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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. BARR].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 28, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable BOB BARR to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of May 12, 1995, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leader limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] for 5 minutes.

WHAT IS AT STAKE IN BALANCING THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, much has been said on this floor and on TV screens in American households—and much has been written in newspapers across the country—about the alleged dangers of shrinking Government and cutting spending. The rhetorical warfare playing itself out among the partisan politics and the Presidential ambitions understandably has many Americans concerned. Big changes can be scary—and that fact has given comfort to those whose mission it is to preserve the status quo, whether the status quo is working or not, whether status quo is affordable or not. But I am convinced that most Americans are ready for the big changes we need to bring our Federal budget into balance. I am also convinced that most Americans see the real danger before us—the danger of doing nothing. Americans understand what is at stake in this debate. The facts are indisputable: We are on an unsustainable trend, spending more than we have. We are more than $5 trillion in debt. Seventy years ago, at his inaugural, Calvin Coolidge said:

> The men and women of this country who toil are the ones who bear the cost of the Government. Every dollar that we carelessly waste means that their life will be so much the more meager. Every dollar that we prudently save means that their life will be so much the more abundant. Economy is idealism in its most practical form.

I am mindful of my new grandchild, born just a few weeks ago. Because we failed to heed the advice of Coolidge and so many of our Nation's greatest leaders, that baby already carries on his tiny shoulders a lifetime share of the interest payment on the national debt totaling $187,000. That's the bill we are sending to every baby born this year just to pay the debt service for our failure to bring spending into line. Spending is the problem. We spend too much. Looking at it from another view, think about this: If we don't take the steps necessary to make annual deficits a thing of the past by 2002, as we are trying to do, we will be paying more every year for interest on our debt than we spend for our national defense.

The President of the United States went on television last night to talk to us about what a tough place the world is, and we are having a great debate about how we spend, but nobody denies we need moneys for national defense and we are spending more on interest payments than we are on national defense. The new leadership in this Congress has signaled that enough is enough. We must control spending. We have gone to the mat in order to implement the big changes needed to bring the budget into balance within 7 years. Balancing the budget will mean that Americans will see lower interest rates—making homes and cars and higher education more affordable. Unshackling the economy from its massive debt will boost productivity—creating millions of new jobs. Per capita incomes will rise and Federal revenues will increase as a result. There should be no need for tax increases—in fact, we will have more opportunities to reduce the Federal tax bite so that Americans can keep more of their hard earned tax dollars.

Mr. Speaker, no one enjoyed the partial Federal shutdown we saw before Thanksgiving. All agree that we must settle our major philosophical disagreements before the next major deadline of December 15, so we can avoid a repeat of that anxious time. But we cannot paper over the very real differences that exist between those of us who believe we must balance the budget within 7 years and those who do not see any urgency about reaching that goal. It is something like the irresistible force of reform hitting up against the immovable object of status quo. Given the tendency of this administration to watch the public opinion polls, the best way to bring about the right conclusion is for the American people to make their voices heard about their commitment to balancing the budget.

Certainly the cards, the letters, the calls that are coming into my office are overwhelmingly in support of the concept of getting our spending under control and balancing our budget in 7 years. I think that is probably true in

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