

Washington continues to be that taxpayers' dollars are wasted on low-priority, redundant or unnecessary programs. The dollars in fraud, waste, and abuse total billions annually.

The basic message from November 8 was that people understand their Government is too big and spends too much. This historic Congress is now beginning to clean out the cobwebs left by 40 years of one-party rule. We cannot turn our backs on 40 years of mismanagement overnight, and we cannot turn back those mistakes. But in these first 100 days we will take the necessary first steps, voting on the balanced budget amendment, considering a line item veto, and beginning the hard but necessary work on cutting back on Federal spending.

As the Clinton campaign has been fond of saying, "It's the economy, stupid," Now America has told us, "No, it's the spending, stupid." So let us cut out the stupid spending and balance the budget.

UNFUNDED FEDERAL MANDATES

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

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning with concern on the much-needed debate on unfunded mandates that is being conducted by the Republican leadership. Everyone agrees in principle that mandates should be paid for. But before we leap, let us look.

I just returned from the California floods. All the talk was about help to bail out the families affected by those floods. When the water recedes, that talk will shift to responsibility. Flood prevention is dependent upon mandates. Think about it, flood plain zoning, flood plain mapping, flood plain building standards.

The Republicans are more interested in having a political victory in the shortest time possible than in good law. We should take time in this session, not the first 8 days, to talk about how the unfunded mandates are going to be carried out. Let us not go too fast, too far, too soon. Allow the public, not just the politicians, to be involved in the debate.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, when our forefathers met in Philadelphia in 1787, their goal was to write a Constitution based on limited government that provided for the current and future needs of our country. But beginning with several Supreme Court decisions in the 1920's and going right up through the present, that concept has been turned on its head. As a result, we have seen the Federal Government grow to almost a quarter of our gross national

product. This is far beyond what the founders could ever have imagined. Fueling this unconstitutional expansion of the size and power of the Federal Government has been deficit spending, which unfairly asks future generations to pay for the Government spending binges of today.

But on January 25, we are going to have a historic opportunity to reestablish constitutional limits on the power of the Federal Government when we vote on the balanced budget amendment. As Thomas Jefferson clearly sought in 1798, "If there is one omission I fear in the document called the Constitution, it is that we did not restrict the power of Government to borrow money." Let us correct that next week.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, over the past years I have supported various versions of the balanced budget amendment. However, I have not been willing to support just any version. After studying all of the proposals that will be coming up next week, I find them deficient in two areas, and I am introducing today an alternative amendment along with the gentlewoman from Oregon [Ms. FURSE] and the gentleman from Florida [Mr. DEUTSCH]. I should point out it is identical to the contract balanced budget amendment, except for two critical points.

First, it excludes the Social Security trust fund, which our Nation's senior citizens depend on. Second, it does not require a three-fifths vote to raise taxes.

If the House can vote with a simple majority to declare war or for impeachment of a President, we should be able to set tax policy in the same manner. This resolution creates a prudent and viable balance among fiscal responsibility, majority rule, and our responsibility to our fellow Americans.

Please join myself, the gentlewoman from Oregon [Ms. FURSE], and the gentleman from Florida [Mr. DEUTSCH], as a cosponsor of this balanced budget resolution.

PACK UP

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

House Democrats, stung by their historic defeat in the last election, have developed a new strategy. If you can't beat them, beat them up.

As a consequence, they have decided to launch a series of bizarre and unfounded allegations about the newly elected Speaker and the Republican majority.

Democrats have done this for a simple reason. They do not want to reform this House.

The American people are not concerned about book deals. They are concerned about the Federal Government's unbalanced books. They don't care about GOPAC. They want big spenders to pack up and go home.

Mr. Speaker, the Contract With America makes the Democrats squirm. They don't want a balanced budget amendment because they want to continue to spend without fear. Democrats don't want unfunded mandates reform because they like telling the American people what to do.

The reason why the Democrats are attacking the Speaker of the House is clear. Republicans want to change the Congress. Democrats want to change the subject.

SLOW DOWN ON UNFUNDED MANDATES LEGISLATION

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

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, this week the House will consider unfunded mandate legislation, H.R. 5. It is a proposal that admittedly has very popular support, and I as a former government official understand what it is about. But I am compelled to ask, what is the rush? The bill will be voted on without the benefit of hearings.

The committee met last week, where people asked a number of questions that were not answered. The sponsors refused to have these questions answered. Yet the committee has been unable to tell us certainly whether this will cover civil rights, how will the disabled be protected, how will environmental laws be protected. In fact, we are yet to define what an unbalanced mandate is.

We need to know these things. Different opinions about the coverage is expected, but certainly we should have a debate. We are going to eliminate the Federal laws that protect health care and clean water. Should you not let people know? I urge that we should not rush without a debate.

CHANGING THE BUSINESS THAT CONGRESS DOES

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

Mr. FOX. Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago a majority of both Democrats and Republicans voted to reform Congress. Now that we have changed the way Congress does business, I am looking forward to, in a bipartisan fashion, changing the business Congress does. The people of this country have become impatient with a government that has grown too big, spends too much, and is an enemy, not a friend, to working Americans.