

eighth year of economic growth, the benefits of our strong economy have eluded too many Americans.

Instead of setting up a public relations event, however, I urge the President to take solid steps to expand the scope of our economic well-being and develop constructive legislation with Republicans.

□ 1030

One of the ideas we have as Republicans is to reduce taxes. Putting more money back into the pockets of taxpayers will spur investments and spending and generate, of course, more economic activity and ultimately help the poor.

Our plan to reduce taxes, at the same time protecting Social Security and preserving Medicare, is the best means I believe for bringing the benefits of economic growth to all Americans. After all, it is their money, our money, and we can spend it better for ourselves than the Government can.

DEATH OF CIVIL RIGHTS PIONEER JAMES L. FARMER

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

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Members of the Congressional Black Caucus to join the chorus of millions around the Nation and the world to express our heartfelt sorrow over the passing of civil rights pioneer James L. Farmer.

James Farmer was founder of the Congress of Racial Equality. He organized the famous Freedom Ride of the 1960s to challenge the Jim Crow laws of racial segregation in public transportation.

During his lifetime, Farmer was the recipient of numerous awards, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1998.

On a personal level, I experienced firsthand his inspiring leadership while a student of the South Carolina State University. As a member of CORE, I participated in the lunch counter sit-ins and other direct action activities organized by Mr. Farmer. These activities were the driving current for the student movement.

We in the CBC and others will honor his memory by always striving to emulate his shining example. I extend our deepest condolences and our thoughts and prayers to his two daughters, Tami Lynn and Abbey Lee, and the entire Farmer family.

REPUBLICANS WANT TO HELP BOTTOM 50 MOVE INTO TOP 50

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

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, the top 50 percent of income earners pay 96 percent of the Federal income taxes. The bottom 50 percent are carrying only 4 percent of the load.

My colleagues heard that right. The bottom 50 percent are paying almost no Federal income taxes at all, just 4 percent of the load.

Guess who President Clinton and the Democrats want to give a tax cut to? My colleagues guessed it: the 50 percent of taxpayers who are paying almost no taxes already.

"Aha," my liberal colleagues will say, "just as I have always suspected. The only people you Republicans care about are the top 50 percent."

Now, I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to listen closely. That kind of thinking perfectly misunderstands what Republicans are about. Republicans want to help the bottom 50 percent move into the top 50 percent.

In fact, most people do just that over the course of their lifetimes. They start out young and have entry-level jobs and incomes, and then they move up in education, experience, and in income.

Democrat rhetoric constantly, constantly seems to imply there are fixed categories, haves and have-nots. This is just not true.

PRESIDENT TAKES CREDIT FOR WHAT REPUBLICANS HAVE ACHIEVED

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, Republicans have had to get used to hearing the President take credit for what Republicans have achieved many times despite what the President himself desired.

Take welfare reform, for example. Republicans forced the President to sign welfare reform in 1996, something that he had refused to pass when the Democrats controlled both Houses of Congress. He signed welfare reform only after vetoing it twice and only then in an election year, with promises to undo it as soon as he got the chance. And then he took credit for it.

Now, the President is taking credit for the first budget surplus since the Mets won the pennant back in 1996 despite the fact that it was the Republicans who forced him to scrap his initial budget plans, which had huge deficits as far as the eye could see.

Ronald Reagan once said that you can accomplish a great deal if you do not worry about who takes credit for it.

So let us save Social Security, save Medicare, pay down the national debt, and give the American people substantial tax relief even if the President takes credit for it.

GAO REPORTS CONCERNING OPERATION OF LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION ARE VERY TROUBLING

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to comment on the recent GAO report on the Legal Services Corporation.

It turned out that audits conducted by the Legal Services Corporation's Inspector General during 1998 revealed gross overstatement of cases in all five of the grantees examined and 200,000 cases were invalidated from audits on those five grantees alone.

A subsequent GAO study on five more grantees was requested by several Members of Congress to determine the scope of this problem, and the results showed even more reason for concern.

Besides invalidating at least 75,000 more cases, the GAO discovered that two of the five grantees, Puerto Rico and Chicago, had destroyed their client case files. In fact, the destruction of these files in Puerto Rico interfered with the ability of the GAO to conduct their audit. In Illinois, the destruction of the case files is against legal requirements set by the Illinois Supreme Court.

The Legal Services Corporation itself claims to require their grantees to maintain their case files for at least 5 years, and that requirement is apparently violated.

These reports are indeed very troubling concerning the operation of the Legal Services Corporation.

NOMINATION OF RICHARD HOLBROOKE AS AMBASSADOR TO UNITED NATIONS IS BEING BLOCKED

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

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, the nomination of Richard Holbrooke to be ambassador of the United Nations is being blocked across the Capital because of this administration's failure to answer questions about the Linda Shenwick case.

Linda Shenwick is a loyal State Department employee who has offended the White House.

Her crime? She told the truth. She told the uncomfortable truth to the United States Congress, as she is required to do by law; and then she was punished for it. She told the truth about what the U.N.'s appalling budget practices are and about massive waste in the United Nations.

For that she has been declared "enemy number one" by high officials at the White House, all because she is a whistle-blower.