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House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. EMERSON].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 27, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable BILL EMERSON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING BUSINESS

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of May 12, 1995, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leaders limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. SCHIFF] for 5 minutes.

WHAT NEW BUDGET FROM THE PRESIDENT?

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, as our colleagues are aware, the House and Senate budget committees reached a resolution of the differences between the House budget resolution and the budget resolution of the other body, and we may get their conference report on the future budget as soon as this week, and I want to say that they have had to make a number of hard choices, just as each body, the House and the other body, had to make hard choices within their own budget resolutions.

Nevertheless, I have noticed a great deal of media discussion again comparing the President's new budget that he talked about in his televised presentation to the Nation a couple of weeks ago with the proposed united congressional budget, and by united congressional budget, I mean the House-Senate conference report which is coming to us.

Now, I have to say with the utmost respect: "What new budget from the President of the United States?"

Now, Mr. Speaker and colleagues, this is a budget. In fact, this is the President's budget submitted to the Congress in February of this year, which, as you can see by its size, goes through each agency and each program and point by point proposes spending in the next fiscal year and beyond. There is no such document from the White House, at least as of this time, which gives comparable point-by-point proposals for spending.

There is, if one contacts the White House, available some talking points about the President's new budget goals. But talking points are not by themselves a budget. A budget is program-by-program recommendations on spending.

The fact of the matter is in most respects we do not know what is in the President's new budget and, therefore, when the media compares the President's budget with the congressional budget, they are comparing our real budget with the President's talking points, and, as such, there cannot be a point-by-point comparison.

We do not know how the President's new budget will affect so many programs that are federally funded. We have a brief reference in the President's televised address to the Nation referring to a 20-percent cut in funding for discretionary programs except for the military and except for education, and the President stated he wanted to boost spending on education. But what

does that 20-percent cut mean? First of all, is it a 20-percent real cut? Did the President mean that Federal agencies will have 20 percent less budget or did he mean it will be a Washington cut, there will be a 20 percent decrease in the amount of new spending? I think that is a reasonable question, but there is no answer to it.

Further, does that mean a 20-percent cut across the board? That means, however you define a cut, will every single agency except for the military and except for the agency, have a 20 percent reduced budget, or does it mean an average 20 percent reduction so that some agencies and some programs will, say, remain the same and other agencies and programs will be reduced by 40 percent? We do not know any of that either.

So, to give some specific examples, we do not know what the congressional proposal is being compared to. Let me give three examples very briefly. First of all, to start with, my home State of New Mexico, there has been a great deal of discussion about how the future funding of the Federal Government will affect the two national laboratories in New Mexico and there has been a good deal of debate about what the congressional figures will mean in various programs. I want to say that all of this is fair commentary, that the national laboratories, I think, are important programs, but they understand, as everyone understands, that they will be affected as all Federal programs will, in the goal to reach the balanced budget. But the evaluation of how they are being treated by Congress cannot be made in a vacuum.

How will all the national laboratories fare in the President's new budget if the President's new budget is adopted as the spending blueprint for the Congress? Well, we just do not know because we have not seen those figures. Nobody thus far can answer that question.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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