

the balanced budget amendment, but I think amnesia has set in here in the House. I am absolutely amazed that the distinguished minority leader and distinguished minority whip would come to the House and castigate and chastise Republicans for the open rules that we have given them on unfunded mandates, over 150 amendments? Gosh, I can never remember when the Democrats were in charge that they ever had an open rule on a major piece of legislation.

Well, amnesia has been cured. The American people will now have debated a balanced budget amendment, unfunded mandates, term limits, line-item veto. We have been cured. We do have open rules, Members have not been gagged.

Get with it. We are in charge, and we will set the agenda.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENTS

(Mr. WATT of North Carolina asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WATT of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I first read it in the Washington Post and I had my doubts about it. Then I read it in the Farm Journal. This is a quote. "We have to explain to people in advance what a balanced budget amendment is going to mean. I am for it, but you got to tell people you can't have it without giving something up." Our Senate majority leader, a Republican.

He needs to tell the people on this side in the House the same message. Unlike his Republican counterparts over here who steadfastly refuse to discuss the actual cost of the balanced budget amendment, claiming that if Americans knew the real costs, their knees would buckle.

The balanced budget amendment may be good political public relations, but it is not integrity and open government, which is what the Republicans say they want.

We have to be honest with the American people about the balanced budget amendment.

VOTE FOR UNFUNDED MANDATES BILL

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

Mr. CHRYSLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge the Members to vote for the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act. This measure would dramatically alleviate the devastating impact Federal mandates have levied on the States for decades. Additionally, we must protect the private sector from overbearing mandates and regulations. This measure will show the American people that this congress is providing real leadership and is sincere in this efforts to create a streamlined and more efficient and responsible Federal Government.

Coming from the great State of Michigan, one of America's strongest

industrial and agricultural communities, I have seen how such mandates and Federal regulations often result in lost jobs or impede job creation.

The effects Federal mandates have on the private sector are no less devastating and should be analyzed on equal levels as those affecting States and local governments.

A BALANCED BUDGET YES, BUT NO THREE-FIFTHS

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

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, in this body as well as the other body we have people with different ideas. Ideas are what make legislation. We are seeing that with the unfunded mandate bill. That is all it is, a question of ideas. We are going to see it with the balanced budget amendment.

I have supported a balanced budget amendment since I have been here, 18 years. I have never supported however, in that time, the principle that you should have a three-fifths majority in order to increase revenues. I will never support a constitutional amendment that has that.

I believe in my principles. I just wonder how many freshmen Members on the other side of the aisle believe in their principle of a three-fifths majority and how many of them will actually stand by that principle, or how many of them will, just for expediency, decide that they want a balanced budget amendment and they do not care what is in it. I am just curious to see who really stands by their ideas.

STOP THE BICKERING

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

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, tonight, as the President addresses the Nation, I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to reflect on what they have done to reform the government.

Have they come out in support of a tax-limitation, balanced budget amendment?

Have they fought to reform unfunded mandates, have they embraced the Republican-led changes in the way the Congress does business?

Or have they fought the reforms put forth? Have they tried to filibuster, delay, and destroy the Contract With America?

Mr. Speaker, many House Democrats, guardians of the failed past, have come to the floor today and in the past weeks for one reason, to stop needed reform of this Congress.

They attack Republicans on irrelevant issues. They complain about fair procedures, they whine when we make necessary cuts.

The time has come to stop this silly bickering, this endless partisanship. Let us work together to complete the Contract With America and restore the people's faith in their Congress.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. VOLKMER. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHAYS). The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I did not say anything when the gentleman was in the well and just spoke, but as I said earlier, and I was asking about one of the previous speakers, the House rules do not permit the impugning of motives.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHAYS). Will the gentleman state his inquiry, please?

Mr. VOLKMER. The inquiry is, Do the House rules forbid the impugning of motives of the Members of the House, either party, anybody?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would point out to the gentleman that personal motives are out of order. Political motives are not.

Mr. VOLKMER. All right. Fine.

SAVE SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, my constituents asked, as I came to the U.S. Congress, that we engage in deliberation and serious debates on the problems of the American people.

I have been reading in my office letters that have come, handwritten, notably by aged individuals, who asked me simply to save their Social Security.

I went home almost the very first week, not to tell people what I was going to do but to ask them what they would have the U.S. Congress do. In a hearing, one after another pleaded and begged that we would respond to the needs of those who needed Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, a balanced budget amendment that does not protect Social Security violates the rights of needy citizens across this Nation.

In recognition of this great tragedy, those of us on the Committee on the Judiciary offered an amendment, a simple bipartisan amendment, to save Social Security. This was soundly defeated by the Republican majority.

We have already heard over 100,000 million dollars will be taken out of Medicare and Medicaid. Texas will lose 35 percent of its benefits.

I simply ask that we own up to our responsibility and save Social Security.

PASS THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, you know, each month, sometimes at the beginning of the month, sometimes at the end of the month, but surely during the course of the month, the American middle-class families must sit down and assess their finances, and as a result of these assessments, many new dresses and suits and weekends out and stereos and want-to-have type purchases yield to such mundane purchases as new dryers, new washing machines, automobile repairs, new roofs for the house, other type things like that.

The American middle class must do this, because their expenses cannot exceed their revenues. It is essential. It is common sense.

And now the U.S. Congress can join them in this effort. We have ignored this for too long. The last balanced budget was in 1969.

This week we can change everything by the passage of a balanced budget amendment. Let us pass it and do what middle-class America has to do each month.

A PICTURE SPEAKS A THOUSAND WORDS

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

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I read with great sadness and sorrow in this morning's papers that the new chairman of the Rules Committee has replaced the portrait adorning that committee's wall.

The portrait that had hung on that site was of Claude Pepper, one of the most revered and respected Members ever to serve in this institution, a man long associated with protecting the rights and dignity of senior citizens.

The portrait that replaces it, one of Howard W. Smith, a man perhaps best remembered for his obstruction in passing the country's civil rights laws. A man who in his own words "never accepted the colored race as a race of people who had equal intelligence and education and social attainments as the white people of the South."

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that a picture speaks a thousand words. I know the gentleman from New York meant no offense, meant no harm. He should change his mind. Symbols in our society are important. We do not need angels on our walls, but certainly we can do better. Mr. Chairman, please take down that picture. Take it down now.

NO TIME TO STALL

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

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, this is no time to stall. For 40 years the House leadership on this side of the aisle stalled reform from Congress. For 40 years the House leadership resisted passing a balanced budget amendment. They refused to reform our welfare system. They passed unfunded mandates on to the States.

And now there are those who are trying to put off reform again. That is why they use dilatory tactics to slow the legislative process. It is why they concentrate on issues that have nothing to do with changing this Congress. They wish to stall in order to deny the American people a real chance to change business as usual.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if the last election was any indication, this is no time to stall. I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to stop stalling and to start working with us to reform this Congress.

THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, passage in its current form of the House joint resolution, the balanced budget amendment, would reshape the political landscape and impact the American people in ways that have never been felt before.

To avoid that result, I urge two changes: One, that we should not punish those who have given all of their lives—the aged; we should exempt Social Security from the balanced budget calculation.

Social Security is, indeed, the contract that the older Americans have with their country. That contract should not be breached. It should not be broken. It should not be modified, particularly for those who are in the sunset of their lives who have come to realize that this is their only hope for a quality of life.

Second, Mr. Speaker, we should tell the people what we will cut and what we will not. It is undemocratic to say that we are fiscally responsible and fail to tell the people what we will do.

America wants reform, but America wants reform knowing what they are doing.

WELCOMING THE PRESIDENT TO THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, in his campaign for the White House, President Clinton said that he favored tax relief for the middle class. Well, Republicans in the new Congress agree that the Federal Government taxes and spends too much and that

taxpayers should have their tax burden reduced.

Through his Reinventing Government, President Clinton also supports efforts to reduce the size of Government. Republicans in the new Congress will work with the President to achieve a smaller, efficient Government.

You see, Mr. Speaker, there really are areas of agreement. In our Contract With America, Republicans have promised to accomplish many of the things that the President says should be done. But there is one slight difference: Instead of just talking about these things, Republicans have and will continue to deliver on our promises. And, we welcome the President to our agenda of lower taxes and less government.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAD BETTER PAY ATTENTION

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

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker and Members, I am worried about this Congress, and the American people had better pay attention.

This Congress is rushing to pass a constitutional amendment to balance the budget, and most people do not have any idea how their lives are going to be impacted by this vote.

Did you understand the words of the Members who came before me when they talked about Social Security and the fact that it could be on the chopping block?

But let us not dwell on that, as bad as that could be. I want to talk about a children's program today. I want to talk about Head Start, that program which has proven to be an excellent program, that gives little children a head start, that gets them involved with education, that helps introduce them to books, that builds self-esteem. It is in rural communities. It is in urban communities. It is for the working class.

This is a program that could be cut, that could be eliminated.

American people, get involved and understand what is about to happen.

THE PRESIDENT SHOULD READ THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

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

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that the President's State of the Union Address tonight from the rostrum behind me will be a great speech. The President always gives a great speech.

But, Mr. Speaker, the President is a little late. The voters sent a clear message last November to Washington, "Clean up your act and get your fiscal house in order."