

the sanctity of life. And I am not trying to reopen that debate, but I did find it interesting that, when they started cutting, they went after the Healthy Start Program and cut \$10 million from programs that provided prenatal care.

Madam Speaker, I wonder how, on the one hand, people can say they are pro-life, but take away funds that help expectant mothers take care of newborns. They took \$25 million from the Women, Infants, and Children's Program, another program designed to help expectant mothers and toddlers obtain the kind of nutrition that they need to survive. It seems to me to be a strange contradiction.

Next they said, Well, you know, we're the party that believes in work. Well, that is what the Republicans say. But the first thing they did was go after programs that move children, young people, from school to work. They cut a total of \$3 billion, including 600,000 positions in summer jobs.

□ 1945

Now we can talk all we want about how we can fight crime and we can talk all we want about people need to pull themselves up by the bootstraps and get out of the wagon and help everybody else pull, but when you take money out of the Summer Jobs Program, it seems to me you are party in contradiction. Then they said, Oh, yes, sir, we support the elderly. We asked them about protecting Social Security; they said, Oh, yes, we will do it. We won't touch Social Security. We said, If you won't touch Social Security, put it in the bill. They would not do it.

I think the contradiction is clear, but we go on and find that in the area of fuel assistance for the elderly the Republicans decided they would cut out the entire program. Two million elderly are engaged in the Fuel Assistance Program. That program is eliminated.

Then, you know, they are also the party that is big on patriotism and they always want to talk about a drop of American blood, but that is also the crowd that cut 50 million from medical equipment and facilities from the veterans program, even at a time when we are expecting an increase in the veterans population.

Now I just heard one of my distinguished colleagues say, Well, you don't understand. What we are doing is, we are not cutting these programs, we are slowing the growth. I am going to tell you in a minute what they are going to do with the funds that they claim that they are saving. But before I get to that, I want to talk about the School Lunch Program. Because once again they are robbing the poor to give to the rich.

Tomorrow morning I am going to have breakfast with young students at Bladensburg Elementary and next week I am going to have lunch with some more students at Green Valley Elementary School, and the reason I am going is to see what is going on. At Green Valley, for example, 61 percent of the students are in the free or re-

duced lunch program. And the teachers will tell you that this may be the only meal that these young people get.

So it seems to me that if the Republicans were really serious about giving people a chance in life, they would not be taking money out of the School Lunch Program.

Now, let's get back to economics. They say, Well, we are just slowing the growth of these programs; we are actually putting in more. What you find, ladies and gentlemen, is that when the Republicans are talking about defense spending, they always talk about funds adjusted for inflation. But when they talk about social spending, they talk about raw numbers, which means that the numbers essentially stay the same while inflation eats away at the purchasing power. So consequently, those programs that they claim they are increasing are scheduled to fail and cannot in fact keep pace with the cost of providing these services, cannot keep pace with the cost of food and other products to make these programs viable.

Now, I suppose some would say, You don't understand, Congressman, we have to make these cuts to reduce the deficits. If it were going for the deficit, that would be one thing, but they are giving it to the rich. The cuts that I described are not going for the deficit. In fact, they are going to provide tax cuts for the wealthy. Thirty percent of the tax cuts that come out of the programs that I just described will go to the richest 2 percent of Americans in this country. Thirty percent of the tax benefit to the richest 2 percent of Americans. And a full 50 percent of the tax breaks won't go to the average American citizen that the Speaker likes to talk about. The 50 percent goes to the people who make over \$100,000.

So, ladies and gentlemen, it seems to me that we are in a grave state of contradiction in that instead of assisting the poor and instead of helping them move out of poverty, we are taking resources from them.

And they say, Well, we are just giving it to the States so the States can do it better at less cost and we are just cutting bureaucratic costs.

Ladies and gentlemen, you have to have bureaucracy at the State level, so they are substituting State bureaucrats for Federal bureaucrats. The cost savings are not going to be there.

The other issue is this: If the States were inclined to do these programs, if the States were inclined to have fuel assistance and breakfast programs and lunch programs, why didn't the States do it? It was not done until the Federal Government stepped in and said giving people a healthy start in life is a national priority and it doesn't matter if they live in Oklahoma or Alaska, we want to make sure that you get these benefits.

So you see, Madam Speaker, in the final analysis we have a contradiction. We are not helping the poor, we are only helping the rich at the expense of the poor.

WE WILL BALANCE THE BUDGET

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

Mr. RAMSTAD. Madam Speaker, over the last 30 years the Federal Government has only balanced its budget one time: in 1969. One balanced budget in 30 years.

Madam Speaker, time and time again Congress has provided unwilling and unable to balance the budget. Time and time again, statutory scheme after statutory scheme has failed. That is why, Madam Speaker, we need the legal forces and the moral authority of a constitutional amendment. Unless we act now, the deficit is projected to be more than \$200 billion each and every year through the end of the century. This year alone more than 15 cents of every dollar in the Federal budget goes to pay interest on the Federal debt of \$4.8 trillion.

Madam Speaker, we are spending over \$235 billion this year alone to pay the interest on the debt. This insane deficit spending must stop now. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out we are headed for financial disaster unless we balance the budget now.

Now, some politicians in this body are trying to scare people by playing fast and loose with the facts. They are claiming a budget amendment would require \$1 trillion in budget cuts by the year 2002. What these politicians don't tell you is that the Federal Government is currently projected to increase spending each year until then on the average of 5.4 percent per year. That is a \$3 trillion increase in Federal spending over the next 7 years.

Only in Washington, Madam Speaker, can a smaller increase in spending be called a cut. The budget can be balanced by simply holding the spending increase to 3 percent, to an average of 3 percent per year. In other words, if we increase spending 3 percent per year until 2002, we will have a balanced budget. Or put another way, if we halted the increase to 2 trillion instead of 3 trillion over the next 7 years, we will balance the budget.

It is high time the Federal Government lived within its means the way every family in my district in Minnesota must, the way every family in America must. We simply can't keep mortgaging our children's and grandchildren's futures. We can't keep promising more than we know we can deliver.

What is really mean-spirited, Madam Speaker, is to continue to promise people more than we can deliver, to promise, promise, promise to spend more than we bring in. That is why, Madam Speaker, we need the balanced budget amendment and the discipline that that provides. It is the only way to

truly achieve a smaller government, lower taxes and more money in the taxpayers' pockets. It is also the only way to avoid an economic earthquake in America.

With the unfortunate defeat of the balanced budget amendment in the other body, it is more imperative than ever that this body now exercise fiscal discipline. That is exactly what the new House majority will deliver.

And, Madam Speaker, I admit it won't be easy. The President unfortunately has abdicated its responsibility, hasn't given us anything near a balanced budget.

We know the American people are behind us. They understand what is at stake. They are smarter than many politicians give them credit. And working together, we will get the job done. Working together with the American people, we will balance the budget.

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

[Mr. BISHOP addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

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

[Mr. WELDON of Florida addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

TIME TO GET SERIOUS ABOUT TRADE

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, the gentleman who proceeded me talked about a looming crisis, and I am in agreement with him regarding the implications of our continuing deficit and mounting debt, but there is a more immediate economic crisis confronting this country and we are hearing little of it, little discussion of it here on the floor of the House of Representatives or in the other body or downtown at the White House.

Why might that be? Because too many people are implicated in the policies that led up to that crisis and they don't want to talk about it.

The dollar today for the third day in a row hit a postwar low. Here is what the dollar's decline looks like over the last 10 years. The dollar has fallen to just about a third of its value compared to the Japanese yen in a mere 10 years.

A few days ago, we announced that we had the largest trade deficit in the history of the United States: \$160 billion. We borrow \$160 billion from foreign nations so that we could buy their goods when they were not buying ours.

And when Mickey Kantor, or the Special Trade Representative, was discussing this he said, You might ask if your trade policy is working, and he said, Yes, it is right on track. A \$160 billion trade deficit, 3.2 million lost jobs in manufacturing to overseas competition, and it is working just fine?

That underlies to a tremendous extent this crash in the dollar. And the other part is our linkage to Mexico. The peso has reached a new low today, and despite our promise of a \$50 billion bailout, Mexico is in a tailspin like you would not believe.

About a month ago an analyst, a financial analyst named Christopher Whalen sat in my office and he said, If the United States is going to put up \$40 billion to bail out Mexico, they better be willing to put up \$150 to bail out Mexico because it will trigger a run on the United States dollar. And that has come to pass.

The people downtown and the apologists on that side of the aisle for these trade policies and for the Mexico bailout, and the Speaker who would not lift a hand and would not allow us to bring a bill to the floor to stop the Mexico bailout, those people have nothing to say. They would say there is no linkage.

Read today's New York Times. The administration's biggest problem may be that the world is believing the rhetoric it employed to win support for its \$20 billion aid package for Mexico's troubled economy. Especially Mr. Clinton's insistence that the Mexican and American economies are intertwined. Today with the Mexican Government racing to take over failing banks, stabilize a tumultuous political situation, the peso dropped to a new low. And despite the bailout, the peso is now weaker than it was when we announced the \$50 billion package.

The speculation in the markets is now that the package may not be enough to do the job. \$50 billion to export jobs to Mexico to run a \$12 billion trade deficit with Mexico next year and it is not enough? How much is enough for these apologists, for a failed trade policy? Some people are going to have to admit that they were wrong.

NAFTA is not working the way they told us it would. It has put the United States into an international tailspin. We have linked ourselves to a collapsing Third World economy and there is no end in sight.

And what are we doing on the floor of the House of Representatives? Are we considering legislation that would address this? Are there emergency hearings going on here in the Congress to deal with the crashing dollar and our alliance with Mexico and the \$50 billion trade bailout? No, in fact, ironically today and tomorrow on the floor of the House we are considering special legislation to give special privileges to poor beleaguered Wall Street stockholders who have lost their money or people who have lost their pension funds.

We are giving Wall Street a special little gift. They have done such a great job in leading us into these trade policies and forcing us into these trade policies. Not me—I didn't vote for it—but forcing others who felt they must follow the lead of Wall Street. Those people are now being given special privileges by the House of Representatives so they will be immune from stockholder lawsuits and they will be immune from forgetting to tell you something. That is their reward.

It is time to get serious about trade and turn these issues and say no to Wall Street and get America back on track.

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

[Mr. FRANKS of Connecticut addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

A MAJOR ECONOMIC CRISIS IS BREWING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Ms. KAPTUR] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I wish to associate myself with the remarks of the prior speaker. There is no question that the value of our Nation's currency on international markets is a measure of our Nation's economic strength and economic health. And over the past few days and weeks, our dollar has hit historic lows against currencies of all the nations that we trade with. In fact, it is at the lowest level, our dollar's value, since World War II. That is a longer time than many people in this Chamber have been alive. so it has not been at this point for decades.

The dollar's exchange value stands at a scant 92.8 yen to the dollar. I can remember when it was 240 yen to the dollar and 1.4 German marks against the dollar. In other words, the dollar is not looking so good to the rest of the world. It is losing its value. It is looking cheap.

Little that our Treasury Department or Federal Reserve have been able to do over the last few days to give the dollar a boost has worked. In fact, they put over \$2 billion into buying currencies around the world over the weekend and it did not do any good. Did not do any good, had no impact on stopping the dollar's further decline.

□ 2000

Now, what does this really mean to families in our Nation? It means that our money, our people's money, cannot buy as much, not just here at home, but abroad. It means that interest rates in our country rose seven times over the last 12 months, even though most people were going, well, why are interest rates going up? There is really