

under the Republican Medicare proposal.

They are programs which took decades to evolve and refine.

If they are gutted by these senseless cuts, these programs will be virtually impossible to reconstruct.

The proposal to cut formulas for Medicare graduate medical education and disproportionate share payments would devastate New York's hospitals.

Fifteen percent of all medical residents in the America are educated in New York metropolitan area hospitals.

New York City's hospitals also serve an unusually high proportion of special needs patients: the elderly, the disabled, the chronically ill, and the poor.

Overall Medicare payment rates determine indirect Medical education and disproportionate share payments.

If those payments are reduced because of smaller inflation adjustments, New York's hospitals would be hit with a double whammy.

Graduate Medical Education would be further devastated by new restrictions on training international residents, who comprise 45 percent of all residents.

What country a resident comes from is unimportant as long as he or she is saving American lives.

New York's world-renowned hospital system is struggling to stay afloat TODAY.

These cuts are far in excess of what that system can absorb without catastrophic consequences.

Medicaid cuts will especially hurt New York nursing homes and other long-term care providers, who rely on Medicaid for 90 percent of all payments.

That will trickle down to middle class families, who could be bankrupted by simply giving their parents quality care in their old age.

Mr. Speaker, it comes down to this.

New York State, with 7 percent of the population, would absorb 11 percent of the cuts in Medicare and Medicaid.

New York City, with 2.9 percent of the population, would absorb 6.5 percent of these cuts.

These numbers don't just represent dollars.

These numbers represent lives.

Thousands of lives lost, ruined or needlessly compromised.

There are numbers in this budget that we can cut which will NOT represent lives.

It's time to spare these critically important health care programs for our seniors, our poor, our disabled and our people.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 134, FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS TO ENSURE PAYMENT OF VETERANS BENEFITS

Mr. LINDER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104-428) on the resolution (H. Res. 317) providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 134) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 1996, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1655, INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1996

Mr. LINDER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104-429) on the resolution (H. Res. 318) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 1655) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1996 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the U.S. Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 134, FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS TO ENSURE PAYMENT OF VETERANS BENEFITS

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 317 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 317

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 134) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 1996, and for other purposes. The joint resolution shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit. The motion to recommit may include instructions only if offered by the Minority Leader or his designee.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia [Mr. LINDER] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. FROST], pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 317 allows for consideration of House Joint Resolution 134, which will make further continuing appropriation to ensure that our veterans continue to receive the payment of their benefits during the budget negotiations and the current partial Government shutdown. The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations.

The rule also provides for one motion to recommit which may include instructions if offered by the minority leader or his designee.

Earlier this week, the President vetoed the conference report for the VA-HUD appropriations for fiscal year 1996,

and as a result, put the Government in the position of renegeing on its promise to pay veterans benefits checks. We cannot allow our veterans to lose these benefits, and this Congress will take any action to protect our service men and women and their families.

This is a simple resolution which deals with one specific issue in our Federal budget that we in Congress believe is important enough to merit this action. This resolution provides a temporary solution by ensuring the payment of veterans benefits in the event of a lack of appropriations through fiscal year 1996.

Mr. Speaker, the 3.3 million veterans in the United States and their dependents not only look forward to and need these benefits—they deserve these benefits. If we do not act on this temporary funding measure tonight, our veterans and their dependents who are expecting benefit checks will see a delay in the receipt of these critical funds.

I have co-sponsored this resolution and I strongly support this action to provide our veterans with the benefits that they have earned and rightly deserve. Despite the importance of the budget negotiations to the future of our Nation, there is no arguing that the men and women who have served this Nation do not deserve the financial uncertainty that may occur. Both parties are responsible for putting this Nation into the fiscal mess that we now face, but this resolution shows that we will not punish those who have put their lives on the line to protect the freedoms that we enjoy today.

This resolution was unanimously approved by the Rules Committee and it is a fair resolution that will assure that our veterans receive the benefits they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I thank my colleague from Georgia for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Mr. Speaker this continuing resolution is a very small step in the right direction.

This resolution says to American veterans that they should not have to pay the price for this ridiculous game of political brinkmanship my Republican colleagues are playing. What I do not understand Mr. Speaker, is why my republican colleagues believe the entire country should pay this price.

Why don't my republican colleagues tell the 383,000 people who are shut out of National Park Service facilities every day that Congress cares about them too?

Why don't my republican colleagues tell the 80,000 people who are shut out of the Smithsonian and the National Zoo every day that Congress cares about them too?

Why don't my republican colleagues tell the 2,500 people whose FHA home purchase loans aren't being processed that we care about them too?

As the gentleman from Massachusetts noted up in the Rules Committee earlier this evening, although the Speaker and the Majority Leader supposedly had a very productive discussion with the President, a funny thing happened to the Speaker at the Republican conference, he found out his radical colleagues would rather cut Medicare and Medicaid than keep the Government running. He found out that Members of the Republican Party won't let a continuing resolution come to the floor at all.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the country will support my attempt to defeat the previous question in order to expand this continuing resolution to the entire Government, not just the veterans.

I'm sure the country wants Congressional Republicans to stop these games, leave Medicare alone, and fund the entire Federal Government through January 26.

I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question.

□ 1900

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is worth pointing out that the State of Arizona has kept the Grand Canyon open by working out an intergovernmental agreement.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX].

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise to support House Joint Res. 134. This is a bipartisan effort under the leadership of the gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. HUTCHINSON], the chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs' Subcommittee on Hospitals and Health Care, and our chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON]. This legislation would ensure, Mr. Speaker, the payments to more than 3.3 million veterans and their dependents will continue to be made on schedule during the current partial Government shutdown. The bill also ensures vendor payments to contractors who supply the Veterans Administration with products and services vital to the health and the safety of our VA patients.

The Hutchinson-Livingston bill currently has the support of nearly 30 Members of both parties and obviously, by the number of speakers here this evening, many more Members of the House are in support of this important legislation.

The President's veto of the VA-HUD appropriation bill means the veterans' benefit checks will not be paid on time next month, and veterans may be denied needed medical supplies if the partial shutdown continues. The President could have easily signed the bill and avoided putting veterans' benefits at risk and in jeopardy. However, this legislation would solve that problem, and I believe that the Hutchinson-Livingston bill will assure that GI bill benefits, compensation, and pension pay-

ments for veterans will continue, as well as dependency payments and indemnity compensation for survivors of veterans are made on schedule.

So, I support this legislation, and, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to unanimously vote for its adoption.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY], the ranking Democratic Member on the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, there is not a day that goes by that when I pass the Capitol and take a look at the dome that I am not immensely proud of the privilege that I have of representing the people of my district in this Congress of the United States, in this great Capitol Building. I have profound respect and love for this institution and respect for every Member in it because of what they represent and who they represent. But I have to say there are some times when I get very disappointed about the conduct of this institution and people in this institution, and tonight is one such occasion.

Anybody who knows me knows that I have strong partisan views and I am not afraid to express them. But I think anybody who has worked with me through the years also knows that when it comes to my legislative responsibilities, in dealing with my committee work, that I have always tried to approach that work in a bipartisan way, and I think the record speaks for itself. We produced 9 appropriations subcommittee bills under my chairmanship, all of which were bipartisan, and when I chaired the Committee on Appropriations last year, we produced an allocation of budget resources to all 13 subcommittees, which was a bipartisan allocation.

I think we need that same approach tonight.

Last night the networks told the country that the President, and the Speaker, and Senator DOLE had begun talking again about the budget, and, as the networks showed tonight, Mr. Pannetta came down here today expecting to try to negotiate on that and on the question of reopening the Federal Government. We are then told on the nightly news that the Republican caucus, led by the freshmen, decided to reject any effort whatsoever to reopen the Government until a total deal is consummated between the White House and the leadership of the Congress.

As anyone who understands anything about government knows, even if agreement on policy were reached tonight, it would take a good period of time to draft the legislation necessary to reflect that policy.

If we are truly interested in meeting our bipartisan responsibilities, what we would do is pass this motion before us tonight to allow veterans to be paid their benefits, but we would expand it so that all of Government, which is closed down, is opened. The taxpayers deserve to get the services they are paying for from all the workers in the

Federal Government, not just those in the Veterans Department.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I will be asking at the appropriate time that we defeat the previous question on this rule tonight so that we can offer a resolution which would allow all of the Government to reopen.

I think it is just fine that this proposal would allow us to pay veterans' benefits, disability, pension, education benefits, but it will not allow us to process new claims for veterans' benefits, it will not allow us to deal with the same 2,000 claims a day that come for those benefits it will not allow us to tell our troops who are on the way to Bosnia that they will be guaranteed their military pay raise this year, their COLA, because we are not opening all of the Government under this resolution.

I have talked to many of you on the majority side of the aisle, and I know you as human beings, and I know that there are a good many of you who do not agree with the idea of keeping Government closed down. I understand the peer pressure that is being put upon you. But I ask you to rise above that tonight and do what is necessary to restore some semblance of respect in the country for our processes in this institution by reopening all of Government and dealing with our divisions on long-term budget policy in a restrained, disciplined, and adult manner. That is the only way in my view that we can earn our pay the way the public expects us to earn our pay.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Glens Falls, NY [Mr. SOLOMON], the chairman of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. LINDER] for yielding this time to me, and I would just say to my very good friend, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY], who I have a great deal of respect for, he has been here longer than I have; I have been here for close to 18 years now, I guess; but I just want the gentleman to know, yes, the freshman feel very strongly that we are going to stay here, and we are going to get this job done, we are going to balance this budget. But, as my colleagues know, there are others, too. I feel like an 18-year veteran freshman because I feel the same way.

Mr. Speaker, I have been here during times when Ronald Reagan, when that great President, tried to bring about this revolution. He could not do it because he did not have the control of both Houses. And then I recall a time later on in 1985 when this body had the courage to pass something called Gramm-Rudman. As my colleagues know, that was a balanced budget. That was an attempt to do what we are doing now, to balance the budget over a 5-year period, and even though we did not have the right figures to work with, we were making those cuts.

As my colleagues know, I have a button in my pocket here that says, "It is the spending, stupid," and that is the problem out here.

But my colleagues know we conscientiously, with good Democrats supporting us, passed Gramm-Rudman, and the only problem with it is that in bringing that to a balanced budget over 5 years, we did not make any cuts in years 1, 2, and 3. We only did it in years 4 and 5.

So what happened? The Congress sent out all their press releases, we are going to balance the budget. But then what happened in year 1? We did not have to make the hard cuts, so we got through that, we got through year 2, we got through year 3, and all of a sudden it became too difficult, and we abandoned that attempt to balance the budget.

I am going to say to my friends on the other side of the aisle that is not going to happen this time. No matter what, we are going to balance that budget, and that means staying on the glidepath, staying on that glidepath in the very first year.

Now having said that, that is what I guess I get so upset about, and I am going to be calm here tonight, but when the President then vetoes this bill which has all these benefits in it, it just irritates me because we have to stay on that glidepath.

We had a part of the pie which was allocated for the Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Housing, the Environmental Protection Agency, and all of these other sundry departments, bureaus, and agencies, and we were willing to say to the President, "Please, you tell us how you would like to divide up that part of the pie," and he would not do it. He would not tell us. So we sent him our way that we would divide it up, and do my colleagues know what we did because there is not enough money there for all of these programs? We first determined that the medical care delivery system function of the VA Department of Veterans Affairs had to have about a \$550 million increase in order to maintain the veterans hospitals outpatient clinics, et cetera, and in order to get that, then we had to cut and reduce the growth of the other programs like NASA, like EPA, like Department of Housing, and that was our way of staying on this glidepath.

Now the President has vetoed that bill, and that is why we are here today. In doing so we have not reached a conclusion, and the veterans' checks for medical compensation will not be going out unless we pass this piece of legislation.

That is why today, after hearing all this rhetoric out here, I believe everybody is going to come over here, and they are going to vote for this very important bill. We need to do it. We need to do it for these people that have sacrificed their lives for their country, that have come home wounded and disabled, and that is where most of this money will go. This continuing resolution would allow them to get their checks on time.

So let us put aside the rhetoric, let us go ahead and pass this bill and make sure that those checks go out on the 1st of January.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY].

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, the rule we are considering today is a very good rule. American veterans should not have to pay the price for the Republican inability to pass appropriations bills, nor do I think the American people should be used as pawns in a political game.

That's why I will be supporting the effort to defeat the previous question so that we can expand this continuing resolution to the entire Government not just the veterans. And everyone in this Chamber will have a chance to vote for that amendment to stop these games and fund the entire Federal Government through January 26.

I look forward to seeing all of my colleagues put politics aside and vote against the previous question so we can offer an amendment to fund the entire Government.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SCARBOROUGH].

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. LINDER] for yielding this time to me, and I think it is important that we clarify a few things.

First of all, we are not here tonight because of Congress' inability to pass an appropriation bill regarding veterans. We have done that. It is the President who vetoed it for his own political purposes, and that is why the Republican Congress has had to come forward with help, with bipartisan help, on the Committee on Rules to pass this important rule.

The national parks. I heard somebody complain about the national parks being closed. We did our job, we passed the bill; the President vetoed it.

The employees of Commerce, State, and Justice did not work today, not because we did not do our job. We passed the bill; the President vetoed it.

VA-HUD, EPA, Independent Agencies; all of these agencies would be open today but for the fact that the President of the United States did not sign into law the appropriation bills that we passed.

We did our job, and now if I can address comments from the gentleman from Wisconsin who stated, and I quote, that he is disappointed in the conduct of Congress tonight.

□ 1915

I respectfully would state to the gentleman that Americans who elected me and Americans who swept the Republicans into Congress for the first time in 40 years have been disappointed in the conduct of this institution over the past 40 years, not just tonight, but over the past 40 years, when we only managed to balance the budget one time in 40 years.

As far as respecting, and I am quoting again, "Respecting the process in Congress and moving forward in a restrained, disciplined manner," let me ask what is so restrained and disciplined about passing deficit bills for 40 years; of running up a \$4.9 trillion debt? If that is discipline, if that is restraint, then count me out. There is nothing restrained or disciplined about that.

We are here tonight as part of a bigger showdown. The one thing that I hope all of us in this Chamber can agree on, and I see the gentleman from Mississippi, SONNY MONTGOMERY, a champion of veterans for years, a Democrat, who has been out front on it, what I hope we can all do tonight is unite together and make sure those veterans that sacrificed for this country to protect and defend the Constitution, hope that they will not be left out in the lurch tonight.

I hope we can join together, pass this important rule, and pass this bill. The veterans should not be part of this political battle simply because the President of the United States did not like environmental policies of the Republican party. We need to separate them. Veterans' benefits should not be held hostage. The veterans earned it, they sacrificed, they stayed away from their families.

I hear a lot of Members whining about not being with their families this year. Think about the future veterans who are in Bosnia tonight. That is the sacrifice veterans have been doing. We need to protect veteran's rights.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR].

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, we had an agreement.

Last night, the President agreed to sit down and talk. The Senate majority leader agreed to sit down and talk. Even the Speaker of the House agreed to sit down and talk.

They had a deal.

They had a commitment to go forward.

But the Speaker is not willing or able to keep that commitment today. Why?

Because a small minority in this House, who don't represent the views of the people, who don't represent the views of this House, who don't represent the mainstream of America, who want to shut down this Government, and force their priorities on the American people.

The only reason the Government is shut down tonight is because 73 militant freshman Republicans can't get their way.

And once again, national parks are closed.

Benefit checks for 3.3 million veterans are threatened; 60,000 students and parents applying for Pell Grants and student loans are being denied.

Small businesses have not received the loans they need.

And hundreds of calls to the EPA's hotline for drinking water contamination have gone unanswered.

All because a small group of extreme Republicans are holding America hostage.

And what are they holding out for?

Tax breaks for the wealthiest people and the wealthiest corporations in America, paid for by extreme cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment.

In other words, they are holding out for the biggest transfer in income—from the middle class to the wealthy—in the history of America.

The Speaker gave his word last night—that the talks would start—that we would move forward, but today, he can't or won't deliver.

Who is in control here?

Who speaks for the Republican Party?

Does the Speaker expect us to believe that he can't persuade his own membership to stand behind his word?

This is a sad and irresponsible act by a party who claims to be leading a second American revolution.

Mr. Speaker we are 5 days away from Christmas.

For many of us, this holiday is about more than just gifts and reindeer.

It's one of the most sacred and joyous religious holidays of the year.

It's a time to celebrate our faith and a time to hold close to our families.

It is a disgrace to watch this spectacle of partisan gamesmanship overshadow one of the most holy days of the year.

For over 200,000 families who have been shut out of work today, they are facing the Christmas season without another paycheck.

It is wrong to hold these people hostage.

It is wrong to hold our Government hostage.

It is wrong to hold this Nation hostage to the views of an extreme minority who are trying to force their way.

The American people deserve better.

Defeat the previous question and get America back to work.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. HAYWORTH].

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to our friend, the minority whip, who used the phrase "partisan gamesmanship." I think that accurately describes the diatribe which he launched here from this well just a few moments ago; this mindless mantra, always dealing with fiction rather than fact, and now separating out the newest Members of the House, those who made a new majority and who, Mr. Speaker, if we are extreme, are only extreme in terms of making extremely good sense.

The gentleman noted the spiritual significance of the days coming now. At the risk of being politically incorrect, I would offer this scriptural ad-

monition, for He whose birth we will celebrate in a few days said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." So let us give our children the chance for a meaningful future. Let us give this entire Nation a chance to survive and prosper into the next century and beyond. Let us also give our veterans, those who have served with distinction, the benefits they deserve.

No, the gamesmanship and the interesting interpretations of what transpires in this body are best left to the fiction writers. The American people will understand the fiction inherent in the comments of the gentleman from Michigan. Members of Congress will recognize their responsibility to pass this rule, and to pass this legislation, and to ensure that our veterans are provided for, and indeed, this entire Nation is provided for.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. FRANK].

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans' problem is with the Constitution. They want to make very drastic, extreme changes in programs like Medicaid and environmental protection, and they do not have the votes, so they have decided to take the Government hostage. But they are getting a little heat. They did not have a game plan.

So what do they do? They come up now and say, "We will let the veterans' checks get paid, but we will not let the EPA function, we will not let housing authorities function so veterans who live in housing will be hurt, but we will let the VA function." So now I understand their game plan. It is literally a game plan. This one is "Red Rover, Red Rover, let the Veterans' Department come over," and then we will do that. Tomorrow, we will hear from another group that is complaining, and it will be time to "Let the housing department come over."

I do not know what has come over them, but it certainly is not rational government.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. HUTCHINSON].

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to the previous speaker that it is not a game at all. The reason we are in the situation that we are in right now is because President Clinton determined that he would veto a very good and very fair veterans' appropriation bill. We did our job. We are faced with the dilemma we are tonight faced with because he chose to veto that bill.

A previous speaker referred to this as a game of brinksmanship. It is not a game of brinksmanship. It is not a game of dare. It is not a game at all. There are very high stakes about what this is all concerned with. That is the future of this Nation, the future of our children, the future of our grandchildren, what kind of hope we are

going to give them, what kind of life and what kind of standard of living our veterans are going to have.

It has saddened me deeply that the President, who hails from my State, has chosen, has gone to the lengths of using every vulnerable part of our society as pawns in this budget debate: little children and their school lunches; students and their loans; the disabled, as if they are going to be thrown in the streets; senior citizens, as if they are going to lose their Medicare; and now, the veterans of this Nation, used as pawns.

Tragically enough, the usual bipartisan support that has existed for veterans of this country has begun to unravel as the VA has become more and more politicized, attacking those in good faith who want to tend and care for our veterans, a concerned campaign to scare the most vulnerable.

There was a veto. Had it not been for that veto, we would not face this situation that we face right now. We would have the veterans cared for. What was vetoed was this: An appropriation bill that in 1996 would have provided \$399 million more for medical care than the 1995 level, a total of \$16.5 billion; medical research would increase \$5 million, to \$257 million.

During the next 7 years, more than \$275 billion will be spent on veterans' programs under our appropriation bill. That is \$40 billion more than was spent during the last 7 years. We increase veterans' programs by \$40 billion at a time that the VA population, the veteran population, will be decreasing. That reflects a deep commitment for the welfare of our veterans.

In spite of that appropriation bill being vetoed, tonight we will do the responsible thing and we will pass this CR to ensure that not one veteran's benefit check is delayed even 1 day, in spite of the President's veto. I urge support.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER].

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I come to this floor to plead with people to please, please, let us have a Christmas truce. Yes, I am very pleased Members are going to open the gates finally for veterans, and not hold them hostage in this incredible war on the budget. But what are you going to say to small business men who cannot get their loans and need to be moving forward? What are you going to say to students who need to be making their plans for going on to school, over 60,000 of them? What about the Federal workers whose lives have been put into a total tailspin, not knowing what is going on. What about the parks? Why are these people guilty? Why are they the hostages of this budget war? Why should they be the hostages?

Mr. Speaker, I am from Northern Ireland. That is where my relatives come

from. They used to even be able to have peace during the Christmas period, and they have been fighting forever. We now see in Bosnia all sorts of groups met in Dayton, OH, and they were able to come up with some kind of a peace. These folks should not be held hostage while these negotiations go on and while people argue about how big is the table, how many people get to sit there, what kind of food, where are we going to have the meeting. What is going on? Petty, petty, petty stuff. We cannot even get the thing launched and going.

To say to Americans who all work for this same flag, who all pay money to this flag as taxpayers, and who all think it means something, they have got to be really asking questions when for the second time this year, 3 months into the fiscal year, we are slamming the door shut again. I am pleased that we are opening it for veterans, but please, vote against the previous question so we can open the door for all, and in the name of the season and in the name of shedding the rhetoric, let us not hold hostage innocent people who do not have a dog in this fight.

□ 1930

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. BACHUS].

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, many years ago there was written on a wall in Gibraltar these words:

God and the soldier all men adore;
In time of trouble and not before.

When trouble is gone, and all wrongs are righted,

God is forgotten, and the old soldier slighted.

Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, today the President once again insulted and offended and slighted our military men and our veterans when he stood up and claimed that it was Republicans who were preventing their benefit checks from being mailed to them, their dependents and their widows.

Mr. Speaker, the President has offended our veterans on many, many occasions, and I think our veterans have tried to overlook this in the past. When he told his draft board many years ago that he was too educated to fight, to wear the uniform, they overlooked that. We all said, he was young, those of us who did serve, and we overlooked that. We excused the fact that he went to England and he led demonstrations. He was young. It was his right to lead demonstrations.

Then, when he became our President and we had doubts, then we started hearing that his staff and the staff of the First Lady showed open disdain for our military fighting men at the White House, and it again made us question this President and his respect for our fighting men.

Then sadly, recently, he sent our fighting men and women into harm's way in Bosnia, and many of us ques-

tioned that. We questioned the fact that when he was at the University of Arkansas, he told Colonel Holmes, we should not be involved in a civil war, they are dangerous. Yet, he sent our fighting men and women into an ancient civil war.

More recently, he wrote in his journal, and later affirmed that he still believed this, that:

From my work, I came to believe that no government rooted in democracy should have the power to make its citizens fight and kill and die in a war they oppose, a war which, in any case, does not involve immediately the peace and freedom of the Nation.

Does he believe now that we should not send our fighting men and women into a war that does not involve immediately the peace and freedom of the Nation? Regardless, that is what he has done.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, the previous speaker has brought into question the patriotism of the President of the United States. I would like to point out to the people on the other side the old saying that "People in glass houses should not throw stones."

Of the current elected Republican leadership of the House, not a single Member of the elected leadership of the Republican House has served in the military. The Speaker did not serve in the military. The majority leader did not serve in the military. The whip did not serve in the military. My counterpart, the chairman of the Republican Campaign Committee, did not serve in the military.

On the Democratic side, the minority leader [Mr. GEPHARDT] served in the military. The minority whip [Mr. BONIOR], served in the military. I served in the military.

I resent the remarks made by the previous speaker, directed at the President of the United States, and I would suggest that he direct those remarks to the Members of his own leadership who chose not to serve in the military.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I might point out that none of those Republican leaders sent people into a war zone.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS].

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

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. LINDER] for yielding me this time.

I do not claim to have been in leadership here, but I did serve in the Army, and I was proud to do it, and I am very concerned about the veterans.

Mr. Speaker, Americans need to understand that the reason many Federal agencies—including the administrative services of the Veterans' Administration—are closed today is because our President, President Clinton, vetoed three major appropriations bills that were sent to him last week, before the shutdown began. It appears that he vetoed those bills to score political

points. We can only assume that he did so in order to evade serious discussions about balancing the budget in 7 years. Regardless of all the propaganda coming out of the White House, there is no escaping the facts: If the President had done his job and signed those spending bills on time, we would not be facing yet another day of Federal shutdown of this magnitude, and our Nation's Veterans would not be worried about receiving their benefit checks on time this month. However, because our President vetoed those bills and because President Clinton still refuses to come to the table with a balanced budget proposal using real numbers and meeting the 7-year commitment that he agreed to, we now are taking steps to provide limited spending authority on behalf of our Nation's veterans. House Joint Resolution 134 will provide the funds necessary to keeping veterans' services up and running throughout this negotiations process. We know the shutdown has been difficult for many Americans besides veterans and we are willing to keep working at the discussions to bring this stalemate to an end. All we need is for the President to stop the posturing and come to the table in good faith—and remain true to his word.

If the President spent more time at the negotiating conference and less time at the press conference, I believe we would get the job done.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DOGGETT].

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I think if we needed any example of why it is we have the mess in Washington that we have tonight, it has been provided by some of the speakers among our Republican colleagues, people that come here wanting to even old political scores instead of trying to even up the budget and get the Government back to work. It is wrong.

America wants to put an end to the politics and to have a little good sense and maybe even a tad of goodwill at this time of the year.

It has been said that we would not have this problem if the President had not vetoed a particular piece of legislation. Thank heavens he had the courage to do that, because that is a piece of legislation that a majority of this House, including a number of Members from the Republican side, voted to recommit with instructions that over \$200 million added in medical benefits and health care benefits for our veterans.

After a lot of arm-twisting, some of our Republican colleagues backed off of the bill and brought it back without those resources in it.

This is a bill our veterans can understand that the President vetoed. It is a bill that provided for unilateral disarmament. It required a tremendous cut

□ 1945

in the law enforcement powers to enforce our clean air and our clean water. Thank heavens the President had the courage to veto that bill and then to say, as with some of these other measures, let us keep the Government going. Let us protect our veterans and our clean air and our clean water by operating the Government instead of having a high-jack or a blackmail with reference to that.

Yet, I read, as did the thousands of veterans in Austin, TX in today's paper, that unless this Congress acted by tomorrow, they would not get the benefits that they worked for and deserve.

Mr. Speaker, they are not the only people. In Texas, because of the inaction of this Republican majority, Texas will not get \$24 million for child support enforcement. I think our veterans are important, but I think it is important to take care of child support; an the same thing is true of "workfare" and child care as well. We need to get this Government going again, not just to take care of one problem, but take care of all of them.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. FRELINGHUSEN].

Mr. FRELINGHUSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I rise in strong support of both the rule and the resolution. As a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on VA-HUD and Independent Agencies that provides funding for our veterans, I want to make it clear, we did our job, we passed our bill, we provided for our Nation's veterans. For some to suggest otherwise, I think is an outrage.

Surely the President must have well understood when he vetoed the VA-HUD bill on Monday that in fact he was jeopardizing health benefit checks for our veterans. Frankly, we would not be here today had the President signed the VA-HUD bill and these other appropriations bills. Without the support of the President, we are taking this necessary action to honor our financial commitment to our veterans. Our veterans deserve nothing less. We need to support the rule and the bill.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER].

(Mr. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, it has been suggested the last couple of days that the shutdown of the Federal Government by the Republicans is a matter of high principle, but apparently that is not so, because if you have the strength of the veterans' lobbies and you have the concerns of this Congress that we have for veterans, you can escape that. But if you are trying to refinance your home or you are trying to buy your first home or you are trying to provide for your family, you will be out of luck.

This is not a matter of high principle; this is again another temper tan-

trum. The first temper tantrum was thrown by the Speaker; the second is now by the Republican caucus that insists that if they do not get their way at the outset of the talks, then the Government must be shut down.

Mr. Speaker, we are here rewarding veterans for their service to this country to protect a democracy. Dictating the terms at the outset of negotiations is not in keeping with the democratic spirit or principles of this Government. So I think we ought to understand why we are here.

The President had the courage to veto a very bad bill; the Republicans do not have the courage to face the consequences, and yet they want to dictate the terms of the shutdown of the Federal Government.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. MORAN].

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I would urge that we vote against this rule, because veterans, every veteran is a former public servant, every veteran is a citizen, every veteran is a taxpayer.

Veterans do not just care about their own benefit checks, they care about the Federal workers that have been locked out of their jobs that cannot provide Christmas for their families this week. They care about the other Americans who are denied services because the Government is shut down, and they care about the other taxpayers, taxpayers who will pay out, as of today, \$900 million to Federal employees to not work.

Federal employees want to be on the job, and yet every Republican on the Committee on Rules voted against an amendment that I offered that would let Federal employees go to work and then get paid subsequently, and those who chose not to go to work would not get reimbursed, but at least we would not be paying money for people not to work. I cannot believe we are creating this situation where we now are going to pay almost \$1 billion for no work performed.

We have an opportunity tonight to rectify an unconscionable situation, unconscionable to Federal employees, to taxpayers, to the entire American public. We ought to do it, do it now, add it to this rule. But without it being added to the rule, we ought to vote it down.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DE LA GARZA].

Mr. de la GARZA. Mr. Speaker, I am getting tired of finger-pointing, blaming the President and Mrs. Clinton for everything that is happening.

My friends, we are here tonight on the verge of closing the Government because you did not pass the appropriations bills in time. That is the main reason. It is a legislative failure, Mr. Speaker; the Republicans failed.

I have told my colleagues, and I will tell them again, my colleagues waited 40 years to be in power and they have messed it up the first year.

You did not pass the appropriation bills in time. You are saying the President vetoed them this week.

Where were you when the fiscal year ended? You have the majority. You have an overwhelming majority, and the veterans and the people of this country should know it was a legislative failure.

It has nothing to do with the President. He does not legislate it. You, my friends, messed it up. You messed it up royally. You cannot blame it on the President. It was pure simple legislative failure and you made it fail.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. BURTON].

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, the President vetoed the bill. We did not veto the bill. The President vetoed the bill. I think America should know that.

Let me just talk about something else that came to my attention tonight that really concerns me. I went to a conference that the Republicans had today and we were unanimous, like a fist of steel, we are unanimous, 235, that we are going to get a balanced budget in 7 years using CBO figures. But I watched television tonight, and I saw Tom Brokaw and Dan Rather and their people saying that our party is split all to heck and that NEWT GINGRICH cannot lead, and it is all because of the freshmen that we have this problem.

Let me tell Dan Rather and Peter Jennings and Tom Brokaw and the Democrats and the President, and anybody else, we are united. We want a balanced budget in 7 years using CBO figures and we will not be deterred. I do not care what you guys tell the media. The media was spewing out exactly what the Democrats have been telling the people tonight. It is wrong.

We are united, we are not going to deviate. We are going to get a balanced budget in 7 years using CBO figures or else. I just want to tell everybody that I get a little bit concerned when I see the national media spewing out garbage that I know to be false. We had a conference today and when NEWT GINGRICH walked into that room, he got a standing ovation. Everybody applauded. And yet they keep telling us on television, he cannot lead our party.

He is leading our party, he is doing a great job. We are united. So, Mr. President, Mr. Brokaw, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Rather, my Democrat colleagues, we are united, we are going to get it one way or another, and we are not going to pass any more CRs until we do.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY].

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, evidently what the previous speaker is saying is they have not been able to fool the public, they have not been able to fool the President, they have not been able

to fool the press, and somehow it is somebody's fault but not their own.

If you want to know why your position is not selling, if you want to know why you are in trouble, look in the mirror. It is because of the way you have been acting. Do not blame somebody else for your own failure to meet your responsibilities. People know what you are doing. They have caught on. They do not like it and they want you to change it.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. DURBIN].

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, this is a sad situation. I do not take any comfort in standing in this well realizing that a quarter of a million Federal employees have been sent home.

Some people on the Republican side of the aisle believe that this is part of a grand political strategy. They say it is a matter of principle. If it is a matter of principle, you should put your own paychecks on the line, not the paychecks of innocent Federal employees who showed up for work ready to do their job, and were sent home to an uncertain future and for many of them an unhappy Christmas season.

But the sad fact of the matter is, neither Speaker NEWT GINGRICH nor any of the Republican leaders has been willing to put his paycheck on the line and say, as a matter of principle, "I will not get paid until this budget crisis is over." No, you will all be in line to get your checks but you say to a quarter of a million Federal employees, "You are the ones who will have to sacrifice for principle."

So tonight comes this resolution because, quite frankly, we all honor the veterans. We want to do our best by them, and maybe inadvertently, but certainly you have to admit it is a fact, the veterans are losing out because of the Republican strategy. They may not get their checks in time, and the Republicans are afraid of that. They are afraid of facing veterans' groups, trying to explain how this crazy strategy of theirs did not penalize any Republican Members of Congress but may have penalized some veterans unwittingly.

I will be with you on the veterans, but let me tell you, do not forget the other people you are hurting.

When you suspend medical research at the National Institutes of Health, you are hurting every family in America. When you suspend the awarding of Pell grants and student loans to kids from working families, you are hurting every family in America. When you suspend the activities of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, you are saying to families who have been dreaming for a lifetime that they might own their own home, "Wait until Newt is ready." That is unfair.

If it is a matter of principle, put your own paycheck on the line. Do not put the paychecks of 250,000 innocent Federal employees on the line. Support "no budget, no pay." It is the only way to end this crisis.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. STEARNS].

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, what kind of message are we sending tonight to those currently stationed in various war zones around the world?

We really should not be blaming each other, no matter what party we are from.

All of us should urge passage of this legislation. I think it is clear tonight, if the President had signed the VA-HUD bill, we would not be in this sorry position that we are in here tonight. We would not have to have a continuing resolution to ensure that our veterans receive their rightful and hard-earned benefits.

I could sit here tonight and blame you and you could blame us. But tonight we should all come together and pass this continuing resolution. Maybe the President had a good reason to not sign the VA-HUD appropriations bill. Maybe he had his reasons and maybe a lot of your agree with him, but I have been here before when I saw you provide a VA-HUD bill that we did not like.

But now the bickering is over. There is no use screaming and hollering. Let us think about our veterans first and let us proceed and pass this continuing resolution. But, frankly, I think all of us should realize that this problem can be solved by the President signing the VA-HUD appropriations bill; we would not be here tonight this close to Christmas discussing this if he had signed the VA-HUD appropriation bill.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO].

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of our veterans and against the previous question.

I am pleased that America's veterans will not be held hostage to the budget impasse. What I do not understand is why Republicans are willing to make this concession for veterans but not for the 250,000 Federal employees who are out of work because of the shutdown.

As we embark on the holiday season, I ask my Republican colleagues to think about those 250,000 families.

The gentleman from Virginia [Mr. MORAN] came to the floor yesterday and put a human face on the Government shutdown when he told a story about his visit to a local elementary school. He said that the teachers told him that the children were not enjoying the holidays as they had in the past.

Why are these children not enjoying the holidays? Because many of their parents are Federal employees, hard-working men and women who now find themselves out of work at Christmas-time. They want to be working.

And the children? They hear their parents fighting, they know that Mom and Dad are not working. They listen to their parents explain that this will

be a lean Christmas because they do not know when or if they will get their next paycheck.

It is right that we are making certain that veterans do not suffer because the Republican majority failed to produce a budget. Now it is time to summon the same compassion for the 250,000 families who are the unfortunate pawns in Speaker GINGRICH's game of budget blackmail.

The Speaker would have you believe that he did not want to break his promise to the President to reopen the Government. He claims that the extremists in his party forced his hand. But we all know that this extreme agenda is the Speaker's agenda, to cut Medicare and Medicaid and education to pay for a tax break for the wealthiest Americans.

Mr. Speaker, give Americans an early Christmas present, a budget that reflects their priorities and not yours.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. WELDON].

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the President of the United States had the opportunity to sign an appropriations bill that we presented to him which would have funded the Veterans Administration, as well as the Department of Housing and Urban Development, as well as NASA.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas for a point of order.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman has removed the button from his lapel.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida may proceed.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. I thank the Speaker.

Again I would like to resume and just point out that the President had the opportunity to fund NASA. He had the opportunity to fund the VA. And he chose not to. He chose to veto that bill. Today we have a good piece of legislation before us here which will at least keep the veterans' checks going to our needy veterans, the veterans in District 15 of Florida that need them.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation and I rise in strong support of the rule.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida [Mrs. THURMAN].

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is time to stop the suffering of the people. But, that can be done only if we bring a clean continuing resolution to the House floor tonight.

Is the other side afraid of the outcome of a vote on a straight, clean CR? If not, then give the House a chance. Straight. Up or down.

A month ago, we exempted from this Republican-imposed government shutdown the Federal workers who help people on social security. Tonight, we are helping veterans.

Who is next? What about the first-time home buyer whose HUD loan cannot be approved by the end of the month? What about the senior citizen who needs a simple hot meal once a day? Or the student applying for a college loan?

These programs also are affected by the inaction of the other side of the aisle. My Democratic colleagues, colleagues and I are willing to keep vital functions operating during budget negotiations. A shutdown is not necessary for negotiations. Indeed, a shutdown could have been avoided if, as in the 103d Congress, the majority had passed its appropriations bills by mid-November.

Because I support not only veterans but also new home buyers, needy students, and senior citizens, I urge Members of good will toward their fellow Americans to pass a clean CR tonight.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I have one speaker left, and I reserve the right to close.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I would inquire the amount of time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas [Mr. FROST] has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. GEJDENSON].

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, by the action of the Republicans this evening, we see how easy it would be to make whole all the Federal employees, all the people out there looking for services, while we continue to negotiate an agreement for 7 years. There virtually is no difference in spending in 1996.

We are going to take care of veterans' benefits in this one instance. But if you are a veteran working for the Federal Government in one of the other agencies that shut down tonight, you are not getting a paycheck or you are in limbo at the moment. If you are a veteran trying to get a new student loan, you cannot get that student loan because we are taking care of one small group of veterans as compared to all the veterans out there asking Federal services.

□ 2000

If you are a veteran looking for an SBA loan to bridge some spending for your company or to help you reorganize so you can keep your business and your family together, you do not have any Government services today. Veterans who are waiting for the benefits of biomedical research are left out. We need to solve all our country's problems and the veterans and we could do it tonight.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute and 30 seconds to the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. HOYER].

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, Americans, as I said earlier today, are distressed. They are angry. They do not

understand why adult presumably responsible individuals they have sent to represent them from 435 districts throughout America cannot honestly debate and come to resolve the differences between them and, indeed, to compromise.

Our Speaker has said that he will cooperate but not compromise. There is not an American who lives who has been in a family who knows that compromise is essential if those with differences are to make progress.

We have shut down a portion of the Government. Not only will it not solve the budget deficit problem, it will add to it. There is a cost to doing that. Those of you on your side of the aisle talk about privatize go and contracting out and in fact we have done that. A lot of people talk about Federal employees, but let me tell you, there are a lot of contractors out there for NASA, somebody mentioned NASA, who have been told, you cannot work. They and their employees are not drawing a salary. And notwithstanding Mr. GINGRICH's letter, nobody is saying they are going to be reimbursed. My colleagues, America expects us to act in a fashion which will bring credit to our Government and to our country. I am going to vote for this resolution but it ought to be a resolution affect go all of the Government that is shut down.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentleman will state it.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I have a privileged resolution. When would be the proper time to bring it before this body?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will not respond to that at this point without knowledge of the resolution.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas [Mr. FROST].

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker. I urge a note vote on the previous question. If the previous question is defeated, I shall offer an amendment to the rule which would make in order the text of House Joint Resolution 131. This resolution would provide for a clean continuing resolution that would fund the Government through January 26th and would also provide for the military pay raise and retiree COLA provided for in the Defense authorization bill that was passed by the House earlier this month. This amendment is in addition to the continuation of veterans' benefits. I include the text of the amendment at this point in the RECORD.

H.J. RES. 131

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 106(c) of Public Law 104-56 is amended by striking "December 15, 1995" and inserting "January 26, 1996".

SEC. 2. MILITARY PAY RAISE FOR FISCAL YEAR 1996.

(a) WAIVER OF SECTION 1009 ADJUSTMENT.—Any adjustment required by section 1009 of title 37, United States Code, in elements of compensation of members of the uniformed services to become effective during fiscal year 1996 shall not be made.

(b) INCREASE IN BASIC PAY AND BAS.—Effective on January 1, 1996, the rates of basic pay and basic allowance for subsistence of members of the uniformed services are increased by 2.4 percent.

(c) INCREASE IN BAQ.—Effective on January 1, 1996, the rates of basic allowance for quarters of members of the uniformed services are increased by 5.2 percent.

SEC. 3. ELIMINATION OF DISPARITY BETWEEN EFFECTIVE DATES FOR MILITARY AND CIVILIAN RETIREE COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 1996.

(A) IN GENERAL.—The fiscal year 1996 increase in military retired pay shall (notwithstanding subparagraph (B) of section 1401a(b)(2) of title 10, United States Code) first be payable as part of such retired pay for the month of March 1996.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of subsection (a):

(1) The term "fiscal year 1996 increase in military retired pay" means the increase in retired pay that, pursuant to paragraph (1) of section 1401a(b) of title 10, United States Code, becomes effective on December 1, 1995.

(2) The term "retired pay" includes re-tainer pay.

(c) FINANCING.—The Secretary of Defense shall transfer, from any other funds made available to the Department of Defense, such sums as may be necessary for payment to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund solely for the purpose of offsetting the estimated increase in outlays to be made from such Fund in fiscal year 1996 by reason of the provisions of subsection (a). Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the transfer authority made available to the Secretary in Public Law 104-61 or any other law shall be increased by the amounts required to carry out the provisions of this section.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia, [Mr. LINDER], is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, one of the first persons to speak on this rule noted that the networks told the country last night that we would be working again. A two-hour meeting in the White House with our leadership led us to believe that was the case.

The morning papers all said that the President has agreed to put on the table his specific budget proposal using CBO numbers and shortly thereafter the Vice President spoke and said, no, we are not going to do that.

We have not just 73 Republican freshmen but 236 members of a caucus that is still growing that are very, very frustrated in trying to reach a balanced budget in 7 years using honest numbers. We are not only frustrated but we are united that we will balance

the budget using honest numbers in 7 years and we will do it now.

This administration has had so many different positions on this issue that it is hardly worth recounting, but it reminds me, dealing with this administration reminds me of duck hunting. You get off in the wind, because every time you see a target it moves and the wind changes it.

Virtually every speaker on this rule tonight voted against the balanced budget amendment, the coalition's balanced budget and our balanced budget. We are faced not with Members who want to balance the budget under different terms but with Members who want to spend more money, liberal extremists who want to spend more money. And that is what the whole thing is about.

We should have gotten off the discussion of whose numbers we use and just say we are not going to spend more than \$12 trillion. Sit down at the table with us, argue priorities, but we are not going to continue to spend money that we have not raised. That is our children and grandchildren's money. There is not a program in this budget that cannot be defended by somebody, but we should not be spending it if we have not raised it.

We have for 30 years voted ourselves wishes and dreams over needs and passed the bill on to future generations. And this Republican majority said that is going to stop.

Much has happened; much movement has occurred. We now are all discussing a 7-year balanced budget and by the time this weekend or early next week passes, we will be talking about using the same numbers. I think by the end of the year, we will have passed and the President will have signed a 7-year balanced budget with honest numbers and we will have done our children and grandchildren a great service. It is time.

Frankly, the numbers are not that far apart. We want to increase spending 3 percent; the President wants to increase it 4 percent. We want to presume an additional 5 percent revenue; the President wants to presume 5.5. The numbers are not that far apart.

We can get together if we will just sit down and honestly and straightforwardly look each other in the eye and say, where are your priorities? The President's budget is not on the table using the same numbers, even though he has said he would do that. So this effort tonight under this rule is merely to say for those veterans who have served their nation, who have earned their benefits, we are going to pass a continuing resolution to assure that you will get your checks. We are not inclined to pass a continuing resolution for the rest of the government because it will take entirely the pressure off the President. The last time we did that, under certain assurances, 30 days went by where we were hammered and demagogued with our specific numbers; \$30 million was spent by unions

trashing our specifics in our districts where we have marginal districts for freshmen. We are not going to do that again. We are going to keep the feet to the fire.

It is unfortunate that decent, hard-working, honest Federal employees are caught in this pinch. But the President, seemingly to bolster the notion in this country that he believes something, has chosen to pitch a battle with the Congress of the United States. It seems to have helped him in the polls and he seems to think that is the thing to get reelected on so he will continue to veto and we will continue to have this problem. But I tell my colleagues, from our point of view, we are united. We were sent here to change the economic direction of this nation, to balance the budget for our children and grandchildren. We intend to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule XV, the Chair announces that he will reduce to a minimum of 5 minutes the period of time within which a vote by electronic device, if ordered, will be taken on the question of agreeing to the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 238, nays 172, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 871]
YEAS—238

| | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Allard | Calvert | Ehrlich |
| Archer | Camp | Emerson |
| Armey | Campbell | English |
| Bachus | Canady | Ensign |
| Baker (CA) | Castle | Everett |
| Baker (LA) | Chabot | Ewing |
| Ballenger | Chambliss | Fawell |
| Barr | Chenoweth | Fields (TX) |
| Barrett (NE) | Christensen | Flanagan |
| Bartlett | Chrysler | Foley |
| Barton | Clinger | Forbes |
| Bass | Coble | Fowler |
| Bateman | Coburn | Fox |
| Bereuter | Collins (GA) | Franks (CT) |
| Bilbray | Combest | Franks (NJ) |
| Bilirakis | Cooley | Frelinghuysen |
| Bliley | Cox | Frisa |
| Blute | Crane | Funderburk |
| Boehlert | Crapo | Galleghy |
| Boehner | Creameans | Ganske |
| Bonilla | Cubin | Gekas |
| Bono | Cunningham | Geren |
| Brewster | Deal | Gillmor |
| Browder | DeLay | Gilman |
| Brownback | Diaz-Balart | Goodlatte |
| Bryant (TN) | Dickey | Goodling |
| Bunn | Doolittle | Goss |
| Bunning | Dornan | Graham |
| Burr | Dreier | Greenwood |
| Burton | Duncan | Gunderson |
| Buyer | Dunn | Gutknecht |
| Callahan | Ehlers | Hall (TX) |

| | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Hancock | Martini | Schaefer |
| Hansen | McCollum | Schiff |
| Hastert | McCrery | Seastrand |
| Hastings (WA) | McDade | Sensenbrenner |
| Hayes | McHugh | Shadegg |
| Hayworth | McInnis | Shaw |
| Hefley | McIntosh | Shays |
| Heineman | McKeon | Shuster |
| Herger | Metcalfe | Skeen |
| Hilleary | Meyers | Skelton |
| Hobson | Mica | Smith (MI) |
| Hoekstra | Miller (FL) | Smith (NJ) |
| Hoke | Molinari | Smith (TX) |
| Horn | Montgomery | Smith (WA) |
| Hostettler | Moorhead | Solomon |
| Houghton | Morella | Souder |
| Hunter | Myrick | Spence |
| Hutchinson | Nethercutt | Stearns |
| Hyde | Neumann | Stockman |
| Inglis | Ney | Stump |
| Johnson (CT) | Norwood | Talent |
| Johnson, Sam | Nussle | Tate |
| Jones | Oxley | Tauzin |
| Kasich | Parker | Taylor (MS) |
| Kelly | Paxon | Taylor (NC) |
| Kim | Peterson (MN) | Thomas |
| King | Petri | Thornberry |
| Kingston | Pickett | Tiahrt |
| Klug | Pombo | Torkildsen |
| Knollenberg | Porter | Upton |
| Kolbe | Portman | Vucanovich |
| LaHood | Pryce | Waldholtz |
| Largent | Quillen | Walker |
| Latham | Quinn | Walsh |
| LaTourette | Radanovich | Wamp |
| Laughlin | Ramstad | Watts (OK) |
| Lazio | Regula | Weldon (FL) |
| Leach | Riggs | Weller |
| Lewis (CA) | Roberts | White |
| Lewis (KY) | Rogers | Whitfield |
| Lightfoot | Rohrabacher | Wicker |
| Lincoln | Ros-Lehtinen | Wolf |
| Linder | Roth | Young (AK) |
| Livingston | Royce | Young (FL) |
| LoBiondo | Salmon | Zeliff |
| Longley | Sanford | Zimmer |
| Lucas | Saxton | |
| Manzullo | Scarborough | |

NAYS—172

| | | |
|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| Abercrombie | Fattah | McCarthy |
| Ackerman | Fazio | McDermott |
| Andrews | Fields (LA) | McHale |
| Baesler | Ford | McKinney |
| Baldacci | Frank (MA) | McNulty |
| Barcia | Frost | Meehan |
| Barrett (WI) | Furse | Meek |
| Becerra | Gejdenson | Menendez |
| Bentsen | Gephardt | Mfume |
| Berman | Gibbons | Miller (CA) |
| Bevill | Gonzalez | Minge |
| Bishop | Gordon | Mink |
| Bonior | Green | Moakley |
| Borski | Hamilton | Mollohan |
| Boucher | Harman | Moran |
| Brown (CA) | Hastings (FL) | Murtha |
| Brown (FL) | Hefner | Nadler |
| Brown (OH) | Hilliard | Neal |
| Bryant (TX) | Hinchey | Neerstar |
| Cardin | Holden | Obey |
| Clay | Hoyer | Olver |
| Clayton | Jackson (IL) | Ortiz |
| Clement | Jackson-Lee | Orton |
| Clyburn | (TX) | Owens |
| Coleman | Jacobs | Pallone |
| Collins (IL) | Jefferson | Pastor |
| Collins (MI) | Johnson (SD) | Payne (NJ) |
| Condit | Johnson, E. B. | Pelosi |
| Costello | Johnston | Peterson (FL) |
| Coyne | Kanjorski | Pomeroy |
| Cramer | Kaptur | Poshard |
| Danner | Kennedy (MA) | Rahall |
| Davis | Kennedy (RI) | Rangel |
| de la Garza | Kennelly | Reed |
| DeFazio | Kildee | Richardson |
| DeLauro | Kleczka | Rivers |
| Dellums | Klink | Roemer |
| Deutsch | LaFalce | Roukema |
| Dicks | Levin | Roybal-Allard |
| Dingell | Lewis (GA) | Rush |
| Dixon | Lipinski | Sabo |
| Doggett | Lofgren | Sanders |
| Dooley | Lowey | Sawyer |
| Doyle | Luther | Schroeder |
| Durbin | Maloney | Schumer |
| Engel | Manton | Scott |
| Eshoo | Markey | Serrano |
| Evans | Mascara | Sisisky |
| Farr | Matsui | Slaughter |

| | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Spratt | Thurman | Ward |
| Stenholm | Torres | Waters |
| Stokes | Torrice | Watt (NC) |
| Studds | Towns | Waxman |
| Stupak | Traficant | Wise |
| Tanner | Velazquez | Woolsey |
| Tejeda | Vento | Wyden |
| Thompson | Visclosky | Wynn |
| Thornton | Volkmer | |

NOT VOTING—23

| | | |
|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Beilenson | Gutierrez | Rose |
| Chapman | Hall (OH) | Skaggs |
| Conyers | Istook | Stark |
| Edwards | Lantos | Weldon (PA) |
| Filner | Martinez | Williams |
| Flake | Myers | Wilson |
| Foglietta | Packard | Yates |
| Gilchrest | Payne (VA) | |

□ 2028

Ms. BROWN of Florida changed her vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. SKELTON and Mr. PICKETT changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 2030

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I was here during the entire last vote. I put my card in and pushed the button. It apparently did not record. If it would have recorded, it would have recorded a "yes" vote.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Joint Resolution 134, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4, PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 1995

Mr. ARCHER laid before the House a conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 4) to restore the American family, reduce illegitimacy, control welfare spending and reduce welfare dependence:

(The conference report on H.R. 4 will appear in a subsequent issue of the RECORD.)

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO AMEND HOUSE RESOLUTION 317

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the rule just passed be amended to read as follows:

It shall be also in order to consider an amendment by the minority leader or his

designee adding at the end of House Joint Resolution 134 a new title II consisting of the text of House Joint Resolution 131, continuing funds for many critical Federal departments through January 26, 1996, and authorizing a 2.4 percent pay raise for the Armed Forces of the United States. All points of order shall be waived against such an amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Under the guidelines consistently issued by successive Speakers as recorded on page 534 of the House Rules Manual, specifically the guideline of November 14, 1991, the Chair is constrained not to entertain the gentleman's request until it has been cleared by the bipartisan floor and committee leadership.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I would urge the Speaker to clear that request.

FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS TO ENSURE PAYMENTS OF VETERANS BENEFITS

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 317, I call up the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 134) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 1996, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 134

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following sums are hereby appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, and out of applicable corporate or other revenues, receipts, and funds, for the several departments, agencies, corporations and other organizational units of Government for the fiscal year 1996, and for other purposes, namely:

Sec. 101. ENSURED PAYMENT DURING FISCAL YEAR 1996 OF VETERANS' BENEFITS IN EVENT OF LACK OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) PAYMENTS REQUIRED.—In any case during fiscal year 1996 in which appropriations are not otherwise available for programs, projects, and activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall nevertheless ensure that—

(1) payments of existing veterans benefits are made in accordance with regular procedures and schedules and in accordance with eligibility requirements for such benefits; and

(2) payments to contractors of the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs are made when due in the case of services provided that directly relate to patient health and safety.

(b) FUNDING.—There is hereby appropriated such sums as may be necessary for the payments pursuant to subsection (a), including such amounts as may be necessary for the costs of administration of such payments.

(c) CHARGING OF ACCOUNTS WHEN APPROPRIATIONS MADE.—In any case in which the Secretary uses the authority of subsection (a) to make payments, applicable accounts shall be charged for amounts so paid, and for the costs of administration of such payments, when regular appropriations become available for those purposes.

(d) EXISTING BENEFITS SPECIFIED.—For purposes of this section, existing veterans bene-

fits are benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs that have been adjudicated and authorized for payment as of—

(1) December 15, 1995; or

(2) if appropriations for such benefits are available (other than pursuant to subsection (b)) after December 15, 1995, the last day on which appropriations for payment of such benefits are available (other than pursuant to subsection (b)).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 317, the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON] will be recognized for 30 minutes, and the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY] will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON].

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

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

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I bring to the floor a continuing resolution for certain activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs. This continuing resolution would only have effect in fiscal year 1996 during periods when appropriations are otherwise not available. This is the situation we are in right now. If the regular bill or another CR is enacted, then this particular continuing resolution would not be operable.

The activities provided for in this continuing resolution are payments for compensation, pensions, and educational benefits within the Department of Veterans Affairs. In addition, it also provides for payments to contractors for services that directly relate to patient health and safety. It also provides for the necessary administrative expenses to carry out these activities.

Mr. Speaker, this continuing resolution will assure that veterans benefits checks will be received on time, at the end of the month, and in the full amount authorized. Let me stress, had the President not vetoed the VA-HUD bill, this continuing resolution would not have been necessary and these benefits would have been paid. These benefits would have been paid and this CR would not have been necessary if the President had not vetoed the VA-HUD bill. Once again, these benefits would have been paid if the President had not vetoed the VA-HUD bill. I want everybody to understand it. He vetoed it. That is why we are here today. The President vetoed it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my friends and colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, two more points. This bill is necessary because the President vetoed the VA-HUD bill, but it would not be necessary to progress through both houses and be enacted into law if the President would, in good faith, come to the bargaining table, reach a final agreement on a 7-year balanced budget, according to Congressional