

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.

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We have not done that. So I am here today, popping off at this special order time, because the Democrat freshman class had what we thought could be a privileged resolution. We are newcomers, we did not know you could not set the schedule with a privileged resolution, but we wanted to ask this House to go ahead and say, "Let's just meet. Let's start early tomorrow. Let's not give up at 1, like we said. Let's go to 8 or 9 or 10 at night and let's start again. Let's meet out in the front lawn with our chaplain at 8, let us pray together, and then let us come back in here and let's work all day Sunday until we get the job down, and Monday." Because we have got thousands and thousands of Americans who are waiting for this crisis to be resolved, waiting for us to pass these appropriations bills. We have got thousands of Americans who may not get a veterans check soon.

My father, who is a disabled veteran from World War II, is one of those people. Now, luckily, my father's life is not going to crumble if his disability check does not come, but he has friends from World War II, and if their check does not come, they are in tough shape, so I think we need to resolve this issue. We need to keep working.

I know that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle are diligent people. They do not want to goof off, either. But I think we just ought to insist that we stay here, and we keep working until we have all 13 appropriations bills passed.

STAND FIRM: BALANCE THE BUDGET

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the comments of the gentlewoman from California [Ms. LOFGREN], and indeed, would say that on one point we can agree. The gentlewoman from California suggested that it would be appropriate for this body to meet collectively in prayer, recognizing that we may worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and do so in different fashions. I would respectfully ask that our colleagues on the democratic side join us. Indeed, the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. BROWNBACK] is proposing a national day of fasting and prayer, and if not this Sunday, then sometime in the future, and perhaps that is an element upon which we may agree.

The great thing, Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned many times standing in the well of this House, debating many contentious issues, is this: Good people may disagree. It is championed throughout this constitutional Republic. Disagreement in itself is not

unhealthy. Debating these issues is vitally important, especially at this juncture in our history.

In the wake of the historic moment at which we find ourselves, Mr. Speaker, I thought it important to bring comments from my constituents, those who have written to me during this week. In direct contradiction of what the public opinion polls are showing us, faxes and letters to my office are running 12 to 1 in support of the majority's budget plan.

From a gentleman in Scottsdale: "Keep the faith. Don't give in. Continue to fight for a balanced budget, lower taxes, and a downsizing of the bloated Federal Government."

From a gentleman in Glendale, Arizona: "I have worked hard all my life to try to get ahead, only to have more and more of my income forcibly taken away and given to others. Some of my money even goes to pay the salaries of the very people, the IRS, et cetera, whose job it is to take my money."

From a gentleman in Chandler, Arizona: "My house is behind you completely. For those of you who disagree with a balanced budget in 7 years, well, get a grip and hold on, because that is what the American people really want." This gentleman adds, "I don't care what the polls say." In his opinion, he says, "The truth is, they are rigged to show the President's way of thinking. After all, look at who takes all those polls."

From a family in Paradise Valley, Arizona: "Please hold firm. Closing the government down for a while will not hurt the country as much as continuing the current course of overspending."

Unless there is a mistaking of the comments here, the people who wrote this letter do not rejoice in the fact that Government employees are out of work, but what they are saying has been echoed by many constituents and others who have written me from across this country. What we face right now will not hurt the country as much as the current course of overspending.

My colleague, the gentleman from Tennessee, put it quite eloquently: It is time to do the right thing. My good friend, the gentleman from Pennsylvania on the other side of the aisle, who has a difference on how to get there and whose differences I respect, said the same thing: The time has come to balance the budget. We should have that debate.

We may disagree as to some of the methodology, we may disagree as to some of the tactics, but the fact remains, that time is now to balance the budget.

From a gentleman in Mesa: "Most all the people I talk to support the Republicans on the budget issue. Don't cave in to the news media or to the Democrats. We hope that our representatives will do the right thing this time."

Again, my good friend, the gentleman from Tennessee, pointed it out, how previous Congresses, in the wake

of the last balanced budget in 1969, how previous Congresses had abdicated their responsibility. Perhaps the pressures of history and the unique time in which they served in this body forced them into another course of action. But at this time, for this House, for this country, Mr. Speaker, the choice is clear. It is time to get on a glide path to a balanced budget in 7 years.

I have noted before when I have come to the well of this House that candidate Clinton in 1992 talked about a balanced budget. In an appearance on Larry King Live, he pledged to "balance the budget in 5 years."

Then, Mr. Speaker, as I stand here in the well of this House, surrounded by the echoes of history, and here at this podium, where so many chief executives have addressed this Nation, we can also recall the words of President Clinton in his first State of the Union message, and these are the words of President Clinton. "I will point out that the Congressional Budget Office was normally more conservative about what was going to happen and closer to right than previous Presidents have been. I did this so that we could argue about priorities with the same set of numbers."

Friends, let us use the same set of honest numbers. Let us balance the budget. I thank the Speaker and all my colleagues for joining me here tonight.

SUPPORT THE RESOLUTION TO KEEP THE CONGRESS IN SESSION ON SUNDAY

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

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, the people of the 20th Congressional District sent me here to serve, not to give up and go home. That is why I am pleased to stand with my fellow Democratic freshmen Members and support the resolution seeking to keep the Congress in session on Sunday; that is, after attending Mass.

While my wife, Dolores, and I enjoy returning to our district to be with our family and friends, and especially with my Aunt Jennie and Uncle Frank Flora, both of whom are seniors and who depend on Medicare and Social Security, while we know that is important, we cannot go home when 28,000 seniors per day cannot file for Social Security or disability benefits, or when 200,000 people per day call the Social Security 800 number and get no answer. We cannot go home when almost 8,000 veterans per day, those who stood for this country and served it in times of war, file claims for service-connected disability benefits, pensions, or the Montgomery G.I. Bill educational benefits.

Mr. Speaker, the situation is very serious. Eight hundred thousand Federal workers all across this country have been furloughed. They are nervous and anxious, and beginning to wonder if