

Mr. GUTKNECHT. I guess we are not going to get an answer.

Mr. OBEY. That is the problem.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, how much is enough? \$645 is the number. We can fuss about how we spend it, but \$645 billion is the number. So let me remind everyone now when we are talking about numbers, when we started this year, the Republican budget said 627 was enough. The President said 637 was enough. The Republicans said that was too much. The Blue Dogs came in at 633 and said that is a reasonable compromise.

Well, where would we be tonight had the Republicans accepted our version and we would have been standing here tonight, and I suspect the gentleman from Wisconsin would have been agreeing with us on the 633, just like we are saying on the 645.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, if I can claim some time, having come from the State legislative ranks and now serving on the Committee on Appropriations, one of my big disappointments is that it seems that regardless of who is in charge, the budget is ignored; and I think we have to all hold the line on spending. I do not know why we ignore it year after year.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, again, I thank my friend from Texas for bringing up a point and for his unending advocacy of the position of the Blue Dog Democrats. We look forward to working at a conservative governing coalition with my friend, provided that those who decide who comes back to this institution see fit to return to us, and we look forward to that.

Yes, I think it begs a larger question of budget reform; but it still does not change the dynamic, which is even if we were to agree on a number, is there any guarantee that our President would likewise agree? And therein lies the problem: a continual moving target.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, the President does not sign the budget resolutions. The President has no authority under the law to sign budget resolutions.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Again, I thank my friend from Wisconsin who is a master of process. However, there is a larger question.

Mr. Speaker, I extended to the gentleman the courtesy of not interrupting his speech, and I would appreciate the chance to respond, and then if my friend from Georgia chooses to yield the gentleman time, he can do so accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, the American people want to know, can we come to an agreement. I think there are many different alternatives there, many different ways to get there. But I would hope that in the immediate days ahead, the President will return from the campaign trail, and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), the

Democratic leader, will return from the campaign trail, and that working together, we can find a way to put people before politics.

I have a great deal of respect for my friends on the other side of the aisle. There is not total agreement, but then again, that is the virtue, even with the challenge of serving in this institution; and I hope that we can put people before politics and people before process.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy, and I will be very brief.

Mr. KINGSTON. Let me say one thing about the courtesy. I appreciate you all mentioning that, but we are here, as my Democratic colleagues all are here, because we really do want to resolve this. We have philosophical differences, but I think everybody in this Chamber knows that the people want a product here. So I think we are all here because we want to do the right thing.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I totally agree. When we talk about process, for 16 years of my 22, I was in the majority party, and many on the Republican side blamed me as a Democrat for being part of the big spending problem. And I had to accept it, because we were in the majority.

My frustration with the Republican side, with the Republican leadership, not with my colleagues here tonight, but my frustration is, the Republicans continue to point the finger of blame at the minority side, and everyone that understands the process, understands that minorities cannot achieve that which the majority does not go along with.

Mr. Speaker, a little constitutional reminder: when the President is of the other party, the President has sufficient power, and the only way we can beat a President is with a two-thirds vote override. When we have a very small majority, it is important that we work to achieve some help on the other side.

My frustration is that at no time during the last 2 years has the Republican side ever attempted to work to override the President.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, we only have 2 minutes remaining. I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT).

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, in summation, I think people of goodwill ought to be able to resolve this. I think the American people are really pretty tired of the partisan bickering. I have said from the beginning, it would seem to me that reasonable people could come up with a final number and then work out these differences.

I do not think they are that big, but apparently some people believe that they could gain some political advantage by holding the Congress hostage through the month of October, and that strategy has not worked. Now,

maybe after the break, we can come back and get this thing resolved.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH).

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Georgia, and I thank my friends from the other side of the aisle who have taken the time to come down and offer their insights, their perspectives. I think even as frustrating as it gets, I think we ought to give thanks that we bring to this Chamber honest opinions and convictions, deeply held; and in an imperfect world, we attempt to find some sort of consensus and compromise. I think it is worth noting, as my friend from Texas has pointed out time and again, we have exceeded in terms of spending; and as my friend from Minnesota points out, the target tends to change, and again the question is, how much is enough?

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the participants of this Special Order and thank everyone for trying to keep working on these things dark into the night. Maybe, if we can get a few of our colleagues back here with us, we could resolve this.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a joint resolution of the House of the following title:

H.J. Res. 123. Joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2001, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a concurrent resolution of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 160. Concurrent resolution providing for a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate and a conditional adjournment of the House of Representatives.

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ISSUES OF CONCERN TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE NOT ADDRESSED BY THE 106TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PITTS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, earlier this evening I was concerned because I think the impression was being given by the Republican leadership and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that if we stayed here the next few days, that we were going to be able to accomplish something.

I think that was a false impression, because we all know that the other body has already gone home and passed a continuing resolution that brings the other body back I think on November 13 or 14. So as much as my House colleagues and the Republican leadership