yet again. The finger-pointing, epithet-throwing fracas between Majority Whip Tom DeLay (R–Texas) and Appropriations ranking member David Obey (D–Wis) demoralized Members just back from Easter recess, making the much-ballyhooed bipartisan retreat to Hershey, Pa., last month seem like just another empty feel-good session. These are senior Members of Congress, leaders in their respective parties. If they can't get along, who can?

The truth is: There's no joy in Mudville. Civility has struck out. Deadly serious disdain for the other party is the prevailing emotion, and total, no-holds-barred, take-no-prisoners warfare is the mode of combat encouraged, at least tacitly, by leaders in both parties. The crusade of Democratic Whip David Bonior (Mich) against Speaker Newt Gingrich (R–Ga), Ginrich's own history as a backbench guerrilla warrior, and the revolutionary fervor of the GOP class of 1994 all contribute to this toxic atmosphere. It's no wonder that the recommended reading in the House Republican Conference these days is the Army's field manual.

It's also no wonder, then, that DeLay and Obey won't even apologize to each other for the incident—the most they say is that they regret it occurred. More regretful than the combatants themselves are many other Members in both paties who have tried to launch a grassroots civility movement inside the House. The Hersheyites, led by Reps. Ray LaHood (R–Ill) and David Skaggs (D–Colo), are trying to put the contretemps behind them with a full schedule of meetings, briefings for other Members, and reform proposals in the works. To that end, Rep. David Dreier (R–Calif) will even host a hearing next week on whether changes in the House schedule—such as moving highly partisan one-minute speeches to the end of the day—can improve the 105th Congress's civility quotient.

But the civility hounds face daunting obstacles that we're not sure scheduling changes can fix. Members who so obviously detest each other will continue to do so—whether they spar on the House floor at 10 a.m. or 10 p.m. Hearings into Clinton White House fundraising this summer will raise the decibel level. Budget posturing will bring extremists from both parties into a pitch of rhetorical excess. And the list of challenges to civility goes on.

Maybe the answer is for Members not to take themselves so seriously. Silvio Conte never did. And he actually liked his job. He didn't revile serving in Congress, and he certainly didn't detest Members on the other side of the aisle because their party designation was different from his. Conte's secret was that he had fun on Capitol Hill. It's time to put the joy back into politics.

## TRIBUTE TO THE RETIREMENT OF JOHN T. WILLIAMS

### HON. ED BRYANT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 1997*

Mr. BRYANT. Mr. Speaker, according to Patricia Pair of The Shelby Sun Times, one of Germantown, Tennessee's newspapers, John T. Williams ''has had a full, interesting life.'' Friends and colleagues call him John T., which is to say he's called nothing but John T.

John T. became a public figure when he served as mayor for the town of Trezevant, TN. There, he chartered the town's first Boy Scout Troop. After a few years, John T. moved his family to Paris, TN, where he helped charter the community's first Chamber of Commerce. In fact, John T. served as the Paris Chamber of Commerce's first president, and is one of two living charter members of that organization.

In 1953, John T. sold his insurance business and moved his family to Jackson, TN. During that period, John T. was appointed by then President Dwight Eisenhower to serve as a U.S. marshal for the western district of Tennessee, serving from 1955 to 1960 with distinction and honor.

But serving as U.S. marshal was not to be John T.'s last task in government service. He ran for Congress, hiring as his campaign manager someone whom we all know as a U.S. Senator but in those days was still a little-known FRED THOMPSON. After his congressional bid and tutelage of young THOMPSON, John T. served on the civil service commission for the city of Memphis, and would go on to lend his vast skills and services to former Congressmen Robin Beard and Don Sundquist, as well as myself.

John T. has been an institution in numerous communities across west Tennessee. His record of public service stands as an impeccable example for all public servants. Along with those who have had the opportunity and pleasure of working and associating with John T., it has been an honor to have had him as one of my employees. John T., though we'll always have with us your many feats of volunteerism and helping hands, enjoy your retirement. You certainly have earned it.

## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 1998

SPEECH OF

### HON. COLLIN C. PETERSON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 20, 1997*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 84) establishing the congressional budget for the U.S. Government for the fiscal year 1998 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I support the Balanced Budget Agreement of 1997. I want to commend the chairman of the Budget Committee, Mr. KASICH, and the ranking member, Mr. SPRATT, Members on both sides of the aisle for their hard work in putting together this bipartisan agreement, and especially my ''Blue Dog'' colleagues in the coalition. Most everyone around here knows that this legislation couldn't have been developed without the centrist foundation we provided in the Blue Dogs' commonsense balanced budget plan.

Mr. Chairman, the American people want this to get done, and I intend to lend my support to passing this resolution through the process. A balanced budget is long overdue. I'm not happy with all of the details, but the moment is at hand and we need to pass this now.

I would rather be supporting the Blue Dog budget, but nobody got everything they wanted in this process, and I understand that. However, I am very disappointed by the Republican leadership's refusal to allow the coalition Democrats to offer the alternative resolution we wanted to offer, which was the Republican bill plus strong budget enforcement language. As it is, I am concerned that this resolution lacks the strong budget enforcement language necessary to ensure that the spending caps and deficit targets are met and that we do in fact reach balance by the year 2002. It's one thing to say you will balance the budget by 2002—it is clearly another thing to actually do it. A strong enforcement mechanism is necessary to require the Congress and the President to take action if this plan goes off course, and the budget fails to meet its targets for spending and revenues. We should have had the opportunity to strengthen the enforcement provisions of the resolution we are now supporting. I am sure a majority of Members would have voted for stronger enforcement if they had been given the chance. Hopefully, this shortcoming can be remedied by the conference committee.

Two years ago when the Blue Dogs first offered their own alternative budget, I told people it was the sensible, middle ground and the foundation for a bipartisan agreement. Two years later, after a lot of hard work by all the Blue Dogs, as well as other Members and the President, we have essentially arrived right were the Blue Dogs started—on the sensible, middle ground, where compromise and bipartisanship have finally delivered what the American people have wanted for a long time—a balanced Federal budget.

Again, I wish this Congress was going to get a chance to vote on the Blue Dog budget, but I recognize that democracy requires compromise, and that's what it will take from all of us to keep this process moving in the right direction.

This budget resolution is only a broad outline, and I know the Blue Dogs will continue working with Members on both sides of the aisle when the real work begins on a Medicare bill, a Medicaid bill, a tax bill, a possible budget reconciliation bill, and all of the 13 appropriations bills.

## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 1998

SPEECH OF

### HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 1997*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 84) establishing the congressional budget for the U.S. Government for the fiscal year 1998 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I have had the privilege of serving in this body since 1981, and one of the first bills that I supported 16 years ago was a balanced budget. This is a goal that I have worked for year after year—and it is a goal that has eluded us until now. So I am gratified that the Congress has taken a dramatic first step this week toward achieving that goal by passing the budget resolution.

It has taken us years to come this far—and it is a testament to the hard work and dedication of many current and former Members of