

Mr. Speaker, this is family unfriendly, because this House, your House, has failed to do its duty. You did not pass your budget in time, you did not pass your appropriations in time, you failed to realize how the Constitution works. And if all of America does not accept your budget, Medicare cuts, tax cuts and all, then there is no deal, no Christmas, sorry, kids, sorry, America.

The Constitution does not work that way. This Congress is not working the way that our forefathers intended it to.

TIME TO BALANCE BUDGET IS NOW

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

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, the time to balance the budget is now. For 40 years, the liberal politicians in this town were willing to put off decisions until tomorrow. And look what it got us—a 5 trillion dollar debt.

No, let me rephrase that. Look what it got our children—a 5 trillion dollar debt. You see, Mr. Speaker, that's what this debate is really about. It's about our children and it's about our children's children. Unless we stand firm now, their future doesn't look very bright. But if we can just restrain our spending, we can help restore the American dream for our children.

That is a Christmas gift worth giving the American people. Mr. Speaker, I'm tired of hearing excuses from the President. It's time to do the right thing for our children's future—it's time to balance the budget. So we ask the President, put a real plan on the table. Help us save the next generation. Balance the budget now.

FREE THE NATION'S CAPITAL

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to alert this body that the Capital of the United States is still hanging out there about to choke. The conference report that was to materialize yesterday did not because of the complications here and in the Senate.

The conference report, I am told, will come forward today. That would be the ball game. That is the right way to handle this. We are already into extra innings that are killing the Capital of the United States.

An agreement structured by the Speaker himself will come before us as the conference report. Vouchers will be out, not because this body wanted them out or because the Speaker wanted them out, but because of a filibuster in the Senate. It is an act of leadership by the Speaker to bring it forward, and I appreciate that. I understand he will speak for it.

It would be easy for this body to sit this out, but nobody wants to shut the

Capital of the United States down. We are now running on empty. Even the gentleman from New York [Mr. WALSH], who does not support this report, does not want to shut the District down. Do the responsible thing; free the District of Columbia.

TIME FOR SECRETARY O'LEARY TO RESIGN AND FOR THE PRESIDENT TO NEGOTIATE A BALANCED BUDGET

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, it is no wonder the President is unable to come up with a balanced budget. He has Secretary O'Leary tied around his neck like a millstone. Secretary O'Leary has taken 16 international trips, she takes as many as 50 staffers with her, 60 other guests, she hires photographers and video crews to catch her at her best. She has 520 public relations employees. She has a personal media consultant, even hired a private investigative firm to see what reporters and Congressmen are trying to see which reporters and Congressmen tarnish her image, all at a cost of about \$30 million to taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, it is not about the tax breaks for the rich or Medicare. That is all bogus. It is about wasting millions of dollars. Mike Royko of the Washington Times had it right:

Buy a rope, tie one end of the rope to Mrs. O'Leary's ankle, tie the other end to her desk. See, whipping the deficit doesn't seem to be so complicated.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for Secretary O'Leary to resign, and it is time for the President to honestly negotiate a balanced budget.

TIME TO STOP PLAYING GAMES

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, last month, Speaker GINGRICH shut down the Government because he did not like his seat on Air Force One. Now he is at it again.

This time Speaker GINGRICH has shut down the Government to try to get his way on the budget, throwing more than 200,000 people out of work a week before Christmas. These families are being used as pawns in the Speaker's attempt to force through huge cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment, all to pay for a \$245 billion tax break for the wealthiest Americans.

Mr. Speaker, they are so wedded to this tax break, the crown jewel of the Contract on America, that they are willing to put the lives of 200,000 working Americans at risk. These folks are not being paid one week before Christmas holidays, and they are willing to put those lives at risk in order to give their rich CEO friends this tax break.

Stop playing games with people's lives. Have a budget that protects Medicare, Medicaid, and America's priorities.

BEAM ME UP

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

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to point out to the gentlewoman who just spoke that as she well knows, it was the President who vetoed three bills that could have put all of those workers back to back.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOKE. No, I will not yield.

Ms. DELAURO. If the gentleman will yield, he knows that is not true.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I have got to tell you about something I read in the paper this morning. It says Clinton told reporters before yesterday's meeting that now he thinks it is possible to reach the GOP goal of a balanced budget by 2002, using the conservative economic calculations by CBO.

Mr. Speaker, in the words of my good friend, fellow Ohioan and honorary theme team member, "Beam me up." Beam me up. It is unbelievable. The President says that he thinks it is possible to reach the GOP goal of a balanced budget by 2002. Did he read the language of the CR that he personally signed into law before he signed it? Did he read that language agreeing to do exactly that 30 days ago? And now he tells us, now he tells us that he thinks well, maybe it is possible to do that.

Mr. Speaker, what planet is the President on? This is just incredible.

AMBASSADOR SPIEGEL DESERVES OUR RESPECT

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

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, in the Washington Post this morning there is a report about the majority leader and the Speaker expressing concern about remarks made by Ambassador Dan Spiegel, our U.N. representative in Geneva, for allegedly attacking the Congress.

Mr. Speaker, Ambassador Spiegel's remarks were taken out of context. He was not attacking the Congress. He was discussing the impact of a growing isolationist trend which has had a devastating impact on our payments to the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

Dan Spiegel worked in the U.S. Senate for 6 years for Senator Hubert Humphrey. He has great respect for this institution. In any event, Ambassador Spiegel has apologized and the matter should be put to rest.

Mr. Speaker, Ambassador Spiegel is one of our best ambassadors. We should now move on, now that his remarks have been clarified. He deserves our

strong support, as he has an outstanding record, both from the private as well as the public sector.

TIME FOR THE PRESIDENT TO LEAD

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

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, the most frightening thing today is the fact that we have a President that is not leading, but that he engages in fear tactics to scare the elderly about Medicare, when the fact is there is only 2 percent difference in the Medicare plan that we have and what the President has, \$138 difference over a whole year in the year 2002.

The fact of the matter is the President is not concerned about Medicare, he is concerned about AmeriCorps, he is concerned about all the liberal social programs that he wants to spend dollars on and bankrupt our economy and not provide a future for our children.

Mr. Speaker, it is time the President starts to lead us into the 21st century and save this Nation from economic disaster. It is time to save the future for my 13-year-old daughter and my 24-year-old son. It is time for the President to be the President and lead this Nation and do the right thing.

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE 104TH CONGRESS

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

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise on this cold, wintry day here at the end of the year to remind us how it all got started. Remember we were here last January with all our families when a new leadership took over, a leadership that promised that this Congress would be family friendly, that we would have an ambitious agenda, that they would deliver their Contract on America, and that first 100 days they really went to work. They did a lot and celebrated here with great big circuses and things like that.

Mr. Speaker, look at it at the end of the year. We have been in Congress more days, cast more votes, and done less than any Congress in history. No budget bill was adopted on time, none of the appropriation bills were adopted on time. Why? All because of stubbornness of the Speaker to keep a tax break, keep a promise.

□ 1030

Look at what the Speaker said. He said, "I do not care what the price is. I do not care if we have no executive offices and no bonds for 30 days. Not at this time."

This Speaker has shut down Washington just at Christmas time. Well, Mr. Speaker, join the spirit of Christmas, start giving. Give up the tax break.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES AND OTHERS HURT DUE TO SHUTDOWN CAUSED BY DISAGREEMENT ON BUDGET

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

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, we hear there is a ray of light and hope in the Budget Balancing Act that is going on. I certainly hope so, because it is about time. I urge the President to work with the leadership to develop the balanced budget plan.

We have 260,000 families who have been furloughed, Federal employees furloughed. And their families and their friends, they are worried, demoralized, filled with anguish, lacking self-esteem, and here it is during a holiday season. They do want to work.

I have also heard from Federal employees who are not furloughed. They are frustrated that they cannot get their work done during the shutdown. It poses serious threats when a pharmacist cannot send out a prescription, NIH must stop research and CDC has furloughed 61 percent of its employees.

Some of the other effects of the shutdown will cost \$40 million a day in lost wages in the private sector. For each day of the shutdown 2,500 families will not be able to close on their mortgages because new Federal housing insurance guarantees were stopped, removing \$200 million a day in housing transacted from the economy. Two hundred sixty businesses that receive SBA loans will not get financing, and maybe later on welfare and veterans benefits will be delayed. Let us get on and let the light shine through and come to a conclusion.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN DUE TO FISCAL MISMANAGEMENT BY NEW MAJORITY

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

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, I do not think there is one American business or one American family that would dare run their finances the way the Republican leadership is running the finances of this country. We are now one quarter of the way, almost, into this fiscal year, and 75 percent of the domestic budget has not passed yet; 75 percent. Imagine.

What is their excuse? They do not like, or they cannot agree on projections as to what is going to happen 7 years from now. Hey, try that when they come and ask us to pay our bills, and we say I cannot pay my bills yet because I have not put my budget together yet because I have not figured out what kind of predictions are going to be 7 years out.

This is all to distract people on the fact of the tremendous mismanagement, the fiscal mismanagement of

this Government. It is an outrage that many people are out on the streets, that veterans may not get their checks, that we can go on and on and on, and this is the first time in history we have had two shutdowns.

This is outrageous.

PRESIDENT AND DEMOCRATS WISH TO AVOID BALANCING THE BUDGET

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

Mr. BAKER of California. Mr. Speaker, this morning I want to read a brief section from this morning's New York Times concerning yesterday's budget meeting between the President, Vice President, Speaker GINGRICH, and Senator DOLE:

Vice President Al Gore, who attended the oval office session and called it "constructive," said there was a "slight misunderstanding," and that there had been no pledge to use the Congressional Budget Office's assumptions. He also said no timetable had been set.

"But minutes later, Michael D. McCurry, the White House Press Secretary, scurried," this is their quote, "to amend Mr. GORE's remarks and said the President has agreed that when any individual part of the budget was discussed, the parties would use Congressional Budget Office estimates of how much it would save or cost."

Mr. Speaker, this revealing exchange points up a simple fact. We are hearing from the White House the dying gasp of liberalism, the ferocious efforts of our Democratic colleagues to avoid balancing the budget, reflected by the Vice President's frantic efforts to back away from fiscal integrity.

The President signed a law he has now reaffirmed: to balance the budget. Mr. Speaker, the Republican Congress will stay here as long as it takes to get a balanced budget, lower taxes, less centralized government, lower interest rates, a brighter future for America's seniors and children and all future generations.

REPUBLICANS' IDEA OF BALANCING THE BUDGET IS NOT BALANCED FOR ALL AMERICANS

(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, could it be too much Christmas eggnog? Surely there must be some explanation as to why our Republican colleagues continue to insist on a balanced budget that has no balance for ordinary American families. For the privileged, of course, this budget is what one might call the eat-dessert-first approach.

They propose to provide tax breaks to the privileged in our society and to give a lot of them out next year on election eve. They will actually, under