

the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. KAPTUR] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, is it any wonder that the citizens of the United States grow increasingly cynical about this Congress? Expediency and the next election will dominate this week's likely battle over the Republican proposed tax cuts and their impact on our worsening budget deficit. We have got a bidding war underway here to see who can flatter the most voters. Cutting spending, reducing the deficit and balancing the budget may not be popular with the hotshot pollsters who have got their eye on next year's elections but is it not time that we do what is right for America and for America's future?

Keep this in mind. According to the Congressional Research Service, the United States budget has not been balanced since 1969. President Clinton in 1993 and 1994, to his credit, began to make a dent in this fiscal mess. Every Member here who supported him in that effort did what was right. The annual deficit was projected to be close to \$300 billion a couple of years ago but has been brought down now to around \$170 billion, still not perfect but a whole lot better. In fact, the deficit as a share of our total gross domestic product has been cut by more than half, from nearly 5 percent in 1992 to about 2.5 percent today. This level is lower than at any time since 1979, which means it is not so much of a drag on the economy. This marks the first time since Harry Truman was President that the deficit has gone down 3 years in a row. But overall, our Nation has accumulated an unpaid debt of over \$4.7 trillion as of January of this year, over \$3 trillion of that \$4.7 trillion total, nearly three-quarter of it, during the 12 years of the so-called supply side economics. Last year alone as a result, taxpayers, us, we had to pay nearly \$300 billion just in interest on the accumulated debt accounting for about 15 percent of total Federal spending.

Of this \$300 billion in interest that people are paying, \$44 billion of it is being paid to foreign creditors we are borrowing from to finance our overspending. The interest we pay on the debt just this year is enough to pay the entire defense budget of the Nation for 1 year as well as all of the medical costs for our veterans and the entire cost of our college student loan program.

So what does the Republican Contract on America intend to do about all of this? It intends to enact a tax cut that will make matters \$700 billion worse over 10 years.

After we have cut the deficit by \$130 billion over the last 3 years, which is not small potatoes, we are now going to throw reason out the window and sop up all our progress. What is really sad about all of this is that interest rates in America are rising, 7 times in the last year, to offset our prior credit orgy. So even if a tax cut passed, the

benefit to any family in America has been lost already by higher interest rates they are paying due to our Nation's accumulated debt and its draw on our credit markets.

Is it not time for some courage and wisdom in this Congress? Is it not time to vote for what is right for the next generation, not the next election? Is it not time for statesmen and stateswomen to be elected here and send the election hucksters back home?

It is time to vote for a balanced budget.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. CHABOT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. CHABOT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. DeLAURO addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

POST MOUNTS CAMPAIGN FOR CASTRO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. DIAZ-BALART] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, sometimes it is amazing to see the campaign on behalf of one of the last remaining tyrants in the world that is engaged upon by our local newspaper here, the Washington Post.

In the last 3 days, we have five articles or op-ed pieces in this newspaper desperately trying to defend Castro, desperately trying.

"Proposed Republican Bill on Cuba Could Hurt Canadian Economy." That is one article.

"U.S. Alarms Canada with Cuba Shift."

"Adrift on Cuba."

"Get off Cuba's Back."

"A Bill That Will Help Castro."

By the way, this bill that has been introduced in the Senate by Senator HELMS and here by Congressman BURTON already with a substantial number of us cosponsoring it, this bill that this op-ed piece in the Washington Post from yesterday, under the headline "A Bill That Will Help Castro," this theory that this bill helps Castro, it is interesting. It happens to be Castro's main objective in terms of defeat. Yet article after article after article, we see allegations that, for example, two things, and this is another op-ed in the Washington Post from today. This op-ed says, "Two things seem to be driving our anti-Castro policy. Cubans in Florida and sheer vengeance."

Where do we see, for example, when black Americans try to influence pol-

icy on Haiti and on South Africa and Irish-Americans try to influence policy with regard to Northern Ireland and Jewish-Americans try to influence policy with regard to the Middle East, where are five articles or op-ed pieces in the Washington Post in 3 days criticizing that? I think that this has to be called what it is. This is despicable. If it were targeted on the Irish-American community or the black community or the Jewish community, it would be rightfully called for what it is, it would be called racist. Yet it is all right to say that Cuban-Americans cannot lobby in the United States so that the country where they were born in and where relatives of theirs still have to live is free. That is incorrect according to article after article and op-ed after op-ed.

Let me just say to these folks at the Washington Post, a little balance would perhaps be logical. If you are going to have five articles and op-eds in 3 days defending Castro, for example, one of them here "Adrift on Cuba," a savage attack on an American patriot who happens to be in the State Department, Ambassador Michael Skol, a savage attack, probably leaked by someone in the National Security Council, notice this, attacks Michael Skol because Skol testified here in Congress that Castro last July had ordered over 40 men, women, and children sent to their deaths when he ordered the sinking of a tugboat that has been reported after pleas and pleas and pleas from this Congress and elsewhere, it was finally reported in the media. And Michael Skol pointed it out.

Look at what this article says. "But neither the National Security Council nor the intelligence community has evidence that the sinking was ordered according to U.S. officials," probably Mr. Morton Halperin at the National Security Council, probably once again the folks around the President who continue to try to pressure the President into throwing a signal of friendship, sending a signal of friendship to the Cuban tyrant.

Listen to this. "Because the Cuban government insists the sinking was accidental, Skol's testimony was taken by Cuban officials as an accusation that Castro had personally ordered it."

Well, what happened if that was not the case? If anyone knows anything about the Cuban situation, you know that nothing happens in Cuba, much less do security officials dare to sink purposefully as the evidence has conclusively pointed to, much less do they purposely sink a ship with over 70 refugees if they do not have the direct order of their commander in chief. All the evidence points to that and Ambassador Skol is criticized.

We are going to continue talking about this, Mr. speaker. But this is very serious and apparently continues to come out of the Clinton National Security Council and something has got to be done about it.