gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), minority leader of the United States House, yesterday?

Answer: Raising campaign funds on the West Coast.

But I thought he wanted to reform campaigns. Oh, but not necessarily so. And besides, we all know, Mr. Speaker, that for that crowd to talk about campaign finance reform is a bit akin to having Bonnie and Clyde come out for tougher penalties against bank robbery.

But at any rate, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) was away.

How can we get our work done? He should have a seat at the table, and he should join with us to save one penny on the dollar for every dollar of discretionary spending, so that the government can live within its means and quit the raid and continue to cease the raid on the Social Security Trust Fund.

Mr. Speaker, I would invite the minority leader to come back to town and go to work and join with us and realize that a penny saved is retirement security.

PARTIES TO THE BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS ARE AWOL

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

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I find it disappointing. As we try to bring this budget to conclusion, as we try to finalize the negotiations, we have major people that are a part of this process that are AWOL. They are absent.

1030

How does the Speaker of the House who has to negotiate with the President stay up late at night every night so he can call the President in Turkey? Is that the way to negotiate?

In Pennsylvania where I come from, if the governor or if his cabinet left town during those final negotiations, the press would have been all over them. Why is it possible for the President, the minority leader, who was away yesterday who is the one who is opposing any kind of trimming of waste or fraud, he is the one who is holding out, but he is not available to negotiate yesterday? That is why this process has run on. The President is just finishing his second trip abroad since October 1, and this is when we have been trying to finalize the budget.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, it is important for those who are a part of this negotiating process to stay in town, get the work of the American people done, so we can pass the budget that does not rob Social Security.

CONGRESS HAS MORE TIME THAN TAXPAYERS HAVE MONEY

(Mr. THUNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, it is November 17, and we are still here for one reason, and that is that we have got more time than the American taxpayers have money.

This Congress has passed all 13 appropriation bills. The President has chosen to veto 5 of those bills. Why did he veto them? Because they did not spend enough money. So we are still here negotiating with all the President's men since he is traveling abroad.

The minority leader is traveling in California raising campaign cash. We are still here until the President agrees with us on a budget that does not raid Social Security, does not raise taxes, and rids the budget of waste, fraud, and abuse.

We will stay here as long as it takes until the President gets back and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) gets back from his California dreaming.

FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS, FISCAL YEAR 2000

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 381, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 381

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 80) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2000, and for other purposes. The joint resolution shall be considered as read for amendment. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY), my friend, the distinguished ranking member; pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration for this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate on this subject only.

Mr. Speaker, H.Res. 381 is a closed rule waiving all points of order against consideration of H.J.Res. 80, the continuing resolution that we have before us later today. The rule provides for 1 hour of debate, equally divided between the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations. Finally, the rule provides for one motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, Members will know that this is an appropriate and traditional rule for a consideration of a clean continuing resolution. Members who have any kind of memory at all will remember that we have done these kinds of things recently in the past.

Given the complex negotiations that have been under way about the budget, and they have, indeed, been complicated by the fact that some of the principals are out of town for whatever reason, it is regrettable that, at a time that we are struggling so hard, that the President finds it necessary to be out of the country, and the minority leader finds it necessary to be out of the capital.

But, nevertheless, Americans come to understand that continuing resolutions, which keep the government functioning at last year's levels, are a necessary tool to facilitate bringing closure to the budget debate which we normally have this time of year.

In order to avoid a partial government shutdown, which we certainly want to do, we have proposed another straightforward extension in the deadline, and that is until tomorrow. We have made significant progress toward final agreement, but we must be certain that we do the right thing, not simply the most expedient to get out of town because the folks would like to go home.

In this case, the right thing is very clearly to provide for important government programs without touching the reserves in the Social Security Trust Fund, not one dime. That has been the goal of our majority from the outset of this year's budget process; and while it has taken some time to convince some of our friends on the other side of the aisle and downtown that this fiscal discipline is, indeed, necessary, we now have everyone working from the same set of guidelines. We just have to keep reminding them of the guidelines.

It has also taken some time to convince the White House that increasing taxes and using part of the surplus, as has been suggested by the White House, are not acceptable approaches to the majority on the Hill.

I am hopeful that this brief extension will provide both ends of Pennsylvania with the requisite time to hammer out our final spending bills in a responsible way. In fact, I understand that the bills individually, the five that have been vetoed by the President, are virtually resolved.

It is a no-nonsense CR that we are proposing here. I think it should be unanimously adopted. I am certainly urging a yes vote on the rule. I am not sure why we are having a rule instead of a unanimous consent; but for whatever reason, we are having a rule vote. I can think of no reason to vote against it. I urge a yes vote.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank the slender gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS), my good friend, for yielding me the customary half hour.

Mr. Speaker, the end is finally in sight. Forty-eight hours after the start of the fiscal year, it looks as if the appropriation process is just about over.