No budget, no pay. If we do not finish the job, we do not get paid. It is just that simple.

We were sent to Washington to solve problems, to work together, to do things in a constructive way. Gridlock and train wrecks are politics as usual. If the political leaders in this town fail, the salaries of Congress and the President should be the first on the budget chopping block.

CONGRESS SHOULD LET EMPLOYEES SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

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

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, today the voices of the majority of American workers go unheard—not because American employers are oppressive, but because American law prohibits it. Under current labor law, employers and employees cannot work together to resolve important workplace issues that might involve terms and conditions of employment unless those employees are represented by a union.

While it is legal for an employer to have a meeting or hold a conference with employees to discuss ideas in the abstract, it is illegal for an employer to follow through on any actual workplace changes developed in consultation with the employees, unless those workers are represented by a union. The 88 percent of the private sector work force that is not unionized is, therefore, not allowed to discuss issues which affect the conditions of their employment.

The TEAM Act permits employee involvement in workplace decisionmaking. Companies want their employees to develop new methods and ideas for improving the workplace. It's about time we let employees speak for themselves.

Vote in favor of H.R. 743, the TEAM Act.

DEMOCRATS ON MEDICARE: POLITICS AS USUAL

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

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, it is true that politics does make strange bedfellows, and we find ourselves once more lying down with the Washington Post, not normally friend to Republicans. But the fact is that they set up an editorial 2 days ago with respect to the ''Medigoguing,'' as they call it, of the Democrat leadership and Democratic Members of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, talking about the letter of minority leader DICK GEPHARDT, they say:

> The letter itself seems to tell us more of the same. It tells you just about everything the Democrats think about Medicare, except how to cut the cost. Medicare and Medicaid together are now a sixth of the budget and a fourth of all spending for other than interest and defense.
>
> If nothing is done, those shares are going to rise, particularly as the baby boomers begin to retire early in the next century. Republicans have nonetheless stepped up to the issue. They have taken a huge political risk just in calling for the cuts that they have.
>
> What the Democrats have done, in turn, is confirm the risk. The Republicans are going to take away your Medicare, they say. That is their only message. They have no plan. The Democrats have fabricated the Medicare tax cut connection because it is useful politically. We think it is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, we agree.

PERMISSION FOR SUNDRY COMMITTEES AND THEIR SUBCOMMITTEES TO SIT TODAY DURING 5-MINUTE RULE

Mrs. WALDHOLTZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the following committees and their subcommittees be permitted to sit today while the House is meeting in the Committee of the Whole under the 5-minute rule.

Committee on Agriculture; Committee on Banking and Financial Services; Committee on Commerce; Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities; Committee on International Relations; Committee on the Judiciary; Committee on Resources; Committee on Science; and Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

It is my understanding that the minority has been consulted and that there is no objection to these requests.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EVERETT). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Utah?

There was no objection.

THE EXTENSION OF DEADLINE FOR INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SYSTEMS IMPLEMENTATION

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent the immediate consideration of the bill (H.R. 2288) to amend part D of title IV of the Social Security Act to extend for 2 years the deadline by which States are required to have in effect an automated data processing and information retrieval system for use in the administration of State plans for child and spousal support.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I yield to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW] for the purposes of briefly explaining the bill.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding under his reservation.

H.R. 2288 simply gives States an additional 2 years to implement data processing requirements that Congress imposed on their child support programs in 1988. H.R. 2288 was approved on September 12, by unanimous voice vote of the Ways and Means Committee. According to CBO, the bill has no budget impact. As far as we have been able to determine, there are no Republicans or Democrats who oppose the bill.

Several factors have prevented States from meeting the October 1, 1995, deadline for meeting Federal data processing requirements. To date—less than a week before the deadline—only one State has actually finished its system.

So beginning October 1, if we don't take action, 49 States will be subject to financial penalties and mandatory correction procedures.

Clearly, if only one State can meet a deadline, something is wrong. That is why I rise to ask unanimous consent to extend this deadline for 2 years.

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I rise in support of H.R. 2288, a bill to extend the deadline for State child support computer systems.

One of the most important reforms of the Family Support Act of 1988 was the mandated implementation of a statewide child support enforcement computer system by October 1, 1995. Without such a computer network, States cannot hope to effectively track and enforce child support obligations. In fact, back in the mid-1980's we frequently heard anecdotes about States keeping child support records in shoe boxes. It was no wonder that they had such a poor record of collecting child support.

In response, Congress mandated a statewide computer system, authorized extra Federal funding to develop these systems, and set what we thought was a reasonable timetable—October 1, 1995—for implementation of the system. Now, as the deadline approaches we are told that only one State—Montana—has met this requirement and that we cannot expect many more to comply in the next 6 months.

Are the States to blame for this failure? Only partially. The real culprit is the Bush administration—which waited 4 years after the legislation was signed into law to issue the specifications for this system. Until then, States simply did not know what standards the Federal Government would use to judge whether they met the requirements. In dragging its feet, the Bush administration was both irresponsible and wasteful of our scarce resources.

So, here we are. It's a few days before the deadline and the Republican majority has finally brought to the floor a bill to extend it. I have no doubts about the Senate acting quickly enough on this measure for it to be signed into law by October 1. We have a chance to do the right thing. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2288.

□ 1245

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the bill, as follows: