

growth initiatives for my State of West Virginia as well as the Nation has been the student loan program. We want more students in higher education, not less. We want more students about to contribute to the economy, not less.

Mr. Speaker, what most middle-income people say they would like more than a tax cut that basically goes to the upper-income people, they want deficit reduction, yes, but, more importantly, they want the chance for their students, their young people, their children, to improve and to have a chance and a start in this life.

RESPONSIBILITY ON TERM LIMITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HOKE] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, this time this week we are going to consider for the very first time ever term limits in the House of Representatives. I just wanted to take the opportunity to talk about that for a couple of minutes this morning. Because one of the things that we are going to find out this week is exactly where every single Member of this House stands with respect to term limits.

What we found out already is that the country as a whole is certainly in favor of the, 75, 80 percent. We now have term limits enacted in 21 States across the United States. We have term limits with something like 35 governors. Obviously, the President of the United States is term-limited to two 4-year terms.

The question is going to be before this House, will we have the guts, will we have the courage, will we, frankly, have the representative responsibility to go along with what the people of the United States want?

You are going to hear all kinds of crazy arguments in opposition to term limits. The one that I like the best, the one that I think is the least credible is the one that says—

This is a tough job that requires a great deal of technical skill, and it takes a long time to get it. It wasn't true maybe 100 years ago or 150 years ago, but now it is true because government is really very, very complex, and it is very, very difficult to understand all of it. And so the longer that you are here the better that you get to know it.

What I would say to that is that, frankly, to the extent that that is true and maybe in some aspects it is true, to whatever extent that is true, it means that the Government is too big. It means that Government has gone out of control, and it has become too complex.

What you need in a Representative are some fairly fundamental character traits. You have to understand that, first of all, there is a balance between leadership on the one hand and representation on the other hand.

What does it take to be a good Representative in this Congress? It seems to me that it is pretty simple. What it

takes is listening, the ability to listen, the ability to not talk, to shut up and to listen to what constituents say. What is it exactly that they want to have represented in the U.S. Congress? What concerns them? What is on their minds? What is on their hearts? What is it that they want to have amplified for them right here on the floor of this House?

You have to balance that ability to represent by listening with leadership. What is it that we want in leaders? What is it that we are looking for? What qualities do we want for leaders and what is it that is important for leadership?

I would say to you there are a number of things. There are a number of qualities. But certainly it is not a big mystery as to what you put together: good judgment, common sense, compassion, patriotism, a commitment to the future, a commitment to where we are going in this country, caring about our children.

But I think that, fundamentally, common sense has got to be way out in front on this issue. Because without common sense, without a basic understanding of what makes the world go round, we will never, we will never be able to accomplish anything of lasting value in this House.

Let us look back at some of the most famous Members of the House. Henry Clay. What did he bring to the party? First of all, he was here seven times. He served seven terms in the House and not one time did he run as an incumbent. Can you imagine that?

Right now, the statistics are that if you are running as an incumbent in November for the House of Representatives, chances are 9 out of 10 that you are going to get elected. They are actually greater than that. It is about 93 percent.

The system is completely rigged from franked mail to campaign financing. All the way from soup to nuts it is rigged by us Members that are here right now to make it easier for incumbents to get reelected.

Mr. Speaker, what you can see is that year after year after year, notwithstanding the elections in 1992 and 1994, if once you get to the general election if you are facing an incumbent, the incumbent wins 9 times out of 10.

If you look at the statistics on committee chairmen, which is a really scary one, and I use the word "chairmen" specifically because in the 103d Congress no women were committee chairs in the Democrat 103d Congress, the average tenure of each of the Chairs was 28 years. Twenty-eight years.

Is there any wonder that we have brought more legislation in the first 85 days of this Congress to the floor of the House than had brought up in the entire last Congress? Well, the reason for that is that this legislation had all been bottled up by committee chairs that had been chairmen on an average

of 28 years. It is going to be an interesting debate, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support all of the term limits bills that are going to be on this floor. We have got to limit terms here.

CUTS IN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. VOLKMER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, last week was a very sad week for the children of America, for the needy of America, for the elderly and the poor of America. Because last week the Republican majority did something that is very destructive to the elderly, to the needy, and to children.

What did they do that was so radical that will injure these people? Well, they cut \$66 billion out of programs for those people. They stand on this floor and they stand over here or at that microphone over there and repeatedly say, no, they are sending more money out for school lunches, for food stamps, for AFDC. They are sending more out. And yet CBO, their own people, admit they have cut \$66 billion, not million, billion dollars out of those programs.

What does it mean? Well, to my people back in Missouri, back in the Ninth District of Missouri I have had breakfast with some of the children that have reduced prices or free because they cannot afford to pay. I have had lunches with school children the same way in my district. I know of elderly who rely on food stamps, especially in the wintertime in order to eat because of the high winter rate for heating their homes and the fact that they have to live on \$250 or \$300 or \$350 a month in Social Security checks or SSI.

Those people know. I talked to them. They know what is coming down the pike. They know when the Senate passes that bill that they are in for a hardship unless our President, and I understand from the Chief of Staff of the White House that when this bill reaches his desk the President would probably veto it.

I say amen, amen. For shame that the majority party, for shame, would do this to the people of this country. At the same time, they are talking about giving more foreign aid, big foreign aid to other countries to help other people. That is a disgrace. That is a disgrace to the people of this country.

Mr. Speaker, it just shows you how they do things here in this new majority. They have the votes, so they are going to run right over anybody that gets in their way. That is what they have been doing.

It is an abuse of power. That is what it is, a gross abuse of power.

Who is running the show? Right from the leadership on down, they have got