

this, and I think this is very accurate, and once again Mr. Thomasson is not known as any conservative or Republican columnist. In fact he is considered, I think, very moderate, and he said that, and in fact he frequently says things that criticize both the Republicans and the Democrats, and he said this. He said:

"The so-called Republican revolution is being undermined by a political ineptness hard to match in modern history. The result could be a derailing of the best opportunity in three decades to win control over runaway entitlements and to put some sense back in the congressional spending process."

But he goes on to say this, Mr. Speaker, and I think these words are so important for many people to hear. He said:

"For 30 of the 40 years Democrats controlled Congress before last year's GOP takeover, the majority displayed a constitutional inability to deal with the building budgetary crisis. Any effort to stabilize Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, pensions and welfare was not only rebuffed; it was labeled as mean-spirited and used to defeat its proponents."

So politically volatile were these issues that few members of Congress from either party would dare to whisper publicly what everyone knew: that unless something was done to control the costs of these huge programs, our economic future was in grave jeopardy."

Mr. Speaker, I think those words are so very important as we consider the debate that we are going through at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I will have more to say about this later on. I see that my time has expired.

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

[Mr. CLYBURN 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 California [Mr. KIM] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. KIM 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 Mississippi [Mr. THOMPSON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

EXPLANATION OF PRESIDENT'S DECISION TO FURLOUGH NON-ESSENTIAL FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

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

Mr. LONGLEY. Mr. Speaker, today is day 3 of the President's decision to furlough nonessential Federal employees, and I know that there has got to be a great deal of concern across the country as to exactly what is happening, and I think that we, as Members of Congress, owe it to the public to explain to them in our view what precisely is happening, and I would like to explain the furlough in these terms.

Yesterday was a defining day. It was a defining day in the debate about the role of the Federal Government and the interests of the respective parties in dealing with the problems of Government spending. It was a defining day for the President because he came out and made it clear once and for all that he is opposed to balancing the Federal budget, despite the fact that in his campaign in 1993 he claimed that he could balance, and would balance, the Federal budget in 5 years, despite the fact that in various times he has come out for either a 7-year balanced budget, a 10-year balanced budget, an 8-year balanced budget, or a 9-year balanced budget, or the fact that in January of this year he submitted to this Congress a budget that will never balance, that shows \$200 billion a year in deficits as far as the eye can see.

The President, Mr. Speaker, made himself clear last night. He indicated that he is opposed to balancing the budget in 7 years.

□ 2350

It was also a defining day for the Congress. Last night we voted a continuing resolution wherein 277 Members of this body went on record in support of a clean continuing resolution, and when I say clean, I mean a resolution that had as its only condition that the President agree to work with the Congress to balance the Federal budget over the next 7 years, no other condition; no conditions about Medicare, no conditions about tax cuts, no conditions about spending adjustments, nothing, other than one simple agreement and understanding, that we will work together to balance this country's budget over the next 7 years.

Needless to say, that passed by 277 votes, nearly a veto-proof majority. But I also need to chide this House, and bring to its attention the fact that in January of this year we had 300 Members who went in support of a balanced budget amendment that would have required and would require that we balance the Federal budget over 7 years. Of the 300 votes in support of that, we received the votes of 72 Democrats.

I should note that since January, four of those Democrats have crossed the aisle to join the Republican party, precisely because of their commitment and support for the objective of balancing the Federal budget. Nevertheless, of those 68 remaining Democrats who voted for the balanced budget amendment, only 48 last evening voted to actually balance the budget in 7

years, per the terms of the continuing resolution.

Despite all the sweet talk and promises and posturing that the public has witnessed, the fact remains that we must get on a track to balancing the Federal budget, that we need a commitment from the Members of this Congress, a commitment to meet their word and to fulfill the promises that they made in their campaigns. We must get this country on the track to a balanced Federal budget.

This is about whether the Federal Government is going to, once and for all, recognize that there is a limit to what it can spend, a limit to what it can tax, and a limit to what it can regulate. Again, I hope that the President sees the light and is willing to fulfill the commitment that he made in his campaign.

REPUBLICANS IN CONGRESS ARE DETERMINED TO BALANCE THE FEDERAL BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Fox of Pennsylvania). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I was elected to the State House in 1974, and began to serve office in 1975. At that time the national debt was about \$375 billion. I periodically would pay attention to the spending habits of Congress and note that it would spend more than it raised in revenues.

In the State House, I wondered how Congress could do this, because in the State legislatures, we of course have to balance our budgets. Obviously, a Congress, when times are difficult, during times of war and so on, during times of recession, it is logical that Congress would want to generate economic activity and help bring the economy out of its recession, but Congresses and Presidents collectively, Republicans and Democrats, allowed for deficit spending.

The national debt since that time has grown to \$4,900 billion, or \$4.9 trillion. When I was elected to Congress in 1987, I joined with a group of Republicans, primarily, and a few Democrats who wanted to end this. At the time our group was about 35 Members. Each year it kept growing, with each election it kept growing more and more and larger and larger, until last year our number was about 160.

Finally, with the election of 1994, we got a bulk of Members, Republicans and Democrats, who voted for the balanced budget amendment, as the gentleman from Maine [Mr. LONGLEY] pointed out, 72 Members on the other side, and every Republican except 1, I think, or 2 in the House. What are we trying to do? The first thing we are trying to do is get our financial House in order and balance our budget.

The second thing we are trying to do is save our trust funds, particularly Medicare, from bankruptcy. The third