

quarter of a century. This bill is, in my opinion, right for New Jersey, but more importantly, right for America.

Throughout the debate leading up to today's historic vote we have witnessed a debate between two competing visions. On the one side are the advocates of the status quo, and on the other a group of legislators committed to offering real solutions to real problems.

Sadly, the advocates of the status quo have only been able to offer us echoes of the very sentiments that put our country in the red to begin with. Their answers to the very real questions and problems we are faced with are disappointingly and simply more of the same.

They believe that more spending, more taxes, and more debt are the answer to our budget ills. Most regrettably, during this debate the supporters of the status quo have fueled the fires of skepticism and despair, choosing to resort to demagoguery and doomsday scenarios at a time when our constituents deserve more.

As we stand on the threshold of truly monumental reform, it is only natural to experience a certain amount of anxiety about what comes next. But real leadership demands, in my opinion, that the response to that anxiety be hard work and commitment, not homage to the failed policies of the past.

Mr. Speaker, today we delivered where others have failed. Only in 1992, our non-President and then-candidate promised a balanced budget, the end of welfare as we know it, and a middle-class tax cut. We have been denied every one of these by the President and his Congress.

Today, we represent the very opposite. Today we will balance, and did balance, the budget for the sake of our children and their future. We have offered real, credible welfare reform and we will deliver a middle-class tax cut.

In short, today in passing the Balanced Budget Act of 1995, we are offering the President, by signing this bill, the opportunity to fulfill his major campaign pledges in one fell swoop. And sadly, again, he appears once more to be poised to reject his own campaign promises.

Finally, I would like to comment for a moment about the subject of Medicare. Unquestionably, in my opinion, the politics of this issue were best explained in the November 16 edition of the Washington Post editorial when it said the following: "The Democrats, led by the President, choose instead to present themselves as Medicare's great protectors. They have shamelessly used the issue, demagogued on it, because they think that's where the votes are and the way to derail the Republican plans generally."

Sadly, I must agree with those comments. In defense of the status quo, we have seen only politics and not leadership.

Mr. Speaker, in the past several weeks I visited the veterans in my dis-

trict and over that time I have been repeatedly reminded of how impressed I am each time with their courage in the face of real adversity and dangerous crises as those that they have faced.

They were successful in their battles and kept America safe from a dangerous world, but history has shown us that great civilizations fall victims to the crisis from within just as often as they fall prey to the threats from without. The threats from within might not be tangible or have a face or a name readily associated with them, but they do, in fact, exist.

Mr. Speaker, the deficit is just such a threat. Through it may not be apparent to Americans in their everyday lives, the effects of the deficit spending and out-of-control growth in the Federal Government pose a real, real danger for America. We in Congress are charged with the duty of dealing with these problems, which is what the debate was about today.

Mr. Speaker, it is not difficult to figure out what the people want and deserve. They do not want us to blink. They want us to go forward. They do want us to pass along to their children a future filled with prosperity and hope, not debt and despair.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased and humbled to be a part of this historic vote today, after only 11 months ago coming to this House.

BUDGET RECONCILIATION

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

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, the budget bill we just passed gives a hand and a handout to the well-connected and well-off and uses a fist and brute force against the poor and many of those who work in America.

It provides for drastic and extreme changes in the lives of our citizens, and it does so through a process that was not open—a process that evolved in the dark shadows of smoke-filled, back rooms.

The Republicans would have us accept that Secret Report so that they can glide to a balanced budget in 7 years—But, "to balance" means "to equalize". And, we will not equalize, when we give a \$245 billion tax break to the wealthy while Student loans are cut, nutrition and child care are compromised, farm programs are thrown out the window, spending for needed housing programs is reduced, and Medicare and Medicaid are slashed.

We can and we should balance the budget. But, we do not need a budget that is a war without bullets.

The issue is not about balancing the budget—it is about balancing our priorities.

I voted for a 7-year balanced budget plan offered in the coalition alternative budget. But, as we glide towards a balanced budget, we should not slide through the cracks and crevices of Con-

gress, creating a clandestine, trillion dollar spending package that helps the rich among us and hurts the rest among us.

All Americans are created equal. We must not forget that fundamental premise of our Government as we shape a basic budget for the United States.

Let's give a hand to all Americans, a handout to those who need it and use a fist on real enemies. Americans who earn \$28,000 dollars or less a year are no different than those who earn \$100,000 dollars a year.

Why can't we balance the budget by giving some tax relief to the low earners and taking back some tax relief from the high earners. That is what balancing means.

Why can't we balance the budget by helping our senior citizens, who have labored a lifetime, instead of helping those who already have money to get more money—that is what balancing means.

The Republicans have established in this Congress—a record that supports the wealthy and neglects those most in need.

This budget plan—a plan that takes from the poor and gives to the rich will succeed, if we do nothing.

They want to spend money on the wealthy and call it an investment, while taking money from school children, pregnant women, infants, farmers, the poor, students and seniors and call it savings.

Our priorities seem out of order.

They have gone too far in cutting school lunches—They have gone too far in shutting off heating assistance for senior citizens—They have gone too far in eliminating scholarships and in cutting loans for college students—They have gone too far in eliminating summer jobs—and, they have gone too far in denying baby formula to infants.

Huddled beneath the dim street lamps, in the counties and towns and cities of this state, and across the Nation, are people who are outside.

They are the sick, the frail, the disabled, the poor, the weak, the old, our children—the least among us. This Budget Reconciliation Bill will keep them on the outside. And, toiling on the farms and in the factories and in small and medium sized businesses, are the people who are also outside—outside of the bounty of this Nation, despite their hard work. This Budget Reconciliation Bill will keep them on the outside.

I urge my colleagues both Democrats and Republicans who want to give a hand to the majority of our citizens—to the poor and to average, hard-working, taxpaying Americans—and who want to find a fist to crush this unrevealed conference report for a select few—I urge you to join me in supporting the President's veto of this report.

This Reconciliation Bill is a war without bullets because—while there are no weapons nor bloodshed—it does the same kind of harm to the lives of millions of Americans.

This Reconciliation Bill is a war without Bullets because—while there are no war torn streets and bombs echoing in the air—it will, if it stands, leave a stinging scar on the hearts and in the minds of our citizens.

Let's pass a budget reconciliation bill that serves all of our citizens.

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Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. CLAYTON. I yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I would simply ask the gentlewoman in the wake of her statement that the tax breaks are allegedly going to the wealthy if the gentlewoman considers 80 percent of American families wealthy?

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join with me, Republicans and Democrats, when we get a chance to support the President when he vetoes this because this is a bad budget for Americans.

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

[Mr. RAMSTAD addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

HOUSE SHOULD REMAIN IN SESSION THROUGH SUNDAY

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

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, as one of the new members of Congress this year, I am pleased to say that I think we have made some positive changes in this 104th Congress. There has been some things that I have been proud to support, reforms that have been made. I have been proud to reach across the other side of the aisle with some of my colleagues in the Republican Party to support some of those changes. People back in western Pennsylvania told me when I was running for office that good ideas come on both sides of the aisle. When something benefits western Pennsylvania and our country, I do not care if it is a Republican idea or a Democratic idea, we should support that. I have been happy to do that.

But, Mr. Speaker, the unsettling fact is that partisan wrangling and political staging are starting to delay the appropriations process. We are behind on paying the Nation's bills. Of the 13 appropriation bills, we have only completed work on 4 of them so far. And 800,000 Federal workers were furloughed on Tuesday and remain off their jobs and wondering if or when they will be able to pay their bills.

Millions of Americans are seeing an unprecedented Federal Government shutdown that, if it persists, will cripple

the ability for the American people to move forward, to prosper, to be proud of the service that they receive from their government.

Americans, what they are starting to see here, they do not like on either side of the aisle. They see disagreements on the budget, but our disagreements are not on whether or not to balance the Federal budget. They are on budget priorities. They see petty fights about state funerals, about which adding machine will get used, who gets credit in the public opinion polls, who gets blamed or the stories of the mere childishness in this institution. And they are seeing it taken to extremes.

The American people want to see us be serious about facing the problems in front of us. This Congress, not the President, has an obligation to keep the government in business. Yesterday I visited with 70 students from western Pennsylvania, from Brentwood High School. They were here to visit the Nation's Capitol and see some of the Nation's treasures that we have to offer. They were not able to see a lot of those treasures because we are in a shutdown right now. That fault lies with the American Congress, with the Congress here, Democrats and Republicans, because we need to get our work done. We need to do our job because we hold the purse strings.

I would like nothing better than to be home this week with my wife Susan and my four children. I think every Member in this House would like to be home with their families. But there are thousands of families nationwide who rely on the sole providers who work in this government and they, too, deserve to have the knowledge of whether or not they are going to receive a paycheck. And there are millions of families throughout the country who rely on the services that the government employees provide.

I would just like to talk a minute about the balanced budget because we hear a lot of talk about the balanced budget. I am a Democrat who voted for the balanced budget amendment. I am a Democrat that supported the Stenholm budget resolution. There were over 300 of us that agree that we should balance the Federal budget. This is not a question about whether or not to do it. The argument is going to be about how we do it. It is going to be about priorities. It is going to be about whether we have tax cuts or whether we mitigate some of the pain in Medicare and Medicaid. I think we should have that discussion.

I respect Members on this side of the aisle that feel deeply held convictions that there should be a \$245 billion tax cut and what they are doing in Medicaid and Medicare. I happen not to agree with these gentlemen and I hold those convictions sincerely. That is what we should be talking about over these next months.

Let us get this CR behind us. Let us get the government running again and then let us sit down and have the great

debate that the American people want us to have on what our priorities should be for Federal dollars. Let us get on with our work.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. LONGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to proceed in place of the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SCARBOROUGH].

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

There was no objection.

BUDGET IMPASSE

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

Mr. LONGLEY. Mr. Speaker, it is amazing to me to listen to the discussion on the floor this evening, particularly the suggestion that we might work over the weekend to do something, I am not quite sure. I have to confess that this is day 4 of the President's decision to shut down the Federal Government. But I would emphasize that it is the President's decision. Basically, I want to try to simplify things for Members to understand exactly what the issues are that we are now confronting.

Last Wednesday was a defining moment. It was a defining moment for the administration and it was a defining moment for the Congress. It was a defining moment for the administration because finally the administration made it clear that they are not in support of a balanced budget, period. And it was a defining moment for the Congress because 277 Members, including 48 Democrats, made it clear that we were in fact in favor of a balanced budget along the lines of the 7-year time frame.

For those who might be confused about exactly what is happening, Wednesday, when the President indicated that he was going to veto a clean continuing resolution, I realize that is Washington talk, what a clean continuing resolution means is a clean continuing resolution.

What is a continuing resolution? It is a resolution of the Congress that will allow spending to continue until early December. It had one requirement built into the resolution, that was that if the President accepted the agreement that he would in effect work with us to achieve a balanced Federal budget over the next 7 years.

There was no other requirement in that resolution. There were no tax cuts in that resolution. There were no adjustments in Medicare spending or Medicaid or any one of the hundreds of programs that we have worked our way through over the last 6 or 10 months. It was a clean continuing resolution; that is, it was unornamented. There was nothing complex about it.

We gave the President the opportunity to continue the operations of