

States and is an infringement of the privileges of this House and that such bill be respectfully returned to the Senate with a message communicating this resolution.

Mr. CRANE (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution constitutes a question of privilege.

The gentleman from Illinois [Mr. CRANE] is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution is necessary to return to the Senate the bill S. 1518, because it contravenes the constitutional requirement that revenue measures shall originate in the House of Representatives. S. 1518 would repeal an import restriction found in current law, and therefore contravenes this constitutional requirement.

S. 1518 proposes to eliminate the Board of Tea Experts by repealing the Tea Importation Act of 1897. Under the act, it is unlawful to import to the United States tea which is substandard, and the importation of all such tea is prohibited, except as provided in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States.

The repeal of this provision would have a direct effect on customs revenues. The proposed change in our tariff laws is a revenue-affecting infringement on the House's prerogatives, which constitutes a revenue measure in the constitutional sense. Therefore, I am asking that the House insist on its constitutional prerogatives.

There are numerous precedents for the action I am requesting. For example, on July 21, 1994, the House returned to the Senate S. 729, prohibiting the import of specific products which contain more than specified quantities of lead. On February 25, 1992, the House returned to the Senate S. 884, requiring the President to impose sanctions, including import restrictions, against countries that fail to eliminate large-scale driftnet fishing. On October 31, 1991, House returned to the Senate S. 320, including provisions imposing, or authorizing the imposition of, a ban on imports in connection with export administration.

I want to emphasize that this action does not constitute a rejection of the Senate bill on its merits. Adoption of this privileged resolution to return the bill to the Senate should in no way prejudice its consideration in a constitutionally acceptable manner.

The proposed action today is procedural in nature, and is necessary to preserve the prerogatives of the House to originate revenue matters. It makes it clear to the Senate that the appropriate procedure for dealing with revenue measures is for the House to act first on a revenue bill, and for the Sen-

ate to accept it or amend it as it sees fit.

□ 1215

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURTON of Indiana). Does any Member on the minority side seek recognition?

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on House Joint Resolution 165 and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS, FISCAL YEAR 1996

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 386, I call up the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 165) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 1996, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The text of House Joint Resolution 165 is as follows:

H.J. RES. 165

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Public Law 104-99 is further amended by striking out "March 22, 1996" in sections 106(c), 112, 126(c), 202(c), and 214 and inserting in lieu thereof "March 29, 1996", and that Public Law 104-92 is further amended by striking out "March 22, 1996" in section 106(c) and inserting in lieu thereof "April 3, 1996".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 386, the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON] and the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY] each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON].

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. LIVINGSTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House again today regarding funding for the remaining fiscal year 1996 appropriations bills. I do hope that we will have everyone's help to prevent a Government shutdown and allow the House and the Senate con-

ferences on the omnibus wrap-up continuing resolution time to close out this fiscal year and get on with the business of the Congress.

On Tuesday evening, the Senate concluded action on H.R. 3019, the omnibus continuing resolution, making a further downpayment toward a balanced budget. This was a big bill in the House because it addressed big problems. In the Senate it became a bigger bill because they added funding for the District of Columbia as well as providing additional funding, with some offsets, for programs in education and the environment.

We have begun analyzing the differences between the House and the Senate bill, and I might add that the Senate amendment is some 933 pages long, so it has taken us some effort to do so, and we are trying to find out additional offsets to pay for these program increases without exceeding our budget allocations. I have talked with Senator HATFIELD, distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee in that body, and it is our intention to get together informally this afternoon to begin the process of working out the differences between the two bodies on the omnibus bill. Both of us are asking the administration to join with us in concluding the business of fiscal year 1996 so that we can indeed move on to the pending budget for fiscal year 1997.

I might just point out that regardless of what happens on this bill or subsequent ones, by December 31, 1996, this year, the 104th Congress ceases to exist. It is going to be over. And in the interim we have about 4 months that are going to be predominantly taken up by the election season, if you will. So that really only leaves between now and the middle of September for active, ongoing effort to conclude the business of Congress.

We have got lots of policy initiatives to deal with from the authorizing committees, and we have to conclude the fiscal year 1997 appropriations process, which entails 13 bills which must pass the House, pass the Senate, go to conference, pass both Houses again, and be ultimately sent to the President and signed by the President. That means we have a great deal of business to do for fiscal year 1997, and here we are still contemplating the effort in fiscal year 1996, primarily because the President vetoed three of the bills under consideration and because the fourth bill, the Labor-Health bill, languished in the Senate for some 9 months because our liberal friends over there decided to just filibuster it and keep it from coming up for consideration.

In addition, the District of Columbia bill, which should have been sent to the President a month or two ago, was not because of some few Members' concern about a little \$3 million school voucher program which would allow poor youngsters to go to private schools. They do not want to take on the NEA, the National Education Association, and all of those great stalwart protectionist organizations which protect the

great quality education provided by our public schools today, or lack thereof; they just do not want to let the camel's nose get under the tent, and have opposed the possibility of poor youngsters going to quality schools. As a result, the District of Columbia bill has been hung up, and now the Senate has included that bill in this omnibus wrap-up effort which we are going to be considering in conference over the next 8 days.

But obviously since the Senate did not complete their business until Tuesday, and here it is Thursday, and for the last 24 hours we have been evaluating the 933 pages of additions that the Senate put on our effort, we need some time for the conference to do its work. We begin today, we will work through the next 8 to 10 days, and we hope to be concluded before the close of business on Friday next. If we are, we will be delighted, because that will wrap up the fiscal year 1996 season. Then we can go on to the fiscal year 1997 season.

I regret that we have to be here today, but our work is not yet completed. I do believe that we have to keep Government open. We tried doing the other in the past, and that was not a pleasant experience for anybody. So we come here to try to keep Government open while Congress does its business on the remaining stages of the process for fiscal year 1996.

The bill I bring before the Members today keeps Government operational through March 29 with the exception of two programs, the AFDC and the foster care program, which we carry through into law through April 3 to allow continuity of the bureaucratic effort to make sure that people who are entitled to the benefits under those programs actually get those benefits.

But we really must have this extension. I expect some prolonged debate here today, much as we had last week on a similar 1-week extension. I would like to think that despite whatever debate we have, the issue is not that controversial, that the vast majority of our Members will ultimately vote for this bill, and that we can go about the business of the conference and conclude fiscal year 1996 once and for all.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR], the distinguished minority whip.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Wisconsin for yielding me the time. Let me just say, with due respect to my friend from Louisiana, that this is indeed controversial, at least it is on our side of the aisle, and I will tell the Members why.

We had a rather interesting, heated and enlightening debate on the rule that governs the discussion of this resolution. The objection from this side of the aisle is that we are continuing stop-and-go Government. Stop-and-go Government is not good for this country, it is not good for this Congress,

and we are doing it under such a closed procedure. We are in our sixth martial law resolution right now.

What does that mean? That means basically that the folks out there in the country have been shut out from the process, from testifying at hearings, from having their input into legislation. Members of this body have been shut out from their committee work. This is all being done out of the leader's and the Speaker's office, coming right to the floor. We have been at it now for 4 months like this. Seventy-three percent of all legislation that has come to the floor this year has bypassed the committees, come right to the floor. Why have a committee structure?

Mr. Speaker, this is distressing because it runs roughshod over the rules and the traditions of this great institution. This is supposed to be a deliberative body. It is supposed to look at legislation, discuss it, have people come and give witness to whether it is on-track or off-track. Yet here we are jamming through another resolution.

The reason we are doing this, the gentleman from Louisiana is correct in this, is to give a little bit more space so they can do the work that they were supposed to have gotten done 6 months ago. The budget was supposed to be finished 6 months ago. Here we are with five appropriation bills unfinished.

That is maybe all well and good in terms of discussion in this institution, and people are saying, "Well, what does that have to do with me out there in America?" What it has to do with people out there in America is that it gives them no sense of where this country is going, where their school district is going to in terms of education. Let me use education as an illustration of the incompetence of this do-nothing and delay Congress that we are in now.

Mr. Speaker, when is this assault on education going to end? For 15 months now you have been talking about giving our kids a better life. You have come to the well, you have made that case, but time and again you have denied our children in this country the skills that they need to have a better life.

You started off the beginning of this Congress by cutting school lunch, and then you attacked student loans. You wanted to take \$17 billion out of student loans, so kids could climb that ladder of success? No, you have brought that ladder up and you have said, "We can't afford it."

Then, after the student loan debate, you have gone after a very important program called DARE, safe and drug-free school program. We are talking about cuts of \$3 billion plus in this fiscal year in education as a result of this inaction and this stop-and-go. DARE is just one of the programs that is going to be affected. It is a great program. It deals with drug abuse in our schools and for our children.

What these cuts will do, Mr. Speaker, is put approximately 13,000 DARE offi-

cials out of work. It will deny literally millions of our kids the opportunity to get the education they need to say no to drugs.

□ 1230

In addition to that, title I, a program that helps our young people in math and science, is going to be cut. It is going to be cut by \$1 billion, if you take this over the course of the full year.

Now, school districts across the country right now are trying to plan for September. They are making decisions about how large the classes are going to be, they are making decisions about how many teachers they are going to have. Across this Nation, this week and next week, 40,000 to 50,000 teachers are going to get pink slips and classes are going to be enlarged because you cannot get your act together to let us know where the budget is going to be on education.

Now, the Speaker likes to refer to public education as subsidized public dating. He actually said that. This is much more than subsidized public dating. This is about the best investment that we can make in this country, investing in our young people today, and they know that. They know what they earn will depend upon what they learn.

This is the 12th time in 5 months that we have had a stopgap continuing resolution, the 12th time. You cannot run a government that way. You cannot do it. It does not work, and it has proved it does not work.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues this afternoon to vote against this resolution. It denies us the opportunity to restore those education funds, to restore those cuts in the Environmental Protection Agency, to restore those Superfund cuts so we can clean up our toxic waste sites and our dumps and disposal sites. We need to have that opportunity, so we can get on with the business of this country.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this resolution.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am absolutely astounded. I just heard the distinguished whip from the minority party say he wants to vote against this simple bill to keep Government going for 1 week. He gives a lot of reasons, but basically instead of allowing the committee to do its business and go ahead and go to conference and work out the bigger issues by a week from Friday, he wants to shut the Government down. He would totally shut the 9 departments, I think, maybe 10 departments, and the entire District of Columbia down, because he is frustrated about a program that he says works.

I would like to comment on the DARE Program. First of all, I would like to make this point: He says we have not done our job. We are talking about the labor-health-education-human services bill that passed this

House at the end of July 1995. It passed this House, and whoever is responsible dutifully took it from the House of Representatives over to the Senate and delivered it to them. Every time someone wanted to bring it up for discussion in the other body, the Democrats stood up and objected and filibustered it.

Now, I want it to be clear that the gentleman is accusing the majority of creating a situation whereby this bill was not funded.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LIVINGSTON. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin. I am just replying to the minority whip, if I might.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding, but I would suggest if you are going to point out the history of the Senate, that you point out the complete and accurate history of the Senate. The fact is that there were objections to consideration of that bill from both sides of the aisle, not just once, but many times more than once, on both sides of the aisle, as we both well now know.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, the issue of striker replacement was repugnant to the liberals on the other side. I personally turned on the television and watched the proceedings and watched one of the liberal Democrats object to the bringing up of this bill.

The fact is it is the normal process for the House to pass a bill and the Senate to pass a bill and to meet in conference. This bill has never been conferenced, because the bill never got out of the Senate. Now, it is absolutely impossible to draw the conclusion that anybody in the House of Representatives, Republican or Democrat, is responsible for that state of affairs.

Mr. Speaker, if I might go on, the DARE Program, it is Safe and Drug-Free Schools. As I pointed out last week, this is a program that has got a wonderful name, an absolutely fantastic name, until you start to understand that in the implementation of that program, it often goes terribly awry. In Talbot County, VA, they spent grant money on disc jockeys and guitarists for a dance, lumber to build steps for an aerobics class, and school administrators spent over \$175,000 on a retreat to a St. Michaels resort. I think that is in Maryland on the Eastern Shore. Nice place.

Additionally, a single school district in Texas, the Alomar independent school district, received a grant of \$13. How many bureaucrats had to get together and huddle in a room for how many weeks to figure out that we have got to give this district a \$13 grant? And all for a good cause, mind you, to promote the advocacy of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, to discourage children from using drugs.

What is the history during the entire Clinton administration. After the Clinton administration decimated its own drug abuse office in the White House by 85 percent of its budget, what is the

history? Drug abuse among teenagers went up, not down. This program does not work.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 8 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that we can cut through the bull gravy and focus on what is really happening here today. The fact is that this proposal really represents the majority party's determination to keep Government running on the installment plan. They do not have enough gas in the tank to get the car down the road apiece, so what they are doing is driving the Government about a block and then they have to get renewed authority and fill up the gas tank to get the Government to go down another block. That is no way to drive a car, it is no way to run a railroad, it is certainly no way to run a government.

What you really are doing, by extending the ability to operate on a week-to-week basis, is you are playing weekly Russian roulette with local school districts, with veterans, with recipients of government assistance and a wide variety of programs. It is an immature way to run a government, and it ought to stop.

This is the 12th time, the 12th time, that we have now had a temporary continuing resolution before us. In 2 weeks we will be one-half of the way through the fiscal year, and yet 70 percent of the domestic appropriations will still not be in law.

Now, why is that? It is because the majority in this House insisted on passing through this House an extreme ideological agenda under which you slashed funding for education by 15 percent, you slashed job training by 18 percent, you slashed environmental cleanup enforcement by one-third. You attached a laundry list of special interest legislative riders to these appropriations bills, and to protect the public interest the President vetoed a number of the bills.

The Education and Labor proposal was so extreme that the Republican-dominated Senate added more than \$3 billion to at least partially restore the draconian cuts that you made in education, in manpower training, in summer jobs, and the like.

Because of the extreme nature of that bill, we have not even yet been able to get to conference. The chairman just says "Why don't you let the committee do its work and go to conference?" Why does the committee not bring up the motion to appoint conferees? You cannot even have a conference until conferees are first appointed. The last time I looked, there is a dispute between the majority leader and the Speaker about process on the floor, so we cannot even officially get to conference because of yet another internal division within the Republican Party leadership in this House.

Meanwhile, what is happening? What is happening is because they cannot get

the decisions made, they are saying "OK, let us run the Government on a reduced funding basis a week at a time." So they are funding education at a low level, which is going to require the layoff of a good many teachers and teachers' aides. They are preventing us from continuing to clean up all of the Superfund sites that we ought to be cleaning up, and then what do they do? They gin up a smokescreen. And the gentleman says, "well," he justifies the cuts in drug free schools by pointing out something that some idiotic administrator did at the local level in a city or two to justify cutting back by a huge amount in that entire program.

I would like to take just a minute to run through some of the arguments the gentleman is making. He argues, for instance, about what has happened to drug free schools. Let me say to the chairman of the committee, I will have unanimous-consent requests at the proper time to remove funding for virtually any of these items that you name. If you do not like the fact, for instance, as the gentleman indicated, that we had cosmetology schools being funded under the Student Aid Program, fine. I will ask unanimous consent to strike all funding for cosmetology schools.

You mentioned last week you did not like the fact that there were massage schools being funded. I will have the unanimous-consent request to eliminate all funding for massage schools. I hope the gentleman will support that unanimous-consent request.

I will have a number of other unanimous-consent requests.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBEY. I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, while the gentleman is in the business of asking for unanimous-consent requests, would he join with me in asking for a unanimous-consent request that might obviate the need for continuing to come back in this manner? Would he join with me in just striking the date March 29 and inserting the date September 30 on the issue pending before us here today? That way we would not have to come back. We would not have to go to conference. We would go ahead and be done with this whole doggone thing.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, let us take a look at what the effect of that would be on the local school districts. You would require local school districts to lay off 40,000 teachers. Am I going to support a unanimous-consent request for that? Absolutely not.

It means you would nail in the large reductions in Federal support for School to Work programs. Am I going to support a unanimous-consent request to do that? Absolutely not.

It means you would nail in the huge reductions in enforcement for environmental cleanup. You think I am going to support a unanimous-consent request to do that? Absolutely not.

I will offer a unanimous-consent request to eliminate some of the abuses of funding which the gentleman claimed he was concerned about last week, but I am not going to support a unanimous-consent request that will tell schoolteachers that 40,000 of you are going to get pink slips so you can continue to provide tax cuts in your budget for very wealthy people making over \$200,000 a year. If you want to offer a responsible unanimous-consent request, I will be happy to entertain it. But it is not responsible to suggest that local school districts should lay off 40,000 teachers because you've got a political dispute within the leadership of the Republican Party in this House. That is not responsible and the gentleman knows that.

So let me simply say that what is at stake here is whether or not we are going to vote for a continuing resolution which cooperates in the strategy by which we tell working families, for instance, that we are going to raise the cost of their getting student loans by \$10 billion over the next 7 years.

□ 1245

We are not going to cooperate in that kind of an agenda. What ought to happen here is very simple. Instead of bringing these silly, stop-and-go, week-by-week extensions to the floor, what my colleagues ought to do is go into that conference and recognize they need to restore funding for the NLRB, they need to more fully restore funding for education. They need to fully restore more funding for environmental cleanup.

They need to buy into some of the offsets that the administration has suggested to pay for those programs. They need to drop the extraneous special interest language which is going to let timber companies rip up the Tongass Forest, which is going to allow other special interests to get away with murder in the environmental field. And they need to rip up some of the other special interest language that they have attached to these appropriation bills.

Mr. Speaker, that is what the President is asking for. That is the rational thing to do. That is what they ought to do rather than running the risk every week that the Government is going to shut down again.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER], the distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education of the Committee on Appropriations.

(Mr. PORTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I feel like I have walked into the middle of the same movie I was in a week ago. Why are we debating this matter? This is the same thing we did last week. Mr. Speaker, we might as well just play the tapes of last week's debate. All the

same things are being said all over again.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Wisconsin, I think he has got that "tax cuts for the rich" down like a mantra. He says it over and over again and cannot remember what the words are, they just pour out the same way.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. PORTER. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. OBEY. Is the gentleman making a unanimous-consent request to play the tape again so we can stop going through this charade?

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I will make that unanimous consent.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I would agree to that request.

Mr. PORTER. Why do we not yield back the balance of the time and vote then? Would the gentleman agree to that?

Mr. Speaker, what we are having here in Washington lately is about 70 percent politics and about 30 percent substance. While politics are always going to be a part of it, I think what the American people expect of us is 30 percent politics and 70 percent substance, or even more.

We have to reverse all of this. There is way too much politics involved.

Mr. Speaker, the President has just sent to the Congress a budget that is 90 percent politics and 10 percent substance. It ramps up spending in a lot of areas. I agree with the gentleman on some of the areas he mentioned earlier and some of the special interests that are not contributing at all to deficit reduction and ought to. But the President very easily ramps up spending and plays to every special interest group in our country saying we are going to do better for you in this, better for you in that, better for you in another thing. And he does it without any responsibility for the bottom line, and that is for the country as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, he sends up a budget that has in it cuts that are made only in the last 2 years after he is constitutionally out of office that he knows very well would be impossible to be made because they are so huge and they are in the discretionary spending side alone. He plays the same old game of playing to seniors and farmers and union people and the like with no responsibility for where the money is coming from to pay for it.

Where is it coming from? Well, it is coming from adding to the deficit, that is where it is coming from. We were asking future generations to pay our bills. That is the old way of doing it in Washington. It has been done for years, and here we are attempting again apparently to do it all over again.

The fall election, Mr. Speaker, is going to be about whether we are going to continue to do business in the old way and play the special interest politics game or not. Whether we are going to change to a new way, to take responsibility for the country, to ask

people not what they get out of the process but what they are willing to give to the process to make it work for all the American people, to look at everything that Government does to ensure that it is worth doing in the first place. That it is something that has to be done through Government in Washington and can only be done there, to decide our priorities and to make certain that the money is spent to get results for people.

That is what has been failing to happen over and over and over again in Washington. It is money that is shoveled out the door to serve interests rather than getting results for people. It is time that we change this process and that we make Government work for people and that we stop playing the special interest game and the political games that are so evident throughout the President's budget and throughout all of these debates.

It is time that we get control of this process. It is time that we behave responsibly. It is time that we work budgets within a framework of fiscal responsibility and not ask people in the future to pay for what we receive from Government today.

So I would say to the gentleman from Wisconsin, yeah, let us just play the tape. It is all the same old stuff over and over again. It is all the same old banter. It is all the class warfare and playing the special interest game. Let us get on with it. Let us get this job done. Let us get the substance done. That is what the American people expect of us and not just politics as usual.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, we do not have either the President's budget or the Republican budget before us today. What we have before us is a proposition which continues the reduced funding levels of education and environmental protection which will threaten the environmental future of the country and the educational future of our children. That is what is before us today.

But if we are going to mention the President's budget, let me simply point out the gentleman can say all he wants about how too many of the budget cuts in the President's budget are in the outyears.

Mr. Speaker, let me simply point out that in the seventh year of the budget which my colleague voted for, the budget reductions in the seventh year in the Republican budget are larger in the seventh year than they are in President Clinton's. Now, my colleague may not know that fact, but that is a fact.

So I would suggest that, if he is concerned about reliance upon outyear cuts, I think he ought to look in the mirror because the budget that he supported has deeper cuts in the seventh year than the President has.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute and 30 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, the point was made earlier that this practice of a lot of continuing resolutions coming directly to the floor and not going to committee, is highly unusual. I think it is important to point out for the record that in fact it is not unusual. In 1985, when the Democrats controlled the House of Representatives, we had three continuing resolutions that went directly to the floor. In 1986, there were six continuing resolutions that went directly to the floor; two in 1987; five in 1991; three in 1993.

The point is nobody likes the process that we have engaged in, but we are where we are because the President vetoed three of the major appropriations bills just before Christmas, prompting the expulsion of thousands of Federal employees from their jobs at Christmas time. And the other bill, the labor HHS bill, was hung up in the Senate because it was filibustered for 9 months until really now.

So as distasteful as this whole process is, it has been done before. It will be done again. The old adage that you do not look at sausage and laws being made because it is troublesome is painfully apparent in this particular process we are working our way through. I think for the Democrats, the minority's position seems to be to vote against this bill and close down Government because they do not like provisions that are being discussed in the conference in H.R. 3019; that is ludicrous. It just does not even make sense.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. REGULA], the distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on Interior.

(Mr. REGULA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, just a few comments on the interior portion of the omnibus bill that will be coming before us in the near future in the form of a conference report.

Obviously, it was very difficult to meet all the needs with the allocation that we had. The final product that we put out was \$1.7 billion under the President's request. Now, that is \$1.7 billion that we are not loading on to future generations. What that means is that, when young people in the next century, soon to be upon us, want to borrow money to buy a house, it will be at a reasonable interest rate instead of an inflated rate. If we can reduce the deficit and ensure to the marketplace that we are going to achieve a balanced budget over the next 7 years, I think we would see a dramatic decrease in interest rates. Even now, of course, that translates into jobs, as people start businesses, as they expand businesses, as we gain a larger share of the export market because the cost of production is reduced by not having the high overhead of interest rates, and I remember the late 1970's when we were up at something like 21 percent. So the potential benefits are enormous.

Mr. Speaker, in structuring the interior bill, we did all that we could to make our contribution. We divided our responsibilities into must-do's, need-to-do's and nice-to-do's. On the must-do's, we kept the funding for the parks flat, a little bit of increase but relatively flat, and said manage it better. They are doing that.

We did the same thing with the forests. The cut of timber we allowed was at the President's number. So it was not a case of cutting below in that instance because we recognized that the availability of timber is very important, wood for housing. When we had the bill on initially, I had a piece of 2-by-4 to illustrate what has happened to prices for lumber, and this affects of course the price that young people need to pay when they build or buy a house.

So I think what we tried to do was recognize that the agencies that dealt with people, the parks, the forests, fish and wildlife facilities, BLM, and they also have a lot of facilities that are used by people on a multiple use basis, we kept that funding level so they would have the people and the ability to respond.

We eliminated the Bureau of Mines. I noticed in the President's 1997 budget he takes credit for eliminating Bureau of Mines, which we have done already in 1996. He has become a budget cutter.

What we did is took care of the things that we had to do on the must-do's. We finished facilities that were under way because that was important. If there was a repairs, for example, we put—and this has just been recently—\$2 million in the CR to take care of the C&O Canal because thousands of people enjoy that every week. Those sorts of things are must-do's.

Now when we got the nice-to-do's, build new visitor centers, buy more land, we did not do it because let us take care of what we have.

Mr. Speaker, all I am saying is that we are trying to be responsive and be reasonable and to get the job done but not do it at the expense of loading an enormous burden of debt on future generations. I think they will thank us for it when they go to buy that house and maybe get a mortgage at 5 percent instead of 8, 9, or 10 percent. They will thank us when they are not saddled with all the costs that go with the debt burden that this Government has.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, the previous speaker just gave a wonderful speech on the reasons to have debt reduction and deficit reduction. The problem is that has nothing whatsoever to do with this bill and nothing whatsoever to do with the budget that the gentleman voted for.

If the gentleman will check the numbers, he can talk about bringing interests rates down all he wants, but the budget that he is trying to foist onto the American people has a deficit which goes up next year. It does not go down. If he can explain to me how interest

rates are going to go down as the deficit goes up, he is a whole lot smarter than Alan Greenspan.

□ 1300

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER].

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I took the floor last week when we had this debate and said I felt like I was at the Groundhog Day movie. My colleagues know how every morning the alarm went off, the guy gets out of bed, and they run through the same day. But even in the Groundhog Day movie they did not do it 12 times, because they figured the audience could not even take that. And here we are with the 12th time.

Now the gentleman from Louisiana says continuing resolutions are not new, we have had those in prior Congresses. He is right; we have. But it seems to me the other side seems to think we have to hit our full 40-years score in one 6-month period. Our colleagues are about to throw as many continuing resolutions up on the scoreboard as it took us to accumulate over 40 years, and I want to say that is not something we were proud of. We tried to have as few as possible.

I think the reason is because it is impossible to manage, it is impossible to plan, when we have this lurching, and jerking, and week to week, and will it continue, will it shut down?

But the real bottom line is we now have out there school boards all over America trying to decide whether they give teachers pink slips, whether 40,000 teachers are going to get a pink slip, because we are going to slash education at such a low level.

As my colleagues know, my concept had always been the family was the seat of virtue in this country. That is where we plant the seeds of virtue, in the family, and our job is to try and help that family raise that child, and one of the ways we try and help through the Federal level is with some supplemental money to education so that we have safe schools, drug-free schools, we have remedial education and math and science and reading. Those are key things that school districts need extra help with, and I cannot stand here and say it is a great idea to gut that, nor can I stand here, as spring has broken out over America, and say it is a great idea to cancel many of the environmental programs and, while America is going green, we are going to go brown.

That is why this is happening, and I think the time has come to end this.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes and 30 seconds to the distinguished gentleman from New York [Mr. BOEHLERT].

(Mr. BOEHLERT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, I rise in support of this continuing resolution and to correct some

of the implications of comments that have been made about its impact on the environment.

First, let us put a lot of politicking aside. This continuing resolution is for 1 week, 7 days. It is not permanent policy, although I think much of it would be reasonable policy for the rest of the year.

We need another week's continuing resolution because until recently, and very candidly, the administration has not been willing to bargain, and bargaining, the last time I checked, did not mean simply holding out until the other side capitulates.

So now real bargaining seems possible, and we ought not to shut down the Government while that negotiation continues. Again, this is only about 1 week. Not even Congress can cause much damage in that time.

Concerning the environment, this resolution is obviously not perfect, but it moves responsibly in the right direction pending further negotiations. It provides more dollars to the Environmental Protection Agency than either the House or the Senate passed, not enough, but a good start until the President comes to the negotiation table.

Similarly, with the riders. I prefer no riders. Maybe that is where we will end up. But by and large, these are not the kind of damaging riders that the House debated last year.

Take the Tongass, for example. The Tongass rider in this bill is a compromise that I helped negotiate with the Alaskan delegation and other concerned parties that allows the scientific planning process to continue. Let me stress that: That allows the scientific planning process to continue, and it will not increase actual timbering in that important national forest.

So let us not waste a lot of time trying to score political points when we are on the verge of serious negotiations. Let us pass this harmless 1-week bill. We can do so in good conscience.

Mr. YATES. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BOEHLERT. I yield to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. YATES. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is exactly wrong about the Tongass because the Tongass provision still contains a waiver of ANILCO and NEPO as far as environmental safeguards are concerned. All it has is the safeguards provided in a contract, which were not nearly as much as provided for.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Reclaiming my time, my distinguished colleague from Illinois knows full well the budget realities, the dollars and cents of it all. There will not be an increased timber cut in the Tongass. That is something that I strongly believe is the right policy. I do not want that. I think my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. REGULA], has worked very well and very diligently on this.

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BOEHLERT. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out on the Tongass that the allowable cut with the money we put in is less than has been true in the fiscal year 1995 and fiscal 1994. We have actually reduced the cut, recognizing, of course, some of the differences of opinion. But I think that is an important fact that ought to be brought out here.

Mr. BOEHLERT. And I am so glad the gentleman did, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank him publicly for the outstanding work he has done and all the help he has given us to try to fashion a responsible compromise that was environmentally sensitive, and that is very important.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

I simply note that earlier in the year we were told, "Let's just pass a 45-day continuing resolution. That will give us enough time to work out the long-term budget problems." That expired. Then they brought to the floor another continuing resolution. Then last week they brought to the floor another one, saying, "Let's pass one to keep the Government going for a week. That will be enough time to work out our problems." Now they are here saying the same thing they said the previous week, "Just give us another week. We will work out the problems."

Meanwhile, I still see no indication that the gentlemen on that side of the aisle are willing to back away from the environmental riders that are holding us up on the Interior bill. I see no indication that they are willing to restore the funding the President has asked so that we do not have to lay off 40,000 teachers.

The problem is that every week that they continue with this "government on the installment plan" they push local school districts further and further to the point where they have to lay off teachers. We do not want that done. We want them to get down to the business now, deal with the regular long-term CR rather than continuing this "let's pretend" extension of the Government under which you are continuously week by week squeezing the guts out of education and squeezing the guts out of our ability to enforce the law when it comes to environmental cleanup.

That is the problem we face here today. And we believe sincerely that the way that you are running this House is going to greatly increase and enhance the likelihood that, in fact, they are going to either have to come up with another CR next week or else they are going to have to shut the Government down next week.

I mean every week it is the same thing. When are we going to get serious and simply resolve the differences on the long-term resolution. Otherwise they are using that as an opportunity to gouge every local school district in the country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER].

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding this time to me.

I just want to clear up a point. The gentleman from New York who was in the well was saying that the Tongass provisions, the rape and ruin of America's only temperate rain forest, have not been corrected. In fact, what they have done under this legislation is put in place a harvest plan for that forest that has already been found to be flawed scientifically, that is unsustainable and will lead to the overcutting of that rain forest, and then they put hurdles in the place of replacing that. So, in fact, they have gone from having a plan for 2 years to having a plan that essentially is in perpetuity that will lead to the overharvesting and the stripping of that forest and its resources. It is the only temperate rain forest that we have in North America, and it ought to be protected, and it ought to be harvested in a scientifically acceptable and understandable fashion.

Mr. Speaker, that is not what this legislation does. It overrides the scientists, puts in place a plan that was rejected already by the scientists, and then says that is the method by which we will harvest the Tongass Forest. That is why it continues to be unacceptable to the administration, to the American people, and to those of us who care about reasonable forest practices.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Montana [Mr. WILLIAMS].

Mr. WILLIAMS. I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY] for yielding this time to me.

To put it crudely, my colleagues, this is indeed a lousy way to do the people's business. These weekly CR's are Government by political hiccup. It is atrocious that ideology, and stubbornness, and extremists, and extremism and hostage-taking have been substituted for what in previous Congresses had been a rational and timely consideration of and passage of the Nation's budget and appropriations process. These CR's come weekly, many of them. This is the 12th, as we have heard, the 12th continuing resolution.

The gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY] and a couple of others have mentioned what I know each of my colleagues has heard in their own offices, and that is that school boards are apologetic about this situation. Many teachers do not know if they are going to have their contracts renewed or at what salary levels.

It is not true that the environment is not suffering. Public lands acquisition has been put on hold. Necessary construction on public lands has been put on hold. EPA enforcement has been slowed in some areas almost to a stop. There has been disruption in the

Superfund work, and I can tell my colleagues, in that I have two great national parks, all or part within my State of Montana, that the morale of Park Service workers is the lowest I have ever seen it, and that may be true throughout the Federal system.

Let me say in closing, what I said at the beginning. Crudely put, this is a lousy way to do the people's business. It is perhaps no wonder that for 40 years the American people kept the current majority in the minority. If this is the way they do the public's business, they will probably be put in the minority again with good reason.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WISE].

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, this is indeed the same speeches and same thing this Congress did last week, and the month before, and the week before, and the weekend before that, but there really is something different: It is a week later, and another week of cuts, significant cuts in education, and the environment, and important other areas. One week, Mr. Speaker, 1 week, 45 days.

I voted for the 45-day temporary spending bill because I thought that it was fair to give time to work this out, and so I voted "yes" for those 45 days of cuts. But yet now, it is another week, and another week, and another week. At some point, we say "no."

As my colleagues know, education and the environment, like Caesar, can die by 100 cuts just as easily as 1, and the impact is very clear, Mr. Speaker. In West Virginia, when this temporary spending bill expires, and they are asking for another one, 226 teachers will have gotten their pink slips, 90 aides; 6,500 students that benefit from the math and reading programs that are so important will no longer be eligible.

Mr. Speaker, whether it is the environmental cleanup, the toxic waste cleanup, the education programs, the job training programs, this is no way to do business.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. HOYER].

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for yielding this time to me.

Mr. Speaker, this is an unfortunate procedure. This is an unfortunate year. This is an unfortunate Congress.

I agree with the gentleman from Montana who spoke that the judgment that will have been made of this Congress, is that it is probably the worst-run Congress in 50 years. That is the sentiment expressed by Kevin Phillips, a very conservative Republican columnist; not my view, but I share that view. And today we see another result of that.

□ 1315

I do not believe, frankly, that the chairman of the committee would want this to happen. I have said that before. I do not think the Chair of any of our subcommittees would want that to

happen. I am speaking of the Republican chairs. I frankly think it is central management that is to blame for this, but I want to say that I supported the last continuing resolution, a CR, as we call it, or perhaps "completely ridiculous," as the American public must view it.

I supported it because obviously I want to see the 56,000 Federal employees that I represent remain on the job doing the work that America expects of them, and being paid for that work. But the fact of the matter is I am going to oppose this resolution, because what is happening is, in my opinion, part strategy and part an admission of failure; strategy to the extent that it is, as the gentleman from West Virginia, said, death by a thousand cuts; just drip, drip, drip, drip; cut, cut, cut, cut, education, environment, energy assistance for old people and poor people; drip, drip, cut, cut.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a responsible action to take. The Contract With America talked about personal responsibility. I have said it before, but in point of fact, we have abrogated our responsibility to the American public to handle the finances of this Nation responsibly. This is not responsible management of the Congress.

Mr. Speaker, these 1-week CR's are unprecedented. This is the 12th extension, because we cannot get our business done in this Congress. Mr. Speaker, it is not because the President is vetoing so many bills. In fact, this President has vetoed fewer bills than either George Bush or Ronald Reagan. Let us be responsible. Let us fund at least the balance of this fiscal year, halfway through it.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. LEWIS], chairman of the Subcommittee on VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I must say my colleague, the gentleman from Maryland, very much was helping us all focus upon the point. There is little doubt that the American public knows full well that we need to reduce the rate of growth of Government, because the past rate of growth of Government has taken us to a deficit that is pushing \$5 trillion. The American public further knows that in their own households they have to be able to pay their bills, and if consistently they do not pay their bills, they eventually declare bankruptcy.

Mr. Speaker, some suggest that a \$5 trillion deficit has a tremendously negative impact upon our economy. The problem is not the result of cuts, but rather the result of spend, spend, spend, spend. This Congress, dominated by one party for 40 years, moved us toward this horrendous condition. In the short time the gentleman from Maryland and I have been together on this

committee, the majority, the former majority: spend, spend, spend. Never could they find a program that was not working, never cancel a program whenever you create one, but expand it; spend, spend, spend, spend; tax, tax, tax, tax. Mr. Speaker, that is not the way to solve the problems of our people or our Government. Indeed, it is time for a change.

If the President would work with us instead of vetoing bills, we would not have to be here today. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, it is time for a change.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time, and I reserve the right to close.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, we have a simple choice here today. We can continue to pass 1-week continuing resolutions, which will force our school districts within the next 3 or 4 weeks to begin laying off 40,000 teachers; we can continue in place the policy of the majority party that will make it much more difficult for 1 million kids to learn how to read and how to deal with math; we can continue the process of cutting deeply into the school-to-work program, which largely enables kids who are not planning to go to college to get some help in transitioning from high schools to the world of work; we can continue to cripple the ability of the Government to protect the public interest from environmental damage by continuing the very large reductions in environmental cleanup that we have in the bill; or we can decide that we have had enough of that, and we are going to ask that those funds be restored.

This issue is not about how much will be spent, because the President has offered offsets to every single dollar he wants to put back in this budget for education and for environment. The majority party simply made a decision that they want to buy twice as many B-2 bombers as the Pentagon asked for, and then they want to pay for it by taking it out of education and out of worker training and out of environmental cleanup. We think those are dumb priorities.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman can talk all he wants. He invents this fictitious list of about 760 Federal programs that are supposedly for education. If the gentleman wants to take out air traffic controller training, he is the chairman of the committee. Why does he not do it? He is not a helpless victim. If he wants to eliminate NIH kidney research, which they ludicrously count as an education program, if he wants to eliminate NIH heart research, which he ludicrously counts as an education program, if he wants to eliminate FBI advanced police training, go ahead, offer the motion. He is the chairman of the committee. He has the power to do so. We do not think it is a good idea to eliminate those things.

The President's budget recommends the consolidation or elimination of 70 education programs so we can focus

our money where it is needed most in the education area. Yet, we get this smokescreen pointing to some little silly action here or there at the local level to justify the fact that they are trying to impose on this country the largest reduction in support for education in the history of the country.

We do not think that is a good way to help middle-class families raise their living standards and help give their kids decent jobs. We do not think it is a good idea to raise the cost of getting student loans by \$10 billion over the next 7 years. We think we ought to get about the business of keeping the Government open full time, rather than this week-to-week nonsense.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to end the nonsense and vote against this silly piece of legislation.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. I yield myself such time as I may consume, Mr. Speaker.

(Mr. LIVINGSTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I think it is interesting to hear my friend, the gentleman from Wisconsin, talk about how we could do this or how we could do that. The fact is, we tried to take out all those programs and zero them out. The gentleman voted against the bill.

Now the gentleman says, well, he is willing to stand up and give me a unanimous consent request to get rid of such screwy things as an Ounce of Prevention Council, that funds 2 billion dollars worth of a glossy magazine, because they have not done anything else. Hopefully he will join with us in reducing the extremely dumb grants of \$175,000 for school administrators to go on a St. Michael's resort retreat under safe and drug-free schools, or buy lumber for the steps of aerobics classes. Hopefully he would like to join with us and strike the good old President's favorite AmeriCorps Program, which, in Baltimore, the average cost per participant of a volunteer is some \$50,000.

Mr. Speaker, he said that he wants to strike the unnecessary and wasteful, yet never have I heard him offer one single cut, ever. He always wants to spend more money, more programs, tax the American people. We have got 726 education programs, each with their own bureaucracy, each with their own beneficiaries. It does not matter how duplicative, wasteful, unnecessary, or redundant they may be.

The point is, the gentleman talks a good game, but the fact is, all he wants to do is tell the American taxpayer to pay more money so he can tell them how it can best be spent.

This is a simple request to keep the Government working so the conference can go into action between the House and Senate and we can send the President a final bill. Mr. Speaker, they would close down the Government. They are hoping to vote unanimously against this and get a few Republican votes and just close down the Govern-

ment so they can say, "I told you so." Is that the answer? Does that help all the beneficiaries of the various programs the gentleman is concerned about? I think not.

The point is, Mr. Speaker, they do not have a leg to stand on, because the American people have caught on to their game. They have said, "We have paid enough taxes, and you have misspent it time and time and time again, and the time has come to quit, to streamline, to strike the redundant and the necessary programs, to try to make government work as efficiently as business works, to downsize the government, the bureaucratic conglomerate that Washington has created."

He talks about the harm that would happen to education if our downsizing goes through. The fact of the matter is 30 years ago the Federal Government did not give \$1 to education. It was always the State and local responsibilities. Now the Federal Government pays between \$20 and \$30 billion in education, and we pile on the regulations, we pile on the restrictions, we pile on the bureaucracy, we extract the money from the American people and tell them what we did for them, and the quality of education goes down. Look at the charts. Look at the statistics. American pupils, students throughout America, are going lousy today compared with what we did 20 years ago.

When are we ever going to restore common sense to the American budget? never, if the gentleman from Wisconsin has his way.

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition House Joint Resolution 165, the 12th short-term continuing resolution for the current fiscal year. Where will it end? How many stop-gap measures will it take for our Republican colleagues to realize that this is not the way to operate the Government?

After two GOP-politically contrived shut-downs, which cost the American people over a billion dollars, action is still pending on five major appropriations bills. This week-to-week, piecemeal, and part-time management of the Nation's Government must end. Funding for nine critical Federal agencies is in jeopardy including the Departments of Education, Housing and Urban Development, Labor, Health and Human Services, and Veterans Affairs. These agencies provide vital services upon which families across the country depend.

Mr. Speaker, this needless and continuing disruption of the lives of the American people is irresponsible. This is the 12th continuing resolution in less than 6 months. Our Nation's children are among the hardest hit by the Republicans' budget. While hard-working parents are raising their children, telling them to study hard, play by the rules, and you will succeed, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are destroying the very foundation upon which that philosophy was built.

I know the children and families in my district, in Cleveland, OH, as well as those throughout the State, and across the country will suffer as a result of the Republicans' mean spirited budget. Over \$3 billion is gutted from education, the largest cut in history. Where will our disadvantaged children, who need and want to learn, turn for teaching as-

sistance in basic reading, writing, and arithmetic, when the GOP-measure cuts over a billion dollars from title I alone? Approximately 40 thousand teachers would be eliminated. In Ohio, 1,300 title I teachers would be removed from the classroom, 32,000 children would suffer.

School systems across the country would suffer from the \$266 million cut in the Safe and Drug-free Schools Program. Ohio's students would suffer from an over \$8 million cut. This would make it nearly impossible to maintain effective violence and substance-abuse prevention programs. Most programs would be destroyed. Children must be provided a safe, crime-free environment in which to learn.

Communities and States would be denied the funding they need to provide youth and adults vocational education training. This program would be devastated by the Republicans' \$185 million cut. Ohio's students would suffer tremendously from the loss of \$7 million in basic grant funding alone.

Mr. Speaker, the cuts in education coupled with those in critical employment training programs including the elimination of the Summer Jobs Program, and the \$362 million cut in dislocated workers' assistance would threaten the quality of life for hundreds of thousands of hard-working families across the country.

The elimination of the Summer Jobs Program alone means that over 600,000 students would be denied the opportunity to gain the skills they need to enter the work force. The cut in the dislocated workers' program means that workers who have been laid-off through no fault of their own would be denied the assistance they need to reenter the work force. It is estimated that over 20 million workers will be permanently laid-off in 1996 alone.

Mr. Speaker, the American people need and want to work. Our children and their families must not be denied the resources necessary to help them achieve their highest academic and economic potential. In this era of escalating global competitiveness, the American people must be equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to earn a living wage.

Furthermore, this short-term fix still does not dismiss the fact that what is ultimately being proposed by our colleagues on the other side would: Jeopardize the welfare of millions of veterans, who are dependent upon a certain level of interaction from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, by restricting the Secretary's travel; threaten the security of millions of elderly and low-income Americans who, without adequate Federal assisted housing, are at-risk of going homeless; add to the growing ranks of persons living in the streets as a result of their appalling reductions to homeless programs; endanger the environment by cutting EPA funding for programs that maintain clean air and keep our drinking water safe; and imperil the public's health by reducing Superfund efforts to clean up hazardous waste sites.

Mr. Speaker, America must protect and invest appropriately in her No. 1 resource, the American people—to do otherwise is fiscally irresponsible. I strongly urge my colleagues to stand up for children, and to stand up for families. Let's go back to the budget negotiation table and restore the Nation's investment in human capital including education, summer jobs, health care services, employment training, veterans's services, the environment, and housing. Vote "no" on House Joint Resolution 165.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time has expired.

REQUEST TO OFFER AMENDMENT

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, in light of the express concern of the chairman of the committee about retreats or administrative personnel, student vacations, cosmetology schools, et cetera, I offer an amendment, and I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the operation of the previous question on this amendment, that I be permitted to offer the amendment at this point, which would read as follows:

At the end of the joint resolution, add the following new section:

SEC. 101. Notwithstanding any other provision of law—

(a) none of the funds made available under this Act for the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program and the Title I Compensatory Education Program for Disadvantaged Students shall be used to pay the costs of disc jockeys, aerobics classes, retreats for administrative personnel, and student vacations; and

(b) none of the funds made available under this Act may be used to administer any program subsidizing massage therapy and cosmetology schools.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, the fact is that I probably will object to this in a second, but I want to point out that the gentleman will have ample opportunity in the conference that begins today informally and will be more formalized as we go through the next 10 days, so he will have an opportunity to strike these programs.

If he is sincere, if he really means what he says, I will join with him to strike the money for this waste and this inefficiency. But Mr. Speaker, I would point out that the gentleman is grandstanding here. The request before the House of Representatives is simply to extend the existing CR's for 1 week.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, this gentleman is constrained to object, because the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY] will have his opportunity later on.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard.

Pursuant to House Resolution 386, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

□ 1330

MOTION TO RECOMMIT OFFERED BY MR. OBEY

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURTON of Indiana). Is the gentleman opposed to the joint resolution?

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I most certainly am.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. OBEY moves to recommit the joint resolution, H.J. Res. 165, to the Committee on Appropriations with instructions to report the resolution back promptly with an amendment to provide the necessary funding during the period of the joint resolution to avert all layoffs of instructional school personnel whose salaries are paid in whole or in part by programs of the Department of Education for the 1996-1997 academic year.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment. We have just now received it and I would like to have a chance to read it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Louisiana reserves a point of order.

The gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, let me explain what we have just seen and let me explain this motion. The majority party is insisting that we pass a resolution which continues in place lower funding levels that cut some \$3 billion out of education and continue very savage reductions in environmental cleanup legislation.

They argue the necessity to do that because the chairman has pointed out the abuse of a few programs. I just tried to offer a motion directed to eliminating every single abuse the gentleman just mentioned. I asked unanimous consent that they eliminate under safe and drug-free schools the ability to fund programs such as the gentleman just objected to. I also asked that under this bill we eliminate all funding for schools of cosmetology and massage therapy because the gentleman has objected to those.

The gentleman then accuses me of a smokescreen for responding to the criticisms he has made in existing programs. He said, "Why don't we fix it when we go into conference?" Why do we not fix it right now? I would suggest what is really at stake here is they are desperately trying to hang onto the money they are cutting out of education so they can funnel it into their tax cuts for very wealthy people. And I do not think we ought to lay off 40,000 teachers so they can give a gift to their rich contributors.

So what I am saying is simply this. In this recommit motion, we are simply asking the committee to go back into committee and to restore all of the funds necessary so that no local school district has to lay off any teaching personnel.

What this motion does is ensure that those local school districts will have the Federal funds they need to pay for the teachers and other instructional personnel to provide the reading and math classes for disadvantaged kids, to hire guidance counselors, to provide antidrug abuse and drug prevention education to both teachers and students, to retain teachers and counselors to help students make a successful transition from schools to jobs, and to the jobs they need.

What this simply says is, do not fund your tax cuts by cutting the guts out

of personnel in the local school districts. That is what it says. I urge a vote for the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON] is recognized for 5 minutes in opposition to the motion.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation and speak in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The fact is that if the gentleman's motion to recommit were granted and were adopted by this House, the entire guts of the bill before us would be virtually obviated, would be wiped out, and we would be forced to either report today a conference agreement on the overall four bills that remain outstanding, actually five counting the District of Columbia, or else Government would shut down.

I do not think that the other side is serious when they say that they want the Government to shut down. But the fact is if they all vote in unison for this motion to recommit and some of our Members vote for it, the likelihood is that the Government could indeed shut down with respect to those departments which are covered by the five outstanding bills.

I think that that would be a terrible thing to happen.

I know, I hear all of the pleas of mercy for the beneficiaries of the multitudinous numbers of redundant, unnecessary, and crazy programs that the taxpayers have been forced to fund under the outstanding bills, but the fact is that the same beneficiaries would be really in trouble if we were to create a procedural vote, adopt their motion to recommit, and just close the Government down.

In 1 week, the Department of Education would not be able to figure out the cost of impact of the Obey amendment. So all those teachers we heard about, and I question the figures that they were using, but all those teachers that we heard about, that they say they are concerned about, would be automatically not getting any Federal funding and that would be ludicrous. That would be absolutely absurd.

So if you want to close the Government down, go ahead and vote for the Obey motion to recommit. If you want to keep an orderly process and show that Government can operate, albeit no matter how ugly the process sometimes gets, then we would urge that you vote against the motion to recommit, vote for this 1-week extension, and hopefully by the end of the next week, a week from tomorrow, we will, in fact, have a conference agreement which will wrap up and conclude action for fiscal year 1996 on all of the outstanding bills.

That is my fondest hope, it is my desire, and I am going to work every hour that I can to make sure that comes to pass. But we need a "no" vote on the motion to recommit or else this Government is going to shut down.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule XV, the Chair announces that he will reduce to a minimum of 5 minutes the period of time within which a vote by electronic device, if ordered, will be taken on the question of passage of the joint resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 192, nays 230, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 82]

YEAS—192

Abercrombie	Gejdenson	Oberstar
Ackerman	Gephardt	Obey
Andrews	Geren	Olver
Baesler	Gibbons	Ortiz
Baldacci	Gonzalez	Orton
Barcia	Gordon	Owens
Barrett (WI)	Green	Pallone
Becerra	Gutierrez	Pastor
Beilenson	Hall (OH)	Payne (NJ)
Bentson	Hall (TX)	Payne (VA)
Berman	Hamilton	Pelosi
Bevill	Harman	Peterson (FL)
Bishop	Hastings (FL)	Peterson (MN)
Bonior	Hefner	Pickett
Borski	Hilliard	Pomeroy
Boucher	Hinchey	Poshard
Brewster	Holden	Rahall
Browder	Hoyer	Rangel
Brown (CA)	Jackson (IL)	Reed
Brown (FL)	Jackson-Lee	Richardson
Brown (OH)	(TX)	Rivers
Bryant (TX)	Jacobs	Roemer
Cardin	Jefferson	Rose
Chapman	Johnson (SD)	Royal-Allard
Clay	Johnson, E. B.	Rush
Clayton	Kanjorski	Sabo
Clement	Kaptur	Sanders
Clyburn	Kennedy (MA)	Sawyer
Coburn	Kennedy (RI)	Schroeder
Coleman	Kennelly	Schumer
Collins (MI)	Kildee	Scott
Condit	Kleczka	Serrano
Conyers	Klink	Sisisky
Costello	LaFalce	Skaggs
Coyne	Lantos	Skelton
Cramer	Levin	Slaughter
Danner	Lewis (GA)	Spratt
de la Garza	Lincoln	Stenholm
DeFazio	Lipinski	Studds
DeLauro	Lofgren	Stupak
Dellums	Lowey	Tanner
Deutsch	Luther	Taylor (MS)
Dicks	Maloney	Tejeda
Dingell	Manton	Thompson
Dixon	Markey	Thornton
Doggett	Martinez	Thurman
Dooley	Mascara	Torres
Doyle	Matsui	Torricelli
Durbin	McCarthy	Towns
Edwards	McDermott	Traficant
Engel	McHale	Velazquez
Eshoo	McKinney	Vento
Evans	McNulty	Visclosky
Farr	Meehan	Volkmer
Fattah	Meek	Ward
Fazio	Menendez	Watt (NC)
Fields (LA)	Miller (CA)	Waxman
Filner	Minge	Williams
Flake	Mink	Wilson
Foglietta	Mollohan	Wise
Ford	Montgomery	Woolsey
Fox	Moran	Wynn
Frank (MA)	Murtha	Yates
Frost	Nadler	
Furse	Neal	

NAYS—230

Allard	Frisa	Morella
Archer	Funderburk	Myers
Army	Galleghy	Myrick
Bachus	Ganske	Nethercutt
Baker (CA)	Gekas	Neumann
Baker (LA)	Gilchrest	Ney
Ballenger	Gillmor	Norwood
Barr	Gilman	Nussle
Barrett (NE)	Goodlatte	Oxley
Bartlett	Goodling	Packard
Barton	Goss	Parker
Bass	Graham	Paxon
Bateman	Greenwood	Petri
Bereuter	Gunderson	Pombo
Bilbray	Gutknecht	Porter
Bilirakis	Hancock	Portman
Bliley	Hansen	Pryce
Blute	Hastert	Quillen
Boehkert	Hastings (WA)	Quinn
Boehner	Hayes	Ramstad
Bonilla	Hayworth	Regula
Bono	Hefley	Riggs
Brownback	Heineman	Roberts
Bryant (TN)	Herger	Rogers
Bunn	Hilleary	Rohrabacher
Bunning	Hobson	Ros-Lehtinen
Burr	Hoekstra	Roth
Burton	Hoke	Royce
Buyer	Horn	Salmon
Callahan	Hostettler	Sanford
Calvert	Houghton	Saxton
Camp	Hunter	Scarborough
Campbell	Hutchinson	Schaefer
Canady	Hyde	Schiff
Castle	Inglis	Seastrand
Chabot	Istook	Sensenbrenner
Chambliss	Johnson (CT)	Shadegg
Chenoweth	Johnson, Sam	Shaw
Christensen	Jones	Shays
Chrysler	Kasich	Shuster
Clyburn	Kelly	Skeen
Coble	Kim	Smith (MI)
Collins (GA)	King	Smith (NJ)
Combust	Kingston	Smith (TX)
Cooley	Klug	Smith (WA)
Cox	Knollenberg	Solomon
Crane	Kolbe	Souder
Crapo	LaHood	Spence
Creameans	Largent	Stearns
Cubin	Latham	Stockman
Cunningham	LaTourette	Stump
Davis	Laughlin	Talent
Deal	Lazio	Tate
DeLay	Leach	Tauzin
Diaz-Balart	Lewis (CA)	Taylor (NC)
Dickey	Lewis (KY)	Thomas
Doolittle	Lightfoot	Thornberry
Dornan	Linder	Tiahrt
Dreier	Livingston	Torkildsen
Duncan	LoBiondo	Upton
Dunn	Longley	Vucanovich
Ehlers	Lucas	Waldholtz
Ehrlich	Manzullo	Walker
Emerson	Martini	Walsh
English	McCollum	Wamp
Ensign	McCrery	Watts (OK)
Everett	McDade	Weldon (FL)
Ewing	McHugh	Weldon (PA)
Fawell	McInnis	Weller
Fields (TX)	McIntosh	White
Flanagan	McKeon	Whitfield
Foley	Metcalf	Wicker
Forbes	Meyers	Wolf
Fowler	Mica	Young (AK)
Franks (CT)	Miller (FL)	Young (FL)
Franks (NJ)	Molinari	Zimmer
Frelinghuysen	Moorhead	

NOT VOTING—9

Collins (IL)	Radanovich	Stokes
Johnston	Roukema	Waters
Moakley	Stark	Zeliff

□ 1354

Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mrs. CUBIN changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. DOGGETT changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURTON of Indiana). The question is on the passage of the joint resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOICE

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 244, noes 180, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 83]

AYES—244

Allard	Fowler	McInnis
Archer	Fox	McIntosh
Army	Franks (CT)	McKeon
Bachus	Franks (NJ)	Metcalf
Baker (CA)	Frelinghuysen	Meyers
Baker (LA)	Frisa	Mica
Ballenger	Funderburk	Miller (FL)
Barrett (NE)	Galleghy	Molinari
Bartlett	Ganske	Montgomery
Bass	Gekas	Moorhead
Bateman	Geren	Morella
Bereuter	Gilchrest	Myers
Bilbray	Gillmor	Myrick
Bilirakis	Gilman	Nethercutt
Bishop	Goodlatte	Neumann
Bliley	Goodling	Ney
Blute	Goss	Norwood
Boehkert	Graham	Nussle
Boehner	Greenwood	Oxley
Bonilla	Gunderson	Packard
Bono	Gutknecht	Parker
Brownback	Hall (TX)	Paxon
Bryant (TN)	Hancock	Payne (VA)
Bunn	Hansen	Petri
Bunning	Hastert	Pombo
Burr	Hastings (WA)	Porter
Burton	Hayes	Portman
Buyer	Hayworth	Pryce
Callahan	Hefley	Quillen
Calvert	Heineman	Quinn
Camp	Herger	Ramstad
Campbell	Hilleary	Regula
Canady	Hobson	Riggs
Castle	Hoekstra	Roberts
Chabot	Hoke	Rogers
Chambliss	Horn	Rohrabacher
Chenoweth	Hostettler	Ros-Lehtinen
Christensen	Houghton	Roth
Chrysler	Hunter	Roukema
Clinger	Hutchinson	Royce
Coble	Hyde	Sanford
Coburn	Inglis	Saxton
Collins (GA)	Istook	Schaefer
Combust	Johnson (CT)	Schiff
Cooley	Johnson, Sam	Seastrand
Cox	Jones	Sensenbrenner
Crane	Kasich	Shadegg
Crapo	Kelly	Shaw
Creameans	Kim	Shays
Cubin	King	Shuster
Cunningham	Kingston	Skeen
Danner	Klug	Skelton
Davis	Knollenberg	Smith (MI)
Deal	Kolbe	Smith (NJ)
DeLay	LaHood	Smith (TX)
Diaz-Balart	Largent	Smith (WA)
Dickey	Latham	Solomon
Dixon	LaTourette	Souder
Doolittle	Laughlin	Spence
Dornan	Lazio	Stearns
Dreier	Leach	Stenholm
Duncan	Lewis (CA)	Stockman
Dunn	Lewis (KY)	Stump
Ehlers	Lightfoot	Talent
Ehrlich	Linder	Tate
Emerson	Livingston	Tauzin
English	LoBiondo	Taylor (MS)
Ensign	Longley	Taylor (NC)
Everett	Lucas	Thomas
Ewing	Manzullo	Thornberry
Fawell	Martini	Tiahrt
Fields (TX)	McCarthy	Torkildsen
Flanagan	McCollum	Traficant
Foley	McCrery	Upton
Forbes	McDade	Vucanovich
	McHugh	Waldholtz

Walker
Walsh
Wamp
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)

Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wolf
Wynn

Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Zeliff
Zimmer

NOES—180

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Andrews
Baesler
Baldacci
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Barton
Becerra
Beilenson
Bentsen
Berman
Bevill
Bonior
Borski
Boucher
Brewster
Browder
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Bryant (TX)
Cardin
Chapman
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Coleman
Collins (MI)
Condit
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cramer
de la Garza
DeFazio
DeLauro
Dellums
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Durbin
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Fazio
Fields (LA)
Filner
Flake
Foglietta
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Furse

Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hamilton
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hefner
Hilliard
Hinchev
Holden
Hoyer
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee
(TX)
Jacobs
Jefferson
Johnson (SD)
Johnson, E. B.
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Klecicka
Klink
LaFalce
Lantos
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lincoln
Lipinski
Lofgren
Lowey
Luther
Maloney
Manton
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McDermott
McHale
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek
Menendez
Miller (CA)
Minge
Mink
Mollohan
Moran
Murtha
Nadler
Neal

Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Orton
Owens
Pallone
Pastor
Payne (NJ)
Pelosi
Peterson (FL)
Peterson (MN)
Pickett
Pomeroy
Poshard
Rahall
Rangel
Reed
Richardson
Rivers
Roemer
Rose
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Salmon
Sanders
Sawyer
Scarborough
Schroeder
Schumer
Scott
Serrano
Sisisky
Skaggs
Slaughter
Spratt
Studds
Stupak
Tanner
Tejeda
Thompson
Thornton
Thurman
Torres
Torrice
Towns
Velazquez
Vento
Viscosky
Volkmer
Ward
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Williams
Wilson
Wise
Woolsey
Yates

NOT VOTING—7

Collins (IL)
Johnston
Moakley

Radanovich
Stark
Stokes

Waters

□ 1406

So the joint resolution was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERMISSION FOR ALL COMMITTEES TO SIT TODAY AND THE BALANCE OF THE WEEK DURING THE 5-MINUTE RULE

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. ARMEY moves pursuant to clause 2(i) of rule XI that for today and the balance of the

week all committees be granted special leave to sit while the House is reading a measure for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we have a good deal of important business ahead of us, both on the floor and in the committees, during this week and the next. It is, of course, out of consideration for the Members on the floor and in the committees relative to their pending district work period that I make this request. I want to appreciate for a moment the Members of the body on both sides of the aisle for their cooperation with me with respect to this request.

Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I am happy to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. VOLKMER].

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I first wish to thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding the time.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from California has now just arrived, and I was waiting until he got here.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. VOLKMER. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Missouri not only for yielding but for that introduction.

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I will be frank about it. I really have nothing to say about this. We are going to let the gentleman from California speak for a few minutes and tell the Members about what happened.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, would my friend from Missouri yield for a second?

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman all the time I have.

Mr. FAZIO of California. That is what I wanted to know, how much time he was yielding to me.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. VOLKMER] yields 5 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. FAZIO].

There was no objection.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, we had an interesting session this morning, however brief it may have been. Interesting in the sense that it, I think, is perhaps too typical of the kind of hearings that we are seeing here in the House of Representatives. Unfortunately in that it did not include a balanced presentation on a very important issue to Members of this House.

In fact, I think to the country at large, and that is how we deal with the question of voter education, how we deal with the issue of expenditures that are made outside the Federal election process. We had invited almost 25 groups from all across the spectrum, from Common Cause and the Sierra Club to the Christian Coalition and

Citizens for a Sound Economy. Yet, when it came time to hold the hearing, the only people who were brought to the witness table, theoretically, they chose not to come. In my view that was the right decision, those people representing working men and women, organized labor.

Mr. Speaker, now, it is easy to demonize our foes in this area, and both parties certainly have a preponderance of friends from one side of the spectrum to the other which they often like to demonize. But if we are going to hold hearings that really get to the root cause of how we can reform our political system, we cannot play favorites. We cannot just hold up those people representing the interest of working people because they have priorities and they have concerns that do not know in the direction the majority wants to go in.

We have seen too much of this when the AARP was brought up before a Senate committee because they were standing up for Social Security, or critical of some of the Medicare reform proposals. I just simply wanted my colleagues to know, and I think I speak for every member of our committee, that this behavior of the Committee on House Oversight today is going to inflame passions here, is going to create an impossible environment for us to work this most important issue of campaign finance reform in.

There are many, many groups spending hundreds of millions of dollars without limitation, without any attribution to any individual, no disclosure at all, who are working hand in glove with the majority in this House to affect its agenda. We were not willing or able to hear any of the testimony that might have enlightened us about that. It was only to go after people who in the minds of, I guess, the majority of that committee, were associated with the Democratic Caucus. I feel very much compelled to object to that process.

Every member of our committee absented ourselves from the hearing today because we felt it was an inquisition. It was a kangaroo court designed to embarrass people who are merely spending, legally, their dues to put across a point of view to help educate their members and hopefully to impact on the Members in this body before they make a number of mistakes.

Mr. Speaker, I would simply close by saying this side of the aisle is prepared to work on these issues as long as we come to the table in a bipartisan manner. I am told in the aftermath of our decision to leave that we were told the room was not big enough, the table was not large enough to bring all the various interests together to discuss this. We only had to select one. Well, I think that is a metaphor that concerns me. The table ought to be big enough for all of the interest groups and all the points of view in this country to be heard.

When we single out people, then we make enemies of people. Then I think