

AN APOLOGY

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, Friday evening the gentleman from California [Mr. CUNNINGHAM] directed an inappropriate remark at me for which he subsequently apologized. Unfortunately, I responded to that remark in an even less appropriate way by forcing Mr. CUNNINGHAM to leave the House floor with me and then instigating a physical confrontation outside the doors. I acted in a way that is unbecoming a Member of the Congress.

If this were an athletic ring, a top gun Navy fighter pilot the size of DUKE CUNNINGHAM would certainly have made for a fair fight of it. But we are supposed to be engaged in a battle of ideas, demonstrating to the American people and other countries how we settle our differences in a nonviolent way.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM deserves an apology from me. I hereby offer one.

□ 1430

FINALLY A PLAN TO BALANCE
THE BUDGET IN 7 YEARS

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

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, this is a truly historical day in this country, not because we have agreement on a final balanced budget plan, but because we finally have the executive branch and the legislative branch agreeing to balance the budget in 7 years.

Now we have seen a lot of flip-flops over the past year. We are going to put that behind us. We are going to do what it takes to protect and preserve Medicare and to also balance our budget for the next generation.

Of course, we have heard the Democrats attacking our plans on Medicare, saying that it was mean-spirited, but let us hear what the Washington Post had to say about the difference between the plans. They said:

Though many of the President's advisers think the GOP's proposal is sensible and it differs little from his own plan, the President fired sound bites from the Oval Office daily taking the low road in ways that only Washington pundits could recast as standing trial.

Let us forget the demagoguery, let us admit that there is only \$4 difference between our Medicare and the President's Medicare plan, and let us get on with the people's business, and stop looking at the polls, and do what is right. That is why we were elected, and that is the principle that we stand firmly on.

Balance the budget for the next generation.

THANKSGIVING INTROSPECTION

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, among those many blessings for which we can give thanks this Thanksgiving, one is our good fortune at being a part of the greatest Nation in the world.

Yes, I have listened to those who come almost daily to this House floor to whine about almost everything that has happened in this country over the last six decades, beginning with President Roosevelt signing Social Security into law, something they have never gotten over. But while we are gathered at the Thanksgiving table this Thursday, let us look at our own families and think what we want our national priorities to be.

As we look at the oldest member of our family, do we want to deny her health care security just in order to give those who have the most another tax break? As we look at the youngest, do we want to put more obstacles in the way of their educational opportunities so that they, too, can share in the great bounty of this Nation just in order to give the Pentagon \$7 billion in costly weapons systems it never asked for? And are all of us going to have to buy bottled water next Thanksgiving because this Congress cannot stand up to the polluter lobby? I think not.

The American people can speak out this Thanksgiving about what they have to be thankful for and what they will be thankful for when this budget is concluded.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MY BRAVE
COLLEAGUES FOR STICKING TO
THEIR GUNS

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

Mr. BONO. Mr. Speaker, what really happened?

First of all, the Members that decided to stay on the floor over the weekend accomplished zip, and zero, and nothing. All they did was they, and do not hiss. That is kind of foolish.

Mr. Speaker, all they did was make the Capitol Police stay here on Sunday and keep their staffs here. But what did they accomplish? Nothing.

What happened? We finally made the President understand that he had to balance the budget in 7 years. No one else did. We did by sticking to our position. Eventually it dawned on the President that he had to balance the budget, and, therefore, he can no longer play any more games, and we got what we wanted.

Other than that, that was what occurred over the weekend so we had a lot of brave Members here, and I congratulate all of my colleagues for sticking to their guns, and that is all that brought this about, nothing else. Everything is rhetoric.

BALANCING THE BUDGET IN A
FAIR AND EQUITABLE WAY

(Mrs. MEEK of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I think that, as we are on the brink of having a chance to balance the budget in a fair and equitable way, I am begging that we take into consideration the crisis which exists for the veterans in this country with the current budget put forth by Republicans. The budget is setting, as it is now, a double whammy on veterans. Do my colleagues realize that Medicaid has been cut, and the Medicaid cuts alone would force as many as 172,000 veterans to lose Medicaid coverage in the year 2002.

I come before my colleagues this morning to beg that they watch what is happening to the veterans of this country because these are the people who went to wars and to foreign wars to help each of us, so it is up to us now to be sure that in addition to the harsh Medicaid cuts, look at the cuts in the VA budget that are going to severely impact veterans.

And I want to say to my Republican friends we are spending a lot of money on the military budget. Let us think of those who have already extended their lives into the military.

SEVEN YEARS MEANS SEVEN
YEARS

(Mr. LIVINGSTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, Medicaid has gone up, Medicare has gone up, veterans benefits are going up. But 7 years is not going up. Seven years means seven years. The President committed to 7 years, not 8, 9, 10, 12, anything else. He committed to 7 years last night, and we are going to hold him to it. This is not a goal of a balanced budget in 7 years, it is a commitment, it is a contract, a rock solid contract.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have to go through the implementing legislation. The President has to provide his guidelines on how he wants to reach that 7-year balanced budget. We will look at his figures. But it is going to be balanced within 7 years according to Congressional Budget Office scoring. That is a deal.

NO MORE BRINKSMANSHIP WITH
FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, Republicans have focused on the No. 7. Now focus on the No. 4 for Medicare, Medicaid, then education, and the environment. President Clinton has explained that the agreement means, "nothing will be agreed to unless all elements