

that we have to pass 13. In fact, if we had done our work then, we would not be in this crisis mode tonight.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. I think what the American people are reacting to is the extremism, the extremes which these bills contain, and that is why we are having such difficulty bringing them to finality. When we decide that our children need no protection in the water or in the food or the air, and our seniors or working families or any of the American people, that is extreme.

THE EFFECTS OF THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to dialogue 5 minutes with my colleague. Would my colleague continue her remarks?

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Yes, I am very concerned as to this contract. The Republicans talked about the Contract With America. I have often said it was a contract on America. A contract on the elderly people, a contract on the children, a contract on the poor people.

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This reverse Robin Hood, robbing from the working people and the poor people to give to the rich.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they have offered up provisions in this Contract With America that they could not pass in the Senate. I have always been so very proud of being a Member of the House. I served 10 years in the Florida House and 2 years here, and I have always been proud of the fact that the House deliberates, we have hearings.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I can thank God for the other body who just do not take up this work, this sometimes trashy work this House has produced, and pass it on.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. I served in both the Texas House and the Texas Senate, and I have never been in a position where I could say that I did everything the way I wanted it to be done, but what I can say is that everyone had an opportunity to be heard, to call witnesses, and then there was a fair vote.

Very, very frequently, I got a part of what I wanted, others got parts of what they wanted. But in the end, it was a piece that was made up of input and one that we could say that a clear majority wanted. It was called compromising, negotiating, agreeing, and then a majority win.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that that will work in any deliberative body, but without that, it cannot. Here I am not even sure we are listening, because poll after poll, and then finally last week's local elections, have demonstrated the growing level of opposition to the Medicare and Medicaid cuts and the education cuts, which are not popular, but no one is listening.

This budget is being held hostage in order to impose higher Medicare premiums on seniors. This is not what the public wants. This is a body of, by, and for the people. This is a democracy, but nobody is listening; at least the ones who are trying to ram their ideas through are really not listening.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that the Republicans really are interested in negotiating, despite these weak complaints about the Democrats. The Republican leadership has demonstrated no sincere interest in negotiating. If there was interest in negotiating, we would use the proper procedures. We would simply not load up these simple resolutions with all of the legislation for the entire session to be in them.

It is not fair. It is not right. It is not according to anyone's procedure. It is heavy-handed. It is insulting, and it is ignoring the wishes of the American people.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. One thing I have learned from the Republicans is: He who has the gold makes the rules. It is like if you invite someone over to your house to play cards and you change the rules each step of the way, that is what we are experiencing here. The Republicans change the rules to fit whatever they are trying to do at that moment.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Clearly, this has been a long-time strategy; one that I really could not believe that we would have persons in the kind of responsible positions as we have planning this shutdown longer than 6 months ago, planning to ramrod unpopular ideas and policies that will hurt the majority of the American people in simple resolutions, simply because we have not completed our work.

If these are policies that ought to stand, they ought to stand without being loaded into these simple resolutions. We should be able to work those out. We should be able to allow the resolutions to go forward clean, and then come to the negotiating table.

This is simply a technique, in my opinion, to pull the President into a fight, where he has clearly stated that using the proper procedure for negotiating is acceptable, but he will not be hoodwinked into attempting to negotiate by allowing these higher premiums to go in and all these protections to be removed from our air, food, and water.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Do we have a final word for our constituents as to what is going on in Washington and what they should do? I suggest that they call their Congresspeople and let them know how they feel about how they are wasting taxpayers' dollars by furloughing people, by shutting down the Government.

CONGRESS SHOULD COME TOGETHER AND SERVE AMERICA WELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARR). Under a previous order of the

House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, in a time of crisis, one wonders where is that forceful leadership of the majority? Where is the forceful leadership of the Speaker? I tell my colleagues where they are. They are playing a dangerous game of chicken. Mr. Speaker, I say to them, shame on you for doing that.

In particular, in a state of crisis and emergency, Medicare and Medicaid should not be played as pawns and toys in the hands of people who want to force their way. I say they need to find new toys and new games to play and not force these kinds of unacceptable views on the President.

When we get down to the brass tacks, it makes no difference who flinches first. That will be lost in yesterday's news. The people will forget all of that. What they will wonder is that we failed to govern, we failed to take care of the people's business.

By the time the majority comes to their senses, their capricious acts will have already hurt those people who can least afford to sustain these harsh blows: The elderly, the poor, the disabled; not only those who are being furloughed tomorrow or at midnight tonight.

The majority has voted to cut Medicare by \$270 billion. To do what? To make sure their wealthy friends get a tax break. The poorest of the poor, those who receive Medicaid, \$182 billion will be reduced. That will mean unnecessary pain for a lot of people who now already find themselves in distress.

Mr. Speaker, what does this mean for my district in North Carolina? It means North Carolina will lose \$6.75 billion in Medicare funding for the next 5 years. And add to that Medicaid, which again will lose \$6.76 billion. Those combined would be \$13.51 billion that we will lose in the State of North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, that will affect millions of people, and yet my colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to overload this resolution to continue to make the Government function by making sure we increase the premiums for senior citizens and Medicare. That is uncalled for. That is uncalled for.

Again, Mr. Speaker, what other things in the budget reconciliation do we find objectionable? Mr. Speaker, \$16.5 billion will be cut from the farming community as well. That will hurt people in my district.

Why is it that the President finds these objectionable? Because he wants to serve the majority: American people, whether they are farmers or senior citizens, or whether they are the poor. Medicaid itself in my district will affect some 882,000 people. Medicare affects some 999,000 people in my district. Should I not be concerned about that? Of course we are concerned about that. That is what we find objectionable about the budget reconciliation.