

“Here comes the sun,” and I say, “It’s all right.”

BRINGING TECHNOLOGY TO THE CLASSROOM

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

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, preparing and educating our students for the global economy of the 21st century must be one of America’s top priorities.

As a father and a former teacher, I am increasingly concerned about the shortage of technology in our Nation’s schools. While there are some 8.2 million instructional computers in our elementary and secondary schools, the additional resources that are needed are startling. At least 5 million new computers are needed at this time, and the number will be higher tomorrow and next month and next year.

There is widespread concern about the academic performance of students in the United States relative to their counterparts in other nations. It is time that we have a clear and focused vision to bring educational technology to the classroom for the sake of our most precious resource, our children.

This week I introduced legislation, House Resolution 295, calling for a commission on technology and education that is comprised of educators, parents and tech industry leaders to help bring technology into the classroom. If we can do this effectively, students will learn the skills they need to prepare for a successful future in our high-tech world.

Let us pass this resolution and give our kids another chance for a brighter future tomorrow in our increasingly competitive world.

URGING ACTION ON ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, another Friday has passed, another week is finished in Congress, and we still have no economic stimulus package. We need to urge the other Chamber to work with us to try and get something that will stimulate this economy.

Unemployment numbers are rising. GDP numbers released this morning were weak. We continue to see problems in the economy. Shopping and holiday shopping has dropped dramatically. Tourism in Florida is off 16 percent.

How much more information do you need in the other Chamber? I urge all parties, Democrats, Republicans and independents, on both sides of this Capitol to work together over this weekend and have an economic stimulus bill that will actually cause the economy to move forward. We hope on our side

that at least includes tax relief for hardworking families so they will have more money in their pockets to spend in their community. But there is no excuse for failing to act. I urge this body to move the legislation to the President’s desk so we can get the next quarter of the economy moving in a positive direction.

□ 1030

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2001, 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 gentlewoman 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.)

AMERICA’S RECESSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, on September 11 our Nation was mercilessly attacked in New York and in the Pentagon, and we may well have been made subject to biological attacks through the mail since, even some of which arrived at my own congressional office.

The impact of these attacks on our country is incalculable. It has been emotional. It has resulted in spiritual renewal in our country. It has resulted in military activity overseas and activity by the Justice Department in criminal investigations of a historic scope here in America. And, yes, the consequences of September 11 have been economic as well.

The reality is that what we found out this week, Mr. Speaker, is that beginning in March of this year and manifested in newspapers around America on Tuesday, we are in fact in a recession. All people around America know is recession is defined as when there are two consecutive quarters of net negative growth in the GDP, and that sad news arrived on the door steps of Americans this week.

Well, the reality is that the events of September 11, Mr. Speaker, contributed to a weak economy spiraling even further into recession, the recession in which we find ourselves today. Now, these facts may seem obvious. They may not even seem worthy of taking the time of this august Chamber today; but they are not apparently obvious to our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, who we are told in newspapers around America today including the front page of USA Today that political

attack ads will be launched beginning this weekend in markets all across America deriding the George Bush recession.

Let me say again, labeling the economic downturn as the George Bush recession, a key Democrat announced plans Thursday for her party’s first political ad campaign since the attacks on America on September 11.

So I rise today to simply ask the question, Mr. Speaker, whose recession is this? Is it in fact the George Bush recession? Well, let us begin with the facts. As I mentioned earlier a recession is two consecutive quarters of net negative growth in the GDP. That means that the recession in which we find ourselves began on March 1.

I seem to remember that the Presidential campaign was quite divisive. That in fact George W. Bush was not able to form his government until into January and, therefore, he had been President of the United States for approximately 5 weeks, Mr. Speaker, when this recession arrived. Now that to me is an extraordinary judo throw for any human being or any administration. In 5 weeks we are to believe that George W. Bush was such a repellent on the American economy that he drove us into a recession. That is obviously absurd.

But some might be quick on my side of the aisle to say this is not a George Bush recession we are in. It is a Bill Clinton recession we are in and there is certainly evidence to suggest that.

Manufacturers in the automotive industry and the diesel industry in the east central Indiana district that I serve have said that their orders were off beginning in the fourth quarter of the year 2000. The National Association of Manufacturers estimated that without an energy policy in America, fuel prices soared in 1999 and 2000, costing the economy more than \$115 billion, dragging down manufacturers and sending us into a recession.

But I am not here today, Mr. Speaker, to exploit national tragedy for political gain. So I do not stand in this Chamber even to say this is a Bill Clinton recession.

So whose recession is it, Mr. Speaker? Is it George W. Bush’s? Is it Bill Clinton’s? Is it the terrorists’ who attacked our country on September 11? The truth of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, it is none of the above. It is simply America’s recession.

The people of the United States of America learned a powerful lesson on September 11, and that is we are all in this together, that united we stand. The American people have rightly had much less patience for small-minded partisan bickering and finger pointing since September 11, and I suspect that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who would seize this moment for political advantage, to lay this multi-year recession driven even farther down by the terrorist attacks may well pay a penalty at the ballot box for their exploitation.