

continuing resolution passed. I am going to support that. If the leadership of the House brings it to the floor, we ought to vote on it and get it done. But I do not think it should stop there.

I am concerned about the people who work in the Forest Service, who work in the Park Service, who work in the Department of the Interior and the people who work at Health and Human Services, all these other agencies who are not going to be taken care of. It is very obvious that, when there is a little heat put on, the majority is willing to make some adjustments. So if the American people want this Government to operate, they are going to have to make sure that the new Members who were elected last time hear from their constituents that they want this Government reopened and started.

This is ridiculous, and then there is no justification for it. This is the worst crisis we have had in terms, I think, of the confidence of the people of this country about our Government. What the Republican majority wants is for Bill Clinton to capitulate and accept their very radical prescription for the budget. The American people do not accept the levels of cuts in Medicare and Medicaid. I think it is preposterous to have a \$254 billion tax cut when we are trying to balance the budget. That tax cut makes it incumbent upon the majority then to make these very large cuts in Medicare and Medicaid and also in education and other very sensitive and important programs to the American people.

I just hope we can bring some common sense back. I hope that the senior Members in the Democratic Party, the senior Members in the Republican Caucus can bring some sense back to this institution and do our job. We should initiate a continuing resolution to get these people back to work.

I feel sorry for the Government workers and their families who at this Christmas time are being denied their work, their opportunity to earn a living, because of this impasse.

I also urge the President to stand his ground. He should not capitulate. He should not accept this radical agenda. I am very upset about this. I am very upset and feel very badly for the people and their families who are being forced out of work because of this inability to reach an agreement.

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DICKS. I yield to the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. VOLKMER. It becomes very obvious to me at least, maybe not others, that there are those, especially among the freshman group, after listening to one of the freshman speak earlier today, that they almost relish the Government shutting down. The Federal Government is the enemy. They want to take it down to nothing.

I can remember back when I had a conservative tell me that the Federal Government should defend our shores, deliver the mail, and get out of our

pocketbooks. In other words, that is all the Federal Government should do. That is what I am hearing here, especially among the radical ones, that they want to shut the Federal Government down. To them there is nothing wrong with it. That is what one of the freshmen said earlier today.

JUST THE TRUTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WHITE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SCARBOROUGH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, people are talking about how disappointed they are and how sad they are. Let me say what saddens me, that people can get on this floor with a straight face, with a straight face, mind you, and still spread the untruth that we are cutting Medicare. I hear that we are slashing Medicare. It is a radical agenda.

I had a member of my district call and say, please, will somebody tell me who is telling the truth up in Washington. The President keeps saying that he is shutting down the Government, and he is not going to pass the first balanced budget in a generation because you are radically cutting Medicare.

I do not want to call the President of the United States a liar, and I will not. I will let the Washington Post, the New Republic, and members of the President's own staff, former staff do this. This is the front cover of the New Republic. It says why the Democrats' demagoguery is even worse than you thought. The New Republic is one of the most liberal publications in America since 1914. It is flat out saying the President is not telling the truth.

The Washington Post writes an editorial. What saddens me, what deeply saddens me is every person that comes up and says that we are slashing Medicare is, A, either knowing that that is not true or, B, is ignorant of the facts. Ignorant of the facts that the Washington Post points out, when they say that the Democrats led by the President have chosen instead to present themselves as Medicare's great protectors, they have shamelessly used the issue, demagogued on it because they think that is where the votes are and the way to derail the Republicans.

The President was still doing it this week. A Republican proposal to increase Medicare premiums was the reason he alleged to veto and shut down the Government. But never mind the fact that the President himself would countenance the same increase. The Washington Post—this is not from NEWT GINGRICH. Wake up, America. Wake up. This is from the Washington Post, the New Republic: We are being called radical.

Do you know what is so radical about our plan, that on Medicare, we are doing the same exact thing that President Clinton and Hillary Clinton said

we needed to do 2 years ago. Hillary Clinton, shake your head, Hillary Clinton testified on Capitol Hill that we needed to slow the growth in Medicare to twice the rate of inflation. She suggested 6½ percent. The Republican plan increases it to 7 percent. Furthermore, spending on Medicare explodes to 65 percent over the next 7 years.

The press knows it. The press has stated as much. The markets have stated as much. Everybody knows the truth. Do not believe me, do not believe NEWT GINGRICH, do not believe the Democrats. Listen to what neutral observers are saying. They are trying to scare senior citizens because they are devoid of any plan to balance the budget in 7 years.

The New Republic has said it. The Washington Post has said it. The Washington Times has said it. The Wall Street Journal has said it. Editorial boards around America have said it. They said it this past week when they called Leon Panetta on the carpet on This Week with David Brinkley.

Do my colleagues know what Leon Panetta's final remark was? Well, it is just to give the rich tax cuts. Let me tell my colleagues, check it out. Eighty-nine percent of these tax cuts for the so-called rich, 89 percent as scored by CBO, goes to families earning under \$75,000. Check it out. Check out the truth.

Is \$75,000 or less for a family the way that Bill Clinton defines rich these days? If so, I think he needs to lead a Third World country instead of America, because there are a lot of people with three or four children making \$75,000 or less that have trouble getting by. If that is a tax cut for the rich, label me guilty. I am sick and tired of what is going on. I just want to hear the truth. Give me some truth.

REPUBLICAN PROPOSAL ON MEDICARE

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

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, that was quite a display we just saw, for all the fire and volume, kind of a temper tantrum really at the rostrum. I think it is very unfortunate that we are not proceeding in more of a thoughtful way reflective of the weighty issues that we have responsibility to resolve.

The gentleman hollering, describing how nothing is impacted under the Republican-passed budget regarding Medicare, in point of fact that is simply not the case. The part B premium alone, Mr. Speaker, \$46.10 a month today, in the final year of the Republican plan that will be \$88.90, compared to \$46.10.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. POMEROY. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Would the gentleman also admit that under the

President's plan there is only a \$4 difference between the Republican plan and the President's own plan?

Mr. POMEROY. Reclaiming my time, it is not at all clear to me where the administration is on the part B premium number. But I will tell the gentleman this. The only plan that virtually doubles the part B premium is the GOP-passed budget resolution.

Let me tell my colleagues another thing. I used to regulate insurance. I spent a lot of time dealing with the insurance needs of senior citizens in the State that I represent. There is an issue called balanced billing. In the old days, I mean back just now a decade, even less than that, Medicare would pay a portion of the bill, but the physician could bill the senior citizen that amount. Then any amount more, Medicare would pay the Medicare part, but the senior citizen out of pocket would be eligible for the difference.

Congress in its wisdom a few years ago in a bipartisan vote voted to say, no, no, no, doctors, you cannot charge unlimited amounts over Medicare. You can only bill in fact when fully implemented, I believe the difference is 15 percent over what Medicare approves as an appropriate charge. If you are in an indemnity plan under the Republican budget, you are again exposed to that virtually unlimited amount over what is a Medicare approved charge.

So we can talk differences in part B premium. I believe they are very serious differences, new out-of-pocket costs for seniors. But I think even more serious is this whole business of balanced billing, the physician billing over and above what the Medicare has said is an acceptable charge.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, please just clarify for me. The administration proposal is scored, shows a \$4 difference in the year 2002 between the Republican plan. I mentioned that before, and then the gentleman said that he did not know if that was the case, but said the Republican plan was the only plan that doubled premiums. If in fact that is the case and that has been documented in the Post and other publications, then the President's plan too would double it, would it not, if there is only a \$4 difference in premiums in 2002?

Mr. POMEROY. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, the only plan that causes part B premiums to double is the GOP budget plan. The things that the gentleman does not consider Medicare cuts in fact to a senior citizen that suddenly has to pay a lot more out of pocket because Medicare does not pay it anyone, I am telling the gentleman, they think their benefits have been cut. They think it in a very real and personal way.

I yielded happily to my friend from South Carolina, and we had an interesting exchange. In fact I wish we had a lot more of that going on right now in constructive circumstances, most particularly at a negotiating table.

I have been in public life a long time. It has been my opportunity, I have not

been in Congress long, but I have got the opportunity to work for public issues on behalf of North Dakotans in the State legislature and for the insurance commissioner. In addition to that, I was in the private sector practicing law in my hometown. I have been involved in lots of negotiations, lots and lots of negotiations.

What I learned is, you come to the table with the position. You care deeply about it. The other side comes to the table with a position. They care deeply about that. And then you start to deal. I do not mean callously, just cutting deals willy-nilly. But you begin to negotiate, engaging the other side, talking about the things that really matter to you, trying to find common grounds.

I think it is a tragedy that this afternoon, with the Federal Government, portions of it shut down, with budget talks at an impasse, we do not have this kind of negotiation under way. I urge all of my colleagues to insist we get negotiations underway and let us fund Government while these important talks proceed.

DO NOT PLAY POLITICS WITH MEDICARE OR THE BUDGET

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, prior to coming to the U.S. Congress, I used to practice medicine. I practiced internal medicine and half of my patients were senior citizens. I do hope someday to be able to go back to my practice and resume taking care of senior citizens because I very much enjoy that type of practice. I have always like caring for seniors.

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They are all in the Medicare program. The Medicare Program has been a tremendous success. I think it has been instrumental in prolonging lives of seniors. And one of the key components of our balanced budget plan that we put on the President's desk is maintaining the solvency of the Medicare plan that makes sure that it will be there for seniors, and all we have done with this plan is we have done exactly what the President and the First Lady said needed to be done in 1993 when they were pushing their health care plan. They said, and if I may paraphrase them if I do not quote them exactly right, is that all you need to do is lower the inflation rate in the Medicare plan from where it is right now, 10 or 11 percent down to about 7 percent, and the plan comes into balance.

Now there has been a lot of stuff said about the Medicare Part B premium. The GOP plan is going to double the Medicare Part B premium over the next 7 years. Well, guess what, my colleagues. Under the Democrats who have controlled this House for 40 years, guess what? Over the last 7 years the Medicare Part B premium doubled, they doubled the premium the last 7

years. Under the President's proposal it is going to much double. But, you know what? Next year, in the election year, under the President's proposal, he wants to reduce the Medicare Part B premium, and then he will increase it steadily every year thereafter once he is firmly ensconced in the White House for another 4 years.

I believe this is wrong, that you should not play politics with a program as important as Medicare which provides health care for our seniors. I also think you should not be playing politics with an issue as important, as crucial, as balancing our budget in 7 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ran on a campaign that says you must balance the budget in 7 years, and there was a very, very high degree of frustration amongst the voters in my district because they heard about Gramm-Rudman, they heard about the budget deal of 1987, they heard about the budget deal of 1990, and the tax increase of 1990 and how that was going to balance our budget, and then they heard again about the 1993 program, how this was finally going to do it.

Here we go again in 1995. We have got \$200—\$180 billion deficit, and the budget that the President presented to us scored by the CBO, an agency that the President himself said is the group that should be scoring the budgets, says that his budget is going to be in debt, show deficits \$200 billion a year out of 5 to 7 years into the plan. He finally produced a slightly better budget that was only going to have a deficit of about \$100—120 billion a year.

Now what we are saying, what the Republican freshmen are saying, is enough is enough, no more smoke and mirrors. We want a budget that is going to balance in 7 years.

Now there are a lot of people getting up here and saying, "Oh, we need to do a continuing resolution and get the Government open." I have got a lot of Government workers in my district. I have got Kennedy Space Center. I have got engineers who are furloughed, and guess what, my colleagues on that side of the aisle? They call me up, and they send me letters, and they say, "Don't give in. I know I'm laid off, I know I'm not working, but you have got to balance the budget. We cannot continue to run these deficits." Mr. Speaker, they tell me it is immoral, they want me to hang tough, they do not want me to cave in. They want the budget balanced, and they want the budget balanced in 7 years.

Indeed I got a phone call yesterday from a Democrat who told me that everything we are doing is right. He said, "Don't give in."

Now I am not going to vote for another CR. We signed a CR 3 or 4 weeks ago, and what happened? That gave the President the chance to waffle for 3 or 4 weeks and the AFL-CIO 3 to 4 weeks to run million-dollar-a-day ads trying to get us not to balance the budget.