

what makes these costs and their cost to the local taxpayers all the more shocking.

Election officials in Alameda County, CA, told me recently that they spent almost \$100,000 to produce ballots in Spanish and Chinese for the entire country, yet only 900 were ultimately requested. You can do the math. The taxpayers of Alameda County spent over \$100 for every multilingual ballot that was actually used in that June 1994 election. This appears to be a trend.

The last election in Los Angeles saw ballots printed in six languages other than English. Among them were Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Korean. It cost the city government over \$125,000 to prepare the materials. Yet, and listen to this, only 927 ballots were used. Los Angeles spent over \$135 for each voter the city helped.

Even small communities are not immune. Long Beach spent a relatively modest \$1,026 preparing multilingual materials for its eligible voters when only 22 requests came in. The township spent over \$280 per multilingual voter. As a frustrated election official told me recently, "This is a lot of money to help a few people." That official could not be more right.

These ballots have other, more serious costs associated with them, too. Providing these special services creates the fiction that newcomers to this country can enjoy the full benefits of citizenship without the language of the land, which is English. How can a citizen cast an informed ballot in a foreign language when most candidates' platforms, stump speeches, and media coverage are in English? Exercising one's rights of citizenship involves more than just casting a vote. It means making a thoughtful decision regarding an issue or a candidate.

Multilingual voting ballots give individuals the right to vote without granting the power to cast an informed vote. The logical extent of the argument behind the multilingual ballots is to provide these services in all the languages spoken in the country. After all, why should we privilege one linguistic minority over another? Should we not provide news reports and election coverage in all these languages, so these citizens have access to all the information they need to cast an informed vote? The simple and obvious answer is that we cannot. There are 327 languages spoken in the United States today. We cannot provide these services in all of these languages. What is more, we should not.

CALLING FOR A MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN TAIWAN AND THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA

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

Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. Speaker, it is said that in history, great conflicts begin more often from miscalculation than by purposeful design. Even in our own time, it is said that the Korean war may have begun by the unfortunate statement of Mr. Avenuees that the defense perimeter of the United States began in the Sea of Japan, and not the 38th parallel.

A few years ago the United States Ambassador to Iraq suggested to Saddam Hussein that in a dispute between Kuwait and Iraq, the United States would regard the matter as an internal problem in the Arab world. Today in the straits of Taiwan a foundation may be being laid for a similar misunderstanding.

I take the floor today, Mr. Speaker, as one Member of this institution, in the hope that the leaders of our country, our great allies in the People's Republic of China, come to some mutual understanding of events that are taking shape even as we speak between Taiwan and the People's Republic of China.

Only weeks ago the Peoples Republic fired missiles into the airspace and the shipping lanes around Taiwan. It is now openly being discussed what further actions, including military measures, might be taken. The leaders in Beijing are displeased with comments or activities of President Li after the Taiwanese elections.

It is the policy of the United States Government to have formal diplomatic relations with the People's Republic and to recognize it as the sole legitimate Government of China, but the Taiwan Relations Act is infinitely more complex. It also permits, and indeed, in my judgment, provides a responsibility for the United States Government to continually reassess our role and obligations if the security situation of Taiwan were to deteriorate.

I recognize that the relationship between Beijing and Washington is one of the cornerstones of world peace. It is one of this Nation's most important economic, cultural, and security relationships. I want it to be strong and I want it to be sound. But I also recognize, and history bears witness, the United States keeps its obligations, recognizes its relationships, and meets the needs of its friends.

I trust and I hope that Beijing in the coming months will act responsibly, retain the commitment that any dispute it might have with the people on Taiwan and the question of the larger China is resolved peacefully, responsibly, and diplomatically. But simply because Members of this institution and the larger U.S. Government are committed to good relations with Beijing, simply because we want good political relationships, increased investment and trade, simply because of the progress of all these years, they should not put aside that this is still a nation that keeps its obligations, defends the weak against the strong, and holds democratic governments with

pluralistic governments in a singular and special category.

This is, after all, not the Taiwan of 20 years ago. There is a free press, a pluralist democracy, and now, a popularly elected President. That does not negate aspects of, or in its totality, the Taiwan Relations Act. It is simply an attempt to make an effort on my own part to communicate with the leaders in Beijing to let them know that the firing of the missiles was not only wrong, but threatening military action is irresponsible.

However they may calculate it, whatever their advisers may say, at the end of the day, in spite of all the investment and all the hopes for good relations with China, the world will not watch a military incursion, a renewal of hostilities, or even irresponsible acts that threaten the peace.

So I hope each in our private ways, parties to this potential dispute, will again renew their commitment to peace and ensure that our actions remain responsible, but that all parties at the end of the day recognize that the United States will not witness the forceful end of the Government of Taiwan.

TRAVEL HABITS OF THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CHRYSLER] is recognized for 40 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. CHRYSLER. Mr. Speaker, once again, the Commerce Department has made news. But it's not news about any new trade deals it won for American business. It's for the travel habits of the Secretary of Commerce. It seems that the Secretary has a penchant for travel, one that has cost the taxpayers of this country millions of dollars.

In fact, the current Secretary's travel costs have increased by over 145 percent from that of his predecessor. One can only assume he is using the same travel agency as the Secretary of Energy.

This weekend, the Los Angeles Times reported that the Department of Commerce's own inspector general was sharply critical of Secretary Ron Brown's travel expenses, noting that "His spending levels are particularly striking since he took over the job from a Republican administration that was often under fire for incurring excessive travel costs."

The Los Angeles Times goes on to add, "Brown, a former chairman of the Democratic Party, was accused by his critics of using his travel budget to gain favor with political allies and party contributors, many of whom have been invited to accompany the secretary on his extensive foreign trips."

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the Los Angeles Times article.

The article referred to is as follows:
 [From the Los Angeles Times, Jan. 22, 1996]
 AUDIT CITES TRAVEL COSTS OF COMMERCE
 SECRETARY

(By Sara Fritz)

WASHINGTON.—Under Commerce Secretary Ronald H. Brown, travel expenses for the secretary's office have risen at least 145% over those of a well-traveled GOP predecessor, while many of Brown's aides are improperly using government credit cards for personal purchases, according to a confidential audit report obtained by The Times.

The report by the Commerce Department's inspector general also sharply criticizes Brown for supplementing his escalating travel budget with millions of dollars that Congress intended for other purposes.

In addition, it questions the Commerce Department's practice of paying in advance the expenses of nongovernment workers who travel as "consultants" for the administration. It notes that more than \$360,000 in travel advances to these private citizens have never been repaid.

The report, which generally calls into question Brown's financial management of the Commerce Department, comes to light in the wake of the controversy over excessive travel spending by Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary, whose penchant for numerous and expensive foreign trips was detailed by The Times.

Brown is already under investigation by a court-appointed independent counsel on a variety of charges unrelated to his travel expenditures—most of them involving his personal finances.

His spending levels are particularly striking since he took over the job from a Republican administration that was often under fire for incurring excessive travel costs. In particular, the extensive travels of former Commerce Secretary Robert A. Mosbacher, who served in the Bush administration, were often questioned by Democrats in Congress.

Like Mosbacher, Brown, a former chairman of the Democratic Party, was accused by this critics of using his travel budget to gain favor with political allies and party contributors, many of whom have been invited to accompany the secretary on his extensive foreign trips.

Carol Hamilton, Brown's press secretary, said the increased spending reflects the secretary's determination to be more of an activist than his predecessors in promoting the interests of American business.

"The Brown Department of Commerce is a far more activist Commerce Department, particularly in terms of export promotion," she said.

At the same time, she said, the department has taken steps to clamp down on the misuse of credit cards and to eliminate other problems cited by the auditors.

Judging from individual expense reports filed by Brown and his traveling companions, which also were obtained by The Times, the Commerce secretary's costs have risen in part because he makes numerous domestic and foreign trips. But records also show that he adds to the cost by taking along a sizable entourage of advisors and security personnel, along with an advance team whose tasks include arranging for hotel accommodations and ground transportation.

Overall, according to the audit, travels by Commerce Department employees cost the taxpayers nearly \$68 million in 1994, exceeding the budget set by Congress by about 55%. One Commerce Department agency alone, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—which helps pay for Brown's trips—exceeded its travel budget by \$22 million in 1994.

Auditors found that the secretary and his office staff spent nearly \$1.4 million from

their own budget on travel during 1994, nearly 1½ times more than the \$552,389 spent in 1991 by Mosbacher and his aides.

In addition, auditors found, the secretary has supplemented his travel budget with hundreds of thousands of dollars drawn from other agencies within his department, including NOAA, the International Trade Administration and the Economic Development Administration.

For example, the report says the ITA and the EDA transferred funds from their budgets to pay for Brown's trips to Russia in March 1994 and to India in January 1995. Records indicate that NOAA routinely pays for Brown's bodyguards, both on foreign and domestic trips.

As a result of Brown's decision to use other agencies' funds for his trips, auditors were unable to determine precisely how much money the secretary has spent on travel. But the report quotes ITA officials as saying his travel expenditures from their budget reached \$2 million in 1994 alone.

The inspector general's office says the practice of transferring funds between agencies was troublesome, but not illegal. "We found no violation of the letter of the appropriations law," the report says. "But we are concerned that the transfers weaken the integrity of the budgeting and appropriation process and expend funds in ways not anticipated by Congress."

Hamilton said Brown disagrees with the inspector general's criticism.

The report was first obtained from the Commerce Department by Citizens Against Government Waste, a conservative, Washington-based watchdog group, and the inspector general's office has declined further comment on it.

But on Capitol Hill, where decisions about Brown's travel budget are made, a spokesman for Rep. William F. Clinger Jr. (R-Pa.), chairman of the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee, expressed strong dissatisfaction with Commerce Department spending practices.

Brown's travel spending, he said, appears to be "in violation of Congress' power of the purse." Clinger, who also has a copy of the audit report, added that Americans would prefer to have their economic development funds spent on local community projects, not on foreign trips for Brown.

The auditors found widespread abuse of government credit cards within the Commerce Department, including "unpaid charges, use of charge card for personal purchases and automated teller machine advances not related to official travel." Among those issued these credit cards, according to Hamilton, are some nongovernment workers—some of them political associates of Brown—who are hired as consultants to accompany the secretary on his trips, often to make advance arrangements.

Specifically, they identified 293 employees with delinquent accounts and 567 who had used the card for ATM advances or personal charges, such as meals at fancy Washington restaurants, liquor, jewelry, flowers, books and music, online service fees and automobile insurance.

Hamilton described the problem as simply a "bookkeeping issue" and said department administrators have assured Brown that the money was not "inappropriately spent."

When confronted by the inspector general with these apparent abuses of government credit cards, according to the audit report, most agencies within the Commerce Department appear to have made a good-faith effort to ferret out the problem and respond in writing.

But Brown's own office appears to have been less cooperative. The report notes: "The coordinator in the office of the secretary

gave us oral explanations for some of the questionable accounts, but told us that because of other pressing duties, she did not have sufficient time to provide written explanations."

At NOAA, the expense account coordinator complained that she could not possibly do a thorough job of monitoring credit card expenditures because she was the only person responsible for 5,000 to 6,000 cardholders.

Although the department subsequently made arrangements with American Express Co. to automatically block retail expenditures made with a government credit card, the inspector general noted that the system was far from foolproof.

The Commerce Department's efforts to collect repayments of travel advances from consultants also have been inadequate, according to the report. As of March 31, 1995, these nongovernment personnel had received 525 advance payments totaling \$360,110 that had never been repaid.

Of the 83 nongovernment workers who traveled with the Commerce Department between 1992 and 1994, the report says, only two of them repaid their travel advances in full. While most of them made some accounting of their expenditures, however inadequate, nine of them filed no vouchers.

The report says 260 of the advances, totaling \$119,552, were more than a year old and probably uncollectable. Recipients of 367 advances, totaling \$195,861, had ignored four government notices seeking repayment.

Perhaps the hardest criticism leveled in the inspector general's report points to a lack of concern within the Commerce Department about these matters of financial management. "Oversight of travel spending by agencies appears virtually nonexistent beyond the commitment of funds," it concludes.

Earlier this year, 60 of my colleagues and I introduced legislation that would have dismantled the outdated and unnecessary bureaucracy at the Department of Commerce.

The Commerce Department is typical of the old way of Washington thinking that I was sent to challenge. While the Department is supposed to be helping the Nation's businesses, the truth is that business leaders from across the country have indicated their overwhelming support for eliminating the Department.

A Business Week poll of senior business executives taken last year indicated that those business leaders favor eliminating the Commerce Department by a two to one margin. A survey of business executives in my home State taken by the Detroit Chamber of Commerce found only 6 percent of executives and business owners in favor of keeping the Department as it is.

Yet despite this resounding vote of no confidence from the very people the Department is supposed to be serving, Secretary Brown and his liberal allies continue to defend the Department and justify ever bigger budgets.

If the Department of Commerce were truly the voice for business it claims to be, it would be supporting the things that business wants: a balanced budget and the lower interest rates and stronger economy it will bring; legal reform; and regulatory reform.

Instead, the Department has advocated against all these things, in the mistaken belief that American businesses are looking for a Secretary of

Commerce with a lot of frequent flyer miles.

Is it any wonder that the majority of business leaders in this country say get rid of Commerce?

I think I speak from some experience when I talk about dismantling the Commerce Department because I came to Congress from the business world. I started a company from the corner of my living room that went on to provide jobs to over 1,200 families and did business in 52 countries.

During the whole time I ran my company, I never once called on the Department of Commerce for their help, and they never called me to offer any.

And as a businessman, if the vast majority of my customers said they thought my company was no longer needed, I would think it was time for some major reengineering.

That is precisely what the Department of Commerce faces today. When over two-thirds of the Nation's businesses—the Department of Commerce's customers—say it should be dismantled, it is time for some serious reengineering.

Our Department of Commerce Dismantling Act provides a serious and responsible blueprint for the reengineering of the Department.

It streamlines the beneficial programs of the Department, consolidates the duplicative programs, privatizes the programs better performed by the private sector, and eliminates the unnecessary programs.

□ 1415

One of the other key features to this dismantling act is that we have found a way to consolidate many of the programs. We have 115 different trade programs that my good friend from Florida, Mr. MICA, will talk to us about, that we have consolidated into one office of trade.

If I could yield to my good friend from Florida, Mr. MICA, maybe he could embellish on that, because it was his amendment to this bill that gave us a concept for trading that puts us on a level playing field with all of our major trading partners in this country.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I do want to say what a pleasure it has been to work with the gentleman from Michigan and the refreshing viewpoint that he brings to the Congress, and also the background and knowledge. He is not an attorney, I am not an attorney. We both come from a background of business. He has dealt in international trade, knows what he is talking about. I ran a small consulting business that represented big and small firms around the world that was involved in international trade, and we think we have some idea of what is going on out there and what we need to do.

I spoke earlier on the floor to my colleagues about what the President said and what he did not say. One of the things that people were concerned

about that I talked to and that I am concerned about is our opportunities for trade. The President talked about global competition. I cannot think of any country, major industrialized country that is more ill-prepared than the United States to deal from a government standpoint in international trade. The gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CHRYSLER] has seen it, I have seen it, and others who have been involved in international trade.

The President did not tell you that the trade deficit that we are facing, that this Nation is facing, is the most staggering from last year in probably the history of the recorded statistics, that we are going down the tubes, that we are losing jobs, we are losing opportunities for the future. We are losing good-paying jobs because we do not have our act together.

It is easy to stand here and criticize, but in fact, the President and this administration are blocking the proposal that Mr. CHRYSLER and I and others have worked on. It was not an easy task to come up with a reorganization of this Department of Commerce.

Let me tell you how disorganized our trade effort is. There are 11 committees of jurisdiction; Mr. CHRYSLER and I went to at least 5 or 6 of these committees with our dog and pony show to explain what was going on, to say we needed to make a change, we needed to reorganize the Department of Commerce, not just to spend money wildly or in excess, like you have seen the abuses outlined by Mr. CHRYSLER, but in some organized, cohesive fashion.

That is what we propose. That is what is in this budget that we have proposed, and that is what has been sitting on the President's desk and has been sitting for consideration and ignored. Unless these kinds of program changes are made, we will continue to lose our shirts and our pants and our wallets and our opportunity for the future, because we do not have our act together.

Now, that is some of the bad news. Let me tell you, it gets worse. You think about the Department of Commerce. Now, what does the Department of Commerce do? Do they help commerce? Are there a few folks involved?

Let me give you the exact statistics. There are 37,009 employees in the Department of Commerce. Do you know how many are in Washington, DC?; 20,199 as of last January, 20,199. Now you think they would all be involved in helping promote commerce. Wrong, wrong again. What they are involved in, 16,000 of them are involved in the Weather Service; 16,000 in the Weather Service. Less than 3,300 are involved actually in trade and commerce and international export promotion. But we have scattered throughout 17, 18 other Federal agencies this responsibility for export promotion, for assistance for finance and for the other things that will help our medium and small businesses compete.

In fact, we propose to bring together trade assistance, trade negotiation,

trade promotion, and trade finance. You cannot cut a deal in business unless you have the ability to finance. Our medium and small businesses cannot compete. When you have the right hand not knowing what the left hand is doing and 18 agencies involved in this spending of over \$3 billion in a disorganized fashion, this is what you get, the biggest trade deficit in history.

The White House continues to ignore this, and most of the people here know nothing about it. They have never been in business. Most of them are attorneys and most of them have been running for office most of their life. This new group has come in and said: We do not want business as usual, we want to conduct international business. We want our people to have good-paying jobs, and we need to get our act together.

But let me tell you. It does not matter if it does not work; they want to continue doing it that way. It does not matter if it is ineffective. They want to continue doing it that way. It does not matter if it is costly, we will spend more money on it. And you see the results of what you get with someone like Mr. Brown running the Agency.

So we have to make some changes. Even in the Weather Bureau, with 16,000 people, you know, they are still there. Let us put our thumb out and see what the weather is, our finger. That is how they did it 10 years ago, not recognizing that there are technology changes, not recognizing that we also have a Weather Service with the Department of Defense and FAA. How about some consolidation? How about some elimination of positions of duplication?

So we propose an organized attempt for this country to get together. The freshmen are called extremists. Well, yes, they are extremists if they want to see your dollars spent properly. Yes, they are extremists if they want to see 2 or 3 people doing the same job that used to take 10. Yes, they are extremists if they see us losing our pants in competition. Yes, they are extremists if they see 30,000 people in the Department of Commerce and 20,000 of them in Washington, DC, right here.

Now, folks, we have to get a grip. This Congress has to get a grip. The American people have to grip and look at what is happening with their money and look at what is happening in the area in which we have the most opportunity for the future.

This country always depended on domestic trade. Now we have to compete in an international arena the President said, and yet they do not have one idea. They will not come forward and accept this well-thought-out, well-negotiated proposal to allow us to compete, to allow us to get our act together, to allow us to give some opportunities for the future.

Mr. Speaker, one of the first things I did as a Member of Congress as a member of the Aviation Committee, I flew out to Washington. I was there because they were laying off over 10,000 employees at Boeing. We cannot allow this to

happen. That was one of the few areas where we excel and exceed in exports. Now they are beating our pants off with Airbus and other activities. We are not able to compete.

We have to have a new relationship between business and Government working together to create jobs, to create opportunities, and to compete with the other guys who are beating our pants off. The Germans, the Japanese, the English, they have been trading with the Europeans for centuries with international markets as part of the nature of things. We have relied on domestic markets. Now we have to change.

Now, this class of freshmen who are not all attorneys, who are business people like Mr. CHRYSLER, have come here. They are bringing their knowledge, their experience, and applying it to an agency like the Department of Commerce. They wanted to do away with four or five agencies. Did you see the parade the other day when they started coming in, the Cabinet members? My goodness, they took up a whole row of the House of Representatives. There is not enough room for the Cabinet to sit at the table anymore.

Even Mr. Panetta, when he was on this floor and a Member of this House, had recommended that we downsize to seven Cabinet members. We are talking about consolidation of one activity, the most important, commerce, commerce and business that pays the bills for all of the rest of it. It pays for welfare, it pays for Medicare. None of this is provided by the tooth fairy; it is provided by the taxpayers, and then we get the funds and we spend them. But we have to have some basis for that, and that basis is business. Our best opportunity for business is export and getting the Department of Commerce together.

I yield back to the gentleman, and I thank him so much for the leadership he and his class has provided, for the abuse you have taken in trying to bring this country into the 21st century as far as business, economic opportunity, and I salute you.

Mr. CHRYSLER. I thank the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MICA]. I appreciate the help of the gentleman and his expertise in the area of trade.

Trade is a very important issue to this country, but we need to do it so we can compete on a level playing field with all of our trading partners.

In this Commerce dismantling act that we have passed here in the House, over 7 years the plan will save taxpayers \$7 billion of their hard-earned money, money that will not be going to fund Secretary Brown's worldwide junkets any longer. And just getting rid of the Department of Commerce, which is the mother of all corporate welfare, giving away over \$1 billion a year in the Department of Commerce, if you do not have a Department of Commerce for 25 years, you do not give away \$25 billion of taxpayers' money.

□ 1430

Dismantling the unnecessary and duplicative bureaucracy at the Depart-

ment of Commerce is a hefty down payment that we can make today on our efforts to balance the budget. If the President is serious about getting rid of wasteful Government spending, as he indicated the other night in his State of the Union Address, he should join us in this effort to make Government more effective and more efficient.

Certainly, one of my colleagues that has worked extremely hard at that in this 104th Congress is the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. BROWNBACK]. He has worked to try to right-size this Government. He has worked to dismantle not only the Department of Commerce but the Department of Energy, the Department of Education, and HUD. I am proud to say that three of those four departments were included in the Balanced Budget Act of 1995 in the House bill.

If you want to protect the status quo, then you will continue to do what Alice Rivlin indicated the other day when we met with her and said, well, she was not ready to look at dismantling the Department of Commerce because she wanted to keep it around.

I would like to yield to my friend, the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. BROWNBACK], and let him tell us a little bit about his experiences of trying to right-size Government while trying to eliminate the wasteful spending of a Secretary with the total disregard for the taxpayers' money that he has shown here.

Mr. BROWNBACK. I thank the gentleman from Michigan for yielding.

I want to recognize what the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CHRYSLER] has been doing. Here is a businessman coming into the Congress. Normally, people would say, well, this would be the type of person that would defend the Department of Commerce, help the Department of Commerce because it is going to deliver goodies back to him or to his organization or people that he knows. Instead, he is going in saying, "Why do we have this Department of Commerce the way it is currently configured and can we not save money and help the American people and help the American taxpayer in the process?" I think that is a very worthy goal and objective and something that the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CHRYSLER] has really put forward.

Mr. Speaker, the other night I was really attracted to very supportive to very supportive of the President's statement in the State of the Union where he said at the outset, "The era of big Government is over." The era of big Government is over. It is over.

He said that, and he said that we have got to get on past this point in time. I was very appreciative of him saying that, that the era of big government was over. And I anticipated that shortly thereafter in the speech, the State of the Union, that he would call for the elimination of the Department of Commerce as an indication that the era of big government is over and here is something we can do without and we

can save \$7 billion in doing this, \$7 billion. We can cut corporate welfare in the process of doing this, as well, and we can deal with some of these issues of excessive travel expenditures in the process, too. We can show a smaller, more focused, more limited Federal Government.

We can do as the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MICA] has talked about previously as well, consolidate our trade functions. Instead of 19 different agencies and entities doing trade promotion, get it into one, and we can have an effective, focused force in international trade that will help us, although I think the biggest help we can do to help ourselves in international trade is negotiate good treaties, have less regulation, have less litigation, have less taxation and a balanced budget to cut interest rates by 2 percentage points, and if we could get the Federal Government as a smaller percentage of the gross national product, that is going to do more than anything else to help us promote international trade and get our balance of payments.

I would be happy to yield back to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CHRYSLER. I just want to remind the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. BROWNBACK] also of the Freedom to Farm Act. That is the one we need to get through, too.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Yes, to be able to allow farmers to decide themselves what they want to plant rather than somebody that is planning for this out of the centralized bureaucracy in Washington telling my dad and my brother what they can plow on their farmland in Linn County near Parker, KS. They sit out there now and they go, "Now who is telling me that I have got to plant this many acres of corn and this many acres of wheat," and they are saying, "Well, OK, I will go along because that is what the system is."

But you have got to question, is that really the way it should be decided? Should the marketplace not send those signals and then individually decide in that system? And they would much rather do that.

I would say, as well, there are a number of very good things done by the Department of Commerce that we keep. Patent and Trademark Office, you have to keep that and you want to keep that. The National Weather Service does a very good job. I think we could probably do some more with some increase in technology, but they do an excellent job as well, and there are other things within that agency that do a good job.

But it is also well known about the political nature of many of the appointments within the Department of Commerce. There are problems that it has had recently, and we have seen these recent reports about the Secretary in the Department of Commerce.

I think overall, as a statement of faith and as a statement of commitment from the President of the United States and this Congress, that the era of big government is over, we should take this very first step and eliminate the Department of Commerce, keeping the core functions that are good and necessary, eliminating the corporate welfare, getting it out, saving the American people \$7 billion in the process, and showing them a smaller, more limited, more focused Federal Government.

I would be happy to yield back to my colleague, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CHRYSLER], who has brought this debate thus far with a great deal of difficulty.

Mr. CHRYSLER. I thank the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. BROWNBACK].

The gentleman mentioned the era of big government is over, and it is true the President of the United States said that three times in his speech.

This is the same President that wanted to give us the biggest health care, national health care program, in the history of this country, gave us the biggest tax increase in the history of this country, and then presented a balanced budget to us on January 6 which he could have just as easily presented to us on December 15 and we would have had no Government shutdown. So we ask ourselves, Who shut down the Government? Only the President, the President that could have submitted that budget when the law that he signed said he would. So he broke the law, did not keep his word and shut down the Federal Government. That is very easy to understand.

In that budget, \$400 billion went for a bigger government here in Washington, DC. There was also another \$200 billion tax increase. And Bill Clinton has again just demonstrated that he is a tax-and-spend, liberal Democratic President. This, when he is standing there saying out of the other side of his mouth, the era of big government is over.

At this point, I yield to my good friend, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. SMITH].

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, first let me thank the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CHRYSLER] for the tremendous work he has done looking at wasteful government spending, and, make no mistake, there is a lot of waste.

You are exactly correct that Republicans probably made a mistake when they simply said we want the President as a starting point to give us his balanced budget that balances in 7 years as scored by CBO. So what does he do? He gives us a budget that increases taxes, does not cut spending and said, well, this is it. But do the people of this country really want to continue down that path of more taxes and more spending and more borrowing.

On the Department of Commerce, I think when we have a department that is not necessary and we start appoint-

ing political cronies to head up those departments, there is a danger of misuse of their positions.

So I am not only concerned about Secretary Brown's international travels, I am also concerned about his domestic travels. This is an individual who was chairman of the National Democratic Party, who was the major fundraiser for Democrats, who does a political evaluation test for the people that he brings in to make sure that they are partisan Democrats.

I think what happens is not only a waste of taxpayers' money but a misuse of the Department, when instead of appointing the highest qualified individuals, you go to those political patronage jobs who have done the most for your political Democratic Party or for your reelection as President and you say this is the person I am going to bring in to head this Department.

So it is no wonder that there is an abuse of travel. When we investigate this, and I would hope everybody would just take the time to read the Monday, January 22 Los Angeles Times article where it cites the travel costs of the Commerce Secretary that are 145 percent higher than his predecessor, that has evidence of misuse of credit card by the staff of that department. Here is not only the head of the Department but essentially a whole department that should be wiped out, eliminated from the Federal Government. The useful functions of that department can well be accomplished by other agencies and other departments at much lesser cost.

We have got a problem in this country, and it is about time we face it. It is about time that every individual, say, at least under the age of 50 years old, better start looking at this Federal budget, they better start looking at the ramifications that this overspending and overtaxing and overborrowing is going to have on their future lives. Because if you look at how long Social Security is going to last, the estimates are now that Social Security is going to be broke by the year 2020, that Medicare is actually this year spending out more money than it is taking in. We have made overcommitments, we are overspenders.

Politicians in the past have decided that by promising more and more good things to people, it increases their chances of being reelected. The U.S. American citizens, when they go to the poll every election, better be saying, Is this person going to be doing what is right for my future, my kids' future and our grandkids' future? We are in a big battle now.

I will yield back to the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CHRYSLER]. He can yield maybe on this point.

Mr. CHRYSLER. I thank the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. SMITH]. I appreciate the gentleman's comments this afternoon, and certainly they are very, very well noted.

I yield at this point to the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON].

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CHRYSLER] and the other gentleman from Michigan.

I wanted to say that it is interesting that just this morning I was speaking to a senatorial candidate from Georgia, and he said he started politics in 1974. In 1974 the big issue, when he was running for the State legislature, was let us balance the budget, we cannot have these deficits going on and on forever. He said, finally, after all these years, 17, 18 years later, we finally have a Congress who is doing something about the budget.

When I hear a lot of the folks back home who are bureaucracy brokers and status quo preservers saying, Oh, you can't do this, you can't do that, nobody said it was going to be easy to balance the budget. Nobody said that you could just do it overnight. We did not get in this situation overnight, and we will not get out of it overnight.

I always think it is kind of like dismantling an old white-elephant kind of house, one board at a time and maybe 1 year at a time. Perhaps we underestimated how quickly we could turn this government around. But we got used to borrowing money. Back in the days of Lyndon Johnson, we got used to borrowing money. It got so bad that by 1969, we said good-bye to our last balanced budget, and since then we have just been comfortable year after year of borrowing money.

While that would terrify our constituents back home, our moms and dads running households, to us it is not as terrifying because we have always been able to print more money. But I am glad that this Congress is taking a critical, crucial step. I wanted to just support what the gentleman from Michigan was saying in that regard.

Mr. CHRYSLER. I thank the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON].

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Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and my other colleagues that have come out to talk about the scandal at the Department of Commerce and our meager attempts to try to reorganize one agency in this huge bureaucracy. I talked about 37,000 employees in the Department of Commerce, and 20,199 just in Washington, DC.

Here we are trying to balance the budget, we are trying to make some tough choices. It is not any fun to tell people they are going to get less, or the increases will not be as much, or some programs have to be eliminated. But then you have the responsibility, and I serve on the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, charged with looking at investigations and audits of these Federal agencies, and then these are the reports that we get about the Department of Commerce that Mr. CHRYSLER is highlighting today. Listen to this. Here is what these 20,000 people are doing in the Department of Commerce just in Washington.

This audit specifically identified 293 employees with delinquent accounts. They had Federal Government credit cards within the Department of Commerce, including unpaid charges and use of credit cards for personal purchases, even with ATM's—293 employees had delinquent accounts. Now listen to this; 567 had used the card for ATM advances for personal charges for meals at fancy Washington restaurants, liquor, jewelry, flowers, books, music, on-line service fees, we do not know what that is, and automobile insurance.

Would not all of my constituents in the Seventh District of Florida like to have one of these handy cards? This is not just a few folks; this is 567.

Now, we came, we looked at the Department of Commerce, and we saw disorganization. We saw 20,000 people out of 36,000 just here in Washington, DC. We saw us losing our shirt and pants and economic opportunity in the international trade arena, and we tried to reorganize it. We proposed that and got slammed in the face. We have been ignored.

Then we have the President come here and talk about global competition, and no one is less prepared than the United States of America to compete in this global market.

So here is what is going on. These are the choices we have to make. These are the choices Americans have to make, and we have got to do something about it. We wanted to change much more. We acceded to one department, and this is what the people are getting for their money. Their money is being wasted. We are not competing.

You heard Mr. BROWNBACK. The answer that the gentleman gave is true. We can do more for business with a balanced budget. We can do more to promote business with less taxation, less litigation, less government regulation. Those are all part of our agenda here, what we have tried to do in a sensible, responsible, commonsense business fashion.

But people do not want to listen to that. They want to stand up and say the Republicans are hurting the elderly, environment, and education. It sounds good and gets on a bumper sticker, but it does not jibe with the facts.

These are the facts, that this department and other departments are out of control, that this Federal bureaucracy is out of control. When you have 350,000 Federal employees within just a few miles of my speaking distance from the floor of the House of Representatives, that is what this argument is about.

These freshmen have come here from business, from every walk of life, and they do not care whether they get re-elected. That is the difference here. They do not care whether they get re-elected. They came here to get this country's finance in order. They came here to get this Government in order. That is what they care about. They do not care about the next election, they care about the next generation.

When you see this country, the threat of our debt carrying us into a lower credit rating on the international market, when you see the President talking about responsibility with pension funds, while Secretary Rubin, the Secretary of the Treasury, is rocking the shreds that are left of our Federal employees' retirement funds. It is a pitiful state of affairs for this country, for this Congress, and for the future of any American.

So I thank the gentleman. I get a little bit wound up on this, but I care too, and I know the gentleman cares, and that is why we came here. It does not matter whether we come back, because others will come to this job. It has to be done. It must be done, and it will be done for the future of this country.

Mr. CHRYSLER. I thank the gentleman and appreciate those words. The gentleman mentioned 37,000 employees in the Commerce Department. Two-thirds of those employees were deemed nonessential during the first Government shutdown, 24,000 employees. My legislation only reduced it by one-third, or about 12,000 employees, which says we are not extreme, just conservative. The extreme position is when you want to protect the status quo, and we are here to change it.

To that point, I would sure like to yield some time to my good friend from Arizona [Mr. HAYWORTH].

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Michigan. As we are gathered here on the floor to have a little straight talk, I think it is very interesting again to recall the words of our Chief Executive, who stood here at the podium 2 nights ago and who said the days of big government are over.

Well, maybe there is a word we should insert there, because I think what the American people want to know is that the days of big spending government are over. For how could the President make that assertion 2 nights ago, and be here in this Chamber with his Cabinet officers, including two of the biggest spenders the executive branch has ever seen? If not the biggest spenders, certainly two of the most well traveled Cabinet secretaries this country has ever seen?

I exchanged pleasantries with Secretary O'Leary. Much as been made, and, indeed, the record of her travels has been chronicled for all in this free society to see. And apart from recognition of those problems, the White House has turned a deaf ear. Of course, this White House, goodness knows, has problems of its own.

Then Secretary Brown. It is almost as if the receptionist at the Commerce Department could make a recording that rhymes: "Mr. Brown is out of town." That in itself would not be so bad, I suppose, Mr. Speaker, but Mr. Brown is out of town, and he is on your expense account, you, the American taxpayer.

Mr. Speaker, all of us in here, all of the American people who pay their taxes, who play by the rules, are fi-

nancing trips that need some oversight, expenditures that this Congress should take a very real look at, and, again, not questioning the sincerity of the service, but instead looking at the evidence, the compelling evidence.

A few years before we got here there was criticism of another Secretary of Commerce who served under a Republican President, and previous Congresses chose to investigate that Secretary of Commerce. And yet expenditures for the current Secretary of Commerce are some 145 percent above his Republican predecessors. Now, I realize in this town, and given the kind of quirky mathematics employed by the liberals inside the beltway, they will probably try to say that is a cut. But it is an increase, and it is to the credit of the gentleman from Michigan that he has brought it to our attention and a credit to the fact that it has not gone on his credit card, but has been brought to the attention of the American public.

Mr. CHRYSLER. Now more than ever it is time to dismantle the Department of Commerce.

BALANCING THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] is recognized for 20 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the House.

Mr. Speaker, former Prime Minister Rabin made it very clear that he felt that politicians, elected officials, were elected by adults to represent the children, and that is in fact what our responsibility ultimately is, to represent the children and to leave this country a better place than we found it.

When I was elected in the statehouse in 1974, really at the end of the Vietnam War, our national debt was \$430 billion. In the 22 years since the end of the Vietnam war, our national debt has grown to \$4.9 trillion. We have seen a tenfold increase since the last really extensive war. So we fought the Revolutionary War, we fought the war with the pirates, we fought the War of 1812, we fought the Civil War, we fought the Spanish-American War, we fought World War I, we fought World War II, we fought the Korean war, we fought the Vietnam war, and our national debt was about \$430 billion.

Admittedly those dollars bought more in past years, but since then our national debt has grown to \$4.9 trillion.

I was elected to the statehouse, and I looked at Congress with some awe, that it is an amazing place. It is a magnificent opportunity to serve in Congress. But I looked as a State legislator and said I have to balance our State budget in Connecticut. I cannot let it be unbalanced.

I understand when times are bad you might have a year or two when you