

debt ceiling. Not once. The bottom line is, these are bully-boy tactics which were never used before.

Yes, there has been agreement with the debt ceiling put on ABDC, but it was bipartisan, et cetera. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding, because that is a grave misstatement of the facts.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I think your point is very well taken. I think it is important, as Mr. SCHUMER indicated, that any time that we have not had the passing of a clean debt ceiling or lifting of such, it has been bipartisan; but more importantly, let me state that all of the economists will confirm, we have never, never, never defaulted on payments that the American people must make and that this Nation must make on their behalf.

We must understand, this Nation must understand, that the creditworthiness of this country is based upon its ability to pay its debt. The alternative: Sell all our gold. The other alternative: Do not pay any tax refunds.

The President of the United States will not stand.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is good that we are here this morning in vigorous debate, and hearing my colleague, the gentleman from Michigan, who serves as the chair of a 130-person panel from the Republican Conference, it is interesting that he would say that we on this side of the aisle are frivolously representing to the American people that this is not a crisis. On those alternatives. That is a crisis.

Has any other Western civilization nation or any other nation defaulted? Yes, four of them in the past 100 years, and they have not done so since 1970. Places like Argentina, Stalinist Russia. Is that the kind of company we want to keep to ensure that we have a nation that can be respected internationally and have the economy stable?

Do we want to default? Do we understand that the Republican majority is saying to us, we are going to leave tomorrow, not come back, and take us to the brink of March 1, when we have not passed a clean debt ceiling in order to prevent default. That is the crisis which we face; and my colleague from Michigan, who, as I said, I respect, is clearly on the wrong road if he thinks he can bring the American people to the brink of default and we not constantly get on the floor of the House and explain it.

We will not leave here tomorrow, and I will offer a resolution that we not have a recess so that we can continue this, and that we not go home while we are without the responsibility or the action of making sure that we can pay on our responsibilities and our debt on March 1.

DEMOCRATS SO-CALLED SCAMS ARE SHAMS

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

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues, I come to the floor this morning to talk about two scams that have been perpetrated by both the administration and the other side of the aisle.

The first scam is what I call the Clinton shutdown and the charges that were made about balancing the budget and about getting our Nation's finances in order. It is part of a scare scam, and it is pretty clever. It says, that Republicans will hurt the elderly, the environment, education.

In fact, if we just take a minute and look at the facts involved here, in the area of Medicare, we have heard it over and over: Republicans are going to cut it. In fact, over the next 7 years we will add \$724 billion in spending.

Medicaid, we will add \$348 billion in spending. In education and job training and student loans, we will add \$25.7 billion in spending. But we hear it over and over.

What they do not in fact tell us is that part of this argument is about the bureaucracy. EPA has 6,069 employees in Washington, DC. That is almost as many as a dozen years ago, a total of 18,000. I am not talking about the 12,000 outside of Washington, but 6,000 in Washington, DC.

Education, we have 3,322 employees in Washington, D.C., out of a total of 4,876 employees. A total of 358,000 Federal employees. These are not defense; these are not civilian defense. These are part of that bureaucracy within just earshot of the Capitol building. That is what this debate is really about.

Now, my colleagues, a second scam comes before us, and the second scam is this: If the Republicans do not continue taxing and spending and driving this Nation into debt, then we will not be able to pay our Social Security recipients, and they have even said, Mr. SMITH said, we are not going to be able to pay our veterans.

This administration, which has just gotten through robbing the Federal retirement trust funds, now is engaged in the second scam. They can pay welfare payments to illegal aliens, they can pay medical benefits better than we have for our veterans, but they cannot pay Social Security.

They can pay for bilingual education for illegal aliens. They can find \$50 billion to bail out Mexico. But, in fact, they cannot pay Social Security and our veterans.

So the President is making these choices. The administration is making these choices. They can even pay AmeriServe, or whatever the name of the President's volunteer, so-called volunteer program, which pays volunteers for the first time in the history of this country and gives them an array of perks that would make any veteran blush.

These are the choices that we face. I will say again, the greatest threat facing our senior citizens today is that we get this mess in order.

We debated here about extending the debt limit of this country for 34 days, and we needed \$67 billion. We are going into the hole at the rate of over half a

billion dollars a day, and they want to continue this tax-and-spend policy; and they say that in fact we cannot pay our senior citizens Social Security checks. Well, that is their choice, because they have other choices, and that is what this debate is about, whether the debate deals with in fact balancing the budget or extending the debt limit.

So we are in fact here today. Let me tell my colleagues, I chair the Subcommittee on Civil Service, and let me describe the mess we inherited: 35 of 39 Federal retirement trust funds have unfunded liabilities in the trillions of dollars. Now they have spent the last number of days robbing what little remains, what shred remains, so now they are threatening our senior citizens. That is what this is about.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MICA. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Let me just say that I asked the Congressional Research Service whether Secretary Rubin could legally withhold trust funds. They said their first review of the law said, no, it would be illegal to withhold trust fund payments for any trust fund where there is a surplus coming into those trust funds. I have written Secretary Rubin the day before yesterday asking him to give us the reasons why he thinks he can do this.

Mr. MICA. Finally, my colleagues, let me say that the President, after this Congress and this new majority did its job and came forward with 12 funding bills, the President never came up with a balanced budget proposal until January 6, 1996.

TIME FOR RESPONSIBILITY IS NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, this debate, I think, for people at home is very frustrating, except I think the people are a lot smarter than those of us in the Chamber, and they see right through it. They know what is going on here. They see people saying, we are not going to pay our bills.

Now, that has never happened. There have never been elected representatives that have come in and said, we are not going to pay our bills. That is not anything that anybody respects in America. Try that as a family. Furthermore, if you know you are just about to go into bankruptcy, you know you are just about to run up against that brick wall, you go on vacation for 3 weeks.

Mr. BUNNING of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Well, let me finish, if you do not mind, because I do have a few things to say. I have asked others to yield and they do not. I remember the days when we used to yield, but I guess that seems to be over.

I sit here and on one hand, I get depressed because people come to me and they say, why are you leaving? And I say to them, why are you staying? Why

are you staying? This place has just fallen to its new, all-time low. Never in the history of this Republic, during several wars, during depressions, during anything, have people stood up here and refused to pay the bills and said, OK, we will just take the full faith and credit of this great Nation, this Nation that has the best credit rating on the planet and we will just shove it off the cliff because we want our way. Never has it done that. I am embarrassed to be here.

The good news is, the reason some of my colleagues are staying is because today in Oregon we know that the people are waking up and the people are saying, this is outrageous. We just saw a race where one person who spent \$1 million more than the other lost. That says the people are saying, we have to pay our bills and we want this Government to pay theirs, and we do not want people playing fast and loose with the credit rating of this country.

I have a question and my question is, if we know that March 1 is a very serious date, why are we leaving and not having any votes until February 27? Why are we having the French Prime Minister in here, the guy who is dropping nuclear tests all over the Pacific that most people and most countries are outraged about? Why is he coming here to give a speech? We have time to do everything in the world except deal with the one basic responsibility we have, and that is to pay our bills.

Everything that is being discussed and everything that has already been committed to, this is not new spending; this is stuff that has been committed to. I think if we listen real closely and we are real quiet, we can hear the rest of the world laughing at us.

I think that we ought to stay here, we ought to get started on this debt issue. We should not be running toward being a defaulting nation or a deadbeat nation.

I just find it absolutely outrageous people saying, look, we are either going to be deadbeats or you are going to do it my way. It is like saying to Visa, I am not going to pay my bill unless you come paint my house, take care of my kids, walk my dog, and do anything I ask you to. I do not think that is how it works, and I think we all know that is not how it works.

So I guess I am basically saying, remember, this is about paying our bills. We have had over 200 years of history where people in this Chamber have never, never used that as a leverage or a gun at the head of a President or anyone else. That should be done. Those things were decided upon; that happened, and we should pay those bills just like every other American.

To play with the credit rating of this Nation we love is every bit as bad as desecrating the flag, as desecrating any other thing. I think it is really about patriotism. I cannot think of anything worse that we could do to our country at this moment than just trampling all over the credit rating and make this country be a deadbeat.

Think about what other countries are going to think. They are going to think, hey, if we default, we default. We could have National Default Day.

That is not what we were about, I thought. I thought we were about responsibility. I thought that is what Republicans were about, responsibility.

I listen to all of this with 23-plus years of experience, sitting on this floor, and it saddens me greatly. Every single thing that the President has been asked to do, he has come forward with a proposal. It ends up, they do not like what he did, so they want it still to be their proposal.

We do not have tantrums. Let us move on. Let us pay our bills and let us not be deadbeats.

PRESIDENT HAS NOT KEPT HIS PROMISES

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

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, this President has kept all of his promises? I mean, who is kidding whom? This President was the President who campaigned vigorously across America 4 years ago, and what were the issues? He is going to end welfare as we know it, and now we see him vetoing and threatening to veto any piece of legitimate welfare reform.

What was the second thing that he campaigned on? That he was going to balance the budget; he is a new Democrat. This President is not a new Democrat, he is just like the old Democrats and the fact is, it is the old Democrats and his philosophy that have gotten America in the position it is in today, that we are going to have to make these tough choices or we will go broke.

Now, earlier I heard criticism of how this body is functioning and how much work we are putting out. I happen to have been here, and this is my eighth year as a Member of Congress. We have done more since the Republicans took over a year ago legislatively than in the entire 6 years that I served before the Republicans took over.

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The reform efforts before that were thwarted time and time again.

Let me cite just one example. Our country is going broke, we are being told now we have to borrow more and more money from our children, and we cannot even put any type of restrictions on spending in that process. But let me give one example of a reform that has actually cost the American people tens of billions of dollars since I have been a Member of Congress, and how the other side thwarted our attempts over and over again to get even a vote on the floor. It was mentioned earlier by the gentleman from Florida. Should illegal aliens be consuming scarce dollars when we are going to the

poorhouse, we are having to borrow from our children? We tried to get that reform so illegal aliens would not be encouraged to come into this country to consume scarce dollars. We could not even get a vote on it.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I just wanted to make a point.

We heard the gentlewoman from Colorado make the statement, we should pay our bills. I could not agree more with that, but the question becomes this: Are we willing to rob future generations to pay the seemingly endless bills of today? That is the bottom line on this issue.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. There is nothing standing in the way of a balanced budget, there is nothing standing in the way to bring to an end this policy that we have had of having to increase the debt limit over and over and over again because we are nowhere in sight of a balanced budget. There is no one standing in the way except the President of the United States.

The other side had a chance. For 2 years the President controlled both Houses, or his party, controlled both Houses of Congress and every executive department and every executive office. All of those were controlled by the liberal Democrats who control the Democratic Party, and what did we get? We got no reform. We got no reform at all.

What do we Republicans get now, after working as hard as we possibly can, passing more reforms in a shorter period of time? We get criticism that we are not working hard enough, when in reality we all know it is the President of the United States that is standing in the way of these reforms, it is the President of the United States standing in the way of a balanced budget, it is the President of the United States who is putting the burden of higher and higher debt onto our children. That is what the problem is.

I am proud to be a Member of this body. I am proud to be a reformer in this Republican effort and NEWT GINGRICH's effort.

Mr. MICA. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, we on this side, I think, were foxed before by the President because he promised to come up with a balanced budget. He never did. Now they are telling us the responsible thing to do is raise the debt limit without any guarantees, to continue taxing and spending. We were betrayed before.

The alternative is the President's budget, which they are afraid to really even bring on the floor today. It has in it \$210 billion in additional spending. That is more than 1 entire year's deficit that we are running now. Then another surprise, \$66 billion in taxes.

They are saying we cannot pay our senior citizens or our veterans, but in fact we are going to make choices and we are going to pay if we do not make some changes here; our illegal aliens,