

□ 1800

RANKING OF MEMBER ON COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I offer a resolution (H. Res. 85), and I ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration in the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 85

Resolved, That on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Mr. Pombo shall rank immediately after Mr. Moran of Kansas.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY,
MARCH 12, 2001

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Monday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TUESDAY,
MARCH 13, 2001

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns on Monday, March 12, 2001, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 13, for morning hour debates.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR
WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON
WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO
JAMES MADISON COMMEMORATION
COMMISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to section 5(a) of the James Madison Commemoration Commission Act (P.L. 106-550), the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the James Madison Commemoration Commission:

Mr. GOODLATTE of Virginia;
Mr. CANTOR of Virginia.
There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PENCE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

AMERICA'S VETERANS ARE ENTITLED TO THEIR DAY OF CELEBRATION AND REMEMBRANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PLATTS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of over 1.3 million veterans in Pennsylvania and to express my strong opposition to legislation which I consider an affront to the heroic service to our Nation.

As introduced, H.R. 62 would move Veterans' Day to election day in Presidential election years. The intended purpose of this legislation is to increase voter turnout by establishing election day as a national holiday in conjunction with Veterans' Day.

Although I agree action needs to be taken to help convince our Nation's citizens to take a more active role in the political process, this particular solution troubles me. I believe we need to take necessary steps to increase voter awareness and participation, but depriving our veterans of the day set aside historically to honor their sacrifice is not the way to do it.

By designating November 11 of each year as Veterans' Day, we give thanks and pay tribute to the soldiers who fought and gave their lives to preserve the freedoms we know today.

In 1918, at the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month, the Treaty of Versailles was signed between the Allies and Central powers to end the fighting of World War I, the war to end all wars. In the years immediately following 1918, memorial gestures were made on that day worldwide. In 1926, Congress passed legislation to commemorate this date with, quote, "thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through goodwill and mutual understanding between nations."

In 1938, Congress officially designated November 11 as Armistice Day. It was a day to honor the bravery of our veterans and celebrate the cause of world peace.

In 1954, one of our greatest veterans, President Dwight Eisenhower, declared Armistice Day as Veterans' Day so that all Americans would, quote, "solemnly remember the sacrifices of all those who fought so valiantly to preserve our heritage of freedom."

Mr. Speaker, I give this brief history of Veterans' Day because it serves as proof that November 11 was not ran-

domly selected as a day on which to honor veterans. Moving Veterans' Day, even if it is only once every 4 years, does a great disservice to our veterans and the freedoms for which they fought so hard to secure and defend.

Congress learned its lesson on moving Veterans' Day once already. In the 1970s, Congress moved Veterans' Day to the Monday closest to November 11 to allow for a 3-day holiday weekend. The movement of Veterans' Day was met with so much outrage that President Ford returned the observation of Veterans' Day to November 11.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard from countless individuals in my district that are outraged that legislation is once again pending before Congress to move Veterans' Day. These citizens, veterans and nonveterans alike, do not understand why their government wants to diminish the opportunity of this Nation to remember the sacrifices of our veterans. Veterans and the families of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice certainly do not understand why Congress would even consider legislation that would lessen the tribute paid to our brave sons and daughters who have served in all branches of our armed services.

In my opinion, we should not diminish the observance of Veterans' Day. On the contrary, we should be promoting the reason we mark this day. There are over 26 million veterans in this country, including nearly a half million who are permanently disabled. The Veterans Administration estimates that we are losing approximately 1,100 veterans a day. It is extremely important that we not only remember their service but honor it as well.

The best way to do that is to pass meaningful legislation which will improve benefits and ensure that every veteran has access to the best health care possible. It is imperative that we demonstrate our commitment to those who served us with dedication and valor.

Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate that I stand ready and willing to work with my colleagues to find ways to get more of our citizens to the polls, not just in Presidential elections but in all elections.

However, we must not attempt to solve the problem of voter apathy by showing disrespect to our fellow citizens who have gone into harm's way on behalf of our great Nation. Our veterans have fought courageously to secure and preserve the freedoms we enjoy today. Without the efforts of our heroic veterans, our citizens would not have the right to vote.

Our veterans have fought, and many have died, so we can live in a country with free and fair elections, a country where even in an election as close as the last Presidential contest, the winner is decided by the rule of law, and not with violence.

Mr. Speaker, our veterans have fearlessly put their lives on the line for

this country. This country can surely give them their own day of remembrance. Veterans' Day is and always should remain November 11. I for one pledge to do my utmost to preserve this day of recognition for our patriotic men and women of our armed services.

THE TROJAN HORSE STRATEGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I regret that the leadership, the Republican leadership, saw fit to have such a limited debate on a \$2 trillion tax cut today. Basically, it worked out, for the portion of the tax cut adopted today, to about \$5 billion a minute. I was one of many Members who is not a member of the Committee on Ways and Means who did not have an opportunity to speak and give my reasons for opposing this tax cut so I am going to lay them out now, because we know that this is not the end of the debate.

The Senate will not even take this bill up until late this spring, if then.

Now first, the tax cut is predicated upon a wish, a dream, a projection, a prediction, a prediction. Now, remember all the economists 10 years ago said we see deficits as far as the eye can see, huge and growing deficits. We were supposed to have a \$400 billion deficit this year, but here we are fighting about how to spend the surplus. There is an actual real surplus this year. How long will it last? What are the assumptions behind it?

This is a very interesting chart which comes from the official Congressional Budget Office chaired and headed up by a Republican appointee. This is what we are predicating a \$2 trillion tax cut on. These are future projections. If one notices, there is a little bit of uncertainty here. In fact, when we get to the year 2006, according to the official projections of the Congressional Budget Office, we could be running anything from a \$100 billion deficit to a \$1.1 trillion surplus, but today the Republican leadership locked into place tax cuts that are going to spend this surplus even if it does not exist, and they did it under the rationale it is a stimulus for the economy.

Now remember, the tax cuts do not even begin until next year. Well, they added a little bit for this year.

Mr. Speaker, 1/100th of 1 percent of the GNP will be devoted to a so-called retroactive tax cut this year; minuscule amount, totals just tens of dollars, for most families, \$15 or \$20. Yet what they have done here is begun the same strategy that fooled this Congress before I served here in the early 1980s, the Trojan horse strategy. Dress it up, get it inside the gate and then out pops a big surprise.

The big surprise is most likely to be a return to huge and growing deficits a few years out.

No, we should base tax cuts on actual surpluses received, not on projections by pointy-headed economists who are wrong a lot more times than they are right. If they can project the economy 10 years out, they would not be working at the Congressional Budget Office for a government salary. They would be living on their private island somewhere if they had that much knowledge about the future of our economy, and even they, with this chart, admit they really do not have a clue.

So this Congress is being incredibly irresponsible in locking in place those tax cuts now heavily weighted toward people who earn over \$329,000 a year, on the bet that these surpluses might exist or maybe knowing that the surpluses will not exist and not really caring that we could return to the huge days of deficits.

Now, this is reality, folks, right here. This is reality. The United States of America's debt, that is black and white. We owe that. Every American from the tiniest baby to the oldest senior citizen owes a share of that, and if we divided it up equally it would be over \$20,000 per person.

They are going to not even address that as effectively as the budget last year. They are proposing under their optimistic projections to leave a much bigger debt for future generations, not to reduce it as much. Under a worst case scenario, they are going to increase that debt and leave it as a gift or a burden to future generations. That is irresponsible.

I have supported the plan to do one-third, one-third, one-third, once we have a surplus in hand. One-third to reduce the debt, and if these wild projections come true we could pay off the debt in 12 years; one-third to invest, to invest in education, in infrastructure. I just got a report today from the National Society of Civil Engineers. We have a \$1.3 trillion shortfall in infrastructure. Our infrastructure is crumbling over the next 5 years. That is about what they are spending here, betting that we are going to have these surpluses. We could be investing it. We could be investing it in education.

Then finally, yes, let us have responsible tax relief. There was an alternative today. I voted and proposed other alternatives in the past. A tax relief based on reality, targeted at those who carry the heaviest burden, and that is middle-income families and lower-income families. When we look at the burden of the FICA tax, about more than half of American families pay more in Social Security taxes than they do income tax, they will get no relief under this proposal, even if it puts us massively in debt for the future. This was not a proud day for the United States House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. JONES of Ohio addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 1815

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY AND THE UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND ACT OF 2001

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PENCE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to women around the world for being honored on International Women's Day. International Women's Day, today, recognizes the achievements and successes of women around the world. It is also a day on which we work to advance the status of women everywhere. This is why I, along with my colleagues, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK); the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY); and the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH), and over 60 original cosponsors, we are announcing that we will introduce our bill, the United Nations of 2001 on this important day.

This bill will help save the lives of millions of women and children around the world and will work to bring equality to all people by restoring funding for UNFPA. Equal rights and equality for all people is crucial, whether they live in sub-Saharan Africa or South-east Asia or the United States.

Over the last 20 years, we have seen a commitment from countries around the world to honor women's rights, and women's voices are finally beginning to be heard. However, this success and the many others we have had is overshadowed by the millions of women around the world who do not even have the most basic rights. There are more than 600,000 women who are dying each year because of complications from pregnancy and childbirth. The inequality of girls and women around the world is real, but there are very real steps we can take to work together toward equality. Over 182 nations support funding for UNFPA, and the United States should likewise support it.

We know that UNFPA works, that it saves lives. Each day we in Congress are confronted by many challenges for which we do not have answers: the answer to global warming, to the AIDS crisis, to Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. But we know what to do to save the lives of women around the world, and that is to fund international family planning through the United Nations Population Fund.