

"Isn't it time we hold Congress accountable?" it says.

It goes on to say, "Just as every American sits at the dinner table, and as they do, they balance their own books, they balance the budget of a family, a business, it's time that the American people hold Congress accountable to balancing the books."

This week we will be taking up the balanced budget amendment, a piece of legislation that is long overdue.

We have already started giving the voters of America what they said they wanted in the Contract and now it is time to focus on the job at hand and get on with the people's business.

As a freshman Member of the 104th Congress, I was sent here by the people to make real change, to make this happen for the first time in 40 years.

Let us not continue backsliding toward politics as usual, but let us give the American people what they sent us here to do, and, that is, to pass a balanced budget amendment.

CALL FOR AN INDEPENDENT COUNSEL IN SPEAKER'S ETHICS CASE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, we Democrats are anxious to get on with the business before this House. I was pleased on Friday that the Speaker appointed his Members of the Ethics Committee and Minority Leader Gephardt appointed Members from the other side of the aisle as well. To avoid a conflict of interest, they each chose Members from the preexisting ethics panel. This was a wise move because the only complaint before the Ethics Committee right now is a complaint involving Speaker GINGRICH. Clearly the Speaker would have had a conflict of interest appointing new Members who would sit in judgment on his own case. Unfortunately, even with Friday's announcement, the Speaker still has a conflict of interest problem. The subject of the ethics complaint and the essence deals with the relationship of GOPAC, which is a political action committee controlled by Mr. GINGRICH, to Mr. GINGRICH's other enterprises.

GOPAC is an organization which has raised over the last 9 years anywhere between \$10 and \$20 million in contributions. Its contributors included people who have direct interest in what we do in the People's House here. Direct interest. They have contributed to over 100 Republican candidates and campaigns. Yet we do not know who contributed the money or how the money was spent, because GOPAC still refuses to disclose the names of its past donors, and, I might add, its past expenses as well.

The ethics complaint involves questions about the relationship of this

multimillion-dollar slush fund to Mr. GINGRICH's alleged nonpartisan college course. Clearly any person who has had dealings with GOPAC has a serious conflict of interest in this case. Yet in this morning's Wall Street Journal, we learned that 2 of the 5 Members appointed to the Ethics Committee by Mr. GINGRICH on Friday have had past dealings with GOPAC.

Mr. Speaker, this will not do. The only way we are going to get on with the business of this House and to get past this ethical cloud swirling around the Speaker's head, from his book deal to GOPAC, to his supposedly nonpartisan college course, is to have a professional, nonpartisan, independent outside counsel appointed to this case.

I would urge in the strongest way possible that that is the course that this body and that the Ethics Committee take.

QUOTES FROM THE PAST SUPPORT BALANCED BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HOKE] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, we are getting to the point in the balanced budget debate where the volume is being turned up, the heat is being turned up, we are starting to hear a lot of gnashing of teeth and beating of chests and wailing and wringing of hands, and I thought that it might be a good idea at this point to remind ourselves of the words of George Santayana who said that those who refuse to study history are condemned to repeat it, especially as we hear, and I talked last week a little bit, about the new species on the floor this year in Congress called the Metoobut.

The Metoobuts are known by their talking about a particularly positive and popular Republican principle, for example, in this case the balanced budget amendment, which the people of this country have said overwhelmingly that they want this Congress to enact, and they will say, "We absolutely have to have a balanced budget amendment, I support it completely, it's the best thing in the world, it's the greatest thing since sliced bread, but," and then launch into 55 reasons why we ought to have it maybe in the next millennium but not in this one.

I thought it might be instructive if we could just look a little bit at what other people in other times have said about the ability to spend the national treasury.

Going backward quite a way, I thought maybe we could start with the Roman statesman Cicero when he spoke in the Roman Forum in 63 B.C. Listen closely, because this has particularly special relevance to today, Mr. Speaker:

The budget should be balanced, the Treasury should be refilled, public debt should be

reduced, the arrogance of officialdom should be tempered and controlled, and the assistance to foreign lands should be curtailed lest Rome become bankrupt.

Then we move closer to our own era, and we find a gentleman named Alexander Fraser Tyler who wrote about the decline and fall of the Athenian Republic. He was a Scotsman, a scholar, a historian and a professor, and he wrote this book in 1805. He said that a democracy "can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves money from the Public Treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates promising the most benefits from the Public Treasury with a result that a democracy always collapses over loose fiscal policy always followed by dictatorship. The average age of the world's greatest civilizations has been 200 years. These nations have progressed through the following sequence." This is all according to Mr. Tyler:

From bondage to spiritual faith;
From spiritual faith to great courage;
From courage to liberty;
From liberty to abundance;
From abundance to selfishness;
From selfishness to complacency;
From complacency to apathy;
From apathy to dependency;
From dependency back into bondage.

Mr. Tyler's assessment is not very positive and I think I will take issue with his notion that every democracy will collapse over loose fiscal policy followed by a dictatorship. That is one of the reasons that we are not going to allow that to happen here at this time in the history, in the life cycle of our own Republic.

Let us go back to what one of our own Founding Fathers said, one of the greatest Founding Fathers, Thomas Jefferson, in 1789. He had one reservation about the Constitution, this document that he personally had had so much to do with authoring. He said, and this is 1789 he wrote this, "If there is one omission I fear in the document called the Constitution, it is that we did not restrict the power of the government to borrow money."

That is what our balanced budget amendment is all about. It is about requiring a supermajority, a three-fifths vote of the House, in order to borrow more money. The operative working section of this constitutional amendment is the requirement that 60 percent, that is the restriction right there, 60 percent of the House of Representatives and the Senate must vote in order to pass a raising of the debt service, or the debt limit, the ceiling on the debt. That is the restriction that Thomas Jefferson was talking about, right there.

Finally, I would like to quote from the founder of our party, Abraham Lincoln. He wrote, "As an individual who undertakes to live by borrowing soon finds his original means devoured by interest and next to no one left to borrow from, so it must be with a government."