

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, the last 11 months here in the House have been an object lesson on keeping promises. At least on this side of the aisle. Last year, Republicans promised the American people that if we were given a majority here in the House, we would put all our energies into balancing the budget—something that Democrats failed to do even though they had the Presidency, and control of Congress.

Republicans made a commitment in the Contract With America and we kept that commitment. We passed a balanced budget. Even our opposition and liberal news media know that we are doing the right thing for America's economy and America's children.

Mr. Speaker, over 3 years ago, Bill Clinton said he would present a balanced budget. He never did. The American people deserve more than self-promoting politicians who promise, but never deliver. And that is why they voted for a Republican majority. We are doing what we said we would do, and we will balance the budget.

REPUBLICANS ARE SINGING THE SAME OLD SONGS ON THE BUDGET

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, we keep hearing the same old songs in this House.

It wasn't long ago that many of my Republican colleagues were singing the gospel of Voodoo Economics—that tax cuts for the rich and more money for defense that would magically add up to lower deficits.

The result?

A budget deficit that more than quadrupled during the 12 years Ronald Reagan and George Bush ran our Nation.

But now, many of my colleagues who stood in this Chamber and voted for 12 years to burden working Americans with 300 billion dollars' worth of deficits and now singing loudly in the choir of fiscal responsibility again.

They have a plan for getting our deficit under control.

But it is the same old song, with a new twist.

Tax cuts for the wealthy, more money for defense and devastating cuts in education, Medicare, and the programs that most American rely on every day.

I think it is time to change our tune to supporting a responsible budget that puts our children, our students, our families, and our seniors first.

My Republican friends might not know the words, but that would be a song that more working Americans could sing along to.

AMERICANS WORK HARD FOR THEIR MONEY AND OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO KEEP MORE OF IT

(Mr. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of personal affection for the gentleman who preceded me here in the well, but the simple fact is when you talk about genuine cuts, about the only real cut we have seen is my good friend, the gentleman from Illinois, shaving off his trademark mustache.

The fact is, for all the venom and vitriol about incredible cuts and draconian measures taking place, that simply is not the case. Rather, we are slowing the rate of growth of Government. To my friend who says, Mr. Speaker, that we are affecting seniors and students and families, I say he is right; we are affecting them in a positive way. We are making sure that the American people hang onto more of their hard-earned money. Indeed the tax cut, the \$500 per child tax credit, goes to help 80 percent of families in this country.

Certainly there is a problem with facts and rhetoric. The fact is we are helping working Americans by this very simple premise: They work hard for the money they earn, they ought to keep more of it and send less of it to the Federal Government here in Washington, DC.

THE CONSTITUTION CALLS FOR THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH FROM STATE, BUT NOT OF GOD FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(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, Brittney Settle, a Tennessee ninth grader, wrote a paper about Jesus Christ. The teacher flunked her. The teacher said Jesus Christ is not an appropriate topic for a public school.

Appropriate? Other students are allowed to write about devil worship, reincarnation, the whole gamut; witchcraft. The Supreme Court, by the way, says Jesus Christ is not an appropriate topic. They sided with the school.

Mr. Speaker, is there any wonder our schools are so screwed up when the only time you can hear God's name is when it is taken in vain? Wake up, Congress. The Constitution may separate church and State, but the Constitution never intended to separate God and the American people. In God we trust. It would not be all over our buildings and all over our currency. Something is wrong in our public schools when the only time you can hear God's name legally is when it is taken in vain. Let us take a look at some issues here, Congress.

THE PRESIDENT NEEDS A PLAN TO BALANCE THE BUDGET

(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, last week the Republican leadership here in Congress sent a letter to the President asking for specifics on exactly how the Clinton administration would balance the budget in 7 years as they agreed to do on November 19.

This is what the administration sent back—a set of talking points. No specifics, no numbers.

In his talking points, the President had the unmitigated gall to ask that Congress provide a legislative plan. Well excuse me, but it seems we have already passed the Balanced Budget Act of 1995. In that we spell out exactly how we will balance the budget in 7 years, including numbers, amounts, and specifics.

Mr. Speaker, it is understandable that the Clinton administration would have a problem with specifics. It already had huge problem keeping promises. The President totally lacks any plan to balance the budget with honest numbers. Without a plan, really, all they can do is provide talking points, and, of course, more hot air.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HEALTH EQUITY ACT

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I will introduce the Health Equity Act legislation that will address the problem of environmental discrimination.

Mr. Speaker, there is a growing recognition that people in poor and working class communities, and particularly people of color, are forced to live and work in areas contaminated by opportunistic polluters that target these communities. Whether it is in the form of incinerators, industrial production facilities, pesticides, or radiation—exposure to such contamination represents a death sentence for black and Latino Americans throughout this country.

My legislation, which applies title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to the Federal environmental regulatory process, will allow minority communities to halt potentially dangerous action, before harm comes to them. Our society has slowly taken steps to end the burden of discrimination in areas ranging from employment to housing. This will give communities of color a chance to fight against this form of discrimination.

I would encourage my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation and help end one of the most neglected forms of discrimination in America.

BALANCING THE FEDERAL BUDGET AND HOPE

(Mrs. KELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, this Congress is dedicated to restoring traditional values in our society. Common sense tells us this means living within our means. This means a balanced Federal budget.

These past few weeks we've finally reached one of the ultimate questions separating conservatives and liberals: Do we want to continue sacrificing our children's chances at achieving the American Dream? Or do we want to do the principled thing and balance our Federal budget?

The President doesn't think our children deserve a chance at this opportunity. My colleagues and I believe that this is wrong. We are willing to do whatever it takes to give them their chance.

To hear my Democrat colleagues talk, one would suspect that they oppose job creation, lower interest rates, and a brighter future for all.

To hear them talk, a balanced Federal budget is little more than a myth, a mirage, a Xanadu.

To hear them talk, saving money for future generations is a bad thing, but we can do it.

Mr. Speaker, this is a nationwide drama with the President and Democrats using our children as the stakes. This is wrong. I believe our Nation deserves better. America is about hope and the potential for prosperity, and America's leadership should lead us in this direction. Let us balance the budget and help restore this hope.

AMERICANS WANT STRONG ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, the public is finally becoming aware of what the antienvironmental extremists in this Congress are doing. Under the Republican leadership, clean water, clean air, and public health are being sold to the highest campaign contributor. While we are struggling to cut the budget, Republicans want to subsidize logging in the Nation's last rain forest. They want to continue the 1872 mining law that gives away millions to private companies, and to allow oil drilling on Alaska's true wilderness.

The American people want strong environmental protection. Instead, the Republicans are jeopardizing the rivers we fish, the beaches we swim in, and the very air we breathe for the benefit of special interests. There truly is a contract with the American environment. That contract is becoming a bill of sale.

DEMOCRATS, START TELLING THE TRUTH

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

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, in a cynical ploy to distort reality for political gain, the minority party continues to decry the so-called student loan cuts in our budget. It is time to start telling the American people the truth.

My Republican colleagues understand the importance of helping low-income students pay for college. That is why we protect student aid in our budget.

Contrary to the battle cry of the minority, there are no student loan cuts in the Balanced Budget Act of 1995. In fact, total student loan volume will grow from \$24 billion this year to \$36 billion in 2002. And more loans will be available next year than ever before.

Student loans are preserved. No student will be cut off. And no student will be required to pay more for his or her loan.

Mr. Speaker, it doesn't take a Harvard professor to figure out what's going on. Democrats are trying to regain power by scaring the American people with imaginary spending cuts. This is downright dishonest.

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PRIORITIES FOR A BALANCED BUDGET

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was not planning to follow the other speaker, and I appreciate the changes that my Republican colleagues have made in the education funding, because they have come a long way. He is right. There have been some funding cuts restored, but the House Republicans do not deserve the credit. The Senate Democrats and Republicans deserve the credit for insisting that House Republicans not decimate education funding.

We have an opportunity over the next few weeks to work bipartisanship on a balanced budget bill. We have a responsibility to make sure the values and the priorities of the American people are maintained and that we balance the budget while protecting education, and Medicare, the environment, and veterans.

Our priorities should be, No. 1, to protect Medicare and Medicaid. We must maintain the high quality of health care we currently enjoy. No. 2, protect students and children. We must maintain current levels of education funding so that students, including those from Aldine High School in my congressional district who are here today from the Close-up program get the education they need to succeed in the 21st century. It is our obligation to make sure that those students have the opportunity to obtain a student loan or Pell grants. They are the future of our country and have a responsibility to make sure they are prepared. Finally, we need to protect tax fairness in the tax system. We do not need to punish

low-income Americans by increasing their taxes.

I hope we will give serious consideration to a bipartisan effort to balance the budget. The time has come to get our fiscal house in order while maintaining the values and priorities most important to the American people.

UNITED STATES BOSNIA POLICY

(Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, the House will soon debate a resolution of support for the President's decision to deploy up to 20,000 United States troops into Bosnia.

The President has placed himself and Congress into a lead box. If we decide to support the President, we'll be supporting a costly policy that won't be finished in a year—Bosnia, after all, isn't another Haiti. If Congress rejects the President's decision, our European allies, and others around the world, will come to doubt the United States resolve and commitment. The next time there is a Persian Gulf crisis, they may not answer our call for cooperation.

And so, no matter where we turn, we find our lead box sinking deeper and deeper into the Bosnian bog. This debate won't provide the right answers, nor will it provide an acceptable alternative, since the decision has already been made.

But, I must strongly object to the President's decision. I encourage my colleagues to join me in opposing that decision.

TRICKLE-DOWN ECONOMICS HAS FAILED

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

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, I find wearisome this continual Republican litany that claims only Republicans want to balance the budget and somehow Democrats are opposed to it.

I have served here 17 years. In my early years here Ronald Reagan was President, and by count, no President, with the exception of Franklin Roosevelt, ever got more of his economic policy agreed to by the Congress than did Ronald Reagan. Mr. Speaker, you remember it. It was called trickle-down economics. What happened to the deficit? It tripled. It tripled under Reaganomics.

Under President Clinton, the deficit has come down every year of his Presidency, and this is the first time that has happened since Harry Truman was President. If the Republican balanced budget attempt passed and was put into effect, it would not decrease the deficit in its first 3 years of operation as much as Clinton's economics has reduced the deficit in the last 3 years.