

that we have to pass 13. In fact, if we had done our work then, we would not be in this crisis mode tonight.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. I think what the American people are reacting to is the extremism, the extremes which these bills contain, and that is why we are having such difficulty bringing them to finality. When we decide that our children need no protection in the water or in the food or the air, and our seniors or working families or any of the American people, that is extreme.

THE EFFECTS OF THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to dialogue 5 minutes with my colleague. Would my colleague continue her remarks?

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Yes, I am very concerned as to this contract. The Republicans talked about the Contract With America. I have often said it was a contract on America. A contract on the elderly people, a contract on the children, a contract on the poor people.

□ 1915

This reverse Robin Hood, robbing from the working people and the poor people to give to the rich.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they have offered up provisions in this Contract With America that they could not pass in the Senate. I have always been so very proud of being a Member of the House. I served 10 years in the Florida House and 2 years here, and I have always been proud of the fact that the House deliberates, we have hearings.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I can thank God for the other body who just do not take up this work, this sometimes trashy work this House has produced, and pass it on.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. I served in both the Texas House and the Texas Senate, and I have never been in a position where I could say that I did everything the way I wanted it to be done, but what I can say is that everyone had an opportunity to be heard, to call witnesses, and then there was a fair vote.

Very, very frequently, I got a part of what I wanted, others got parts of what they wanted. But in the end, it was a piece that was made up of input and one that we could say that a clear majority wanted. It was called compromising, negotiating, agreeing, and then a majority win.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that that will work in any deliberative body, but without that, it cannot. Here I am not even sure we are listening, because poll after poll, and then finally last week's local elections, have demonstrated the growing level of opposition to the Medicare and Medicaid cuts and the education cuts, which are not popular, but no one is listening.

This budget is being held hostage in order to impose higher Medicare premiums on seniors. This is not what the public wants. This is a body of, by, and for the people. This is a democracy, but nobody is listening; at least the ones who are trying to ram their ideas through are really not listening.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that the Republicans really are interested in negotiating, despite these weak complaints about the Democrats. The Republican leadership has demonstrated no sincere interest in negotiating. If there was interest in negotiating, we would use the proper procedures. We would simply not load up these simple resolutions with all of the legislation for the entire session to be in them.

It is not fair. It is not right. It is not according to anyone's procedure. It is heavy-handed. It is insulting, and it is ignoring the wishes of the American people.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. One thing I have learned from the Republicans is: He who has the gold makes the rules. It is like if you invite someone over to your house to play cards and you change the rules each step of the way, that is what we are experiencing here. The Republicans change the rules to fit whatever they are trying to do at that moment.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Clearly, this has been a long-time strategy; one that I really could not believe that we would have persons in the kind of responsible positions as we have planning this shutdown longer than 6 months ago, planning to ramrod unpopular ideas and policies that will hurt the majority of the American people in simple resolutions, simply because we have not completed our work.

If these are policies that ought to stand, they ought to stand without being loaded into these simple resolutions. We should be able to work those out. We should be able to allow the resolutions to go forward clean, and then come to the negotiating table.

This is simply a technique, in my opinion, to pull the President into a fight, where he has clearly stated that using the proper procedure for negotiating is acceptable, but he will not be hoodwinked into attempting to negotiating by allowing these higher premiums to go in and all these protections to be removed from our air, food, and water.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Do we have a final word for our constituents as to what is going on in Washington and what they should do? I suggest that they call their Congresspeople and let them know how they feel about how they are wasting taxpayers' dollars by furloughing people, by shutting down the Government.

CONGRESS SHOULD COME TOGETHER AND SERVE AMERICA WELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARR). Under a previous order of the

House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, in a time of crisis, one wonders where is that forceful leadership of the majority? Where is the forceful leadership of the Speaker? I tell my colleagues where they are. They are playing a dangerous game of chicken. Mr. Speaker, I say to them, shame on you for doing that.

In particular, in a state of crisis and emergency, Medicare and Medicaid should not be played as pawns and toys in the hands of people who want to force their way. I say they need to find new toys and new games to play and not force these kinds of unacceptable views on the President.

When we get down to the brass tacks, it makes no difference who flinches first. That will be lost in yesterday's news. The people will forget all of that. What they will wonder is that we failed to govern, we failed to take care of the people's business.

By the time the majority comes to their senses, their capricious acts will have already hurt those people who can least afford to sustain these harsh blows: The elderly, the poor, the disabled; not only those who are being furloughed tomorrow or at midnight tonight.

The majority has voted to cut Medicare by \$270 billion. To do what? To make sure their wealthy friends get a tax break. The poorest of the poor, those who receive Medicaid, \$182 billion will be reduced. That will mean unnecessary pain for a lot of people who now already find themselves in distress.

Mr. Speaker, what does this mean for my district in North Carolina? It means North Carolina will lose \$6.75 billion in Medicare funding for the next 5 years. And add to that Medicaid, which again will lose \$6.76 billion. Those combined would be \$13.51 billion that we will lose in the State of North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, that will affect millions of people, and yet my colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to overload this resolution to continue to make the Government function by making sure we increase the premiums for senior citizens and Medicare. That is uncalled for. That is uncalled for.

Again, Mr. Speaker, what other things in the budget reconciliation do we find objectionable? Mr. Speaker, \$16.5 billion will be cut from the farming community as well. That will hurt people in my district.

Why is it that the President finds these objectionable? Because he wants to serve the majority: American people, whether they are farmers or senior citizens, or whether they are the poor. Medicaid itself in my district will affect some 882,000 people. Medicare affects some 999,000 people in my district. Should I not be concerned about that? Of course we are concerned about that. That is what we find objectionable about the budget reconciliation.

When we ask for a continuation of Government for 1 month, my Republican colleagues want to overload it with things we already find that are unacceptable in the budget reconciliation. Who will be helped and who will be hurt, I ask? Only those who receive the tax break will be helped.

Certainly, the Federal employees who are going to be furloughed tomorrow will not be helped, and certainly those who will see an increase in their Medicare premiums in January will not be helped. Certainly, the students who are going to lose their loans and find that the interest payment is going to be increased are not going to be helped.

Mr. Speaker, what is this all about? Should this not be about bringing Americans together? I say, shame on you, shame on you, Speaker of this House. Shame on you, the leader of this House. Shame on you, the majority in this House who do not find it in their vested interest to govern and to govern well.

Mr. Speaker, we need to come together, Republicans and Democrats both, to understand this is a time of crisis. We need leadership. We need to stop this chicken game of who will flinch first. The American people are annoyed at that arrogance. We need grownups to act like grownups and not act like overspoiled children. I beeseech to my colleagues to come together as persons of responsibility, persons of compassion, and to serve America well.

"LET THEM EAT DOG FOOD"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, about now in the First Congressional District in Denver, CO., Federal workers, thousands of them, are going home after a long day's work and they are wondering if they come back tomorrow. What do they do? Does anybody recognize how hard their work is? What is going on?

Mr. Speaker, 45 days after the fiscal year ran out, they cannot believe this body cannot have a budget together. They also cannot believe we could not even get anything of substance on the President's desk, really; that the fight is with the other body. We cannot even get it down Pennsylvania Ave. So, they are driving home in their cars wondering what kind of career mistake they ever made to go into public service and dedicate their lives to this.

Mr. Speaker, people who live in the First Congressional District are hearing now that this shutdown is going to cost the economy \$10 million to \$15 million a day. It is going to cost taxpayers, and that is outrageous.

Mr. Speaker, people going home in their cars who have been designated "essential," so they can go back tomorrow, and they are realizing how inefficient it is going to be without sup-

port staff. People are going to phone in and not get an answer, and they are going to phone in to this body and not get an answer.

What is all of this about? Last night we got a little window into this, because the GOPAC people had a gala. They had a gala. GOPAC is the group that the Speaker put together that brought all the new Members of Congress is here on the other side of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, they had address this great gala the person who they have designated as an honorary member of their class, Rush Limbaugh. Rush Limbaugh stood up to talk about what a great night it was. He said he greeted his fellow extremists and he hailed the new Republican budget, because he said it would starve the poor and it would take those on Medicare, like his mother, he said, and force them on dog food. But, he said, his mother was probably watching C-SPAN and he wanted her to know he was sending her a new can opener.

We have all heard of Marie Antoinette who said, "Let them eat cake." Apparently the new cry of this group is, "Let them eat dog food." Take a sock for Christmas and take cans of dog food and insert them for people who are on Medicare, because if the President is to be able to stop this tonight, he has got to agree to \$13 more in premiums for the people on Medicare. That is why Rush Limbaugh is so happy that his mother is going to be on dog food.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am not. My mother is not going to eat dog food, and I do not think we ought to have Federal employees going to dog food. I think for the great Nation that this Nation is, that kind of talk is absolutely outrageous.

Mr. Speaker, if we condemn, and we have as a nation, the Marie Antoinettes who were so out of touch, who said, "Let them eat cake," we ought to be condemning just as insensitive a statement as, "Let them eat dog food."

Mr. Speaker, we should not be attaching mandatory increases to Medicare to keeping the Government going. None of it makes any sense. This is about a dysfunctional part of the Government right now, the legislative branch.

Mr. Speaker, we ought to come in here, reconvene, and we ought to pass a clean continuing resolution so Government goes on. We ought to increase the debt ceiling, so Government goes on and the full faith and credit of this country is not run to the cliff. And then we ought to go back and work out that budget that was due 45 days ago. Mr. Speaker, 85 percent of it has not been finalized. Work that out. Bring it here in the regular process.

No wonder the American people are disgusted. The haughtiness and the arrogance of laughing about one's mother and laughing about how the poor are going to suffer and, "Isn't that a great day?"

□ 1930

If you really think the problem of America is that the real needy are the greedy and that the real greedy are needy, are not greedy, they are too greedy, then you are going to love what is going on. But I think most Americans do not think that the greedy are real needy.

If you have got hundreds of dollars to go to these great galas and fundraisers, you are not exactly suffering. And you may think it is funny for those who are suffering but I do not. I think it is tragic for Federal employees who have families, who have mortgages, who have school tuition. I hope Members of this body try and write notes to all of them, see if they can get some kind of an extension on their mortgage. See what they can do. They cannot. We should not do this. We should convene. We should have a clean continuing resolution. We should have a clean debt resolution. We should get on with business as usual and let us knock off this talk about dog food.

I am not from the heritage of Marie Antoinette. I am from the heritage of the great leaders of this country who believed every American counted and you did not make fun of them, of their social status or their economic status. Let us move forward in that tradition.

MEDICARE AND STUDENT LOANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. BROWN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, for months Speaker GINGRICH promised to shut the Government down so he could score political points. The Washington Times earlier this year said, "House Speaker NEWT GINGRICH vowed yesterday to create a titanic legislative standoff with President Clinton by adding vetoed bills to must-pass legislation increasing the national debt ceiling."

The Washington Times, in April of 1995, said the President will veto a number of things and will then put them all in the debt ceiling and then he will decide how big a crises he wants.

Five months later leading up to this budget problem we are in now and this close-down-the-government threat, Speaker GINGRICH said, "I don't care what the price is. I don't care if we have no executive offices and no bonds for 30 days, not at this time."

An Ohio Congressman, Ohio Republican Congressman said, If we close down, people will listen. An Ohio Congressman also said, I do not see the Government shutdown as a negative; I see it as a positive, if things get righted. A Nebraska Republican Congressman said, If we have to temporarily shut down the Government to get people's attention, then so be it. The question, Mr. Speaker, is, why are they doing this? What is the point of this? The answer is, the Gingrich plan