

There was no objection.

BUSH JOBS AND GROWTH PACKAGE PROMISES RECOVERY FOR ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. HARRIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I am amazed by the revisionist history that continues to accompany these arguments against the jobs and growth package. We continue to hear the accusations that the President's 2001 economic plan has not worked. Against what benchmark are we evaluating the success of this policy?

President Bush inherited a speculative bubble that had burst into the Clinton-Gore recession when this body first passed that plan. September 11, of course, worsened our economic outlook even more dramatically. What was the result, then, of the President's 2001 economic plan? A potential depression became one of the shortest recessions on record.

Now the economy is growing again, but the American people continue to fear for their own economic security and for the dreams they nurture for their children and their grandchildren. The recovery remains sluggish because the temporary nature of the 2001 tax cuts has restrained businesses from fully returning to an investment and growth mode. An unpredictable and ever-changing Federal tax policy is inimical to the long-term, predictable model that businesses require. Thus, this year's jobs and growth package finishes the job that President Bush and Congress started in 2001.

Mr. Speaker, President Bush's plan to revitalize our economy is rooted in values instead of expediency. It reflects the belief and the genius of the American people instead of the power of government. It follows the principle that the American people are better than Washington bureaucrats when it comes to creating jobs and wealth.

John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan understood the power of this idea. They featured tax cuts as the centerpiece of their economic agenda, launching two of the longest economic booms in American history. When Ronald Reagan inherited a shattered economy wracked by double-digit inflation, 20 percent interest rates, long gas lines, and stagnant productivity, he turned the conventional economic wisdom on its head. At the time, the so-called experts told us that high inflation was a necessary evil of a growing economy. They also said that the Reagan tax cut plan would not fix the economy; it would only worsen inflation. They were wrong.

President Reagan once quipped that when a friend of his was asked to a costume ball, he slapped some egg on his face and went as a liberal economist.

President Bush's plan will rescue us from the economic morass the last ad-

ministration left behind, just as Ronald Reagan's visionary leadership accomplished more than 20 years ago.

The jobs and growth package the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) has proposed includes all of the President's priorities, including the acceleration of individual rate cuts, marriage penalty relief, an increase in the child care tax credit, and a dividend cut. It also includes a capital gains tax cut that our economy desperately needs. Balancing the budget remains a very important objective, and growing the economy while controlling spending is the best way I know how to achieve that goal. I am concerned about deficits, but I am much more concerned about making certain that Americans have jobs.

The Federal Government's tax revenues increased after the 1981 Reagan tax cuts. The deficits of the 1980s occurred because spending increased at a more rapid pace than revenue. Thus, we must keep spending in check.

This legislation will provide immediate stimulus to the economy and to the stock market, creating more jobs and opportunity. Moreover, this bill will produce the prosperity over the long term, providing desperately needed tax relief for every American who pays our bills.

HEAVY-HANDED GOP PARTISANSHIP CAUSES SHUT-DOWN IN TEXAS LEGISLATURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, there is a very important event occurring in the State of Oklahoma right now. Fifty-one very brave, patriotic Texans are in Ardmore, Oklahoma, and they are there for a reason. They are there to protest the heavy-handed actions by Washington political leaders in trying to impose a new set of congressional districts on the State of Texas.

Now, redistricting is done every 10 years. It was done 2 years ago in Texas. That is not good enough for some people here in Washington. They want to require the State of Texas to do it again, even though the plan that was implemented 2 years ago was specifically approved by the U.S. Supreme Court.

So these 51 brave Texans have traveled to Ardmore, Oklahoma, to deny a quorum to the Texas Legislature. They are prepared to return immediately if the Speaker of the State House will simply say, we are not going to do redistricting. We did that. It was done 2 years ago. We do not need to do it again. They are prepared to come back and vote on all of the important pending measures before the State House that are important for the State of Texas. They will vote to change procedural rules to permit important bills to come up; everything except redistricting.

So the business of the State of Texas can go forward if the Speaker will simply say, yes, we do not have to do redistricting again. We are not going to be forced to do redistricting by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) and the people from Washington. It was done 2 years ago; it does not need to be done again right now, simply for political reasons.

I would like to read to the House, Mr. Speaker, a number of editorials around the State. Almost every leading newspaper in the State, almost every newspaper has sided with these brave, patriotic Texans and against the power grab by Washington Republicans. Let me start with the Waco Tribune: "Speaker Craddick has no one to blame but himself. He helped write history when he was one of 30 members of the Texas House who disappeared during the 1971 legislative session. Craddick and his 'Dirty Thirty' colleagues were protesting the heavy-handed actions of then House Speaker Gus Mutscher and his cronies who were involved in the Sharpstown bribery-conspiracy scandal. What Craddick has done is put his friendship with U.S. House Majority Leader TOM DELAY over the lessons of history and his own promises to run a bipartisan house."

The Dallas Morning News: "House Speaker Tom Craddick can halt the work stoppage in Austin. Mr. Craddick should resist pressure from Congress to contaminate a generations-old, census-based exercise by converting it into an ill-considered, purely partisan power grab. He should commit to leave Texas' political boundaries alone, and protesting Democrats should promptly return to the hive."

The Houston Chronicle: ". . . if they believe their principles are worth fighting for, and they have only one means to fight for them, it's difficult to fault them for it. Particularly in a fight that was thrust upon them by Washington-driven partisan politics. At the very least, Republicans pushing the redistricting effort bear a large share of the responsibility for this legislative standstill. We and many others have been saying since before the session began that Texas has too many important pieces of business to conduct to get bogged down in a needlessly partisan and divisive political and legal catfight over redistricting."

The Austin American-Statesman: "It's sad that it came to this, but the Speaker has been tested and found wanting on a number of issues. The one that sent the quorum-busters towards the exits was the grossly partisan congressional redistricting bill and how Craddick let it advance in the hasty, backroom way that it did. . . . The villain in the Democrats' statement is not Craddick, but U.S. House Majority Leader TOM DELAY of Sugar Land, an extremely partisan Republican who wants more members of his party elected to the U.S. House from Texas. . . . Refusing to show up for a legislative session is a desperate measure, and the

fact that more than 50 Democrats, one-third of the house's total membership of 150, did so is a sign of just how trampled they feel. This isn't a few disgruntled members sulking in their tents."

The Corpus Christi Caller Times: "Instead of seeking conciliation and appeasement of opponents, Craddick and Governor Rick Perry have chosen to run roughshod over their opposition, all but ending any semblance of bipartisanship. The other 'heavy' in this drama is TOM DELAY, the U.S. House Majority Leader, whose attempt to muscle a redistricting bill through the legislature triggered the revolt. Doesn't DELAY have more pressing business in Washington?"

The San Antonio Express News: "The Gingrichian hubris of the Republican-led House prompted Monday's revenge of the 'House Flies.'"

Now, why are all of the newspapers in the State of Texas siding with the 51 who went to Oklahoma rather than siding with the leadership down in the legislature? It is because the leadership is wrong; because they are abusing their position. They are requiring, they would require Texas to redistrict 2 years after it already drew the lines.

Now, if this were to happen, and I do not believe it will, but if it should happen, then what would prevent every State in the country from redrawing congressional lines every 2 years? That would be chaos, and that was not intended by the Framers of the Constitution nor the Members of this body who drafted legislation requiring that redistricting be done every 2 years.

Let us end this chaos. Let us restore order.

□ 1715

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHOCOLA). The Chair would remind Members to refrain from wearing communicative badges while under recognition.

THE REST OF THE TEXAS REDISTRICTING STORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as Paul Harvey says in his radio broadcasts, Let us hear the rest of the story.

My good friend from the State of Texas (Mr. FROST) from the 24th district has been expounding on potentially how unfair that particular redistricting plan that is pending before the Texas House is so I want to talk about the rest of the story.

Back in 1980, the redistricting process was controlled by the Democratic legislature in Austin as it should have been because they were in the majority in both the Texas House and the Texas Senate. We did have a Republican Gov-

ernor at that time. I believe Governor Clements. But the legislative process was dominated by the Democrats. And a map that was put out had 27 congressional districts in it. And I believe, I want to say four of them, four of the 27 elected Republicans, when all the dust had settled, in at least one of those districts was an upset; Congressman Jack Fields upset long-time incumbent Democrat Bob Eckhardt down along the Houston ship channel that was really drawn to be a Democratic district.

So we had a situation where Republicans were packed and the citizens of Texas voted over 50 percent for Republican candidates. We had four out of 27 seats in that particular redistricting process.

We rock along to 1990. In 1990 you had again a Democratic legislature and a Democratic Governor this time, and Texas gained three more seats; it went to 30 because of population growth. The next election about 55, 56 percent of the voters of Texas voted for Republican candidates, but because of the lines that were drawn, nine Republicans got elected out of 30, 30 percent were elected Republicans when we were voting 57 percent. That 27 percent Delta resulted in about nine congressional seats, electing Democrats that if you had a little bit more fairer lines would have elected Republicans.

Now we cannot stand here and tell you today on the floor of the House of Representatives that some of those Democrats that got elected did not deserve to get elected.

My good friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS), a good aggie friend of mine, he won in the district that could have been marginally called at least a swing district, but he did a good job. My good friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL), my good friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), they are winning in districts that are drawn to be Republican districts; and they are just doing a better job or the Republican candidates just are not up to snuff. That is fair. There is nothing wrong with that.

But when you have had two redistrictings done in 1980 and 1990 and it is obvious that the mapmakers, because they were controlled by one political party, which is fair, drew the districts to favor their party. And then we come along to the year 2002, and we elect a Republican House and a Republican Senate and a Republican Governor in Texas. And in the congressional elections we support 57 percent Republican candidates, and we still do not have over half the Congress seats, it is fair to say we should redraw the lines. And that is what the Texas legislature is trying to do right now.

I would say it is trying to do it on a bipartisan basis. No one can tell me that Ron Wilson from Houston, Texas, an African American who is chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means of the Texas House is not a Democrat. And he is part of this process where

State Representative Velma Luna, a Democrat, is helping to put this map together. So this is not a Tom DeLay map or a Joe Barton map or even a Tom Craddick map. It is a bipartisan map. It would elect two more Hispanics in all probability. It would elect probably one more African American; and in all probability, yes, it would elect more Republicans.

Would it elect 57 percent of the delegation to be Republican? Probably not, because there are still going to be some Democratic incumbent Congressmen who just do a good job, and their constituents support the job they are doing, and they are going to elect them in the districts that are drawn to be Republican. I do not have any problem with that.

But to stand here and say, as some Members have said before me, that what is happening in Austin is somehow unscrupulous or ill-towards or ill-founded is just not the case. We are simply trying to get the congressional districts to reflect the voting patterns of the State of Texas. And that is a good thing and not a bad thing.

The legislators that are hiding out up in the Holiday Inn in Ardmore, Oklahoma, it may be good PR, and it may be funny; but it is not what they were elected to do.

They were elected to go to Austin and participate in the legislative process, to win or lose based on where the votes are. I would remind my friends that when the Republicans were in the minority in 1980 where they did not have 50 Republicans in the legislature at that time, but certainly they did in 1990, they did not bug out. They got beat on the floor, but they stayed and fought. And I would hope later this evening or sometime tomorrow enough people come to form a quorum. If that does not happen, the likelihood is that some very good legislation is going to die, the reorganization of State government which would save hundreds of millions of dollars. The Governor will just call a special session, and we will do this in a special session.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BARTON of Texas. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman and I are friends, and we have worked together on a lot of issues and I thank you for yielding.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I will have 5 minutes and this is a time we might be able to exchange some ideas because I was there in 1981 and 1991, and I would be glad to talk about it.

AMERICAN ECONOMIC JOBS CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BALLANCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BALLANCE. Mr. Speaker, today as we stand in these halls, we are experiencing an unprecedented crisis in our