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# House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida).

## DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
*September 15, 1998.*

I hereby designate the Honorable DAN MILLER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

## MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 21, 1997, 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 25 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 9:50 a.m.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GREENVILLE TAR HEEL LITTLE LEAGUE ALL STARS

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I grew up in Farmville, North Carolina, playing Little League Baseball. In fact, it is one of my favorite childhood memories. Little League helped me to learn early in life the importance of responsibility, trust and teamwork. It continues to do the same today for 14 boys from Greenville, North Carolina, and the nearly 3 million young men and women who participate in Little League Baseball worldwide.

In August, 14 young men, members of the Greenville Tar Heel All Stars, brought together a community, and in doing so they brought excitement and hope to the citizens of North Carolina.

Each summer, from the time Little League Baseball held its first World Series in 1947, young men and women have dreamed of reaching the U.S. finals. This dream came true for the Greenville Tar Heel All Stars.

Last month the team from the Third District of North Carolina traveled to Pennsylvania to compete for the World Series title. This marked the first time since 1952 that a team from North Carolina has made it to the World Series. After a week of competition, I am proud to congratulate the Tar Heel team for finishing second in the Nation to the world champion team from Toms River, New Jersey. This is an outstanding achievement for the Greenville All Stars, whose motivation and dedication helped them reach their goal and perform as true champions.

Being home during the August recess, I had the opportunity to see several of these games on TV. As it always seems to happen when young people excel, the community of families, friends and fans rallied together to support the hard work and dedication of the young team that came to serve as examples for us all.

To the Greenville All Stars, the world champion Toms River team and all Little League teams, congratulations. You performed as true winners. And to the 14 members of the 1998 Greenville Little League team, Richard Barnhill, Sam Byrum, Taylor Gagnon, Zachary Garris, Justin Hardee, Kevin Hodges, Jordan Lee, Michael Lilley, Brack Massey, Jon-Durham Morgan, Shelton Nelson, Patrick Warrington, Alex White, Brandon Brown; and coaches Mason Lilley, Randy White, Greg Benner, Pete Carraway; Manager Wayne Hardee and Commissioner Lynn Cherry, congratulations. You have made North Carolina proud.

The achievements of the Greenville Tar Heels on the regional and state level created a wave of excitement that brought together the citizens of Pitt County and all of North Carolina to support and celebrate in their success. The boys' hard work and winning attitude filled us with a sense of pride as we cheered on the hometown team.

Participating in a team sport like baseball can teach children some of the most important values they will learn in life, responsibility, hard work and the importance of working together. Little League Baseball also works to instill character and courage in today's youth. In fact, the Little League pledge is this:

''I trust God. I love my country and will respect its laws. I will play fair and strive to win. But win or lose, I will always do my best.''

These are ideals that are important to remember at any stage of life. The Greenville Tar Heel Little League team played well, and in the eyes of all North Carolinians they are winners. Not only did they succeed on the field, but they succeeded in bringing together and strengthening the community that watched, cheered and shared in their achievement. Through their success, we have all learned that with hard work, dedication and the support of family and friends, success is within the reach of all who wish to achieve it.

The Greenville All Stars brought pride to our community and will forever remain winners in our hearts and in our minds. Congratulations.

## REPAYING THE SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from



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Washington (Mr. ADAM SMITH) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. ADAM SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, in the early part of this decade, no problem seemed more unsolvable than the problem of our growing Federal deficit. It was at over $200 billion at that point, projected to hit $300 billion in rapid succession, and projected by the end of the decade to be well over $500 billion. Now, fortunately, we began to head in the right direction at that point and were actually almost in a position to get to a balanced budget.

That is the good news. The bad news is that we are now looking like we are going to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

The biggest part of this problem comes from the talk that we have heard here recently about a surplus. I hear my colleagues talking about it, I see it on television, I even hear it in my local press, that there is going to be a $1.6 trillion surplus over the next 10 years.

The only problem with that is it is not really true. We are not going to have a $1.6 trillion surplus, and the talk about that surplus I find very disturbing, because it puts us in a position to back away from our commitment to a balanced budget. It gives us the illusion that we have money that we do not have, and I fear that it is going to get us to the point where we are not going to get to the balanced budget that we have worked so hard for over the past 7 or 8 years.

It is important to explain these figures. So if we are not going to have a $1.6 trillion surplus, why are so many people saying we are going to have a $1.6 trillion surplus? It is because they count the money that we borrow from Social Security as income. It is just an unusual way of accounting that they do back here in Washington, D.C.

Somehow, if we borrow money from a bank or from anyplace else, that counts as being borrowed, but if we borrow it from Social Security, it counts as income. Well, that is not true, because, just like the bank and like any other source, we have to pay the money back to Social Security, plus interest.

Now, you might say, well, so part of the $1.6 trillion surplus comes out of the Social Security trust fund. Well, that still gives us some money to play around with.

Unfortunately, when you look at the $1.6 trillion over 10 years, only $31 billion of that $1.6 trillion comes from any place other than the Social Security trust fund. So we truly do not have a surplus.

Unless we are willing to spend money that comes directly out of the Social Security trust fund on something else, we do not have a surplus. We cannot consider it a surplus, and we must be honest in the way we evaluate those numbers.

I find it particularly disturbing to hear some of my colleagues from the Republican side of the aisle talking about this surplus, because I remember back in the late eighties and early nineties they were the ones who first raised the argument that this was unfair, that we were masking the true size of the deficit.

Now, at the time Democrats were in the majority, so it was in their political interest to make that point, because it made us look bad. I was very troubled by that argument at the time, and I was troubled by it as a Democrat for one very good reason: They were right and we were wrong. We needed to address that issue and change it. But now we are in the latter part of the 1990's, they are in the majority, and now they are talking about a surplus, as if the Social Security trust fund was income that we could spend any way we want.

We need to stop doing that. We need to be honest about the numbers and make sure that we stay on a path to a balanced budget. A balanced budget is critical to this country. It helps our economy and protects our future. We need not to back away from it.

I understand with why we do this. I have people come by my office every day who have ideas to spend money on a variety of programs or have ideas for tax cuts in a variety of areas, and rarely does someone come by my office and present an idea where I can honestly say no, that would be a complete waste of money. That would not do any good for anybody.

Yes, there are programs that can use more money and taxes that could be cut, but the point is, where is the money going to come from? That is when you get to hard decisions.

No one likes to make hard decisions, so what we want to do is we want to say we can take it from the surplus. That is the easy answer. It is free money. We can give you tax cuts, we can give you spending, everything you want, we can promise you the world, and we can simply take it that take it from this mythical surplus. So I understand why we want to do this, because it is an easy way out.

But we were not elected to take the easy way out. We were elected to give people honest answers and give them an honest assessment of where the budget is. And the honest assessment is that we are doing okay. We are headed in the right direction. But we do not have a surplus this year, and we do not have that $1.6 trillion projected surplus that we have heard so much about over the last 10 years. Almost all of that money is taken from the Social Security trust fund, is borrowed from it. It is not money that we can spend, for the very good reason that we have to give it back. We have to give it back, plus interest. And if we have spent it, we are going to run up debts or not be in a position to pay the money back.

I strongly urge this body in the last four or so weeks that we have in session here to not break down from our commitment. We have worked so hard to get to a balanced budget. Let us get there. Let us be honest about the numbers, and let us stop using the money that we borrow from Social Security to mask the true size of our deficit.

## ASSISTING AMERICA'S FARMERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a very important issue, not only for people in my district, but I think for people all over the United States.

Yesterday morning I met with farmers in Kasson, Minnesota, and we talked about low commodity prices. For the benefit of Members who probably do not follow commodity prices and how they affect our farm economy and ultimately affect the entire economy, I would like to bring our colleagues up to speed.

Yesterday I think the posted price in Kasson, Minnesota, for corn was $1.44 a bushel. To inform my colleagues, the cost of production on that corn is somewhere north of $2 per bushel.

I know that some of our colleagues on the left are saying the problem is Freedom to Farm, that that was a huge mistake in the farm bill we passed several years ago, and that is the reason for that. It is curious, however, they were not complaining when the price of corn was in excess of $3 a bushel.

The truth of the matter is, allowing farmers the decision about where and how they want to plant their crops and which crops to plant on which acres, the whole notion of allowing freedom to farmers I think is a good idea and an idea whose time had come.

The problem is that we have lost over $5 billion worth of exports over the last year or year-and-a-half. That is $5 billion that has come right out of the pockets of farmers throughout the United States.

But it has particularly affected the farmers in the upper Midwest where we are very dependent on export markets. Why has that happened? For a variety of reasons. One is the decline in the economy in Asia. That was a very large export source for us, particularly in the upper Midwest. But $5 billion has come right out of the pockets of farmers. Coincidentally, this administration has failed to use nearly $5 billion in export enhancements. At the very time we need to export more, the administration has done less in terms of encouraging more exports.

What are we going to do about this? I think it is incumbent upon the Congress to respond, and to respond this fall. Obviously, because we have had relatively good farm incomes for the last couple of years, we are not in a crisis state yet, but we certainly will be, unless Congress takes some immediate and important actions and takes them yet this fall.