

are you staying? This place has just fallen to its new, all-time low. Never in the history of this Republic, during several wars, during depressions, during anything, have people stood up here and refused to pay the bills and said, OK, we will just take the full faith and credit of this great Nation, this Nation that has the best credit rating on the planet and we will just shove it off the cliff because we want our way. Never has it done that. I am embarrassed to be here.

The good news is, the reason some of my colleagues are staying is because today in Oregon we know that the people are waking up and the people are saying, this is outrageous. We just saw a race where one person who spent \$1 million more than the other lost. That says the people are saying, we have to pay our bills and we want this Government to pay theirs, and we do not want people playing fast and loose with the credit rating of this country.

I have a question and my question is, if we know that March 1 is a very serious date, why are we leaving and not having any votes until February 27? Why are we having the French Prime Minister in here, the guy who is dropping nuclear tests all over the Pacific that most people and most countries are outraged about? Why is he coming here to give a speech? We have time to do everything in the world except deal with the one basic responsibility we have, and that is to pay our bills.

Everything that is being discussed and everything that has already been committed to, this is not new spending; this is stuff that has been committed to. I think if we listen real closely and we are real quiet, we can hear the rest of the world laughing at us.

I think that we ought to stay here, we ought to get started on this debt issue. We should not be running toward being a defaulting nation or a deadbeat nation.

I just find it absolutely outrageous people saying, look, we are either going to be deadbeats or you are going to do it my way. It is like saying to Visa, I am not going to pay my bill unless you come paint my house, take care of my kids, walk my dog, and do anything I ask you to. I do not think that is how it works, and I think we all know that is not how it works.

So I guess I am basically saying, remember, this is about paying our bills. We have had over 200 years of history where people in this Chamber have never, never used that as a leverage or a gun at the head of a President or anyone else. That should be done. Those things were decided upon; that happened, and we should pay those bills just like every other American.

To play with the credit rating of this Nation we love is every bit as bad as desecrating the flag, as desecrating any other thing. I think it is really about patriotism. I cannot think of anything worse that we could do to our country at this moment than just trampling all over the credit rating and make this country be a deadbeat.

Think about what other countries are going to think. They are going to think, hey, if we default, we default. We could have National Default Day.

That is not what we were about, I thought. I thought we were about responsibility. I thought that is what Republicans were about, responsibility.

I listen to all of this with 23-plus years of experience, sitting on this floor, and it saddens me greatly. Every single thing that the President has been asked to do, he has come forward with a proposal. It ends up, they do not like what he did, so they want it still to be their proposal.

We do not have tantrums. Let us move on. Let us pay our bills and let us not be deadbeats.

#### PRESIDENT HAS NOT KEPT HIS PROMISES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. ROHRABACHER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, this President has kept all of his promises? I mean, who is kidding whom? This President was the President who campaigned vigorously across America 4 years ago, and what were the issues? He is going to end welfare as we know it, and now we see him vetoing and threatening to veto any piece of legitimate welfare reform.

What was the second thing that he campaigned on? That he was going to balance the budget; he is a new Democrat. This President is not a new Democrat, he is just like the old Democrats and the fact is, it is the old Democrats and his philosophy that have gotten America in the position it is in today, that we are going to have to make these tough choices or we will go broke.

Now, earlier I heard criticism of how this body is functioning and how much work we are putting out. I happen to have been here, and this is my eighth year as a Member of Congress. We have done more since the Republicans took over a year ago legislatively than in the entire 6 years that I served before the Republicans took over.

□ 1215

The reform efforts before that were thwarted time and time again.

Let me cite just one example. Our country is going broke, we are being told now we have to borrow more and more money from our children, and we cannot even put any type of restrictions on spending in that process. But let me give one example of a reform that has actually cost the American people tens of billions of dollars since I have been a Member of Congress, and how the other side thwarted our attempts over and over again to get even a vote on the floor. It was mentioned earlier by the gentleman from Florida. Should illegal aliens be consuming scarce dollars when we are going to the

poorhouse, we are having to borrow from our children? We tried to get that reform so illegal aliens would not be encouraged to come into this country to consume scarce dollars. We could not even get a vote on it.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I just wanted to make a point.

We heard the gentlewoman from Colorado make the statement, we should pay our bills. I could not agree more with that, but the question becomes this: Are we willing to rob future generations to pay the seemingly endless bills of today? That is the bottom line on this issue.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. There is nothing standing in the way of a balanced budget, there is nothing standing in the way to bring to an end this policy that we have had of having to increase the debt limit over and over and over again because we are nowhere in sight of a balanced budget. There is no one standing in the way except the President of the United States.

The other side had a chance. For 2 years the President controlled both Houses, or his party, controlled both Houses of Congress and every executive department and every executive office. All of those were controlled by the liberal Democrats who control the Democratic Party, and what did we get? We got no reform. We got no reform at all.

What do we Republicans get now, after working as hard as we possibly can, passing more reforms in a shorter period of time? We get criticism that we are not working hard enough, when in reality we all know it is the President of the United States that is standing in the way of these reforms, it is the President of the United States standing in the way of a balanced budget, it is the President of the United States who is putting the burden of higher and higher debt onto our children. That is what the problem is.

I am proud to be a Member of this body. I am proud to be a reformer in this Republican effort and NEWT GINGRICH's effort.

Mr. MICA. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, we on this side, I think, were foxed before by the President because he promised to come up with a balanced budget. He never did. Now they are telling us the responsible thing to do is raise the debt limit without any guarantees, to continue taxing and spending. We were betrayed before.

The alternative is the President's budget, which they are afraid to really even bring on the floor today. It has in it \$210 billion in additional spending. That is more than 1 entire year's deficit that we are running now. Then another surprise, \$66 billion in taxes.

They are saying we cannot pay our senior citizens or our veterans, but in fact we are going to make choices and we are going to pay if we do not make some changes here; our illegal aliens,

we are going to pay volunteers for paid volunteer programs, and we can dig up \$50 billion here or there for Mexico. We cannot make these wrong choices again.

#### REPUBLICANS ASKED TO PASS CLEAN DEBT LIMIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RADANOVICH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of revisionist history going on here on the other side.

First let us understand something. The demand was that the President would submit a 7-year CBO-scored balanced budget. The Republicans came saying, "He won't do it, he won't do it." He did it. They called off the negotiations. Apparently they were not serious about that.

They spent 50 hours at the White House. The leaders of the legislative branch, Senator DOLE, Speaker GINGRICH, and the President of the United States, first time in history, high-level negotiations, at the 50-hour point after conferring on a number of topics, the President put down a budget that was CBO-scored, 7 years, balanced the budget, and the Republicans said the meetings are off. Why did they do that? Because apparently they cannot stand success.

So now they want to up the ante, and what they want to suggest is what they are now prepared to do is to jeopardize the credit rating of the United States of America, to put this Government into default, and to potentially cost American families billions of dollars because they want to play fast and loose with the debt of this country and the debt limit.

They should not be allowed to do that. They should not be allowed to cost the American people billions of dollars by leaving town tomorrow. I guess they are going to stay to hear Jacques Chirac, the Prime Minister of France, and they are going to listen to him and then they are going to leave for 3 weeks and come back, apparently on the 26th or the 27th, 2 days before the debt limit expires, and play brinkmanship with the White House or with themselves.

Or really what they are doing is, they are going to play brinkmanship with the American people and their families. Because of the speculation and going down to the wire, people in the bond market will make decisions, the price of bonds will go up or they will not go up, and all of the American families that have automobile loans, that have adjustable rate mortgages on their home, that have a credit card whose interest rate is tied to indexes, who have home loans that are tied to indexes, all of those people will immediately be disadvantaged because the Republicans decided they want to leave town for 3 weeks.

I guess they want to leave town for 3 weeks because their program is not working. Someone just said they will not put the President's budget on the floor. No, the Republicans will not put the President's budget on the floor. That was the decision today. That is why we are doing 5-minute special orders, because they do not have anything to put on the floor, except we have this huge backlog of business to do.

We have not done the 1996 budget. The 1997 budget is supposed to be getting underway. We have not dealt with the appropriations bills. We have not dealt with the farm bill. We have not dealt with the Endangered Species Act, we have not dealt with the Clean Water Act, we have not dealt with regulatory reform, but yet the Republicans want to go home.

If your children did this, you would say, "Eat your vegetables first before you get dessert." If a corporation did this who was contemplating going into chapter 11 and they said, "We're going to leave town for 3 weeks, we'll get back to you on the day before the default," they would be fired. But somehow the Republican-led Congress can decide that we are just going to take 3 weeks off so Mr. DOLE can go campaign in New Hampshire and in Iowa, and the deficit be damned.

That kind of cavalier attitude is going to cost American families billions of dollars. It is going to cost this country its standing in the credit markets of the world. That should not be allowed.

It was the same cavalier attitude that led to the tragedy of shutting down the Government, to deny American taxpayers the benefits of the Government for which they were paying and to jeopardize the financial stability of Governmental workers and their families. It was unfair, it was rude, it was reckless, and it turned out it was repudiated by the American public; repudiated again as late as yesterday in the Oregon election where the citizens of Oregon chose not to go with an extremist attitude, chose not to go with an extremist agenda but rather to try to go with a constructive individual who is interested in working for change, to bring about real change as opposed to extreme rhetorical charges and rhetorical comments about change.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress should stay here, it should do its work and get its job done. If Mr. DOLE wants to run for President, let him resign as the leader of the Senate and get on with his campaign, and let the American public get the benefit of us meeting the debt limit on a timely basis, on a clean basis, without threats of blackmail, without threats of taking hostages, without threats of shutting down the Government. That is the way we ought to do business.

This obstructionism, this extremism ought to be brought to an end. Maybe the Oregon election will help bring that to an end. Maybe the Oregon elec-

tion will get these people to understand that their agenda is being repudiated as being anti-American and American family.

#### BOEHNER SEES NO PROSPECT OF DEFAULT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, there has been an awful lot of talk about the credit of the United States of America. Over the last 15 years, the Congress of the United States has consistently used the statute to increase the debt limit to move their agenda, the congressional agenda, through the White House and into law. We have seen this over these past 15 years by Democrat Congresses.

Over the last year, Republicans in Congress have felt pretty strongly about the need to bring fiscal responsibility to Washington, DC. We have accumulated some \$5 trillion worth of debt that none of us in this room are ever really going to pay off. Our children and our grandchildren are going to pay that off. We are imprisoning our children and our grandchildren by our irresponsibility over the last 25 to 30 years.

So now is the time to do something about it. The President of the United States wants us to give him a clean increase in the debt limit. He wants to put more debt on the backs of our children. What we are going to insist is that we make a down payment, a down payment on saving the future for our children and theirs, a down payment on moving us toward a plan to bring fiscal responsibility to Washington.

Our friends on the other side and the White House are making this big issue about whether we are going to default. Well, there is going to be no default, not now, nor is there going to be any default in the future. We believe that the debt limit is being handled by the Treasury, probably not in a way that I would do it, but it is being handled.

But I have to tell Members the frustration amongst Members on both sides of this Capitol about the refusal of the President of the United States to deal honestly with trying to bring fiscal responsibility to Washington is excessive. We sat through 6 weeks of meetings at the White House over trying to find some agreement on balancing the budget.

I have got to tell Members, looking back over those last 6 weeks, nothing really happened other than we were diddled with. We were props for the cameras at the White House, because the President of the United States in fact made hardly no movement toward any honest effort to balance the budget. Oh, yes, the President wants to agree on some numbers but never agree on the policies that would actually get us there. He wanted to do the same thing the politicians from both sides of