

announcement made by the Speaker earlier today.

Announcement by the Speaker, January 3, 1991

The SPEAKER. It is essential that the dignity of the proceedings of the House be preserved, not only to assure that the House conducts its business in an orderly fashion but to permit Members to properly comprehend and participate in the business of the House. To this end, and in order to permit the Chair to understand and to correctly put the question on the numerous requests that are made by Members, the Chair requests that Members and others who have the privileges of the floor desist from audible conversation in the Chamber while the business of the House is being conducted. The Chair would encourage all Members to review [rule XIV] rule XVII to gain a better understanding of the proper rules of decorum expected of them, an especially: First, to avoid "personalities" in debate with respect to references to other Members, the Senate, and the President; second, to address the Chair while standing and only when and not beyond the time recognized, and not to address the television or other imagined audience; third, to refrain from passing between the Chair and the Member speaking, or directly in front of a Member speaking from the well; fourth, to refrain from smoking in the Chamber; and generally to display the same degree of respect to the Chair and other Members that every Member is due.

The Speaker's announcement of January 4, 1995, will continue to apply in the 106th Congress as follows:

The SPEAKER. The Chair will like all Members to be on notice that the Chair intends to strictly enforce time limitations on debate. Furthermore, the Chair has the authority to immediately interrupt Members in debate who transgress [rule XIV] rule XVII by failing to avoid "personalities" in debate with respect to reference to the Senate, the President, and other Members, rather than wait for Members to complete their remarks.

Finally, it is not in order to speak disrespectfully of the Speaker; and under the precedents the sanctions for such violations transcend the ordinary requirements for timeliness of challenges. This separate treatment is recorded in volume 2 of Hinds' Precedents, at section 1248 and was reiterated on January 19, 1995.

6. CONDUCT OF VOTES BY ELECTRONIC DEVICE

The Speaker's policy announced on January 4, 1995, will continue through 106th Congress.

The SPEAKER. The Chair wishes to enunciate a clear policy with respect to the conduct of electronic votes.

As Members are aware, [clause 5 of rule XV] clause 2(a) of rule XX provides that Members shall have not less than 15 minutes in which to answer an ordinary rollcall vote or quorum call. The rule obviously establishes 15 minutes as a minimum. Still, with the cooperation of the Members, a vote can easily be completed in that time. The events of October 30, 1991, stand out as proof of this point. On that occasion, the House was considering a bill in the Committee of the Whole under a special rule that placed an overall time limit on the amendment process, including the time consumed by rollcalls. The Chair announced, and then strictly enforced, a policy of closing electronic votes as soon as possible after the guaranteed period of 15 minutes. Members appreciated and cooperated with the Chair's enforcement of the policy on that occasion.

The Chair desires that the example of October 30, 1991, be made the regular practice of the House. To that end, the Chair enlists the assistance of all Members in avoiding the unnecessary loss of time in conducting the business of the House. The Chair encourages all Members to depart for the Chamber promptly upon the appropriate bell and light signal. As in recent Congresses, the cloakrooms should not forward to the Chair requests to hold a vote by electronic device, but should simply apprise inquiring Members of the time remaining on the voting clock.

Although no occupant of the Chair would prevent a Member who is in the well of the Chamber before the announcement of the result from casting his or her vote, each occupant of the Chair will have the full support of the Speaker in striving to close each electronic vote at the earliest opportunity. Members should not rely on signals relayed from outside the Chamber to assume that votes will be held open until they arrive in the Chamber.

7. USE OF HANDOUTS ON HOUSE FLOOR

The Speaker's policy announced on September 27, 1995, will continue through 106th Congress.

The SPEAKER. A recent misuse of handouts on the floor of the House has been called to the attention of the Chair and the House. At the bipartisan request of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, the Chair announces that all handouts distributed on or adjacent to the House floor by Members during House proceedings must bear the name of the Member authorizing their distribution. In addition, the content of those materials must comport with standards of propriety applicable to words spoken in debate or inserted in the Record. Failure to comply with this admonition may constitute a breach of decorum and may give rise to a question of privilege.

The Chair would also remind Members that, pursuant to [clause 4, rule XXXII] clause 5 of rule IV, staff are prohibited from engaging in efforts in the Hall of the House or rooms leading thereto to influence Members with regard to the legislation being amended. Staff cannot distribute handouts.

In order to enhance the quality of debate in the House, the Chair would ask Members to minimize the use of handouts.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 6, 1999.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
The Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Under Clause 4 of Rule III of the Rules of the House of Representatives, I herewith designate Mr. Gerasimos C. Vans, Special Assistant to the Clerk, to sign any and all papers and do all other acts for me under the name of the Clerk of the House which he would be authorized to do by virtue of this designation, except such as are provided by statute, in case of my temporary absence or disability.

This designation shall remain in effect for the 106th Congress or until modified by me. With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAHL,
Clerk.

PROVIDING FOR AN ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE FROM WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 1999, TO TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 1999

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 2) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 2

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That when the House adjourns on the legislative day of Wednesday, January 6, 1999, it stand adjourned until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, January 19, 1999.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBERS OF HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING COMMISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection and pursuant to the provisions of 40 United States Code, 175 and 176, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the gentleman from Texas, (Mr. ARMEY) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) as members of the House Office Building Commission to serve with himself.

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBERS OF HOUSE PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection and pursuant to the provisions of clause 11 of rule X and clause 11 of rule I, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence:

Mr. GOSS of Florida, Chairman;

Mr. DIXON of California.

There was no objection.

□ 1815

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

ENSURING BALANCED BUDGETS EVERY YEAR

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

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, one of our greatest accomplishments of the 105th Congress was providing Americans with the first balanced Federal budget and the first budget surplus since 1969.

Now that we have proved we can balance the budget, it is time to ensure that we always balance the budget every year by enacting the Balanced Budget Amendment to the United States Constitution during the 106th Congress.

As we know, the Balanced Budget Amendment's chief advocate and sponsor, Mr. Dan Schaefer, retired at the end of the 105th Congress following many years of distinguished and committed service to our country. It is my belief that we could not have finally balanced our books this year, for the first time in a generation, without the tireless efforts of Mr. Dan Schaefer in bringing this issue to the forefront of American political dialogue. It is for this reason that I am particularly proud he has asked me to carry on the fight for a constitutional amendment requiring the government's books to be balanced every year.

The Balanced Budget Amendment will lower interest rates and make mortgages, car loans, and student loans more affordable and available, annually saving the typical American family \$1,500.

It will end waste and pork by requiring Washington to honestly and realistically identify needed and unneeded Federal programs and spending.

It will protect our children and grandchildren from the burden of paying for Washington's inability to budget responsibly.

The Founding Fathers of this great Nation understood and believed the Federal Government must not spend beyond its means. Thomas Jefferson said, "We should consider ourselves unauthorized to saddle posterity with our debts, and morally bound to pay themselves ourselves." Clearly, we have strayed far from this advice.

The Federal government's spending has built an enormous national debt, now exceeding \$5.6 trillion. When this debt is divided among all men, women, and children in the country, each of us owes over \$20,000. If a business lost \$1,000 a day, it would take 15,000 years to accumulate our current debt. Unfortunately, beyond these stunning statistics is an even more unbelievable but all too real fact: Our debt is growing by \$4,500 every second.

The economic rewards for ensuring a balanced budget would be significant. Many prominent economists predicted that interest rates would remain steady, and possibly drop even further, if the budget was always balanced. This could result in annual savings of at least \$1,200 on an average home mortgage, \$200 on a typical student loan, and \$180 on an average car loan. While these savings might seem small in the world of congressional budgets, to the American family they would lead to more opportunities and a better life.

Although we have demonstrated more responsibility in balancing our

books, we must look to the future and guarantee a strong, solvent Nation for the next generation.

The moment has come for Congress to pass a Balanced Budget Amendment and embrace lasting fiscal accountability. Again, the words of Thomas Jefferson offer guidance: "To preserve our independence, we must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt."

Like the disastrous economic decisions that ultimately led the colonists to revolt against an unreasonable bloated and bankrupt government, Washington has allowed itself to grow beyond its means, spend without reason, and fall dangerously in debt. All the while, the Federal Government has increasingly burdened the hard-working, honest citizens of this country to support its reckless habit. Washington has fallen prey to the same traps and rationalizations, and is on a path that can only lead to ruin.

To quantify this historic perspective, we must only look to the dramatic growth in Federal spending which has caused the current national deficit crisis. As Senator ORRIN HATCH outlined in 1995, the first \$100 billion budget in the history of our Nation occurred in 1962, more than 179 years after the founding of this great Republic.

However, once Washington acquired the habit, it quickly lost all sense of reality. The first \$200 billion budget came only 9 years later, in 1971; the first \$300 billion budget came 4 years later, in 1975; the first \$400 billion budget, 2 years later in 1977; \$500 billion in 1981; \$700 billion in 1982; \$800 billion in 1983; \$900 billion in 1985, and the first \$1 trillion budget in 1987. The budget for 1998 exceeded \$1.7 trillion.

Is there any question we have a spending habit? Yet opponents of the Balanced Budget Amendment claim there is no problem. They repeatedly point to the statistically insignificant slowdown in the growth of the debt as though we have solved our problem. That is like telling an unfortunate person struggling with addiction they are cured if they manage to avoid their habit an extra second out of a 24-hour day. Clearly, we have only begun to grapple with this obsession.

We are, however, not doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past. By approving the Balanced Budget Amendment, the 106th Congress can join those who put patriotism and responsibility above personal gain and short-term satisfaction, as well as honor the past and protect the future from unreasonable spending.

The Balanced Budget Amendment is rooted in, and preserving, the fundamental American values of:

1. Integrity—It will instill credibility and principle to budget negotiations and the federal government.

2. Children's future—Passing the BBA is a vote for our children's economic freedom.

3. Families—Approving this amendment will improve the economic health and stability of America's families.

4. Economic strength—The BBA will stabilize Washington's budgets and the national economy, enabling us to rein in our monstrous national deficit.

The strength of the Constitution can ensure a responsible budgetary framework, saving us from being swallowed by accumulating debt. The BBA will improve and protect our economy, our families and our children.

I am following the wisdom of Thomas Jefferson, who said, "I wish it were possible to obtain a single amendment to our Constitution * * * an additional article taking from the Federal Government the power of borrowing," by introducing the Balanced Budget Amendment, along with Reps. STENHOLM, CASTLE, and a large and growing bipartisan group of Members.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.)

PRESERVING THE HEALTH OF SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, the 106th Congress started the day with a nationwide consensus that the health of social security is in jeopardy. Millions of American seniors have come to depend on social security, and it is our responsibility to see that a solution is found to address this looming crisis.

In the early 1980s, social security faced a similar, more immediate crisis. At that time projections showed that social security would be insolvent by 1983. Within months of that projected insolvency, reforms were enacted that provided for the continued health of the program, and included in these reforms were tax increases which would result in social security receiving more in revenue than it would pay out for benefits for several decades.

The surplus was to be placed in the social security trust fund, where it would earn interest and be saved for future retirees. American seniors were assured that the system was saved at least temporarily, and that the massive reserve account being created would ensure the fund's solvency and American seniors' security. It seemed that the crisis had been at least avoided temporarily.

Unfortunately, the surplus that was supposed to be placed in trust, ready for American seniors, was spent. Contrary to popular belief, when social security was first established in 1935, social security taxes were not placed in a trust, but instead, became part of the government's operating cash pool. Social security revenues that were not