

THE REPUBLICAN MAGIC MESSAGE TO BALANCE THE BUDGET

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the day that Congress votes on the balanced budget amendment I am troubled by the fact that the Republicans still have not told the American people where the cuts are coming from. One thing the Republicans are telling us, however, is that they want to change the Consumer Price Index with smoke and mirrors. They want to change the way the Consumer Price Index is calculated.

What does that mean? It means that Social Security benefits will be cut by \$27 billion, cutting benefits for 42 million senior citizens. Republican recalculation of the Consumer Price Index means taxes will be increased by \$21 billion, raising taxes on 114 million families.

Wait a second. Are these the two steps Republicans promised not to take, cutting Social Security and raising taxes? Republicans again want to magically massage budget numbers to balance the budget. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, we can now expect Republicans to name David Copperfield as the new CBO Director.

Mr. Speaker, Republican smoke and mirrors will not fool the American public.

□ 1148

MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, last night we heard President Clinton call for an increase in the minimum wage. Leon Panetta claims such an increase will "keep people interested in work rather than in welfare."

It must have been a busy week for the writers over at the White House. Not only did they have to write a State of the Union Address, but they had to rewrite basic economic theory as well.

Last Wednesday, Mr. Carlos Bonilla, an economist at the Employment Policies Institute, testified before the Opportunities Committee. He argued that low wage jobs, not job training programs, provide the best means to break the cycle of dependency. He also warned that raising the minimum wage would deprive many welfare recipients of the opportunity to work their way off welfare.

I urge my colleagues, who believe that raising the minimum wage rate will help the poor, to review Mr. Bonilla's testimony. The President's intentions may be good, but raising the minimum wage is bad policy.

As the House begins to consider legislation that will move welfare recipients toward self-sufficiency let us not

lift the bottom rung of the occupational ladder beyond their reach.

SOUND FAMILIAR?

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, can anyone seriously tell me what was different in last night's State of the Union Address from what the President has done in his previous two addresses, I mean besides the fact that it was longer?

There is nothing wrong with the President's words; it is not the President's speeches that have put him in the fix he is in, it is his actions, and the quicker the President figures that out the better off we all will be.

The President says he wants less Federal spending and a smaller, more efficient Government. If that is the case, I hope he supports the tax limitation balanced budget amendment that we will vote on today.

The President says he wants to reduce unfunded Federal mandates on State and local governments. If that is the case, he should tell our Democrat colleagues to stop these obstructionist tactics we have seen that have stalled the reform bill that we have been working on all week.

The President says he wants to end welfare as we know it. If that is the case, then he should support the Republican contract bill which will fundamentally change the role of welfare in our society. But the President probably will not do that, and next year he will come back with a speech that will sound familiar to us all.

MIDDLE CLASS PROMISED PROTECTION IN PRESIDENT'S POSITIVE AGENDA

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

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, last night the American people heard President Clinton present a positive agenda for America's long forgotten middle class. He held out an olive branch to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and said the Democrats and Republicans must come together for the public good.

But the President also made it very clear that we will not allow the new Republican majority to undermine the progress we have made in fighting crime, protecting the environment, and improving education. When the Republicans propose radical ideas like eliminating the FDA, federalizing divorce laws, criminalizing abortions, and slashing Medicare and Social Security, we will oppose them every step of the way. We want to move this country ahead to the 21st century, not go back to the 19th.

We are going to continue to fight for our hard-working families. We will work to pass a middle class tax cut to help families pay the mortgage and send their children to school. We will continue to reinvent government and cut bureaucracy, and we will not slash Social Security and Medicare. Can our Republicans say the same?

THE REPUBLICAN PROMISE TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(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, some of the President's remarks last night gave us reason to hope. The President has done that before. However, let us remember that hopeful rhetoric does not always lead to action.

I know what kind of action the American people want. Back in November the voters sent us a message—it is time to change Congress, no more overbloaded, big spending, big government status quo. The American people demand change.

Republicans are working to keep our promise to the American people. We are committed to reducing the size, scope, and cost of our Federal Government. We are passing unfunded mandates legislation and balancing the budget because that is what the American people want.

They want no rhetoric, just action. I hope the President's party will join us in a bipartisan way to deliver the people the action they want.

A NEED TO SPECIFY WHERE THE CUTS TAKE PLACE

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

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, at the finest moments of the State of the Union speech last night the President stressed bipartisan responses to the problems which face this country.

I believe the new majority is making a serious mistake in its tough partisan response to his and other viewpoints. This partisanship is evidenced in many ways, including the wholly inappropriate words uttered by the gentleman from California a few minutes ago.

It is also evident in majority efforts to stop this House from considering requirements that the balanced budget amendment specify where the cuts will come from. Every single balanced budget amendment proposal considered by this body should specify where the cuts will come. I favor a balanced budget amendment, but I deeply regret that the new majority has not even allowed us to vote on whether every proposal should specify where the cuts will be.