

SOME REAL VICTORIES IN THE OMNIBUS APPROPRIATION BILL

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have been told that budgets are about priorities, where the taxpayers' money should be spent, and where the goals and objectives which we hope to accomplish can be approached in an effort to meet them.

The \$500 billion omnibus appropriation bill which we just passed and I voted for contains funding for many of our governmental agencies which provide a glimmer of hope for the poor, elderly, and disinherited of our society. While this bill is not picture perfect, it does in fact contain some real victories for many people throughout America.

The defense appropriation is too high, but we fought off attempts to cut the summer jobs program for disadvantaged youth. They now have hope again. We resisted attempts to cut low-income home energy assistance programs. Now seniors and others on fixed incomes will not have to choose between staying warm in the winter or buying food to eat. When the hawk comes to the windy city, to Chicago, and the wind off Lake Michigan drops temperatures to zero, 5, 10, and 15 degrees below, low-income people will have some help to try and keep warm.

We prevailed in getting \$1.1 billion as a down payment for 100,000 new teachers, which means that we will be able to reduce class size. Unfortunately, we did not get the money needed for school construction, which absolutely makes no sense, because what is the use in having teachers if we do not have schools?

The bill contains a significant amount of money for health care, which pleases me greatly. The \$100 million increase for federally qualified community health centers will go a long way toward serving the large number of uninsured Americans in rural and inner city communities.

It has \$10.6 billion for the National Institutes of Health budget, which provides much needed money for medical research; \$110 million to address HIV-AIDS in the African American community; \$1.4 billion for the Ryan White AIDS program, and \$105 million for the Healthy Start program.

This bill also contains needed funding for education: \$1.2 billion as a down payment to reduce class size; \$125 million for the school-to-work opportunities programs, which help ease the transition from school to work; \$600 million for TRIO funding; \$995 million for adult job training, which would fund about 386,000 participants.

But in reality, this bill is a testament to the will of the American people, who have indicated that they place substance over rhetoric, and that they appreciate real leadership.

I commend my colleagues, and I commend President Clinton for his politi-

cal acumen and skill in orchestrating this compromise. It is good for my district, and it is good for America.

AMERICA'S VULNERABILITY TO BALLISTIC MISSILE ATTACK

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I have come before this body over 150 times to talk to my colleagues and the American public about what I see are some of the important issues that this country faces.

Oftentimes my colleagues on the other side have repeatedly accused the Republicans of leading a "do-nothing" Congress. In one sense, I am very sorry to report that they are correct. This Congress has done nothing about our Nation's vulnerability to ballistic missile attack. Congress has failed to begin building a national missile defense system, a failure that is so inexcusable I will have to agree with my liberal Democratic colleagues, at least on this one point.

The United States has a policy of deliberately remaining vulnerable to a missile attack. Instead of building a national missile defense system, we place our faith in a piece of paper called the ABM Treaty. Our national security depends, therefore, on tyrants, dictators, and international thugs to respect that piece of paper.

Does anyone really believe that Saddam Hussein cares that we have signed an ABM treaty, a treaty with a country that no longer exists? Does anyone really believe that Mu'ammar Qadhafi will think twice about threatening the United States because we have signed the ABM treaty? Did Osama bin Laden reconsider his terrorist strikes against our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania because we are signatories to the ABM Treaty?

What good will the ABM treaty be against the Islamic bombs, weapons which will soon be in the hands of rogue nations whose citizens demonstrate against the great Satan by burning the American flag? Did North Korea step back from launching missiles into Japanese territory because America has signed an arms control agreement with a country that no longer exists?

Mr. Speaker, this policy of deliberate vulnerability is dangerous, it is foolish, and it is counterproductive. What is also strange is that we already have a technology to deploy a missile defense system. The U.S. Navy's Aegis cruisers are equipped with the technology that can be converted into a national missile defense system at a minimal expense. The Navy has already spent billions of dollars perfecting the state-of-the-art system, and it defies logic to prevent that system from being developed to end our vulnerability to a missile strike.

I do not understand why the other side refuses to take dangerous threats seriously. Must we always be surprised when the threat is upon us? How many times in history must we learn the hard way? How many more examples of rogue nations threatening the United States do we need to have before we wake up to the threats? Must the United States squander the technological edge that it has built up over the years with billions and billions of dollars for the sake of a meaningless arms control agreement?

Mr. Speaker, although we have, in the recently passed budget, approximately \$1 billion for some antiballistic missile research and development, the American people expect more. They deserve more, and failure to do so is a violation of the public trust.

I might remind my friends on the other side of the aisle that the preamble to the Constitution declares to all the world that "We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, and provide for the common defense."

Let us stop there, and provide for the common defense of this Nation, Mr. Speaker. Failure to build a national missile defense system immediately is a failure to provide for the common defense of America. Every single person in America will know it, but will they know it far too late to take advantage of it?

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CLOSING THOUGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as Speaker Newt Gingrich made his remarks in discussing the omnibus budget that we just passed, he asked the question, what we would have done if we had not passed this legislation. Frankly, I agree with him that this was a must-do situation. But it was not a situation that could not have been done differently. And frankly, those of us who voted for this legislation clearly recognized that the process was faulty, that what might have been totally best for the American people was not concluded because of the haste in which we had to work.

I am, of course, concerned with many issues that impact my district. And frankly, we have made some progress on this omnibus bill. I am glad that homeless youth in Texas will have an additional \$300,000 as given to Covenant House, Texas, and I am glad of the work of the appropriators with my offers to secure these dollars for that very worthy cause, to bring young homeless people into a clean and secure place in order to get them back on track.

I will be able to tell my housing authority, where some 25,000 people remain on a waiting list for housing, that

over the two-year period we will be able to apply for some 100,000 section 8 vouchers that help most of all the working poor move throughout the community in stable neighborhoods, to raise their children with support from our housing authority. Mr. Speaker, that is good.

I heard my colleague mention the LIHEAP funds dealing with providing support for seniors who are in need of supplement for cold weather. But let me tell you how much we needed it in Texas when a heat wave of national disaster level plagued our State and killed over 100 people, many of whom were seniors. We were able to secure some \$3 million also to assist in that crisis. And so we have restored, Democrats, the money that was gutted out of the labor, HHS. That is an important and needed resource for our seniors across this Nation.

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, we had a vigorous debate on the census. I believe that the results were positive for what this country will ultimately recognize that it needs, an accurate census count in the year 2000. The State of Texas lost 400,000 plus in the 1990 census because of an inaccurate count. We lost 65,000 in Houston alone. Those were predominantly minorities, Hispanics and African Americans. We now have the ability to use sampling, the statistical method until June of 1999. I hope that we will prevail on this process, for it is shameful that we would look not to count every single person within this Nation.

We just faced a terrible rain and flooding situation in Houston, and I am delighted that a project that we have been working on collectively as members of the Texas delegation and individually, in particular my district, the 18th congressional district, the Sims Bayou project will receive some \$12 million. Work has already begun. But we will now see for the Army Corps of Engineers to move this along and move it along for the citizens along that bayou to live in their neighborhoods with a quality of life not in fear of every raindrop that comes our way. And I might say that Houston gets a lot of raindrops.

I am not happy, Mr. Speaker, however, with the constant fighting over the NEA funds although we did fund it. I am calling now for all of our arts associations and organizations across the Nation to be assured that we work for the fight to protect the NEA.

As I close, Mr. Speaker, let me say that I will continue to fight for our home health care agencies so that we will have them in our community, and children's mental health. I am most proud of the \$5 million extra dollars that we have secured through our hard work to protect and help rehabilitate our children suffering from mental disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, we have a long way to go, but we did do what we needed to do today. We answered the Speaker's question, what would we do if we did

not pass this bill. We passed it for America, but yet we are challenged to come back here and do more for education and do more for our seniors and do more for our children.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE 105TH CONGRESS

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

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to address my colleagues and to highlight the accomplishments of this 105th Congress.

For the first time since 1969, Mr. Speaker, we have a balanced budget, a balanced budget which means lower interest rates for all of our families, when it comes to their mortgage, when it comes to car expense and when it comes to student loans.

And what is the biggest dividend from a balanced budget, Mr. Speaker, has been the fact that we now have a budget surplus. After 40 years of excessive spending, we now have a budget surplus. This year alone we are talking about 71 billion. Over the next 10 years we are speaking about \$1.6 trillion dollars. That is the American taxpayers' money, most of which, under the Republican-led plans, will go to shore up Social Security. A much lesser amount is actually needed, but this is to make sure that Social Security is secure for many years to come and also make sure the following takes place: We take Social Security off budget; we roll back the 1993 tax on Social Security; we increase the income that seniors can earn without deductions from Social Security from 30,000, under our proposal to \$39,000 a year.

We have also taken important steps to save Medicare, the health care program for our seniors. Under this program we have done two major things, Mr. Speaker. One, we have increased the penalties for those who would abuse Medicare, health care fraud, whatever provider they may be. If they would, in fact, abuse Medicare, they would no longer be providers and would be subject to penalties. Beyond that, we have five new health care prevention programs for our senior citizens under Medicare. We have the annual mammograms, the annual Pap smears, the annual prostate cancer screening, the annual colorectal cancer screenings and as well osteoporosis screening and the diabetes screening.

On IRS reform, what grade strides we have made here. The Republican-led House and Senate have done the very thing that I was requesting in my legislation to shift the burden of proof. Instead of the IRS commissioner being presumed correct and we guilty as taxpayers, we have shifted it. It is now assumed that the taxpayer is presumed correct and the IRS commissioner has the burden of going forward to prove otherwise.

FDA reform, we have now speeded up the approval for life-saving drugs and

medical devices signed into law by the President. I was proud to do my part to move this legislation forward to help people live longer and better while waiting for a cure or vaccine.

On education, the Republican-led Congress has given an additional \$500 million over the President's amount for special ed. Increased funding for the Women, Infants and Children program, our school nutrition programs, increased funding for Head Start, for the vocational education program, for charter schools. But the most significant program was one that came from the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS). This program says more dollars to the classroom and less money for bureaucrats; 95 percent of all dollars must go back to schools to use as they see fit, more teachers, new classrooms, maybe new computers, whatever each school district wants. This ensures that every every new school has an additional \$90,000, even more funds for each school district.

It also would do something for higher ed. Our legislation says we are going to increase the loans and grants for college students, highest ever Pell grants and our lowest interest rate in 17 years.

Yes, America is on the move because of a bipartisan Congress, led by Republicans, to make sure we made a difference in people's lives for working families, for seniors and for our young people. We made a real positive difference.

I am looking forward to working together with my colleagues as we move forward to make sure America is stronger and American is better.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

The following Members (at the request of Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BERRY, for 5 minutes, today.

The following Members (at the request of Mr. NORWOOD) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:

Mr. BURR of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GIBBONS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, today.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 109. An act to provide Federal housing assistance to Native Hawaiians; to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.