

they did not want it to apply to them and so they fired them before Christmas.

But, Mr. Speaker, not one peep in their defense. Not one peep. What hypocrisy.

□ 1215

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. GOSS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

FULFILLING OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I think that once again it is important to explain to the American people really what is going on in this body. The American people have sent us to work. There are millions and millions of citizens every day going to work. They hold in this body a great deal of trust. The responsibility of funding and financing this Nation, of ensuring defense, of presiding over the commerce and making sure that the economy is both healthy and provides opportunity for jobs belongs to this Congress. Yet now we find on January 25 we do not have a budget, primarily because the Republican majority never completed the task of providing the right appropriations bill in early fall of 1995.

We find now that we are discussing not lifting the debt ceiling limit and frivolously bringing this Nation to the brink of economic destruction. We have six former Secretaries of the Treasury who have indicated that, if we do not lift this debt ceiling and default on the full faith and credit of these United States, we will send this Nation into a tailspin that will be comparable to the Depression of the 1930's. Yet, we find that being still raised as a possibility by the leadership of the Republican majority.

My plea is not personally. It is not a personal plea. I will be here to work,

for it is the duty I owe to my constituents and my responsibility is to be here in the U.S. Congress to ensure that we have a budget. My plea is for those Social Security recipients on March 1 who will not get their checks. My plea is for the veterans who will not get their checks on March 1. And my plea, again, is for the Bosnian troops who will not get their checks on March 1.

It is for the working man and woman, who have a variety of credit cards. They might not want all those credit cards, but on each one is an interest amount. That will go up if we do not raise the debt ceiling by a certain period of time. So will the consumer loans, so will the education loans, all of that, the interest will be outrageous.

I do not believe that there has been a great deal of compromise to date. Much of the media reported the fact that the President spent most of the holiday in one-on-one meetings with the Republican majority leadership of the House to discuss saving Medicare, to discuss saving Medicaid, to discuss saving education opportunities for our young people and protecting the environment and to discuss balancing the budget.

Many great leaders have fallen over the last couple of weeks, and most of them were the kind of leaders who said government is not a win/win situation; government is the art of compromise and the ability to work together. Government should not allow diverse interests, singular interests to take over, but it should work toward common ground, focus, funnel your energies toward what is best for all of America.

I stand before this House because I am saddened as a freshman to believe that we have forgotten the Founding Fathers' wisdom, for we would imagine that they did not have the strength of mind to understand that this Nation would be some 200 million citizens plus when only at that time there were some 4 million in a few colonies.

They had a vision by establishing a presidency, the judiciary and these bodies of Congress, both House and Senate. They gave us our special responsibilities, the House being in control of the purse strings, getting through the budget and ensuring that this Nation stood strong with a solid economy.

Yet, I believe that the Republican leadership has forgotten the words and wisdom of our Founding Fathers, and that was that these bodies of government should work together, that we should not overtake each other but, in fact, in our own wisdom and responsibilities, we should each play our role. The President having responsibility for all of this country, and we, as a collective body, representing our constituents, coming together for the best common good.

This has not happened. So my challenge is that we must pass a clean resolution that lifts the debt ceiling to ensure that veterans are paid, to ensure that Social Security payments are made, that the troops who are laying

their life on the line in Bosnia are paid and their families back home are protected and that we never, never, never again shut this Government down. We owe this not only to our working Americans but to all America, because it is a tragedy that we have forgotten the words of our Founding Fathers that we are to work for the common good and together. We must do that.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. VOLKMER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, here we go again. There are not many on the floor again. We are not doing anything. Day before yesterday we did a few minor bills. Yesterday we did one conference report that everybody basically agreed with, very few Members disagreed with.

What have we done so far today? Nothing. What are we going to do today? I do not know.

Talk about lunacy. A mental institution, that is what this is. I never saw any place that operates like this. There is one Member, we are supposed to take up a continuing resolution today to continue the operations of the Federal Government that are not funded because the Republicans have not passed the appropriation bills. They have been working behind closed doors, some of them, maybe 5 or 10 of them at the most, not one Democrat, not one member of the public, not one member of the media been working on that bill. Nobody knows what is in it.

I have been told that there is one Democrat, one that just recently got a copy of what he thinks might be the latest version, which has gone through many changes on what they are proposing to do this afternoon to keep the Federal Government open.

It is very easy. All they have to do is come up here with a resolution that is clean and says that the Government shall be funded, those that are not shall be funded continuously for another 30 days, 60 days, up to September 30, anything they want to do. That is all they have to do. And it will pass here overwhelmingly. It will pass the Senate and the President will sign it and we can get out of here. But, no, not the way they are going to do it. It is lunacy.

What they are going to do is come up here with something nobody has seen. I doubt if one Member that is sitting here from the other party can tell me what is in that resolution. The gentleman from Michigan, can you tell me? No. The other gentleman from Michigan? No. None of them can. They cannot tell us. They do not know what is in it. I will yield to them. I want them to tell me what is in that continuing resolution.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. VOLKMER. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.