

"Dumb and Much Dumber." It was dumb to shut the Government down for a month, but it would be much dumber to default on the national debt.

Yesterday Moody's, the world-renowned bond rater, put \$400 billion of U.S. securities on the credit watch list, and Moody's has reason to worry. Many in this House, exhibiting a combination of arrogance and ignorance, a dangerous combination, want to allow us to default, in the vain hope it will bring a budget agreement. Not in the 220 years of our country's existence has America's credit rating ever been downgraded from triple A.

Some in the Republican Party are playing with fire, and if they are not careful we will all get burned. The Speaker is dancing on the edge of a fiscal abyss.

□ 1015

He may go down and take all of us with him if he does not stand up to the extremists in his own party.

Mr. Speaker, a month ago I would have said not even this Congress would be stupid enough to default on the debt. Today I am not so sure, because the inmates in a real sense, are running this asylum.

AVOCADO IMPORTATION

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

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, it would seem Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman is on a one-man crusade to destroy California's multibillion-dollar fruit and vegetable industry.

That is exactly what will happen if he allows the importation of Mexican avocados. These avocados will bring fruit flies, seed weevils, stem borers, and other pests that will destroy California's economy.

"Not to worry," says Secretary Glickman, "we have used good science."

That is not true.

An independent report by University of California Riverside, Cornell University, Boston University, and Oregon State University states that "there is no rational basis for USDA's estimate of risk." The importation of Mexican avocados could mean catastrophe for California.

The introduction of these pests will destroy our oranges, our avocados, and our grapes. Not for one season, but for a generation. This is bad public policy, based on bad science. Do not ruin California's economy.

Mr. Secretary, institute a credible peer review process, now.

CONGRESS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE ON BUDGET

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this is no time to gloat, even though the Republicans raised \$16 million at a fundraiser last night. I think it is time to listen to the President's message. We should never, never, never shut the Government down again.

But if we do not pass a new debt ceiling limit, I will tell you what we will do. We will not be able to pay Social Security payments on March 1. We will not be able to pay veterans benefits on March 1. And, yes, we will not be able to pay our troops in Bosnia on March 1.

How outrageous. Wall Street is trembling. Six former Secretaries of the Treasury said this is outrageous that we would bring a government, a nation, to its knees.

Congress, wake up, stand up, and work together. Pass a new debt ceiling limit and be responsible to the American people. This is no time to play with our lives and jeopardize the lives and the hopes and dreams of our seniors, our veterans, and our men and women laying their lives on the line in Bosnia.

ERA OF BIG GOVERNMENT OVER?

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

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, no one gives an upbeat speech better than our President. Analyst Kevin Phillips described the President as a chameleon because of his extraordinary ability to deliver a conservative message that masks his liberal government agenda.

For instance, in his State of the Union Message, our President twice told Americans that the era of big government is over.

However, in the same State of the Union Message, the President twice told Americans that we cannot fend for ourselves.

Which is it, Mr. President?

Liberals believe that Americans can't fend for ourselves. That's why liberals built up the monstrous Federal Government in Washington over the last 30 years.

Americans want the Government off our backs.

Mr. Speaker, if the President is really serious about ending the era of big government, why did he propose to expand or create no less than six new Federal Government programs in his State of the Union?

Actions speak louder than words.

LIMITING INCREASE IN MARKETABLE DEBT

(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, I am introducing a bill this morning that I would invite all Members to cosign with me. It is a bill that says

there shall be no increase in net marketable debt after December 31, 2001.

Mr. Speaker, both sides of this issue on how we reach a balanced budget have agreed to have a balanced budget and not have an increase in debt. I think when you analyze the President's budget though, we need to remember two figures: \$300 billion and \$200 billion. The President's budget proposal for balance has \$300 billion more spending than the Republican proposal. It has \$200 billion more taxes than the Republican proposal.

Mr. Speaker, if one wants to continue to tax and spend, then it is OK to go with the President's proposal. The Republicans cannot accept that if we give a hang about what happens to our kids and grandkids. Let us at least agree on the final line, the final resolution, to not increase net marketable debt after the year 2001.

"DON'T LET ME HAVE TO TELL YOU TWICE"

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, my mother always said, "Do not let me have to tell you twice."

We heard you, Moody's. We do not need to hear from Standard & Poor's, too. We need to respond that we are not the kamikaze Congress. The markets actually responded positively all during our tortured balanced budget negotiations. There were Dow Jones records broken. The reason, of course, is that they expected a balanced budget. A more balanced budget compromise would have the same effect, only this time the benefits would not be only to the markets, but also to jobs, to renewed confidence in our economy, and especially in much needed renewed confidence in the Congress of the United States.

WHAT THE DEBATE IS ABOUT

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

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, any time you hear Members come to the floor advocating the President's balanced budget, you need to understand what that means. The fact is the President did as he was requested to do. He came in with a balanced budget that does meet balance in 7 years. The problem is that it always reflects his sense of priorities, and in that balanced budget the President has told us he wants to spend more, he wants to tax more, he wants bigger government, not less government, and that is what the debate is about. It is not whether or not you get to balance; it is how you get there and what you are doing, what are the programs and the priorities that you espouse.

The programs and the priorities espoused by President Clinton lead us to

more problems for the future. Why? Well, it is a little like going on a diet and telling yourself I am going to lose 20 pounds this month. In the President's budget, what he does is says we will not lose one pound in the first 29 days of the month, and then in the last 2 days of the month we will lose the other 19 pounds. In our budget, what we do is say let us make the hard choices up front. That is a big difference.

SCHOOLS AND INFORMATION SUPER HIGHWAY

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

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise, first, to thank the President for challenging this Nation and those who are elected to govern it, and also for his reasonable stand on our budget crisis.

Second, I want to thank the President for recognizing the importance of educational technology in our schools. While serving in the California State Legislature, I authored the California Educational Technology Act, which now drives public schools throughout California into modern technology.

In his State of the Union Address, the President spoke of continuing and expanding on this project.

The California Educational Technology Act highlights the importance of computer technology in the classroom.

In my district, children at Manzanita Elementary School in Seaside, use computers to communicate with students from around the world to learn about geography, different cultures, and languages.

They can also communicate with scientists doing research in the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary together with the National Weather Service to learn more about science.

This project is an outstanding example of the benefits that come from local, State and Federal Government partnerships with private industry.

Connecting our schools to the information super highway is exactly the type of program that will prepare America's youth to lead American economic growth and technological development into the next century. Thank you, Mr. President, for your leadership in education.

SCARE TACTICS AND DEMOGOGUERY

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

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, for the past 8 months liberal interest groups have been advertising in my district, and we have heard a drum beat of the same message here in the Congress from the minority, where millions of dollars have been spent trying to scare seniors about Medicare and mislead the public

about what Congress is trying to do to secure America's future.

Most people recognize that the ads and the rhetoric are completely politically motivated and dismiss them, but the problem with the big lie is that if it is repeated often enough some people will believe it. And the real tragedy will be if it works, because, let us face it, it really does not matter if I am back or any particular individual is back, but what matters very, very deeply is if our Nation misses this extraordinary opportunity to stop stealing from our children's future to save Medicare from bankruptcy, most importantly, to renew the American dream and to get our country back on the right track. That would be an incalculable tragedy.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just hope that you are listening and the American people are listening, and that this demagoguery and scare-mongering is not effective.

DANGEROUS CUTS IN EDUCATION

(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, last night I spoke on the House floor about the devastating cuts House Republicans are making to education.

After I left the floor, a Member on the other side of the aisle challenged the accuracy of my remarks—forcing me to repeat the facts to my colleagues and the American people today.

Fact: According to the Department of Education, the Labor-HHS appropriations bill passed by the House last year cuts education programs by 13 percent in 1 year alone. In fact, almost one-half of the bill's cuts come from education.

Fact: According to the Department of Education, if the Gingrich Republicans continue to fund education at the level in the current continuing resolution, education will be cut by a total of \$3.1 billion below last year—resulting in the largest cut to education in the history of this country.

□ 1030

The facts are clear, but if my colleagues on the other side of the aisle can't do the math, I'd suggest that they go back to school for a little math refresher course. Then, maybe they'll learn that their cuts to education are both real and dangerous.

WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 4(b) OF RULE XI WITH RESPECT TO SAME DAY CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON RULES

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 342 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 342

Resolved, That the requirement of clause 4(b) of rule XI for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported from that committee before March 16, 1996, and providing for consideration or disposition of any of the following measures:

(1) A bill making general appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, any amendment thereto, any conference report thereon, or any amendment reported in disagreement from a conference thereon.

(2) A bill or joint resolution that includes provisions making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 1996, any amendment thereto, any conference report thereon, or any amendment reported in disagreement from a conference thereon.

(3) A bill or joint resolution that includes provisions increasing or waiving (for a temporary period or otherwise) the public debt limit under section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code, any amendment thereto, any conference report thereon, or any amendment reported in disagreement from a conference thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina). The gentleman from Colorado [Mr. MCINNIS] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY], pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During the consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 342 is a simple resolution. The proposed rule merely waives the requirement of clause 4(b) of rule XI for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House for resolutions reported from the committee before March 16, 1996, under certain circumstances.

This narrow waiver will only apply to special rules providing for the consideration or disposition of measures, amendments, conference reports, or items in disagreement from a conference that: make general appropriations for fiscal year 1996; include provisions making continuing appropriations, that includes provisions increasing or waiving the public debt limit.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 342 is straightforward, and it was reported by the Committee on Rules with unanimous voice vote. The committee recognizes the need for expedited procedures to bring these legislative measures forward as soon as possible. I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 342.

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

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

(Mr. MOAKLEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, today's rule marks not the first but the second time my Republican colleagues have waived the two-thirds requirement for