THE $50,000 TAX DEDUCTIBLE DINNER

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

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, the American people have a right to know—just who is coming to dinner tonight?

And what will they be getting in return for their $50,000 tax deductible contribution to Empowerment TV?

This is the same tax exempt TV network that carries Speaker GINGRICH's college course.

The same tax deductible course that is the core of the Speaker's soon-to-be-very-profitable book deal.

Mr. Speaker, these interlocking networks of special interests—multimillion dollar think tanks and political action committees, many of them subsidized at taxpayer expense for personal or partisan political gain—is casting a long ethnical cloud over this House.

Is it any wonder that Public Citizen, Common Cause, and others have joined the chorus calling for an independent, nonpartisan investigation into the ethical charges surrounding the Speaker?

It is time for an outside counsel to untangle this web.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

(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, it is my hope that the more we delve into President Clinton's budget, the more we will find in it that we like and can support. As we heard already this morning, this budget will not be dead on arrival.

If the President has some good ideas that we can support while being consistent with our goal of smaller, less costly government, we will gladly incorporate some of his ideas into the budget.

But I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that upon initial examination the President's budget proposal is not very bold. In fact, it merely treads water.

Mr. Clinton constantly reminds us that he is the first President in memory to cut the deficit 3 years in a row. Well, that is a start, but it is not an end in itself. Under the President's own projections, the budget begins its upward path again next year.

We Republicans are committed to balancing the budget by the year 2002. If the President wants to help us, fine. But if he wants to remain wedded to the politics of the past, then we will act alone. However, one way or the other, rest assured, we will get the job done.

A $50,000 A PLATE FUNDRAISER

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, tonight National Empowerment Television, the taxpayer-subsidized station which broadcasts Speaker GINGRICH's college course, is holding a $50,000 a plate fundraiser. But it is the Speaker, not the filet mignon, that is the main course.

This lavish dinner speaks volumes about who Republicans represent. They are dining with the elite, at the same time Republicans are opposing a minimum wage increase for American workers. A full-time minimum wage worker would have to work 5¾ years to buy a seat at Mr. GINGRICH's table tonight.

Those lucky enough to have a spare fifty grand to buy a ticket for tonight's fundraiser will be rewarded with a nifty $19,800 tax break. You see, National Empowerment Television operates as a nonprofit, even though it is the only TV station devoted solely to a particular political ideology. Like tonight's dinner, this is another example of the commingling of politics and special interests that has led to the calls for an outside counsel to look into and investigate Mr. GINGRICH's political and financial dealings.

RESTORE THE RULE OF LAW TO SOCIETY

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

Mr. MARTINI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a former Federal prosecutor to discuss a topic that this body will soon debate: crime reform.

Crime in this country has reached epidemic proportions. It is time we as a body get serious about restoring the rule of law to our society.

Alexander Bickel of Yale University once said:

> No society will long remain open and attached to peaceable politics and the decent and controlled use of public force if fear for personal safety is the ordinary experience for large numbers.

Yet sadly, today 8 out of every 10 Americans can expect to be the victim of a violent crime at least once in their lives.

It is apparent that the debate over these crime bills embroils us in more than simply an exchange of competing partisan ideas.

The coming debates will engage us in a struggle that affects the very core and future of American society.

As the discussions begin, I urge my colleagues to take swift and strong action on behalf of the well-being and safety of a nation's people.

APPOINTMENT OF OUTSIDE COUNSEL NEEDED

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, the clouds of scandal once again are gathering above the House of Representatives. The Wall Street Journal has been running daily accounts of the special favors that the contributors of GOPAC and the contributors to the Progress and Freedom Foundation that are controlled by the Speaker have sought and received.

According to the Wall Street Journal, 10 percent of the contributors to the Progress and Freedom Foundation are makers of drugs and medical devices, whom we now learn are the same people who have sought special legislation and are now seeking to gut the Food and Drug Administration. What we as Members of the House are witnessing is very strong suggestion that the House of Representatives is somehow for sale.

This cannot be allowed to stand. We as Members deserve better, and the people of this Nation deserve better. It is imperative that the House Committee on Ethics and its chair, the gentlewoman from Connecticut, NANCY JOHNSON, move to appoint outside counsel. Given the ramifications of these stories and the fact that GOPAC and the Progress and Freedom Foundation are controlled by the Speaker, the committee has no other choice. It owes it to the people of this Nation to do so, and I urge my colleagues to call upon the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Mrs. JOHNSON] to appoint outside counsel.

ANOTHER CONTRACT WITH AMERICA ITEM PASSES HOUSE

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, imagine going to the grocery store to buy your daily fruit, vegetables, and meat, and when you go through the counter the clerk reaches over and sticks some caviar in your grocery cart. And you say, ''I don't want any caviar.'' And he says, ''Tough, you want your meat and potatoes; you have to buy my caviar. And if get too sensitive, I am going to throw in some Twinkies.''

Well, that is what the Congress has been doing to the American people and their President for too many years. But as of yesterday, with the passing of the line-item veto, we, the American people, can have our President stop it.

Item three on the Contract With America has now passed the House. Call your Senator, ask him or her to support the line-item veto, and then we can have that lean, green, grocery shopping machine that we all want. Cut out the fat, Mr. Speaker.

FUNDRAISING FOR NATIONAL EMPOWERMENT TELEVISION

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