

Congress who has ever served with him will be proud to make that boast.

Mr. Speaker, I want to once again commend Mr. MFUME for his great service to this House of Representatives.

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

[Mr. SMITH of Michigan addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

HOUSE FAILS TO PASS FARM BILL

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

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I would certainly commend the gentlewoman from California for her kind words about Congressman MFUME. Members on both sides of the aisle are going to miss him. He spoke with a lot of emotion and from his heart and spoke with a lot of reason in a House that does not always exercise reasonableness, and he will be missed.

I have with me tonight my colleague and agriculture friend from Iowa, TOM LATHAM. We come here tonight out of a sense of terrible frustration for what is going on in the agriculture business in this House.

We made an attempt today to bring the 1995, and here we are in 1996, farm bill to the floor for a vote. The Committee on Agriculture has worked very diligently and very hard over the last 13 months trying to formulate and change the agricultural policy in this country to ensure that we have strong and viable agricultural programs moving into the 21st century. We met all day on Tuesday to discuss what is now the new form of the farm bill that is the second bill that has been passed by that committee, the first one having been a part of the Balanced Budget Act of 1995 that unfortunately was vetoed by President Clinton. Had that bill not been vetoed, our farmers would have had back in December the ability to plan and determine what they were going to be able to do with their farm operation for 1996. But that did not happen. So we came back to the table on Tuesday of this week. We again brought forth the bill that was contained in the Balanced Budget Act of 1995, debated it thoroughly in the Committee on Agriculture on Tuesday and were in great hopes that it would come to the floor today. But, unfortunately, our friends on the other side of the aisle would not agree with us to bring this bill up today.

TOM, I know you share that same frustration and I know your folks in Iowa are as upset as I am and you are and as my farmers in Georgia are.

Mr. LATHAM. You are exactly right. I appreciate the chance to visit with you about it.

I do not know how to explain to my farmers in Iowa who last year were devastated by floods in southern Iowa going down into northeast Missouri, what to tell those people, why a group of people, led by the leadership on the minority side, would stop a farm bill that would finally give them some hope, give them some income next year. Just continuing what we have now would give them no income next year. These people are going to be asked to pay back their deficiency payments.

If you will remember just last week, we tried to put the farm bill on the continuing resolution and once again, because of the leadership of the minority party, they threatened a filibuster on the continuing resolution and thereby stopped the farm bill at that time.

I am very discouraged at this point, because even though we were promised cooperation so that we could advance a farm bill, it was not brought forth from the minority.

We will continue to work very hard and during the next few weeks to make sure that we do get an agreement, that we get a farm bill. It is needed very much for people who are in desperate straits at this time.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. We are leaving here today. We voted on and passed a bill to adjourn this House until the 26th day of February. So we know it is going to be then. You are going to have the same problem in going home to your farmers and saying, "Folks, you know, we're not even going to be able to take this bill up until the 26th of February," and it really will not make any difference whether we took it up in advance of that or not because the Senate is out until the 26th of February, they have already said that, and we are sort of going to be in limbo until then.

I am very frustrated, I am very upset about this, and I certainly hope that during these next 3 weeks as we are out of this House, that all Members on both sides of the aisle are going to take the opportunity to sit back and reflect on the fact that 2 percent of the population of this country feed 100 percent of the population of this country, as well as many, many other hundreds of thousands and millions of folks all across this world, because we grow not only the finest quality and most abundant agricultural products in the world but the cheapest agricultural products in the world.

□ 2100

Our farmers need good, solid farm programs to ensure that they are able to get some sort of return on their investment to keep them going. That has been our goal in this farm bill from January 4, 1995, when we started last year. It is still our goal.

Mr. LATHAM. You are exactly right, and this farm bill is real reform, a way of getting our farmers to respond to the market rather than the government control, the centralized control that we have had in the past, and look-

ing at the floor here, I mean, there are three people on the floor here this evening. If it had not been for what happened this evening because of the minority's technical procedural glitch they put in, we could be having this farm bill debate right now and passing the farm bill for the people at home.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. I thank the gentleman for joining me tonight. I know you have the same deep regret that I do that we do not right now have a farm bill in place that we could have had tonight. We will continue to work over the next 3 weeks and hopefully on February 26 we will come back in the frame of mind to get it done and get it done soon.

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

[Mr. BEREUTER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. CLAYTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. MALONEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. MALONEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

HERE THE CONGRESS GOES AGAIN

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

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, I am going to follow up on the previous speakers a little bit.

Mr. Speaker, here the Congress goes again, quite literally goes right out that door, heads for the airport, heads for the trains, heads for the highway, heading home.

Of course, it has been a rough week that the Speaker's leadership has presented to the Congress. The Congress has been in session all of 2 days of which part of it was being here for a joint session to hear the President of France, Mr. Chirac. There was a well-known Republican Attorney General named John Mitchell who served under President Nixon who had a saying, I believe it was Attorney General Mitchell, that when the going gets tough, the tough get going. The Republican leadership had modified that a little bit to when the going gets tough, it is time to go, go home, go anywhere, get out of here, because the going is tough right now.

By March 1, this country will default on its debt, that is right, for the first time in 209 years, this country runs the risk of defaulting on the national debt.

Now, I might express, Mr. Speaker, this is not debt, this is not voting to extend the debt ceiling so that you can borrow more for future spending. This is simply acknowledging and paying the debts you have already incurred. If you do not like future spending then you do it the old-fashioned way, you legislate it so you do not have any more. You cut the programs. This is honoring the country's debt that it owes.

The previous gentlemen talked about the farm bill. Yes, that is also in crisis, and, yes, the Congress ought to be here working on it.

But why is it not being brought up tonight? They provided the answers themselves. It came out of committee on Tuesday. There are many of us, such as myself, who are not on the Committee on Agriculture. The rules of the House provide for a 3-day layover so you can study these bills, and yet this Republican leadership is not willing for this House to be in session tomorrow, Monday, Saturday, whatever it takes to get this bill done.

You know, Mr. Speaker, everyone knows about credit ratings. America's families worry a great deal about keeping their credit ratings solvent. Why is not this congressional leadership worrying as much about keeping the Federal Government's credit rating?

I was thinking about this the other day, Mr. Speaker, as I wanted to look at our mortgage. We have an adjustable rate mortgage, and so we keep our mortgage and we keep a lot of our important papers like a lot of Americans keep their important papers in a metal box under the bed. We do that, we keep it in a metal box because if there is a fire, they will be protected, or a flood, those important papers like a mortgage will be protected, perhaps even from prying hands.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, there is one danger, one crisis that a metal box cannot protect, metal, concrete, steel, Teflon, you name it, cannot protect against, and that is from a default. That is from interest rates going up on variable rate loans. That metal box cannot protect our variable rate mortgage from the \$1,200 that the average family will pay additional if this country goes into default. That metal box cannot protect future car payments from being 2 to 3 percent higher. That metal box cannot protect us against these credit rates, Visa credit rates, Visa, MasterCard, and so on, from going up. That metal box cannot protect us from the higher rates we will have to pay for our children to go to school. That metal box cannot protect us. Just as that metal box cannot protect this family, and a lot of us are families, guess what happens if this country goes into default, that metal box cannot protect the country.

The country has a metal box, and in it it keeps Social Security, it keeps

veterans payments, it keeps payments to veterans, honors its obligations to contractors. What happened to the country's metal box? Why cannot that be protected?

This Congress voted by a narrow margin to go home instead of making sure that metal box was secure. The fact of the matter is that failing to deal with the deficit or failing to deal with the debt ceiling, Mr. Speaker, failure to keep this country from going into default now can only worsen the deficit, because this country will have to pay more for the inevitable borrowing that is going to take place.

I voted against adjourning, Mr. Speaker. This Congress needs to stay here until it gets this problem worked out, until it gets the farm bill worked out we have got to preserve the credit rating for the United States.

The first time in 209 years it has really gotten to this point. Does anyone really want to push the country to this edge?

Mr. Speaker, in preserving the credit rating of the United States, this Congress could preserve a lot of credit for itself. We should not be going local this week.

FAREWELL TO REPRESENTATIVE MFUME

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

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a great American, a great humanitarian, a great representative of the people, a great friend—KWEISI MFUME, whose letter of resignation from this body was read earlier tonight. The event of the 104th Congress brought with it many changes. Many of these changes do not bode well for African-Americans, other minorities, the elderly, the poor, students, and working class Americans. Knowing this, I cannot be totally saddened by the departure of my distinguished colleague from this body, because I know that this leaving Congress is truly for the greater good of all these groups and the American community at large. Representative KWEISI MFUME's leadership is needed elsewhere at this time, and I look forward to supporting his efforts in his new role as President and CEO of the NAACP.

The NAACP is gaining the experience and leadership of a man who recognizes the importance of coalition building—he has shown his ability to move coalitions towards their goals without sacrificing principle. The NAACP is gaining the knowledge of a man who recognizes the importance of economic development and empowerment, and one who has used his legislative experience to advance the causes of small and minority-owned businesses and to encourage banks to invest in economic development opportunities within inner city communities. The NAACP is gaining the expertise of the former chairman of

the Congressional Black Caucus, who during his tenure, elevated the Black Caucus to a position of national prominence.

KWEISI MFUME now takes on a new challenge—to rebuild the NAACP and elevate its prominence. With this in mind, I cannot be saddened by his departure—there is too much to look forward to.

A HISTORICAL DATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from California [Mr. DORNAN] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. DORNAN. Mr. Speaker, I am sure glad that there is an outstanding member of the freshman class and a friend and compadre in the chair. I like to feel good vibrations coming down on the back of my neck from that lofty high perch up there.

Today is a historical day for me personally, Mr. Speaker. Today is the first day that when we adjourn here, that I will be a full-time candidate for the Presidency of the United States. My eight worthy men of high character who are all out there competing have been full-time candidates for an entire year.

I declared in this well at this lectern on February 7 last year, which was the 40th anniversary of my receiving my Air Force wings of silver. It was the 25th anniversary of the POW-MIA bracelet I still wear, No. 1, for a master sergeant, Jimmy Holt, from Hope, AK, one of the heroes from Hope who went missing on February 7 of 1968, right at the end of the infamous Tet offensive, and in the whole year, the leader of the other Chamber set the schedule so he was a full-time candidate whenever he felt like it. He has 100 percent attendance record last year and this year, never missed a vote. When there were three Senators in, when my friend Mr. SPECTER of Pennsylvania was in, all he had to do was watch the leader. When he left, they left. He went to New Hampshire, they followed him, or he went to Iowa or somewhere else. The other five are all literally full-time. My friends Allen Keyes and Pat Buchanan gave up their broadcasting and writing careers, to their credit, and have been full-time candidates for a year.

The two millionaires, multi millionaires, make \$15 million a year, Morry Taylor, and Steve Forbes, Malcolm Forbes, Jr., worth \$500 million or so, they have been full-time candidates, turning their corporations over to chief operating officers, and Lamar Alexander on "Meet the Press" this Sunday said he draws almost \$300,000 a year from his law firm in Nashville, from Howard Baker's law firm. He has been a full-time candidate for 3 years. They have all raised among them tens, twenties of millions of dollars. It is almost all gone, and the only one with