

REMARKS BY THE HONORABLE LES AU COIN  
IN THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
SEPTEMBER 16, 1982

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MR. SPEAKER, I RISE IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 562, THE URGENT SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION TO PUT UNEMPLOYED AMERICANS WHO ARE DESPERATE FOR WORK BACK TO WORK IN COMMUNITIES THAT ARE SUFFERING SEVERE RATES OF UNEMPLOYMENT CAUSED BY THE SCORCHED-EARTH POLICIES OF THIS ADMINISTRATION.

WE HAVE HEARD HERE TODAY FROM THE OPPONENTS OF THIS BILL THAT IS IS ONLY A BAND-AID, THAT IT WILL NOT GO VERY FAR TO RELIEVE THE WORST ECONOMIC MISERY THIS NATION -- AND MY STATE OF OREGON -- HAS BEEN SUFFERING SINCE 1933.

MR. SPEAKER, THAT THIS BILL IS NO PANACEA IS NOT IN DISPUTE. BUT WHEN PEOPLE ARE BLEEDING, AS THEY ARE IN MY STATE, WHATEVER BANDAGES AS ARE AVIALABLE OUGHT TO BE APPLIED. I REFUSE, WHEN THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO SOMETHING -- AND TO DO IT WITHIN THE BUDGET THIS CONGRESS HAS ALREADY ADOPTED -- TO DO NOTHING AND JUST LET THEM BLEED.

THAT IS THE ATTITUDE WE'VE HEARD EXPRESSED OVER AND OVER BY THE ADMINISTRATION'S CHEERLEADERS. MR. RICHARD DEVOS, THE FINANCE CHAIRMAN OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY, CAPTURED THE ESSENCE OF THAT ATTITUDE WHEN HE SAID ON JUNE 4 OF THIS YEAR THAT THIS RECESSION "HAS BEEN A BENEFICIAL THING, A CLEANSING THING FOR THIS SOCIETY."

I'LL TELL YOU HOW CLEANSING THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICIES HAVE BEEN. THEY HAVE CLEANED THE ECONOMY OF JOBS AND BUSINESSES FASTER THAN ANY ADMINISTRATION SINCE HERBERT HOOVER'S.

MR. SPEAKER, THIS WAS THE ECONOMIC PROGRAM THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO UNLEASH THE MOST IMMEDIATE, UNPRECEDENTED ECONOMIC BOOM THIS COUNTRY HAD EVER SEEN. IT WAS ONLY THAT PROMISE OF GENERAL PROSPERITY THAT KEPT THIS PROGRAM FROM BEING SEEN FROM THE OUTSET AS A RAW SHIFT OF RESOURCES FROM THE FOLKS AT THE BOTTOM OF SOCIETY TO THE FOLKS AT THE TOP -- A MASSIVE SHIFT OF RESOURCES AWAY FROM PROGRAMS THAT CREATE JOBS AND PAY DIVIDENDS TO THE TREASURY IN ORDER TO ACCELERATE THE BUILDING OF BOMBS AND MISSILES.

IN MY STATE, MR. SPEAKER, THERE IS ANOTHER SHIFT GOING ON AS WELL -- A SHIFT OF HUMAN RESOURCES. I LOOK AT THE UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES FOR OREGON AND NOTED THAT THEY HAVE DECLINED FOR THE LAST THREE MONTHS RUNNING -- FROM 10.9 PERCENT IN JUNE TO 10.1 PERCENT IN AUGUST, FROM 145,100 UNEMPLOYED DOWN TO 131,900 UNEMPLOYED. BUT OVER THE SAME THREE-MONTH PERIOD, THE FIGURES SHOW THAT TOTAL EMPLOYMENT HAS DECLINED BY 15,900 JOBS, WHILE 29,100 OREGONIANS HAVE DROPPED OUT OF THE STATE'S LABOR FORCE.

I SEE THE VICTIMS WHO MAKE UP THESE STATISTICS IN MY DISTRICT, MR. SPEAKER. I SEE THEM STANDING ALONGSIDE THE FREEWAY INTERCHANGES OUTSIDE PORTLAND, WITH SUITCASES IN HAND AND SIGNS MARKED "SACRAMENTO," "DENVER," "SALT LAKE CITY" -- ANYWHERE THEY THINK THERE MAY BE JOBS TO BE HAD, FOR THERE ARE NONE TO BE HAD IN OREGON.

THIS BILL WILL CREATE SEVERAL THOUSAND JOBS IN OREGON FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE DESPERATE TO WORK AND FOR WHOM A JOB OF ANY KIND, OF ANY DURATION, IS BETTER THAN NOTHING, WHICH IS THE ONLY ANSWER THE OPPONENTS OF THIS MEASURE HAVE TO GIVE.