

PASS THE BALANCED BUDGET
AMENDMENT

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, you know, each month, sometimes at the beginning of the month, sometimes at the end of the month, but surely during the course of the month, the American middle-class families must sit down and assess their finances, and as a result of these assessments, many new dresses and suits and weekends out and stereos and want-to-have type purchases yield to such mundane purchases as new dryers, new washing machines, automobile repairs, new roofs for the house, other type things like that.

The American middle class must do this, because their expenses cannot exceed their revenues. It is essential. It is common sense.

And now the U.S. Congress can join them in this effort. We have ignored this for too long. The last balanced budget was in 1969.

This week we can change everything by the passage of a balanced budget amendment. Let us pass it and do what middle-class America has to do each month.

A PICTURE SPEAKS A THOUSAND
WORDS

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

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I read with great sadness and sorrow in this morning's papers that the new chairman of the Rules Committee has replaced the portrait adorning that committee's wall.

The portrait that had hung on that site was of Claude Pepper, one of the most revered and respected Members ever to serve in this institution, a man long associated with protecting the rights and dignity of senior citizens.

The portrait that replaces it, one of Howard W. Smith, a man perhaps best remembered for his obstruction in passing the country's civil rights laws. A man who in his own words "never accepted the colored race as a race of people who had equal intelligence and education and social attainments as the white people of the South."

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that a picture speaks a thousand words. I know the gentleman from New York meant no offense, meant no harm. He should change his mind. Symbols in our society are important. We do not need angels on our walls, but certainly we can do better. Mr. Chairman, please take down that picture. Take it down now.

NO TIME TO STALL

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

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, this is no time to stall. For 40 years the House leadership on this side of the aisle stalled reform from Congress. For 40 years the House leadership resisted passing a balanced budget amendment. They refused to reform our welfare system. They passed unfunded mandates on to the States.

And now there are those who are trying to put off reform again. That is why they use dilatory tactics to slow the legislative process. It is why they concentrate on issues that have nothing to do with changing this Congress. They wish to stall in order to deny the American people a real chance to change business as usual.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if the last election was any indication, this is no time to stall. I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to stop stalling and to start working with us to reform this Congress.

THE BALANCED BUDGET
AMENDMENT

(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, passage in its current form of the House joint resolution, the balanced budget amendment, would reshape the political landscape and impact the American people in ways that have never been felt before.

To avoid that result, I urge two changes: One, that we should not punish those who have given all of their lives—the aged; we should exempt Social Security from the balanced budget calculation.

Social Security is, indeed, the contract that the older Americans have with their country. That contract should not be breached. It should not be broken. It should not be modified, particularly for those who are in the sunset of their lives who have come to realize that this is their only hope for a quality of life.

Second, Mr. Speaker, we should tell the people what we will cut and what we will not. It is undemocratic to say that we are fiscally responsible and fail to tell the people what we will do.

America wants reform, but America wants reform knowing what they are doing.

WELCOMING THE PRESIDENT TO
THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, in his campaign for the White House, President Clinton said that he favored tax relief for the middle class. Well, Republicans in the new Congress agree that the Federal Government taxes and spends too much and that

taxpayers should have their tax burden reduced.

Through his Reinventing Government, President Clinton also supports efforts to reduce the size of Government. Republicans in the new Congress will work with the President to achieve a smaller, efficient Government.

You see, Mr. Speaker, there really are areas of agreement. In our Contract With America, Republicans have promised to accomplish many of the things that the President says should be done. But there is one slight difference: Instead of just talking about these things, Republicans have and will continue to deliver on our promises. And, we welcome the President to our agenda of lower taxes and less government.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAD
BETTER PAY ATTENTION

(Ms. WATERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker and Members, I am worried about this Congress, and the American people had better pay attention.

This Congress is rushing to pass a constitutional amendment to balance the budget, and most people do not have any idea how their lives are going to be impacted by this vote.

Did you understand the words of the Members who came before me when they talked about Social Security and the fact that it could be on the chopping block?

But let us not dwell on that, as bad as that could be. I want to talk about a children's program today. I want to talk about Head Start, that program which has proven to be an excellent program, that gives little children a head start, that gets them involved with education, that helps introduce them to books, that builds self-esteem. It is in rural communities. It is in urban communities. It is for the working class.

This is a program that could be cut, that could be eliminated.

American people, get involved and understand what is about to happen.

THE PRESIDENT SHOULD READ
THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

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

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that the President's State of the Union Address tonight from the rostrum behind me will be a great speech. The President always gives a great speech.

But, Mr. Speaker, the President is a little late. The voters sent a clear message last November to Washington, "Clean up your act and get your fiscal house in order."

The voters elected a Republican majority to disassemble the big Government bureaucracy that the Democrats built up over the last 40 years.

Republicans are keeping their promise with the American people through the Contract With America, despite the delaying and occasionally obstructionist tactics we see on the other side of the aisle.

We are working to reduce the size and scope and cost of government.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest to the President that for his State of the Union Address tonight he should just read the Contract With America. These are the issues concerning the people, and these are the issues they want to hear the President support tonight.

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FREEDOM OF SPEECH STIFLED

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

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, for 24 years I was a journalist. I did stories on and about murderers, rapists, drug dealers, politicians that were in trouble, even police officers who had crossed the line. And I was threatened many times, told not to carry a story or threatened if I was to move forward.

Never in 24 years was my freedom of speech stifled until last night. And it did not happen in a dark alley, it happened on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. Only two Members of the minority side were allowed to speak last night about a very controversial issue, and they were only given 3 minutes.

Never in my time in the House have I seen this. 202 Members were told, "You can't speak, you can't debate."

In all those years when I was threatened, in all those years when someone tried to stop the debate, the free flow of ideas, I learned one thing about it: that they were afraid of the exposure of that idea. They did not want to have a debate. And when you are afraid of debate, it shows the weakness in your philosophy and a weakness of where you are coming from.

Ladies and gentlemen, I think we have got to continue pushing for our rights to at least have a debate on these issues, win or lose.

THE CHOICE IS CLEAR: SMALLER, MORE EFFICIENT, LESS COSTLY GOVERNMENT

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

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, in the last election people gave this Congress a specific mandate: they want a smaller, more efficient and less costly government. This week Members of this body will have the opportunity to begin fulfilling that mandate by voting

"yes" on a balanced budget amendment.

I believe most Members would agree that this Government is too intrusive in our lives. By forcing ourselves to balance the budget, we can begin downsizing the Federal Government.

The choice is clear, and the American people know it. If you want smaller, more efficient, and less costly government, then you will vote for the balanced budget amendment with tax limitation provision. But if you want to maintain the status quo of intrusive, big-government solutions, then you will vote against this amendment.

I urge my colleagues to vote with the American people and for the balanced budget amendment.

LET US WORRY ABOUT THE BUDGET NOW, NOT IN 2002

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

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, as a former county commissioner and an accountant, I know what it means to balance a budget. I have balanced 16 of them. I know what it means to make sure that the numbers add up correctly. It means sitting down and setting priorities, deciding whether to build bridges, build a jail, or to build new drains down Main Street. It means seeing if revenues equal the needed outlays, and it means doing something about it if they do not.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle would like us to believe that the budget can be balanced by magic. They say if we pass a balanced budget amendment and it goes into effect in the year 2002, well, we will worry about it then somehow. I say we had better worry about it now. We have to start laying out a roadmap that will lead us to the balanced budget. We must let the American people know now what they are in for; namely, some very tough times and very difficult decisions. My friends on the other side of the aisle say we just cannot predict what will happen in 5 years. I have been predicting for years as a county commissioner what will happen 20 years later.

MORE ON UNFUNDED MANDATES

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

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, soon the House of Representatives will wrap up debate and vote on H.R. 5. But since debate on the floor began, it is clear the bill's opponents just do not get it. The supporters of unfunded mandates continue to argue that if there was no big brother, a Federal big brother, America's children would be subjected to all sorts of horrible things. They seem to be saying Washington cannot trust the State Governors and legislators with these responsibilities. Well, the taxpayers know better.

It is time to change that same mentality that has governed this town for the last 40 years. State Governors and elected officials were chosen, and the taxpayers are being belittled by Members of this body for those choices.

Apparently, the only people who know how to clean the water or take care of the children are those whose credentials are backed by the Federal bureaucracy. How unthoughtful to those State and local officials and to the voters who decided to change to a new way of thinking at both the State and Federal levels. It is time to give local officials a little credit and adopt the unfunded mandates legislation.

BOOKGATE

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

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, we have heard a growing number of conflicting and disturbing reports over Bookgate, the Speaker's book deal. Here is the bottom line, though: If the Republicans want to close the books on this episode, it is time for them to open up the books to the book deal and accept the call for an independent counsel to investigate these mysterious dealings.

Some Republicans are hoping that this issue will quietly disappear. But, Mr. Speaker, it will not go away, for a simple reason: America does not know what there is to "go away."

As recently as last week, the Speaker and Republican leaders met with media moguls in this country, including tycoon Rupert Murdoch. Murdoch is pushing the Congress to eliminate the ban on foreign ownership of America's TV and newspaper companies. Murdoch's publishing company, by the way, was the one that gave the Speaker the \$4.5 million book deal. Do not forget also that Murdoch and his lobbyists had a private meeting with the Speaker prior to the announcement of that lucrative book deal. Last week's meeting could have been just a friendly get-together, or there might have been a lot more to it than that.

It is time to, Mr. Speaker, open up the process and find out exactly what did happen.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the people of this country spoke last November. But it is apparent to anyone who is paying attention to what is going on in this House that the Democratic Party is doing everything they can to derail the Contract With America. They are proposing hundreds of amendments to slow down the process. All I want to say is that it is the