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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. BARR].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 28, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable BOB BARR to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of May 12, 1995, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leader limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] for 5 minutes.

WHAT IS AT STAKE IN BALANCING THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, much has been said on this floor and on TV screens in American households—and much has been written in newspapers across the country—about the alleged dangers of shrinking Government and cutting spending. The rhetorical warfare playing itself out among the partisan politics and the Presidential ambitions understandably has many

Americans concerned. Big changes can be scary—and that fact has given comfort to those whose mission it is to preserve the status quo, whether the status quo is working or not, whether status quo is affordable or not. But I am convinced that most Americans are ready for the big changes we need to bring our Federal budget into balance. I am also convinced that most Americans see the real danger before us—the danger of doing nothing. Americans understand what is at stake in this debate. The facts are indisputable: We are on an unsustainable trend, spending more than we have. We are more than \$5 trillion in debt. Seventy years ago, at his inaugural, Calvin Coolidge said:

The men and women of this country who toil are the ones who bear the cost of the Government. Every dollar that we carelessly waste means that their life will be so much the more meager. Every dollar that we prudently save means that their life will be so much the more abundant. Economy is idealism in its most practical form.

I am mindful of my new grandchild, born just a few weeks ago. Because we failed to heed the advice of Coolidge and so many of our Nation's greatest leaders, that baby already carries on his tiny shoulders a lifetime share of the interest payment on the national debt totaling \$187,000. That's the bill we are sending to every baby born this year just to pay the debt service for our failure to bring spending into line. Spending is the problem. We spend too much. Looking at it from another view, think about this: If we don't take the steps necessary to make annual deficits a thing of the past by 2002, as we are trying to do, we will be paying more every year for interest on our debt than we spend for our national defense.

The President of the United States went on television last night to talk to us about what a tough place the world is, and we are having a great debate about how we spend, but nobody denies

we need moneys for national defense and we are spending more on interest payments than we are on national defense. The new leadership in this Congress has signaled that enough is enough. We must control spending. We have gone to the mat in order to implement the big changes needed to bring the budget into balance within 7 years. Balancing the budget will mean that Americans will see lower interest rates—making homes and cars and higher education more affordable. Unshackling the economy from its massive debt will boost productivity—creating millions of new jobs. Per capita incomes will rise and Federal revenues will increase as a result. There should be no need for tax increases—in fact, we will have more opportunities to reduce the Federal tax bite so that Americans can keep more of their hard earned tax dollars.

Mr. Speaker, no one enjoyed the partial Federal shutdown we saw before Thanksgiving. All agree that we must settle our major philosophical disagreements before the next major deadline of December 15, so we can avoid a repeat of that anxious time. But we cannot paper over the very real differences that exist between those of us who believe we must balance the budget within 7 years and those who do not see any urgency about reaching that goal. It is something like the irresistible force of reform hitting up against the immovable object of status quo. Given the tendency of this administration to watch the public opinion polls, the best way to bring about the right conclusion is for the American people to make their voices heard about their commitment to balancing the budget.

Certainly the cards, the letters, the calls that are coming into my office are overwhelmingly in support of the concept of getting our spending under control and balancing our budget in 7 years. I think that is probably true in

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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every congressional office. I hope it is true at the White House, and I hope Americans will not lose patience and will keep sending those messages, because now is the time we are going to balance the budget for the United States of America and get spending under control so every baby is not born with the prospect of \$187,000 of interest payments alone in his or her lifetime.

ENGLISH-ONLY LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Guam [Mr. UNDERWOOD] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I want to address the House on the issue of English only, making English the official language of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, mandating English as the official language of the United States is unnecessary, resolves no particular problem of Government, and communicates a negative divisive message to the society about people who speak other languages. We all acknowledge that English is the common language. In fact, 97 percent of Americans over the age of 5 speak English. And every immigrant to this country recognizes this also. In fact, today's immigrants learn English faster than previous immigrant generations.

A variety of official language legislation has been introduced in the 104th. Some of these bills are less intrusive than others, but most of them include provisions similar to section 2 of H.R. 739, the Declaration of Official Language Act, which states that all communications by Federal officials and employees with U.S. citizens "shall be in English." This implies that English-only improves Government efficiency. In fact, just the opposite is true. Language restrictions will make carrying out the functions of Government more cumbersome in the few instances where languages other than English are used. In fact 99.96 percent of all Federal Government documents are printed in English according to GAO.

Members of this House would feel the burden of this legislation if it ever became law. Under English-only provisions I would be breaking the law if I wrote a letter to one of my constituents in the indigenous language of our island of Guam. My staff would be breaking the law if they spoke to a constituent in a language other than English. Many of our congressional offices would become less effective if forced to speak only English.

English-only advocates further claim that language is what binds us together as a nation. I maintain rather that our unity as a nation is rooted in common beliefs and values, as well as a common language. It is these distinctive American values that bind us together as a people.

There are those in this country who feel it necessary to declare English as an official language in a symbolic way,

but I want to remind Members of this House that most of this English-only legislation goes far, way beyond symbolism.

English-only legislation solves no real problem either in the Government or among U.S. citizens. What this kind of legislation does is stigmatize users of other languages as somehow not being quite American enough and discourages the cultivation of our linguistic resources. How can we value multilingualism, and simultaneously discourage the environment which would allow it to flourish. This country needs to develop not stifle our linguistic resources to compete in a global economy. This legislation communicates the wrong message. It tells citizens to speak only English while at the same time, American businesses seek persons with foreign language skills in order to maintain a competitive edge in today's global economy, and higher education degrees mark the truly educated as those who are multilingual.

In Arizona, English-only legislation has already been determined unconstitutional because it required all government officials to "act" only in English. This clearly inhibited the free speech of these employees. I find it ironic that those who fight for devolution, States rights, and limited government, also fight for English-only which takes power from the States and hands it over to the Federal Government. Further, it mandates that the Government infiltrate our private lives by regulating how we talk. This is the ultimate in Government intrusion and runs counter to the mood of the country which is to deregulate Government, to get Government out of our lives as free citizens. Nowhere did I hear a cry to regulate language, to regulate speech.

H.R. 739 also states that the Government "shall promote and support the use of English for communications among U.S. citizens." Provisions like this go far beyond encouraging the learning of English and move toward English-only, not English first but English-only. We make a distinction between attitudes. Frivolous litigation, which would no doubt follow such a law, would flood our already overburdened court system with claims such as: "I was spoken to in Spanish by a Government employee." "I heard them talking in Chinese on Government time." "The Government isn't doing enough to promote English." And on and on. Citizens will be permitted to sue for monetary relief based on these claims of linguistic abuse.

Because it solves no problems, English-only legislation which seeks to regulate language seems to be giving life to the social forces of resentment.

This resentment could stem from a rise in the number of foreign accents we hear day-to-day or the increase in the use of languages other than English. This kind of resentment is not based on a need to improve communications between individuals or their Government, but is based on a fear of the growing foreignness in our midst.

Recently, proponents of English-only have tried to frighten us by comparing America with Canada. They tell us that if we reject English-only, portions of America will again attempt secession from the United States. Every country has a different history and those who attempt to draw this comparison display an ignorance of the Quebec situation. In Canada, official languages were written into the original legal framework. It is because of legal language restrictions on languages that Canada finds herself divided. I doubt Americans want to create a bureaucracy to enforce language policy like our northern neighbors have.

English-only legislation is potentially dangerous because it encourages nativism, raises constitutional issue about free speech and empowers the Federal Government to regulate—for the first time in our country's 219-year history—how Americans speak. The message of English-only legislation cannot be that English should be America's common language because it already is. Is the message then that we are less than those who speak only English? For those of us with different mother tongues, it is not at all incompatible to practice the continuance of a mother tongue, to be a good American, and recognize that the lingua franca is English.

As Congress considers English-only measures, I urge my colleagues to consider the implications of such legislation and the message it will send to this Nation of immigrants.

Mr. Speaker, I urge every Member to take a close look at this legislation and examine it, and see it for what it is worth.

RECOMMENDING A LOBBYING DISCLOSURE BILL WITH NO AMENDMENTS

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

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today the House will resume consideration of the Lobbying Disclosure Act. As we resume consideration of this bill, we have a historic opportunity to pass a lobbying disclosure bill and send it to the President for his signature. We need to do that. For 40 years the Congress has been grappling with this issue unsuccessfully. We have seen 40 years of gridlock on the subject of lobbying disclosure reform. It is time that we end this gridlock and move forward.

When the House begins its consideration later today of this bill, we will vote on four amendments. I want to bring the Member's attention to the substance of these amendments and urge that the Members reject these and all other amendments to the lobbying reform bill.

The Washington Post summed the situation up in an editorial that appeared yesterday. The headline says "Amending Lobby Reform to Death." The editorial says, "The question now is whether the House will pass this bill and send it to the President or gum it up with amendments that would force a House-Senate conference and delay enactment indefinitely. The Senate