

Working families have earned the right, not the privilege, the right to a secure retirement, and Republican leaders must put Social Security first, not dip further and further into the trust fund, violating the very lock box promise they made seven times not to dip into Social Security reserves in order to pay for other things.

The urgency is real and especially pronounced in the wake of the Enron collapse, WorldCom and other corporate scandals. Thousands have already lost their retirement checks in the private sector across this country, and many have been forced to return to work or to extend their career.

In his own case, President Bush yesterday in a White House press conference commented about confusing accounting procedures that were used to mask nearly three-quarters of a million dollars that he yielded from the early sale of stock in a firm on which he had sat, actually an oil company on which he had sat on the board. When the national press asked him how it was possible that he had sold this stock early and yielded those dollars, he said he still had not figured it out completely. That was reported in three different newspapers today.

Let us reflect on that statement for a moment. President Bush, a former corporate director and member of the auditing committee of that corporation, when pressed about possible corporate bookkeeping practices, replies, I still have not figured it out completely.

Should the American people expect that? We should expect more. We deserve more. America needs tough accounting standards for private sector plans, and it needs tough accounting standards for Social Security because these dollars have to be replaced somehow.

So the time has come for financial and political accountability. Republican leaders should be held responsible and they will be in this coming November's election.

WE NEED SMALLER GOVERNMENT

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, because of the corporate scandals at WorldCom, Enron and Global Crossing, C-SPAN a few days ago asked people call in on the question of whether they had lost their faith in American corporations.

The problem is that bigger and bigger government has led to and resulted in bigger and bigger businesses controlling or dominating almost every industry or business sector. Almost every major problem we have today has been made worse because liberals over the last many years have made our government at the Federal and now even at the State levels far too big.

Big government, in the end, really helps only extremely big businesses

and the bureaucrats who work for the government. The big giants in every industry have come to the government and have gotten the government contracts, the favorable regulatory rulings, the tax break, the insider sweetheart deals in trade deals and so forth. So the big keep getting bigger and small businesses and small farms go under or struggle to survive, and now even medium-sized businesses even barely hang on.

Despite the most economic leverage of any Nation in the world and the fact that every nation drools to get into our markets, we have not used this economic leverage to help American small- and medium-sized businesses and workers, and instead have helped only big multinational companies.

Liberals always claim they are for the little guy. Yet their policies have hurt the little man in almost every way. For example, big government has driven medical costs almost out of sight.

Another example, liberals expanded the FDA and made it so big and bureaucratic that it now takes an average of over 10 years and over \$850 million to get a drug to market. This is why prescription drugs cost so much. People wonder why and do not realize it is their own government that has done it to them.

Big government liberals and their allies in the environmental movement protest every time anyone wants to cut any trees, dig for any coal, drill for any oil, or produce any natural gas. This has caused many small companies to go out of business and forced them to merge and has driven up prices and destroyed jobs. This has hurt the poor and lower-income and working people most of all.

I am sick and tired of seeing so many American jobs go to other countries. However, when big government taxes and regulates small businesses or small farms out of business, it simply means that the big keep getting bigger. Then the big giants have to go where labor and regulatory costs are the lowest, and they are much more likely to move out of the country, and then our people wonder why we keep losing so many good jobs. Well, it is primarily because of a Federal Government that has grown so big and so bureaucratic that it is simply out of control.

In the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, we recently learned that some 400 pages of proposed EPA regulations would run 40,000 small farmers out of business. We had farmers in our hearing crying because their own government was about to do them in.

I am told that in 1978 we had 157 small coal companies in east Tennessee. Now there are none. All the small- and medium-sized ones were regulated out of existence by Federal mining regulators under intense pressure from environmental special interest groups which get their contributions mainly from extremely big business.

We have just had some 500 square miles of forests burning in several States out West. Two years ago, the previous administration followed policies that caused 7 million acres to burn and over \$10 million in damage.

The head of the Forest Service told the Washington Times that "there might have been 40 to 50 Ponderosa pine trees per acre at one time. Now you've got several hundred per acre."

Yet environmental extremists oppose even any thinning of the trees, no cutting at all, and even oppose removal of dead and dying trees. The Washington Post said the combination of drought and refusal to thin the forests has been deadly and has caused all these fires because there is such a tremendous build-up of fuel on the floors of the forest.

The opposition to cutting the trees has driven many small logging companies out of business and once again has destroyed jobs and caused another industry to be limited primarily to big grants.

When big government liberals make it impossible for small drug companies and small businesses in every industry to survive, it decreases competition and drives up prices. This hurts lower-income people the most.

When big government liberals and wealthy environmental extremists force mom-and-pop mining or logging companies or small farms out of business, it destroys jobs and opportunities not only for loggers and miners and farmers but also their lawyers, accountants, secretaries and salespeople. This is a big part of the reason why so many college graduates cannot find good jobs and have to go to graduate schools and work as waiters and waitresses.

When I was growing up, a poor man could start a gas station. Now, because of all the environmental rules and regulations and red tape, it takes a multimillionaire or a giant corporation to start one.

Mr. Speaker, to sum up, big government liberalism is killing the little guy. Liberals and environmental extremists are the best friends extremely big business has ever had, and it is no wonder we are seeing the major corporate scandals we are reading and hearing about today. Unless and until we downsize our Federal Government, we will continue to see even more.

OMNIBUS RESTORATION AND REFORM ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we find ourselves in a dilemma, and I would hope that the dilemma would cause us to recognize that all of us who are responsible for governance and are responsible for the leadership that is important in corporate responsibility cannot take on