

For those who are not already gagging on the Republicans' so-called Contract With America, hold your breath.

PUTTING GOVERNMENT ON A DIET

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

Mrs. SEASTRAND. The facts are in, Mr. Speaker. The Clinton economic plan has not paid off for middle America.

According to a Labor Department report, the median weekly earnings of full-time workers—in real, inflation-adjusted terms—actually declined about 2 percent last year. In other words, Americans are working harder and getting less for it.

What makes this so startling is that it occurred during a time when the economy was growing.

This is just one reason why we need to move forward on our plan to cut taxes and balance the budget.

American families need tax relief.

American savers and investors need incentives.

American workers need more job opportunities.

Our plan will deliver all that. And it will be paid for by real reductions in government spending.

Mr. Speaker, the Clinton administration has put the American family, the American saver, the American worker on a diet. We Republicans will put the Government on a diet.

MORE ON THE ETHICS PROBLEMS OF THE HOUSE

(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, it is a great honor to serve in the people's House. Here, every Member is equal and directly responsible to his or her constituents to represent them at the national level.

To ensure that we each focus on constituent representation rather than our own or special interests, numerous ethics rules have been established to govern our conduct in carrying out our duties.

For instance: We cannot accept any outside earned income nor can we accept honoraria; we are prohibited from seeking special favors for ourselves from governmental agencies; and nor can we accept any funding from a corporation or person for representing their specific interest before a governmental agency.

Well, Mr. Speaker, given all of these very precise rules—it bothers me deeply that virtually every day a new allegation is reported in the news related to your multiple relationships with so-called think tanks, persons, and corporations that suggest a violation of the House ethics rules.

These allegations have the potential to discredit every Member of this House. Let us clear the air. I ask you to call for an outside counsel to investigate these allegations to clear your name and to lift the cloud over this House and to ensure no harm is done to the good reputations of all of the Members of this institution.

□ 1030

RESCISSION BILL IS ON THE RIGHT TRACK

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

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, several years ago the American people were rightfully outraged when U.S. Congressmen wrote checks on empty bank accounts. The House Bank scandal was a disgrace to this body and an example of the lack of fiscal accountability common in Washington.

However, there seems to be less anger from the American people and less shame in this Congress today, as the Federal Government continues to write checks on an empty account.

The debt has reached crisis proportions, but President Clinton and the liberals have renounced any responsibility to this disaster—despite the fact that Bill Clinton himself noted in his 1994 budget that if left unattended the debt would force future generations to pay an 82-percent tax rate.

We have a moral obligation to clean up this mess. The rescissions package is a good start. The Republicans aim to rescind \$17.2 billion.

Lobbyists are up in arms. If that many special interest groups hate the rescissions bill, I know we are on the right track.

DO NOT KILL BIG BIRD

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I am here to deliver one short concise, simple message to my colleagues: Do not kill Big Bird. Do not kill Big Bird by voting for mean-spirited Republican budget cuts on Public Broadcasting. Do not kill Big Bird in order to help finance tax breaks for the very wealthy in this country. Do not kill Big Bird in order to help finance a star wars program that this country neither wants or needs.

Do not kill Big Bird because millions of American children, including my own three children, have grown up on Big Bird and "Sesame Street" and Mr. Rogers and Public Broadcasting. Do not kill Big Bird because Public Broadcasting works. Public Broadcasting is good for the American taxpayer and good for the American people.

Do not kill Big Bird because the public-private partnership of Public Broad-

casting is what has really proven to be successful in this country.

In short, Mr. Speaker, do not kill Big Bird.

ETHICALLY CHALLENGED ADMINISTRATION

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

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, we would not possibly kill Big Bird if we wanted to kill Big Bird. Nobody wants to kill Big Bird. The fact is that Big Bird generates hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars of revenue every single year to the great benefit of the people that created it, and any suggestion that Big Bird is going anywhere is crazy.

We cannot go 1 week, 1 day without another new ethical allegation that is made against a member of the Cabinet. Today it is Henry Cisneros and his problem with Housing and Urban Development. Over the weekend there was a problem with Ron Brown and apparently Federico Peña had hired Mr. Brown using FAA funds to lobby on behalf of Denver back in the late 1980's or early 1990's.

There is a pall, a cloud of ethical problems that hangs over this administration. It is certainly no secret that it is, let us call it in the politically correct language of the day, the most ethically challenged administration of the 20th century, perhaps of both centuries.

RECENT ACTIONS BY THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT

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

Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. Speaker, several weeks ago the French Government was complaining about the activities of American Government officials. This came as an enormous surprise. The Japanese, the Germans, and Americans did not know there was any technology in France that anybody needed.

Yesterday the French President hosts Fidel Castro.

Mr. Speaker, we are entitled to doubt whether if there were an island in the Mediterranean with a 30-year dictatorship, with no human rights for any of its people that the French Government would be so understanding.

In the coming years France will have its difficulties in North Africa. Europe has not seen its last internal political problems. I trust that all of the people of the Americas will be similarly understanding and give the same difference to the French Government when it faces its own next crisis.

TAYLOR-DICKS EMERGENCY TIMBER SALVAGE AMENDMENT

(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, severe storms and floods have recently ravaged my home State of California, destroying entire communities and claiming over a dozen lives.

If flood prevention measures had been available to avoid this catastrophe at no cost to our taxpayers, every Member of Congress would have endorsed them. Mr. Speaker, next summer our Nation will face forest fires as destructive as our recent floods. If unchecked, these fire storms will incinerate public resources, homes, and people. Fortunately, the Taylor-Dicks emergency timber salvage amendment to the supplemental appropriations bill before the House today provides national wildfire protection through the removal of deadly natural fuels from our forests—at no cost to our taxpayers.

This is a deal that Americans and Congress simply cannot pass up. I strongly urge my colleagues to support this timely and tax-free legislation.

ETHICS

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

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, it appears my colleagues from the Sixth District of Georgia has a problem recognizing the truth and making up facts to support his medieval ideology. Examples of this include the wasteful Federal shelter that does not even exist, the heart pump that the FDA allegedly refused to approve regardless of the fact that they have not seen it, and his claim that D.C. schools are the most expensive in the country when they are not.

Now it appears that information was withheld from the Ethics Committee about his controversial college course. The ultimate purpose of this tax-exempt course, according to Jeffrey Eisenach, is to, "train by April 1996, 200,000-plus citizens into a model for replacing the welfare state * * *." Sounds like the brown-shirts to me, Mr. Speaker, it is time for an outside counsel.

CONGRESS MUST MAKE BUDGET CUTS

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

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot from Members saying that we cannot cut this, we cannot cut that. But you know something, we have a budget which is shaped like a pie. A slice of that pie is the debt service, which is the interest we have to pay on a \$4.5 trillion debt which, incidentally, is owned by countries like the Netherlands and Great Britain. They actually own this debt, the Treasury bonds.

It takes \$250 billion just today, this year, to pay the service on the national debt. If we allow spending to increase

at the same level that it has increased over the last 5 years, we will add \$1 trillion to the national debt. That means that the slice of the pie will no longer be \$250 billion, it will be \$360 billion. And as this slice of the pie to pay off the interest on that debt without even lowering the debt grows, it means less money to help those people who truly need help, like the aged, blind, and disabled.

Keep that in mind when Members say do not cut this or do not cut that. We have to cut them all equally.

THE GINGRICH HEALTH CARE PLAN

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

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, there is a new health care plan available to some members of the public, it is called Newtcare. Under this plan, you work for a Member of Congress for 1 month each year for just \$100, in return you are entitled to the Government's generous health care benefits. Under Newtcare, you will likely save hundreds, perhaps thousands, of dollars on your health care costs.

But wait, this is not a dream or a fantasy, at least for a select few. Last week the Capitol Hill newspaper, Roll Call, reported that a fundraiser for Speaker GINGRICH, Nancy Bocskor, has been put on the Government payroll for 1 month in 1991, 1992, and 1993, enabling her to participate in the Government employee health care plan.

Mr. Speaker, this practice may or may not violate the rules of the House. But it is wrong, just plain wrong. More importantly, this is but the latest example of the Speaker of this House pushing the rules to the limit and, perhaps, crossing the line.

There are many charges, serious charges, swirling around the Speaker of the House. Only an outside, independent counsel, can tell us for sure whether the Speaker has crossed the line. We need an outside counsel and we need one now.

STOPPING RUNAWAY INFLATION

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

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, in my hand is the most expensive credit card in the history of the world, a credit card that has piled up 4.7 trillion dollars' worth of debt and \$247 billion in budget deficits for as far as the eye can see.

This credit card is a voting card for Members of Congress. We are continuing to imprison our children and theirs by this runaway spending.

Today on this floor House Republicans are going to begin the effort to stop this runaway spending with a \$17 billion rescission package, and in May we are going to lay out a 7-year plan to

balance our budget. And we believe that this year we need to make a significant downpayment on that effort.

We are going to be hearing from the left how we are hurting this and stopping this, all of the pain today. And I will say this: There will be pain today, there will be discomfort, but our effort is to make the courageous decisions to protect our children and their children.

DON EDWARDS SAN FRANCISCO BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE

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

Mr. MINETA. Mr. Speaker, today I will introduce legislation to name the San Francisco Bay Wildlife Refuge after our distinguished former colleague Don Edwards.

Without Don Edwards, the creation of this wildlife refuge would have not been possible. Throughout the environmental community, Don is recognized as the father of this precious sanctuary.

Don was successful in passing legislation to establish the refuge by authorizing the Federal Government to acquire 20,000 acres of land around the San Francisco Bay.

In the years following, Don fought to secure appropriations for land acquisition for the refuge, and to expand the authorization of the refuge.

Mr. Speaker, I can think of no more appropriate way to recognize Don Edwards' many years of distinguished service to this body and his constituents than by naming this refuge in his honor.

REPUBLICAN CUTS WILL HURT CHILDREN

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully last evening to the remarks of a Republican Member and other colleagues from the other side of the aisle as they rose in protest of what they want America to believe is the big lie.

They say Democrats are lying about the proposed cuts to school lunch and breakfast programs. They say that they are not really cutting the critically important programs, they are only slowing the rate at which they will be allowed to grow; except hungry stomachs continue to grow. They say they are not really cutting these.

Well, Mr. Speaker, because of the Department of Education figures that project that the population of elementary and schoolchildren will increase substantially, some 8 percent during the same period that the GOP spending cuts will slow the rate of growth for nutrition programs, the net result is not a big lie, it is a big cut.