

FACTS AND FICTION ABOUT THE BUDGET

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

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, in their zeal to defend the status quo, President Clinton and his Democrat allies in the Congress have inundated Americans with a barrage of misinformation about the Republican plan to balance the budget. So let me make the distinction between Clinton fiction and the plain facts.

Fiction: The Republican plan to balance the budget cuts education. Fact: Funds for student loans rise from \$24 billion to \$36 billion, and the maximum Pell grant goes up to its highest level ever.

Fiction: Our plan cuts Medicare. Fact: Medicare spending will increase by 7.2 percent, more than double the rate of inflation, each year. That is an increase from \$4,800 to \$7,100 per beneficiary. Only in Washington would a 50-percent increase be called a cut.

Mr. Speaker, when the facts are laid out, the American people support our plan to balance the budget. Let us give them the best Christmas present ever. I say to the President, support our balanced budget.

REPUBLICANS MUST COMPROMISE

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe that this House just passed a Republican-sponsored motion that allows us to go into recess for 3 days with the pending shutdown of the Government once again. I fully expected this morning, maybe naively, that I would be here to vote for a continuing resolution that would let the Government continue to operate while we worked out our differences over the budget, but that is not happening.

The President said that he was willing to go ahead with what we call a clean continuing resolution. On the Senate side they said that they would agree to it. But here in the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. GINGRICH] and the Republicans say that they will not, and I do not think it is fair. There is tremendous cost involved to this Government if we shut down again this coming Monday or any days following that, and the President has put forward a compromise budget that allows for a balanced budget over 7 years. It maintains the priorities, protects Medicare, protects Medicaid, protects the environment and education.

The Republicans have not done that. They made an agreement on the previous CR that they would try to come up with a compromise that protected Medicare and Medicaid and the other goals, and so far they have not. I think it is incumbent on them to do so.

CONFIDENCE, HOPE, AND GROWTH

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

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, America has been blessed with many good things. We are the richest, most productive Nation ever in the recorded history of mankind.

Today, the Congress and the President are locked in a conflict over the budget. And to paraphrase the Gipper, Ronald Reagan, it is conflict not really between two parties, but between two differing visions of the future.

One is a vision of fear and limits. The Republicans vision is one of confidence, hope, and growth.

Republicans want the best for the American family. We believe our middle-class tax cuts are profamily, progrowth, and prowork.

Liberal Democrats, on the other hand, want the best for the American Government. They love higher taxes, more rules, more regulation, and bigger bureaucracies.

Mr. Speaker, this battle over the budget is not a choice between left or right, it is a choice between up or down. I, for one, want the American people to progress and for the Government to live within its means.

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SHUT DOWN THE GOVERNMENT, SHUT DOWN CONGRESSIONAL PAYCHECKS

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, last month the Gingrich Republicans shut down the Federal Government for the longest period of time in the history of the United States. While 800,000 Federal workers were sent home with uncertainty as to whether they would be paid, the American taxpayers picked up the bill. In fact, we paid \$700 million when the Gingrich Republicans, because of their failure to pass spending bills, shut down the Federal Government. Now they are about to set another record. They are going to shut down the Federal Government for the second time in 1 year. This time they want to do it a few days before Christmas.

Just a few minutes ago, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. GINGRICH] and his Republican friends passed a motion here so we could recess and leave for 3 days. Members of Congress can go home and shop for Christmas gifts while 350,000 Federal employees are uncertain as to whether or not they are going to be on the payroll on Monday. If Members of Congress on the Republican side believe this is a matter of principle, join me and support the bill: No budget, no pay. Shut down the Government, you shut down congressional paychecks. That will end this foolishness in a hurry.

THE NATIONAL DEBT

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, this is the national debt. I think we need to bring a little sobriety to this debate here today. \$4,988,313,115,981.39. As Members can see, Mr. Speaker, this debt is too big for the camera. This debt is too big for a convenient pocket-size chart. This debt, most importantly, is too big to pass on to our children. What it means to them is that in their lifetime they will have less income, they will pay higher interest rates, they will have a lower quality of life and less opportunities; but if we in the next week do the right thing and balance the budget, then in 7 years we can start paying down this horrendous number so our children can enjoy the great America that you and I believe in and work for. We did not get into this mess because of Democrats or Republicans. We have to get out of it because of both parties working together.

MEDICARE, MEDICAID, AND THE FEDERAL DEBT

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

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the subject of Medicaid and Medicare and to respond to the gentleman on the issue of the Federal debt. I supported a 7-year balanced budget program but, in doing so, I did not support a \$245 billion tax break that the Republican side insists on keeping in that bill while we have this huge deficit.

Mr. Speaker, I do not doubt the sincerity of the commitment of the Speaker and the Republican caucus in taking care of the budget deficit, but I am reminded of the cartoon, the Christmas classic, "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas." It runs every year of TV and I urge Members to take a look at it again. What they say about the grinch I think is true.

In spite of my acceptance of the sincerity on the Republican side, maybe, like the grinch, their hearts are just two sizes too small, because the decision that they are making on this budget is to reduce taxes on the wealthiest while increasing, increasing taxes on the poorest.

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

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

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, during the Bosnia debate a day or so ago, a number of Members came to the House floor to support provisions that they believe manifested the House's support for the troops: Do we support our

troops, a number of whom are going to Bosnia? The President urged us to support the troops, support the provision that was brought by the minority party, by the Democrats, to the House floor, basically validating the President's position on Bosnia.

We rejected that, but we are offering every Member of the House today, in just a few minutes, an opportunity to really support the troops. Members can support the troops by supporting the conference report on the defense authorization bill, which gives a 2.4-percent pay increase to the troops. It is a real pay increase that they can make house payments with and car payments with, and have a little better quality of life for their families. It provides more ammunition. It provides good equipment, so at least if the President puts our troops in harm's way, they will be well prepared. Please vote for this measure today.

CORRECTING TECHNICAL ERRORS IN THE ENROLLMENT OF S. 1060, LOBBYING DISCLOSURE ACT OF 1995

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the Senate concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 36) directing the Secretary of the Senate to make corrections in the enrollment of S. 1060, to provide for the disclosure of lobbying activities to influence the Federal Government, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LONGLEY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

Mr. SKAGGS. Reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, and I do not intend to object, but I want to engage my colleague, the gentleman from Florida, in a brief discussion of how we have gotten to this point, which is probably not susceptible to a brief discussion.

As I understand it, however, we are taking up Senate Concurrent Resolution 36, which is a purely technical, typographical error correction bill to the lobbying bill, is that correct?

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SKAGGS. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this concurrent resolution directs the enrolling clerk to correct solely technical errors in the lobbying bill, especially with respect to some erroneous cross-references. It makes no substantive changes in the bill. The concurrent resolution is necessary so that the bill we send to the President, hopefully later today, will be technically correct.

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, if I may reclaim my time on the reservation, as has been widely reported now, there is a more substantive issue that now pertains to this bill having to do with the

contract language in section 18 and its effects on, in particular, certain health insurance organizations, corporations organized under 501(c)4. This bill does not deal with that issue, is that correct?

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, this concurrent resolution does not deal with any substantive issues. The Senate passed a separate resolution; actually, they amended the concurrent resolution the House had previously passed, with a change that would affect section 18 of the bill. That is not the resolution that is before the House now.

Mr. SKAGGS. Continuing to reserve the right to object, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the gentleman if he would be willing to consent to an amendment to Senate Concurrent Resolution 36 that would address what I believe to be a sincere problem with the implementation of section 18 and delay its effective date.

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield further, I cannot consent to that for two reasons. One, there are Members who have substantive objections to that particular change; and second, an amendment to the concurrent resolution at this point would only further delay this bill which has already been delayed far, far too long.

We can discuss why it has been delayed, but the point before us now is that we can end the delay. If we pass the resolution that is before us now without amendment, it will go to the enrolling clerk. The enrolling clerk will complete the enrolling clerk's duties and the bill will be available for transmission to the President. I believe that could be accomplished today. If we accepted the gentleman's amendment, I do not know how much longer this would go on.

Mr. SKAGGS. Continuing to reserve my reservation of objection, Mr. Speaker, that is certainly good news on the underlying issue. I was just looking to address the concern some groups have about compliance by January 1.

Mr. CANADY of Florida. If the gentleman will continue to yield, I am certainly willing to work with Members who have an interest in section 18 on a separate bill to correct problems that may exist with it. Of course, as Members know, there is a difference of opinion of what the problem may be and the scope of the problem with section 18, but I am certainly willing to work with Members who have an interest in this, and I want to make certain that all the concerns of Members are adequately addressed in the proper forum.

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, under my reservation of objection, I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. FRANK].

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I hope I may not cause too much difficulty with the chairman of the subcommittee for expressing my admiration on how he has dealt with this bump in the road.

Second, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say, sometimes people say things they do not really mean. People often like to talk about how they hate to say "I told you so," but I have found it to be one of the few pleasures in life that gets better with age.

A few weeks ago several of us cautioned against amending this bill, let it have to go back to the U.S. Senate, and some said we were exaggerating what would happen if that were to take place. We have seen now, even when we made no substantive amendment, that the U.S. Senate was capable of entangling this bill. So I think this shows that when we urge people not to vote for amendments, we knew whereof we spoke, because there be dragons, as they said in the 15th century, and I hope now this bill is free.

Mr. Speaker, I would just ask, finally, of my friend, the gentleman from Florida, who has done such good work on this bill, can we now expect the U.S. Senate will allow both the base bill, the lobbying bill, and this correction, to go to the President for signature?

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, of course, this would not go to the President for signature. This just goes to give instructions to the enrolling clerk, but I am hopeful that the enrolling clerk's work can be completed today and that the bill will go to the President today. However, as the gentleman knows, I do not control the process in the Senate, but I am going to contact the Senate as soon as this action is taken today and encourage that the bill be transmitted to the President today.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. If the gentleman will yield again, we all know that the gentleman does not control the processes of the Senate, because it is patently clear that no one controls what goes on in the U.S. Senate.

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate concurrent resolution, as follows:

S. CON. RES. 36

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring). That in the enrollment of the bill S. 1060, to provide for the disclosure of lobbying activities to influence the Federal Government, and for other purposes, the Secretary of the Senate shall make the following corrections:

(1) In section 6(8), strike "6" and insert "7".

(2) In section 9(7), insert "and" after the semicolon, in section 9(8), strike "; and" insert a period, and strike paragraph (9) of section 9.

(3) In section 12(c), strike "7" and insert "6".

(4) In section 15(a)(2), strike "8" and insert "7".

(5) In section 15(b)(1), strike "5(a)(2)," and in section 15(b)(2), strike "8" and insert "7".

(6) In section 24(b), strike "13, 14, 15, and 16" and insert "9, 10, 11, and 12".