

PROMISES MADE, PROMISES KEPT

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Oval Office went from the block in the middle of the road to the light at the end of the tunnel. Yesterday, President Clinton agreed with the Republican majority to balance the budget in 7 years using honest scoring numbers. What Republicans promised the American people last year is one step closer to becoming reality. This is truly a day to celebrate.

American families are the winners in the balanced budget debate. Families will see lower interest rates, saving them money on car loans, home mortgages, and student loans. A balanced budget will mean a stronger economy with more job opportunities. A balanced budget will give our children and grandchildren hope for the future, allowing them to live the American dream and not the American debt.

Promises made, promises kept. That's what the Republican majority is all about. I'm glad President Clinton finally came on board. Balancing the budget is the right thing to do for our children's future.

SOMETHING STINKS

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, something stinks. Army medic Michael New is a twice-decorated soldier. No one ever questioned his bravery or patriotism. Nevertheless, Michael New is being court-martialed in Germany. He refused to wear the blue beret and shoulder patches of the United Nations.

Michael New said, and I quote, "I will only wear the uniform of my country." What is going on here? When Michael New took an oath, he took an oath to defend and support the Constitution of the United States, not the charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Speaker, something is wrong here when we allow a decorated soldier to face a court-martial because he will not wear a foreign uniform. Michael New should not be court-martialed. Michael New should be commended and the Congress of the United States should be looking into the prosecution of Michael New.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. Something stinks.

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CONTINUING RESOLUTION

(Ms. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to address to House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, my constituents have been telling me that they want Congress to get on with the

business of balancing the budget, make responsible spending cuts that will not harm our elderly, our children, and our environment. The continuing resolution that we agreed to last night commits us to those priorities.

This agreement would not have been reached and the Government would not have reopened today had the Democratic caucus not insisted that the House stay here and work over the weekend. If we had adjourned on Saturday, as the leadership planned, Federal workers would not now be back on the job and the stalemate would continue.

I commend every Federal worker for their public service in these difficult times. Now that the Government is up and running, Mr. Speaker, it is time for us to get down to the real issues at stake in the balanced budget debate. We must make the tough decisions to return our Government to fiscal responsibility and to balance the budget in 7 years.

Let us work together to reach the balanced budget goal in a way that helps working families and protects the most fragile part of our society. Let us return our constituents to a sense of pride in their Government.

IT IS TIME TO HOLD THE LINE

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address to House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, to quote Alexander Hamilton: "Here, sir, the people govern; here they act by their immediate Representatives."

Mr. Speaker, 90 percent of the incoming calls to my office last week supported balancing the budget in 7 years.

As one caller put it, "President Clinton is not a monarch." We must abide by the will of Congress as Alexander Hamilton said.

Let me share a couple of other calls with you.

Gordon, who lives in Lady Lake stated: "Don't cave in on this budget thing—Republicans must stand firm or there will never be a balanced budget."

Doris and Robert of Ocala said: "We both feel so strongly about achieving a balanced budget that we would both be willing to forego our Social Security checks for up to a year if it would guarantee a balanced budget. Stick to your guns!"

Craig of Jacksonville stated that: "he is a furloughed Federal employee and he is willing to miss a pay check to support the Republican's plan."

I believe we must act on the will of the people and balance the budget as we promised. And I am glad the President now agrees.

BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address to House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that the Federal Govern-

ment is back to work today and that there was agreement on the continuing resolution to keep the Government working. I am also happy that one of the principles that was articulated by President Clinton and included in that continuing resolution was adequate funding for the environment.

We must make sure that in these budget negotiations that take place over the next few weeks that there is adequate funding for the environment. One of the concerns I have is that late today we will be taking up an appropriations bill on the EPA which does not provide sufficient funding for the environment. The bill undermines protection of the environment, increasing associated health risks by significantly decreasing EPA funding by about 20 percent with enforcement being the hardest hit in terms of cuts, almost 25 percent.

I have always taken the position that it is great if we have all good environmental laws on the books. But if we do not have the money to enforce them, to make sure that the polluters are not out there violating the laws, then there is no point in having those laws on the books.

I hope that we defeat this bill today and that it serves as an example of why we have to provide adequate funding in the budget for the environment.

A REAL BALANCED BUDGET

(Mr. DAVIS asked and was given permission to address to House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Speaker, I think we can all rightfully take pride in the agreement reached last night. The President has finally recognized the need for a 7-year balanced budget scored by the Congressional Budget Office but with appropriate input from all sides. There is now, I think, a mutual commitment from both sides of the aisle, from the administration and Congress, to balancing the Federal budget, that it is the right thing to do for our children's future.

I think, as Republicans here in the House, we promised the American people we would deliver a real balanced budget. We have been faithful to our word. We are and still are committed to stopping the almost endless mortgaging of America's future.

Now we will work with the Democrats and the President to fashion a plan together to accomplish this. This week America will celebrate Thanksgiving Day. For the first time in many, many years, Congress has given the American people something to be thankful for, a commitment for a balanced budget.

I look forward to working with my friends on the other side of the aisle to fashion a true balanced budget in the coming weeks.