

believe that asking the people of our Nation to receive just a little bit less of an increase in the Government payments they receive is to great a sacrifice to guarantee the future of our country. The time has come to enshrine the fundamental value of a balanced budget in the Constitution, and to distribute short-term sacrifice fairly and equitably among Americans of all ages.

We must remember, however, that voting for a balanced budget amendment is the easy part. The amendment has overwhelming public support, and simply voting yes puts each of us on the right side of public opinion without having to make the tough choices that will put the budget into balance.

It would be a cruel hoax on the American people to pass a balanced budget amendment without beginning to actually balance the budget now. If we start our work today, the impact will be less painful and our decisions less difficult than if we continue to postpone tough decisions.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentlewoman from Missouri [Ms. MCCARTHY] is recognized during morning business for 1 minute.

Ms. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday we will begin debate on a resolution to add an amendment to the Constitution to require a balanced budget.

The fiscal mismanagement that has existed at the Federal level has compelled this body to seek a constitutional remedy to our exploding debt problem. Over the years, attempts at statutory discipline have failed miserably. The succession of such failed statutory remedies—from Gramm-Rudman-Hollings in 1987 to the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990—liters the legislative landscape and affirms the need for a balanced budget amendment. It appears obvious that we need the discipline of a constitutional amendment to control Federal spending.

However, notwithstanding the need for the procedural discipline that a constitutional amendment will bring, we are fooling ourselves if we think the votes we will cast this week for the balanced budget amendment are the difficult votes. No, the truly tough votes will occur this spring and summer and in subsequent springs and summers when we turn to the budget and appropriations process. At that time we will see whether we are serious about cutting the deficit and whether we will make the sacrifices necessary to end the days of deficit spending.

During the course of last year's campaign I pledged support for the balanced budget amendment; I am committed to keep that promise. However, of equal importance will be my commitment to find ways to cut government spending without transferring that burden to the States or the elderly. Reducing government spending should be the goal of every

Member in this body, but that goal has to be reached without shifting the costs to other levels of government or those least able to pay.

THE 84TH CONGRESS, AN AUSPICIOUS MARKER FOR A PROUD DEMOCRATIC LEGACY

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

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. speaker, I am interested to hear that, from the point of view of some, the past 40 years of Democratic leadership in the Congress has been disastrous. The Democrats have squandered public resources, destroyed national institutions, and in general presided over the complete destruction of that ideal called the American Way of Life.

As I look back on those 40 years, a very different picture unfolds for me as the legacy of the Democratic Party. And since nothing is so liberating or enlightening as a simple statement of the truth, it would be useful for this body in general, and for my Democratic colleagues in particular, to review the historical reality, and from time to time, to remind ourselves what it has meant, and what it still means today, to be the Party of the people.

Let us start with 1955, Mr. Speaker—exactly 40 years ago. That was the 84th Congress, and even then Democrats were pursuing peace among nations, while building the physical, economic, and social infrastructure which this great nation requires to support the lives of its people.

Most significant among all the actions taken during the 84th Congress was the increase in the minimum wage from 75 cents to \$1 per hour. It is important to mark that point in history—that in the very beginning of this much maligned 40 year period, the Democratically-controlled Congress took action to improve the lot of the broadest possible base of our society. This was not an action which benefited only a few of the wealthiest individuals—like a capital gains tax. This was an action which benefited the entire Nation, because it lifted the boats stuck at the bottom and set a new and higher minimum standard of living for all Americans. Far from destroying the American way of life, Mr. Speaker, Democrats have defined the American way of life and brought it within reach of us all.

To normalize relationships with potential international partners, working with the President, the 84th Congress ratified the Southeast Atlantic Treaty Organization, established peace with Austria, and liberated Germany from Allied occupation.

To secure the nation, they established the national reserves.

In order to stimulate economic development, they built four major dams which provided electricity to the upper Colorado River region.

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To stabilize the agriculture industry, they established the soil bank program which insulated farmers from fluctuations in farm prices.

To connect this vast Nation from sea to shining sea, the Democratic 84th Congress initiated a 41,000-mile interstate superhighway program, and established the user-fee-financed highway trust fund to help pay for it.

To protect the quality of our environment for future generations, they passed and funded the Water Pollution Control Act of 1956.

A simple assertion of the truth, Mr. Speaker. I cannot imagine a more auspicious marker for our proud Democratic legacy than that provided by the 84th Congress. A self-governing people cooperatively managing their society, meeting their immediate needs, and providing for their future through the processes of government.

From this podium during the coming year, I will demonstrate by such simple statements of the unvarnished truth, that the American way is the way of the Democratic Party. Democrats have served this Nation well. We must claim and proclaim and embrace it as our mission to carry this great, but not yet perfect Nation forward as one Nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all.

TWO PROVISIONS WHICH BELONG IN BUDGET LEGISLATION, NOT IN A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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, I want to speak this morning about the balanced budget amendment that we are going to begin consideration of either later today or tomorrow.

This body is going to consider a bill which has two very, very important features in it. The one is a three-fifths majority to raise the debt ceiling of the Federal Government, and the other is a three-fifths majority to increase taxes, both of which are needed and are absolutely good policy and should be enacted.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, there are other issues and there are other sections of the amendment that we are going to consider that really do not belong in a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. The ones I am thinking of specifically have to do with, first of all, a requirement that the President of the United States submit to the Congress a budget that purports to be in balance, or that the Congress of the United States should adopt a budget that purports to be in balance.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about why those two ideas do not belong in the Constitution, because although, as well-intended as they are, as needed as they are with respect to the adoption of that kind of a balanced budget, the fact is that they belong in budget legislation and not in the Constitution.

In order to create a budget, when the President creates a budget, what he does, and when the Congress creates a budget through the Committee on the Budget, of which I am a member, what we do and what the President does is, he relies on the CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, or OMB, Office of Management and Budget, or Joint Tax Committee, to come up with projections about what we are going to spend, what we are going to receive in revenues, and then to make recommendations about what the budget should be based on those things.

The fact is that all of those projections made by OMB, CBO, or Joint Tax are, by definition, wrong. They must be wrong, unless by some incredible, extraordinary chance of luck they should be on the dollar.

However, what we are asking in this constitutional amendment, the way it is worded, is that the President and the Congress should determine in advance what will be in balance, what will not be in balance, what exactly every agency is going to spend, and how much money we are going to raise. It is impossible to do that.

What we do know absolutely is how much money the Government has borrowed and what the debt ceiling is. This is the absolute brick wall that will stop, except with a supermajority. Remember, this is not a complete stop sign. It is merely a hurdle you have to go over. It is a 60-percent hurdle in order to continue this binge of deficit spending we have been on, but it is a very, very important hurdle.

That requirement, that you must have a supermajority, a three-fifths majority in order to raise the debt ceiling, that is the linchpin of this constitutional amendment from the spending side, because what it means is that you cannot deficit spend without a three-fifths majority. That is the one that will work.

Bill Barr, former Attorney General under President Bush, has made that clear in his testimony. Dr. William Nescanin, former head of the Council of Economic Advisers under President Reagan, has made that point, and other judicial scholars and constitutionalists agree that it is the three-fifths supermajority to raise the debt ceiling which is the true linchpin that will finally at least create the resistance that Thomas Jefferson talked about in 1789 to borrowing money.

Jefferson said in 1789 he had one concern about this Constitution that he had been so instrumental in crafting and then adopting. His concern was that it did not create any resistance on the part of the Federal Government to borrowing money. That is what this

constitutional amendment will do, it will create the resistance of a three-fifths majority to borrowing more money and increasing the debt service, or increasing the debt ceiling.

What I am urging today, Mr. Speaker, is as we consider this balanced budget amendment there will be, I hope, in order a substitute that I took to the Committee on Rules yesterday, that is in all parts identical to the bill that was reported out, and I urge that Members will support that substitute that will be on the floor.

FORMER REPRESENTATIVE GINGRICH WOULD URGE ETHICS INVESTIGATION OF PRESENT SPEAKER GINGRICH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. DEFAZIO] is recognized during morning business for 2 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, there are those on the other side of the aisle who make light of the pending investigation on ethics of Speaker GINGRICH. I believe they do so at their own peril, and in contradiction of the position taken by Representative GINGRICH in July 1988.

In July 1988, Speaker GINGRICH, or at that time Representative GINGRICH, waxed very eloquent in a press release regarding the duties and the burdens of the Speaker and the duties and burdens of the House in investigating the Speaker of the House, and the fact that it should not be done by peers in the House of Representatives but in fact by an outside counsel, because it is so important to assure the integrity of that office.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we are confronted with a situation where several Members, several Republican Members of the Ethics Committee, have past associations with GOPAC, the secret and multi-million-dollar slush fund which is the subject of the ethics complaint.

Here we are, we have members of the committee who have a conflict of interest, who should recuse themselves, but if they recuse themselves, only new members could be appointed by the Speaker, so the Speaker in effect would be appointing his own judge and jury.

There is only one way out of this for Speaker GINGRICH. That is for Speaker GINGRICH to take the advice of Representative NEWT GINGRICH in 1988 and appoint an outside counsel, so the American people can be assured that the integrity of this office is upheld and the integrity of the U.S. Congress is upheld without any possible assertion of undue influence.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Edwin Thomas, one of his secretaries.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Hallen, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 16. Concurrent resolution providing for a joint session of Congress to receive a message from the President on the state of the Union.

□ 0950

CAN'T WE ALL JUST GET ALONG?

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

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I have given some thought to the events of the past week, the discussions and the debates. Through it all I am reminded of something I learned from my father years ago, and, that is, that great minds debate issues, average minds discuss events, and small minds talk about other people.

I have been dismayed that of all the many issues facing this Congress, particularly as we debate the Contract With America, that we find the other side, the minority party, concentrating on personal attacks on a Member of the Republican side.

Perhaps there is some basis for that, although I do not believe so. But the point I am making is, we have a number of major issues facing the Congress in the first 100 days and beyond. Furthermore, I believe the philosophy underlying the Contract With America deserves discussion and debate on behalf of the American people.

I believe it is important for us to engage in a dialog with the American people and discuss these issues with them, both Republicans and Democrats. I find it personally dismaying that so much emphasis during the 1-minute speeches and the 5-minute speeches has been concentrated on one particular person and one particular aspect of what that person has done.

I do not believe that this is behavior befitting the institution of the Congress. I believe that we have better things to do, we have more important things to do, and we have more important issues to discuss.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join in debating the issues that face this country, and the issues that are being presented to us daily on the floor.

There are certain things we can discuss during these 1-minute and 5-minute speeches which cannot or do not lend themselves very well to debate during the specific bills which are brought before the body. I think that we should take the opportunity during these 1-minute and 5-minute discussions to in fact debate the philosophy underlying this. I would also like to see more discussion about foreign relations