

Government just based on one caveat; that was that we are going to balance the Federal budget.

Today we did something.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LONGLEY. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, did the sentence requiring a balanced budget by the year 2002, did it say anything about tax cuts?

Mr. LONGLEY. It said nothing about tax cuts. It said nothing about spending cuts. All it said was that we, the Congress of the United States, will work with the administration to develop a balanced Federal budget, scored by the Congressional Budget Office over the next 7 years.

Mr. HOKE. So when you clear it all away, it boils down to the President very clearly saying, I will not balance the budget in 7 years?

Mr. LONGLEY. That is exactly the issue.

We have also got a second item.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, now that the gentleman has reached the point in his presentation where he is taking questions, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LONGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I will yield for a question to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, why has not the continuing resolution, if the gentleman is so eager for the President to act on it, why is he holding it up?

Mr. LONGLEY. Reclaiming my time, I think that the President's indication that he was going to veto it before it was even passed resulted in it going through the Senate and it has been passed yesterday, I am advised by the Senate. I am sure that by tonight or tomorrow, it will be working its way on to the White House.

But at the same time, we have now added a second act of legislation that will be finalized by the House tomorrow morning, which is that, and remember what I said, that Wednesday we are giving the President, we voted on a clean continuing resolution. No ifs, ands, or buts, just we are going to agree to balance the budget. No adjustments in spending, no cuts, nothing.

Tomorrow morning we are going to vote on a budget, a 7-year budget. So we are going to give the President two choices. If he wants to work with us to develop a balanced Federal budget over the next 7 years, we are going to start from scratch. But by the same token, if he wants us to do the heavy lifting, we have already done it, worked our way through the budget, and we have come up with a package that we think is pretty strong. So he has got plan A and plan B. So as far as the work that needs to be done in this House, I might also add that the President's decision on Wednesday to indicate that he had no intention whatsoever of balancing the Federal budget has also thrown us into a little bit of a quandary, because if the President is going to interfere

with what we thought was his objective, which we thought was the objective of all Members of this Chamber to work toward a balanced Federal budget, and he has decided not to do that, well then now we have got to go through more programs and more adjustments and deal with the appropriations knowing they are going to be vetoed.

□ 2230

WE SHOULD STAY AND DO OUR WORK

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

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, is as obvious, I think, to all of us in this House and has been for the 10 months that I have been here, as have many of my colleagues who are on the floor tonight, we disagree, and reasonable people often disagree. But I think there is one thing that we cannot disagree upon and one thing that the American people will not disagree with, and that is simply that we should stay and do our work.

The fact of the matter is that we are still getting paid when a lot of people are not getting paid, and the fact of the matter is that we get paid a lot as compared to the majority of the American people, and I think the American people want action, not talk, and most of all I think the American people would rather see us stay in Washington and try and work out our differences on this budget, get us to a balanced budget, rather than adjourn and go home. That is what we get paid to do, and we ought to stay and do it.

Now tonight I join with my colleague, the gentleman from the great State of Maine [Mr. BALDACCI], and my other colleagues in the freshman Democrat class to introduce a resolution which will say that we will stay in session until we get this issue resolved.

Now we can talk about the issues of clean CR's, and time frames, and CBO, and OMB, and all other acronyms which make Washington tick, but the fact of the matter is that they are all irrelevant unless we are willing to sit here, work out our differences and get on with our business. To basically take our bat and ball and go home because we are mad and not do our work puts us in about the same league as major league baseball players who were out making \$4 million or \$5 million a year and decided they did not want to play baseball because they are not making enough money. American people feel we make too much money, and sometimes I think they are right, if we are to willing to sit down, try and find common ground and address these issues.

Mr. Speaker, we can all dig in our heels, we can all say we will not give an inch, but that is not what we were sent here to do, that is not what this democracy is all about.

Now I will tell my colleagues that I think that, if we decide to leave, without finishing our business, we will have a lot to pay, and quite frankly it will be deserved, so I think our colleagues on both sides of the aisle would be well served to join with us and join with us in this resolution. Let us tell the leadership, let us tell the Speaker, that we wish to stay.

Now let me, let me just make a couple of points of clarification since I have been sitting on this floor listening to my good friends from all over the country, and I want to make two points that I think the gentleman from Kansas spoke with earlier. He made the point about the Speaker's airplane problems, and I just want to make a point to remind him, and the way that I read it in all of the newspapers, was that it was the Speaker who brought up the issue of the airplane and why as a result of his personal offense that he took he decided to make the CR harder so it would not pass. In fact I heard a tape of that last night on the nightly news. It was the Speaker who said I am just doing this for point of clarification.

Let me also make another point to my colleagues because this is something that I just have an interest in. When we talk about interest rates, and he was talking about Chairman Greenspan of the Federal Reserve, an unelected position, but certainly an expert in the area of macroeconomics, he talks about lowering interest rates, but I might point out that when the Congress threatened to default for the first time in our history as a Nation to destroy our creditworthiness, interest rates actually went up because the market reacted to that. This goes to say any time you play around with the creditworthiness of a nation, you will pay more in interest rates.

So that brings me back to where we are. Let us sit down at the table, and let us get our work done. Let us not go home. Let us not go home because we are mad. We get paid to work. Other people are not getting paid, and let us get to work. So I ask my colleagues to join me in the resolution.

BALANCING THE BUDGET IS NOT A POPULARITY CONTEST

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

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. HOKE. I appreciate that. I just wanted to say to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. BENTSEN] that, you know, all this talk about working, and we could work, and we should have this resolution to work. The fact is this House agreed, we agreed, on a continuing resolution that is clean. We did that. We make it clean, and we voted on it.

You may have even voted for it, Mr. BENTSEN. Forth-eight of your colleagues did.

Mr. WAMP. Reclaiming my time, I am happy to yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. WALKER].

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I was fascinated to hear a minute ago when we heard about interest rates rise. Interest rates are rising because we have the Secretary of the Treasury that is down looting the pension funds of the country, and guess what? The markets are beginning to respond to the looting action taking place by the Secretary of the Treasury. I mean it is absolutely fascinating to hear these people come out defending what is going on in the administration when what we have is a looting of the retirement funds—

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the gentleman would yield for 1 moment, and I would just point out that the stock market is now—

Mr. WAMP. Mr. HOKE, let me reclaim my time and make my point, if I could, please.

You know, this has been a long and difficult year. It has been 11 months nearly now, and a lot of people are tired in this Chamber, and I can tell it on the floor today, and I can tell it with people's tempers, and what I would just respectfully come and say to our Members from both sides of the aisle is try not to be so disingenuous with your comments and your positions. This business of coming to the floor tonight and saying we should somehow stay on Sunday when on Sunday there is probably not going to be anything to vote on.

Let me tell you that beginning in 1991 I began running for the U.S. Congress, and I decided early on that I was not going to sacrifice my commitment to my wife and my children by entering the public arena, and I said I will not campaign, I will not do anything on Sunday, except go to my church, worship the God that I serve, and spend that day every week with my family, with my wife and my children, and I have not backed down on that commitment in 4 years.

In the first race the incumbent said we will debate you if you want to debate. She had a tremendous advantage. She said we will debate you on Sunday night, and I turned down that network-televized debate because I was not going to back down on a commitment that I made to live a balanced life of mind, body, and spirit, and I think it is very disingenuous for Members to down here and talk about us staying. We are staying tomorrow, we are staying Saturday.

Mr. Speaker, I have been here. I left home at 6:30 Monday morning, and we are staying Saturday. We are staying Saturday, and we are working, and we are going to go home for one day so I can go to my church with my children and spend a day with my family that I love.

There is a problem with the continuing resolution, there is a problem here,

we all know it. All week long we have heard about policy and popularity. Well, let me just say this, please. It is popular, and it has been popular for years, to overpromise and overspend, and even if it is not popular today to do what we have got to do to save this country from the train wreck that we are destined to have if we do not turn around, even if it is unpopular, I am willing to do it, and many of my colleagues are willing to do it.

This should not be a popularity contest. This country has got to quit worrying about polls, and how they run them, and what the results are.

Thankfully my district did respond this week. It was four to one all week in favor of what we are doing in standing tough, standing firm, on a balanced budget. One day it was six to one.

But what really bothers me is that we are the only generation in the history of this great Nation that is going to leave this place in worse shape than we found it. I would like to retire when I am 75 or 80 years old, and I would like to sit there with my grandkids and know that we did the right thing in 1995, that we stood in the gap for their future, that we made some tough decisions, that we did not back down when it all of a sudden got a little hot, like they done since 1969, said they were going to do it, got there, and we had a little pressure, and they had to back away from it, and the conservative Democrats over here, my hats are off to you. Forty-eight of you joined me, defected from President Clinton's commitment not to balance the budget, and joined us, and there are more every hour coming over. Why? Because it only makes sense.

Mr. Speaker, we have a reasonable proposal. We have stripped it down to the bare essentials of the 7-year balanced budget. It is time to move. It is time to do it. If not now, when? If not now, when are we going to do it?

I want to stay until the budget is balanced; that is what I came here for. We have got to take a step and come forward. I did not come here to play games. This is not a Republican-Democrat thing; it is a liberal and conservative thing, and we need to come together.

A CONGRESS THAT PRAYS TOGETHER CAN FINISH ITS BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Ms. LOFGREN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, as the Speaker knows and, I think, the American people know, we are not here doing actual business tonight. This is a time after our colleagues have gone home where those of us who want to stay until 11 or midnight can stand here and kind of pop off, and speak our minds, and I do not usually do that, but I did want to do it tonight because I feel strongly about something.

Mr. Speaker, I was interested in the civic lessons from the gentleman from Maine [Mr. LONGLEY] on how we got here, and I think it is important that we did that because the public, they do not know what a CR is, and most people do not, and I did not before I got elected and took office this year. But he stopped short of the civic lesson because the real reason why we need this emergency measure to keep the Government open is the fact that we have not done our job. We have to pass 13 appropriations bills, and we have only gotten three to the President's desk, and because of what we have to have these emergency measures.

Now I think it was my friend, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. DOYLE], who mentioned that there are very serious disagreements on what we should do in this budget. I think there is general agreement that we need to have a balanced budget. There is very strong disagreement over how we should do that, what the spending priorities should be, whether it should be 7 years or 10 years. All of those things need to be resolved, and we should have debates over them, but they should not in my opinion be resolved in a crisis mode. We should do that in the ordinary budget process, and that is why I came here at a quarter to 11 tonight, to pop off because I think that we ought to stay through the weekend and keep working.

Now I remember when the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY], the majority leader, mentioned this. He was asked about this a few days ago, and he said, well, Sunday is the Sabbath, and we need to go to church, and I looked up, and there was our Chaplain, Reverend Ford, and I thought we got a chaplain. Maybe we should take our chaplain and go out on the front lawn of the Capitol and have our service, put on our coats and have our service out there, and maybe, if we prayed together, we would have an easier time of coming to grips with the disagreements that we have.

I would like to say another thing. For some of our Members the Sabbath is Saturday, and there has been very little concern given to those individuals, and their religious beliefs, and their sacred day, and I think that that is a problem as well.

As my colleagues know, I have a 10-year-old son, and a couple days ago he said, "Now, Mommy, I do not understand this. Two weeks ago you didn't work on the—the Congress did not meet on Monday, and you didn't meet on Tuesday, and you started at 5 o'clock on Wednesday, and then you were out on Friday, and Saturday, and Sunday, and then you started in at 5 on Monday, and now the government shut down," and, you know, I did not quite know what to tell my 10-year-old son because he knows when he has not done his homework he does not get to go to the movies, when he has not cleaned up his room, he does not get to turn on the TV set. You keep working until you get your task done.