

Although the earthquake crippled Taiwan's infrastructure in the hardest hit areas where phone, power and water lines were knocked out, I have confidence that Taiwan will be able to rebuild quickly and continue to play an important role in the Asian and world economies.

□ 1130

Mr. Speaker, as a Member of the House Committee on International Relations, I stand ready to assist Taiwan with its rebuilding efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this worthy resolution to express the House's sympathy for this terrible, terrible disaster.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. COX), chairman of our Republican Policy Committee.

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding this time to me.

I think all of us here in this chamber and, in fact, anyone in the world with a television set watched in awe and horror and ultimately relief as 6 year-old boy whose faint cries were heard beneath the rubble was extracted alive after several days following the earthquake. His first words were: Why am I here, and where is my family? But his parents and his sisters were all killed in that same building in that same earthquake. It tore my heart out.

Mr. Speaker, I have a 6 year-old son, and just to imagine the human loss, the tragedy of that earthquake, is almost beyond our individual capacities.

Sometimes it takes an enormous tragedy such as this earthquake to bring home how futile it is for us to maintain the political differences that we do across the globe. I think everyone watching on television saw that the people of Taiwan are not the dangerous splitists so often derided by the Communist government in Beijing, but men and women and children fighting for a better life, just like all of us.

Mr. Speaker, that is why it is so tragically ironic that at this time, when we should have set aside politics and put humanitarian interests first, the government of Beijing literally got in the way as Russian aid was trying to make its way immediately after the tragedy to the victims. A Russian plane actually had to divert and take a different, longer route in order to get to Taiwan because they did not have clearance from the Beijing government. The American Red Cross, as has been discussed previously in this debate, felt it necessary, even though it is a non-governmental organization based here, to check first with Beijing, and that slowed down aid getting to people right when they most needed it, when there is still a chance to save their lives. This should never happen again.

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), our Democratic colleague, has offered legislation that I know the Chairman of the Committee on International Relations supports that would

permit Taiwan membership in the World Health Organization, something that does not require the status of statehood; so, this does not in any way interfere with our United States China policy. But what it would do, Mr. Speaker, is cut out the bureaucracy so that in the case of future medical emergencies this could not happen again, these kinds of delays could not happen again.

I think we also need legislation to make sure that every nongovernmental organization in America, every charity in America understands that if there ever is another medical emergency or natural disaster in Taiwan, that they can get relief there right away without having to check with Beijing first.

It is fortunate that so much good is now coming of the worldwide attention that has been paid to this tragedy in Taiwan, so much money is coming from our country to help people there. On Saturday night last, I met with several hundred Taiwanese Americans who were gathered in principle part to marshal their efforts behind earthquake relief in Taiwan, and I personally am participating in those efforts, and I hope that everyone here will because we do live in a small world, and we do all have much more in common than we realize.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD), my good friend and distinguished colleague.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding me the time, and for the reasons that have been outlined already by many of the previous speakers, I stand in strong support of Resolution 297 expressing our sympathy and our concern for the people of Taiwan. As a representative of an area that is the closest U.S. area to Taiwan, we certainly have many important business, commercial and people-to-people relationships with the people of Taiwan, and the people of Taiwan have always been there for Guam and other parts of the United States whenever we have problems. And so it is important that we express directly and in this very highly symbolic and very important way our sympathy for them. In our own relationships and between Guam and Taiwan, whenever we had a very severe earthquake, about 4 years ago, and we have had a number of typhoons where the people of Taiwan have always come through. And I am pleased to report that back home in Guam we are also engaged in many relief efforts to help the local Chinese community in their efforts to gather support and provide needed assistance to the people of Taiwan.

We have also experienced some of the obstacles that have been alluded to earlier, and it is simply abominable that political considerations are now confounding and have confounded and have found their way into efforts to provide relief. And yet in a kind of interesting way, I think the earthquake

in Taiwan has pointed out the real success story that is Taiwan, the fact that they do have very good and solid relationships with people throughout the world who want to provide them their needed assistance. Nothing is as a serious sign of our common humanity than when we are most vulnerable, and certainly times of natural disaster point that out. And it is very important that we continue to express our support for Taiwan.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to personally participate in this.

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, as a cosponsor of H. Res. 297, a resolution expressing sympathy for the victims of the devastating earthquake that struck Taiwan on September 21, 1999, I would like to express my strong support for this important legislation. Had I been able to be in Washington today, I would have enthusiastically cast my vote in the affirmative.

As the first member of the U.S. House of Representatives born on Taiwan, I would first like to express my deepest sympathy and condolences to the people of Taiwan. I hope in these challenging times that they find comfort in family and loved ones.

Since the earthquake shook Nantou and Taichung, Taiwan, thousands of homes and families were damaged or destroyed. Thousands of individuals lay dead, missing, and injured. I feel a great sense of sadness for all that were affected by this tragic incident.

I commend the Taiwanese people for their display of strength, courage, and determination. Indeed, the tasks of rebuilding homes and comforting loved ones lay dauntingly ahead. I am confident that my colleagues, the President, and the international community will provide the necessary assistance to help the people of Taiwan rebuild their homes and family.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 297, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

DESIRE OF HOUSE REGARDING BUDGET SURPLUS AND RETIRING THE PUBLIC DEBT

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 306) expressing the desire of the House of Representatives to not spend any of the budget surplus created by social security receipts and to continue to retire the debt held by the public.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 306

Whereas, earlier this year, the House of Representatives passed a social security lockbox designed to protect the social security surplus by an overwhelming vote of 416 to 12;

Whereas bipartisan efforts over the past few years have eliminated the budget deficit and created a projected combined Social Security and non-Social Security surplus of \$2,896,000,000,000 over the next 10 years;

Whereas this surplus is largely due to the collection of the social security taxes and interest on already collected receipts in the trust fund;

Whereas the President and the Congress have not reached an agreement to use any of the non-social security surplus on providing tax relief; and

Whereas any unspent portion of the projected surplus will have the effect of reducing the debt held by the public: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the the House of Representatives that the House—

(1) should not consider legislation that would spend any of the social security surplus; and

(2) should continue to pursue efforts to continue to reduce the \$3,618,000,000,000 in debt held by the public.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER).

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

Mr. Speaker, today Congress has an opportunity to send a clear message to all current and future Social Security recipients. Fiscal year 2000 will be the year Congress will end the raid on Social Security.

For over 30 years, the Social Security Trust Fund has been used to distort surpluses, numbers, and mass deficits. Mr. Speaker, for years the Social Security trust fund has run a surplus, and for years Washington has taken that surplus and spent it on programs unrelated to Social Security.

Just 4 months ago, this House passed by an overwhelming 416-to-12 vote the Social Security Medicare Safe Deposit Box Act of 1999, a measure I introduced which locked up the Social Security Trust Fund, making it much more difficult to spend for non-Social Security purposes. This sense of the House Resolution we are considering today will reiterate the overwhelming passage of the Social Security Lockbox and our commitment to our seniors by reemphasizing this Congress' steadfast commitment to not spend one penny of the Social Security surplus.

This resolution does not have any impact on any spending or tax relief that would not come from the Social Security surplus.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to not pass up this opportunity to protect Social Security and to vote for this resolution committing ourselves against any effort to once again raid the Social Security Trust Fund.

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

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

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

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, fiscal year 2000 begins in 2 days, and we have no budget, no prospect of one. What we have instead is a red herring, this resolution, one House resolution hastily filed less than an hour ago which makes a promise that the majority has already broken. This resolution asserts that we should not spend any of the Social Security surplus.

Now there is nothing wrong with that in principle, but there is a big problem with it in fact. When we recessed last August for our break, the House had already spent the entire on-budget surplus of \$14.4 billion for the next fiscal year, fiscal 2000, and we invaded the Social Security surplus, the House had, Mr. Speaker, on the majority's control and direction by some \$16 billion.

Now do not take my word for that. This is the conclusion reached by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office, Dan Crippen, in a letter dated to me August 26. I put a copy of it in the RECORD:

U.S. CONGRESS,

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, August 26, 1999.

Hon. JOHN M. SPRATT, Jr.

Ranking Democratic Member, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN: CBO's most recent baseline projections, which assume that discretionary outlays in 2000 will equal the statutory limits on such spending, show an on-budget surplus of \$14 billion in 2000. As requested in your letter of August 18, the Congressional Budget Office has computed what the on-budget surplus would be using the following assumptions that you specified:

You requested that we incorporate legislation passed by the Congress since the baseline projections were prepared. The only such legislation with significant budgetary impact is the Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act of 1999, which would reduce the surplus by an estimated \$5 billion in 2000.

You also asked that we adjust the baseline figures to reflect spending designated as an emergency. In the appropriation process so far, each chamber has made one emergency designation. The House has passed \$4 billion in funding for the census that it has specified as an emergency requirement, while the Senate has passed \$7 billion in emergency spending for aid to farmers.

You also requested that we include the effects of various scorekeeping directives and adjustments made by the budget committees, which would have the effect of reducing the outlays attributed to appropriation bills. Directed scorekeeping adjustments for defense, highways, and mass transit total around \$11 billion. Outlay reductions in the nondefense category that equal 1.14 percent of new budget authority would increase that total by another \$3 billion. In addition, the House Budget Committee has directed CBO to make additional scoring adjustments, totaling \$3.1 billion, involving proceeds from spectrum auctions and criminal fines paid to the Crime Victims Fund. The Senate Budget Committee has adjusted CBO's outlay estimate of the spectrum auction provision by \$2.6 billion. In total, these adjustments come to about \$17 billion for the House and \$16 billion for the Senate.

The Balanced Budget Act for adjustments to discretionary spending limits to reflect funding for payment of dues in arrears owed to international organizations and for compliance efforts of the Internal Revenue Service related to the earned income tax credit. Based on appropriation action to date, we estimate that these adjustments would total about \$350 million for fiscal year 2000.

Including about \$700 million in additional costs for debt service, the adjustments that you have specified total about \$27 billion for the House and \$30 billion for the Senate. Applying those adjustments to CBO's July baseline projection of the on-budget surplus would turn that measure into a deficit of \$13 billion (based on House actions) or \$16 billion (based on Senate actions).

Finally, CBO's baseline calculation of the on-budget surplus excludes about \$3 billion in spending for administrative expenses of the Social Security Administration because that spending is designated as off-budget. The budget resolution, however, treats such expenses as on-budget. If the deficit figure were adjusted to be consistent with the budget resolution, the projected on-budget deficit under your assumptions would reach \$16 billion (based on House actions) or \$19 billion (based on Senate actions).

If you wish further information, we will be pleased to provide it. The CBO staff contact is Jeff Holland.

Sincerely,

DAN L. CRIPPEN,
Director.

Since the August break, Congress has taken up more bills. We spent \$11 billion more of the Social Security surplus. This is neatly shown on this very basic graph right here. We started the year at \$14 billion, looking for \$14.4 billion surplus in fiscal 2000 because of actions already taken in the Committee on Appropriations and elsewhere including the tax bill. That surplus was converted to a deficit of \$16 billion, and right now, if we carry out the track on which we are headed, it will be at least \$27 billion, and I say "at least" because that makes minimal allowance for what will happen with Labor HHS, Mr. Speaker, the biggest of all the appropriation bills.

The graph referred to is as follows:

FY 2000 ON-BUDGET SURPLUS/DEFICIT: WHERE THE REPUBLICAN CONGRESS IS NOW, AS OF SEPTEMBER 27, 1999

[Dollars in billions]		
	CBO	OMB
Current-law on-budget surplus, July reports	14.4	2.9
Tax cut	-5.3	-5.3
Census "emergency"	-4.1	-4.1
HBC scorekeeping "plugs" to mirror OMB outlay estimates	-16.1	0.0
Crime Victims Fund scorekeeping "adjustment"	-0.5	-0.5
Cap adjustments for EITC compliance and arrears	-0.1	-0.1
Debt service on above	-0.7	-0.3
Use congressional treatment of SS administrative costs	-3.3	-3.1
Where Republicans are now: On-budget deficit [CBO 8/26]	-15.7	-10.4
Likely adjustments to CBO's \$16 billion estimate:		
Sustain veto of the tax cut	+5.3	+5.3
Use OMB/CBO accounting of SS administrative costs	+3.3	+3.1
Labor-HHS-Education restorations (preliminary est. of Porter's mark)	-7.8	-7.8
LIHEAP emergency designation	-0.9	-0.9
Emergency farm aid (Senate-passed)	-7.3	-7.3
Emergency Veterans' Medical Care (Senate-passed)	-0.5	-0.5
Other emergencies (hurricanes, Turkey, Kosovo, etc.) ???	-2.5	-2.5
Cap adjustments for CDRs and adoption incentives	-0.4	-0.4
Additional debt service	-0.4	-0.4

FY 2000 ON-BUDGET SURPLUS/DEFICIT: WHERE THE REPUBLICAN CONGRESS IS NOW, AS OF SEPTEMBER 27, 1999—Continued

[Dollars in billions]

	CBO	OMB
Where Republicans are headed	-26.9	-21.8

Note: May not add due to rounding.

Now we are declaring everything around here unforeseen. We did not know we were going to take a census; \$4.4 billion is an emergency, but this was foreseeable. We argued it right here in the well of the House when the budget resolution came up, and when we did the conference report, we had all of 30 minutes of a conference, and the majority was proud because they had made the trains run on time, they had done a budget resolution before April 15 for the first time in years, but in truth I told them, "There is a train wreck down the road waiting on you," and here we are, 5 months later; I have never seen the budget as badly derailed as it is now.

Mr. Speaker, it was foreseeable, and what do we have in these dire straits? We have this resolution.

Why are we considering this bill today? This is subterfuge. This is a setup. This is an attempt to shift blame for failure. When we finally do pass all the spending bills because we have to, the majority wants to blame the President, Congressional Democrats for spending the surplus that they have already spent. That is a fact.

The new fiscal year begins in 2 days. So far only 1 of 13 appropriation bills, 1 bill out of 13, has become law. Most of the others are mired in conference.

Later today, the House is going to take up a continuing resolution to prevent the government from shutting down. This is not a time for empty gestures, partisan ploys. This is a time to get down to business. But, instead of finishing the budget, the House is spinning its wheels on this resolution that tries to conceal the majority's failure to govern. That in itself should tell my colleagues why we are at this impasse.

□ 1145

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

Mr. Speaker, just responding to the last speaker, it is precisely for this reason why we need this resolution, to enforce on this Congress the importance that we need to be trimming down in conference the spending that has been going on so that we ensure that we do not spend Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. VITTER.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, at a time when our country is enjoying unprecedented peacetime prosperity, Americans' cynicism toward government remains high. Now we may fuel that cynicism further because we have all talked for months about making Social Security our top priority, and we now clearly have the ability to stop spending Social Security money for other

purposes, but we may go ahead and do just that anyway.

This August I held town hall meetings throughout my district, speaking to thousands of people, and they made one thing very clear: they want us to protect Social Security funding. In short, they told me, hands off Social Security. They want Congress to stop spending the surplus dollars in the Social Security trust fund, like Congress has been doing for the past 30 years.

This year we have already effectively erased the \$14 billion non-Social Security surplus. In coming weeks we must resist the urge to dip into the Social Security surplus to pay for Government programs we cannot afford. Instead, by making Social Security revenues off limits, Congress can give workers the confidence that the money they pay into Social Security will be there only for Social Security and for them in the future.

Only by ensuring that any new Federal spending does not come at the expense of Social Security can we truly protect the surpluses that will be needed for Social Security and Medicare reform.

Mr. Speaker, we have an enormous opportunity to do the right thing. We must make sure that we do that and set the proper precedent for future budgets.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), the ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

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

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I would say to my dear friend and colleague from California and member of the Committee on Ways and Means, I think we have the wrong forum for this type of resolution. This should be taken up at the Republican Conference, because the President of the United States and the minority here agree with everything that you are saying, and we have been saying it.

The previous speaker already has indicated that you already spent the non-Social Security surplus, and, while my Democratic colleagues do not fully understand the need to bring this on the floor, I understand your calling, and you are saying, Stop me before I kill again. I understand that.

But, you see, it has to be the chairman and the subcommittee chairman that hear your message, because they know you are right. But they are so creative that they come up with things that violate the budget caps because they cannot admit that they are going to sooner or later sit down with Democrats and sit down with the President and make certain that we have continuity in government.

You just cannot do it by coming to an empty floor saying, Help us to do the right thing. You have to be able to say, Hey, listen. Census is an emergency. We were only joking. We know

it comes every 10 years, but we thought the House was sleeping. But Republicans have to say, We don't tolerate it.

Emergency home heating for the poorest of the poor, \$1.1 billion. You have to send that message to the Republican leadership and say, We don't want that any more.

The whole idea of creating a 13th month in order to manipulate an intrusion into the Social Security surplus you are saying is something that you as a Member of Congress will not tolerate, and certainly some of the creative thinking and deciding, which you are using, OMB-CBO, it means what we are going to have to do, Democrats and Republicans, is send a message to the leadership that it is time for us to come together.

You cannot possibly do the things that you want to do and talk about a \$92 billion tax cut, unless you talk with Democrats.

I know how badly you feel about having to sit down with the President, but, still, we are your colleagues. We want to work with you. But you just cannot come to the floor, make declarations saying, do the right thing, and then go into the Committee on Appropriations and do the wrong thing.

So what I am suggesting is that if you can get your leadership to come out, not with a resolution, not with a vote, but just to come to the well of the House and say, How are we going to do this without intrusion on the Social Security surplus; the President says let us repair the Social Security system, let us do the right thing for Medicare, a modest tax cut, and then we will go on.

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

Mr. Speaker, the point is, we have to begin doing the right thing. We have not been doing the right thing since 1937 when we first began spending Social Security surpluses. We need to begin doing that now. We all have projects in our districts that we would like to spend money on, and the fact is the reason we are here doing this today is to help reemphasize, during this time we are in the appropriations season, that we are going to cut back, that we are going to trim back these legislations so that we are not spending Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, first I rise and state my very strong support for this resolution and commend the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) for bringing this to the floor.

After I was first elected in 1988, when I first came to the Congress, we were routinely giving 12 and 15 and 18 percent increases to almost every agency and Department. But after President Clinton came into office, a few months later his director of the Office of Management and Budget, Ms. Rivlin, put out a memo stating if we kept going in the way we were going, we would have

deficits, yearly losses, of over \$1 trillion a year by the year 2010, and between \$4 trillion and \$5 trillion a year by the year 2030.

If we had allowed that to happen, our whole economy would have crashed. Nobody would be able to buy a house; nobody would be able to buy a car. But then control of the Congress changed after the 1994 elections, and we started bringing these increases in Federal spending down to a manageable level of about 3 percent a year, about the rate of inflation. So this resolution is another important step in that direction, and I commend the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) for bringing this to our attention and to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I also rise for the purpose of engaging the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) in a colloquy. House Resolution 306 expresses the sense of the House that it should not consider legislation that would spend any of the Social Security surplus.

It is my understanding that this resolution is not intended to affect future consideration of the Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century, which passed the House by an overwhelming majority in June. This legislation, also known as Air 21, would not spend any portion of the Social Security surplus.

Let me emphasize that. Air 21 would not spend any of the Social Security surplus. Rather it seeks to recapture that portion of the on-budget non-Social Security surplus that is attributable to unspent aviation taxes.

Therefore, I believe that future consideration of Air 21 would not be prejudiced by House Resolution 306; and on behalf of the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I have been asked to ask the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER), is this also your understanding of the intent of the resolution?

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, that is my understanding of the resolution.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI).

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I would just hope that the author of this resolution, and I have not checked, and I will not check, but I hope he voted against all of the appropriations bills before the August recess and since we have come back, because, from what we understand, you have already dipped into the Social Security trust fund by passing all these appropriations bills. The Senate has as well. In fact, Mr. Crippen on August 26 pointed that out. So I just want the gentleman to understand that he has already done that.

Secondly, I think everybody knows that this will not save Social Security. This will not add one day to the life of the Social Security system, because this is just a resolution. It has no meaning at all.

It is kind of interesting, this resolution. It is about the 18th resolution on Social Security. It says, basically it expresses the desire of the House of Representatives not to do all of these bad terrible things that the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) does not want us to do. It is kind of interesting, it is like talking to yourself. The House should not do this to the House.

The reality is that this is irrelevant. It has no meaning at all. At least the resolution we just took up, the Taiwan resolution, expresses regret to the people of Taiwan for the earthquake. This one here is telling ourselves what to do.

What we really should be doing, instead of wasting our time, as we are on this issue, is actually do it. But, undoubtedly, what this is is just a political gimmick. I think everybody understands that.

So we will pass this thing, play our games and hope that the American public does not understand that in the next 3 weeks we are going to bust those caps. This resolution is ludicrous.

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

Mr. Speaker, again, what we are trying to do is break the addiction that we have had since 1937 of spending Social Security. It is a hard addiction to do away with. But why we are bringing this up again today is that we want to emphasize it, so that this Congress, before we vote on final passage of the conference committee of our appropriation bills, that we do not spend this.

Mr. Speaker, I yield two minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for all his leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with a lot of what the other side of the aisle is saying. What we are trying to achieve in this resolution is essentially this: let us stop raiding Social Security.

All sides can be blamed for raiding Social Security over the last 30 years. Looking at the CBO's estimate of the President's most recent budget, the President proposes raiding Social Security. If you do not take into account his tax increases, the President proposes raiding Social Security next year by \$20 billion. If you pass his tax increases, he is raiding it by \$7 billion.

Having said that, the pressure in this place is amazing. I know I am a new Member of Congress, I am a young Member of Congress, but I am also growing tired and old with all the excuses you hear around here for raiding and spending Social Security.

What we are trying to achieve with this resolution is basically this: while we are going through the waning days of our appropriations battle, while we are coming to the end of the fiscal year, let us remember what we all said in our campaigns. Let us remember the policies we produced in our budgets, and that is this: every dime of money we pay in FICA taxes for Social Security

should go to Social Security, should go to paying down our debt, and should go to paying off the debt we owe to Social Security, not to be spent on other government programs.

We are trying to get Congress to reaffirm that policy with this resolution today. Yes, I would say to the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI), it is not binding, but it does get everybody on RECORD saying "stop raiding Social Security."

The ranking member of the Committee on the Budget suggested that the raiding is already taking place, pointing to various legislative proposals in the House and Senate that are out there. If added together, it would cause raiding of Social Security.

Well, these legislative proposals have not passed yet. The tax cut was vetoed. The conference reports on the appropriations bills have not been signed into law. That is why we are trying to pass this resolution.

So as these bills are put together, as these conference reports are assembled, make sure you do not raid Social Security.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), the minority leader.

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

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, this resolution is the equivalent of saying that we are going to quit smoking while we are lighting a cigarette, or saying we are going to quit drinking alcoholic beverages while we pour out a beer, or any other equivalent that you want to talk about.

We do not need a nonbinding resolution to tell us that we do not want to spend Social Security money. We just need to do it. It is like the Nike ad, "just do it." We do not need to say what we are going to do; we need to do the right thing, not say the right thing.

As the ranking member on the Committee on the Budget, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) has pointed out, we already this year, unfortunately, are spending Social Security money.

□ 1200

There is only one way not to spend it, and that is to have a budget that does not invade the Social Security money and uses that money to pay back down debt so we are prepared for the baby boom when they come, which is what the President has been repeatedly asking us to do.

We do not have a budget on this floor today, and we are going to later today take up a continuing resolution because the majority in the House does not confront reality. The reality is, the budget that we are operating under spends Social Security money and does things that many in the majority and many on our side say we do not want to do. We need to stop the music, sit

down, and figure this out with the executive branch, with the leaders on both sides of the aisle, and come up with a new blueprint, a new budget, that does what a majority of this House wants to do.

If we continue to grind our wheels and waste time with resolutions like this, which are totally meaningless and time wasting, we are never going to get the work done of this Congress.

I urge the leaders on the other side, let us sit down, let us figure out a budget which is good for the American people, which does pay down the back debt, which does save Social Security, and gets America the budget that we need and want. Let us do it on time. We are going to miss the deadline at the end of this week. We are going to have 3 more weeks. Time is running out. It is time now to get this budget done.

As the leader of the minority, I reach out to the majority and say, let us sit down, let us figure out a budget that the President can agree to and let us get it done for the American people.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, could we inquire of the remaining time, please?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) has 10½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) has 9½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT).

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that the budget we are working on does the things that my friend, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) said we ought to be doing.

We must have voted on two separate budgets this year because the budget I voted on clearly balanced the budget without spending a penny of Social Security. We need to stick to that commitment. We do not need a new budget. We need a commitment to the budget we have.

What was that budget based on? That budget was based on the balanced budget agreement between the Congress and the administration in 1997, not 1987, not 1887; 1997. Two years ago, the President said, and the Congress agreed, this is how much money we need to run the government in fiscal year 2000. Suddenly, because of a productive economy and hard-working American families, we have more money than that; and suddenly we decide we have to have more money.

All this discussion about cutting programs is just not what we agreed to. We agreed that this is what we were going to spend this year. Suddenly now, if we spend what we agreed in 1997 to spend, we are cutting programs. How could that possibly be the case?

We have not broken the caps. We may do that. I do not know. We cannot possibly break the overall cap until we

pass the last budget. It is not possible to do. There is one overall cap. It cannot possibly be broken until the last appropriations bill is passed. We have not done that yet.

We need to work hard to find offsets. No question, if we stay on the course we are on right now, without working to find the offsets, we will go beyond that cap, but those offsets can be found; they must be found. This House has to dedicate ourselves to do that. We should not spend a penny of Social Security.

This should be the first budget since Eisenhower was President, since fiscal year 1960, when we did not spend a penny of Social Security. As has been said earlier by my friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI), that this is not the solution to the long-term future of Social Security.

I will say we will not find the solution if we cannot, first of all, have the resolve not to stop spending the money. This is where the solution to Social Security is found. It is found by not spending the money. Not spending the money is found by finding the resolve to find the offsets in the budget to see that we do not dip into that surplus.

Let us set a new standard for the American people and the future of Social Security.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN).

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, let me thank my friend, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution certainly is a feel-good resolution expressing the desire of the House of Representatives not to spend any of the budget surplus created by Social Security receipts and to continue to retire debt held by the public. It sounds good but the problem we have is that in 2 days, when we start the new fiscal year, we are going to start to spend the Social Security-generated surplus. That is because of the programs that the Republicans have brought forward.

First, they wanted to spend 100 percent of the on-budget surplus with a tax cut. Thank goodness the President vetoed that. Then they bust the spending caps. The projections are based upon adhering to the spending caps; but when regular spending is called emergency, such as our census that is going to come up, and we start to advance fund projects and say, well, we will pay for something in the other fiscal year that really occurs in one fiscal year, the Social Security surplus is being spent.

Do not take my word for it. The Congressional Budget Office has already told us that the Republican fiscal plan will spend the Social Security-generated surplus.

Now, I understand what my friend from California wants to do. He wants to have a responsible budget. So do I. Rather than spending time today, 2

days before we start a fiscal year, on this resolution, why are not we meeting to bring out a budget that protects Social Security and Medicare, that makes sure we do not spend the Social Security money, that retires debt, rather than doing this resolution which will have no impact?

It is only our Chamber that is doing it, and we are going to start the next fiscal year in 2 days.

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

Mr. Speaker, again I want to emphasize, we do not have a final budget yet. This is being done specifically to help put pressure on this Congress to do what we have already promised we would do, and that is not spend the Social Security surplus.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), a distinguished member from the Committee on the Budget.

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

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, during the August district work period, I conducted nearly 20 town hall meetings throughout middle and south Georgia. And at every stop, I had young people who came up to me and raised the concern that Social Security would not be there for them during their retirement years.

This concern is legitimate, as American taxpayers have witnessed the raiding of Social Security surpluses time after time after time. In fact, since 1983, the Social Security Trust Fund has run a surplus. And since 1983, Washington has taken that surplus and spent it on programs that are totally unrelated to Social Security.

This practice must end; and I agree with my colleague, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), the distinguished minority leader, who said that exact same thing earlier. After years of hard work, the independence that comes from financial security ought to be the one thing that our senior citizens can count on.

Now, earlier this year we made a commitment to this idea by overwhelmingly passing the Social Security Safe Deposit Box Act. Now, as we near the end of the appropriations process, it is important that we reiterate our resolve to reign in government spending and not spend one penny of the Social Security surplus.

I commend my colleague on the House Committee on the Budget, my good friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER), for bringing this legislation to the floor and for his tireless effort in promoting honest budgeting. This resolution reaffirms our commitment to the principles of honesty and accountability in the Federal budget process, and I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM).

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

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I have no argument with this resolution. I do have a problem with hypocrisy. Where has the majority been for the last 6 months? The Blue Dogs put a budget on this floor 6 months ago which was not just a meaningless, nonbinding, feel-good piece of rhetoric like today's resolution. Our budget laid out concrete strategies for doing what this resolution pretends to do: Protect Social Security with a real lockbox, fix Social Security and Medicare long term and do it now.

Where have we been the last 6 months? If the majority really embraced the tenets of today's resolution, they would have come on board the Blue Dog budget 6 months ago.

The gentleman is correct, we have a budget. The only problem is, that budget has already spent Social Security surpluses. We have already done it. How can we stand on the floor and make speeches like we are not going to do it when we have already done it? I do not understand this rhetoric.

Instead, we keep having devised scorekeeping and bookkeeping gimmicks which allow us to pretend that we kept the budget caps but which in fact have already invaded Social Security funds. When are we going to stop playing games and get serious? When are we going to have an honest effort at fixing Social Security and Medicare first and stop this endless speechifying on this floor about what we should do and the desire to do?

Where have we been? We spent 6 months debating a tax cut that would have gone into Social Security in ways in which no one on this floor could possibly have stood up and defended in the 2014 period when Social Security is going to be in its biggest trouble. No one would stand up and defend that, but here we are today with another meaningless resolution of a desire to protect Social Security when we know it has already been spent.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. GARY MILLER).

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I really hope the American people are listening to what is being said here today. What did the minority leader say? He said we need a budget that does what we want it to do. What is that? They want to spend more money.

He said let us figure out a budget that the President can agree to. What is that? He wants to spend more money.

When the President proposed his budget this year, he spent \$58 billion of Social Security money.

What do we have to do to get Members to focus on the issue? We are saying, let us save Social Security.

What do the others argue on that side? No, we do not want to agree to this resolution that we will not spend Social Security dollars this year.

We need to protect the money our constituents pay for Social Security in

a bipartisan fashion. If my colleagues really want to save Social Security, why will they not vote for this?

Actions speak a lot louder than words. My colleagues have come before the American people and their rhetoric says let us save Social Security, but their actions today will not vote for a resolution that says we are going to save Social Security.

None of us, including the President, should be adopting a strategy to increase pressure for spending new money just to force the other party to spend money from Social Security. It is easy to say we are going to play one up on the other side, we are going to present something that Social Security monies have to be spent for.

Let us stop that. Let us stop playing games. Let us do what we say we are going to do. Let us protect Social Security.

The gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) is coming forward with a reasonable resolution. My colleagues on the other side say it does not do any good. What harm does it do? If it does no good, it does no harm. Let us put our actions where our efforts are. Let us say we are going to save Social Security. I urge my colleagues, Democrat and Republican, and all of us should call on the President, to support this resolution and refrain from spending one dollar of Social Security money.

This is a noble goal. This is an appropriate line to draw in the sand, and it should be drawn here today.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT).

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the question was asked by the last speaker what harm does this do? Well, this harm that is being done here is throwing sand into people's eyes again.

Now, I know the Republicans are getting to the end of the fiscal year. They all know that so they must be getting ready to do something real bad because they come dragging this old horse out here again, and said we are going to pass a lockbox.

I do not know if this is the fourth time or the fifth time we have seen the lockbox on the floor, but the gentleman from California ought to get the equivalent of the Congressional Medal of Honor for being picked to drag this mother out here.

We have already spent all the non-Social Security budget surplus. We received a letter from the CBO, appointed by the Republicans so it has to be right, there cannot be any question about it, and we received estimates that are way understated, again from a letter from the CBO to us.

Now what I watched a couple of weeks ago was something that I have not seen since I have been in the State legislature. I thought I was back in a State legislative body when I saw people coming out here and saying, well, we are going to snatch this money from next year and move it over into this money, that is like taking one of

those lights up there and moving it over there and thinking that we have saved the light in this place. Light bulb snatching is going on at this point, and that has to be what is happening here because I can see these bills just being lined up to run at us for the next 3 days and everybody is going to say, but we are protecting Social Security, we have this lockbox right here. There is no bottom in that box.

□ 1215

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

Mr. Speaker, just in response, for the last almost 40 years that the other side of the aisle was in control, we never heard one word about protecting Social Security during that period of time. Now we are talking about it. We are putting it up front.

A final budget has not been passed, and that is the purpose of why we are here this morning.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH). (Mr. SMITH of Michigan asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, what we are trying to do is lock in our intestinal fortitude not to spend the Social Security surplus. As Democrats all vote for this resolution, we would hope they also would lock in their intestinal fortitude not to spend Social Security money.

As the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) had suggested, until the Republicans took the majority in 1995, almost every one of those 40 years that Democrats had control before that time, the Social Security surplus was spent on other government programs. That raises a tremendous problem of, not only the indebtedness, but the problem of interest and the problem of paying it back and ultimately the solvency of Social Security.

Democrats have to stop criticizing Republicans for not spending enough money, not spending enough money on water, not spending enough money on Medicare, salaries, pork, or other government programs. That is what is happening.

The President has suggested that we spend \$120 billion more next year. That was in his budget. So somehow we are going to have to have the guts, the fortitude to live within our budget without spending the Social Security surplus. I would hope both sides would work together to do that.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

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

Mr. Speaker, when the Republican Majority Leader was campaigning in Texas, he declared Social Security, "a bad retirement program," "a rotten trick on the American people", and said, "I think we are going to have to bite the bullet on Social Security and phase it out."

Of course all of us remember Speaker Gingrich's prophetic remarks that we should let Medicare "wither on the vine." So it is that, every time people that are predisposed against Social Security are caught meddling with it, they come up with a gimmick like this resolution.

Now, this year in Congress, the most amazing thing has been that we have been in an emergency state all year long. Every time that there has been a need to reach into Social Security, an emergency is declared. That is what happened in April when the price of getting the necessary funding for Kosovo was to attach billions of dollars of unrelated projects. That is what happened when the Republicans discovered the census that we have taken every 10 years since 1790 and declared we needed \$4 billion to fund that.

Now, I understand the Republicans have discovered it gets cold in the winter and hot in the summer, so they declared the Fuel Assistance Program an emergency. These folks have almost as many emergencies as EMS—all of them to reach into Social Security. Of course we would have had a true emergency had President Clinton not vetoed their tax bill.

This designation of an emergency is just a way of grabbing money out of Social Security and spending it on unrelated projects.

So this resolution basically says, by the Republicans, "help us," "help us to not steal money from Social Security again."

I think it ought to be approved, and I only wish there were a way to enforce it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT).

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. Speaker, when we get past all of the rhetoric, the legislation, and the debate, our job here in Congress is to try to secure the future for every American. There are no Americans more deserving than our senior citizens who have put into this Social Security system all of their lives.

The reason we have this resolution today and the reason I support it is that we are having difficulty in this budget process bringing one side of this room to the table to work in good faith to solve our budget differences without spending Social Security.

I rise in strong support of this resolution so that we can all go on RECORD that we are committed not to spend any Social Security surplus, and we will work out our budget differences aside from that.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY).

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, we are at the 11th hour in the appropriations

process to get the funding for the United States Government in place by the beginning of the next fiscal year. This is an hour where the American people have a right to expect straight talk and substantive action. Instead, this majority, in a resolution introduced at 10:30 this morning, gives them this utter nonsense, basically saying we pledge not to do that which we have already done. This resolution gives hypocrisy a bad name. It is patently phony.

The fact of the matter is that actions of this body have already spent Social Security trust fund dollars. Let us not try and do some kind of bait and switch on the American public. Be square with them.

We know that, to shore up Social Security for the long haul, it will not take paper resolutions that fly in the face of the actions of this Congress. It will take bipartisan action working with the President to substantively resolve the differences before us and ensure this program for the long haul.

Vote for the resolution, but it is phony.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time for closing.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN).

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

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up to the gentleman from North Dakota who just spoke. This is the type of resolution that gives Congress a bad name.

I know the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) has only the best intentions, but the fact is the CBO, our budget office, has already said that we have spent the Social Security surplus.

The problem is, Republican after Republican has come down here and said the President does not want to do this, the minority does not want to do this. They are in the majority. They control the Committee on Appropriations. They control the floor schedule.

Bring the Labor-HHS bill down to the floor. It is not our fault we have not gotten the budget done and the fiscal year is almost over. If my colleagues want to pass that bill and show the American people how much they want to cut out of education, do it. But they cannot do it.

Somebody said both sides cannot come to the table. Apparently that is all in the Republican Caucus because they cannot bring their own bills down here. They cannot keep their own bills within the budget caps set in the 1997 budget agreement. So they cannot do it on their side, and they blame it on us. They are in control.

Perhaps what the American people need to learn about this is it is time to get rid of that control and get some people who are going to be honest about the process and save Social Security.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time to close.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution is long on principle, a principle that most of us agree with. In fact, we initiated it in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. We laid out the plan for achieving a situation in 2002 where we would have a unified budget surplus.

We are well ahead of the plan we laid out for ourselves. The majority of the Social Security payroll taxes this year were, in fact, used to pay down Government debt. We are not quite there yet.

Now we have this resolution on the floor of the House at the 11th hour when we are facing a shutdown of the Government unless we pass one of these stopgap resolutions called a CR. We are out here spending our time on what is an empty gesture because this is long on principle, but short on practicality. Because this resolution vows that this House will not do what it has already done; and that is pass spending legislation that would require the Government to dip into the Social Security trust fund, borrow money from the Social Security trust fund next year as it has for the last 45 or 50 years.

If the sponsors of this resolution were in earnest, what they would be doing is proposing now an amended budget resolution, a road map to get us from where we are with one budget resolution, with one appropriation bill passed, 12 still mired in conference or committee, and not passed.

We do not need any more resolutions like this. We need to get down to work and pass a budget.

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

Mr. Speaker, the reason we are here this morning, and the reason we are bringing up this sense of a concurrent resolution to not, for the first time, be spending Social Security surplus is because of what we have done in the past. We have spent Social Security surpluses in the past.

The fact is we have not voted out a final budget yet. Even the resolutions that we have put out that have gone out of here, the President has indicated he was going to veto them because we have not spent enough in them.

Just yesterday, the President was out proclaiming that we had \$115 billion surplus. The fact is we do not have \$115 billion surplus if we figure in the fact that is Social Security. We have to begin somewhere. Let us begin today on voting out our budgets that are within the spending caps.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution is about committing this Congress to end the raids on Social Security. Four months ago, this House passed a Social Security lockbox by an overwhelming 416 to 12 vote. Will it be easy for this Congress to not spend Social Security surpluses as Washington has done for the past 60 years? No. I have projects in my district that I would like to have funded. But, Mr. Speaker, we owe it to our constituents and our seniors to stop the raids on Social Security.

Let us set a precedent in fiscal year 2000. Let us lock up the Social Security

surplus. I urge an "aye" vote on this measure.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I think this resolution is accurate but misleading.

The resolution says it's the desire of the House not to rely on funds from the Social Security trust fund for extraneous purposes, and to continue to retire the publicly held federal debt. I think that's accurate, because that is the desire—at least the professed desire—of all or nearly all Members. Certainly it expresses my preference.

However, it is misleading because it suggests that the House can escape arithmetic—and we can't. According to the Congressional Budget Office, some of all of the funds in question will end up being used for purposes other than those cited in this resolution.

That's not all bad, in my opinion. Congress should respond to true emergencies, such as those experienced by the victims of hurricanes and floods, and to other crisis situations at home and abroad. But we should not try to mislead people about what is involved.

We should be straightforward about our arithmetic, and not resort to phony book-keeping devices such as pretending that the constitutionally required census is an unforeseen emergency. We also should be candid about the fact that all these estimates of future surpluses or deficits depend on assumptions, including assumptions about the realism and desirability of the funding levels set in the 1997 budget agreement.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will vote for this resolution because I agree that bolstering Social Security and reducing the federal debts should be our top priorities. But I hope none of the resolution's supporters want to mislead people about what actually has been occurring this year in terms of the tax bill and the appropriations bills. We need to be straight with the American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 306.

The question was taken.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2000

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 305 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 305

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 68) making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2000, and for other purposes. The joint resolution shall be considered as read for amendment. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolu-

tion to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, for the purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from South Boston, Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY), my very good and hard working and overworked friend; pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time that I will be yielding will, as usual, be for debate purposes only.

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, this rule provides for consideration of H.J. Res. 68, making continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2000. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the resolution and provides 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. The rule provides for one motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, for 5 years, Republicans in Congress have repeatedly made the tough decisions necessary to get our Nation's fiscal house in order. The hard work of American taxpayers, combined with our commitment to spend their money wisely, has resulted in the first 2-year budget surplus since the 1950s.

I am very proud to say that our victory over irresponsible spending has been so overwhelming that maintaining a balanced budget is now a priority, not only for Republicans, but for the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) and other Members on the other side of the aisle who join with us in our quest for maintaining balanced budgets.

Now it is time for us to take the next step and live up to the contract that we have made with America's voters. People will say it cannot be done. People will claim that we are threatening our important national needs. I happen to disagree with that assertion.

□ 1230

We cannot lose sight of the fact that the \$1.7 trillion budget for fiscal year 2000 is the largest amount of Federal spending that we have ever had.

I do not believe that the unexpected tax revenue coming from hardworking Americans is a windfall given to the President and those of us in Congress to spend on nice-sounding, poll-tested programs.

First and foremost, our budget decisions should be made after we set aside the Social Security surplus, and we just had that debate on this resolution, which is obviously key to providing long-term retirement security to mil-

lions of Americans. Just like with balancing the budget, this will require hard work and fiscal discipline.

So far, under the very able leadership of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG), who is sitting here to my right, the House and the other body have each passed 12 out of the 13 appropriations bills. One bill, as we know, has already been signed into law, and we hope to have eight more ready for the President's signature before the fiscal year ends on Thursday. I guess we already do have three that are over on the President's desk right now we are hoping that he will sign, although I guess we have heard he is scheduled to veto one of them today.

The bottom line is that we are committed to getting the appropriations work done right here in the Congress. And I think, again, that the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) has done a superb job in this effort. This continuing resolution will allow the Federal Government to continue its normal operations while we meet that goal that we are pursuing.

Now, it should go without saying that continuing resolutions like the one we are going to be considering here, as soon as we report out this rule, are a normal part of the annual budget process. As my friend, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY), knows very well, when they were in the majority, it was routine for many appropriations agreements to get hammered out with the President during the month of October.

While we work in a bipartisan effort to wrap up the appropriations bills just as soon as possible, we on this side of the aisle remain focused on our Nation's top priorities: Saving Social Security and Medicare, which, again, was discussed in the last resolution we just had with us; restoring our Nation's defense posture; improving public education; and providing tax relief for working Americans.

We are making real progress on these fronts, passing the Social Security lockbox, the National Ballistic Missile Defense Act, the Education Flexibility Act, and the Teacher Empowerment Act. Although the President chose to veto the Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act, we remain committed to providing meaningful tax relief to the people who have, in fact, created this anticipated \$3.4 trillion surplus.

Completing the appropriations process is more than just an accounting procedure. Throughout this process, we need to keep our broader priorities in mind. I am very confident that H.J. Res. 68 will give us the time to get that job done within the next 3 weeks.

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

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my dear colleague and dear friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, here we go again. Every single year as October approaches, my