

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, having just returned from a series of meetings in Georgia and meeting with a number of constituents during the work recess period, there are three predominant things that people have on their minds back home, and I think this is probably true all over America, and that is Bosnia, Medicare, and the budget.

I would like to speak very briefly on Bosnia, because we are now in a new phase where the President, our Commander in Chief, has officially decided to embark in a new phase of the debate by sending and committing to send 20,000 of our troops over there. We all want to support troops who are anywhere fighting in the world at the order of the Commander in Chief, and yet certainly in Bosnia we have a lot of questions.

The questions that we had debated 2 weeks ago when we had a very critical vote on Bosnia, which in that vote Congress decided against sending troops over there, and our questions were at the time: What is our peril? What is the timetable that we will be there? What is the plan? Who are our allies? How long will we be there? How will we get out of being there? And what is the exact mission?

These questions need to be answered. I think within the next couple of weeks the President will be answering these through his staff members to Congress. Senate hearings, I believe, began today, Mr. Speaker. So I think it is appropriate that we look at this and continue this debate.

Mr. Speaker, as the previous speaker, the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. RAMSTAD] said, clearly the people of America at this point are not in support of sending troops to Bosnia; and I think, because of that, we need to define what the American peril is, and I have yet to hear what that peril is. It is very important for us to know before we send our sons and daughters over there.

Mr. Speaker, I was in Italy in August and had the opportunity to be briefed by NATO on the Bosnian situation. In August, when one talked about Bosnia, it was years and years away in terms of everything that has happened; and yet, in that discussion, one of the things that struck me was who are our allies. It is not just Bosnians and Croats and Serbians. There are all kinds of subgroups and counter groups and local warlords and so forth.

I know often when we try to take humanitarian supplies into one section another group down the road or up the road from them would block the supply trucks, even though they all had the same label as being Bosnians. Yet they were different, because they were from a different territory. So one of my main questions is going to be that I hope to find out in the next couple of weeks who will our allies be.

Then a question that has come up more and more lately as we debate balancing the budget is what is this going to cost us? Will we really be able to get

out of there in a year or is it going to be like so many other peaces that we have won worldwide?

The peace that we got in Somalia, the peace that we got in Haiti, the peace that we got anywhere is really purchased peace. It is a matter of the United States of America pulling out the checkbook and buying off the warring factions. I would like to know what those costs are. I know our taxpayers back home would like to know also.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to have debates and we are going to have hearings, and this is a good process. The War Powers Act has been debated since the inception of our great democracy, and yet the Congress and the President still view these things differently. Again, we do want to support the troops individually. It looks like at this point they are going to go over there, yet at the same time we have congressional duties of our own and we will begin immediately in due diligence to answer some of the questions that we have been asking on the floor of the House.

Mr. Speaker, on Medicare let me just say this. The gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS], who is the budget expert, is down here. Our colleague, the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Mrs. JOHNSON] was able to come to Savannah this weekend and found the time to meet with a lot of our hospitals and nursing homes and home health care professionals and other health care providers, and we talked about the fact that in April the Medicare trustees said Medicare is going to run out of money in 2 years, it will be bankrupt in 6 years; it is the obligation and duty of the Congress to act to preserve and protect Medicare, which we have been doing.

We are trying to slow down the inflation rate of Medicare, the growth of it. It is right now at about 11 percent; regular medical inflation is more in the 4 to 6 percent range. We believe if we can get Medicare costs in that 4 to 6 percent range, we can save it. Yet at the same time, we are committed to increased spending per recipient from \$4,800 to \$6,700.

As I said that to the people back home, they said, well, that is not a cut. We said, well, yes, it is true. We are going from about \$178 billion to \$278 billion.

Mr. Speaker, let me yield back the balance of my time, and maybe the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] would yield a few minutes to me to complete that thought.

BOSNIA AND THE BUDGET

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

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague, the gentleman from

Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON] to complete his presentation.

INCREASING MEDICARE BENEFITS

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I will just say real quickly something that is very appropriate to the subject that the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] is going to address, which is the budget, and that is that in Washington, a decrease in the anticipated increase is considered a cut, which means if you are wanting to spend \$15,000 and you only spend \$10,000 more than you did last year, then that is a \$5,000 cut instead of a \$10,000 increase.

Therefore, so much of the debate I think is tainted by the fact that we use what are normal, every day, commonplace words, but we change them into an illegitimate-type usage so that the word "cut" again is a decrease in the anticipated increase.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I will say in that context we are increasing Medicare benefits per recipient from about \$4,800 to \$6,700 over a 7-year period of time, and we are doing that by giving seniors more options than normal Medicare. We are going to opt to have Medicare Plus, we are going to have managed care options, health maintenance organizations options; we will have medical savings account options and physician service network options, preferred provider organizations, all kinds of things which I think are very exciting. I have discussed these options with my parents and other senior citizens that I know, and they are excited about it and they are glad that we are going to move to protect and preserve Medicare.

Mr. Speaker, I now need to yield back to the gentleman from Connecticut his time, and maybe we can have a good discussion on the budget.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman and I would encourage him to participate in this special order. We are joined also by the gentleman from Maine [Mr. LONGLEY].

Mr. Speaker, this is obviously a time that many of us are focused in on Bosnia, and whether or not we are going to be committing troops. We are going to devote most of this special order to the budget, not Bosnia. However, I just want to put on the record that the vote on what Congress does and decides to do on the issue of whether we commit troops to Bosnia is going to be not a partisan debate.

Each member of a vote like that is going to look to his own conscience, is going to be checking and talking with people in the administration and outside of the administration to know ultimately what is the proper vote. I know that if I had to vote today, I would not be sending troops to Bosnia, but I have pledged to have a very open mind about this issue.

The President has committed our Government to send 20,000 troops, has made it very clear that he intends to work with NATO, and that obviously has to count for a lot. He is the Commander in Chief. However, then we

have to wrestle with whether or not there is a defined national interest, whether we know exactly what that mission is, and if we know what that mission is, how we are going to carry it out and ultimately what will be our exit policy. We cannot be there indefinitely, how do we ultimately exit Bosnia and leave it better off than it is.

□ 2045

I am tempted to suggest to my leadership that we invite the participants who signed the agreement to come to Washington and convince us that they truly want peace. Because if we are just going there sending our troops, 60,000 sounds like a lot, ultimately, 20,000 Americans, but spread over such a wide part, a large area, there will not be a heavy concentration of troops practically in any one area, our troops will be at risk if the warring factions are not committed to the concept of peace.

So I want to start out this special order by just being on record as saying that I intend to keep an open mind, though if I had to vote, I would vote no, that it is not a partisan kind of decision, that we know we are talking about the lives of Americans, men and women who while volunteering trust us to engage them when there is a national interest and not when there is not a national interest. I do not know if either one of you would care to comment.

Mr. LONGLEY. If the gentleman would yield, I just would add to what the gentleman from Connecticut has said, that the most serious decision that any President can make is the decision to send American men and women into harm's way, and that I know that every Member of this body feels a very heavy responsibility to evaluate honestly and fairly the decision that the Commander in Chief is now presuming to make. As speaking for myself, I have been very skeptical about what the benefit and certainly any number of risks that American service men and women would confront on the ground in Bosnia but I also feel that the President needs to be given every benefit of the doubt. Again, that does not necessarily mean that we may ultimately agree with him but again we respect the fact that this is about the lives of young American men and women and our role in the world.

But I think it is also important to mention Bosnia in the context of the budget, as two of the many very serious issues that we are dealing with, and I guess it is, for whatever purpose or reason at this point in time we are not only faced with the prospect of American ground troops in Bosnia but we are also debating how we might best balance this budget and finally get this country on the track to a balanced budget over the next 7 years. Frankly as we debate in this Chamber, we still do not know whether or not, even though the President last night spoke to the country about his need or his

feeling that we needed to send American ground troops to Bosnia, we still do not have a decision as to whether he is willing to accept the defense budget that has been passed by this body and the Senate and sent to him for his signature. Again there is a strange irony in the fact that the President as Commander in Chief is now planning to commit American forces overseas in Bosnia, yet we are faced with the possible veto of the defense bill that was passed by this body. Again given the issues in Bosnia, given the significance of national defense and the fact that we may be asking men and women to risk their lives in pursuit of what the President deems to be our national interest, given the issues that are underlying the need, I feel, for once and for all finally getting Washington to accept the discipline of a balanced budget, I have no doubt that the public is watching us very closely, in fact, perhaps far more closely and with far more scrutiny than sometimes we may come to appreciate.

Mr. KINGSTON. One of the things that I think the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] said that is extremely important and I wish we could really front-page bold-type your words about the warring factions asking for our troops to come there to help them keep peace. Because they are not asking. You had said that you were part of a group inviting them to come to Washington and assure us that it was their wish and desire to have American troops there as an integral part of them resolving their problems peacefully. They are not going to do that.

As you recall in Ohio last week, they would barely shake hands and they avoided eye contact. So I think you have really hit something very key to this whole debate. Are we thrusting our troops and our American, quote, good will on these folks, or are they saying, "We can't do it without you"? I am not sure. We need to find out.

Mr. SHAYS. The bottom line is that that is an important question to have answered along with what the President said, a well-defined mission after describing what our national interest is. That as yet has not been described to us. So we are going to be doing everything possible to get answers to those questions and then ultimately to vote intelligently. It is an extraordinarily important vote.

It is just one of many votes obviously that are important in the days and weeks and months to come. I am happy my colleagues have joined me to just have a dialog about kind of what we have seen happen in the last year, and what we might expect ultimately to be the result of this effort.

It seems to me that we have had as a majority party three primary objectives: One is to get our financial house in order and balance our Federal budget within the timeframe of 7 years, or less. Ideally less.

The other is to save our trust funds, particularly Medicare, from insolvency

and then ultimate bankruptcy, and ultimately to work on the long-term savings. We have a short-term crisis, then we have a long-term, when the baby boomers start to enter in as retirees in 2010 to the year 2030. By year 2030, all the baby boomers will be in. There will be a gigantic group from age 65 to 85. The third issue, and it is a little harder to define but is probably as important as the other two and maybe even more important, and I describe it this way. We are looking to transform our caretaking social and corporate welfare state into what I would describe as a caring opportunity society where American citizens feel that this is truly the land of opportunity. Instead of giving them the food to eat, we give them the seeds and teach them how to grow the seeds into food, ultimately has to be our biggest interest.

We set out last year with a Contract With America and it has been amply described and we do not need to get into all aspects of it but what I was so proud about was that this was a positive agenda of what we wanted, of what we were going to do as a majority party, a firm commitment to the American people. A number of reforms in the opening day of the session, meaningful reforms, and then a long-term, 100-day effort with 10 major bills.

Nowhere in the contract did we criticize Democrats in Congress, and nowhere did we criticize the President. It was interesting that the Contract With America was criticized. Yet if you analyzed it, we were doing something that they say politicians do not always do and, that is, instead of criticizing the other side, we said, "This is what we stand for, this is what we are going to do," and none of it was negative. It was all positive.

Mr. KINGSTON. I was in the State legislature before I got here. One of the things I have always heard about politicians is you make one set of promises on the campaign trail and then you vote a different set of philosophies once you are in elected office.

This was the first time in my knowledge in my political experience that Members of Congress, elected officials, actually kept the campaign brochure in their front pocket. And as you remember, it was even read each day, the first 1-minute of each day was to read the Contract With America.

Again as you are saying, this is what we are going to do, this is what we promised we would do, this is what we are doing, and now after the first 100 days, that is what we did.

Mr. SHAYS. I notice we have been joined by a new Member, the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. BROWNBACK]. We welcome you here. I think of how important the new Members have been as a catalyst, obviously one to give us the opportunity to be in the majority but the second thing, a strong base of new Members that have been determined that we will fulfill the commitments that we made. I am happy to yield to my friend.

Mr. BROWNBACK. That is what I find out when I go home, that people are surprised that we are. That they go and say, "I really support and agree with what you guys are doing. You know what, I love it because this is what you said you were going to do and you're doing it." I even have had people that said, "I didn't vote for you but I'm going to this next time because you're doing exactly what you said you were going to do."

I do not know why this should be any great shock but it is in a political system that we are getting that done.

I would like to if I could compliment the gentlemen as well on the reform efforts we are getting done, gift ban passed 2 weeks ago, on the verge of lobby reform. Campaign finance next year. Those are key things that the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] has done a tremendous amount of work on.

Mr. KINGSTON. If the gentleman would yield a second, putting Congress under the same laws as the American people, the Shays Act, from the gentleman from Connecticut.

Mr. BROWNBACK. An amazing thing to think that we were not under the same laws but we were not. But right now we are about to engage in one of the most historic things in reshaping this Federal Government right now and that is balancing the budget. I do hope the administration is watching and going to participate in actually forming a 7-year budget that goes to balance, zero deficit in year 7, so that we can get rid of this deficit.

I get worried that the administration is not going to participate in this. I certainly hope that they are going to and that they are not just going to criticize the budget plan that we are putting forward. We have put forward a very specific budget plan and I hope the administration puts forward an equally specific budget plan of how we get to balance in 7 years. It is critical for our future, it is critical for our priorities, and we need to have a legitimate dialog and debate just about that.

Mr. LONGLEY. If the gentleman would yield, I would just like to point out again, we just celebrated the Thanksgiving holiday last week. Certainly all of us in our own way pause to give thanks for the great blessings that we have received as individuals, as families, and as a country.

I have been fortunate enough to live overseas for a year or two of my life, and it just really makes me realize how fortunate and how lucky we are as Americans to live in this country. But it also gives me an opportunity to kind of reflect back over the last 18 months, and one of the thoughts that came to my mind was, as important as the Contract With America was, the one aspect of the contract that really stood above all of the others is the need to get this country on the track to a balanced Federal budget.

I mention that because when I look at the 850 plus or minus votes that we

have cast over the last 10 months, the dozens of issues that we have had very strong and maybe even very heated debates about, a lot of that has obscured the fundamental reason that many of us got into politics and decided to run for this office and to serve in this body, which is to get the country on the track to a balanced budget.

To pick up on what the gentleman from Kansas just said, I as a citizen, as a Member of Congress, as someone who is concerned about the welfare of this country, in listening to the President speak last night, in the back of my mind I am saying to myself, is the administration truly committed to balancing the budget in the 7-year time-frame?

Again, the President campaigned on the fact that he wanted to balance the budget in 5 years. We not have an agreement to do it in 7 years. Given the fact that he has been in office for 2 years already, effectively what we have done is provided a mandate of a 9-year balanced budget when in fact the administration, the President, campaigned on a 5-year budget.

The only reason I mention that is that I want to be positive and I want to believe that we can count on the President and his administration to deliver on this commitment. I say I thought about that last night because one of the feelings that I know any American soldier or marine will have, and I have to confess that I felt that myself, having served during Desert Storm in northern Iraq, you always wonder. You realize that your fate is in the hands of powers far greater than you are.

I hope that the administration is serious about working with us. We are going to have policy disagreements. Republicans and Democrats can disagree, but we need to disagree within the context of balancing the Federal budget and taking no more than 7 years to do it.

In my view, the President's commitment to that objective is just as sacred a commitment as his duties as Commander in Chief when he orders American men and women into service overseas. I see a linkage between the two issues.

I will feel, frankly, far greater confidence in the administration's commitment to send troops to Bosnia if I know that they are also serious about keeping their commitments in other areas. Because if they are serious about keeping their commitment on the budget, then I know that they are going to be serious about keeping their commitment to act in the best interests of our men and women who may be called to duty over overseas.

I would yield back to the gentleman, but I wanted to pick up on the point he just made so very well.

Mr. BROWNBACK. I appreciate that very much from the gentleman from Maine.

I yield to the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. SMITH].

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. We do not want to spend a lot of time eulogizing

the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS].

Mr. SHAYS. Do not spend any time. We do not have much left.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. But I am proud to work with you, CHRIS. Everybody knows the guy that is just consistent, that is soft-spoken, that has good ideas and follows through on them. I am certainly proud to work with you on all of these issues, from campaign finance reform to balancing the budget.

See, we just need to shout out and say, look, does everybody realize what a predicament this huge, overbloomed Government has gotten us into and the imposition that it is placing on our kids and our grandkids.

□ 2100

You know, we say balance the budget, but even at the end of 7 years we are still borrowing \$100 billion from the trust funds. And yet the whining and the moaning and the criticizing about our going too far, we are hurting our economic future and we are putting this load on our kids. You know, we have got unfunded liabilities in Social Security and Medicare, Medicaid, promises we have made to retirees. We have now guaranteed that we are going to hold harmless all the private pension funds just in our overzealousness to try to do good things to people so we will get reelected.

We have really made some commitments that are placing us in great jeopardy.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman for how incredibly persevering he has been in waking us to the fact that we cannot continue to increase our national debt until we get our financial house in order, and this made an incredible difference making sure people recognize increasing the national debt is very much related to the deficit that we have every year. We have deficits because we spend more than we raise in revenue each year, and the end of each year they just keep getting added to the national debt.

I was thinking about my colleagues talking about Thanksgiving and how much we have to be grateful for. This is a very bountiful Nation, but we are mortgaging our children's future and we need to wake up to that fact.

Thirty years ago, as one of the documents that you gave us pointed out, we had a debt of only \$375 billion, and as your document pointed out, we had World War I, World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam War that was financed by debt, and now, with no war basically, we have gone from \$375 billion to \$4,900 billion, a 13-fold increase in a short period of time.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. If the gentleman will yield, the interest on our public debt subject to the debt limit now is almost \$330 billion. You compare that with 1977 of a total Federal budget of \$370 billion, it is disrespectful.

Mr. SHAYS. We have been joined as well by the gentleman from Arizona. I

would like to get us to begin to focus on what we are trying to do. What we are trying to do is get our financial house in order and balance the Federal budget at least within 7 years. There is nothing that says we could not do it in 6 or 5. We can talk about whether this is a difficult task or not.

In one sense, the gentleman from Kansas was pointing out people have said, you know, you vote for the balanced budget amendment, and there were over 305 Members who did that; and we are voting to balance it in 7 years, which is the balanced budget amendment said do it within 7 years. We are doing it for a logical reason. We just want to care about our children.

Mr. KINGSTON. Let me ask the gentleman a question. I am on the Committee on Appropriations. You guys are the budgeteers. I want to ask you something many constituents ask me, and that is you look at the Bush tax deal in 1990, look at Gramm-Rudman, you look at all these grand crescendos we had in Washington followed by a lot of bipartisan hugging and kissing, backslapping, are we not great? Then we wait. The budget is never balanced.

Is this going to be the case? Why 7 years? Those of us who are here in this Chamber tonight, we may not be elected in 7 years. Now we may cut the budget and start it. What is going to make sure that in the year 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000?

Mr. SHAYS. I would like to take a first crack at that. Basically, there are two parts of this budget we are focused in on. One is the appropriations the gentleman is very much involved in. That is only one-third of our budget.

Congress, for so many years, attempted to control the growth of spending by focusing on one-third of the budget. By entitlements, you fit a title, you are given a certain sum of money, a certain benefit, whether it is Medicare, Medicaid, welfare, food stamps, and so on. You get that benefit. Those entitlements have been growing. Gramm-Rudman never focused in on entitlements.

This is the first Congress, and the gentleman from Kansas was talking about those who said, you know, good, you are following through, and the positive response. We are getting some negative response. We have to be very up front about it. We are taking on a lot of special interests. It mostly focuses in on the entitlement side. I do not think people realize we are cutting some programs. We are eliminating some programs. The vast bulk of programs, most of them entitlements, will grow at significant rates. Medicare is going to grow at 7.2 percent, Medicaid at over 5 percent.

In some cases, we are seeing a lot of expansion. We are still trying to ultimately have spending slow the growth of spending so it ultimately intersects with revenue by the seventh year, and no balanced budget.

I yield to my colleague, the gentleman from Arizona, who has joined us.

Mr. HAYWORTH. I thank my good friend from Connecticut. He raises a point that is absolutely valid and cannot be repeated too often. That is the fact in the span of little more than 40 weeks in a majority in this Chamber we are looking to reverse the course of 40 years of a philosophy predominated by the notion of bigger is better in a centralized government, in a centralized bureaucracy.

The gentleman from Connecticut is quite correct to point out that what we have decided to do at long last, after almost a half century, is to seriously evaluate the efficiency and the practicality of the entitlement programs in addition to discretionary spending.

I look in the well, I see my good friend from Michigan, and I know that he has been a watchdog on these issues. I know that at times he quite accurately, I believe, voices some frustration that we hear from many of our constituents saying it is not happening fast enough. What I would say, Mr. Speaker, to those who join us tonight here in this special order is we get the message.

But a journey of 1,000 miles, in this case a journey of \$12 trillion, to mix metaphors here, begins not with a single step but in this single session dedicated to making the fundamental change necessary.

Mr. SHAYS. I did not answer the second part. Obviously, we have to be vigilant each and every year. We have to make sure we do the heavy lifting this year and next year and not ask the next Congress and the Congress after that one. But one thing that is quite significant, if we can make changes in entitlements, still allow them to grow but slow their growth, that becomes written in law and becomes an automatic process.

So if we can make some significant changes in entitlements today, they will be in law, not sunsetted. So that is our effort.

Mr. BROWNBACK. If the gentleman will yield for just a moment, I think there is another pressure point here. I do not know how many people caught what Chairman Greenspan said yesterday of the Federal Reserve in front of the Senate Banking Committee. He said if Congress fails to balance the budget in 7 years, interest rates are going up, they are going up. This is the chairman of the Federal Reserve saying to Congress there are many incentives and one of the key ones is what will happen to this economy if you fail and what will happen immediately and directly as a consequence of your failure.

To just hook onto one of the points of the gentleman from Arizona, we are talking spending \$12 trillion over 7 years. This is \$12 trillion in Government spending. This is a lot of money that we are going to spend for the Government, \$12 trillion. It is enough to run this Government on.

Mr. LONGLEY. If I could just add something to that, you know, and I re-

spect the comments of the gentleman from Arizona, but we have built this Government up over 40 years, and there is not a single vote that I do not cast that I am not concerned about what is the impact of this vote, if it is in changing the funding pattern for a program or possibly eliminating a program, and I respect the fact that many of these programs, much of the spending that Washington now engages in, was built up in good faith on the assumption that we were going to be able to make positive changes in society. But I think what we have come to realize is that the money is not the issue.

Yes, money is part of the issue. But it is not the entire issue.

What has happened is that money and Government have become ends in themselves in Washington to the detriment of the values that make this country what it is, and the lack of accountability, the distance that Washington has from what is going on in local and State Government, and I have no doubt in my mind that we are making the tough decisions that we need to make because money is not the only issue.

It is now recognizing that individuals and local government and State Government need to have the authority and the responsibility to be able to do what only they can do and that much of what we have pretended Washington could do has not worked, and we have got to find new ways to do it.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. If the gentleman will yield further, I think, Mr. Speaker and colleagues, that the American people should know that we are now at a turning point. Will the President work with us in changing the welfare programs and the entitlements? Because those programs represent 60 percent of the savings that need to be made to finally achieve a balanced budget, and the President right now, I do not know if you heard the reports from leadership when they met with the White House, they are still discussing how CBO will do the scoring.

Is the President serious about having a balanced budget in 7 years? Will he work with Congress in developing the kind of changes for the welfare programs so that we no longer have welfare as we know it?

Mr. SHAYS. Maybe the gentleman would just explain the significance of what the Congressional Budget Office is, a nonpartisan office, not partisan office, that sets the economy, that determines where the economy is going to go. What is so significant about how CBO scores the budget?

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. The Office of Management and Budget works for the President of the United States, takes their directions from him, and so they are able to say, look, the economy is going to expand by 3 or 4 percent. They are able to present a rosy scenario and predict tremendous amount of revenues coming into the Federal Government so that the President or anyone else that wants to say it, look,

with all of these revenues coming in, we do not have to cut any spending and we will still achieve a balanced budget. So the danger is having somebody that is bipartisan, that is impartial, developing the projections for those 7 years.

Mr. SHAYS. That partly answers the question the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON] raised about how come we failed in the past. I can speak from direct experience. I voted for the 1990 budget agreement. The part I liked in it that said if you expanded an entitlement you either had to come up with revenue or cut spending to pay for an expanded entitlement.

What I failed to fully grasp was the budget being presented and being scored by the Office of Management and Budget, a Republican administration at the time, projected a tremendously rosy scenario which said the budget would be balanced in no time without a lot of heavy lifting. They said the economy is going to grow at a rate it never came close to growing.

The challenge we had, and the President when he addressed it in the State of the Union Address 2 years ago, said let us use the Congressional Budget Office, a fair referee for determining how the economy will grow. Obviously, if the Congressional Budget Office scores it less than the Office of Management and Budget, we will have to do greater heavy lifting, we will have to make greater cuts to some programs and slow the growth in others, which I think we really have to do.

Mr. KINGSTON. If the gentleman will yield, if we look at a private sector example, the big motor companies, the tractor manufacturers who are out there, they have all in the last decade had to downsize, and as a result most large United States manufacturers can produce more now at less cost and at a higher quality than they could in 1980, and the Federal Government has to go through this process as well. But it is not easy.

You know, it has taken the fuel of the freshman class and the votes provided by the freshman class to get this through. But, you know, long-term players like you know that if this was easy we would have had a balanced budget since 1969, and, you know, I think the Speaker, has said nobody said that when you are going to start cutting the programs they are going to come up here and say this is great, you are cutting out my job but you are balancing the budget, I am so proud of you. That is just not happening.

Mr. LONGLEY. The gentleman has made an important point. The Federal Government is the least changed major institution in the United States, and as tough as the decisions have been that we have had to make, and we are going to be asked to make more of them and very serious decisions, the fact also remains that we need to succeed at what we are doing. We need to work with the President to make sure this happens because if we are not successful in making these kinds of changes, as mod-

est as they are, and when I say modest, you know, the gentleman from Kansas referred to the \$12 trillion that we are going to spend in the next 7 years versus the \$12.8 trillion or \$12.9 trillion that the other party would like to spend, or, if you will, the big difference between the mean, cold Republicans and the warm-hearted Democrats is that the mean Republicans are only going to let the Federal Government increase spending by \$3 trillion, whereas the Democrats are going to have to increase by \$4 trillion. But that \$1 trillion, that trillion-dollar difference in a \$12 trillion or \$13 trillion budget is all the difference in the world between adding \$1 trillion in national debt on top of the trillions of dollars of debt that we already have or finally getting to a balanced budget and starting to work towards eliminating our debt and not just adding to it.

Again, I remind myself I was barely two aisles away I was sworn in in January, and I had my 7-year-old daughter, Sarah, and my 11-year-old son, Matt, and while I am being sworn in, it is drawing on me this government today is spending the money that my 7-year-old and my 11-year-old will spend their working lifetimes paying back, just paying the interest let alone retiring any of the debt.

Mr. SHAYS. Which raises the question, where are we headed right now? What we have is an agreement with the White House, and I take them at their word that they will work within the parameters of balancing the budget within 7 years and also, very important, that they will use real numbers scored by the Congressional Budget Office, not the bipartisan office, the non-partisan office.

□ 2115

So we have now the framework to have a meaningful dialog. We have presented our budget. Candidly, there are parts of that budget I do not like. I am proud of what we have done. I am in awe of what we have done. But there are parts I do not like.

Maybe some of the parts I like the gentleman from Michigan may not like or the gentleman from Georgia or the gentleman from Maine or Arizona. Even in that conference, we had our disagreements. Ultimately, we agreed as the majority party to do something no Congress has ever done, and that is take the initiative to balance the budget and get our financial house in order.

Now we have the right, and the President has the obligation to respond, we have the right to ask him where is his 7-year budget, where are your priorities, Mr. President, and then we will evaluate them and say we agree here and we disagree here. Candidly, I have some suggestions on how he could make our budget better. I would like to see it a little more friendly to urban areas. The gentleman from Michigan may want to see it more friendly to farming areas. We may be lobbying the

White House to weigh in in a particular way.

Ultimately, if we can agree to balance the budget in 7 years, interest rates will not go up, they will go down. Maybe one of my colleagues would like to talk about the benefits of getting the balanced budget and what it means in terms of the interest rates.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, another situation I am sure that the people that want to spend more money have already started arguing is let us not have any tax cuts. So I think it is important to remind ourselves where we have been over the last 5 years, based on the tax increase over a 7-year span. In 1990, we had a tax increase of \$235 billion. In 1993, a little over 2 years ago, we had a tax increase of \$350 billion spread out over 7 years. Now the tax increase in this proposal is \$222 billion. It is just a question that if you start increasing taxes too much, I mean, everybody knows and the economists all say that you start depressing the economy and depressing jobs. So the question is should we give some of those tax increases back.

Mr. LONGLEY. Mr. Speaker, is what the gentleman really saying is we are proposing a tax cut that is literally less than half of the two prior tax increases that were passed in this body?

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. That is correct. And the goal has got to be to expand business and jobs in this country, at the same time that we achieve a balanced budget, to say, just like the gentleman said, the wages that your kids have not even earned yet are going to have to pay for our overindulgence as a Federal Government living beyond our means.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, coming back off of break and spending time at home reminds me of the fact that on Saturday, John Micah Hayworth turns two, our youngest child. And if we do nothing to change the culture of taxing and spending, if we are somehow able to hold this remarkable experiment together with the legislative equivalent of chewing gum and bailing wire, postponing the decisions we need to make, John Micah Hayworth over the course of his lifetime as a working adult will pay over \$185,000 in taxes to the Federal Government just to service the debt. Just to service the debt.

The President, to his credit, a couple of years ago, in sending his budget proposals up to Capitol Hill, included a page called generational accounting, measuring the effects of expenditures in governmental services, projecting it on the next generation of taxpayers.

The results were astonishing. Mr. Speaker, I do hope that those who join us are seated at home when they hear the figures, because they are mind boggling and terrifying. To maintain the current culture of spending and governmental services at all levels, the average taxpayer of the next generation would be looking at surrendering 82 percent of his or her income in taxes to provide those services.

Now, look at the steady increase. In 1948, an average family of four surrendered 3 percent of its income in taxes to the Federal government. By 1994, it was almost one-quarter of income, 24 percent. Clearly there is nothing ignoble, there is nothing selfish, in saying and recognizing that the people of this country, liberal and conservative, Republican and Democrat and Independent, all work hard for the money they earn. They should hang on to more of it and send less of it to the Government, because, as the gentleman from Michigan points out, it is a matter of allowing the market to flourish and to prosper and to rekindle the economic engines that have driven this country so dynamically.

That is the challenge we face. It is not a matter of downsizing; it is a matter of right sizing. What is right for the future? Good honest debate can take place. The gentleman from Connecticut mentioned it. I championed the fact that the gentleman at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, the President of the United States, has put his signature now on what is in effect a contract agreeing to the parameters of a balanced budget in 7 years with honest numbers.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, and I hate to stop his peroration. He is on a roll and sounding good, but I wanted to make a point that I think is very important. We do not discuss this as much when we talk about that middle class tax burden, which as the gentleman said, has gone from about 3 percent in the early 1950's to 24 percent now, and the gentleman from Maine points out how the middle class is just piling on more and more. The gentleman from Michigan talked about we got hit with new taxes under Bush, new taxes under Clinton, and this tax cut is less than those new taxes.

But the point is, there are also a lot of tax loopholes that this balanced budget bill actually stops. So often American people say, "You know, I don't mind paying my fair share, but I want to make sure everybody is paying their fair share." In many cases, there is a lot of fine print that it is stopping some of these loopholes in this balanced budget bill. A lot of this corporate welfare is stopped. But it never makes it into print or debate, but it is in there.

The gentleman from Connecticut talked about what the impact is on the middle class family of having a lower interest rate. If you have a \$75,000 mortgage over a 30 year period of time, you save something like \$39,000 with lower interest rates. That is big money for middle class America.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Will the gentleman repeat that? We have to amplify what is in effect a balanced budget bonus that will be there.

Mr. KINGSTON. This all comes back, and the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. SMITH] mentioned it earlier as to why, Alan Greenspan, the chairman of the

Federal Reserve, when he testified to the Congress, and it was actually months ago, he said that balancing the budget could bring down the interest rate as much as 1.5 percent. Other economists have said 2 percent. Most everyone agrees it will be at least 1 percent. That is 1 percent, 2-percent lower, on a student loan, a house mortgage, a car payment, your Visa bill, your MasterCard bill down the line. That is going to help the middle class of America.

Mr. SHAYS. Not to confuse the matter, it is rally one point down. If someone was paying 8 percent, they would pay 7 percent. It is a significant drop in the total amount they would have to pay.

I was thinking about the gentleman raising the issue of taxes. We could even in this group here have argument or discussion as to when the tax cut should take place. But we all know that we pay for tax cuts with spending cuts. They amount to 1.5 percent of the total revenue we are going to raise in the next 7 years. So we are just reducing the revenue flow by 1.5 percent. One of those, the capital gains exemption in the minds of many will create revenue rather than cause a loss. We have to score it by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office as a revenue loss.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. If the gentleman would yield, everybody should still understand that revenues from taxes significantly increase over this 7-year time period, so there are going to be more revenues coming in from taxes, even though we have a modest reduction in the rate of some of those taxes.

Mr. KINGSTON. I wanted to say one of the things that people are overlooking so often are the cuts for the rich. Seventy four percent of the people who benefit from the tax cuts have a combined household income of less than \$75,000. Last week I was speaking to the AARP. I said, "You know who the rich are getting this tax cut? It is you, the senior citizens. You are going from \$600,000 to \$750,000 on your estate tax exemption, from \$11,000 to \$30,000 as the exemption for Social Security earnings limitation. You or your family will be getting a \$500 tax credit for having a dependent senior living in your home." These are helping senior citizens as much as anybody.

Mr. LONGLEY. If I could interject, I think all of us would agree we need to provide tax relief, particularly to the middle class and to working families. I think that the public has been served a tremendous injustice to the extent to which they do not understand that some of the provisions in this tax cut that we are looking at are heavily geared towards working families. Radical ideas like eliminating or easing the marriage penalty, so a couple that gets married does not pay more tax to be married than they would pay if they lived together without being married. We are going to provide a tax credit for

adoptions, to increase adoptions and the incentive to adopt, hopefully to make that an easier process for people. We are going to give people a deduction to take care of elderly parents in their homes. What an outrageous idea, that we could actually let a family try to take care of a loved senior in their own home.

We are going to be providing an increased health deduction for health insurance for the self-employed. Medical savings accounts. We are going to give spouses the opportunity to have a full IRA if they stay home to take care of the children. We are going to allow additional interest payment deductions on student loan repayments.

It is just outrageous to me that the public is not being told the full extent of the types of measures that we are targeting, that this is not some big tax cut for the rich. Frankly, anyone that suggests that is not paying attention to the facts.

Mr. SHAYS. If the gentleman would yield, more than half of the tax cut is a \$500 tax credit to families who, if it is a single mother, would be any family under \$75,000, and a dual family, husband and wife, father and mother, \$115,000. Not above that income level. It is focused in on truly those most in need.

To illustrate the argument for it, it is a very clear one. You were talking about families in the 1940's. I was 1945 baby. My three older brothers were raised by my family in the 1940's and 1950's. My parents were given in today's dollars the equivalent of \$8,200 per child tax deduction off their income, an equivalent of \$32,800 off their total income in today's dollars. A family today is given \$2,500 as a deduction. My family raised me when they paid less than 15 percent of their income in taxes. Today a family raising children are faced with anywhere from 25 to 40 percent of their income going to taxes. So there is just no question why we want to do it.

Someone asked me this question. They said, "Isn't the most important issue balancing the budget and getting the economy moving again?" The answer is yes, I say taxes would be second to that. But if we are going to balance the budget and take 7 years to do it, we can afford a tax cut. If we agreed that we could balance the budget in 4 years, maybe we could not do it with a tax cut. But that is not what is before us. It is a 7-year balanced budget effort. So we clearly can reduce the burden on taxpayers over that period of time.

Mr. HAYWORTH. If the gentleman would yield, some of the debate has been characterized, and indeed some have talked about letting people hang onto more of their hard-earned money as if it were the equivalent of free candy. I have heard that expression used by some who would try to envelop themselves in a populist mantra.

Again, this is money earned by working Americans. It is their money. And,

again, we come back to the central realization: This Government does not create the wealth. In our free market economy, this Government does not create the wealth. The wealth and the economic well-being results from the fruit of labor and work.

So what we are simply saying is for working Americans, you deserve to hold on to more of your money, because you know best how to care for your family. You know best the dreams and the aspirations of your children. You know best the dreams that you have for your children. You should have that money to spend as you see fit, to save, to invest, because in doing so, you will not only be caring for your family, you will be caring for your community.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. If the gentleman will yield, just the frustration so many Americans have felt that are working so hard for the dollars that they have to raise their families, and then if you go out to the check out counter at the grocery store, very often you see food stamps that are being misused for all kinds of non-nutritious food items. So as you look at the welfare recipients that may be have ended up with a snowmobile or whatever that you cannot afford, while you are paying taxes, you know part of your tax dollars are being wastefully spent in so many areas. So I think the only way we are going to achieve this is for the American people to say "Look, enough is enough. Just do it." I think that is what the American people are starting to say.

□ 2130

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield.

I am a Congressman in a car pool line. I have four kids. I drive a car pool every Monday before flying up to here. As I look at the other dads and moms in the car pool line and I think about that \$500, I know where the money will go. It will go to buy new shoes, maybe a new book or two, maybe a downpayment on a computer or some software program. It will go to positive things.

And what happens is most of that money will be spent locally and it will be spent in small businesses. Those small businesses, as we all know, will expand, they will create jobs, and new people will be working. People will get off of public assistance benefits. And what will then happen? More revenue comes in.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, getting back to what the gentleman from Connecticut said, that the tax cut is very much in line with balancing the budget and will, in fact, grow the economy.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield.

This was a commitment we made to the American people in our Contract With America and we are fulfilling it. We did not say before the election we will cut taxes and afterward forget that pledge. That is an important part of this whole effort.

We talked about the significance of balancing the budget, and as the gentleman from Michigan, NICK SMITH, has pointed out, in that wonderful document I keep referring to, he points out that 42 percent of all of our savings goes to pay for our national debt. Just think if some of that could go somewhere else, like investing in new plants and equipment. We know that when interest rates go down businesses say, I can be competitive, I can afford to buy this new plant and equipment because the cost of money is less.

If we could, I want to get into this one area, we have about 9 minutes left, and it is the whole issue of what are we doing; are we cutting earned income tax credit, are we cutting the school lunch program, are we cutting the student loan program, are we cutting Medicaid and Medicare?

I would love to go through this list because it has been such a difficult thing for me to hear some Members say, well, of course, everyone wants to balance the budget, then they tell us what they do not want to cut or they accuse us of cutting things we are not cutting.

On the table, when we talk to the President, we want him to know the earned income tax credit is going to go from \$19 billion to \$25 billion. Only in Washington when we go up 28 percent do people call it a cut. The school lunch program, just within a 5-year period, will go from \$6.3 to \$7.8 billion in 5 years. That is an increase, but in Washington they call it a cut. The student loan program, and this really gets me, it goes from \$24 billion to \$36 billion. We are going to spend in the 7th year \$36 billion. That is a 50-percent increase, but in this place some people call it a cut. Medicaid will go from \$89 to \$127 billion. Clearly an increase in spending, not a cut. Medicare from \$178 billion to \$289 billion. That is a 7.2 increase each and every year.

So the bottom line is we are cutting some programs and we are actually eliminating some. We are consolidating the Commerce Department and we are making some tough decisions. But on some of these programs, that are basically entitlement programs, they are going to grow quite significantly. In fact, some people are embarrassed to admit how much they are growing, but at least we have to say to people these are increases.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the President realizes that, and I hope he focuses in on where his priorities are. He has a tax cut he would like. It is a tax credit for families who are paying to have their children go to college and are giving them some benefit. Maybe that is something to be on the table and we talk about taking one of our taxes off.

Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to yield to my colleague.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Let me mention that the Speaker tonight for the U.S. House of Representatives is the gentleman from Michigan, DICK CHRYSLER. The gentleman just mentioned the

Department of Commerce. Mr. CHRYSLER led the way to make a consensus that we are now moving towards cutting the waste in that department out, abolishing it as a named institution. He has introduced legislation now also that gives that tax credit for education. So my compliments to the Speaker.

I throw that in and will yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HAYWORTH. I thank the gentleman from Michigan for saluting the other gentleman from Michigan, who tonight serves as our Speaker pro tempore, and who, indeed, led the way with a tangible action to right size the government borne of his experience in the working world.

Mr. SHAYS. And, I might add, saved about \$7 billion in the process.

Mr. HAYWORTH. That is real money, and I thank the gentleman from Connecticut for making that vital point.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to note, and my colleagues here gathered on the floor on both sides of the aisle, I think it is worth noting that in the wake of this historic shift, with the changes that have taken place, there has been a great deal of heat generated on this floor. We recognize the fact that good people can disagree, but, Mr. Speaker, I do not believe it is too much to ask the American people to join with us now to take a look simply at the proposals which we have outlined; coolly, objectively, yes, compassionately, divorced from the venom and vitriol and exaggeration that so often takes the place of sound public policy discussion.

Indeed, what has happened here, tragically, has been almost the utilization of political theater instead of rational policy discussion.

So, Mr. Speaker, I simply have a challenge to the American people and, indeed, to our friends on the other side and, indeed, to our President at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, echoing what the gentleman from Connecticut has said. There are philosophical disagreements. There may be a different way of looking at what should happen in the future. We believe, in the new majority, that we have fashioned a plan that indeed complements very nicely, ironically, the path first endorsed by candidate Clinton in 1992, many of the objectives he said he had hoped to reach as a candidate.

Again tonight, Mr. Speaker, as we have done on so many occasions, recognizing that some things are nonnegotiable, the notion of balancing this budget in 7 years, the notion of providing adequate funding to reevaluate what transpires with entitlements to evaluate and better understand how to make sure that we have a safety net instead of a hammock in terms of social spending, but once again, Mr. Speaker, we would be remiss if we did not say again the hand is extended from this legislative branch to the executive branch, from the Congress of the United States to the White House.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we would simply ask the President of the United States to join with us and govern, to set the stage for a balanced budget in 7 years, because the American people deserve nothing less.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] for organizing this special order and would ask for his conclusion.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I know we have about 2 minutes left, and the bottom line is that what is not negotiable is getting our financial house in order within at least 7 years and to use real numbers scored by the Congressional Budget Office.

We are not saying the President has to accept our budget. We are eager to see his budget and then work out where our differences are. Obviously, we will have our differences. People have said to me this must be kind of tough being down in Washington, the polls are somewhat negative about what is going on both to the President and the Congress, even more so to the Congress. And I have responded in a like response to say we are doing some heavy lifting.

I am proud of what we are doing. If we just looked at the polls, I am reminded of thinking if Abraham Lincoln had looked at polls we would not be one Nation under God, indivisible, we would be two nations. When President Lincoln was bringing about change and fighting the great conflict, his poll ratings were, according to historians, practically nonexistent. He was considered a bumbler. He had to be snuck into the city. Ultimately, it was not until the fourth year people began to realize the significance of what was taking place.

The bottom line for us is we are going to get our financial house in order. We will do it ultimately, I think, on a bipartisan basis. We will do it with an extended hand, as the gentleman has pointed out, but we are determined. We have left the old world for the new world, and we are not going back to the old world. We burned our ships. We are either going to succeed or fail, but we are not going to return to business as usual.

With that I thank my colleagues who have joined us and thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your attention and your willingness to preside over this.

THE BUDGET NEGOTIATION PROCESS

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

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, as we have heard from previous speakers, the countdown has begun on the budget negotiation process. It is a countdown of greater significance than we have ever experienced probably in the history of

the Nation. It is a countdown to the remaking of America.

We are not just talking about budgets and appropriations. We are talking about a drastic overhaul, a remaking of America. We are not just talking about reforms, we are talking about destruction. We are talking about the wrecking ball that has to precede any rebuilding that may take place.

As we move toward December 15, we have gone through a period where a gun was held at the head of the American Government. The Republican majority refused to allow a continuing resolution to go forward until it extracted certain promises from the Democratic President in the White House. That is a most unfortunate way to proceed.

The general way of proceeding is to have appropriations bills passed, the President acts on those, Congress reacts, and we go through an orderly constitutional process. But a crisis was created this time and we have gone through that, and now we have a new framework established. The new framework says that we have until December 15 to work out the budget process, and in the process we must adhere to certain parameters that have been established.

The framework is established. The environment for negotiations is set. We must negotiate within the parameters of the establishment of a balanced budget by the year 2002. In 7 years we must balance the budget. We must negotiate this. If we do not, we will not be able to continue the Government beyond December 15. The same kind of crisis that was artificially created a week ago will be recreated. So we are negotiating with a psychological bomb threat hovering over the process.

Is this a logical and scientific way to remake America? No, but it is the conditions that have been set by people who have enormous amounts of power, and the process goes forward. The engagement is on now. The engagement is between the Democratic President and a Republican controlled Congress. The crisis in a revolutionary atmosphere has been created artificially and does not improve the decisionmaking process. We cannot expect a better America to emerge under the kind of atmosphere that has been created, a kind of bomb threat hovering over.

I do not think the decisionmaking is going to be the best that we are capable of. I do not think the decisionmaking is going to be the kind of decisionmaking that the American people deserve, but that is the crisis and the revolutionary atmosphere that has been created.

Those that have created the crisis obviously do not trust a rational step-by-step decisionmaking process. They do not agree with the process. They think that we have to have a crisis, we have to have a bomb threat hovering over the process. They are intellectual cowards who have nothing but contempt for the deliberative process of democ-

racy, but they are in power. They have created the situation. That is the way it has to go forward as we count down toward December 15.

Reform is not on the agenda of this controlling group. The Republican majority is not interested in reform. They talk about reform. They come to us in the clothing of reform, in the camouflage of reform, but what they really mean is they want to wreck and destroy. Wrecking and destroying is on the agenda of the Republican controlled Congress. They want to wreck what has been put together over the last 60 years. They want to wreck Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. They want to wreck Lyndon Johnson's Great Society.

□ 2145

They want to wreck Medicare. They do not really want to save Medicare. There are quotes which clearly show that they never believed in Medicare. The Republican votes were never there.

Medicare was created 30 years ago. It is an infant program. In the life of nations, 30 years is a very short period of time. But now, Medicare must be slowly strangled. The reforms are not to save Medicare. It is hoped that Medicare, "would wither on the vine."

There are other people that felt that Medicare was an idea that never worked anyhow, so the fact that they are attempting to make drastic cuts in Medicare now should surprise no one. It is logical. They are wrecking and destroying.

The original Contract With America came camouflaged in the clothing of reform, but destruction is the objective. Destruction is the goal, and destruction is the mission of the present Republican-controlled Congress.

The framework has been established. The countdown has begun. But each American voter, each constituent out there is not condemned to merely be a spectator. They do not have to be merely a spectator in this process. Their common sense has a vital role to play. Their common sense is already having a profound impact here in the distorted world of Washington decisionmaking.

I want to thank the American people for raising their voices. I want to thank them for letting it be known that they can clearly understand the language of political used car salesmen. They can understand when they are being swindled. The public is far more intelligent than a lot of the professional decisionmakers here in Washington. I want to thank the American public.

There are people who say that, "Well, things are improving." Unfortunately, some within the Democratic Party. They say, "Things are improving, and the public is coming around to seeing things the way Democrats see them and, therefore, we should lower our voices and we should not be shrill."

Mr. Speaker, I do not understand that reasoning at all. I think that raising voices has led to American voters