

details surrounding the Speaker's financial empire.

CHANGE HAS COME

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

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Mr. Speaker, it is the greatest honor of my life to be standing in the well of this great Chamber on behalf of the people of the Second District of North Carolina. From Durham and Rocky Mount to Lillington and Southern Pines, my constituents sent a clear message to Washington on November 8.

They want the power and authority of the Federal Government returned to them and to the States.

They want radical changes in the failed liberal programs of the past.

But, most of all they want Washington out of their pockets and off their backs, as Ronald Reagan so eloquently put it.

I am pleased to report that we are on our way. This new Congress marks the end of business as usual in the Nation's Capital. We have already begun to get the people's house in order beginning a new era of accountability. Next week we will get to work on tightening Government's belt with a balanced budget amendment, then we will reform welfare, cut taxes, and restore the morale of our military. We have changed the way Congress does business, now we will change the business Congress does. It is truly a new day in Washington and a new day for the people of eastern North Carolina.

STOP THE VIOLENCE

(Ms. FURSE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute, and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FURSE. Mr. Speaker, every night on television we see the horrors of war. We see children killed in places whose names we didn't even know. But I want to talk today about a war on much more familiar grounds, our own beloved America.

There was a small story in the Washington Post 2 days ago of two children killed by gunfire. There was not a big headline.

Well, no wonder. Because an average of 13 children a day are killed in America from gunfire in America. In 1993, there were over 24,000 murders in this country, and 17,000 of those were from gunfire.

Mr. Speaker, it is time we had a peace treaty in America. It is time we stop the violence.

LEGISLATION TO REPEAL THE DAVIS-BACON ACT

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, I am joined today by many of my colleagues in the introduction of legislation to repeal the Davis-Bacon Act. In one way or another, the act is expensive, inflationary, unnecessary, restrictive, and generally harmful to the structure and development of the construction industry. The act adds billions of dollars to Federal construction costs and the American taxpayers are picking up the tab.

Enacted during the throes of the Depression, the Davis-Bacon Act requires contractors on Federally funded construction to pay the prevailing wage. Now, more than 60 statutes incorporate the Davis-Bacon wage requirements by reference. In some instances, coverage of the Davis-Bacon Act has been further extended to situations in which the Federal Government merely has an interest through ownership participation, funds guaranty, or cases where the Federal Government contributes a minimal amount to a State or local project.

The rationale for special wage protection was never very persuasive but Davis-Bacon has remained in place since 1931, giving some construction workers a bonus at the bargaining table at the taxpayer's expense. For example, electricians working in Philadelphia on a Davis-Bacon project are paid \$37.97 an hour compared with electricians on a private contract who are paid an average of \$15.76 an hour.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the Davis-Bacon Act raises Federal construction costs nearly \$1 billion a year. Repeal of the act would allow the Federal Government to fund more construction projects with the money which is being spent, or to get the planned construction done for less money.

Finally, the Davis-Bacon Act is demonstrably unnecessary. Despite claims by labor leaders that workers would be victimized and exploited without Davis-Bacon, unionized construction firms do compete effectively in many private markets where Davis-Bacon does not apply. The Fair Labor Standards Act, which was enacted 7 years after the enactment of Davis-Bacon, establishes a minimum wage and overtime rate of 1½ times the hourly rate for employees working more than 40 hours in a week.

By repealing the Davis-Bacon Act, the taxpayers will be saved an estimated \$3.1 billion in construction costs and bureaucratic overhead over the next 5 years. Sixty-three years of artificially high construction costs are enough. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act.

UNFUNDED MANDATES

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

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, the Unfunded Mandate Reform Act of 1995

is of great interest to State and local governments, and to my constituents on Guam.

We too have our share of the burdens imposed by the Federal Government.

Recently, we have been confronted with an unfunded mandate that illustrates how difficult it is to receive funding even when congressional intent to provide that funding is clear.

In 1986 Congress passed a law authorizing completely unrestricted immigration between Guam and three newly independent Pacific Nations that were formerly the U.S. Trust Territory.

Anticipating the impact on Guam of this Federal policy, Congress also authorized Guam to be reimbursed for costs resulting from this immigration. While Guam incurred over \$45 million in costs, over the past 7 years Congress appropriated \$2.5 million in its first payment to Guam last year—a noticeable improvement but still too little too late.

Uncle Sam, if you are not careful, you may soon be known on Guam as a deadbeat uncle.

KEEPING THE PROMISE OF A BALANCED BUDGET

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

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, last week, Republicans began the passage of the contract with America. We are changing the way Congress does business, and we are changing the business Congress does.

No longer will we pander to the big government, big bureaucracy legislation as Congress has in the past. We want to make the Government smaller, less costly, and more effective for the American taxpayer. To begin on this journey we must pass a balanced budget amendment.

In the next week, we will have on the floor legislation to make the Government live under a balanced budget. This concept makes sense to the American people—they live under a budget. It is time to make the Government do the same.

We will keep our promise to the American people to bring a balanced budget amendment to the floor. It is up to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make sure it is passed.

DISCLOSURE ON BOOK DEAL NEEDED

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, Speaker GINGRICH has said that his multi-million dollar book deal was "like winning the lottery." Well, not quite, Mr. Speaker. Your lottery was no game of chance. You see, Mr. Speaker, you were

the only one holding a lottery ticket. And in addition, your lottery price was being decided by Rupert Murdoch and his publishing empire, a man who has extensive issues pending before Federal agencies.

This morning's Washington Post reported that many publishing companies refused to bid on the Speaker's book contract when Mr. Murdoch raised the offer into the millions of dollars.

The Republicans and Speaker GINGRICH have promised us new openness in dealing with the House of Representatives and politics in Washington. Let us start with openness and full disclosure on this multimillion dollar book deal. It is time for the Speaker to not only release the contract, but to come clean with the American people about all the circumstances surrounding it.

THE OSCE STATEMENT ON CHECHNYA

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, the Permanent Council of the OSCE has adopted a statement on Chechnya which emphasizes the seriousness of the violation of human rights and international humanitarian law that has characterized the Russian military action in Chechnya.

Affirming that respect for OSCE commitments is a legitimate concern of all signatory states, the OSCE has called for an immediate ceasefire and the beginning of negotiations for a political settlement, while respecting the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Speaker, the OSCE had welcomed Russia's stated willingness to cooperate with the OSCE in stabilizing the region and restoring constitutional order and in the early dispatch of an OSCE mission to that country. However, it now appears that the Russians may permit an OSCE peace mission only after the offensive has ceased. That is totally unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, any delay means more carnage, more dead civilians, more dead soldiers. The OSCE mission must be allowed immediate access to Chechnya, and this must be done with dispatch.

Mr. Speaker, for many days the administration has called this aggression an internal affair. Thankfully there has been a shift in the administration's position.

Next week as chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I plan to hold a hearing on this important matter, and hopefully we will see some progress then and now.

PERMISSION FOR COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT TO FILE REPORT ON H.R. 5, UNFUNDED MANDATE REFORM ACT OF 1995

Mr. CLINGER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight have until midnight tonight to file a report on H.R. 5, the Unfunded Mandate Reform Act of 1995.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EWING). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, at this time I do not intend to object, but under my reservation I would like to engage in a brief colloquy with my friend, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. CLINGER].

□ 1020

The gentleman from Pennsylvania knows of the concern on our side of the aisle on this issue. The fact is that this issue, which is extremely important to this Nation, an issue that deals with questions like toxic waste, safe drinking water, clean water, child safety, all of these very important issues wrapped into this significant piece of legislation, was discussed and marked up on the same day as the committee was organizing, without a hearing, although one member of the gentleman's side of the aisle testified and none on our side was allowed to testify, but no hearings on this.

As I understand it, a large percentage of the gentleman's committee now are new Members who have had, frankly, no experience with this particular legislation in the past.

We on this side have very grave concerns about waiving the rules, as the gentleman is asking for on this legislation. Normally I believe he would be able to file on Tuesday. The gentleman wants to file it tonight.

While we understand the need to move on, we are concerned about the process here. We are concerned about: Is this going to be the norm? Is this going to be the standard on which we on this side of the aisle will have to live and have to react in terms of our ability to get our point of view across without hearings, without adequate preparation by the new Members who are on the committee?

I would like to ask the gentleman from Pennsylvania, first of all, if he intends to go to the Committee on Rules and ask for an open rule on this?

Mr. CLINGER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CLINGER. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to inform the gentleman that it is my intention, and I believe it would be concurred in by the chairman of the Committee on Rules, to ask for a completely open rule, and I believe that it has already been signaled that that will be the case.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, continuing my reservation of objection, I yield to the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON]. Will the gentleman from New York, the chairman of the Committee on Rules, care to respond to whether or not we will see an open rule on this?

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I would be glad to respond to my good friend, a former member of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. BONIOR. Still am a member.

Mr. SOLOMON. The gentleman has taken a leave of absence, I understand, out of the goodness of his heart.

Mr. BONIOR. The gentleman will see me in there.

Mr. SOLOMON. The gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. CLINGER], has requested of our Committee on Rules an open rule. It is the intention that we will grant an open rule.

We will hold that hearing at 11 on Wednesday, and the gentleman is welcome to come up and testify.

I might point out that we did hold a hearing on the subject of this bill. We did not limit it to just title III, which was our jurisdiction in the Committee on Rules. We allowed the full discussion on the entire bill. We offered the Democrat minority the opportunity for Members to come and testify, as well as the private sector. And the minority did produce three people to testify. It was a very informative meeting.

From that, we came to the decision we should put out an open rule and let the House work its will, because it is probably one of the most important bills that will come before this House during this 104th Congress, especially in the eyes of the taxpayers of this Nation.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I would say to my friend the gentleman from New York, that while there were no hearings in the primary committee that deals with this, Government Operations, the Committee on Rules allowed three people from the entire country to participate, that is all, in this process.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, I will say to my good friend we absolutely did not limit it. The gentleman was welcomed to have 5 or 10 witnesses, including Members of Congress, and the only panel that was asked for was the three from the private sector. It was completely open to as many as the gentleman would have desired.

Mr. BONIOR. Further reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, I would yield to another former member of the Committee on Rules, one of our strong advocates for the issues which I enumerated earlier on for discussion of this issue, and gentlewoman from New York [Ms. SLAUGHTER].

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.