

It is important that the voice of those Democrats who are seeking to do so be heard. I am somewhat disturbed that the House majority has failed to address the real serious questions of the economy. In the backdrop of a very high and moral decision of whether or not this Nation goes to war, we have lost all sight of those who are hurting.

Let me just give some points that are worth noting. Household income is down for the first time since 1991. This is not household income of those who can afford to throw away a few dollars, cut out one more midwinter trip away to the islands or to some European attractive vacation spot. This is the household income of those who are trying to make ends meet, trying to send young people to college, pay their mortgages, or, like in the State of Texas, trying to scurry around to find substitute insurance to the Farmers Insurance Company that has shut down in Texas, causing 700,000 families not to have home insurance. This is real. Mr. Speaker, I have sent a letter to the Attorney General of the United States, and I am waiting for a response, for him to determine how he can be of assistance to those 700,000 families in Texas.

Poverty is up for the first time since 1993, affecting 1.3 million more families than last year; 1.8 million jobs have been lost, and unemployment is up 5.7 percent. Health care costs are soaring; and again we say to the senior citizens in our community, prescription drugs prices are five times the rate of inflation, but yet this body has not been able to pass a guaranteed Medicare prescription drug benefit. People are hurting.

□ 1800

The stock market has lost \$4.5 trillion of its value, more than was lost in the Hoover administration in that collapse. All of the history books will point to the stock market crash of 1928. We have surpassed that. The market just ended its worst quarter since the crash of 1987.

Thousands of employees have seen their retirement savings evaporate. 401(k) and other defined contribution plans lost \$210 billion. The index of leading economic indicators fell .2 percent this month, double the decline experts had expected. And a \$5.6 trillion surplus has become a \$2 trillion deficit.

We have work to do, Mr. Speaker, and we are not doing it. Thousands and thousands, I am exaggerating, of course, hundreds and hundreds, tens of tens of suspension bills going nowhere; but yet we are failing to address the pain and the hurt of those who are suffering from this economy. We have got to strengthen pensions by giving employees the same protections that executives get. We have got to allow those who are living with companies that are bankrupt, Mr. Speaker, to go into the bankruptcy court, pass a prescription drug benefit, protect Social Security, and provide jobs. I simply ask for this Congress to do its work.

GUAM'S POSITION IN LIGHT OF IRAQI SITUATION

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

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, today as we look upon the world situation and we are confronting the possibility of a renewed struggle in the Middle East and trying to deal with all the challenges that we face as a result of the activities and actions of Saddam Hussein, it is important for me as the representative of Guam to inform the House about what the impact all of this may have on communities around the country, and particularly Guam.

We are on the precipice of a new struggle, and we will have some time to review and debate that particular resolution which may authorize military activities in that part of the world next week; but the military challenges that we face and the strategic challenges that we face, even though they affect the entire Nation, they do not affect all the communities around the country in the same way; and certainly we the people of Guam will feel the effects of this in many disproportionate ways.

Guam is known primarily as a strategic area, as a place from which we can triangulate armed conflict. It is a military base for the Navy and for the Air Force. There has been recent discussion about the placement of bomber squadrons there at Anderson Air Force Base, and new submarines are going to be home-ported in Guam. All of that is welcomed by the people of Guam because, indeed, we are patriotic Americans.

In fact, today I just got an e-mail from an Air Force captain asking me for some remarks in order that he might swear in an airman. Both of them are in Kabul. The airman is going to be reenlisted there in Afghanistan. Our people are disproportionately in high numbers in armed services. We support the military. But as we look upon what the effects of this struggle might be and even though it may lead to a bump-up in military activities in Guam, we are directly economically challenged by this because our economy is based primarily on tourism and 80 percent of our visitors come from Japan and nothing is more disconcerting to Japanese tourists than the prospect of war and conflict. If the situation which occurred in Guam immediately after the Gulf War crisis or immediately after September 11 last year again exists as a result of this armed conflict, we will see a dramatic downturn in tourism. A downturn in tourism is already in effect as a result of 9-11 and is already in effect simply because of the economic malaise that continues to obtain in Japan. But more so than that, if this armed conflict comes about, even the discussion of it will lead to a reduction in numbers.

Guam will stand ready to do its part. It did its part even in the evacuation of

the Kurdish refugees in 1996 under Operation Pacific Haven. They were sent to Guam. When there was no overflight authority granted to conduct bombing raids on Iraq at a couple of times in the past few years, those bombers were prepositioned in Guam and then taken directly to Iraq.

But I point this out not because the people of Guam will not be in support, but because really the people of Guam deserve additional consideration should this series of economic downturns occur as a result of any conflict or even the discussion of conflict. Immediately after the 9-11 situation, there were a couple of proposals offered for economic recovery. In that effort, the House was not receptive to inclusion of the territories in that economic recovery package. While in the other body the economic recovery package was more receptive to the inclusion of Guam and other territories, that economic package never was successful.

Indeed, at the end of the day, the economic assistance that was given directly to the territories was minimal at best. But we have a new situation that we are confronted with and the people of Guam because of their long contributions to the strategic posture of the United States and because of their contributions not only in terms of their support for the military in Guam but their own participation in Guam I think should be treated with some regard. I think the people of Guam deserve to be treated according to their contribution to national security and national defense and simply not be utilized on the basis of its value from time to time.

And so as we take a look at the world situation today and as we will go over the details of the resolution, we must be mindful that this effect, the economic effects on communities will be disproportionate around the country, and we should be mindful of those so that when we construct some initiatives that we give each community its due.

FISCAL REVERSAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLAKE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight along with my colleagues to address an issue of great importance which is receiving hardly any attention at all. It is about our fiscal reversal, about the tide of red ink that has overtaken our budget, about the resurgence of deficits that we thought after long, long years of trying we had finally laid to rest. Lost in the clutter, drowned by the drums of war, the deficit sinks deeper and deeper and deeper; and there is no apparent plan by this administration or this Congress to deal with the problem.

You can look at this chart here which shows graphically the deficit and

how we have grappled with it over the years and see what a difficult struggle it has been. The surpluses that we had for a brief period of time did not come easily. They did not drop like manna out of heaven upon the Earth beneath. In the Reagan-Bush years, we adopted in 1985 something called Gramm-Rudman-Hollings. It did not work, but it did help us focus attention and frame the problem and turn the attention of the Congress to deficit reduction as a top-drawer concern.

When Bill Clinton came to office in 1992, we had reached an agreement a couple of years before with President Bush I, George Herbert Walker Bush, called the budget summit agreement. It was 6 months in the making. Its effects were eclipsed by a recession. It did not appear to have succeeded, but in fact it laid the basis for the surpluses that we were to enjoy in the latter part of the 1990s.

President Clinton sent us a budget plan on February 17, less than a month after he was in office, to show the significance he attributed to the problem. And look what happened. This red ink here represents the deficits accumulated, the precipitous decline in the budget during the Reagan years. This represents the dramatic improvement. Every year from 1993 through the year 2000, every year the Clinton administration was in office as a result of the Clinton budget adopted in 1993, the budget got better, the bottom line of the budget got better, so much so that by the year 1998, the Federal Government achieved the first unified balanced budget in 29 years. Unified means all the accounts of the budget, Social Security, Medicare, all the trust funds which are in surplus, and that helped.

But in fiscal year 1999, we achieved the first balanced budget in 39 years without using the Social Security trust fund, without counting the Social Security trust fund, the first balanced budget in 39 years. Nobody would have even bet money on enormous odds that that could have been done in 1993 when the deficit was \$290 billion, but we did it in 1999. And in the year 2000, the Federal Government achieved its first surplus excluding Social Security and Medicare. Backing the surplus in both of those accounts out of the budget, we had a surplus for the first time in the overall budget.

In effect, what we did then, it is hard to believe now, less than 2 years ago, this was the situation of the budget; this was the situation that we presented to President Bush, the second President Bush when he came to office on January 20, 2001. For the first time in recent history, certainly since the Great Depression, for the first time, we presented President Bush with a budget in surplus, big-time surplus. By the estimation of his Office of Management and Budget, the surplus looming over the next 10 years would accumulate altogether to a total of \$5.6 trillion. In 2 years, that surplus is virtually gone.

As this next chart will show, what happened to the \$5.6 trillion? This layered graph right here represents the \$5.6 trillion that accumulated between 2002 and 2011, over that 10-year period of time. The little green tip at the far end, the upper layer, shows you the surplus that we presented President Bush when he came to office. It was his. An enormous advantage. He then took the estimate of \$5.6 trillion and basically bet the budget on what was a blue-sky forecast. In doing so, as you can see from this top green layer, the remaining surplus, he left next to no room for errors and no room for the unexpected. And, guess what, there were estimating errors of major proportions and the unexpected, 9–11, came along.

When it came, we had no reserve, we had no cushion, we had no margin; and the consequence was the surplus that we had depended upon turned out to be about 43 percent lower than we had anticipated, 10 percent of it because the economy was overestimated, another 33 percent because we bet the budget on the assumption that the revenue growth of the 1990s would continue.

Here is the bottom line in about as stark a manner as we can possibly present it. This was the surplus in May 2001 when this body, the House of Representatives, under Republican leadership, passed the Republican budget resolution that called for about \$1.4 trillion in tax cuts. In addition to that, the additional interest cost would have been about \$400 billion on top of that. Here is where we are in August 2002 as a result of not allowing any margin of error or any margin for misestimation or any margin for the unexpected.

Tonight we want to address that problem and the consequences of it because what has happened is the most dramatic reversal we have seen probably since the Great Depression in the fortunes of the Federal budget. Just 2 years ago, it is hard to believe that every year for 8 years we had seen a better bottom line. Now every year the budget is in deficit for the next 10 years if you do not include the Social Security surplus, and by law we are not supposed to include the Social Security surplus. It is a trust fund surplus. The deficit this year by our best estimation will be about \$315 billion, excluding the surplus in Social Security. Next year, 2003, it is barely better, \$315 billion. These are estimates of the Congressional Budget Office, our mutual non-partisan budget office that does this work for us with no axes to grind. That is their best guess, that next year the budget gets no better. Even though the economy, they assume, will get better, we still have a deficit of \$315 billion.

□ 1815

The next year, 2004, it is \$299 billion. Over the next 10 years, this is a base-line forecast, assuming no change in policy except enough to keep up pace with inflation, we will accumulate in the basic budget \$2 trillion in deficits, and if we factor into that estimation

policies that we believe will be enacted, tax cuts that we believe will be enacted, changes that we believe have a good possibility of being enacted, CBO does not include them in its base-line forecast. When we adjust this forecast for political reality, things in the pipeline and likely to be passed, we add at least another trillion dollars to that total.

So here we were 2 years ago talking about a better and better bottom line. Now we are talking about a budget with deficits as far as the eye can see. Two years ago we were talking about paying off in earnest, both parties, literally talking about paying off \$3.6 trillion in national debt held by the public. Today we are talking about or looking towards, unless we do something dramatic, a national debt that actually increases over that period of time. From total payoff to an enormous increase.

Finally, just 2 years ago we were talking about taking the trust fund in Social Security and the trust fund in Medicare and locking it up in a lockbox. That metaphor is now derided, but nevertheless we were all that talking about not spending that money, using it solely to buy up the debt held by the public so we would reduce the debt, add to the net national savings of this country, and as a consequence lay the basis for the first step towards the long-run solvency of Social Security. All of that has been dashed by the budget policies of the last 2 years, and that is what we would like to address tonight.

I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) to pick up at this point.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for this enlightening presentation of just how serious our budget difficulties are and how we got here. As the gentleman realizes, the consequences are evident not just in these overall budget numbers, but in the dilemma we currently face with respect to getting the Nation's business done by the start of the fiscal year and passing our appropriations bills on schedule.

If someone could prepare chart 18, I believe that would give us an indication of how our situation this year compares with past years.

Since President Bush took office in 2001, our Republican friends have held out the promise that we could have it all, that oversized Republican tax cuts would not require tapping Social Security and Medicare surpluses, and it would not require underfunding key priorities such as education and health care.

Unfortunately, however, we cannot have it all, and it is not just because of the war on terrorism, although that has had an impact on the budget, but the cushion was not there to withstand that change in the budget or the impact of Medicare and Medicaid costs. The fact is that that cushion has never

been present, and now we are in a situation where our Republican friends simply cannot get their business done. They cannot pass the appropriations bills necessary to take us into the next fiscal year.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) would yield, is the chart that the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) was talking about the chart right here that shows that from 1993 through 2002, the number of appropriations bills that have been passed by the House before the beginning of the new fiscal year, and I think down here if I can see it, it is 2002 where the House has passed only 5 of the 13 appropriations bills? Is that the chart that the gentleman is talking about?

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. That is the chart I am talking about. I appreciate the gentleman's pointing this out. Our Republican friends last week, when we were discussing this as the new fiscal year approached, they said it is not unusual to pass continuing resolutions. We pass continuing resolutions all time. It is certainly unusual to have the entire Federal budget come crashing down and to have the entire government running on continuing resolutions for months and months into the new fiscal year, and that is exactly what we are facing today.

The Republicans in July, Republican Conservative Action Team, the group of the most conservative House Republicans, threatened to bring the Interior appropriations bill down, and they said that the price of their cooperation would be that the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill would be considered next, and nothing would be done on appropriations until that bill was dealt with. And I wondered, and I expect all of us wondered during the month of August when we were home, how are Republican leaders, in fact, going to pass that Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill within the President's totally inadequate numbers? How would we get past this bill to the rest of the appropriations agenda before the new fiscal year began?

But I must say it did not occur to me, never did it cross my mind, that Republican leaders would simply disregard the start of the fiscal year and let the entire budget come crashing down all to appease the most right-wing members of their caucus.

The President and his OMB Director are apparently complicit in this strategy. Actually it is an absence of strategy. It is just a dereliction of duty, irresponsibility on a monumental scale. So what I never dreamed would happen has happened indeed, and the continuing resolution that we voted on last week did not just cover one bill or two, it covered the entire discretionary budget.

So the gentleman is correct. We passed in the House five appropriations bills, and that is a modern record, but the number of appropriations bills that have been sent to the President is ex-

actly zero, and that, of course, is an institutional breakdown that does not just mean that this institution has failed to do its duty. It has real consequences for the people we represent.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN).

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), the senior Democrat on the Committee on the Budget, for yielding to me, and I thank the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE). I want to make sure that we got that, that the House has only passed 5 of the 13 appropriations bills by the end of the last fiscal year.

I want to go back to this chart because I think is terribly important. Last year when we began putting together the budget for fiscal year 2002 and really putting together the Republican economic program for the next 10 years, we were told that the unified budget surplus would be \$5.6 trillion over the next 10 years after a lot of hard work by the American people, by American taxpayers, to dig us out of the years of deficits and debt that quadrupled the national debt. And, in fact, as the gentleman will remember, we had tremendous arguments about not how much more debt we were going to add, but how much debt we could pay down and how fast we could pay it down. But we were told this is the number, \$5.6 trillion, even though the Congressional Budget Office told us there was a margin of error of 20 percent, good or bad, over a short period of time, that these numbers could be off, but that we should accept this number.

Lo and behold in really a year's time, we now see that the number is no longer \$5.6 trillion, but rather it is \$300 billion. That is a substantial error, and what that means is that rather than talking about paying down the national debt and having money left over to fix Social Security and Medicare for the long haul, what it means is we are now deep back into borrowing against Social Security and Medicare. What that means is we are not just going to argue about paying down debt, we are going to have down the road, in just 8 short years when the baby boomers retire, having to borrow trillions of dollars from the public markets in order to fund Social Security without doing one thing to extend its life. We have dug ourselves deep in the hole.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) would yield, the gentleman may remember that a little over a year ago, the Secretary of the Treasury was expressing concern that the Nation was going to pay down the public debt too quickly. Is that a problem that we now need to worry about?

Mr. BENTSEN. No. The Republican economic program has solved that problem. There is no risk now of our paying down the national debt. In fact, if the gentleman will look here on the

projections what we received from the Congressional Budget Office, last year the debt baseline was looking like it would go down, and really by 2008 we would have paid down the publicly held debt completely. What has now occurred as of this August is our baseline has the debt actually going up from where we are today.

The bigger problem goes beyond this because this is just a current service debt. This does not tell us anything about the public debt that will be required at the time that the baby boomers begin to retire in earnest and we have to convert the bonds held by the trust fund in the public debt. So not only do we not have the trillion dollars that we were told was being set aside in the Social Security Trust Fund to fix Social Security for the long haul, we, in fact, are going to have to borrow several trillion more dollars in order to, one, just to meet obligations that already exist on the books, not to mention the trillion or so more that will be necessary to ensure that every American in the Social Security System gets the benefits that this country long ago decided was something we want do.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. This, of course, also means that we are paying interest, far more interest in servicing that publicly held debt than was anticipated last year.

Mr. BENTSEN. In fact, that is true. We now are projected to pay three times the amount of interest over the next 10 years, almost \$2 trillion, as opposed to a little more than half a trillion dollars that we were looking at last May of 2001. This is \$2 trillion that goes nowhere but out the door, into the pockets of bond holders. It is good for the bond holders, but it means we are not buying any hard assets with the American people's hard-earned tax dollars, whether it is tanks, whether it is more school books, whether it is more health care, prescription drugs. All that is gone because now we are adding debt, not paying down debt.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. The money that we pay in this interest on the debt, money down the rat hole, one might say, each year over \$200 billion. I wonder if there is anyone in this Chamber who could not think of better public and private uses for those funds than simply paying interest on the debt. And as we look forward to the retirement of the baby boomers and the reversal of the cash flow in Social Security, is it not true that to prepare, to prepare to start redeeming those bonds that the Social Security Trust Fund is holding and making good on those obligations, is there any better way we could prepare for that than to pay down the publicly held debt and get rid of this \$200 billion burden around our necks every year in interest payments?

Mr. BENTSEN. There is no question. Two things. Number one, if we were not paying this interest and we were paying down the debt, number one, we could fund a program like a universal

prescription drug program for senior citizens who are crying out for it. We could put more money in education like the President says that he wants to do. We could fund the defense build-up that many feel is necessary.

But the second thing that is terribly important, and the gentleman raises this point, the United States runs a very high current account deficit based upon cash flows which we can afford because of the strength of our economy, although it is fairly flat right now. If we run a high fiscal deficit as well at the time that we have to start selling even more debt into the future, we run the chance of driving down our currency and driving down the value in the American economy that we will pay for for many years. We see this in countries like Argentina and others. It should not happen in the United States.

So I thank the gentleman for the question.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN).

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I am most honored to be a member of the Committee on the Budget, and I want to commend the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) and the other members of our committee this evening for laying out what I think is a critical message at a moment of critical importance.

I came to this Congress just about 4 years ago at a moment of what I regarded as real opportunity. I was excited about the fact that we were whittling away at the deficit and, in fact, on this upswing towards surplus. We were really paying down our national debt, and things were going in an extraordinarily hopeful direction. I viewed the moment that I came to Congress as an opportunity to start responding to some unmet challenges in this Nation. Perhaps we could call it righting the domestic wrongs that still exist.

□ 1830

Well, clearly, we are now in a very, very different time. We are now looking at deficits for as far as the eye can see and squandering an opportunity which I think has been squandered for a wide multiplicity of reasons, but a number of them have to do with ill-advised policies enacted by the majority in this last 2 years.

My constituents are worried. My constituents are very concerned about the country's economic security. They are worried about their family's financial security; they are worried about their retirement security; they are worried about their health security.

Mr. Speaker, looking at chart 8, I want to just talk about the direction that we are going in, and I think this is subtitled, what should be going down is going up, and what should be going up is going down. If my role this evening is nothing else, I know that my colleagues laid a good groundwork on the

big picture. I want to really localize this issue. I want to put a face on what is happening with our economy and the stewardship that we are not seeing of it right now.

I want to focus right in on that second one on that list, the health care costs, because I cannot spend a moment in my district in Wisconsin without hearing the incredible concerns that people have. Whether it is a small businessowner who talks not about double digit increases, but sometimes 40, 50 percent health insurance increases; or a person who has just gone through a bargaining session with their employer and their entire cost-of-living increase has been wiped out by the health care costs; or whether it is one of my self-employed farmers who, at times of historic low commodity prices, can hardly afford, and many are not covering, their families any longer with health insurance because of the costs; whether it is the senior citizen who is struggling, once again, to try to figure out how to maintain their health, extend their life with a needed medication, but they cannot either afford that or maintain their other basic necessities; or whether it is the total lack of attention in this Congress on the plight of the uninsured and the underinsured. These are the people, these are the faces, these are the impacts that are being felt by the economic situation that we find ourselves in.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell my colleagues that my constituents are asking questions. They are asking, What is on the congressional agenda? Why are you spending all of your time passing senses of the House and telling the other body what they should or should not be doing when we have an economic situation here in the country that needs your attention, that needs addressing immediately? The inactivity, the inaction on the part of the majority of this House is inexcusable at this time of great stress and great tension and great anxiety in our districts, and we have to see that turn around.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, I am going to just let the charts tell the story. We have seen this chart. We do not create a graph like this by accident. My colleagues will notice that the Carter administration left a deficit; Reagan and Bush came in, they passed their budget, they never suffered a veto override. President Clinton came in, passed a budget without a single Republican vote, vetoed some Republican budgets when the Republicans took over the House and the Senate, and maintained fiscal responsibility to a surplus and, in one year, we are back down to a deficit.

Now, it is interesting to say, if we could see the next chart, that we are down to where we started; and it is going to get worse before it gets better.

If we look at the surplus that was inherited in the year 2000, 2001, this yellow line is Medicare. We spent all of Medicare. The red line is the Social Security surplus. By next year we will have gone through all of the Social Security surplus and then some deficit on top of that. For the rest of the Bush Presidential term, he will be spending all of Medicare, all of the Social Security surplus that we have promised to protect, and then, running up a deficit on top of that. In fact, for the next 10 years we will be dipping into Medicare and Social Security that we promised to save.

Mr. Speaker, if I could see the next chart. How did this happen? According to OMB, 40 percent of that was because of tax cuts which we will remember were mostly to benefit the upper income. What happens as a result of this? We see on the next chart, number 9, we see the economic growth, the worst we have had in 50 years. We have seen on chart number 1, we have seen the number of jobs held by Americans is down. On the next chart, number 12, unemployment is up a third. We see foreclosures, how home foreclosures are going up month after month. We have another chart showing the stock market, and I think people are familiar with what that chart would look like.

And what are we doing? Chart number 18 shows that every year for the past 10 years we have passed either all 13, 12, 12 or 13 of the appropriations bills by the first of the year. This is what the House does. Not blaming it on the Senate, the House can pass its bills. We may have an excuse that the House and Senate cannot agree. This is just what the House did in 2002, only 5 of the 13 appropriations bills have been passed. And what are the proposals? There are no proposals, other than just passing 5 of the 13.

Now, a great political philosopher once said, "If you don't change directions, you might end up where you're headed."

Let us see where we were headed in May of 2001. We would have paid off the entire national debt held by the public by 2008. The discussion was, What are the economic implications in paying off the debt? What will it do to the bond market? That was the discussion that we would have had, a surplus of Social Security and Medicare, so that the money would be there when the baby boomers, like myself, retire; the money would be there. But no, we passed by 2002 legislation that has resulted in a debt; essentially nothing paid off.

Mr. Speaker, it is going to get worse before it gets better, because if we look up here, if we adopt the policies of this administration, we are going to be running up even more debt. We need to change. If September 11 was the cause of this, then we need to change policies. In past years when we had a war, we sacrificed. We do not give juicy tax cuts to those that have the most, while other people are losing their jobs. We

need to change directions, and we can begin by passing responsible appropriations bills and not by passing more juicy tax cuts for the privileged few. We need to go back to the fiscally responsible years of the Clinton administration and keep the promise of protecting Social Security and Medicare surpluses so those funds will be available when needed.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the leadership of the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) in trying to bring fiscal sanity to this budget, advocating the responsible things that need to be done and pointing out the irresponsible direction that we are headed in.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for participating, and I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCARELL).

Mr. PASCARELL. Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank my good friend, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), for his exemplary leadership.

As the ranking member of the House Committee on the Budget, he has the almost unbearable task of trying to correct the hazardous economic course the current administration is charting. The gentleman has been trying since early last year to correct that course on this economic ship, and I salute the gentleman sincerely.

I have never seen such fiscal mismanagement in my life. None of us can quite explain it, but we do try with some consistency. We are at a point in time when critical decisions must be made. The reverberations of these decisions will be felt for generations to come.

Iraq is on the forefront of everyone's mind, and rightfully so. But as Members of Congress, we cannot focus solely on any one issue at any one time. It is our absolute duty to address every major issue that is before us, and we shall. Our budget, our economy are major, major issues. That is why we are here tonight.

We are not going to politicize this issue. I will not adhere to blind ideology. There is no need to do that. But as Sergeant Joe Friday would say, It is just the facts, Ma'am; and that is what we are about to talk about and have been talking about.

Mr. Speaker, chart 3, right here, the surplus declines. When the administration took office, it received a benefaction unparalleled in our history. The largest budget surplus ever projected to a total of \$5.6 trillion over the next 10 years. Fact: the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office now reports that the surplus is at \$336 billion over 10 years. That is a swing of \$5.3 trillion in the wrong direction in 18 months. The numbers roll off our lips: trillions. The budget is now in substantial deficit. Mr. Speaker, \$157 billion is projected for this year alone at this moment. Private sector forecasters believe that the budget will suffer \$200 billion annual deficits as far as the eye can see.

What does this mean for you at home? Running deficits are going to drive up interest rates on car payments, mortgages, and student loans. How many of us are covered by those three issues alone?

We are back to piling up massive debt for our children and our grandchildren, and weakening Social Security and Medicare for beneficiaries today and tomorrow. Budgetary choices impact people's lives daily, not unlike elections. We should remember that the next time we hear the House leadership tout the virtues of permanent tax cuts for the wealthy, which we cannot afford.

My Republican friends have tried to shift the responsibility for the dissipation of the surplus just about anywhere. They blame the terrorist attacks, they blame the recession, they blame Bill Clinton, they blame the plague; but tonight we are dealing with just the facts. Fact: the mid-season review by the Office of Management and Budget reports that 40 percent of this dissipation of the surplus, the largest single share rests with the administration's tax cuts. I did not make it that way; I did not vote for it. All other legislation is responsible for only 17 percent, and more than half of that is normal national security spending. The economy is responsible for only 10 percent of the dissipation of the surplus. About one-third of the worsening of the budget was caused by technical errors, largely overestimates of revenues. We know about that in New Jersey, where the outgoing Governor cooked the books. It looked like we had a \$1 billion surplus, and we wound up having a \$6 billion deficit. That is called cooking the books. I think we invented it in New Jersey. Large overestimates of revenues, does that sound familiar of what we have been hearing on the corporate level?

□ 1845

That is why the Republican cries for even more tax cuts are nonsensical. Indeed, their claims ring hollow. Maybe that is why the administration has backed off its next batch of tax cuts.

Remember, when the economy was prosperous, they told us that the tax cuts were about returning the people's money. Then, when the economy took a downturn, we were told that tax cuts were about stimulating the economy. They want it both ways. Apparently, that is the Republican philosophy in any economic time, regardless of the situation, regardless of the circumstance.

But even blind allegiance to the ideology cannot prevent the Republicans from realizing that the 10-year \$1.35 trillion tax cut was deeply involved in the greatest plunge in tax receipts since the repeal of World War II surtaxes 56 years ago. This is a disgrace. Remember, just the facts.

The budget deficit ties the hands of Congress in our efforts to alleviate the pain of all those who have become un-

employed. What are we going to do for the 2 million people who have lost their jobs under this administration? The silence is deafening. Tell me, what are we going to do? Are we going to pass further tax cuts?

New claims for unemployment insurance have risen 400,000 per week in the last 5 weeks. This means that private sector job gains will remain weak at best in the immediate future. But what are we going to do? The administration is proposing many cuts in order to try to make a catch-up. We have nicked and dimed our veterans, we have nicked and dimed our first responders, and we talk out of both sides of our mouths.

The \$270 million for our veterans, \$150 million for our first responders is not a lot of money with regard to the totality of things, but we nicked and dimed the very people who put their lives on the lines, and put them on the lines today as we speak and sit comfortably here in the House of Representatives.

Our budget in this economic situation is in disarray, I say to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT). Is there any Republican willing to stand up to the administration's disjointed agenda and say, Enough. I want the facts.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I yield to the gentleman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ).

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for allowing me to talk about something that I am very concerned about, and it is the economy.

About 15 years ago, when my husband was deciding on whether he was going to ask me out on our first date, he had never seen me, he went to one of his colleagues in the same firm who had worked with me before and he said, what about this LORETTA SANCHEZ? What is she like? And the guy said, well, you know, 2 years ago, the last time I saw her, she was a looker, but, you know, a lot can happen in 2 years; and let me tell the Members, a lot can happen in 2 years.

In 2 years, after the Clinton administration and after we worked so diligently to get surpluses to begin to pay down the debt of the United States, when people were employed, people who had creative ideas were accessing capital markets for the money they needed to put those ideas into play, everything was going right.

What has happened in 2 years? This chart shows the Bush economic record. What should be going down is going up, and what should be going up is going down.

The Republicans' failed economic agenda, or lack of an agenda, is really the problem here. This has led us into fiscal deterioration, into economic hardship, and into an erosion of Americans' retirement security, a lack of an economic agenda.

Let us just take a look at this chart here. We all know, for example, that one of the biggest costs that business is

facing right now is the cost of health care. That is why we see people unable to afford the larger premium that their employers are now charging for them to have health care insurance; or no health care insurance is being offered, something which, when it hits a family, is detrimental to their stability.

Foreclosures of homes are up. Our national debt is up. Goldman Sachs says it is going to be at least \$200 billion a year for the foreseeable future; nothing close to the numbers that the White House gives us as projections, but the financial markets are understanding that it is getting worse and worse by the moment.

And, of course, right now, long-term interest rates are low; but what happens, what happens when we start going into the market to borrow more and more to finance this almost \$6 trillion debt that we have on our hands as a Federal Government? Those long-term interest rates will shoot up.

The only positive light in the economic sector that we have right now are all those refinancings that people are doing on their mortgage, their 15- and 30-year mortgage rates, because long-term interest rates are down. But when we start to borrow and take money out of the system to finance this debt, this deficit that is adding to it, these higher interest costs, a bigger piece of pie to finance year after year after year, what happens? Those long-term interest rates go way up, and then that \$100 or \$150 extra we have because we refinanced, it is not going to be available anymore. There will be no refinancing to do. There will be no bright spot in the home market purchasing going on.

The Social Security Trust Fund, we will be raiding it and taking those monies to pay for these deficits that we are running.

Now, let us take a look at what is going down, which should really be going up. Our economic growth is down. In my area, it is actually an area that is a little buffeted right now, and we have 1 percent growth going on; but we had projected 3 percent or 4 percent or 5 percent this year, not 1 percent.

Other areas are suffering: job losses, foreclosures. People do not know what to do.

Business investment? People do not want to lend money. People are afraid of the economic conditions that we find ourselves in, and they see it getting worse. They are holding onto their money instead of investing.

The stock market? We know what has happened with the stock market, just \$5.5 trillion over the last 18 months of losses in the stock market value. Trillions, what do we mean by that? It is so hard to have that concept. But just this past September, in 1 week alone we lost \$420 billion of wealth in the stock market. These are real numbers. This is our wealth slipping away, our retirement accounts.

Enron, Global Crossing, all of these companies, our net worth, it is going

down, down, down. The last 4 months, the consumer confidence level is down, down, down, down.

Retail sales just this month, this back-to-school month, which is an indicator of what will happen in the holiday season for retailers: down. It is an indication that the place where we make money in retail, the holiday seasons, are projected to be down, and still we cannot pass an increase in the minimum wage.

The fiscal condition of our country. For 2 years the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) has been telling us that these things are happening, and somehow the Republicans and this administration do not want to talk about putting together a plan to begin to turn this around.

I am glad that the gentleman is here tonight and that the gentleman is leading this effort. It is imperative for America to get this turned around, and the way to do it is to sit down and concentrate on what is the most important piece of stability and security for an American family: the national budget.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN).

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep concerns about our Federal budget and its impact on our Nation's economic future. I would also like to commend my colleague, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), for organizing this special order on such an important issue.

Mr. Speaker, I stand united with the President and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in our commitment to defeating terrorism and doing what is necessary to preserve national security, both at home and abroad. However, despite the many new security and economic challenges confronting us, our homeland protection efforts and fiscal policies should not and need not shortchange our domestic priorities. We can win the war against terrorism without raiding Social Security and Medicare, and without increasing the national debt.

Last year I joined many of my colleagues in cautioning that the administration's budget simply did not add up. Sadly, our warnings were ignored, and we were instead continually reassured that we could afford an enormous tax cut, ensure the solvency of Social Security and Medicare, pay down the national debt, fund our domestic priorities, and still have a large reserve fund for unanticipated emergencies.

As it is now very clear to us all that that budget was based on unrealistic surplus projections that never materialized, and we now face deficits and an ever-increasing national debt that stretches far beyond the temporary economic downturn or the costs of the war on terrorism.

Recent Congressional Budget Office projections confirmed the dramatic de-

terioration in the budget outlook since the current administration took office. Less than 2 years ago, the administration and Congress were looking covetously at a staggering \$5.6 trillion cumulative surplus through 2010. Much of it I hoped would be used to pay down what was then a \$4 trillion national debt. Sadly, it has become clear that the fiscally irresponsible policies of the Bush administration and the Republican-led House have squandered these opportunities. The CBO's current surplus projections now total only \$366 billion.

Even worse, CBO's current projections are optimistic, as they do not reflect the cost of the likely extension of several expiring tax cuts, relief from the expanding alternative minimum tax on individuals, potential new tax breaks for businesses and investors, and an expanded war on global terrorism, or a new Department of Homeland Security. If these initiatives are all enacted, we could be faced with a \$386 billion deficit over the next 10 years. When Social Security funds are not counted, the deficit could balloon to \$2.7 trillion.

Mr. Speaker, the American public is already paying \$1 billion on interest-only payments on the debt every day. Further, the interest payments on our debt are on a fast track to become our single largest annual expenditure. By continuing to rack up debt on the national credit card, we are saddling future generations with our poor choices, and endanger the fiscal stability of this Nation.

Our rapidly deteriorating fiscal outlook presents a serious challenge for every Member of Congress. The government is now on track to raid more than \$2 trillion of the Social Security surplus over the next 10 years to cover deficits in the rest of the Federal budget. When I was elected to Congress, I promised my constituents that I would protect Social Security and the Medicare Trust Funds.

□ 1900

And I was not alone. As many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle made this same vow, it is time to honor our commitments by acknowledging our current situation and working together to craft a budget that is fiscally responsible and protects Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to heed this call and do the right thing.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I recognize the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN).

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, in a recent column, Washington Post columnist EJ Dionne opened with a statement: "Perhaps the White House and Congress might just take a little time away from war planning to consider what the economic downturn has been doing to poor Americans, especially the working poor."

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the leaders of this country and this

body who have the votes and, therefore, the responsibility. Certainly they must know that in the last year alone the number of uninsured increased more than 1.4 million; that poverty rates are up for the first time in 8 years; that 1.8 million jobs have been lost; and that thousands of people in this country have seen their retirement savings disappear.

In the health care arena, the impact is hard now and likely to be devastating as time goes by. Already 41 States are cutting Medicaid programs this year. That means that people are losing coverage and children are the hardest hit. This is happening at the worst time because with the economic downturn, 2.3 million more Americans were unemployed in August of 2002 compared with July the year before.

The saying that when the rest of the world gets a cold, minority communities and our territories get pneumonia is holding true. As of 2001, of the 41 million uninsured, 18 percent were Asian Pacific Islanders; 19 percent African American; and more than a third, 33.8 percent, were Hispanic. Thirty-eight percent of the people in my district were uninsured. The median household income of black families after rising by almost 30 percent between 1993 to 2000 fell from \$30,495 in 2000 to \$29,470 in 2001.

Nearly 23 percent of African Americans lived below the poverty level last year. Our unemployment rate as of August 2002 is 7.5 for African Americans and 6.5 for Hispanics. Economists have long reported that even when there is any recovery and other Americans begin to return to work, we will still have unemployment for at least a year to 18 months after.

When the President sent his tax cut to Congress last year, many of us opposed it because we knew what it would mean to funding for the needs of the poor in minority communities as well as the rest of America. After September 11, we were and we remain in full support of efforts to rescue, recover and rebuild, as well as to go after the terrorists; but our fears that the important health, education, and economic issues would be ignored have been realized.

Now that we are poised for an attack on Iraq, no matter what Congress says, economic issues are off the radar screen. But minorities, the poor, and even the middle class are suffering. As a matter of fact, the rise in the uninsured was particularly noted in people with moderate and high incomes.

Yes, we must strengthen pensions, enforce corporate reform laws, pass a prescription drug benefit, and protect Social Security; but the needs of the poor, minorities and Americans living in the offshore territories demand even more.

It is important for all of us who are here tonight to be here with our leader on the budget, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT). We thank him for his leadership and for

bringing us here this evening to talk about these important issues.

It is important for us to be here to say to the leadership of this House and to the administration that we are heading towards a domestic disaster. We can no longer afford to ignore the millions of families who are losing income, jobs, health coverage, and retirement pensions; and we must do more to help those who have never had any of these. So we have to get back to our priorities. The leadership needs to forget about expanding tax cuts. They need to join with us on this side of the aisle to pass sound appropriations bills to improve the lives of all Americans.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT).

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), and at risk of being somewhat repetitive of what our other colleagues have said, I just want to finish by emphasizing some really very important points.

When this Congress began, the Republicans promised, in fact, everyone promised to safeguard Social Security and Medicare. They said the trust fund surpluses would be maintained and saving those surpluses would be important for the retirement of the baby boomers. Their plan, however, was to dissipate as much of the surplus as possible, in their words, to get it out of Washington instead of paying off the debt.

The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) was so diligent in pointing out again and again and again that they left no margin for error. We all said that the projected surpluses were just that. They were projections, not money in the bank; and we reminded Republicans that they needed a margin for error. The gentleman could see it. I remember when he said we did not know what unforeseen circumstances would arise. But we could be sure that natural emergencies, international crises, economic downturns or other things would arise.

Well, this dedication, this overwhelming dedication, fixation on tax cuts, no matter what the circumstances or the consequences, has run the budget into a ditch; and it now risks the livelihood of hard-working Americans. Businesses are not investing. Real business investment which had posted double digit growth in the 1990s is still declining. Scores of corporations have gone bankrupt. Consumer confidence has dropped in each of the last 4 months and is at the lowest level since November of 2001.

Why is that? Businesses understand that this is not sound fiscal policy for our Nation. They understand that we are building up a debt and the interest can crush us. An extra \$1.3 trillion that will be wasted on interest expenses would have been more than enough to cover a decade's worth of cost in strengthening Social Security. May 2001, interest was \$621 billion over a 10-year period, 2002 to 2011. A month or two ago it was up to \$1.9 trillion.

Now, just to finish up, let me drive this home. For each American this means about \$7,000 of interest, each American, child, woman, man, \$7,000 to pay off, down the drain, for no productive use, no good to anyone.

I thank the ranking member of the Committee on the Budget for arranging this Special Order.

Mr. SPRATT. I thank the gentleman for his observations and participation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE).

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your courtesies and I also today rise to join my colleague, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT). I thank him for his Special Order and for my colleagues who have joined him. I am proud of the work of my colleagues who have worked together on a bipartisan basis to balance the budget for the first time in a generation.

One of the first votes that I had the privilege of casting when I came in 1996 was to start the process of balancing the budget. That Balanced Budget Act finally stopped the flow of red ink that was piling up trillions of dollars in national debt. In fact, when we balanced the budget, we not only did it for one year, but we have put the Nation on course to generate huge budget surpluses for years to come. Those surpluses presented us with a golden opportunity to begin to pay off the national debt, shore up Social Security, strengthen Medicare with the benefit for prescription medicine for our seniors, and invest in the education of our children and our Nation's long-term economic growth.

As a former chief of my State schools in the State of North Carolina, I was hopeful Congress would make wise investments in needed reforms like school construction, teacher training, class size reduction, early childhood education, reading initiatives, science and math instruction, aid for college and other important priorities for America. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership in this Congress did not decide to do that. They have put together a budget-busting tax scheme, blew the surplus, and has hamstrung our ability to meet those urgent priorities.

Because of this scheme, Republican leadership is now severely underfunding the education budget. Despite their rhetoric in support of education and countless photo opportunities posing with children, the leadership's handling of this matter is to say one thing and do another. In each of the past 5 years, Congress has provided growth in the education budget of roughly 13 percent average and 15.9 percent last year. That was commendable at a time when student population was growing rapidly. Those healthy investments will come to a screeching halt under the Republican budget.

The budget also slashes funding for President Bush's education bill, the No Child Left Behind Act. For example, instead of the \$5.65 trillion increase in

title I funding for poor children in the No Child Left Behind Act, the budget cuts 82 percent of that proposal. Despite the growth of our immigrant population, the Republican budget cuts 10 percent per child for funding to teach children to be proficient in English. Some may think that is not important. Having been a superintendent, I can tell Members that if we do not help those children, all children suffer.

The Republican budget freezes funding for education for homeless children. When you account for inflation, the budget will mean 8,000 fewer homeless children receive this help next year. They are all Americans, and they deserve our help.

We should not turn our back to fully fund special education and forestall completion of that long-time goal by at least 4 years, but this budget does that. And the Republican budget freezes funding for after-school centers, which will eliminate 50,000 children from participating in after-school programs. And I can tell Members that having been a school chief, that is critical, because so many children go home alone and stay by themselves. Despite the looming teaching shortages across the country, the budget shortchanges teacher training and denies this aid to 92,000 potential teachers who would be eligible under the No Child Left Behind Act.

The budget cuts more than 95 percent of the school library initiatives of the No Child Left Behind Act. And the budget guts school reform grants of 24 percent, or \$75 million, and the list goes on. But let me talk about my home State of North Carolina.

More than \$92 million from title I grants to school districts will be cut, \$1.5 million from language acquisition grants, \$332 million from special education, \$10.2 million for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, \$462,000 for education for homeless children, \$9.5 million for teacher training, and \$1.7 million for comprehensive school reform.

Mr. Speaker, the list goes on and on. The bottom line is that this Republican budget is wrong for education. It is wrong for our children, and it is wrong for America. I join my fellow Democrats and urge the Republican leadership to restore these educational cuts.

CAUTION IS URGED IN STRIKE AGAINST IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REHBERG). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the very distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) for allowing me the courtesy to speak this evening.

As the daughter of a family of infantrymen and Marines, I was particularly captivated by an article I read just a

few days ago in USA Today's editorial page entitled "Untested Administration Hawks Clamor For War," by James Bamford, who is a member of USA Today's board of contributors. I would like to read a portion of it into the RECORD and insert it in its entirety.

He says, "Beware of war hawks who never served in the military. That, in essence, was the message of retired four star Marine Corps General Anthony Zinni, a highly decorated veteran of the Vietnam War and the White House point man on the Middle East crisis. Zinni is one of the growing number of uniform officers in and out of the Pentagon urging caution on the issue of a preemptive strike against Iraq."

"In an address recently in Florida, he warned his audience to watch out for the administration's civilian superhawks, most of whom avoided military service as best they could. 'If you ask my opinion,' said Zinni, referring to Iraq, 'General Brent Scowcroft, General Colin Powell, General Norman Schwarzkopf and General Zinni may all see this the same way.'

□ 1915

"It might be interesting to wonder why all of the generals see it the same way, and all those (who) never fired a shot in anger (and) are really hell-bent to go to war see it a different way."

"That's usually the way it is in history," he said.

"Another veteran, Senator CHUCK HAGEL . . . who served in combat in Vietnam and now sits on the Foreign Relations Committee, was even more blunt. 'It is interesting to me that many of those who want to rush this country into war and think it would be so quick and easy don't know anything about war. They come at it from an intellectual perspective versus having sat in jungles or foxholes and watched their friends get their heads blown off.'" They have never seen that.

He talks about during the bloodiest years of the Vietnam War, Vice President CHENEY decided against wearing the uniform of his country. Instead, he used multiple deferments to avoid military service altogether. In fact, he quotes the Vice President as saying, "I had other priorities in the '60s than military service."

Mr. CHENEY is far from alone. "Neither Paul Wolfowitz, the Deputy Defense Secretary, nor Richard Perle, the Chairman of the Defense Policy Board, have served in uniform, yet they are now two of the most bellicose champions of launching a bloody war in the Middle East.

"What frightens many is the arrogance, naivete and cavalier attitude toward war. 'The Army guys don't know anything,' Perle told The Nation's David Corn earlier this year," and debated with him whether 40,000 troops would be sufficient, when indeed most of the military say 200,000 to 250,000 would be needed, plus the support of many allies.

"Non-combatants, however, litter the top ranks of the Republican hierarchy. President Bush served peacefully in the Texas National Guard," and indeed was missing for 1 year of that service. "Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld spent his time in a Princeton classroom as others in his age group were fighting and dying on Korean battlefields (he later joined the peacetime Navy). Another major player in the administration's war strategy, Douglas Feith, the Defense Under Secretary for Policy, has no experience in the military. Nor does Mr. CHENEY's influential Chief of Staff, Lewis Libby.

"The top congressional Republican leaders" in both the House and Senate "never saw military service," and in contrast, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) here in the House, "a World War II combat veteran, has expressed skepticism about hasty U.S. action, as have some prominent Democrats" such as the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR), a distinguished Member who was in the military during the Vietnam War.

"What is remarkable about this administration is that so many of those who are now shouting the loudest and pushing the hardest for this generation's war are the same people who avoided combat" themselves, "or often even a uniform, in Vietnam," just simply were not there.

"Military veterans from any era tend to have more appreciation for the greater difficulty of getting out of a military action than getting in, a topic administration war hawks haven't said much about when it comes to Iraq.

"Indeed," the author closes, "the Bush administration's nonveteran hawks should review the origins of the Vietnam quagmire. Along the way, they might come across a quote from still another general, this one William Westmoreland, who once directed the war in Vietnam," and said, "The military does not start wars. Politicians start wars."

Also, he quotes Civil War General William Tecumseh Sherman, who observed, "It is only those who have neither fired a shot nor heard the shrieks and groans of the wounded who cry aloud for blood, more vengeance, more desolation."

I commend this article to my colleagues. The title of it is "Untested Administration Hawks Clamor for War." I ask Americans to think about it.

I will insert in the RECORD at this point the article that I mentioned previously.

[From USA Today, Sept. 17, 2002]

UNTESTED ADMINISTRATION HAWKS CLAMOR
FOR WAR

(By James Bamford)

Beware of war hawks who never served in the military.

That, in essence, was the message of retired four-star Marine Corps general Anthony Zinni, a highly decorated veteran of the Vietnam War and the White House point man on the Middle East crisis. Zinni is one of a growing number of uniformed officers, in