

not be attached to a basic, simple, continuation of Government services for 2 to 3 weeks.

Now, some have asked, is this not the way things have always been done, you have attached riders? First of all, never with this magnitude. Second, we have a unique situation here. In my time in Congress, I have never seen the day when two major items happen at the same time. You are faced with a shutdown of the Federal Government, that is tough enough, but the second is even more sweeping, you are faced with a default on the national debt, the first time in over 200 years that that happened. Both of those come to happen this week.

So that is why these votes are so significant. My hope is that this Congress stays in tonight, does its job, and passes a simple continuing resolution to keep the Government and a simple extension so that the Government can borrow money to pay back debts and the Government keeps functioning.

#### PLACING THE BLAME FOR A GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, it is going to be a sad situation across the Nation tomorrow—800,000 Federal employees will be sent home. It is a crisis in our Government that is totally unnecessary. It is a political crisis that was created here in this Chamber. You have to really recount the history of how we reached this point to understand how it was totally avoidable.

You see, the Republicans took control of the House of Representatives this year and announced they were going to do things differently. The first announcement they had was they would pass something called the Contract With America, something that Speaker GINGRICH had published in TV Guide and believed that since it appeared in TV Guide, he had a mandate from the American people. So he brought 31 bills to the floor of the House of Representatives. The Speaker, Mr. GINGRICH, and his Republican majority, considered those 31 bills and passed many of them and sent them over to the other body.

The net result of 100 days of deliberation and debate on those 31 bills on the Contract with America was to have signed into law three bills. Three bills, out of 31. So 100 days were wasted at the beginning of the session, and it cost us dearly. The Committee on the Budget, which had a big job already, was delayed in its deliberations because of all the time eaten up by this TV Guide strategy for the Contract With America, this so-called PR extravaganza. So the Committee on the Budget came in with their report exactly 1 month later.

The Committee on the Budget has to do its work and pass its resolution be-

fore the appropriations committees that come up with the spending bills can do theirs. So the appropriations committees were slowed down.

The net result was a traffic jam, the end of it on October 1, when the Republican majority in the House and Senate were required to present to the President 13 appropriations bills to keep government running. Six weeks ago, on October 1, they presented three bills. Three out of 13.

You cannot blame the Democrats for that. Republicans are in the majority. The Republicans are in control. One of the big problems they had was that the special interest groups all wanted to put an amendment on each of those appropriations bills. Some of the amendments were virtually outrageous. They had one 28 page amendment that they put on the Veterans Administration and HUD bill. This 28 page amendment abolished 14 environmental protection laws.

The lobby out here, the corridor, was lined with special interest groups and lobbyists in pretty shoes trying to get their amendments on the bills so that they could be somehow absolved from responsibility of clean water and clean air.

Well, they managed to do it the first two times. Finally, the third time, 54 Republicans bolted from Speaker GINGRICH and said "We cannot stand this anymore. We are going to vote with the Democrats." And they took that amendment off. That is just one bill. It is one explanation why only three of the 13 appropriations bills ever made it down to the White House.

So now we come to this situation where the government cannot continue to run because Speaker GINGRICH and the Republicans could not produce appropriations bills. So we passed something called a continuing resolution, keeping the government continuing in operation while we figure out how to solve the big questions.

The continuing resolution has been a time honored tradition around here. We sent them down to the President, they sign them, the government keeps going on for a few weeks while we resolve our differences. This time Speaker GINGRICH had a little tricky one to put in there, 9 lines out of a 53-page bill. And in those nine lines, he increased Medicare premiums on senior citizens as of January 1 by 25 percent. The Speaker knew better. The President said he would never sign it. The Democrats opposed it. We do not want senior citizens on Medicare paying 25 percent more in their premiums.

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And so the President has said he will veto it. And now we face the prospect that the Federal Government will shut down.

Mr. Speaker, it is a sad situation. It does not reflect well on either party. It does not reflect well on the President or on Congress, but I think the President was right. The President was

right in vetoing that bill. There is no reason why we should demand Medicare premiums increases as a price for keeping the Federal Government in operation.

As a matter of fact, the gentleman from New Mexico, Senator DOMENICI, a Republican Senator, today came up with a reasonable compromise, and he is a reasonable man. He said let us freeze that Medicare rate and keep government in operation while we work toward a balanced budget, which we all want to see. That is a reasonable thing. Unfortunately, many of the Republican leaders said to him, sit down and be quiet, we have another strategy.

Their strategy, Mr. Speaker, involves not just shutting down the Federal Government but also, for the first time in the history of the United States of America, we run the potential of defaulting on our national debt. Now, none of us like the fact that America is in debt, but we are all proud of the fact that when we say the full faith and credit of the United States of America it means something. Not just here but around the world. That is our integrity. That is our reputation. That is our credit rating.

The Republicans, because they will not pass a debt extension limit, are jeopardizing that credit rating for the United States of America. That goes far beyond what is necessary. What we need is a bipartisan commonsense approach. Stop the political gamesmanship and do it immediately.

#### AMERICAN PEOPLE OPPOSE EXTREME REPUBLICAN BUDGET

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, we all know that Speaker GINGRICH holds a doctorate in history, but over the weekend he may have earned a doctorate in revisionist history as well.

Mr. GINGRICH spend the weekend trying to blame President Clinton for this budget impasse. If we take a quick review of history, however, recent history, it reveals the true culprit is NEWT GINGRICH himself. Since April Speaker GINGRICH has been threatening to shut down the government and throw the country into default. Quite frankly, he is the only person that has talked about shutting the government down.

But now the day of reckoning has arrived and the Speaker has developed a very serious case of cold feet, so he is desperately trying to blame the President. The fact remains that it is the Speaker who put this blackmail scheme into motion months ago.

Take a look at what Speaker GINGRICH was saying in April. He said the President will veto a number of things and we will then put them all on this debt ceiling that everyone is talking about, and then we will decide how big a crisis that he wants, quoting the Washington Times April 3, 1995.