

THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN MAKING THE CASE FOR THE REPUBLICAN TAX RELIEF BILL FOR MONTHS

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, a few thoughts on the President and our tax relief bill. If we listen to what the President has been saying, we will see that he has actually been making the case for this tax relief bill for months. The President says he supports seniors. So do we. That is why the Republican tax relief plan walls off and locks away Social Security trust fund monies for America's seniors.

The President says he supports America's farmers and ranchers. So do we. That is why the Republican tax relief bill eliminates the death tax for farmers and for small businesses so that they can pass the family farm or business on to the next generation.

The President says he supports working families. So do we. That is why the Republican tax relief plan reduces the marriage penalty tax.

The President says he is for reducing the Federal debt. So are we. That is why the tax relief bill pays down \$2.2 trillion of the public debt. It also encourages savings and investments with other targeted tax cuts.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the President to listen to his own rhetoric, to join the cause in reducing the tax burden, the national debt, on all working Americans. Next year is an election year. Mr. President, this is the year for your opportunity to do something with bipartisan support.

THE BIPARTISAN CAMPAIGN REFORM ACT

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

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, today we will be debating a piece of legislation that could more than any other single act put an end to the troubling cynicism of the American electorate, the Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Act. In our Nation, the birthplace of modern democracy, our citizens are less likely to vote than any other country in the rest of the industrialized world. While there are other factors that influence this disturbing trend, the perception that our elections are bought and sold rank at the top.

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The numbers are staggering. In 1998, over \$781 million was contributed to us, we, congressional candidates. In the last presidential election, the Clinton and Dole campaigns spent a combined \$232 million. What has this got to do with free speech?

The time has come to restore some sanity to our electoral process. The

leadership of the House is again trying to submarine the Shays-Meehan bill by making several poison pill amendments in order. That is why we must take the courageous decision today, Mr. Speaker, and pass the Shays-Meehan bill.

REAL REFORM COMES FROM OBEYING EXISTING LAW

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, to hear my colleagues on the left talk about it in concert with other folks at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, it is very interesting to hear all of these calls for campaign finance reform, because, in fact, mindful of these pleas at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue I would equate them, Mr. Speaker, with Bonnie and Clyde in the midst of their crime spree calling a press conference to call for tougher penalties on bank robbery.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, real reform first comes by obeying existing law. That is the problem this administration has never come to grips with in a variety of different areas. It would be good to obey existing laws. That is why they are already on the books.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the President enjoyed his round of golf today in the South Pacific. He came here in January and gave a State of the Union message and the next day went to Buffalo, New York and told the American people they could not be trusted with their money, and yet last week, he said he would trust the word of Puerto Rican terrorists and grant them clemency. How curious, Mr. Speaker, when the President of the United States will not trust the American people with their own money and yet trust the word of terrorists.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM REQUIRES TRUST OF THE PEOPLE IN GOVERNMENT

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

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, political consultants say campaign finance reform, in their words, does not poll. The opponents of campaign finance reform legislation think that if they prevent or water down this legislation, no one will notice. There will be no price to pay.

There will be a price to pay, Mr. Speaker. We face a crisis of trust in our Government.

America cannot deal successfully with the tough problems that face this legislature, taxes, Social Security, Medicare, unless we have the trust of the people.

The Shays-Meehan legislation on campaign finance reform is a very good and excellent first step in restoring trust in government.

ATTORNEY GENERAL JANET RENO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR WACO

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, in 1993, the tragedy in Waco, Texas left many unanswered questions for Congress and the American public. One question remains, of course. What happened? Where does the responsibility lie?

In 1993, in April, Attorney General Janet Reno said, quote, "The buck stops with me," end quote. She took responsibility then for the Waco tragedy, but of course, now, it is shifting blame. Where is her responsibility for the information supplied to Congress and the American people?

It was reported in the Washington Times that the Justice Department omitted in its December 1993 report to Congress the one key page of information quote, "documenting the use of 40 millimeter tear gas project tiles at Waco," end quote. Now, it appears the Justice Department is saying they gave this information 2 years later, in 1995.

This latest revelation and other ones that will probably follow are just an indication that the Justice Department is not handling this situation well. There is incompetency in her department, and much of the information provided is not accurate. So I urge my colleagues to look at this question of responsibility and help us to get to the bottom of this matter.

Attorney General Reno should take full responsibility and not try to shift blame.

VOTE FOR SHAYS-MEEHAN AND DEFEAT POISON PILL AMENDMENTS

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

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, we have an opportunity today to take an important step towards returning control of this Congress to the people and away from the special interests that have a disproportionate influence in Congress. This will be the Shays-Meehan bill that we will debate later today that will close two of the most gaping loopholes in our campaign finance system: soft money and sham issue ads.

Let us be clear about what opposition we face today. The leadership of this House has arranged for amendments to be offered that are very innocuous, but will have the effect of depriving the