

when we do not know how we are going to pay the interest on the national debt 5 years from now.

If nothing is done by the time the Social Security so-called crisis occurs, it will take every nickel of the income of the Federal Government just to pay the interest on the debt. And my question to the Republicans that have created this situation, and I remember so well how they told us back in 2001, if we just do this, if we just cut taxes on the richest people in this country, the economy will just bubble up out of the ground. It will be the land of milk and honey. Nothing but free Bubble-Up and rainbow stew everywhere for everyone.

What a ridiculous thing that has been proven to be. But they told us if you will just do this, everything will be wonderful.

The fact is they have borrowed nearly \$5 trillion from our children and grandchildren and do not have a clue as to how they are going to pay it back. And the great mystery to me is why. Why would you want to do that? Why would you deceive yourselves into thinking that that is something good for this great Nation?

I can tell you this, the United States of America is the most wonderful thing ever done by man with a divine inspiration of God Almighty. And if we would be so foolish as to spend ourselves completely bankrupt and not take any action to deal with this in a responsible way while we may still have time to do it, it will be the greatest tragedy of mankind.

AMERICA NEEDS TO WAKE UP BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE

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

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk to the House about this deficit and about our failure and the consequences facing this Nation if we do not respond and put some brakes on our spending.

This deficit is our greatest problem and the greatest threat to the financial security of the United States, which means the financial security of the free world.

Just think of it, when this administration, when President Bush took office 4 years ago, we had over \$2 trillion surplus. Now, 4 years later, we have over a \$4 trillion deficit, running up nearly \$400 billion as we speak here this afternoon.

This is dangerous. It is not in the best interest of this country. Just think of this one fact: just on paying the deficit, paying the interest on what we are borrowing, 90 percent of which we are borrowing from foreign countries, China, Japan, India, 90 percent of our debt is being held by foreign interests. How insecure is that? And just the amount that we are paying, the interest is more than what we are paying for our own national security.

America, we need to wake up. We need to understand what is at stake; our future is what is at stake. And who is going to pay this debt? Not me. Not anyone in this room. Our children, our grandchildren. I have children; I have two young grandchildren. Is it right to saddle them with this deficit?

Just recently on the issue of Social Security, the President's answer for Social Security is to do what? Borrow more money to set up private accounts. That will do absolutely nothing to deal with the solvency of Social Security.

Something is wrong and this House must move to correct it. Not long ago or at a time of great crisis in this country, two great men sat here right here in Washington, D.C. One was Robert E. Lee and the other was Abraham Lincoln. They sat on the balcony of the White House and looked out at all the devastation that the Civil War had brought.

These are two great Americans. Abraham Lincoln said to Robert E. Lee, It is not incumbent upon us to complete the task. Robert E. Lee finished the sentence and said, But neither are we free to desist from doing all we possibly can.

Are we doing all we possibly can on this deficit, on this debt? No, we are not. We are on that side, and we are on this side, and we are on this corner. The American people are expecting us to come together, solve this deficit, pay as you go, put some strong fiscal responsibility in this House and solve Social Security.

There was a recent poll on Social Security that I bring of interest. It was just out in yesterday's paper. It had an interesting point. Sixty-two percent of the American people feel that the Republicans will do too much to solve the Social Security problem and sixty-one percent of the American people feel that the Democrats will do too little. Therein lies our challenge, but also lies our opportunity, from this side to come and from that side to come and we can come together and solve this issue.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude with this statement, a very important statement. On the bleached bones of many past great civilizations are written those pathetic words: Too late.

Will that be our epitaph? When the history books are written, what did this Congress do to save Social Security, to pay down the debt?

Let it not be that the history books will write of us "too late."

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

(Mr. KING of Iowa, addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

TOILING FOR FREEDOM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as we welcome this week the President of Georgia and the architect of the Rose Revolution in that country, it is critically important that the United States Congress continue to focus on the need to bring about freedom and democracy as antidote to terrorism, to oppression, and instability.

Nowhere is this policy more pertinent than in Central Asia. Kyrgyzstan today is a vivid example of the need to continue and indeed strengthen this policy in the region.

Months of civilian protests and flawed parliamentary elections culminated in the invalidation of those election results by that country's supreme court, the resignation of the entire cabinet, and an end to the 15-year reign of its strongman.

This is a clear sign that the winds of democratic change cannot be stopped.

The Kyrgyz people certainly took note of the elections in nearby Afghanistan, of Georgia's Rose Revolution and Ukraine's Orange Revolution in November of last year; courageous individuals such as Mr. Edil Baisalov of the president's Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society, Kyrgyzstan, who are struggling to exert their rights as citizens and human beings.

He will be testifying before the Committee on International Relations tomorrow on how the U.S. can help support those who, like him, toil for freedom around the world.

□ 1730

I assure you that what we do in this body resonates throughout that region.

Mr. Baisalov has referred to the positive impact of a resolution that I introduced on the status of human rights in central Asia, and that it has energized the opposition and the prodemocracy, the dissident movement in his country.

The U.S., along with the European Union, was quick to denounce Kyrgyzstan's recent parliamentary election as seriously flawed. It was precisely this Western rejection of sham elections in Georgia and Ukraine that helped tip the balance there.

Thus, as the Central Asian states enter into a challenging phase of political transition, the United States must continue to maintain the pressure for democratic change in Central Asia.

The challenges are immense. Opposition parties in Central Asia are either fictitious organizations that exist only on paper or, as in Kazakhstan, opposition groups in name only, as in Uzbekistan, where all five opposition parties support supposedly the president.

Turkmenistan's president has gone as far as to dispense with the pretense of democratic rule and brazenly declared himself president for life, a move that demonstrates his confidence that his dictatorship will go unchallenged by the world.

This situation has not gone unchallenged by the United States. In July of

2004, after careful review of the state of political reform in Uzbekistan, the Department of State decided that the leader is not fulfilling the terms of the 2002 Strategic Partnership Framework agreement, which mandated substantial and continuing progress on democracy movements and decided to deny certification to Uzbekistan.

In Uzbekistan, religion becomes criminal in that country as soon as it strays out of the official State-controlled Islam. The Uzbek government is behaving much as it did with its Soviet predecessors.

Following massive arrests in Uzbekistan of followers of the two leading militant groups, adherents of the movements have gone underground. Yet their numbers are swelling in the region, particularly among young unemployed folks who are distributing the information put forth by the militants, and they try to manipulate the religion for terrorist political gain, and they are doing so because they need the money.

Thus, the dependence of many governments throughout Central Asia on tyrannical rule does not only fail to adequately address the problem of Islamic extremism, but it serves to fuel the terrorism that stems from it.

We, and other open societies, must, therefore, condition our assistance to Central Asian states not only on their cooperation on the terrorism front, but also on their taking concrete steps in Central Asia toward the establishment of the rule of law, the support for the growth of civil society and support for building democratic institutions.

With the role of the United States in Central Asia, the region faces the best possible scenario to solve their problems jointly.

We are uniquely placed to press for regional cooperation and to monitor the commitment of regional states to real improvement of social, economic and political conditions.

That is why we have exerted congressional oversight through hearings and briefings, to make sure that everyone understands the current state of human rights in Central Asia because only by helping to create an environment where freedom and prosperity can flourish will we achieve long-term success in the war against terror and oppression.

VACATION OF SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. INGLES of South Carolina). Without objection, the order of the House recognizing the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is vacated.

There was no objection.

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

(Mr. FORD addressed the House. His remarks will appear in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order and address the House for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

CENTENNIAL OF THE CHICAGO DEFENDER

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the centennial, the 100th anniversary, of the birth of the Chicago Defender, one of America's great, historic institutions which make up the fourth estate, our free press.

The Defender, founded in 1905 by Robert Sengstacke Abbott, follows in the tradition of Freedom's Journal founded by Samuel Cornish and John B. Russwurm, and the North Star founded by Frederick Douglass.

Abbott began publishing the Defender out of his kitchen, producing about 300 copies at a quarter each. By 1929, the Defender was selling more than 250,000 copies each week.

From its first days, the Defender has also been a campaigner for freedom, equality and justice under the slogan, "American race prejudice must be destroyed." It has covered stories largely ignored by white-owned press. The Chicago Defender reported the 1919 Chicago riots, the election of Oscar DePriest to Congress, and the opening of the first U.S. bank owned and operated by an African American. The Chicago Defender covered the aftermath of the death of Emmett Till and the career of the honorable Elijah Muhammad.

In its editorial pages, the Defender exposed white oppression and the lynching of African Americans. During World War I, the Defender urged equal treatment of black soldiers. During World War II, the Defender protested the treatment of African American servicemen protecting the Nation and urged the integration of the Armed Forces. The Chicago Defender fearlessly spoke out against lynching, racism and segregation, and aroused the conscience of the Nation.

The Defender led a remarkable campaign which brought thousands of southerners to the north from 1915 to 1925. Known in the history books as the Great Migration, over 1 million African Americans read vivid descriptions about options to life in the south in the pages of the Defender and migrated to the north in that short period.

The Defender has been home to many of our Nation's great writers and artists, including novelist Willard Motley, poet Gwendolyn Brooks, and writer Langston Hughes, culturist Margaret Burroughs, women's page editor Mar-

ian Campfield and editorial page cartoonist Oliver Harrington. Outstanding scholars and reporters such as W.E.B. DuBois, Vernon Jarrett and Lu Palmer appeared in the ages of the Defender.

In 1923, the Chicago Defender introduced the first newspaper section written for children, the Bud Billiken page. Since 1929, the Chicago Defender along with the Defender Charities has sponsored the world famous Bud Billiken Day Parade and Picnic, the largest event of its kind, with more than 1 million people attending and viewing.

The Defender reported the campaign and election of Harold Washington, Chicago's first black mayor.

After the departure of Robert Abbott, the mission of the Defender was carried on with undying spirit and integrity by long-time publisher and driving force John Sengstacke who died at the helm of age 84 in 1997. Today, the chairman of the board, Thomas Picou, president and CEO Clarence Nixon, Junior, and Chicago Defender Executive Editor Roland S. Martin are leading a campaign to rebuild the circulation and infrastructure of this unique and irreplaceable institution.

The Defender reported the elections of Carol Mosley-Braun and BARACK OBAMA, two of only three African Americans elected to the U.S. Senate since Reconstruction.

Mr. Speaker, the centenary of the Chicago Defender is a milestone in the history of our Nation and cause for celebration for the entire country. The history of the Defender is a proud page of our free press. The history reported by the Defender is a chapter of our collective history which without this great paper would have been forever lost.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is indeed my honor and privilege to bring to the attention of this House this milestone in the evolution of our democracy. I congratulate the leadership of the Chicago Defender and wish them success in their next 100 years, which are yet to come.

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

(Mr. FLAKE addressed the House. His remarks will appear in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE NATIONAL DEBT

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

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, \$6,198 trillion, \$6,198,000,000,000, a lot of money. An almost inconceivable amount of money. So many zeros that it is easy to pretend that it is paper money which, of course it is not, but that is how much our gross national debt was, how much our government owed, how much we owed in real money to our Social Security trust fund, to our bondholders and to many foreign countries,