

READING THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

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

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, our Contract With America states: on the first day of Congress, a Republican House will: force Congress to live under the same laws as everyone else, cut one-third of committee staff, and cut the congressional budget.

We have done that.

In the next 91 days, we will vote on the following 10 items:

No. 1, a balanced budget amendment and line item veto;

No. 2, a new crime bill to stop violent criminals;

No. 3, welfare reform to encourage work, not dependence;

No. 4, family reinforcement to crack down on deadbeat dads and protect our children;

No. 5, tax cuts for families to lift Government's burden from middle income Americans;

No. 6, National security restoration to protect our freedoms;

No. 7, Senior Citizens' Equity Act to allow our seniors to work without Government penalty;

No. 8, Government regulation and unfunded mandate reforms;

No. 9, common sense legal reform to end frivolous lawsuits, and finally

No. 10, Congressional term limits to make Congress a citizen legislature.

This is our Contract With America.

DETAILS SOUGHT ON THE MURDOCH BOOK DEAL

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I say to the Members of the House it is time now for some candor about the meeting you had with Rupert Murdoch and its relationship to your book deal. The Congress of which you said you were the Speaker of the entire Congress, not just of the Republicans, deserves some answers about what took place at that meeting and what you knew about the progression of your negotiations with Rupert Murdoch's company for your book contract.

I think it also raises a question about whether or not public officials ought to be allowed to engage in contracts for private gain while they are doing the public's business. To suggest that this meeting was only a courtesy visit or one of 30 visits that took place during that day is to mislead the public. The oldest game in this town is to have a lobbyist, a lawyer, or a special interest do you a favor and then a couple of days later ask one of their representatives that they might arrange a courtesy visit to come by. What they are doing in that visit is not courtesy; what they are doing is cementing the relation between the favor that was

previously done and suggestions of actions or business that they have before the Congress that they want you to be aware of.

We ought to know for the record what the facts were.

THE NEED FOR A BALANCED-BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, last week we did an amazing thing. The House voted to live by the same rules and laws that the rest of the American people have to live by. Now, we need to take the next step. We need to pass a balanced budget amendment and put Government under the same accounting system that the rest of the American people have to deal with. Families have to balance their checkbooks; so should the Government. Families plan and prepare for the future; so should the Government. Where I come from, families want to give their children a chance to have a better life than they did. They work hard and they plan ahead.

They teach their children that money does not grow on trees, that you do not write checks unless you have money in your checking account, and you keep your checkbook balanced. It is time for the Federal Government to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to treat the Government's checkbook as they would their own, and join me in supporting the balanced budget amendment.

A DEMAND FOR ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. PETERSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, a few days ago we were on this floor voting for numerous reforms of this House designed to bring more credibility to this great institution. At the time I spoke about passing reforms that would ensure that special interests did not compromise the work of this body by restricting gifts and deals from lobbyists. I also said that the message the American people sent us on November 8 was that they wanted us to be personally accountable to them, not to special interests. Certainly they do not want us to enrich ourselves through our public service. Unfortunately, over the past several days we have learned that our own Speaker has met with special interests in such a way that suggests backroom dealing and with the appearance of using his position for personal enrichment. I am confident that the American people will find this unacceptable in the way we represent their interests. Worst of

all, this kind of behavior discredits the people's House.

WHAT ARE WE AFRAID OF?

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

Ms. DUNN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, the Democrats are trying to frighten the American people into thinking that balancing the budget is going to end modern civilization as we know it. They would like us to believe that the phrase "living within means" will bring destruction to everyone and everything in America.

Mr. Speaker, balancing the budget simply means that we will control spending and control growth to make the Government less costly, smaller, and more accountable to the American people. How can we be afraid of this?

Every hard-working American taxpayer balances the budget every month—every hard-working American taxpayer understands the meaning of living within one's means. Why are we afraid of practicing this same approach?

Mr. Speaker, it is time to pass the balanced budget amendment. It is time to get our spending under control. It is time to make the Government accountable to the American people. We should not be afraid to do what is right.

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COMMENTS ON BOOK DEAL

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it seems a book could be written on what the American people do not know about the Speaker's multimillion dollar book deal with one of publishing magnate Rupert Murdoch's companies. First we were told the Speaker had not met with Mr. Murdoch prior to signing his book contract. Yesterday the New York Daily News reported the Speaker had indeed met with Mr. Murdoch, but nothing of substance was discussed. Today, the Wall Street Journal reported that, in fact, issues surrounding pending legislation in which Mr. Murdoch has a direct interest were discussed in the meeting.

This meeting does not directly imply impropriety, but it does raise serious questions that deserve answers.

What exactly was discussed at this meeting? Did the legislative issues that Mr. Murdoch is so interested in come up in the meeting? Like foreign ownerships of U.S. media interests? Were the details of the Speaker's \$4 million book deal with Mr. Murdoch discussed?

Mr. Speaker, each day new revelations are raising new questions. The news reports create a cloud. That cloud can best be cured by addressing with a thorough and independent review the