the minimum wage.

But, as my colleagues can see, what we have been hearing this morning is the same old Republican story: Promises made, promises broken. That is what this Republican majority is all about. It was only last week that the Republican leadership of this House and of the Senate were telling us: We would have a vote on the minimum-wage increase. But they forgot to ask the lobby.

As we can see, this would be like the Republicans writing environmental legislation without getting a bill from the polluters. They just do not do that. They made their announcement, and they had a traffic jam out here.

As we can see, they forgot to ask the special-interest lobbyists, and the limousines starting converging on the Capitol, almost a traffic jam out here on the avenue, because these lobbyists expect this Republican majority to do exactly what they tell them to do, and they made the mistake of not asking. They listened to the American people, for once, who demand that they get the kind of raise that they deserve because they are out there struggling with their families.

We are not talking about people that have got limousines that benefit from this minimum-wage increase. We are talking about the people that mop the floors, we are talking about the people that take out the trash, that wash the dishes, the hard-working people of this country who can barely make ends meet on the little bit of minimum wage they have got. And this morning we are going to decide are we going to stand by those people who are working so hard to build a future for their families, or are we going to fold and join the limousine crowd who did not get asked but made their voice heard and caused the Republicans once again to break their promise to the American people?

Let us stand up for the little folks of this country.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

How interesting to hear the gentleman from Texas talking about the little people. I wonder if the gentleman from Texas has any small business in his district.

As my colleagues may know, my district is a rural district out in Colorado. It is not a wealthy district; most of the district is rural. We are ranchers and farmers, and we own small hardware stores. In fact, my father owned a little candle store for 40 years, and it was tough. Maybe the gentleman from Texas and I would like to have them come to my district.

By the way, we do not have any limousines out there; that may be something that perhaps my colleagues are not accustomed to. But we will take them out in a pickup truck and have them explain to the small business people in my district how it is going to help them and how it is going to help their employees, and we will bring the employees in, by increasing the minimum wage and keeping the tax burden exactly the same.

Do my colleagues know what we are debating today? We are debating the rule. This debate has been totally diverted, totally swung over to a nongermane subject on this rule. What is this rule all about? Do my colleagues know what it is about? It is about reducing spending in this year's budget over last year's budget by $23 billion. That is right: billion dollars. Finally we have made positive progress.

As my colleagues know, a lot of people, when the Republicans planted our garden, we said to the Democratic leadership, ''Look, you got too many weeds in your garden. It's gotten too fat. It's not being taken care of, and the people, the taxpayers, that have to pay for the seeds and water and fertilizer for this garden are being abused.'' Let us plant the garden; we planted the garden.

Then all of a sudden nothing came up, it was not growing, and some of these people just sat back and said, ''We told you. So by gosh, your way doesn't work.''

But guess what happened today? We wake up, and we have got plants popping out everywhere. Do my colleagues know why? Because last night we reached an agreement, and this rule will help us move that agreement to the President's desk within 24 hours. We reach an agreement that allows us to reduce the size of Government in Washington, DC, to reduce the size of growth in this budget, to finally realize that the taxpayers of this country have a right to demand from their Government in Washington, DC, efficiency and accountability.

Now what is happening? Finally of course they are not going to concede. A little plant is now coming out of the ground, and this garden in fact is going to be a very healthy garden. Now they try to pull in something that their own President did not agree with, and that is this diversionary argument of minimum wage.

Let us go back to the rule. Last night in the Committee on Rules, I was there. I voted on it. Every Democrat in the Committee on Rules voted for it. I voted for it. We did not have this kind of sneak attack last night in the Committee on Rules, and in fact my good friend from Massachusetts, of whom I have a great deal of respect for, and frankly the more I work with him, the more I respect him, has stood on this floor before and said, ''What about the committee process?''

Do my colleagues know what is happening? This is a sneak attack. They jump up here with minimum wage.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MCINNIS. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I agree. I will vote for the rule. I am just trying to make the rule just a little bit better.

So I am with the gentleman from Colorado on the rule, but I just want to get a shot at the previous question. So the gentleman and I will vote arm in arm when it comes to voting for the rule.

Mr. MCINNIS. But the gentleman from Massachusetts would agree by doing this we avoid the committee process on the minimum wage issue; is that not correct?

Mr. MOAKLEY. But the gentleman from Colorado will agree that the Speaker said he is not going to allow the minimum wage to come to the floor, so will the gentleman tell me how else we can get it to the floor?

Mr. MCINNIS. Reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts for his courtesy and kindness. The fact is he knows and I know this is a sneak attack. That is all right, we can take it, we can absorb it. But if our colleagues want to talk about minimum wage, if the gentlewoman from Connecticut wants to talk about minimum wage, why does she not talk about the tax vote she took? Why do our colleagues not talk about the tax vote we took just 2 weeks ago where we

said to the country and to the bureaucracy in Washington, DC: Before you raise taxes on the American people, you ought to get a two-thirds vote.

Now a lot of States do that. There are a lot of States that require a balanced budget. I would be interested to see what the gentleman from Texas or the gentlewoman from Connecticut voted on the balance budget amendment.

Do my colleagues really want to help the working people of this country? Then put this argument aside, let us debate the rules and the germaneness, and I mean argue what is germane to this rule, and let us get this budget, this agreement which cuts spending by $23 billion; we can have that to the President's desk within 24 hours.

And do my colleagues know something? I think both parties can stand up and say, by gosh, we are making progress in moving this country forward in a fiscally sound manner. But short of doing that, if some of the people who stand up here, and again just a coincidence in an election year, and talk about how much they have helped the working poor, I think it is legitimate, very legitimate, for everyone of us in this room to ask them, How did you vote on the balanced budget amendment? How are you rated by the Taxpayers Association? How did you vote on the tax limitation amendment? Where have you been on some of these spending issues that are here?

Do my colleagues want to help the working people of this country? One, get this budget to the President within the next 24 hours because he said he would sign it; two, follow your own President's advice where in Time magazine he said the minimum wage is the wrong way to raise the incomes of the low wage earners; and, three, get back to the germaneness of this rule, let us get this debate out of the way, and let us get to the budget debate because that is the most important time of the day. That is what is going to make this budget. And what we are doing right now is spending very valuable time debating kind of a sneak attack, certainly did not come up in the committee last night, certainly will not go through the committee process, but they think is fun and games to play down here and discuss it.

Let us get back to the budget. Let us pass this rule.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN.

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, what we are talking about is asking for a vote on minimum wage. Why will not the House allow us to vote on the minimum wage? By opposing the previous question, that is the only way we can do that. This martial law resolution gives special status to a lot of categories of bills. A minimum wage increase deserves that special status. We should be willing to give special treatment to the American families who are having to work for $4.25 an hour.

In fact my colleague from Colorado talked about this should go through the committee process. My committee has tried to have a hearing on this bill, and we have not. Seventy percent of the bills in 1996, and I will yield if I have time, 70 percent of the bills on this floor this year did not go through the committee process, and yet today they are not willing to use that special exception for the working folks. He knows also the reason that we tried to have health care reform in 1993 and 1994 and not a minimum wage increase, but it has gotten so far out of whack because of inflation we need to do it.

A great Senator from Texas said what we need to do is put the jam on the bottom shelf for the little people. Senator Ralph Yarbrough, the late Senator, said that minimum wage increase will do that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. MCINNIS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all for the gentleman from Texas, I think it is incumbent upon him to use the words that he used in description, that he use them at least somewhat close to their definition. Continually he attempts to use the words martial law as if we are attempting martial law on this House floor, and let me just read for his assistance the definition of martial law. It is a temporary rule by military authorities over the civilian population.

This is getting a little out of hand when we start using those kinds of terms. Let us bring it back to the issue that we are talking about today. The issue is we have got a rule here that agreed to by all of the Democrats on the committee, that was voted by a voice vote, which means there is agreement amongst the committee, to bring this rule down to the floor so that we could clear the path for our budget package to come down here, to be heard, to be voted on, to be sent to the President within the next 24 hours.

□ 1200

My goodness, we have spent the last 6 months in tough negotiations and good faith negotiations from both sides to come to some kind of budget which will help reverse the spending in Washington, DC, which will help the taxpayers of this country; which, by the way, will help every working man, woman, and child in this country. We have it in our hands. We have the budget. We can send it to the President within the next 24 hours.

So why are we stalling? Let us stay germane to the subject. Let us pass this rule. Let us send this budget to the President. It is $23 billion in reductions in spending in Washington, DC. Do we want to make a working poor person's day or any working poor person's day? Tell them that finally the Government in Washington, DC, is about to reduce the rate of their growth, that the bureaucracy that is out of control in Washington, DC, is about to come back down to the size that it ought to be. That is a government that serves the people, not a government that rules the people.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE].

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I must say that the gentleman from Colorado has made a very valiant effort to try to justify why this should not be brought to the floor, but the bottom line is we have no choice. We know that the Republican leadership in this Congress will not schedule the minimum wage for a vote. ''It is not my intention to schedule a vote on the minimum wage,'' said the House Republican leader, the gentleman from Texas, DICK ARMEY. This is the only way we can bring this up to the floor for a vote.

We are talking about real people and real lives here. Minimum wage workers have a very difficult time paying for groceries, paying for housing, paying for the utility bills. I think that the budget we are going to pass today is a great thing, and I will commend every one involved in it. But the bottom line is when we are talking about a minimum wage worker, that budget may be something that helps them in the long run, but they need help right now to raise their living, the amount of money they take in so they can buy food, housing, and the basic necessities of life.

Let me just say, very briefly, in my home State of New Jersey we have raised the minimum wage. It is now $5.05 an hour. This increase has been a complete success. We have increased the purchasing power of minimum wage workers and we have improved our economy with it.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the gentleman from Texas does not quite leave the floor. Why does the gentleman not put on the other side of this very nice poster, which by the way was paid for by the taxpayers, probably a couple of hundred bucks, put on the opposite side the President's statement about the minimum wage? And I am quoting Time Magazine from February 6: ''It is the wrong way to raise the income of the low-wage earners.''

Now let us talk. I will be very interested to see if the gentleman from Texas votes against this rule. In fact, I think there is pretty wide agreement on that side of the aisle to support this rule, because I think that side of the aisle does not want to shut down the Government. We need to get a budget to the President.

All this kind of thing is, in my personal opinion, is show and tell. it is election year. We have to expect some of that. But the fact is we have one of

the most important issues of this Congress, one of the most important issues of this Congress sitting in front of us, and that is a budget bill. In order to clear the way for this budget bill we need to pass this rule, and we are going to pass this rule.

Last night this rule passed out of committee on a unanimous vote. Not one Democrat voted against it. Why? Because they understand the importance of it. They were not going to be obstructionist. We had a very good Committee on Rules last night. There was no harsh debate. There was no sneak attack, trying to bring in this minimum wage issue. There were no discussions on the tax bill that they passed 3 years ago. No. The debate up there, and it was not really a debate, the discussion in that committee was, ''Hey, we have got an agreement. We are going to get an agreement on this budget. Let us move it up to the President. Let us keep the Government open. We can do it.''

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Colorado talks about sneak attacks. Everybody knows that the way to get an amendment in this type of process is to defeat the previous question. This is operating according to the rules of the House. Nobody in that committee last night said they would not make a motion to defeat the previous question. We said we would vote for the rule, and that agreement still holds.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. FAZIO].

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, sometimes Congress works at a glacial pace, but other times Congress can move like lightning when we choose to do it. Yesterday we passed a 1-day CR with lightning speed. It did not take any preliminary hearings.

A few weeks ago, the Republican leadership decided to schedule a vote to lift the ban on assault weapons, passed just last year. They made that decision, announced it, and voted on it within 1 week. Lightning speed. Last week, we voted on a constitutional amendment to require a supermajority vote to make changes in the Tax Code. We did not even need a committee hearing on a constitutional amendment. Lightning speed. But when it comes to providing a working wage for Americans by raising the minimum wage, it gets glacially cold around here. Paralysis sets in. Our leadership says it is not their intention to schedule a vote on the minimum wage. We cannot move. The lightning speed tends to slow down to the point where we have a glacial pace.

The Republicans have used parliamentary tactics, and now they are simply blocking a vote. Let us have one, up-or-down, on the minimum wage increase that the American people overwhelmingly support.

Mr. Speaker, what is the Republican response to our request for a simple up-or-down vote on an increase in the minimum wage: They call it—incorrectly—an unfunded mandate and invoke parliamentary procedure to prevent a vote.

They counter it with elaborate proposals for tax credits, tax incentives for businesses, assaults on labor unions, and labor law. Now they want hearings—for legislative packages—all of which are designed to put off debate and voting on an increase in the minimum wage for months—or forever.

Twelve million Americans earn $4.25 or less—73 percent of them are adults, and most of them are women. The purchasing power of the minimum wage has plummeted to a 40-year low.

A 90-cent increase proposed by the President and Democrats in the House and the Senate would provide $1,800 a year for a full-time worker. Raising the minimum wage would provide an immediate raise to more than 10 million hourly workers—and the ripple effect would assist another 3 million low-wage workers.

Some have argued that a raise in the minimum wage would have an adverse effect on business—especially small business.

But this is not just a war between working people and the business community.

Increasing the minimum wage has received wide, bipartisan support in the past—including the support of Senator DOLE and Speaker GINGRICH.

And if our local governments think this is such bad policy, why do nine States and the District of Columbia have minimum wages that exceed the Federal standard?

The fact is: Historical evidence shows us there is little or no job loss from increasing the minimum wage. We all know intuitively that business and the economy grow and flourish when people are making a living wage.

Living wages increase productivity—the unemployed are attracted off welfare, families receive health care, some of the strain of providing for their families is taken away. Democrats understand how important it is for small business to flourish.

That's where the new opportunities are being created—small business is the fuel that's driving the economic engine of recovery. That's why Democrats have supported policies such as raising the deduction for health care costs for the self-employed.

We want to keep that economic engine firing away—and we know that small business will continue to pull the major load of our economic recovery.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt first proposed a national minimum wage, he described it as a ''fair day's pay for a fair day's work.'' Let's make the minimum wage a fair day's pay once more.

I urge defeat of the previous question.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman, before he walks off the floor, I am a little mystified, I guess. He talks about how Congress works with lightning speed. The gentleman from California [Mr. FAZIO] was in the majority 2 years ago and he was in the majority for 40 years. But my first 2 years of Congress, you certainly ruled this place with an iron hand. When you wanted to, you would get something with lightning speed. Where was the minimum wage?

The second thing I would like to ask the gentleman, nobody else has done it yet, for perhaps a little explanation. The President's position was in 1995, just a year ago, as he says: ''The wrong way to raise the incomes of low-wage earners is the minimum wage.''

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MCINNIS. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, in the last Congress we did, without one Republican vote, more to help working families through the increase in the working families' tax credit, sometimes known as the EITC. We did not have one vote from that side of the aisle to help people with families working, earning less than $27,000 a year. That used to be a bipartisan issue.

Where the Republicans decided not only to oppose the minimum wage but an increase in the earned income tax credit comes from surprises me. But perhaps at the moment we have simply to look at their proposal in lieu of a minimum wage increase, which does nothing but redistribute poverty among working families. It does not help anyone's income to go up.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I thought I would get a germane answer to my question, but I did not. Let me make the point very clearly. The gentleman's side did take a vote very clearly that did affect the working poor in this country. They raised taxes by the largest amount in the history of this country.

Mr. FAZIO of California. On the top 1 percent of all taxpayers.

Mr. MCINNIS. No; you did not. You raised the gasoline tax by 4 cents. You raised taxes on every working person in this country.

Mr. FAZIO of California. For the last 2 years, gasoline taxes were below what they were at the time we voted the tax.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Colorado controls the time.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, the fact is, the only thing they did to the working people of this country is raise taxes. But that is not the issue.

Mr. Speaker, let me go back to the gentleman from Massachusetts. The gentleman from Massachusetts has written the chairman of the Committee on Rules on a number of occasions asking the committee to comply with the rules, and he has specifically pointed out the germaneness part of it. Now, clearly, this is not germane to the issue. The issue we have today is can we pass a rule which will clear the path for a budget to get to the President so he can sign it by midnight. I think we can. I think we are going to get this rule. I think most of the Members over there are going to vote for this.

I think all of this is a diversion from the fact that finally, finally under the leadership of the Republican Party we have gotten a $23 billion reduction in spending over last year, and through the cooperation of the President in the

last few days, we now have a package which will reverse spending in Washington, DC, which will demand that Government now begin to become accountable to the people which it serves. The people do not serve the Government, we serve the people, the working people out there.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. CLAY].

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the previous question and to support the amendment offered by my colleague, the distinguished ranking member of the Rules Committee, Mr. MOAKLEY, directing the Republicans to stop blocking the loud and clear demand of working men and women for a straightforward increase in the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, the House Republicans obviously have lost any sense of compassion. They have turned the minimum wage into a three-ring circus. In one ring we have 20 House Republicans proposing a $1 increase in the minimum wage; in another ring we have the Speaker stomping his feet and roaring that he will not allow a vote on the minimum wage. And, in the center ring we have Majority Leader DICK ARMEY promoting a proposal to increase the deficit by giving taxpayer subsidies to low-wage employers.

My colleagues, we don't need these legislative gimmicks. We just need fair wages. The time for a vote on a clean minimum wage increase is now. To Speaker GINGRICH, I say stop playing games and schedule a vote. Stop posturing for special interest business and schedule a vote. Thirteen million Americans who work 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year, deserve a raise, and this Congress ought to give it to them.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would be interested in the gentleman from Missouri, who speaks so boldly and speaks eloquently about the need for this minimum wage, I would ask: Did he sponsor a bill? At least I do not remember a bill during my first 2 years in the U.S. Congress where the gentleman sponsored it to help the working poor, and I do not remember the gentleman standing up and talking about the working poor and so on when he passed the largest tax increase in the history of this country, which included a tax on every working person or every person, certainly, that purchases fuel in this country.

The key here, Mr. Speaker, is that we need to go back to germaneness. The key issue we have here is the germaneness of the rule in front of us.

What should we be talking about? We all ought to be talking in very positive terms about this budget that we want to send to the President by midnight tonight. If we do not send it to the President, the spending authority expires. We are going to have a real problem.

You do not want to shut the Government down, or maybe some of you do want to shut the Government down, but if you do not want to shut the Government down, you need to cooperate with us on this rule. The members of the Committee on Rules, did. We had a great conversation, a great discussion last night. It was a voice vote. Not one disagreement in the committee.

Then today we come down here, and clearly we have a nongermane issue, meaning an issue that has nothing to do with the rule in front of us. I guess, Mr. Speaker, I could ask for a point of order, but then they would call it a gag order, so I guess in an election year we can expect this kind of frivolous discussion. But let us not ignore the fact we need to pass this rule. We have a great budget. It is a success. We have reduced spending in Washington. Let us get this budget to the President and let us get it signed. We can do it by midnight.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. VOLKMER].

(Mr. VOLKMER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, it is very apparent to me, listening to the debate, that the gentleman from Colorado is trying to obfuscate the real issue. We all agree that we will take up the appropriation bill that will finally fund the Government for the rest of this year. That should have been done 7 months ago, but the Republicans did not do it.

The real issue is whether we will have two things to do. One is a minimum wage, and the other is the appropriation bill. We can do both. All we have to do is defeat the previous question. We could tell Speaker GINGRICH and the gentleman from Texas, DICK ARMEY, ''Sorry, boys, we are going to vote on a minimum wage in the House of Representatives. We are going to defeat the previous question.'' If Members are not for the minimum wage, they will vote for the previous question. If they are for the minimum wage, they will vote against the previous question. It is a very easy vote. And, by defeating the previous question, we amend the rule. The rule then passes. We have passed the appropriation bill. We send it to the President. The Government keeps on running. And soon thereafter, because of this amendment, we will be voting on a minimum wage. That is what we should be doing. What is wrong with the Speaker?

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. LEVIN].

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I say to the gentleman from Colorado, we are going to pass the rule, we are going to pass the bill. It reduces spending, but in a way that does not hurt children and their education, does not hurt the environment, does not hurt citizens who want security in their neighborhoods, because it does not adopt the cuts that you voted for.

□ 1215

We want to expand this and have a vote on the minimum wage. We will make an agreement. If the Speaker says we will have a vote, we will not oppose the previous question. But if he says we will not have one, do not say go through committee.

I want to read something from November 8, 1989. This is a statement by Mr. DOLE on the floor: ''We had a White House meeting this morning, and the President asked about minimum wage and the progress it was making. I said we hoped to have it passed as early as noon or 1:00.'' That was Mr. DOLE in 1989. In 1996, Mr. DOLE has an option: either continue to cater to the radical right of the Republican Party or do what was done in 1989.

The minimum wage today is back where it was in 1989. We need to move ahead. You are standing there trying to divert attention. We are going to vote for the rule and the bill, but we should also bring up the minimum wage. It is of importance to the working families of this country.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from California [Ms. WATERS].

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this rule. Once again, this rule gives a clear demonstration of the priorities of NEWT GINGRICH and the Republican leadership. NEWT GINGRICH and the Republican leadership are stopping the minimum wage legislation from coming to the floor of this House.

Mr. Speaker and Members, the gentleman from Colorado keeps asking why did the Democrats not do this in the past, why did the President not say he supported it in the past. It does not matter. It should be done now. Then is then and now is now. It is time for us to step up to the plate for the workers of this country.

Besides, I think the gentleman from Colorado is off the point. Why will NEWT GINGRICH not come to this floor and tell the American people why he is standing in the way of a debate that would give a simple 90 cents per hour increase to those who make the least amount of money in this country? It is important for the American people to understand.

This is simply about whether or not we recognize that American workers are hurting, whether or not we recognize that CEO's and others are getting richer and richer while the least of these is getting worse and worse in this country. It is not about what was not done yesterday. It was not about the

fact that people were afraid of the business community months ago. It is about whether or not, given he has the power, NEWT GINGRICH has the power to bring it to the floor, whether or not he is going to do it on behalf of the workers.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, I would be interested if the gentlewoman from California is out there telling the working poor that it does not matter, ''It does not matter that we did not try and raise your minimum wage while we were in office. It does not matter that when we were in the majority we did not try and raise the minimum wage.''

The fact is it does matter. The fact is, if you want to help the working poor of this country, do something about the taxes.

The other issue that is very important here, as the gentlewoman from California—and I will yield to the gentleman in just a minute—as the gentlewoman from California comes down here and just blasts the rule, where were you at the Rules Committee meeting last night? Not one Democrat voted against it. We had a very healthy discussion about the importance of this rule so that we can get a budget to the President by midnight tonight. I think we can do it.

One of the former speakers up here talked about how much this budget bill that we are ready to send to the President has some positive things from his point of view. I agree with him, it does have some positive things, but the positive thing to me is it cuts spending by $23 billion.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 15 seconds to the gentleman from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS].

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is right. The minimum wage should have been raised 2 years ago, and I had a bill in to raise it to $5.50 an hour. But the fact that it was not raised then makes it more imperative that we raise it now because the purchasing power of low-wage workers has declined even more. So let us move forward today and pass a minimum wage.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. LINDER], my fellow colleague on the Committee on Rules.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I have been watching this debate on my television and it has degenerated for high comedy to farce.

The gentleman from Texas has decided that Americans deserve a raise and, by golly, we are going to give it to them, and that is precisely the difference between the two sides. Democrats think that politicians can determine what a person's work is worth and they will give them the raises, and we believe the marketplace works.

The gentleman from Michigan says that the minimum wage today is right where it was in 1989. Is that not interesting, when the other gentleman from Michigan, the minority whip, said that it is a 40-year low? One of them is not telling us the truth.

The fact of the matter is that this is not policy, this is politics, and it is crass politics. It is mean politics. It is using people who are right now about 3 percent of 117 million workers as pawns in a political battle to make political points.

Two years ago they could have raised the minimum wage. They did not even mention it. Robert Samuelson, in an article, points out the fact that the minimum wage is less about social policy than politics.

If you doubt that, ponder some facts gathered by New York Times reporter David Rosenbaum. With computers and other documents, he searched references made by President Clinton. In the 2 years when he controlled the House and the Senate and the White House in 1993 and 1994, guess how many times President Clinton talked about the minimum wage? You got it, zero. Zero.

This year, with Republicans in control, between the first of the year and March 11 he talked about it 47 times. The Time article by Michael Kramer—I said this earlier this morning—President Clinton said, ''It is the wrong way to raise incomes of low-wage earners.''

In a Wall Street Journal article, April 12, 1996: ''Remember when Bill Clinton claimed he was a new Democrat precisely because he did not favor a higher minimum wage? That was 1992, the last time he was trying to give moderates a reason to entrust their vote with him.''

The fact of the matter is, most of America has gotten used to this President having both sides of the issue and not knowing where he stands. They will see through this, too.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Montana [Mr. WILLIAMS].

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, during the years I have been in Congress, in fact for 50 years, without exception the majority of Republicans in the House of Representatives have been opposed to the minimum wage. Even back when economists said it did work, Republicans were opposed to it for half a century.

Now they have ridden themselves into a box canyon. Because the great majority of the American people want to raise the minimum wage in order to help the working poor, Republicans can no longer be caught being against the working poor, so they have to make a choice.

They have chosen. They have chosen to come down on the side of their friends in business and against the taxpayers. How? By freezing the minimum wage for their pals in corporations and then turning to the taxpayers and saying, ''Give the working poor more money for every kid they have.'' So here is the working poor out of a Dickens novel coming annually to the Congress saying, ''Please, may I have more? Please, Mr. Speaker, I have had another child, may I have more?''

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS].

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans are attacking the lowest wage earners in America, the people at the very bottom, on two fronts. First, they deny them an opportunity for an increase in the minimum wage; an in this legislation, which this rule concerns, they are attacking people and preventing them from getting an education by stealth assassination of a concept called Opportunity to Learn. They have usurped the role of the authorizing committee and they have ruled out Opportunity to Learn standards in this legislation.

Opportunity to Learn means that the Federal Government will collect information, it is all voluntary, collect information about what our school systems are doing to guarantee that children have an opportunity to learn. How are they providing decent books, decent buildings, decent science labs, qualified teachers who can teach science? How are they doing this? This is strictly voluntary.

Nevertheless, after 6 months of debate, the authorizing committee decided to do this, and now in a few meetings the conference report tells us that Opportunity to Learn standards are stricken. That is against the rules, it is illegal, but it will prevail because they have the votes.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON].

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans make us talk about an issue that they say is irrelevant because they refuse to allow a full discussion about the minimum wage. Therefore, we must take this opportunity to talk about the minimum wage.

It is relevant. It is relevant to millions of Americans, their families, their mothers, who depend on the lowest of wages, and it should be relevant to you if you care about the American taxpayer.

Why should it be irrelevant? Why should we be put in such a position to beg for those who need to be concerned? You have refused to understand what it means to not have food, what it means to not have shelter, what it means not to have the basic resources to take care of your family, and yet on the other side you talk about family values. You talk about expediency. How can you not reconcile the indifference that you are showing toward the very people you say you care about?

It is relevant. It is relevant, I would say, Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the majority leader has said before.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS].

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, the major crisis facing our country is that more and more we are becoming a low-wage society. During the last 20 years, the real wages of American workers have declined by 16 percent, and more tragically for our young workers, the new jobs that they are getting are paying even lower wages than was the case 15 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, what is also grossly unfair is that while the vast majority of the working people become poorer, the people on top become richer, and we now have by far the most unequal distribution of wealth and income in the industrialized world. If people work 40 hours a week, they should not live in poverty. A $4.25 minimum wage is a disgrace.

Let us have the courage to do the decent thing, the right thing. Let us raise the minimum wage now. Bring that legislation to the floor.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I think it is very important. It amazes me how boldly some of the speakers we hear on that side of the aisle are talking about the working poor. Where were those kind of comments when they raised the taxes on all of the working people, not just the poor working people but the middle class and the upper, all of them?

Folks are going to be out there and are going to be paying. I do not know if any of you have been to the gas station lately, but the gas prices have really gone up. You can lay the credit of the additional taxes of 4 cents right at your feet. Most of the people that have spoken in opposition to me today voted to raise those taxes.

If you want to help the working poor of this country, if you want to help the working people of this country, quit raising taxes. Taxes are not the answer. Help us pass this rule so that we can reduce spending.

The President is ready to sign it. He is ready to reduce the spending by $23 billion. It has taken a lot of effort on our side to get that kind of compromise put together from the President. Join us. You want to help the working people, help us cut spending in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York [Mr. ENGEL].

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the last time I argued to raise the minimum wage on the House floor I was accused by the majority whip as being hypocritical. I would say that the only people being hypocritical here are the Republican leadership. They talk about family values, they claim to support America's workers, yet their policies are just the opposite.

The bottom line, my colleagues, is that we want a vote. Let us say it again. We want a vote, up or down, on the minimum wage. The Republican leadership is afraid to give us a vote because they know if there was a vote on the House Floor, the minimum wage would go up. It would pass. They do not want to do it. That is Republican democracy for you. Seventy-one percent of Republicans support increasing the minimum wage, and 84 percent of all Americans support increasing the minimum wage.

□ 1130

But yet the tyranny here of leadership will not even allow us a vote on the floor. Today's Congress Daily says House Speaker GINGRICH, who last week conceded he would allow for a vote on the minimum wage in some form, was pressured by other members of the leadership to rule out a vote. Who does the Speaker represent, the American people or the leaders?

All we are saying is that we want a vote. Again, Speaker GINGRICH conceded last week he would allow a vote. This week, he was pressured ''by other members of the Republican leadership to rule out a vote, at least for the foreseeable future.''

What are you afraid of, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle? Let the American people have their way. Let the Congress have their way. All we are saying is give us a vote up or down. You are blocking a vote. You cannot claim to want to help America's workers by not allowing an increase in the minimum wage. you cannot claim family values by not allowing an increase in the minimum wage. Why should someone get off welfare, as you say you want people to do, when they do get off welfare and make a minimum wage they are getting paid less than if they were on welfare?

All we are saying is people want to work, and they are at the very bottom of the economic spectrum, these are people that want to work. They do not want to collect a check. They want to work.

Pay them a decent wage. That is the American way. Wages are at a 40-year low. It is a disgrace. We demand a vote.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to hear kind of a show-and-tell going on here. Obviously it is an election year. The issue that is continually I think a diversionary issue, has been once again brought up by the gentleman from New York.

I think it would be interesting to see where the gentleman from New York ranks on the taxpayer ratings. I think it would be interesting to see if the gentleman from New York had a bill he sponsored to raise the minimum wage when he was in the majority. I would conclude he probably did not.

I think the important issue here, the key issue here, Mr. Speaker, is we can finally help the working poor and every working person in this country by passing this rule and passing a budget that reduces spending by $23 billion.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to my friend, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON].

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado for yielding me the time.

On the subject of the minimum wage, which of course we are talking about here, cutting spending, so the Democrats will do anything to get off a spending cut and start talking about something else. Let us talk about the minimum wage.

I know the folks over there are simply economically ignorant. I do not believe they are malicious, but you know, who do you think is going to get jobs when you eliminate the minimum wage? Or when you increase it? It is going to be good-bye teenage employment for the summer. Nobody is going to be able to get jobs. I would challenge the comrades over on the other side of the aisle, go talk to Burger King, go talk to McDonald's, go talk to any small business, go talk to a pet shop or go talk to a construction company. Ask them how many jobs they will have to eliminate when you increase the minimum wage?

If you want to show compassion, do not show compassion with 90 cents more an hour. Show compassion with a $500 per child tax credit which you fought. Show compassion to repeal the 4 cents per gallon gas tax which the President increased.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY] is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I urge a ''no'' vote on the previous question. If the previous question is defeated I shall offer an amendment to the rule which would make in order a new section in the rule. This provision would direct the Committee on Rules to report a resolution immediately that would provide for consideration of a bill to incrementally increase the minimum wage from its current $4.25 an hour to $5.15 an hour beginning on July 4, 1997. This provides for a separate vote on minimum wage. It in no way slows down the continuing resolution. The Speaker and the majority leader yesterday announced that there would be no vote on the minimum wage before the election. Let me make it clear to my colleagues, both Democrats and Republicans, defeating the previous question will allow the House to vote on the minimum wage increase. This is what 80 percent of Americans want us to do. So let's do it.

I include the text of this amendment for the RECORD at this point in the debate.

Vote ''no'' on the previous question.

At the end of the resolution add the following new section:

''Sec. . The House of Representatives directs the Committee on Rules to report immediately a resolution providing for the consideration of a measure to increase the minimum wage to not less than $4.70 an hour during the year beginning July 4, 1996, and not less than $5.15 an hour after July 3, 1997.''

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 1¾ minutes.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the gentleman from Massachusetts, since he will have time to prepare this amendment that he wants to put on, he would also include within that amendment, since the amendment you will be preparing is nongermane, we might as well hit the whole topic, put in a clause that reduces the gas tax by 4 cents a gallon. You did put that on every working person in America. Put in the child tax credit so we can reduce the taxes, so people do not have to work 2 hours and 45 minutes to pay their taxes every day.

The important issue here is Democrats have attempted, some, not all, have attempted to divert from the issue at hand. The issue at hand is we have a budget that is going to work, that will cut spending by the Federal Government by $23 billion. That is the largest and most significant reduction since the end of World War II.

We ought to all be happy today. We ought to be celebrating. We are going to make progress. So I would urge you support the rule.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 220, nays 200, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 133]

YEAS—220

Allard
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baker (CA)
Baker (LA)
Ballenger
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Bereuter
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bliley
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Brewster
Brownback
Bryant (TN)
Bunn
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Chrysler
Clinger
Coble
Collins (GA)
Combest
Cooley
Cox
Crane
Crapo
Cremeans
Cubin
Cunningham
Davis
Deal
DeLay
Dickey
Doolittle
Dornan
Dreier
Dunn
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Everett
Fawell
Fields (TX)
Flanagan
Foley
Fowler
Fox
Franks (CT)
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Funderburk
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goodlatte
Goodling
Goss
Graham
Greene (UT)
Greenwood
Gunderson
Gutknecht
Hall (TX)
Hancock
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Heineman
Herger
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hoke
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kasich
Kelly
Kim
King
Kingston
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Laughlin
Lazio
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Lightfoot
Linder
Livingston
LoBiondo
Longley
Lucas
Manzullo
Martinez
Martini
McCollum
McCrery
McInnis
McKeon
Metcalf
Meyers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Molinari
Montgomery
Moorhead
Morella
Myers
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Norwood
Nussle
Oxley
Packard
Parker
Paxon
Petri
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Pryce
Quillen
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Riggs
Roberts
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roth
Roukema
Royce
Salmon
Sanford
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer
Schiff
Seastrand
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Shuster
Skeen
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Stearns
Stockman
Stump
Talent
Tate
Tauzin
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Upton
Vucanovich
Walker
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Zeliff
Zimmer

NAYS—200

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Andrews
Baldacci
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Becerra
Beilenson
Bentsen
Berman
Bevill
Bishop
Blute
Boehlert
Bonior
Borski
Boucher
Browder
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Bryant (TX)
Cardin
Chapman
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Coburn
Coleman
Collins (IL)
Collins (MI)
Condit
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cramer
Cummings
Danner
de la Garza
DeFazio
DeLauro
Dellums
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Duncan
Durbin
Edwards
Engel
Ensign
Eshoo
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Fazio
Fields (LA)
Filner
Flake
Foglietta
Forbes
Frank (MA)
Frisa
Frost
Furse
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Geren
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green (TX)
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hamilton
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hefner
Hilliard
Hinchey
Holden
Hoyer
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jacobs
Jefferson
Johnson (SD)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnston
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Kleczka
Klink
LaFalce
Lantos
Leach
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lincoln
Lipinski
Lofgren
Lowey
Luther
Maloney
Manton
Markey
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy
McDermott
McHale
McHugh
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Moran
Murtha
Nadler
Neal
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Orton
Owens
Pallone
Pastor
Payne (NJ)
Payne (VA)
Pelosi
Peterson (FL)
Pickett
Pomeroy
Poshard
Quinn
Rahall
Reed
Richardson
Rivers
Roemer
Rose
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanders
Sawyer
Schumer
Scott
Serrano
Sisisky
Skaggs
Skelton
Slaughter
Spratt
Stark
Stenholm
Stokes
Studds
Stupak
Tanner
Taylor (MS)
Tejeda
Thompson
Thornton
Thurman
Torkildsen
Torres
Torricelli
Towns
Traficant
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Volkmer
Walsh
Ward
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Williams
Wise
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates

NOT VOTING—13

Baesler
Ewing
Ford
Gibbons
Hayes
Hunter
McDade
McIntosh
Peterson (MN)
Rangel
Schroeder
Watts (OK)
Wilson

□ 1255

Messrs. DOYLE, FORBES, FRISA, TORKILDSEN, and MCHUGH changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. WATT of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 133, I was unavoidably detained with constituents. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 286, noes 135, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 134]

AYES—286

Allard
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baker (CA)
Baker (LA)
Baldacci
Ballenger
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Beilenson
Bentsen
Bereuter
Bevill
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blute
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Brewster
Browder
Brown (CA)
Brownback
Bryant (TN)
Bunn
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cardin
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Chrysler
Clement
Clinger
Coble
Collins (GA)
Combest
Condit
Cooley
Cox
Cramer
Crane
Crapo
Cremeans
Cubin
Cunningham
Danner
Davis
Deal
DeLay
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Dicks
Doolittle
Dornan
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Everett
Fattah
Fawell
Fields (LA)
Fields (TX)
Flanagan

Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fowler
Fox
Franks (CT)
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Frisa
Funderburk
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Geren
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goodlatte
Goodling
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Green (TX)
Greene (UT)
Greenwood
Gunderson
Gutknecht
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hamilton
Hancock
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Hefner
Heineman
Herger
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hoke
Holden
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jacobs
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kennedy (MA)
Kim
King
Kingston
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Laughlin
Lazio
Leach
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Lightfoot
Lincoln
Linder
Livingston
LoBiondo
Longley
Lucas
Luther
Manzullo
Martinez
Martini
McCarthy
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McHale
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
Metcalf
Meyers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Minge
Moakley
Molinari
Mollohan
Montgomery
Moorhead
Moran
Morella
Murtha
Myers
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Norwood
Nussle
Ortiz
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Parker
Paxon
Payne (VA)
Petri
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Pryce
Quillen
Quinn
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Riggs
Rivers
Roberts
Roemer
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Rose
Roth
Roukema
Royce
Salmon
Sanford
Sawyer
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer
Schiff
Seastrand
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Shuster
Sisisky
Skeen
Skelton
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Solomon
Spence
Stearns
Stockman
Studds
Stump
Talent
Tanner
Tate
Tauzin
Taylor (NC)
Tejeda
Thomas
Thornberry
Thornton
Tiahrt
Torkildsen
Traficant
Upton
Vucanovich
Walker
Walsh
Wamp
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Williams
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Zeliff
Zimmer

NOES—135

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Andrews
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Becerra
Berman
Bishop
Bonior
Borski
Boucher
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Bryant (TX)
Chapman
Clay
Clayton
Clyburn
Coburn
Coleman
Collins (IL)
Collins (MI)
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cummings
de la Garza
DeFazio
DeLauro
Dellums
Deutsch
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Durbin
Edwards
Engel
Ensign
Eshoo
Evans
Farr
Fazio
Filner
Flake
Foglietta
Frank (MA)
Furse
Gejdenson
Gonzalez
Gutierrez
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hoyer
Jefferson
Johnson (SD)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnston
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Kleczka
Klink
LaFalce
Lantos
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lofgren
Lowey
Maloney
Manton
Markey
Mascara
Matsui
McDermott
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Mink
Nadler
Neal
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Orton
Owens
Pastor
Payne (NJ)
Pelosi
Peterson (FL)
Pickett
Pomeroy
Poshard
Rahall
Reed
Richardson
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanders
Schumer
Scott
Serrano
Skaggs
Slaughter
Souder
Spratt
Stark
Stenholm
Stokes
Stupak
Taylor (MS)
Thompson
Thurman
Torres
Torricelli
Towns
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Volkmer
Ward
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Wise
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates

NOT VOTING—12

Baesler
Dunn
Ewing
Frost
Gephardt
Gibbons
Hayes
Hunter
Peterson (MN)
Rangel
Schroeder
Wilson

□ 1312

Mr. RICHARDSON changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, yesterday on rollcall vote 131, House passage of the National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act, H.R. 1675, I inadvertently voted ''yea.'' I had intended to cast a ''nay'' vote on the legislation.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2535

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 2535.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1202

Mr. PETERSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1202.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces that we will now allow Members to address the House for 5 minutes each without prejudice to the resumption of business.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

HONORING CINDY JENSEN OF ROCKFORD, IL

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

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, so much has been written, and so many discussions have taken place about how quickly life seems to pass us by in these modern times. We are always trying to make time for the parts of our lives we hold most precious: our families, our children, our spouses.

It is never until we are faced with our own mortality that we stop to realize the sweetest parts of our lives, a nectar that sustains us and refreshes our thirst to be connected to the human race. Life has meaning. All of our lives have meaning. We are all born and nurtured and educated for a purpose. We tend to forget that. We tend to forget that one so important lesson.

I have been reminded of this lesson by witnessing the journey of a constituent from Rockford in the 16th District of Illinois, Cindy Jensen, who for years has battled a liver disease and is now recovering from her third liver transplant in the last 4 months. She has not surrendered life during this difficult time. She has remained positive and has taken each day at a time.

Cindy has demonstrated the type of courage and faith that few of us ever experience. She and her family have allowed the people of the city of Rockford to share in her journey, not out of self-interest but to engage us in discussion of a much greater human cause—the importance of organ donation. There is no greater demonstration of the importance of life than when someone is faced with a life-threatening illness and still maintains the courage of her conviction that there is a greater good.

Cindy Jensen's purpose in life has become a mission of education. She has reminded us that we all share life.

In yesterday's Rockford Register Star, Judy Emerson distilled the soul of Cindy Jensen. I would like to share some of that essence with you. Keep in mind that these quotes came from Cindy just a week after her third liver transplant.

''There's been a good reason for all of this,'' Jensen said Monday.

> I know that when I hear people say they never considered being a donor and now they will be. I hear people say they stopped praying and now, they pray all the time. Other people have said, ''You've given me my faith back.''

In spite of everything—or, maybe, because of it—her own faith remains intact.

''This liver is going to work beautifully,'' she said firmly on Monday. ''God has brought me too far for it to be any other way.''

Mr. Speaker, I include at this point in the RECORD the complete column by Judy Emerson from the April 24, 1996, Rockford Register Star: