

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I request that the gentleman's words be read by the reporter.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the words.

The CLERK. "Mr. Speaker, We are here doing the people's business on a regular basis, and what we have just heard is a great hypocrisy coming from the other side of the aisle. The fact that I, in the 103d Congress, which is the only Congress I have had the privilege of being a party to."

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I object.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, the gentleman claims to have heard and therefore claims that it was spoken, a hypocrisy, by the previous speaker. If the gentleman does not apologize for those words, I will object to his withdrawing them.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to apologize for the use of the word "hypocrisy," and ask unanimous consent to remove those words.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there further objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HOKE]?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HOKE] may proceed in order.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I think it is a great curiosity that the previous speaker, who presided over this body as the majority leader in the 103d Congress, knows full well that during that Congress we were under the 5-minute rule many, many, many times, and during that time we never, never once suspended under the 5-minute rule so that we would not be able to sit in committee. So I think it is a great curiosity that today we should hear that this is a complete undermining of all of the reforms that we are bringing forward, that we are somehow going back on the business of the people's House, when in fact that is the only way that this place was run during the 103d Congress. It was never run another way.

#### DO NOT GAG AMERICA

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

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I have here the fundamental contract with America, the Constitution of the United States. And the first amendment of that contract says that the Congress shall make no laws abridging the freedom of speech. But what is going on in this House in the past 2 weeks is a clear violation of the spirit of that contract.

Last night the Republican leader reneged on one of the first promises of reform and instituted a policy that will

make it impossible—impossible—for Members of either party to be on the floor or to be in committee to debate important issues. This is just one, just one in a series of efforts by the Republican majority to shut down debate and gag the voices of the American people. Committees are being adjourned prematurely, the right to hearings is being refused, and minority Members are being denied the right to question witnesses.

Mr. Speaker, the Contract With America cannot be used as an excuse to gag America or shut down the Constitution, and we will not stand for it.

#### SEALY TIGERS WIN TEXAS CLASS 3A STATE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE

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

Mr. FIELDS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have a unique 1-minute in that this is a positive 1-minute.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment today to salute the members of the Sealy High School Tigers football team, who recently won the Texas class 3A State football championship before a cheering crowd of 12,000 people in Houston's Astrodome.

Sealy defeated Atlanta, TX, to win its first State title since 1978. When this year's season was complete, Sealy had attained a 16 and 0 record, the best in school history. While the excellent coaching staff and the tenacious players themselves are responsible for this outstanding season, news reports indicate that its opponents lacked. Before each game, Sealy's football team listened to a motivational speech from the movie "Patton."

I am proud of the young men of this football team, and I know you, Mr. Speaker, will join with me in saluting the Sealy High School Tigers on their Class 3A State football championship title.

#### OBSERVE NORMAL RULES OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

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

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, last night something happened that has never happened in my 12 years as a Member of this body: The Republican majority totally shut out the minority for debate on a bill, unprecedented and incredible.

Mr. Speaker, speaking out against this incredible transgression is not obstructionism; it is called democracy, civility, the normal rules of parliamentary procedure.

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If this type of gag rule continues, I can assure Members that the minority will not stand for this, and neither will the American people. If the majority thinks that a king and his court were elected to do anything they wanted, they will soon discover that the family friendly Congress will only be a dream.

#### BALANCING THE GOVERNMENT'S CHECKBOOK

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

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, every month millions of Americans go through the same ritual. They take out their bank statement and the records they have kept and they balance their checkbook. It can be a difficult task, and occasionally the numbers just do not add up right. However, for the Federal Government, the numbers have not added up right for over a quarter of a century.

The rest of America understands what it is like to live within a budget. They understand that they cannot spend more money than they make.

Mr. Speaker, every American household must balance their checkbook. It is time the House balanced its checkbook. When the time comes, I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join me in voting yes for the balanced budget amendment and restoring a sense of reality to this House.

#### WHERE IN AMERICA IS FREE SPEECH IF NOT ON THE HOUSE FLOOR

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

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, free speech, free debate, the free flow and exchange of ideas, has once again been denied the American people by the majority party.

Last night our Democratic leader asked to debate the majority leader. As is customary, 1 hour was set aside for debate. The new majority leader only granted our leader 3 minutes to debate, 3 minutes to debate.

Why will the majority not engage in debate on this floor? Why can we not debate the Democratic alternative to a balanced budget amendment? Why can we not debate the Democratic line-item veto, which was passed twice in the last session? Why will the majority not let America debate the Contract with America?

If there is no free speech, if there is no free debate, if there is no free exchange of ideas on this floor, then I must wonder where in this great Nation will the majority leader allow any free speech?