

seniors. Then, by preserving fiscal discipline, paying down debt and offering tax relief, this budget ensures lower interest rates and a stronger economy well into the 21st century. This keeps faith with our children. It is a budget I am proud to support.

ISSUES OF CONCERN REGARDING IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

TRIBUTE TO HOUSTONIANS ON OBSERVANCE OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this is a month in which we honor women for the contributions that they have made to the United States and to our communities and our neighborhoods.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I would like to briefly acknowledge some of my neighbors in Texas, in Houston in particular, who I hope to be able to expand on their many contributions in weeks and months to come by tributes that I will submit to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. But just for tonight briefly since I will also talk about another issue in the time allotted, let me pay tribute and acknowledge:

Christa Adair, the first secretary of the NAACP, who created opportunities for people to vote in Houston, Texas.

Luella Harrison, an outstanding teacher, pioneer and spokesperson in our community.

Mrs. Erma Leroy, another activist who has contributed along with her husband, Moses Leroy, to the labor movement in Houston.

Madgelean Bush who founded the Martin Luther King Community Center that today provides facilities for babies with HIV/AIDS.

Nellie Fraga who has championed Hispanic and Mexican rights but also cultural connections and exchange.

Mrs. Laurenzo, the owner of Ninfa's Restaurant, a businesswoman premier who has guided us to indicate and teach women that they too can be involved in business.

I pay tribute to those women among many others who have done such great things for our community with a special tribute as well to Mae Jemison who has pioneered into space and now has an office in the Houston area.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to respond and indicate some issues of concern that I have as the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims of the House Committee on the Judiciary. I was disappointed that the amendment today of my good friend the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN) was not able to be debated. The gentleman from Texas offered an amendment to ensure that criminal aliens that were already incarcerated would not be released until

deportation. I wanted the gentleman from Texas to have the opportunity to discuss and debate a very important issue. The issue was raised because of the \$80 million that was included in the emergency supplemental appropriations bill that was to provide increased border enforcement and funds for 2,945 additional beds for the detention of criminal aliens from certain parts of Central and South America.

I am concerned that when money is given to an agency and it is given to the agency still with the sense that the agency is not functioning, that we need to debate the issue and get clarification. I think it is important that we should acknowledge, as was acknowledged, that any presupposed or any memo that suggested that the INS was prepared to release criminal aliens is obviously incorrect or has been withdrawn. I am disappointed that preliminary discussions about that were ultimately released to the public. But INS should own up to it and explain what that memorandum was about. They say it was about the fact that they did not have enough beds. In fact, in our own community, they have contracted out the need for facilities for incarcerating or keeping criminal aliens. What I would like to see is the Federal Bureau of Prisons move more expeditiously, although I know they are working toward doing this, in providing beds for criminal aliens so that they are not located particularly in neighborhoods and communities around the Nation.

I also believe it is important not just to give \$80 million for the increased border enforcement, but we need trained Border Patrol agents, experienced Border Patrol agents. And so it is important that INS responds how they are going to ensure that the border enforcement patrol is well trained so that everyone is protected, both the Border Patrol agents as well as those they encounter.

I think it is equally important that we address the question that so many have approached me with, and, that is, the INS personnel, in terms of improvements, both in terms of their conditions but also, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the workings of the office, the delay, the treatment of those who come into the INS office.

My commitment to all of those who are commenting about the INS is that we are going to fix it. It is an agency that has an enormous responsibility. Mr. Speaker, this is a country of immigration but it is a country of laws. My colleagues have my commitment as ranking member of the Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims that we are going to address these concerns to the INS and make the United States known for a fair and balanced immigration policy while responding to the concerns of our constituents and our colleagues.

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THE NEW DEMOCRATS WANT FISCAL DISCIPLINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow on the House floor we will begin the budget process. We will debate in the full House for the budget resolution, and the budget resolution is the parameters under which we will pass the spending bills later on in the session. So this is the first attempt to get a look at what our budget is going to look like for the fiscal year 2000.

I rise today to talk about fiscal discipline and to urge fiscal discipline in that process, and I do so from the perspective of a Democrat, but a New Democrat, and I would like to explain that a little bit at the outset because I am a member of the New Democratic Caucus back here in Washington, D.C., but that is not something folks may necessarily be completely familiar with outside of Washington, D.C.

The basic premise behind the New Democrats is that the Democratic party needed to change to address some of the legitimate concerns that the American public had with our party. Essentially we in the New Democratic Caucus believe that the Democrats did have to make some changes in some of its policies in order to address the concerns the public had expressed with us and the reasons that we started losing elections, quite frankly. We had to understand some of the changes that were going on in society and some of the changes that were going on in government and address them in manners that had not been previously addressed, and one of the biggest ones is fiscal responsibility.

Now, as Democrats, we believe that government can, in fact, in certain areas be a positive force in peoples' lives. We can look to Medicare, Social Security, the interstate highway bill, the GI bill, laws that have protected our environment by cleaning up air and water; all of those areas have made a difference. So it is not that we do not believe, as some of our colleagues on the right, in the Republican party, sometimes believe, that government can never do anything right; it is just that we believe that they need to do it in a fiscally responsible manner, and there is a variety of reasons for that.

First of all, all of the needs that we have as a society: education, defense, cleaning up and protecting the environment, medical research, taking care of our veterans, providing health care and pension security for our seniors are not one-time needs. Our generation is not going to be the only generation that is