

yet they continue those same arguments. We just heard the litany go on. What is their argument, then, if he has done those essential things that they say they wanted?

Why not move on, as one of my colleagues suggested, to the farm bill? I can tell my colleagues that farmers in my State are uncertain as to what their future will hold. Democrats are simply insisting that the budget we pass hold fast to the principle that made this Nation strong; principles that Republicans and Democrats should indeed support. Democrats want to safeguard health care for seniors, for children, for poor families; to promote education for our future and to protect our environment.

Here we are again almost facing yet a third shutdown and threatening to default on our Nation's liability and debt; that we will not honor our obligation. What kind of governance is that? Is that being responsible?

Yes, we have made progress in the last few years. Unemployment is down, interest is indeed low, and inflation is stabilized. That is progress we all, Republicans and Democrats, should want to protect. Progress like that, however, will stop and our economy will suffer if we do not work together. Both Democrats and Republicans must come and work together to prevent a national default on our obligations.

I can tell my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, this Republican revolution is paralyzing this Nation and it will do great damage to this economy. It is now time for cool heads and rational minds and thoughtful persons to come together, to join together and revive what is important to Americans in this Nation.

NAFTA AND SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized during morning business for 3 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, January first marked the 2-year anniversary of NAFTA. As we begin the third year of tariff reductions and opening markets under this accord, it is appropriate to take a moment to assess our progress—so far reports show NAFTA has been a mixed bag: Mostly the news is positive; however, there are some serious problem areas that clearly need attention. In Florida, we are particularly concerned about the negative impact that import surges of tomatoes and other winter fruit and vegetables are having on southwest Florida's growers, the packing houses and the workers in these industries. This is a bi-partisan concern—and I am pleased that Senator BOB GRAHAM is working this issue in the Senate. On November 16, 1993, the President wrote a letter to the members of the Florida delegation, assuring us that he was committed to taking the necessary steps to ensure that the trade representative and the ITC would take prompt and effective

action to protect the United States vegetable industry against price-based import surges from Mexico. Now is the time for him to take that action because, unfortunately, it seems that the safeguards in NAFTA and the implementing language—the volume-based snapback provision, the automatic price monitoring and the expedited import relief procedures—have not lived up to our hopes. They are not working properly. I am currently drafting legislation calling on the President to live up to the promise he made and to protect our growers from potentially unfair Mexican trading practices. In the meantime, my colleagues in the Florida delegation and I will continue to work in a bipartisan, bicameral fashion to address the urgent needs of the Florida fruit and vegetable industries. To their credit the Department of Agriculture has been very forthcoming and willing to work with the Florida delegation and our growers.

Unfortunately, I have to say that the USTR could be more helpful. Of course, the administration and its officers can't fix all of the problems, some of that is our responsibility in Congress. In response to the very real needs of the tomato and fruit and vegetable industries in Florida, a series of bills have been introduced to address definitional problems faced by our growers when they attempted to seek relief through the section 202 process, to address the differences in enforced packing requirements between Mexican and domestic growers, and to create national country of origin labeling to allow consumers to make more informed decisions when they make their individual purchasing choices at the market. An invitation has been issued for U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Kantor and Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman to brief Florida delegation members on the tomato and winter fruit and vegetable situation. I understand this meeting will take place tomorrow and I hope it will bring progress we need and look for. This is a critical issue for Florida and an important one for the Nation.

I think it is also a very critical one in terms of living up to the promises that have been made.

Those of us who felt NAFTA would be good for the United States of America want to be certain that we correct the sore spots that are there, if they are correctable. If not, we will have to excise those sore spots with legislation. In any event, once we see those sore spots, the time is now to move, and we have seen them and we must move.

WEST VIRGINIA DIGGING OUT FROM RECORD FLOOD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WISE] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, today West Virginia is digging out from a record

flood, just like your State of Pennsylvania, and like other areas of the mid-Atlantic. I want to report to Congress today on our efforts and to ask for assistance.

Mr. Speaker, this was a true bicoastal flood for our State, going from the Ohio River all the way to the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, from border to border of our State. The Governor, during the weekend, declared 29 of our 55 counties in a state of emergency. Thousands have been driven from their homes or had their homes and jobs threatened. Water systems have been damaged, sewer systems have been compromised. Businesses in some cases have been wiped out, others will take a while to resume. Highways in some cases have been washed out.

From Friday night, beginning Friday night in the basement of the State capital and the State Office of Emergency Services office, I have tried to monitor and follow this flood as closely as possible. From Friday night, with the State OES personnel, to traveling with the Governor on Saturday to our hardest hit central West Virginia counties, to going Sunday night to Mason County to watch the Ohio River as it began its relentless rise, and then yesterday back across the State to Jefferson County where I watched the swollen Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers as they began to recede, I can testify about how awesome and how devastating this flood has been for many of our people.

Today and yesterday our staff has been fanning out across the hardest hit counties trying to bring immediate word about where people can get assistance and to assist in assessing the damage.

Mr. Speaker, in the face of this devastation, of course, we also see incredible acts of human spirit, and I just cannot speak highly enough or applaud loudly enough nor respect enough those thousands of volunteers across our State at every level: The hundreds of National Guard that were mobilized and responded. We do not know what it means, in a county that is still watching the flood waters recede, to see those National Guard uniforms come rolling in on those trucks bringing the promise of help.

The emergency service personnel at every level in the county and the State, the Red Cross, the sheriff and police departments, the highway department staffs, the Corps of Engineers, who control the many dams that prevented the damage from being far worse. All of them working long hours, Mr. Speaker. Long hours, of course, that did not start just with this flood, but started with the blizzard that began over 10 days before. Then the flood came and many of those volunteers and personnel are still working. Many individual acts of people rebuilding immediately their lives.

One question I have received, Mr. Speaker, time after time as I made my trip back across the flood-stricken