

the Pine Bluff Commercial on April 27. Two significant points were made.

First, it stated:

In many ways it seems that the only people who benefit from guaranteed minimum wage are those high school dropouts with lost ambition. We should not promote a permanent minimum wage mentality in anyone by convincing them that they can only expect an increase in wages if the government gives it to them. On the contrary, we should encourage them to look to their willingness to prepare themselves and use their ambition as their ticket to higher prices.

On another subject Mr. Collins talks about good educational programs like Trio being sooner or later: "Bush-wacked and slowly ground into government pork."

Without his knowing it, the opportunities afforded by Trio to students who want to try are being threatened by a new proposed program called Gear Up. The threatened dilution of Trio has been prophesied in this article. Mr. Collins' wisdom on each of these issues is remarkable.

[From the Pine Bluff Commercial, Apr. 27, 1999]

MINIMUM WAGE STIFLES GROWTH, CREATIVE SPIRIT

(By Leo Collins)

As long as I write an opinion column or do radio commentaries, which I have done 30 years or more, I will from time to time voice an opinion against those who buy into the minimum wage concept.

And I will also get branded from time to time as one of those black conservatives who doesn't want to see all Americans with enough financial resources to sit around the dinner table and feast on pheasant washed down with vintage wine.

Well, those who identify me as a black liberal half of the time are about right. Those who identify me as a black conservative the other half of the time are probably right also.

Some of our well-meant social programs are not much more than social crutches that are both addictive and non-productive and often do nothing more than provide feather bedding posh jobs for those charged with overseeing these types of programs.

But there are many government programs that do tons of good: Headstart, TRIO Programs (Talent Search, Student Support Service and Upward Bound) all come to mind. They help provide all kinds of educational supplements for students who are at a disadvantage or who are educationally abandoned.

We don't want to throw all social programs out the back door. Most government programs start off with all the good intent in the world, but along their voyage down the road of good intentions, these programs get bushwhacked, are slowly ground into government pork and get branded often as government waste.

There are times when our elected officials make political hash out of well-meaning social programs because they seem directed toward a certain racial or ethnic group. So when we evaluate the outcome of these types of programs, they will not have had a national impact on America; but they will have helped a large segment of the populace in certain areas of the country.

Over the years social programs that were designed to help the poor have always been

branded as pork. But Pentagon waste and aid to huge corporations have always been labeled as programs aiding America, or it's done under the guise of keeping America strong.

The concept of minimum wage has always sounded like a good idea. No American, according to those who advocate it, should earn less than a set wage.

All of this sounds good, but is it good? Not to me! It stifles individual growth, it dampens the creative spirit and it gives the illusion that your lifelong economic dreams have been fulfilled even though you can never quite figure out why you never seem to take enough pay home to make a down payment on a new car. In many ways it seems that the only people who benefit from guaranteed minimum wage are those high school dropouts with lost ambition.

In a small business the owners may not earn enough to pay minimum wage, but this is an ideal climate for young people to learn something about what it requires to make it in an economy based upon free enterprise. That is more important than earning minimum wage.

No, I don't believe in child labor and slave wages, but I do believe in organized labor, providing that labor leaders require the membership to deliver high quality performance after management concedes to their demands. Wage wise indeed, there ought to be some kind of collective bargaining, but it should be between workers and management, not necessarily between government and management.

The government only needs to raise its powerful fist when management is obviously abusing labor by not providing safe working places, health insurance, etc. It just seems to me that wages ought to coincide with net profits, but there should be no guaranteed minimum or maximum wage. Too frequently, I must admit that management does not pay labor its fair share.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

#### DECLARING CUSTOMS AND INS INSPECTORS LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

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

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work of the officers and inspectors of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service and the U.S. Customs Service and other Federal agents and various agencies and ask that they be accorded the full Federal law enforcement status, as outlined in legislation I recently introduced.

This bill will finally grant the same status to the U.S. INS and Customs inspectors as to all other Federal law enforcement officers and fire fighters. It is in the public's interest to end the unfair, unsafe, and expensive practice of excluding these inspectors from the law enforcement category.

Because of the current lopsided law, INS and Customs lose vigorous, trained professionals to other law enforcement agencies. The agencies also lose millions of dollars, as they have to train other inspectors to take the place of those who have just departed.

Customs and Immigration inspectors are law enforcement officers. They are law enforcement officers. They carry firearms and are the country's first line of defense against terrorism and smuggling of drugs at our borders.

I represent the City of San Diego at the border crossing between Mexico and the United States; and right there in my district, 125,000 people per day, 125,000 people per day cross through the point of entry. It is the busiest border crossing in the world. And inspectors there daily face felons. They disarm people who are carrying sawed-off shotguns, switch-blade knives, and handguns. They have been run over by cars and have had shoot-outs with drug smugglers.

Forty-three courageous U.S. Customs and Immigration and Naturalization Service inspectors have been killed in the line of duty. We owe it to their memory, and to the men and women who now serve in the same dangerous jobs that their predecessors died performing, to provide inspectors with the full law enforcement status.

The sad irony in this fight is that the inspectors who were killed in the line of duty eventually achieved law enforcement status when they died by having their names inscribed in the granite of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial here in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Speaker, I say this is too long to wait and way too high of a price to pay for law enforcement status for the Customs Service and Immigration and Naturalization Service inspectors. We have the opportunity to provide inspectors parity and recognition now, while they live and protect us from terrorists, drug dealers, and fugitives.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. Immigration and Customs inspectors daily put their lives on the line. It is time that we value those lives. I urge support of H.R. 1228, legislation to correct the unequal treatment of these Federal law enforcement officers.

#### SANCTIONS REFORM

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, this Chamber has been dominated with discussion over the course of this week dealing with the limitations and the costs of the use of force in trying to secure international peace. Yet, there is another very critical area.

As we attempt to work our will on issues around the globe, we are finding

it more and more difficult to gain leverage with other countries as we are dealing with issues that deal with economic sanctions. Our efforts are made all the more difficult by signals coming from inside this Chamber encouraging America to retreat from its role as the world's only remaining superpower.

It is time for us to take a step back and reshape our thinking about how we can apply sanctions that are more in tune with what actually happens in the world. Well-intentioned sanctions are becoming less and less effective if we do it on an unilateral basis. Currently, it is estimated that half the world's population is subject to some sort of sanction on the part of the United States. Yet it is estimated that only one-fifth of the programs that we have applied previously in the last 20 years achieved their intended goals.

The Institute for Economic Analysis estimated that unilateral sanctions have a very real cost for Americans and our businesses, perhaps as much as \$20 billion per year in lost opportunities, which translates into a potential job loss of 200,000 American jobs. And those that are in the international arena turn out to be amongst the highest paying American jobs.

We see persuasive evidence that unilateral sanctions simply do not work. The threat of sanctions not only failed to deter what happened in India or Pakistan regarding nuclear testing, but it would have cost people in the region that I represent in the Pacific Northwest a huge wheat sale if Congress had not acted quickly to grant a waiver authority to the President so he would not have to apply the sanction. Well, it rescued a potential loss of business but it made us look foolish, having this sanction out here and then not applying it when the chips were down.

The example of Cuba is perhaps one of the most abject failure, where we have imposed sanctions basically alone in the world. Yet Castro continues to thrive after 40 years and, in fact, perhaps has been even more entrenched by our opposition to his regime.

The simple fact is, if we are going to initiate sanctions, we need to have better information to make better-informed decisions. We need to look in a comprehensive way about what we are trying to achieve. When will we decide whether or not the sanction is effective, and how will we determine whether or not we have met that objective?

I personally am embarrassed in conversations that I have had with people, parliamentarians from other more developed countries who have very thoughtful approaches that allow them to determine when they are going to be involved, how they are going to be successful, and when they conclude that effort.

I was pleased to join former Representative Lee Hamilton and Senator LUGAR, both of Indiana, last session

when they introduced comprehensive reform of American sanctions policy. I am pleased that this legislation has been reintroduced in this session.

I would strongly urge my colleagues to look at comprehensive sanction reform as an area for them to be involved. It is an area that we ought to know what we are doing. It will make a big difference for American business, and it will make our foreign policy much more effective in the long-run.

At a time when we are dominated by the threat of war and, in fact, being actively engaged with American fighting men and women overseas, we owe it to them, we owe it to our constituents, we owe it to ourselves to make sure that we have all the tools that are available and that they are used in a thoughtful fashion.

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#### TRAGEDY AT COLORADO HIGH SCHOOL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, as a Congress and as a Nation we are mourning the brave students and teachers whose lives were cut short in the senseless tragedy at Columbine High School.

An overwhelming sense of sadness and grief has spread throughout our Nation as we wonder out loud what led our country to this point. How could two of our children, our Nation's future, who harbored so much anger and resentment, turn to violence before they turned for help? What frightens me even more than the event itself is that it is symptomatic of a Nation rapidly losing sight of the very values this country was built upon: faith, family and freedom.

Mr. Speaker, in the past year and a half, at least 29 people have been killed as a result of school violence. In today's era of virtual reality games and the Internet, children witness gruesome acts of violence on a daily basis and can access pornography on the Internet with ease. And now our Nation's children are a simple click away from directions to build the same pipe bombs that two troubled young men used to wreak devastation on a small Colorado community.

The events of the last week have reminded me of an old Chinese proverb that says, "If we do not change our direction, we are likely to end up where we are headed."

Mr. Speaker, we are headed down a dangerous path. Some blame violence in the media, music, the Internet, access to guns and parental neglect. While they all influence our children, the problem is even greater.

In response to the tragedy, President Clinton has proposed more gun control laws. Mr. Speaker, we already have a number of gun control laws on the book. New laws are not the answer. It is not what is in our children's hands, it is what is in their hearts.

Mr. Speaker, one of the students who died last week was killed after proclaiming her belief in God. This young girl herself once struggled with some of the same issues her killers did. She even subscribed to witchcraft until she chose to embrace God and turn her life around. For this, for her beliefs, she was killed.

Sadly, in the news coverage over the past week, the media has focused on a small group of students who isolated themselves from others because they felt alienated. But we can see by this tragedy at Columbine that when circumstances were dire, students and teachers cast aside their differences and worked together.

As a man of Christian faith, I cannot help but be proud of the number of students recounting stories of being trapped in the school and surrounded by death who found solace in prayer. Yet how ironic that on any other day, our Nation's children cannot pray in school. In fact, children have been barred from bowing their heads in private prayer, from expressing their religious beliefs in school newspapers and even bringing the Bible to school.

Mr. Speaker, can anyone today say that our children are better off than they were 30 years ago when prayer was accepted in our schools? Thirty years ago, teachers were concerned with students smoking in school, skipping class and an occasional fistfight. Today teachers are being asked to deal with teen pregnancy, drug abuse and the physical safety of their students.

Mr. Speaker, let Littleton, Colorado be our wakeup call. Faith is exactly what this country needs. The children in Littleton turned toward God during their time of crisis. We should not force them to turn away from God during their daily lives.

Mr. Speaker, today our Nation is faced with two choices: We can continue down the path we have created for ourselves or we can look to a time in our history when children felt safe in school, and we can learn from our mistakes. This country was founded on Judeo-Christian principles. Yet we have become an America in which children reach for a gun before they reach for their Bible, or turn to violence instead of their parents or their church.

Mr. Speaker, I have the great honor of representing the citizens of eastern North Carolina. What makes me so proud of my constituents is that they, like so many Americans across this Nation, have a great respect for the Bible and the Constitution. They live their lives for God and country and they nurture these beliefs in the lives of their