

Problems with private contractors are not a new phenomenon. In December, a Blackwater employee killed one of the Iraqi Vice President's guards but was never charged under Iraqi or American law because private contractors enjoy immunity, thanks to a law imposed by the United States.

On July 12, 2005, I delivered a floor statement after Iraqis cheered the brutal death of four Blackwater contractors in Fallujah. I pointed out that those soldiers of fortune are not bound by the same values of duty and honor like those brave young men and women serving in our regular forces, and those contracted forces are paid astronomically more than our regular forces.

There aren't just problems in theater. There are problems right here in Washington, like the opaque and often unfair process of awarding no-bid contracts. In fact, Blackwater has won over \$505 million in publicly identifiable contracts since 2000 and in 2003 was awarded a \$21 million no-bid contract to guard the Director of the Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, Mr. Bremer. Why aren't our regular forces doing that?

I have raised questions before about these contractors and their behavior in Iraq and Afghanistan, but to no avail, in a Congress still not focused on upholding the great traditions of the U.S. military, and that means regular force, not mercenary force, not contracted force.

Mr. Speaker, the private contractors in Iraq all too often are rogue elephants, operating beyond the command and control system of our U.S. military. It is time to restore the time-heralded tradition of regular forces of this U.S. military, committed to duty, honor and country, not bounty.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF MEMBER OF THE HONORABLE JOHN R. "RANDY" KUHL, JR., MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Colleen Banik, District Office Coordinator, Office of the Honorable John R. "Randy" Kuhl, Jr., Member of Congress:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 7, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to formally notify you pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House that I have been served with a trial subpoena for testimony in a criminal case issued by the Bath Village Court of Steuben County in the State of New York.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the privileges and rights of the House.

Sincerely,

COLLEEN BANIK,
District Office Coordinator

OFFICIAL TRUTH SQUAD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 18, 2007, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, what a great opportunity it is to come back to the floor of the House as the designee of the minority leader, the Republican leader, and bring some issues hopefully into a little greater perspective.

We come here often and try to shed a little light as a group that we call the Official Truth Squad. The Official Truth Squad is a group that got started a little over 2 years ago, because, Mr. Speaker, as you well know, when folks tend to speak on the floor of the House, sometimes they exaggerate a little bit. I know that is hard to believe, but in fact that is the case. In fact, what we just heard, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, is a bit of an exaggeration, and maybe a distortion of the facts.

What we would like to do tonight is to talk about a number of issues, primarily monetary issues, taxing and spending and those kinds of things. But before we get started, we want to bring a couple of issues together that have as their common core and their common theme truth.

Our desire is to try to bring into perspective some of those areas that oftentimes don't have the light of day given to them, if you will, Mr. Speaker. We have a favorite phrase or quote that we use in the Official Truth Squad, and it comes from a gentleman who was revered in this Capitol, and truly across this Nation, a former Senator from New York, Daniel Patrick Moynihan. He is quoted, and a number of folks have said something like this, but he has my favorite quote that crystallizes this issue, and that is that everyone is entitled to their opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts. Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts.

Before I begin and talk about some of the fiscal matters, the monetary matters, that we have confronting us in this Nation and that this Congress has already dealt with in ways that I think would benefit from a little light, and certainly issues that we will be dealing with further as we go on into this fall and winter, I want to talk about two very specific issues that have come to this Congress within the last week.

The first is something that the American people are well aware of, and that is that General Petraeus, who was the commanding officer of the coalition forces in Iraq, came last week after much fanfare in the media to present to Congress his perspective on what was going on in Iraq, and only in Iraq. Leading up to that, we had a remarkable display by Members of the other side of the aisle, the majority party, that did their best, their dead level best, to discredit this incredible hero and this incredible patriot and this incredible man of service to this Nation.

All the while you hear them say over and over and over, "we support the troops." "We don't like the war, but we support the troops." Well, nobody likes the war. But some people back up their statement that they indeed support the troops with action, and the action that occurred leading up to last week's presentation before a joint committee in the House and a committee in the Senate by General Petraeus, a true hero and a true patriot, the action that led up to that by Members of the majority party, the Democrat majority party, I found to be disconcerting. When I was home last week for our extended recess, folks at home found it to be disconcerting.

But then what we heard after a remarkable ad was taken out by a left-wing advocacy group that questioned the patriotism and that questioned the honor and that questioned the veracity of what General Petraeus was going to present to the committee, what we heard from the other side after that was remarkable silence, a remarkable silence.

So when you hear Members on the other side of the aisle, as we just did within the last 15 minutes, say, Mr. Speaker, I support the troops, but I don't support the mission, well, it is clear, Mr. Speaker, that you can't do that and be true to our men and women on the ground. You can't do that. Because what we heard after the ad that was put in The New York Times, at a discount rate, I might add, the ad that was put in The New York Times, when it questioned the honesty of one of our bravest heroes, military heroes, what we heard from the other side was virtually nothing, which put it all into perspective.

That is the truth that Senator Moynihan was talking about. You can have your opinion, but you can't have your own facts. And the fact of the matter is in that instance, when there was an attack on one of our leaders in the military, one of our heroes, when there was an attack, where were the Americans in the majority party, who represent the majority party? Where were they?

I know where their constituents were, because I represent many of them, and they were as disgusted as I with the actions of MoveOn.org. They were as disgusted as I with the remarkable, remarkable betrayal of the public trust that anybody in the public arena has. And it was distressing. I found it distressing and saddening that in fact we heard virtually nothing from folks on the other side of the aisle.

So that is a bit of truth that the American people are paying attention to. When I go home, that is what I hear. I hear folks ask me all the time, why is it that our Congress, the majority party now in our Congress, cannot stand up proudly and say that they match their words with action when it comes to our brave men and women in the military? So that is a bit of truth that I wanted to highlight, to bring a little light to in this House of Representatives.

The other is an issue that again doesn't have anything to do with that, except we are trying to shed some light of truth on it. It happened just a couple of hours ago, Mr. Speaker, on the floor of this House.

The majority party has bent over backwards in their efforts to try to make certain that individuals who are in this Nation illegally are able to access certain benefit that are paid for with hard-earned taxpayer money. Now, I don't know why that is. I can't answer the question I get at home, why on Earth would they do those sorts of things? I can't answer that. But they bend over backwards to make certain that individuals who have come into this Nation illegally are able to get access to housing, get access to all sorts of things that in fact my constituents, your constituents, I suspect, Mr. Speaker, don't believe is appropriate.

They believe that we ought to make certain that our borders are secure and that individuals come into this Nation correctly, legally. I don't know of anybody that opposes legal immigration. What many of us, especially on the minority side, the Republican side, oppose is illegal immigration and the consequences of attempting to take care of or provide services for those folks that are here illegally. The problem is, those services, all of the services that we address here, are paid for by hard-earned American taxpayer money.

So what we had on the floor of the House here today was a bill that should have gotten broad support, the reauthorization of the Federal Housing Act. It is a bill that in its original intent was supposed to try to provide assistance for people who were kind of at the margins. They weren't able to make certain that they were able to afford some kind of housing, and this bill was an attempt to try to provide in a very generous and positive way some assistance to those that needed it.

Over time, that mission has become a bit distorted. In this instance today, it has not only become distorted; it has become abused, abused in a way that, again, my constituents at home, they just shake their head when they hear these kinds of stories.

What happened is what the bill included, at the direction of the chairman of the committee and of the Democrat majority. What it included was up to a \$5 billion slush fund.

Mr. Speaker, remember, that is \$5 billion of hard-earned American taxpayer money, \$5 billion to go into what is euphemistically called an Affordable Housing Fund. But in fact what that money can be used for is virtually anything that the majority party believes is appropriate in terms of giving money to organizations that have something to do with housing.

Now, how is that something defined? Well, it isn't, which means that that money can be used for an organization that simply advertises that if you are having difficulty with housing, then we would like to assist you and move you

and get you to talk to the people who truly have the answers.

□ 1730

That may be 1 percent of their mission, and the other 99 percent of their mission is advocacy for left-leaning organizations all across this Nation. And advocacy for individuals on the other side of the aisle to get elected, and advocacy in ways that the vast majority of the American people would say we ought not be doing that. We ought not be spending hard-earned American taxpayer money that way. Yet this is a \$5 billion slush fund for individuals to be able to use it kind of as their own little pet project.

If that weren't bad enough, on our side of the aisle we get one opportunity to truly affect and change the course or the description, the content of a bill. It is called a motion to recommit, as you know, Mr. Speaker. In that motion to recommit that we offered today, it was very simple. It said, if you are going to allow individuals to have access to that \$5 billion of hard-earned taxpayer money, you ought to make certain that the people receiving that money are either U.S. citizens or here legally. Kind of a simple, commonsense amendment.

What we heard from the other side was oh, no, you can't do that. That would limit the ability of us to do, to accomplish our mission. That would make it so we are not able to do the kinds of things that we want to do.

Remember, the kinds of things that they want to do is to support organizations that are not consistent with mainstream America. So we offered that amendment that would have provided that you had to be legal in this Nation, that you had appropriate documentation of your legality. You had to be a U.S. citizen or here legally. The other side strenuously objected and defeated it. So 216 or 217 Members of the Democrat Party said no, we don't believe that you ought to be here legally and get those kinds of moneys. We believe those moneys ought to be able to go to those folks here illegally.

Mr. Speaker, when I go home and try to explain that to my constituents, there is no way I can do that. They stand in front of me just dumbfounded that the majority party that we have right now is intent on providing taxpayer benefits, taxpayer-funded benefits, to individuals here illegally. That is a bit of a truth that I am trying to weave through and make certain that Members of this body, Mr. Speaker, understand and appreciate that some of these votes actually do matter. Some of these votes matter. That vote today mattered.

I am attempting to shed some light on issues that in fact matter, and the issue of the ad that denigrated and criticized and brought into question the honesty and truthfulness of one of our military heroes about which we heard nothing, virtually nothing from the other side, that is truth. That's

truth. And the American people are watching. The American people are watching.

I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, when I go home I often get some questions from folks who are concerned about what is going on here in Washington. I was reminded by a friend here on the floor of the House today that it is striking that so often what seems to matter at home doesn't matter here, and what matters here doesn't matter at home. So we get the kind of remarkable back-and-forth that goes on here on the floor of the House that oftentimes is not full of the kind of substance that the American people are concerned about, and the issues about which they are concerned we often get very little attention paid to those things here in Washington.

We are going to talk about one of those that I hear about all the time from my constituents back home. We are going to talk about the issue of taxes and the issue of spending and the issue of entitlements. "Entitlements" is a word I am not very fond of because it is not an appropriate description. Entitlements have come to capture the Social Security program, Medicare program and Medicaid program. They are called entitlements, because in order to receive the benefits from those three programs, and other entitlements, there are other entitlements, all you have to do is meet certain parameters. So if you are a certain age, for example, you are eligible for Medicare, regardless of anything else. If you are below a certain income and you have a certain family situation, then you are eligible for Medicaid. Once you reach a certain age, you are eligible for Social Security. The proceeds or the benefits that are in those programs are automatic. So I prefer to call them automatic spending as opposed to entitlements. And instead of mandatory spending, I like to call them automatic spending because the spending is on autopilot. It just goes and goes.

Regardless of what happens in this Chamber and in the Senate, the spending continues and continues and continues. The inertia here in Washington about these programs is to do nothing. It is to do absolutely nothing because they are automatic. They are entitlements. Why would we want to do anything. We would want to do something because of the changing demographics of our society. We are on a collision course with a fiscal disaster. A collision course with a fiscal disaster. That is not my opinion, that is a fact, to quote Senator Moynihan.

If you go to other folks who are much more knowledgeable about this situation, they will tell you the same thing. The chairman of the Federal Reserve, Chairman Bernanke said in February 2007, "Without early and meaningful action to address the rapid growth of entitlement, the U.S. economy could be seriously weakened with future generations bearing much of the cost." That is the Federal Reserve chairman saying if something isn't done, the economy

could be seriously weakened. What that means is fewer jobs, decreasing income, higher taxes, decreasing opportunity, a shadow coming across the dreams of the American people. That's what that means.

The comptroller general, David Walker, who has been working as hard as he can for literally years to get the American people and this Congress to wake up to this impending crisis, David Walker said in March of this year, "The rising cost of government entitlements are 'a fiscal cancer' that threatens catastrophic consequences for our country and could 'bankrupt America.'"

Mr. Speaker, that's not Representative PRICE talking. That's not somebody who is talking willy-nilly about the sky falling for no reason at all. That is the comptroller general of the United States of America who looks at the numbers and looks into the projections of spending in these entitlement programs and says that there are catastrophic consequences for our country if nothing is done.

I am fond of saying that a picture is worth a thousand words, and graphs are oftentimes worth more than that. This graph demonstrates clearly the course we are on. These are pie charts that identify the amount of the portion, the percentage of the Federal budget, that goes to mandatory or automatic spending, the entitlement programs, Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

In 1995, these programs, the entitlement programs, automatic spending programs, comprised about 48.7 percent of the Federal budget. And the prediction then in 2005 was that they would comprise about 54 percent of the Federal budget. That was the prediction back in 1995. And what happened? Well, it was right on track. Right on track. 53.4 percent of the Federal budget went to automatic spending in the area of entitlements.

Now what's the prediction for 2017? It is 62.2 percent. This yellow portion of the pie continues to get larger and larger and larger. That's the spending in the automatic spending area, the entitlement area: Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. That is a course, Mr. Speaker, that we as a Nation are not able to sustain. It is crying out for reform. It is crying out for improvement and programs that will be more responsive to the individuals receiving it. It is crying out to make certain that as the baby boomers of our Nation retire, as they age, and as we have individuals who are at the lower end of the economic spectrum, it is crying out for programs that are more responsive to them, that answer their concerns, that listen to them. These programs will not be able to do that because they will not be able to be funded. And to sit here in 2007 and act as a Congress and not address these issues is irresponsible. It is irresponsible.

This chart, Mr. Speaker, talks about this looming entitlement or automatic

spending crisis. In 2007, Federal spending as a percentage of GDP, that's the gross domestic product, is about 20 percent. That means about 20 percent, about two dimes out of every dollar that every American earns, goes towards taxes in order to cover the programs that the Federal Government provides. And the bulk of this, remember, the bulk of this yellow bar here is entitlement spending: Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security.

If we remain on our current course, if we do nothing at all, and remember, we have done nothing. If we continue to do nothing, what happens is that in relatively short order, 2020, we go to 23, 24 percent. In 2030 we go over 30 percent. In 2040, we go to 40 percent. In 2050, we exceed 50 percent of the gross domestic product.

It's important to remember that, and I have another chart which I don't have with me, but it is important to remember that the average level of Federal budget, taxation to the American people is 18 to 20 percent and has been for decades. It is also important to note that amount of spending, that amount of taxation, that amount of Federal spending, a Nation spending at about 20 percent, is about the maximum that any Nation can sustain for any period of time and remain financially viable. Once you get up into these areas here, Mr. Speaker, you can't sustain that. The economy won't sustain it. People won't have jobs. You begin to lose companies and jobs. You begin to lose the infrastructure that makes it so that individuals can go to work and send their money to Uncle Sam.

There is a balance, and that's what Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke knows. That is what Comptroller General David Walker knows, and that is why they are sounding these alarms.

So you would think that this Congress that is charged with making certain that our financial stake, that our financial future, is positive and optimistic and that my son, our son and children all across this Nation can grow up and be able to have the wonderful opportunities that so many of us have had. You would think that this majority would want to continue or want to make reforms so that those kinds of dreams and visions and entrepreneurship and excitement about America's future would continue. You would think that the current leadership would listen to what they hear if they take that shell and they put it up to their ear or they read the tea leaves or they listen to the people that truly know like David Bernanke and like David Walker. You would think that they would reform these programs or put a proposal on the table to reform these programs.

□ 1745

You would think, Mr. Speaker, that there would be no expansion of entitlements, there would be no more additions to the automatic spending that is

going on here in Washington. Well, Mr. Speaker, as you know, that is not the case.

We have had a number of bills that have come through the floor of this House that have in fact expanded entitlements. The most recent one was terribly discomfoting to me. It was the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

Before I came to Congress, Mr. Speaker, I was a physician. I spent over 20 years, 25 years taking care of people, trying to get them well, trying to heal them, trying to make certain that in spite of all the remarkable rules and regulations that are put on the backs of every single physician across this here Nation, that we could actually take care of patients.

One of the things that became much more onerous than it ought to be is the State Children's Health Insurance Program, which actually provided greater rules to how to care for individuals than otherwise. It also ultimately didn't fit the original definition.

The State Children's Health Insurance Program began in 1997. Its mission was to make certain that those individuals, those children in families where their family made too much money to qualify for Medicaid but they didn't make enough money to be able to readily afford health insurance were given some help; that those families were able to provide some type of health insurance that was truly quality for their children.

It is a good mission. It is a bipartisan program, a program that passed through this House in Congress in 1997 in a bipartisan manner because it had an appropriate ideal; it was an appropriate compromise between some Federal program, a State program, and a lot of private input. That program was to run for 10 years. So it is about to expire.

So what has happened in this House is that the Democrat majority decided that they weren't interested in working in a bipartisan way, contrary to so much of what they talk about. They weren't interested in working in a bipartisan way. It was their way or the highway.

Their way was a remarkable expansion of an entitlement. Remember, the State Children's Health Insurance Program was a discretionary program, which means that the Federal Government determines what resources it has available to provide that kind of care, and it works with the States to make certain that the amount of money is there but that it is not on one of those automatic trajectories to the sky in terms of spending. It is not one of those programs that will assist in bankrupting the Nation, as David Walker talks about.

But what does this majority do, this new majority, this Democrat majority that talks all the time about being fiscally responsible? It takes that program and instead of keeping it in the discretionary side, that side where

folks at home can be able to appreciate that it is that side of the budget where if they are able to afford it, they utilize the money in that area, and it puts it in the entitlement side.

Instead of these bar graphs and those pie charts being accurate in their prediction, that will be significantly off. In fact, they will be off so much that we will reach this position of not being able to sustain those programs and of decreasing economic activity in this Nation and of lowering wages and of losing jobs in this Nation sooner because of the recent actions of this Democrat majority.

They made it an entitlement. They did all sorts of other things which I thought were egregious, as well as they pitted seniors against children in their effort to try to pay for it. You don't see the kind of reform that is so necessary.

So, again, Mr. Speaker, you would think that this new majority would say, well, it looks like when we look into the future that we have got a problem on our hands. We have got a problem, financial problem. It is our responsibility as elected representatives of the people of the United States that we need to be responsible, that we need to be responsive to the concerns of our constituents, that we need to make certain that the programs that we put in place will allow Americans to continue to dream and continue to have that great opportunity for success.

We need to make certain that we don't allow the entitlement programs to consume an ever greater portion of the Federal budget so that that discretionary side, which, Mr. Speaker, as you know, is not just the military, it is roads, it is highways, it is all transportation, it is all funding for the aviation, it is all of the other kinds of programs. It is jobs, housing. It is the wonderful housing bill that we worked on today.

It is all those kinds of things. It is everything that you think of when you think of the Federal Government having activity, everything is all of the discretionary side, and it will be consumed by the entitlements, which means all of the things that folks think about other than those three programs will not be able to take place.

So you would think that this new majority would say, well, we better get our act in order, get our House in order, better work together in a collegial and a positive and a bipartisan way to be able to solve this problem. It is what we have been trying to do, what we have been talking about, what we have proposed.

In fact, we did so in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. That act reformed entitlements, about \$130 billion of reform. That is one of the big things that resulted in the ability to balance the budget, to have a surplus. That was done with a Republican Congress and a Democrat President. In fact, in 2005, in spite of all the kicking and screaming

from the other side, another \$40 billion in appropriate entitlement reform.

What has happened with the budget for this year among this majority, who clearly can read the same charts, who get the same information from the Federal Reserve Chairman, Ben Bernanke, and Comptroller David Walker, who can look at the same projections? What have they done in terms of entitlement reform? Nothing. Nothing, Mr. Speaker.

That is an abrogation of duty; that is irresponsible out of this majority. The American people are paying attention because, again, when I go home, they want these problems solved. They want them solved. They ask why can't you work together and get these problems solved. Mr. Speaker, we stand ready, willing and able to work together to get these problems solved.

We are going to talk a little more about entitlements, but we want to talk a fair amount about the taxing that has been hoisted upon the American public by this current majority. We will talk about spending. There are a number of ways you can increase revenue to the Federal Government and cover the programs that are so vital and necessary to the American people.

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that increasing taxes and increasing spending together are not two of them. I believe that we ought to be decreasing taxes and decreasing spending and being fiscally responsible as a Congress.

I am pleased to be joined by my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT), who is a fiscal hawk, an individual who recognizes and appreciates the importance of balancing budgets and making certain that we don't spend beyond our means at the Federal level. I look forward to your comments. I am happy to yield to you.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the good work of the gentleman from Georgia on so many areas that I work with you on, Financial Services and otherwise; but here tonight most specifically what is important to the American public and American taxpayer, and that is just how much money is coming out of their wallet, out of their pocket here and being sent down to Washington, where those dollars are going and whether are being held responsibly.

I am not sure whether you were on the floor at the moment, but prior to your speaking we had a Member from the other side of the aisle on the floor giving their comments, and the gentleman from the other side of the aisle, the Democratic Caucus Chair, who was speaking for a little bit about the new book that is out there on Federal responsibility and issues of such. Alan Greenspan just did the book.

If you listen to his comments, it almost harkens back to prior to the elections and the exact same rhetoric we heard at that time as we did just 35 minutes ago from the other side of the aisle. He was lambasting and had been

lambasting this administration and the past Congresses, saying that they have spent too much money, that the past leadership in this House was being fiscally irresponsible, that they were passing bill after bill, spending increase after spending increase.

On and on the rhetoric went, just 35 minutes ago, the same rhetoric that we heard during the last election about looking towards the past and all the mistakes that were made in the past.

Now if you listen to that, you would always assume that the next words out of their mouth were going to be: but this is what we are going to do when we get into the majority. We are going to reverse those trends. If spending was too high, we are going to go in the other direction.

That is what you think would be the next words out of their mouth, but of course they can't be. Here we are in September, 9 months into this new 110th Congress, under the leadership now of the Democrat majority, both in this House and the Senate, and we have their track record to look at to see what course do they take. They lambasted, attacked the path of too much spending.

Did they reduce spending? They did not. Instead, they have piled onto that spending. Increased spending in the past was bad. Well, they exacerbated that problem by spending even more.

There was a study recently that goes to this point, taking a look now at this new 110th Congress. The National Taxpayers Union, basically a nonpartisan organization, looking at both sides of the aisle fairly recently did a study that shows that the 110th Congress, both Senate and House, have introduced far more bills for budget savings than they have in previous administrations, previous Congresses.

On first blush, that would be a positive thing until, again, you think of what the record has been over the last 9 months. Has anyone seen any of those savings bills passed through this House and passed through the Senate and get signed into law? I can't think of any.

It's one thing to talk the rhetoric, which they have been doing. It is another thing to drop in the savings bills, which some of them may have been doing. But when we see the leadership will not post any of those savings bills, that is the problem. For each bill introduced in this House that would reduce Federal spending, and this makes the point, there have been over 20 bills, a 20 to 1 ratio increasing the size and amount of spending in Congress.

If you additionally listened to the other side, they will talk about and applaud themselves and pat themselves on the back about PAYGO, which you have already discussed, which is a good term described in a very elementary way to say pay-as-you-go, something that all families have to do in this country, and we wish Congress could live by that as well.

Well, there are two aspects to PAYGO. One is the spending side of the

equation. Let's talk about that for a minute. I don't know whether you have this chart up there. I know you have a number of charts. One of the charts is headed "New Majority's Fiscal Irresponsibility." I don't want to make you go through all your charts.

One of the ways you can deal with PAYGO is this, and this is exactly what every family does as well. When the family sits down and looks at their budget for that week or that month as far as paying their bills, they have to prioritize and say we may have a new expense here that we would like or need to pay, but we don't have enough money in the checkbook. So what are we going to do, we are going to reduce spending elsewhere.

Good idea. American families should do it; Congress should do it. This side tried to reduce spending by 2 percent. That didn't get anywhere. How about 1 percent? Can we agree there is 1 percent of waste, fraud, and abuse in Congress? You would think we could agree to that.

But if we could look to the chart right next to you right now, what that chart says is as follows: when that 1 percent reduction legislation was proposed to this House, who voted for it and who was against it.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I appreciate you pointing that out. What this chart demonstrates is that the rhetoric that we hear from the other side doesn't match the action. It happens in so many different areas; it is hard to keep up with. I call it Orwellian democracy, which is that the words don't match the actions.

This chart demonstrates the seven appropriations bills. A number of us, and you were so very, very supportive of these efforts, attempted to say the Federal Government is spending too much, we ought to decrease that. If you don't want to decrease it in certain specific programs, then let's just decrease it by a certain percent.

In this instance, I promoted amendments that would decrease it by 1 percent. Decrease these seven appropriations bills by 1 percent. That is one penny out of every dollar. That reduction would have saved \$3.9 billion. Yet the individuals who so often say over and over and over that they are champions of fiscal responsibility, that they certainly don't want to see us overspend, and you see on the far right there the number of times that they voted for and then against this type of amendment, overwhelmingly voted against it, 95 percent almost all the time.

I am happy to yield to my friend.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I will leave you to make that point in greater detail because I think it is a significant point.

I will leave you on this note as well, that the other side of the ledger sheet, if you are not going to cut spending, the other side is increased revenue. I believe you will probably show a chart that you will have later on with regard

to how they have been doing it. But the American public must know this in a larger sense, that since the Democrats have been in power, they have given us the largest tax increase in America's history. The last time we had such a large tax increase was back when the Democrats were in charge 12 years ago.

It was just a week ago, a couple of weeks ago when they wanted to raise taxes by \$53 billion with regard to a piece of legislation that they had no offsets for. Additionally, just yesterday, or the day before, they wanted to raise taxes again by another billion dollars on redundant programs.

So as you pointed out, there are two ways to do this, either cut spending, which they are not agreeable to do, or raise taxes; and of course we have seen the history over the last month: every time they get a chance, they do that.

□ 1800

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I thank my good friend for coming and helping out and participating and trying to shed light, trying to put a little fact on the table when we talk about the issue of taxing and spending.

I do, Mr. Speaker, want to talk fairly specifically about taxes because, as you know, Mr. Speaker, the general consensus out in America is that the majority party, the Democrats, are the party of tax and spend. I grew up believing that, I grew up thinking that, and that is one of the reasons that I was so staunchly a Republican as I entered my political career, because I thought it was most appropriate to decrease taxes and to decrease spending at the State and the Federal level, because I believe firmly, as I believe most Americans believe, that the American people are better able to decide how to spend their hard-earned money, not the Federal Government, not the State government.

Our friends on the other side of the aisle tend to believe by and large that the Federal Government knows best; that the choices that the Federal Government makes with how to spend individuals' money, those are better choices than that person could make for themselves. I simply don't believe it and I don't think the American people believe that.

But what has happened in a relatively short period of time, Mr. Speaker, we have been in this 110th Congress now a little over 9 months, right about 9 months, in a relatively short period of time the bills that have been passed would increase taxes on the American people, and truly across the board, not just a small focal area. They will talk about increasing taxes on the rich, and we will talk about that a little bit, but in fact what they have passed through this House are bills repeatedly that increase taxes on virtually every single American. And why do I say that? Well, they passed a budget that includes this portion, these parameters laid out in terms of increasing taxes.

When you talk about ordinary income, the highest rate would go from 35 percent to 39.6 percent. When you talk about capital gains, it would go from 15 percent to 20 percent. Dividends, 15 percent to 39.6 percent. Those are all increases, Mr. Speaker. They are also facts, not opinions. They are facts.

The estate tax in 2010 will be zero. That is the death tax. That means that if you are unfortunate enough to have somebody in your family that dies, that their estate on that day that they die, you don't have to write a check to the Federal Government. But on January 1, 2011, with the budget that the new majority passed, that amount, that death tax goes right back up to 55 percent, which is where it was when we have been trying to get it down, 55 percent. That is an increase, Mr. Speaker.

The child tax credit, the amount of money that you are given from the Federal Government as a credit to assist in raising your child, \$1,000, in 2010, 2011 down to \$500, cut in half, slashed in half.

The lowest tax bracket, curiously enough, those at the lowest end of the economic spectrum in 2010 would have a taxable income tax at 10 percent, and then in 2011 at 15 percent.

What does that mean, Mr. Speaker? What does that mean to people? The other side is fond of saying that all they are going to do is tax the rich. They demonize the rich, because there is a tried-and-true method in politics which is to divide people. We believe, I believe that it is important to bring people together to work together in a positive way to solve problems, to solve the challenges that we have as the American people. And so they say, well, all we are going to do is increase taxes on the rich.

In fact, with these tax rates here, one in five people who benefit from the lower rate on capital gains that was passed earlier in this decade have incomes below \$50,000. That is 20 percent have incomes below \$50,000. So I guess that all we can conclude from that is that our friends on the other side, the majority party, believe that anybody who makes less than \$50,000 is rich, the only conclusion that we could reach given their rhetoric, given what they say. One in four people who benefit from the lowered rate on dividends, one in four, 25 percent have an income less than \$50,000. Again, are those people rich, Mr. Speaker? Are those people rich? When you pit people against each other, it doesn't do well or a service to our Nation in terms of the discussion as we move forward.

How many folks is that? 2.4 million people earning less than \$50,000 benefit from the capital gains tax relief, 2.4 million Americans; 5.4 million Americans who earn less than \$50,000 benefit from the dividend tax relief, 5.4 million. In fact, 58 percent of the people who have benefited, Americans who have benefited from the capital gains tax cuts earn less than \$100,000 a year.

Over half of the individuals earn less than \$100,000 a year. So I guess all those people, Mr. Speaker, by the definition of our friends on the other side, are rich.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking a bit about taxes and about the Orwellian nature of the rhetoric that we hear from folks on the other side of the aisle as they continually say, well, we will only tax the rich and we will only tax corporations, as if corporations are this inanimate object that don't relate at all to the American people, that there is no nexus between the American people's jobs and businesses. In fact, when they tax at the rate that they do or that they propose, it affects virtually every single individual in this Nation who has a job. And, Mr. Speaker, that is personal. That is personal to those folks.

So we have talked about the \$392.5 billion tax increase that was incorporated in the budget that our friends adopted on the other side. We have talked about that, and we outlined where that came from with all of the increases in income taxes, capital gains taxes, the death tax coming back. But what else have they done? Virtually a new tax at every single turn. A new bill comes through here, and it is a new tax or it is a new fee. \$15 billion in the energy bill that was passed, \$15 billion in new taxes on American corporations, American oil corporations. And I know it is popular to beat up on the oil companies. But, Mr. Speaker, if you tax them more, who is going to pay those taxes? The American people are going to pay those taxes. Corporations don't make any money, they don't mint any money. What they do is American people purchase their products. And if they are taxed more, the American people will pay more for those taxes.

In addition to what that means is that we are penalizing American corporations. And they didn't tax foreign oil companies. That is not what they did. They taxed American oil companies \$15 billion; \$5.8 billion in new tobacco taxes. That might be appropriate. In fact, as a physician I strongly believe that individuals ought not smoke. Ought not smoke. But what they have done is incorporate new tobacco taxes in a children's health insurance bill, so that as you decrease the number of folks that are smoking, you will have to find that money elsewhere. And then where does that come from? Yes, Mr. Speaker, you guessed it, new taxes.

\$7.5 billion in new taxes in the farm bill. Remember, Mr. Speaker, at every single turn, virtually every single turn, every new bill, this new majority has seen to find an opportunity to raise taxes on the American people.

Five-cent-per-gallon gasoline tax increase for infrastructure. That infrastructure is an appropriate thing to pay for. But, Mr. Speaker, as you know, when you set a budget, you ought to set priorities. And one of the

priorities of this Nation ought to be infrastructure improvement, but we have got enough money to be able to do that if we would set those priorities. We ought not be increasing the taxes on the American people.

A 50-cent-per-gallon, 50-cents-per-gallon tax increase to study global warming. Now, Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is fairly well documented that the temperature on the Earth has increased some over the past couple of years. I don't know that that is due to human activity, but I do believe that we ought to be studying it and looking at it. I also believe that it ought to be a priority of our Nation and it ought to be a priority of our budget, but I don't believe that we need to increase taxes in order to perform that study. I believe that those resources are certainly already there.

New taxes on homeowners by ending the mortgage deductions. That is what has been proposed by the other side.

And in the SCHIP bill again, in the State Children's Health Insurance Program, there was a small little portion of it that many people didn't even know they were voting on when they voted on it that will provide, if it becomes law, for a tax on every single personal private health insurance policy in this Nation. Every single one. Mr. Speaker, it is not the way that we ought to be proceeding to increase economic development to solve the challenges that we have by taxing Americans over and over and over.

I want to spend a few brief moments talking about taxes on corporations, because our friends on the other side, it is one of their favorite pinatas. They beat up on the corporations left, right, and center, and they do so as if the corporations in America aren't paying any tax at all, they aren't paying their fair share. You will hear them say that, Mr. Speaker. If you look at the facts, if you look at the facts, then we could see where the American corporations stand as it relates to the rest of the industrialized world.

Now, one would think, given the Orwellian rhetoric that we have heard from the other side, that American corporations are clearly not paying their fair share. Right? They are not paying as much as they might be in, say, oh, pick a nation. Canada? Canadian corporations pay about 22 percent. American corporations, oh, by the way, they are down there on the far right on this chart, Mr. Speaker. They are down there on the far right paying the greatest percentage of taxes of their income of any other nation, tied with Spain. Granted, we are tied with Spain, 35 percent. Switzerland down here, 8 or 9 percent. Ireland is about 12 percent.

In fact, Ireland is a great case study, because Ireland used to be way down at this end of the chart, way down at that end. In fact, what they did was decrease their corporate taxes, decrease their taxes on corporations and businesses. And what happened, Mr. Speaker? An incredible economic boom, an

incredible economic development occurred, because when you allow corporations to create more jobs, more people get jobs, more money is created in terms of revenue for the Federal Government. And it seems counterintuitive, but when you decrease taxes on both people and on corporations, there is more money that comes into the Federal Government.

So, Mr. Speaker, when you look at the facts, when you look at the facts you appreciate that the United States corporations, again, a wonderful whipping boy and it is easy to criticize them because it is tough for them to defend themselves, especially with the rhetoric that we so often hear on this floor of the House. And I find that troubling and I think that is distressing, and it ought to be to the American people, Mr. Speaker. Because when you look at the facts, what you see is that United States corporations are taxed more than any other industrialized nation except for Spain, and we are tied with Spain, 35 percent. So those are the facts, Mr. Speaker.

Now, what is the solution? Well, the solution is to respect the hard-earned money of the American taxpayer. That is the solution. We have proposed a taxpayer bill of rights. I encourage my colleagues on the other side to look at the bill, to cosponsor the bill. I would love to have it passed. I would love to bring it to the floor and passed.

What does it include? It says that the Federal Government ought not grow beyond their ability to pay for it. That is the balanced budget portion of the bill. You ought not spend more than you take in. You ought to make certain that you end deficit spending. We believe taxpayers have a right to that. We believe that taxpayers have a right to receive back each dollar that they entrust to the Federal Government for their retirement. That is the Social Security portion. As you well know, Mr. Speaker, we talked about entitlements earlier, entitlement reform is imperative. If young people across this Nation are going to be able to receive back with some benefit the resources that they have sent to the Federal Government for their retirement, if that is going to be able to occur, then what needs to happen is that that money needs to be put into a fund that is not used for anything else. Social Security trust fund money ought to be used for Social Security alone. That is what the taxpayer bill of rights says. That is what we say in our bill. That is what many individuals across this Chamber on both sides of the aisle have said that they support.

□ 1815

Well, Mr. Speaker, let's vote on that. That's a positive move to make. In fact, that would be a bipartisan positive move to make. We encourage that to happen. We believe that taxpayers have a right to a balanced budget amendment without raising taxes.

As we've demonstrated already, the current majority believes that if you

just tax more, you'll be able to increase the money coming to the Federal Government to pay for all these programs, these new programs that they want to enact.

In fact, what happens if you tax more, you decrease money coming to the Federal Government. And every single President that has decreased taxes recognized that. John Kennedy did when he decreased taxes, saw a significant increase to the Federal Government in terms of revenue. Ronald Reagan did when he decreased taxes, saw an increasing amount of money to the Federal Government. And certainly in this administration we've seen significant increased revenues to the Federal Government. When you decrease taxes, money to the Federal Government increases. Again, it sounds counterintuitive; but it's not, because what happens is that American people get to keep more of their hard-earned money.

And you remember, Mr. Speaker, we talked about choices, who ought to be able to choose. One of the most fundamental principles that we believe, I believe, is that the American individual, the American citizen ought to be the one that has the right to choose when they save or they spend or they invest, not the Federal Government, with their money. So many of our good friends on the other side believe that they can make better decisions than the American people with that hard-earned taxpayer money.

We believe that you ought to be able to get to a balanced budget without raising taxes. We have a bill that will allow that to happen. We strongly encourage our friends on the other side to support it.

We believe that taxpayers have a right to fundamental and fair tax reform. Some of my friends are supporters of a flat tax, a flat income tax. Some are supporters of a fair tax, the national retail sales tax, which I believe to be the most appropriate way to align our form of taxation in our Nation with our form of commerce. We would then incentivize all the things that we say that we want, like hard work and vision and entrepreneurship and success. Right now we punish all those things. Our current tax system punishes people when they do more, when they succeed, when they die. Those aren't things we ought to be taxing. My goodness.

And we believe also that the taxpayers have a right to a supermajority required for any tax increase. In fact, as you know, Mr. Speaker, that was the rule of the House until this new majority took over. When they changed the rules on the very first day that we met in January of this year, they changed the rule to make it so that it only took a majority to raise taxes on any bill that comes through this House, not a supermajority, which meant 60 percent before.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's very clear. We believe, I believe, that working to-

gether positively, productively we can solve the challenges that we have before us.

It's an incredible honor to represent the Sixth District of Georgia in this United States House of Representatives. It's an incredible honor for each and every one of us to be a Member here.

But what our constituents demand of us, I believe, is responsibility to act together and to work together in a positive way, in an uplifting way, in a way that will make certain that we preserve the American Dream and a system in place, an economic system in place that will allow the majority of Americans, the vast majority of Americans, if not every single American, the opportunity to succeed in his or her own life.

I challenge my colleagues across the aisle to work together positively in that direction. I know that you've got partners who will assist you on this side.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (during the Special Order of Mr. PRICE of Georgia), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-332) on the resolution (H. Res. 659) waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2761, TERRORISM RISK INSURANCE REVISION AND EXTENSION ACT OF 2007

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (during the Special Order of Mr. PRICE of Georgia), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-333) on the resolution (H. Res. 660) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2761) to extend the Terrorism Insurance Program of the Department of the Treasury, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LIVING VICTIMS OF 9/11

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLEIN of Florida). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, 1 week ago today, we marked the sixth anniversary of the tragic events of September 11, 2001. I appreciate the opportunity to speak

today about an issue that faces not just my district, where the attack on the United States occurred, where the World Trade Center once stood, but our entire Nation.

I am honored to be here today to support legislation sponsored by CAROLYN MALONEY and myself and others. CAROLYN has been such a strong advocate for the living victims of 9/11.

I also want to thank Chairmen GEORGE MILLER and FRANK PALLONE for the recent hearings they have held on this issue, one last week and one earlier today.

I am pleased to announce that yesterday, along with Congresswoman MALONEY and others, I introduced essential new legislation that would ensure that everyone exposed to World Trade Center toxins, no matter where they live now or in the future, would have a right to high-quality medical monitoring and treatment and access to a reopened victim compensation fund for their losses.

Whether you are a first responder who toiled without proper protection, who came to help in the rescue and recovery from New York, from elsewhere in New York or from elsewhere in the country, or whether you're an area resident worker or student who was caught in the plume, or subject to ongoing indoor contamination, if you were harmed by the environmental effects of 9/11, you would be eligible.

This bill builds on the best ideas brought to Congress thus far, and on the infrastructure already in place providing critical treatment and monitoring.

Mr. Speaker, when the World Trade Center collapsed on September 11, 2001, the towers sent up a plume of poisonous dust that blanketed Lower Manhattan and parts of Brooklyn, Queens, and New Jersey. A toxic cloud of lead, dioxin, asbestos, mercury, Benzene, PCBs, PAHs and other hazardous contaminants swirled around the site and around Lower Manhattan and Brooklyn and Jersey City as rescue workers labored furiously in the wreckage, many without adequate protective gear. Thousands of first responders inhaled this poisonous dust before it settled onto and into countless homes, shops and office buildings where it remains to this day.

Mr. Speaker, I've always said that there were two coverups conducted here, two coverups conducted by the administration. The first coverup was that the air was okay, that no one would get sick from the exposure to World Trade Center dust at or near Ground Zero. The administration denied the air was toxic and insisted that no one would get sick. They lied. They lied deliberately to the American people, to the people of New York, to the first responders. They said the air was safe, when they had test results saying it was toxic. As a result, tests at Mt. Sinai Hospital published in a peer reviewed medical study just about a year ago revealed that of the 10,000 first responders tested, over 70 percent suffer