

PRAYER

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

We pray, O God, for the spiritual virtues that are the gift of Your hand and the promise of Your word. For faith to reach beyond the usual barriers of time and space, we offer our thanksgiving; for hope to see Your assurances and to claim Your promises, we offer our praise; for love to know fulfillment of all our endeavors and to relate to others in freedom and trust, we offer our adoration. May these gifts, gracious God, be on our lips and written in our hearts that we will be filled with Your gifts and enjoy Your peace that passes all human understanding. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

Mr. TRAFICANT 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

The SPEAKER. There will be 15 1-minute on each side.

AN ABSENCE OF LEADERSHIP
FROM THE WHITE HOUSE

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

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, Thomas Jefferson said, "We should consider ourselves unauthorized to saddle posterity with our debts, and morally bound to pay them ourselves." And yet—

At the end of Friday, the national debt stood at \$4,859,130,968,274 and 89 cents, an increase of roughly \$2.3 billion from the day before.

The debt burden for each individual American, including those babies born over the weekend, now stands at \$18,537 and 2 cents.

In the time it takes me to finish this short 1-minute speech, the national debt will have increased by another \$1,597,222 and 20 cents.

Despite the financial and moral imperative to act, President Clinton has failed to demonstrate even the slightest interest in this matter.

It has been 75 days since we challenged the President to present his plan to balance the budget and 19 days since we asked him to help us help fix Medicare.

In the absence of leadership from the White House, Republicans have offered a blueprint to balance the budget by 2002 so that our children will have a future free from debt and a standard of living better than our own.

Mr. President, where is your plan. We are still waiting.

MEDICARE TAX CUT

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans have now unveiled their slash-for-cash budget.

The Republicans will slash Medicare by nearly \$300 billion to get the cash for a tax cut of that same amount.

How?

It's simple.

If you are a senior citizen, you will just have to cough up about \$3,500 in out-of-pocket costs to pay for Medicare cuts.

Then, the top 1 percent of the wealthiest American families can rake in over \$20,000 each in tax cuts.

See? Simple. Slash for cash.

In fact, the Republicans could make the whole process much simpler.

With this handy envelope.

Elderly Americans—those who guided us out of a depression and through a world war, those who educated us, fed us and led us—you just put your money in here.

Then send it off to the wealthy, in care of the Republican Party, here inside the beltway.

But, look at the bright side.

If the Republicans are feeling generous, maybe they will kick in for the stamps so that you seniors can send in your money.

NO WHITE HOUSE LEADERSHIP ON
SAVING MEDICARE

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

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, this January, Mexico was near bankruptcy, and the Clinton administration mounted a furious effort to save it.

He might have been misguided or wrong. But at least he had the courage to be a leader.

Where is the President now that Medicare is on the same path to bankruptcy as Mexico?

He has made no proposals to save Medicare, even though his own Cabinet officials say it is going bankrupt.

He is not even willing to negotiate with Republicans who are trying to save it.

Mr. Speaker, the President is willing to save Mexico, but not the millions of senior citizens who rely on Medicare.

THE BUDGET

(Mrs. SCHROEDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, we have now seen a new kind of socialism introduced in this new budget. It is called socialism for the rich. You cut the middle class so you can cut the richest's taxes. Yes, everybody gets cuts, but there is a big difference between a tax cut that equals \$20,000 a year for people making over \$200,000 a year and the cuts that are going to come to the middle class, which means the average family is going to be straining to help mom and dad pay the additional Medicare costs, the kids paying additional student loan costs, kids paying additional school lunch costs.

I do not think this is fair. I think the polls today show the Americans have figured it out. They do not think it is fair either. Let us go after some of those pet rocks in the budget that will put this budget in balance. We need it in balance, but not on the backs of the middle class so the fat cats can get one more tax break.

HISTORY

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

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, we are on the verge of making history. For the first time since my 25-year-old son was born, Congress actually has a plan to balance the Federal budget. We made a promise to balance the budget and protect Social Security. We kept that promise. We made a promise to save Medicare from bankruptcy, and we are keeping that promise to preserve, protect and improve Medicare. This week we will vote on our plan to balance the budget and save the future for our children.

While we are making history, where is President Clinton? He is defending the status quo over change and defending big government over local solutions. That is not leadership, and that is ignoring a crisis and turning your back on the next generation.

We have several choices: savings Medicare or allowing the problem to become a crisis; giving the next generation the family farm or simply handing them the mortgage; putting the Federal Government on a sensible diet or allowing big government to eat Twinkies off the taxpayer's plate.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to consider history this week and vote with me to provide opportunity for the next generation.

THE EPA AND SAN DIEGO

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, check this out. A Mexican spokesman said,

Mexico has no money to honor NAFTA, and Uncle Sam will have to clean up the pollution on the border. Now that means that millions of gallons of raw sewage from Tijuana will contaminate the beaches of San Diego. It also means that San Diego will have to come up with \$16,000,000 to build the treatment plant because Mexico was supposed to but they cannot. But the EPA says, in any regard, no one is going to build a treatment plant down there because you will endanger the habitat of the pocket mouse.

Beam me up. People in San Diego are swimming in raw fecal matter, and the EPA is worried about the pocket mouse. Ladies and gentlemen, why don't we let Mickey Mouse take care of the pocket mouse and EPA take care of the American people like they are supposed to.

I say maybe it is time we enforce NAFTA and also pass the clean water bill. It is a commonsense bill.

A BALANCED BUDGET

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, this week the House of Representatives will make history. For a quarter century Government has been the problem rather than the solution. Government policies have squandered our children's future, stagnated our workers' wages, assaulted our families' values and eroded our citizens' freedoms.

This week, once again the people will govern. We will vote on a program to transform the Federal Government by making it work for the people. Our plan will balance the budget for the first time in 25 years by making Government responsible.

Our balanced budget restores our children's American dream by ending the practice of squandering the children's inheritance on big government. It returns power to the people by ending the micromanagement of intrusive Washington bureaucrats. It prepares for the future by saving programs that would otherwise go bankrupt like Medicare. It restores democracy by making government officials public servants. The people of America want a balanced budget.

MEDICARE AND THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET

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

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, Speaker GINGRICH and the House Republicans are pulling a fast one on senior citizens by drastically cutting Medicare and using savings to fund a \$350 billion tax cut for the wealthy. The Gingrich-Kasich budget plan will cut health care services for 37 million seniors receiving Medicare benefits.

Under this plan, Medicare growth will not keep pace with the rising cost

of health care, the growth in the number of beneficiaries and the inflation rate.

The result of these cuts will be an additional cost to Medicare recipients of \$1,000 a year—out of their own pocket—by 2002. To inflict these costs on seniors living on fixed incomes is inhumane.

Where I come from, a person is only as good as their word. The U.S. Government has made a covenant with senior citizens and I implore my colleagues to make sure the Congress honors Medicare promises.

By breaking this promise of a healthier life for tax cuts for the wealthy will mean turning our back on senior citizens and working American families.

By slashing Medicare to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy, Speaker GINGRICH is ensuring that the wealthy get a gold mine while senior citizens get the shaft.

URGING SUPPORT FOR A BALANCED BUDGET

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

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, President Clinton claims he wants a Government that is lean but not mean. Today the Federal Government is big and mean. It takes 1 of every 4 dollars the average family earns. That is mean. The average family has to spend more to pay for the cost of Government than on anything else.

Big government is not just mean to our families. It is nasty to our children. This year the Federal deficit will skyrocket to \$176 billion. The debt will explode to \$4.7 trillion. That is \$75,000 of debt for every family of four. Families beware—the Democratic leadership does not help you—they thrive on you.

There is a better, leaner way, and we are voting on it this week. It is our balanced budget and it puts the big, mean old system on a diet. Our balanced budget ends deficits by 2002, returns power, control, and money to families and restores the American Dream to our children.

I urge my colleagues to vote for leaner, not meaner, Government. Support our balanced budget.

REPUBLICANS AND MEDICARE

(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, the public is not fooled by the Republican shell game.

They oppose Republican plans to pay for a tax break for the privileged few by cutting Medicare.

Today's Washington Post tells us that 56 percent of the people are opposed to the Republican plan to cut Medicare. They are not fooled by Republican claims of fixing Medicare. The

public is on to the Republican scam of using Medicare as a piggy bank to pay for their tax breaks for the privileged few.

Rather than wiping out billions of dollars in tax cuts for large corporations, Republicans chose to slash support for the old and the sick.

The Republican chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee says he will not touch the billions of dollars of tax breaks for wealthy corporate special interests.

Mr. Speaker, let us go after the billions in corporate tax breaks before we stick a "sick tax" on our parents and grandparents.

MEDICARE GOING BROKE

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

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, let me just respond to the previous speaker by pointing out the Washington Post also says, in a column entitled Which Budget, referring to the lack of any proposal from the House Democrats, "Democrat complaints about Republican budget plans have a hollow and unpersuasive ring."

Mr. Speaker, the silence of those on the other side of the aisle about Medicare is deafening. All we hear from them is more distortions, more hot air, no solutions. But do not take our word for it about the condition of the Medicare trust fund. Take the word of the Medicare trustees who said in their April 3 report, and I quote, "the present financing schedule for Medicare is sufficient to ensure the payment of benefits only over the next few years."

The bottom line? The fund is projected to be exhausted in 2001. This conclusion was reached by three of the President's own Cabinet Secretaries who also double as Medicare trustees: Secretaries Rubin, Reich, and Shalala.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are tired of this evasion. They are tired of the posturing. They sent us here to Washington to handle the Nation's problems, not to avoid them. Republicans are providing leadership while the White House and the House Democrats are providing scare tactics and class warfare demagoguery.

PAIN FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, what the Republicans really want to do over the next six years is privatize and eliminate Medicare. A couple of weeks ago I saw Speaker GINGRICH on TV saying the cuts in the budget were going to be large but painless. Painless for whom, I wonder, Not painless for seniors and not painless for children.