

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida [Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. CARDIN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. CARDIN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. DIAZ-BALART] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. DIAZ-BALART addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. HOYER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. HOYER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California [Mrs. SEASTRAND] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. SEASTRAND addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MCCOLLUM] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. MCCOLLUM addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. WYNN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. WYNN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

REMEMBERING CHRISTA
MCCAULIFFE AND THE CREW OF
THE "CHALLENGER"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Maryland [Mrs. MORELLA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, a decade after the *Challenger* exploded, Christa McAuliffe is still fulfilling her mission, inspiring young people to look skyward with curiosity about science and outer space.

On January 26, 1996, the Christa McAuliffe Elementary School in Germantown, MD, honored their namesake by devoting a day of activities to her memory. In keeping with the wishes of Christa McAuliffe's mother, the students and teachers worked with a shared sense of purpose to remember the teacher-astronaut in a dignified manner. "Christa, This One's For You and the Challenger Crew," was the theme for the day.

Under the expert guidance of teacher Bettie Shortt, the children in the Head Start Program made a mural of the *Challenger*. The kindergartners listed Christa McAuliffe's character traits and elaborated on each one.

Team leader Lynne Barrett asked the first graders to read an important book about the *Challenger* flight. Students then discussed why Christa McAuliffe was important. Each second grade teacher selected a subject and prepared a 45-minute lesson. The subjects included: Astronauts, the Space Shuttle, the Moon, Planets, and Christa McAuliffe. Teacher and team leader for the second-graders, Susan Gougeon made sure that the classes were rotated so that each class was afforded the opportunity to participate in all of the relevant lessons.

Peggy Duffy asked each third-grader to make a symbol to put into a goal quilt, keeping in mind that "Christa McAuliffe set a goal and went for it." The finished quilt was hung in the school hall and was "quite a display," according to Dr. Edith Rohrbacher, the assistant principal.

The fourth graders viewed the film, "The Dream is Alive," and then discussed the concept of being part of a team. The fifth graders wrote essays. One of the fifth grade classes will correspond with Christa McAuliffe's mother, Jean Withee and Kristin Dillman deserve credit and praise for their outstanding efforts as team leaders for the fourth and fifth grades.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the winning combination of students and faculty at the Christa McAuliffe Elementary School in Germantown, MD, for it is my understanding that the day set aside to remember the *Challenger*, was a huge success. I congratulate Principal Eugene Haines and the entire McAuliffe Elementary School on their ambitious program, and I wish them continued success in all of their future educational challenges and endeavors.

As Keith Geiger, President of the NEA, stated: "Christa taught us about living life to the fullest. Because she reached for the stars, she made the world a brighter place for all of us."

As a member of the Committee on Science that has under its jurisdiction our space program and as somebody who is a former educator myself, I

commend the school. I hope that the *Challenger* tragedy becomes a symbol for future generations to adopt the kind of theme that the Christa McAuliffe School has, and that is, reach out and touch the future.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. FIELDS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. FLAKE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. FLAKE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Michigan [Miss COLLINS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Miss COLLINS of Michigan addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CONYERS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. CONYERS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

THREATS OF DEFAULT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. BROWN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, a lot of us in this institution are troubled by the threats to force the Nation into default, the comments made throughout the year by Speaker GINGRICH and the gentleman from Texas, Mr. ARMEY, majority leader, that if they do not get their way on the balanced budget or if they do not get their way on a host of things that are they are going to shut the Government down.

We heard those threats throughout 1995. Unfortunately, come November once and then in December a second time, they made good on their threats because they did not get the kind of, exactly the kind of balanced budget that they wanted. And they went ahead and shut the Government down. What that meant to lots of American families that depended on services from the Government, what it meant to people that work in Government, what it meant across the board to this country.

Now the threats, in a lot of ways, Mr. Speaker, are even more serious, because those threats are to force the Nation into default, again, if Speaker

GINGRICH and the gentleman from Texas, Mr. ARMEY, majority leader do not get their way with the balanced budget. At the same time as we move toward this default on March 1 or February 29, the Congress is going to recess today or tomorrow for 2 weeks and just go home and forget about it, when default can be imminent, when they are threatening default.

The gentleman from Texas is with me who knows more probably about what default will mean to veterans, has been a leader on these issues, what exactly it will mean to an awful lot of veterans in this country in addition to all the other problems that the first default in the history of the United States of America in 220 years would mean.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. EDWARDS].

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I know this issue of defaulting on the good faith and credit of the American economy and our Government debts is an issue that a lot of folks back home do not necessarily relate to themselves personally. But I would like to specifically address what the default on March 1 could do to men and women who put their lives on the line for our country.

I am very grateful to have the opportunity to be the ranking Democrat on the Subcommittee on Hospitals and Health Care of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. So on a regular basis I have a chance to go out to our VA hospitals and see those men and women who were combat injured and put their lives on the line.

Let me quote from Jesse Brown himself, a very distinguished combat veteran who was very seriously wounded in service to our Nation. He said that veterans and their families have suffered enough. They should not be the victims of a battle they cannot even fight. The battle that Secretary Brown is talking about is the game of Russian roulette that is being played with the American economy in threatening to shut down our Government once again and to default on our debt.

Let me just put this in real terms, to how a Republican pushed default on our debt, especially if we are going into recess and get a paid vacation for the next month and only come back 4 days before the March 1 default, let me talk about how this would affect real American veterans: 2.2 million veterans with service-connected disabilities may receive bad checks March 1. More than 300,000 survivors of veterans who died from service-connected causes may receive bad checks.

To be even more clear on that, what that means is that widows of combat veterans who died in service to our Nation may receive bad checks, in effect, hot checks on March 1 from the VA.

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Nearly three-quarters of a million poor wartime veterans or survivors may receive bad checks. Also, \$140 mil-

lion a month in education program funds, G.I. Montgomery College loan funds would not go out to veterans on March 1 and for each month thereafter, if the leadership of this House does not keep us here for the month of February, and have us deal directly and honestly with the debt default issue. Hardworking VA employers and employees, people who try to take care of our veterans and hospitals all over this country, once again will not be paid for their work. That will have a devastating impact on the quality of people we can attract to work in our VA hospitals.

The bottom line to all of this, Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman and to our American veterans, is they need to understand that this complex, convoluted discussion of default is something that affects America's veterans, it affects 44 million senior citizens receiving Social Security checks, including many that are on SSI, that receive checks because they are disabled, in wheelchairs, and need that check to pay for their bills.

This is a real issue, a terribly important one that affects real families. It is devastating, most importantly, to America's working families, those people who are working hard to pay their bills and put their children through college. Their mortgage interest rates could go up after March 1. The money they borrowed to keep their farm alive or to expand their business or keep their business alive, that they have struggled so hard to support for years, those costs could go up.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman, that simply does not have to happen. In 220 years it never has happened in this country, through the Civil War, through World War II, through the burning of the Capitol.

THE IMPACT OF GOVERNMENTAL DEFAULT, AND URGING SUPPORT FOR THE FAN FREEDOM AND COMMUNITY PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RADANOVICH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HOKE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, before my colleague, the gentleman from Ohio, leaves the floor, I want to shock him, if I can get his attention. If I can get the gentleman's attention, I want to shock him with the disclosure that I, in fact, am in at least partial agreement with the comments that he just made regarding the debt service, or, I am sorry, the debt ceiling and the extension of the debt ceiling. I would certainly not characterize the shutdown of the Government as, first of all, having been the responsibility of this Congress, but was, in fact, the responsibility of the President.

I also think that the impact of a shutdown of the Federal Government is very, very different from the impact of

a default on the full faith and creditworthiness of the U.S. Government. But notwithstanding those differences I, in fact, agree with you that the creditworthiness of our country should not be tampered with and that, in fact, the impact that such a thing might have would be far-reaching.

Mr. Speaker, I had not specifically thought about the impact it would have on veterans, but you can be darned sure that it would have a tremendous impact on every single person who holds any kind of obligation bearing interest on any debt in this country, including mortgages, including car loans, including student loans, et cetera, et cetera. Nobody knows this better than somebody from northeastern Ohio, where we were thrown into a default situation some two decades ago in the city of Cleveland.

And not only is there an economic consequence from this, but there is also a psychological stigma. It is a stigma that we have suffered under for some time, and only recently dug ourselves out of in the past 5 or so years.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from Cleveland, Ohio. When he talks about the prospective default, never before have I heard political leaders in this country that are responsible leaders with titles like Speaker of the House and majority leader of the House make threats about default similar to the threats that were made about closing the Government down.

You can say it was the President's fault that the Government shut down, but the fact is it was written on the sleeve of the Speaker and lots of other leaders that "If we do not get what we want, we are going to shut the Government down. If we do not get what we want, we are going to force a default." That kind of discussion, those kinds of statements, send all kinds of uncertainties and tremors through the financial markets, something that is not good for the country, something that makes the United States look weak rather than strong, something that, frankly, scares a lot of people in this country.

Mr. HOKE. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, just to recap, and we will agree to disagree, but I really reject your characterization of the reason that we got to the situation we got to. It clearly was a result of the President's absolute refusal to negotiate in good faith what he had said he would, in fact, negotiate in good faith. I think it probably suffices to say that we will just disagree on that.

Mr. Speaker, in any event, I think that there are real consequences that have to be thought about in a very, and I only have a couple more minutes, and I actually did not want to talk about this, I wanted to talk about something completely different, so I am not going