

That is what put people back to work. That is good news.

BALANCING THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SCARBOROUGH] is recognized during morning business for 3 minutes.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on what the gentlewoman from North Carolina said.

It is a good day in America. We can work together. There are 48 Democrats who last week said that it was important that we balance the budget, and that we balance the budget using true and accurate numbers. I mean, let us face it, in Washington, DC, no one side has the high ground on smoke and mirrors.

We saw in the early 1980's that it was the Republicans and a Republican administration that played with rosy scenarios and numbers. We have seen it throughout the 1980's. We have also now seen it in the 1990's that we have a Democratic administration that is awfully nervous about using real numbers. But the fact of the matter is, we can work together.

Unfortunately, this past weekend I heard some people talking about how the Democratic Party worked hard through the weekend in the grand tradition of FDR and Truman. I will tell you what I heard was a lot of demagoging on the floor. I heard NEWT GINGRICH compared to Bull Conner in Birmingham, AL. And of course those of you who know your history and remember, Bull Conner was the police chief who sicced dogs on minorities in Birmingham to eat them alive and turned water hoses on minorities to enforce segregation. That is not helpful.

It is not helpful when extremists on the other side of the aisle refer to Republicans as Nazis for wanting to balance the budget. We have to get beyond that. We have got to get beyond the demagoguery on Medicare.

The Washington Post had several articles and editorials this past week calling the liberals' hand on what I, and I hate to say it, but just on, if not lying, on blatantly misrepresenting Republicans' plans on Medicare.

This past weekend, the Washington Post wrote, though many of President Clinton's advisors think the GOP's premium proposal on Medicare is sensible and it differs little from his own plan, the President fired sound bites from the Oval Office daily, taking the low road in ways that only Washington pundits could recast as standing tall.

As polls showed, it worked. The Washington Post on November 15 wrote that the Democrats have been prospecting harder for votes among the elderly and against the Republican proposal than they have for saving the needed money to bring the deficit down. Of course last week's Washington Post editorial wrote that the Democrats, led by the President, chose

instead to project themselves as Medicare's great protectors. They have shamelessly used the issue, demagogued on it, because they think that is where the votes are and it is the way around the Republican proposals generally.

The President was still doing it this week. A Republican proposal to increase Medicare premiums was one of the reasons he alleged to veto and shut down the Government. Never mind that he himself and his own budget would countenance this similar increase.

We have said it before and it gets more serious now. If the Democrats play the Medicare card to win, they will have set back for years for the worst of political reasons the very cause for rational government on whose behalf they profess to be behaving.

So let us get real, let us talk reality, talk real numbers. The fact of the matter is we are protecting, preserving Medicare for future generations, and more importantly, we have done what this Government has not done in a generation. We put forward a plan to balance the budget. And I hope more Democrats come on board.

ON THE WAY TO A BALANCED BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GIBBONS] is recognized during morning business for 2 minutes.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I rejoice with all Americans that Government employees are back at work today serving the American public. That is the way it should have been all along. There was no need for the crisis we just went through. Apparently one person's ill-disposition got us in that jam.

Mr. Speaker, we are on the way to a balanced budget. We have been on that way for 3 years; 3 years ago, the annual fiscal deficit stood at about \$300 billion. It is now down to about \$160 billion annual fiscal deficit. It is coming down.

Every economist that studies this question will tell you how quickly we reach a balanced budget depends upon the strength of the American economy: How well does American business do, how well do American workers do, and how well the Government do because they all do well? That is what is going to bring the budget into balance. There are some problems that need to be fixed. They can be fixed and they will be fixed.

I notice that some of my Republican colleagues got up here and condemned the tax increase that the President pushed through 2 years ago. Let me tell you, ladies and gentlemen, the bill that comes to the floor from the Republican Party does not repeal a single one of those taxes that they have condemned so heartily. They control this place. They could repeal those taxes if they

wanted to, but they have not seen fit to do it. It is still the law of the land. So that is just crybaby time.

Now, the question before us all is not when the budget is balanced. We all want to do it as soon as possible. The question is how you do it and who is going to pay for it. Keep your eyes on that, American public. We do not want children, poor people, working poor people, sick people, or old people to have to bear the burden. Take the rich tax cut off for the very wealthy and the budget is easily balanced.

GOVERNMENT OPENS AGAIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. WICKER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, this is the Thanksgiving season, and certainly we have a lot to be thankful for today, particularly. We can be thankful that 800,000 furloughed Federal employees are returning to work. We can be thankful that there is a glimmer of bipartisanship here in this Congress. We can be thankful that today this House will vote on a bipartisan agreement, not only to end the Federal shutdown, but to balance the budget in 7 years with honest numbers. No back doors and no gimmicks.

I believe this balanced budget will be the greatest legacy of this Congress. This Congress is committed to working with the administration to do what Congresses should do every year, and that is balance the Federal budget.

Now, the next step on the road to fiscal sanity is just as important, and that is agreeing to a Balanced Budget Act of 1995. We need to balance the budget by agreeing to spend an additional \$3 trillion over the next 7 years, rather than the projected \$4 trillion we are on course to spend.

As my friend, the gentleman from Ohio, Chairman KASICH, has said, the debate is not about cuts. It is about whether we can forgo that fourth trillion.

I must admit, Mr. Speaker, that I am a bit confused today about the President's statement last night, as compared to the specific language of the continuing resolution which he says he will sign.

Now, the continuing resolution, which the President has said he will sign tonight, agrees to protect future generations and to protect Medicare, education, Medicaid, agriculture, national defense, and the environment. But it says specifically, and I quote, "The President and the Congress shall enact,"—shall enact—legislation in the first session of the 104th Congress to achieve a balanced budget, not later than the fiscal year 2002, as estimated by the Congressional Budget Office," a very flat commitment to balancing the budget within 7 years, according to CBO scoring.

However, in his statement last night, the President said, and I quote, "And