

REPUBLICANS' VICTORY MESSAGE STILL RINGS LOUD AND CLEAR

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

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, a lot has changed in Washington over the past 9 months, and the message that sent Republicans to victory last November is still ringing loud and clear.

Americans are not talking about how we balance the budget, but whether or not we will do so. People are also talking about how we save Medicare, not whether or not we will do so.

Our mission this fall is clear. We will pass a budget that brings us into balance by 2002. We will enact meaningful welfare reform that emphasizes work, families, and hope for the future. We will save Medicare from bankruptcy. We will reduce the size of this overbloated government that is taking away our freedoms.

Government has grown quite large. After World War II, we spent 12 percent of our GDP, our gross domestic product, for government spending. Now, we spend almost 22 percent of GDP. We have done this not by taxes, but by borrowing. We must balance the budget if we care about our kids and our grandkids having a good future.

TO PRESIDENT CHIRAC: STOP THE TESTING NOW

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

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday at 12:30 p.m. local time in Mururoa, the French Government exploded an underground nuclear weapon in the first of eight proposed tests that President Chirac contends are in France's vital national interests. It was also the 205th nuclear blast that France exploded, but yet they claim they still need more computer data.

Tuesday's explosion was detected by seismic monitoring stations as far as away as Australia, but France has yet to get the message. Testing half a world away from home displays an arrogance that is unbecoming of a civilized nation.

President Chirac has hinted that France may cut the testing program short. The gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA], our distinguished colleague, made his contribution by being detained by French test authorities last week.

President Chirac, listen to the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] and all peoples of the Pacific. Stop the testing now.

KEEP GOING

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

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, most of the Members of this House have spent the last few weeks traveling our districts and meeting with our constituents. In my town meetings, and in a very successful Medicare conference, my central coast California constituents seemed to be worried that this Congress will be bogged down and not complete the change we started the first 100 days.

They want Medicare to be safe for future generations. They know we must end failed spending policies. They know that we can and must balance the budget and give our children a future free of debt and full of opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are on to something and my constituents understand that after 40 years of liberals defending the status quo, that the new majority of this Congress is changing the system that created the debt and rewarded inefficiency. They want solutions. They want action and they want it now.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CAL RIPKEN ON HIS 2,131ST CONSECUTIVE GAME

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all the Members of this House, and all baseball fans around the Nation, let me offer our collective congratulations to Cal Ripken, Jr., of the Baltimore Orioles. Last night at Camden Yards in the Third Congressional District of Maryland, Cal played his 2,131st consecutive game, one more than the immortal Lou Gehrig, and did it with the same grace and dignity that has marked his remarkable career.

Mr. Speaker, there was not a dry eye in Camden Yards when Cal Ripken spoke after the game and gave credit to his family and the baseball fans for this remarkable accomplishment.

Thank you, Cal, for being such a great role model for young and old alike.

MEMBERS MUST FULFILL THEIR DUTIES

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, as I spent August back home with family and neighbors, I had time to reflect upon why I am here. It's easy to get caught up in inside-the-beltway activities and small battles and forget why our constituents sent us here.

I will tell Members why my constituents sent me here. They sent me here to balance the budget and scale back big Government. They sent me here to save and strengthen Medicare. They sent me here to change the destructive welfare system. And they sent me here

to relieve them of their overly heavy tax burden.

These are simple things. We can do this, and we should do this now. This was in our job description when we were sent here, and if we don't fulfill those duties, our employers will find someone who will.

MEDICARE'S PROBLEMS SHOULD BE SOLVED INDEPENDENT OF TAX CUTS

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, it is quite telling on how excited my Republican colleagues get when democrats tell the truth about their plan to cut Medicare by \$270 billion. I am sure in their districts they got the same reaction that I got in mine when people learned that those cuts in Medicare were not going to be recycled to improve or extend the longevity of the Medicare Program, but rather much of that money was going to be taken away for the first time in history from the Medicare Program to pay for tax cuts for some of the wealthiest people in this country.

My constituents understood the need to make adjustments in Medicare. What they could not understand was a plan to raid that system, to make the problems worse, and for the first time in history take money away from Medicare for other purposes in terms of the budget.

Medicare ought to be solved within the Medicare system, independent of the drive to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy, to pay for tax cuts for the richest families in this country, while stealing the money from the elderly who need health care that they can afford.

MEDICARE

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

Mr. BONO. Mr. Speaker, when I was home in my district last week, I met with constituents to get their input on Medicare. The most consistent question they had was, "Didn't Congress know about the Medicare problem last year or 2 years ago?" I said yes. But, they refused to confront it.

I urge my colleagues to listen to their constituents and listen to the professionals—the doctors, nurses, hospital administrators, and, of course, our seniors. We cannot propose a solution without their recommendations.

In my district, I have set up a task force to come up with some answers and help find the right solution. Let us not be so arrogant that we think we alone can solve this problem without seeking the advice of the people we represent.

My constituents realize that a 30-year-old Government program needs to

be reformed and brought into the 21st century. Politicians using scare tactics and acting like demagogues won't accomplish anything. Let's be responsible and confront the issue. And, solve it.

OPPOSITION TO THE DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS BILL

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

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Defense appropriations bill, especially given the priorities currently being established in Congress.

Now that the cold war is over, why do we continue to spend \$100 billion a year to defend Europe and Asia against a nonexistent enemy, while at the same time this Congress proposes major cut-backs in Medicare and Medicaid?

Why are we continuing to fund the absurd star wars program, but make disastrous cuts in student loans and education, the future of America?

Why are we expanding the B-2 program at over \$1 billion a plane, when the Pentagon has not even asked for any more planes, but we are cutting back on school nutrition programs and child care?

Why are we not cutting the CIA and the other intelligence programs now that the Soviet Union does not exist, but instead are cutting back on Head Start?

CONGRESS MUST BALANCE THE BUDGET AND STRENGTHEN MEDICARE

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

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, in the next few weeks, after decades of fiscal irresponsibility, Congress will at last face up to its fundamental duty to balance the Federal budget. Not since 1969 have Federal expenses matched Federal revenues. Since then, we have compiled a national debt that bears down on our economy like a lead weight, the new Republican Congress is owning up to its commitment to balance the budget as a matter of moral obligation to future generations.

In addition, we are serious about saving the Medicare system. This is not a partisan issue—the President's own Cabinet Secretaries tell us the system is going bankrupt. Republicans find that unacceptable, Mr. Speaker, and our plan will strengthen and preserve Medicare for the sake of America's seniors.

Years ago, Ronald Reagan asked, "If not us, who? If not now, when?" Mr. Reagan's questions still resonate today. For the sake of our children and our parents, we will balance the budget and strengthen Medicare.

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SUPPORT FOR U.N. CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN [CEDAW]

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, today women from around the globe are meeting in Beijing.

The U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women, despite all of its problems, is turning out to be a testament to the will and determination of women who seek to create a better world for one-half of the world's population. Women today, in Beijing, are taking a stand for women.

Today, in these Chambers, I am asking my colleagues in the House of Representatives to take a stand for women. Today, I am introducing a resolution to urge the Senate to ratify the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, also known as CEDAW.

I hope that the next century will be the first century in the history of humanity where women are not faced with Government sanctioned discrimination. My resolution will be a step in that direction.

I look forward to the Congress of the United States approving my resolution.

WHY I SUPPORT THE B-2 PROGRAM

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

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the B-2 amendment. Like my colleagues I have taken a hard look at the B-2 program. In fact, I have gone out of my way to find a reason to vote against the B-2. I came to Washington to cut the deficit and eliminate wasteful programs. I voted against the space station because in my opinion the program did not make sense in the current budget environment.

The same cannot be said for the B-2. The truth is, that I have been unable to find a compelling reason to justify halting this program at 20 planes. The B-2, with its unprecedented combination of stealth, range, and payload is precisely the kind of technologically advanced weapon in which the Congress should invest.

A single B-2 has the ability to complete a mission that would require many more conventional aircraft. This in turn puts far fewer lives at risk. During the Gulf War the stealthy F-117 flew only 2 percent of the missions but hit 40 percent of the targets. The stealthy B-2 has a far greater capability than the F-117. We must keep our technological edge as we move toward the 21st century. The B-2 stealth bomber is the weapon that can meet future challenges.

REPUBLICANS' MEDICARE PLAN DOES NOT MAKE SENSE

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Last month, Mr. Speaker, I listened to Ohioans in the 13th Congressional District in a town meeting in Newton Falls, at county fairs in Medina County, Portage County, at a supermarket in Sheffield Lake. People could not believe the Republicans' plan to cut \$270 million in Medicare and at the same time turn around and give tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans of the same amount. I say to my colleagues, if you make \$300,000 a year, you save \$20,000 a year of your taxes under the Republican plan, while, as a Medicare beneficiary, it will cost you \$1,000 a year. If you are paying right now as a Medicare beneficiary a premium of about \$46 a month, under the Republican plan you will pay somewhere in the vicinity of \$110 a month.

Mr. Speaker, that extra \$60 or \$70 may not sound like much per month to a Member of Congress. But if my colleagues are making \$10,000 or \$12,000 a year, and they are retired, on Social Security, paying that extra several hundred dollars, \$700 or \$800 a year, for medical care is an absolute back breaker, and it does not make sense, Mr. Speaker, to make Medicare beneficiaries pay a thousand dollars more a year, all so they can give tax breaks to the wealthy.

Mr. Speaker, it does not make sense.

PERMISSION FOR SUNDRY COMMITTEES AND THEIR SUBCOMMITTEES TO SIT TODAY DURING THE 5-MINUTE RULE

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the following committees and their subcommittees be permitted to sit today while the House is meeting in the Committee of the Whole House under the 5-minute rule: the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, the Committee on Commerce, the Committee on International Relations, the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on National Security, the Committee on Resources, the Committee on Science, the Committee on Small Business, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the minority has been consulted and that there is no objection to these requests.

Mr. WISE. Reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is correct. The Democrat leadership has been consulted and has no objections to these requests.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOBSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?