To his wife, Marianne, to his children, to his family, his community, and his department and his brethren in law enforcement, our most heartfelt sympathies are offered. In his sacrifice, he was able to leave earth and join hands with God. And I know that his watchful, caring eyes will continue to watch over and protect the family, department, and community that he loved so much.

Mr. Speaker, may God bless Ashtabula Patrolman William D. Glover, Jr., and may God rest his soul.

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA IS TURNING AROUND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this evening with some good news, and let me report it from a more objective observer. The Washington Times, in an editorial, said the following: The District is looking good. There is a $186 million surplus from fiscal 1997. People are buying homes in the District and businesses are expanding and setting up shop.

I know that everyone on both sides of the aisle greets this good news about our Nation's Capital in the same spirit I do. Yes, a surplus. The District is turning around. It has balanced its budget, more than balanced it now 2 years ahead of the congressionally mandated year. How has this been done? Through prudent budgeting, Mr. Speaker, through fiscal discipline, and through preserving the fruits of an excellent economy rather than spending that money.

The highlights are quite extraordinary, and I am sure to many Members, unexpected. Vendors are now being paid ahead of time rather than behind time. We have, Mr. Speaker, a clean opinion from an outside independent auditor, which means an unqualified opinion looking at the books and records of the District of Columbia, that the District is revitalizing itself financially.

We have a general fund surplus of almost $186 million. This is a city that was close to bankruptcy just a few years ago. And the District is reaping increased revenue from taxes, not because it has raised taxes, but because improved operations have allowed the city to collect taxes from those who should have been paying taxes all along.

Mr. Speaker, the District's problems have not been entirely self-inflicted, but the city's repair must be completely self-generated. I think that we now have evidence that that self-generation is occurring, and it is occurring for a combination of reasons. It is occurring because this Congress set up a Control Board. It is occurring because the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS), chair of the Subcommittee on the District of Columbia, and I, the ranking member, have worked collaboratively and in a bipartisan fashion on the District ever since the Control Board was set up 2 years ago.

It is occurring because of the work of the Control Board, and yes, Mr. Speaker, it is occurring because of the work of the mayor and the members of the city council. They deserve our congratulations, even as they have gotten the criticism of this body when they have deserved it. And I must say, sometimes even when they have not.

Mr. Speaker, the District's Government is now multilayered. The Congress seeks an efficient government from the District, but the fact is that the Congress has imposed a highly inefficient structure to do the job. The District needs better collaboration among its many layers until the Control Board sets and Congress will be hearing from me about streamlining its oversight as it requires the District to streamline its operations.

Mr. Speaker, I began with editorial comment praising the District from the Washington Times. The Washington Post said as much when this audit was reported: The District is not enjoying a $185.9 million general fund surplus and a clean fiscal year 1997 annual audit by accident. It took hard work and a stiff spine to bring unchecked and irresponsible spending under control.

That is exactly what has happened. I have been as impatient as many Members to see this day. Now it has come in spades, not little by little, but with a buildup of improvements that is now showing itself in a way that I think none of us anticipated seeing in this fashion.

The District, knowing that this is no time to sit down, that there is much work to be done. The District has revved itself up to work now on its services and operations. It knows that those services and operations must improve and improve quickly. And that is not, Mr. Speaker, because of what this body wants, although that is part of it.

First and foremost, it is because the residents of the District of Columbia, among the highest taxpaying citizens of the United States, deserve no less. My congratulations to the Control Board, to the chief financial officer, to the mayor, and to the city council for a job that is beginning to be well done.

□ 1800

IS THERE A MEDIA BIAS? ASK BOB ZELNICK

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHAW). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, is there a liberal bias in the nation's media? Just ask a prominent member of that media.

Bob Zelnick had been a respected member of ABC's news division for 21 years. He was fired because he wanted to write a book on Vice President AL GORE. The head of ABC news had first granted him permission to write such a book, but then changed his mind when it became clear that Zelnick was not going to write a puff piece about Mr. GORE.

In my own experience, ABC News has a liberal bias. I recently traveled to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, to investigate whether the accusations of sweatshops and other labor abuses were true. At a reception hosted by the Governor of the CNMI, a member of my staff noticed that a film crew was spying on us from a clump of bushes. When the staff asked this film crew whom they represented, they would not identify themselves. Later, they admitted that they were from ABC News.

When someone is spying on you from a nearby bush, it's hard to believe that they will do a fair story. I tried to accommodate them in their story later on. For example, I made certain that they had a chance to follow me as I inspected various garment factories and workers housing units on the island of Saipan. But I have every expectation that the story will be unfair and unbalanced when it ultimately comes out next month.

Bob Zelnick's experience with ABC News just further goes to show the true bias at that news division. I urge my colleagues to read this illuminating piece that appeared in the Wall Street Journal today, entitled ''ABC: Anyone but Conservatives.''

ABC: ANYONE BUT CONSERVATIVES

By Bob Zelnick

Last week I was forced to leave my position as a correspondent for ABC News. What happened to me illustrates something of what is wrong with TV news today.

In December 1996, following a dinner conversation with my publisher, Alfred Regnery, I agreed to undertake a biography of Vice President Al Gore. Early the following month I phoned Richard C. Wald, the ABC News executive who tends to the business of editorial standards, to describe the project and secure his permission to proceed.

Mr. Wald asked if I intended to write a ''straightforward'' biography or one with a distinct point of view. I replied that except for opinions I might develop during my research, the book would be reasonably straightforward. Mr. Wald then inquired what I thought of Mr. Gore. I replied that I knew the vice president only slightly, but had a generally favorable impression of him, shaped by his pro-defense views in the Senate and his critical support for the 1991 Gulf War resolution. I added that my sense was that his environmental views might be a bit extreme.

'YOU HAVE MY PERMISSION'

Late in the conversation, Mr. Wald remarked: ''If you write a book about him, you probably can't cover him for us.'' I told him I thought that writing a book on the vice president would enhance my credentials to cover him. ''Now that I think of it, you may be right,'' said Mr. Wald. ''We'll have to see. In any event, you have my permission.''

I conducted scores of interviews. I hired a researcher who performed more than four months of full-time work. I traveled to Harvard, where Mr. Gore went to school, and to Tennessee. I came up with fascinating, previously unpublished material on both Mr. Gore and his father, also a former Tennessee senator, and mined a rich lode of background material on Tennessee politics. My sense was that the project would prove helpful not only to my own career as a television correspondent but also to ABC's coverage of the 2000 presidential campaign.