

That is what the Republican majority plans to do.

During the debate on the balanced budget amendment, the rhetoric was thick with charges that the Congress does not need a constitutional amendment to balance the budget, all we need to do is offer a balanced budget. Well, the need for the balanced budget amendment is shown clearly by the President's just released budget.

The President's budget is a lost opportunity to do what he called for in his State of the Union speech, a balanced budget without the need for a constitutional amendment. In the President's budget, there is no entitlement reform, no welfare reform, and spending in most major departments goes up. Department of the Interior spending is up; HUD and the Labor Department get an increase in spending; the EPA gets an increase in spending; the Energy Department gets a spending increase even through the administration once talked about abolishing the Department; and even the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities get increases.

The bottom line is not a balanced budget, it is \$200 billion deficits as far as the eye can see.

This is not what the average American is looking for. America wants a balanced budget. Unfortunately, the President has left the heavy lifting to the Republican Congress. Our goal is not \$200 billion deficits, but a balanced budget with zero deficits. We must lead and meet the challenge and produce a budget that makes the tough cuts.

During the balanced budget debate, some questioned whether we can ever balance the budget. Opponents like to point to the fact that over \$1.2 trillion in spending must be reduced. This huge number is used to show how painful it would be to actually enforce a balanced budget amendment by 2002.

This argument could only occur inside the beltway. Though Republicans abolished baseline budgeting on opening day, much more must be done before the terms of the debate are changed.

Baseline budgeting is the process of assuming automatic spending increases every year. If Congress appropriates anything less than the baseline spending growth, there has been a cut. I suspect most Americans believe a cut is when you spend less than you did the year before, not less than you thought you would spend.

The current debate about a balanced budget amendment demonstrates why this issue of baseline budgeting is so important. Every nickel of the \$1.2 trillion that must be cut is projected baseline growth.

As the chart next to me shows, the CBO projects that spending growth will average 5.3 percent a year through 2002. Under this scenario Federal spending will grow from \$1.5 trillion this year to \$2.2 trillion in 2002, and the deficit in

2002 will be well in excess of \$300 billion.

Of course, this assumes Congress does nothing to alter current spending patterns. If Congress instead manages to hold overall spending growth to 2 percent per year, the payoff for this discipline will be the first balanced budget in 33 years. And as I noted earlier, \$1 trillion more will still be spent over those 7 years than if spending had been frozen.

So let me answer the doubters, there is no doubt about it, we can balance the budget by 2002. It can be done in a reasoned and responsible manner—by holding overall spending growth to 2 percent a year.

It is not my intention to suggest that this will be easy. It will be difficult, particularly for those programs that are growing rapidly. But this is Congress' job, it is what the American people want.

Over the last three decades Congress has dropped the ball on the budget. This is why we need the balanced budget amendment and the 2-percent solution. With them we can build a secure future for our grandchildren.

A SCORCHED EARTH POLICY IN THE REPUBLICAN'S WAR ON CHILDREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. OLVER] is recognized during morning business for 3 minutes.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, legend has it that Republicans know more about making profitable investments than Democrats, but with the Contract on America, that legend becomes a vicious myth.

The Republicans want to slash funding for children's foster care, and children's adoption assistance, and child abuse prevention, and children's care while parents have to work, and preschool children's Head Start, and Drug Free Schools for Children, and children's health care, and children's school lunches, and prenatal nutrition, which has saved billions of dollars by reducing the number of low birthweight babies born in this country, as the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. DURBIN] spoke so eloquently about just a few minutes ago.

These extremists are not even happy with hungry children. They want to cut every penny of home energy assistance, so thousands of children are going to go to bed cold as well as hungry.

Mr. Speaker, Americans should understand exactly what is going on with this extremist agenda. This is not about thoughtful, even-handed deficit reduction. It goes much further than the elimination of bureaucracy or waste. This is a scorched earth policy in the Republican war on children.

The radical right extremist agenda is to wash their hands of any responsibility for the welfare of the American family, shift that responsibility to the States, and at the same time, cut billions of dollars needed by the States to

adequately protect children; protect their health, their safety, their schooling, and their stomachs.

It is even a myth that these cuts reduce the deficit. Our radical right is willing to hurt children so they can buy fantasy projects like the star wars antiballistic missile system, and so they can shovel out massive tax breaks to the very wealthiest few Americans.

Children cannot vote, so they are being trashed, and it is shameful. The health, the schooling, and the safety of children should be the first priority for every Member of Congress whose job it is to build a better nation. It is shameful to throw the responsibility to the States and then cut the dollars the States need to meet it.

When they cannot meet it, we will all find out that turning our backs on children is a terrible way to invest in America's future.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the House will stand in recess until 12 noon.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 17 minutes a.m.) the House stood in recess until 12 noon.

□ 1100

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. ZELIFF].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

For all the opportunities, O God, that lie before us and every person, we offer our thanks; for all the possibilities for knowledge and understanding, we are grateful; for friends and family and colleagues who support us and help show the way, we express our gratitude. May we be so fervent in our tasks, gracious God, that we will be worthy of the calling we have been given to be of service to other people in doing the deeds of justice and by providing leadership in the cause of peace and reconciliation for every person. Bless us this day and every day, we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HOBSON] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HOBSON led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will take 20 1-minutes on each side.

THE CONTRACT: BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD

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

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, for 2 months now, this Congress has been held hostage by the extremist trickle-down manifesto known as the Contract With America. Democrats have been saying all along that the American people do not need this contract. What they need are good jobs at good wages, more police to fight the scourge of violent crime, and access to affordable health care.

Republican pollsters who wrote the contract thought they knew better, but a New York Times poll published today makes it perfectly clear. If the Republicans really want to follow the will of the people, it is time to go back to the drawing board. First of all, more than half of all Americans have not even heard of the contract. So much for the Republican mandate. And on issue after issue, we find a wholesale rejection of the contract's extremist planks.

Americans overwhelmingly want the Federal commitment to 100,000 cops on the beat that the Republicans voted down. Americans overwhelmingly oppose a balanced budget amendment that puts Social Security on the chopping block as the contract does. Americans overwhelmingly oppose welfare reform that is tough on children but weak on work.

I suppose that is the problem with the Republican politics-of-opinion polls. When you live by the poll, you also die by the poll.

Based on today's poll results, I would offer these final words on the Contract With America: May it rest in peace, and now let us get down to the real business of the American people.

REPUBLICAN CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

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

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Speaker, our Contract With America states the following:

On the first day of Congress, a Republican House will require Congress to live under the same laws as everyone else; cut committee staffs by one-third; and cut the congressional budget.

We kept our promise.

It continues that in the first 100 days, we will vote on the following items: A balanced budget amendment—we kept our promise; unfunded mandates legislation—we kept our promise; line-item veto—we kept our promise; a new crime package to stop violent criminals—we kept our promise; national security restoration to protect our freedoms—we kept our promise; Government regulatory reform—we are doing this now; welfare reform to encourage work, not dependence; family reinforcement to crack down on deadbeat dads and protect our children; tax cuts for middle-income families; Senior Citizens' Equity Act to allow our seniors to work without Government penalty; commonsense legal reform to end frivolous lawsuits; and congressional term limits to make Congress a citizen legislature.

This is our Contract With America.

Mr. Speaker, this is our contract, we are doing it and living up to it, and I believe it is alive and well.

POLL DOUSES CONTRACT AND GINGRICH REVOLUTION

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

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, every morning Republicans come to this floor and read NEWT GINGRICH's Contract With America.

But this morning's New York Times throws a bucket of ice water on both the contract and the Gingrich revolution.

In a poll released this morning, the American people say that the contract is:

Too extreme, too mean spirited, and out of touch with the priorities of the American people.

When asked what our priorities should be the American people say: jobs, health care, and crime.

Yet, after 55 days of Republican rule, and after casting over 150 votes, we have not passed a single amendment that deals with jobs or health care.

And nearly 6 of 10 Americans say the Republican idea to pull 100,000 police off the streets is a bad idea.

Mr. Speaker, this poll confirms what we have always known: The Contract With America will not make a dime's worth of difference in the lives of middle-class families.

Republicans can talk about the contract all they want.

But the longer we go, the more it becomes clear: Americans do not like what they are hearing.

COMMON SENSE NEEDED IN REGULATORY PROCESS

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, did you hear the one about the guy who was fined by OSHA for not having a

comprehensive hazardous communication plan for his employees—all two of them.

How about the \$100,000 spent on a study of quiet areas in restaurants.

Or the OSHA fine levied against a small business because they had a can of Pledge in a work trailer with no material safety data sheet on hand.

And, one of my favorites, the construction company that was fined because workers were not using disposable cups.

These are all great stories—and they would be very entertaining if they did not symbolize such a job crunching, budget busting, competition killing, business breaking, economic catastrophe in America.

It is time to restore common sense and civility to the regulatory process. The cost of doing nothing is too high for individuals and businesses in America. Let us act now.

IN SUPPORT OF CHILDREN'S NUTRITION PROGRAMS

(Ms. BROWN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I had an opportunity to speak to 95 3-year-olds and today I speak in their behalf, for the school lunch program that has worked well since 1946. It is not broken. America's children are our most important resource for the future.

Mr. Speaker, studies show that if a child is hungry, taxpayer dollars are wasted because hungry kids cannot learn. According to the Children's Defense Fund, millions of children will go hungry by cutting school lunches, food stamps, child care, Head Start meals, and WIC programs. Republican double-talk that "cuts to school lunches" are not "cuts," but block grants to States, and deceives the American people. As a 10-year veteran of the Florida legislature, I can tell you that sending Federal dollars to the States as block grants does not ensure that these funds will go to child nutrition programs.

Republicans seem to think they can fool some of the people, some of the time. But you cannot fool all of the people all of the time. The American people cannot be fooled. The Contract on America is a contract on children, the elderly and the hardest working Americans.

The school lunch program works, it feeds hungry children. As the saying goes, "If it's not broke, don't fix it."

FEDERAL REGULATIONS SHOULD USE COMMON SENSE

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

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, allow me to read a few OSHA rules written