

the Committee in executive session. Classified information and sensitive but unclassified (SBU) information (including but not limited to documents marked with dissemination restrictions such as Sensitive Security Information (SSI), Law Enforcement Sensitive (LES), For Official Use Only (FOUO), or Critical Infrastructure Information (CII) shall be handled in accordance with all applicable provisions of law and consistent with the provisions of these rules.

(E) Oath.—Before a Member or Committee staff member may have access to classified information, the following oath (or affirmation) shall be executed: “I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will not disclose any classified information received in the course of my service on the Committee on Homeland Security, except as authorized by the Committee or the House of Representatives or in accordance with the Rules of such Committee or the Rules of the House.”

Copies of the executed oath (or affirmation) shall be retained by the Clerk as part of the records of the Committee.

(F) Disciplinary Action.—The Chairman shall immediately consider disciplinary action in the event any Committee Member or member of the Committee staff fails to conform to the provisions of these rules governing the disclosure of classified or unclassified information. Such disciplinary action may include, but shall not be limited to, immediate dismissal from the Committee staff, criminal referral to the Justice Department, and notification of the Speaker of the House. With respect to Minority party staff, the Chairman shall consider such disciplinary action in consultation with the Ranking Minority Member.

RULE XV.—COMMITTEE RECORDS

(A) Committee Records.—Committee Records shall constitute all data, charts and files in possession of the Committee and shall be maintained in accordance with House Rule XI, clause 2(e).

(B) Legislative Calendar.—The Clerk of the Committee shall maintain a printed calendar for the information of each Committee Member showing any procedural or legislative measures considered or scheduled to be considered by the Committee, and the status of such measures and such other matters as the Committee determines shall be included. The calendar shall be revised from time to time to show pertinent changes. A copy of such revisions shall be made available to each Member of the Committee upon request.

(C) Members Right To Access.—Members of the Committee and of the House shall have access to all official Committee Records. Access to Committee files shall be limited to examination within the Committee offices at reasonable times. Access to Committee Records that contain classified information shall be provided in a manner consistent with these rules.

(D) Removal of Committee Records.—Files and records of the Committee are not to be removed from the Committee offices. No Committee files or records that are not made publicly available shall be photocopied by any Member.

(E) Executive Session Records.—Evidence or testimony received by the Committee in executive session shall not be released or made available to the public unless agreed to by the Committee. Members may examine the Committee's executive session records, but may not make copies of, or take personal notes from, such records.

(F) Public Inspection.—The Committee shall keep a complete record of all Committee action including recorded votes. Information so available for public inspection shall include a description of each amendment, motion, order or other proposition and

the name of each Member voting for and each Member voting against each such amendment, motion, order, or proposition, as well as the names of those Members present but not voting. Such record shall be made available to the public at reasonable times within the Committee offices.

(G) Separate and Distinct.—All Committee records and files must be kept separate and distinct from the office records of the Members serving as Chairman and Ranking Minority Member. Records and files of Members' personal offices shall not be considered records or files of the Committee.

(H) Disposition of Committee Records.—At the conclusion of each Congress, non-current records of the Committee shall be delivered to the Archivist of the United States in accordance with Rule VII of the Rules of the House.

(I) Archived Records.—The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available for public use in accordance with Rule VII of the Rules of the House. The Chairman shall notify the Ranking Minority Member of any decision, pursuant to clause 3(b)(3) or clause 4(b) of the Rule, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a determination on the written request of any member of the Committee. The Chairman shall consult with the Ranking Minority Member on any communication from the Archivist of the United States or the Clerk of the House concerning the disposition of noncurrent records pursuant to clause 3(b) of the Rule.

RULE XVI.—CHANGES TO COMMITTEE RULES

These rules may be modified, amended, or repealed by the Full Committee provided that a notice in writing of the proposed change has been given to each Member at least 48 hours prior to the meeting at which action thereon is to be taken.

OFFICIAL TRUTH SQUAD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 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, I am so honored and pleased to be able to come to the House floor once again with another version, another edition of what we call the Official Truth Squad.

The role of the Official Truth Squad is to attempt to try to bring some honesty and factual information to the floor of the House of Representatives. Mr. Speaker, as you well know, oftentimes that is difficult to find. Today was no exception on the floor of the House as we tried to, through the debate we had, make sure that facts were being presented and information was reliable upon which people make their decisions was being presented.

I am honored by the leadership on the Republican side of the aisle to come to the floor tonight and share with the American people and talk about issues that are of great concern, some of which have been dealt with as recently as today.

On the Official Truth Squad, we have a favorite quote which comes from Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who was a United States Senator from New York.

He said, “Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts.”

Mr. Speaker, no place could that ring more true than right here in the halls of Congress. We get a lot of opportunity to observe process here. We talk about process a lot. We talk about rules a lot. Many people say, what difference does that make? What difference do the rules make? And a lot of people, many people, say, on my side, say you don't want to talk about process. It is difficult for the American people to understand or appreciate.

But what process does in a democratic institution, and this being the finest democratic institution in the world, the people's House, what process does is allow all voices to be heard and allow all points of view to be heard.

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, if you think about it and if my friends on both sides of the aisle would think about it, we all appreciate that we don't have Republican challenges or Republican problems or Democrat problems or Democrat challenges. We have American challenges, American challenges that are best solved when we all work together and come up with the best and most correct solution for our Nation.

But, sadly, Mr. Speaker, we haven't had much of that with this new Congress. That is, the opportunity to have input into the process. Again, the reason that the process is so important, because if you lock people out of the ability to have input into the process, then what happens, the individuals, the citizens, the American citizens that those people represent, those people who are locked out of the process, those American citizens are without a voice. They don't have a voice in the process.

Mr. Speaker, I think that is not only unfair, it is undemocratic, and so I would respectfully suggest to my friends on the other side of the aisle that they ought to look at the rules that they have adopted and they ought to look at the process that they have gone through for these first 3 or 4 weeks that we have been in Congress and try to be true to their principles, or their stated principles, and make certain that all folks are able to be involved in the process. Because it makes a difference. It does indeed make a difference.

Today, we took up on the floor of the House what was called a continuing resolution. It was, in fact, an omnibus bill. It was a spending bill.

The last Congress, the one that was in place prior to the beginning of this month, the House did its job from a financial standpoint relatively efficiently. We passed all of our spending bills, appropriations bills, to try to figure out how to spend the hard-earned money from the taxpayer. We got our business done pretty quickly.

The bills that we sent over to the Senate sat there and sat there and sat there. Consequently, what happened

was we came to the end of 2006 and there was no agreement between the Senate and the House about those appropriations bills. So what we passed was a continuing resolution.

Mr. Speaker, the continuing resolution that we passed, which was truly a continuing resolution, which just meant that you continued to spend the same amount of money in the programs that were in place in the Federal Government; and to do that it doesn't take much language. In fact, the bill was two short pages. If you had a little larger page, it would be one page. Because all it says in legal terms is we will continue to spend the amount of money that we spent last year. That bill runs the government spending through February 15.

So something else had to be done; and the other side said, we will do a continuing resolution. We will continue spending money at the same rate on the same programs because their committees haven't got up and running. They cannot figure out exactly what the process ought to be to allow people to have input into it, so we will just have a continuing resolution. So they presented their, quote, continuing resolution.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that continuing resolution I have here, this H.J. Res, is 137 pages long.

Mr. Speaker, that is a fact. It is not an opinion, that is a fact.

Now the continuing resolution that could continue the spending for our Nation, responsible spending at the lowest possible level given the amount of spending that has occurred over the past number of months of this fiscal year, could just be continued with a two-page resolution that says, yes, indeed, we will continue that spending.

In fact, what the majority party has done is passed a 137-page omnibus bill. It is not a continuing resolution in spite of what they say. The reason that is important is the process was not in place to allow input by almost anybody. Not just Republicans, but Democrats as well, and certainly freshmen Democrats, had no input into the process.

What is in this bill is all sorts of special spending, picking winners and losers and rewarding friends in this bill that the other side, the Democrat majority side, says is just a continuing resolution.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we have some principles on our side, and one of them is that no process deserves more public scrutiny than the way in which the hard-earned taxpayer money is spent. No process deserves more scrutiny than the way in which hard-earned taxpayer money is spent.

In fact, what happened today is the spending or the concurrence by the House of Representatives, the vast majority of them being Democrat, that we would spend \$463 billion, that is with a "B", Mr. Speaker, \$463 billion on the omnibus bill that they have presented.

And there are so many things that we would like to talk about tonight that

relate to process and to policy, and I am pleased to be joined by good friends who will highlight some of those items.

A member of the Official Truth Squad, a Member who brings highlight and honesty to our deliberations joins me this evening, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN). I appreciate your being with us, and I look forward to your comments.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia. He does such a wonderful job of pulling the Truth Squad together and helping us focus on the issues that are important to our constituents and of concern to our constituents and of concern to all Americans.

Certainly the process that we have seen carried out here in the House of Representatives is one that causes us concern. For those of us who respect regular order, who respect the integrity of the House, to see an omnibus spending bill go straight from the drafting table of a couple of Members, one in the Senate and one in the House, and then come directly to the floor for a vote is of tremendous concern.

□ 1715

We all know that our Nation has a process that was laid forth in the founding of this Nation, a process by which this body would conduct its business on behalf of the people, the people's House. Today, as I heard some of my colleagues across the aisle talk about how we had returned to regular order, I thought, oh, my goodness, I do not think this is what people had in mind.

I really do not think, Mr. Speaker, that when people went to the polls in November and voted and said we want to see a change in things, we want greater accountability, we want greater transparency and we are frustrated with what we have seen in Washington. I do not think this is what they had in mind, and certainly we would hope this is not the process that the Democrat majority will follow as they talk about what is going to be regular order.

What the gentleman from Georgia just said about the omnibus is so very true. As he said, this is a continuing resolution. It requires two sheets of paper. It is a total of about 40 lines of type. That is it. It just says we abide by the budget that was in place in 2006. Our constituents may remember that the budget that we passed in 2006 was the budget that made 1 percent across-the-board reductions in spending, 1 percent. It was a \$40 billion savings to the American people.

Now, the budget, this omnibus budget, this 137 pages is going to end up spending about \$17 billion more. So they are reducing and doing away with the savings that we worked hard to put in place.

The thing that is of tremendous concern to me, and I am so delighted to see the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) who is such an advocate for our military and is really, having

chaired our Armed Services Committee, speaks so well to that issue and I know he is going to talk about it, but it just breaks my heart to know that our National Guard troops and our troops at Ft. Campbell, which is located in my district, are going to have far less money for quality of life because of the actions that were taken in this budget and the way in this budget, in this document, H.J. Res. 20, and people can go online and pull this up and look, and how they have taken from military quality of life, money that should be going to our military families and have moved that to other departments; how they took money from our military quality of life, \$50 million, and that is given to the Palestinian Authority. That is something that with my constituents has certainly raised a lot of questions.

The thing that interested me when it came to the issue of the earmarks was they had said, oh, no earmarks are going to be in this budget, and then I found out that, well, there were earmarks that were in the budget. Nevada seems to have earmarks. Other States seem to have some curious earmarks that are left in there, but then there are funds that are turned back to the agencies.

I said, well, how does this money get spent? Is it done with letters of instruction? How is it done? What I found out was that the process that they would revert to, and I guess this is regular order, would be the process before money started being earmarked. It is where you pick up the phone and you call the agency and say let me tell you how I think we need to spend that money.

My constituents long ago said they did not want the activities of smoke-filled rooms. They wanted more transparency and the American people wanted to see greater accountability, and I think that we will continue to hear from our constituents. They want a smaller budget that is going to be more responsible of their money. This is not our money. It is the taxpayers' money. Government does not have a revenue problem. With the tax reductions that have been passed, the Federal Government has brought in more money than ever.

What government has is a spending problem. It has a priority problem, and this big, bloated budget that was passed today is a budget that will continue to fund a bloated bureaucracy that just cannot get enough of our constituents' money.

I was disappointed today with the actions of the majority. I was disappointed in how they chose to carry it out. I do hope that we see a change in the way they carried forth, and to the gentleman from Georgia, I will tell you, I hope that we continue to see a return to a respect for how we address the people's business in this House.

We talked some about one man, one vote and the sanctity of that and the importance of that, and I do hope that

everyone will continue to keep their focus on being certain that we respect that for our constituents.

I thank the gentleman for the time.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Thank you so much. I appreciate your perspective and your insight and your wonderful words about accountability, because that is really what it is all about, Mr. Speaker. It is about accountability. It is about holding people here in this House accountable for what they said they were going to do.

Elections are wonderful things. Every 2 years, the American people get to go to the polls and they get to say we like how things are going and we want to support that or we think there ought to be a change. In November of last year, the American people voted for change, but I do not believe, as I know my good friend from Tennessee does not believe, that the American people voted for higher spending or greater deficits, which is what the Democrat majority in the House of Representatives today adopted.

I do know also that they did not vote to decrease money for our armed services, for our military men and women who are working as hard as they can, day and night, to make certain they keep us safe. In fact, what they have done indeed with this bill that was adopted today is to decrease the amount of revenue available for our fighting men and women and especially the base realignment and closure which is what gives the efficiency to the system.

Nobody knows about that better than the former chairman of the Armed Services Committee than my good friend from California, the honorable DUNCAN HUNTER, and I appreciate so much his taking part in this hour this evening. I look forward to your comments.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend from Georgia for letting me come in and offer something that I did not see offered by the Democrat side in this debate, which was the Army's position on this continuing resolution.

In fact, they posited this continuing resolution as motherhood, apple pie and everything that we need for a strong national defense, and they invoked the interest of American veterans. What they did not tell American veterans was that the Army sees this as a real problem and a real cut in benefits, and things that would help the active Army come in this defense realignment, this base realignment with divisions coming back to the United States, divisions like the big red one coming back to Ft. Riley, Kansas, and lots of others and lots of quality-of-life programs for the men and women of the armed services and for their families.

What we did not see coming from the Democrat side of the aisle was the fact that they reached over with one hand to give money to one group of servicemembers of veterans; they reached

over and scooped money out of the cash register that would accrue to the benefit of another group, a very important people, and this is the men and women who wear the uniform of the United States.

So let me give you the Army's perspective as manifested in a letter from Lieutenant General David Melcher, United States Army, Military Deputy for Budget, Assistant Secretary of the Army, Financial Management and Comptroller. He says this:

"You recently requested a quick summary of Base Realignment and Closure impacts to the Army as proposed in the Joint Resolution, H.J. Res. 20." That is the resolution that the Democrat side of the aisle just passed. "The attached information accurately portrays these impacts. The following identifies key Army concerns:

One, "Army will not begin with approximately \$2 billion of our BRAC program, which is a key enabler to grow and position the Army; this leaves more than half of our fiscal year 2007 BRAC program unexecutable."

Number 2, "Operational Impact on the Training, Mobilization and Deployment of Forces in support of the Global War on Terrorism." For some reason, the Democrat side of the aisle did not quite want to show that statement by the U.S. Army, that their bill that they passed, their continuing resolution, would, in fact, impact training, mobilization and deployment of forces in support of the global war on terrorism.

Number 3, "Unravels the Army's synchronized stationing and BRAC plan, puts growth of the Army, stationing, and BRAC at risk." That means this: We are bringing back divisions from around the world. Places like Germany are now going to see movement in which American divisions are going to come back, and they are going to be repositioned in the United States. That means you got to go out and build barracks. You have got to go out and build single family housing. You have got to put a lot of construction in place. The Democrat majority reached out and took away part of that money.

Number 4, "Delays transformation of Reserve Component, has operational consequences." We are involved in two shooting wars, and we have now done something that has operational consequences.

Number 5, "Breaks the Nation's obligation to provide Soldiers and Families adequate quality of life, affects the All Volunteer Force," something we did not hear from the other side of the aisle.

Number 6, "Delays capital investment and inhibits economic development, affects local jobs and growth across the U.S." Over 80,000 jobs affected by what they just did.

And lastly, "Limits predictability and military construction acquisition efficiencies, results in higher construction costs."

So, as we see costs going through the roof, the contractors can say, yep, we

were going to build that single family housing for those military families but you guys reached in, took a bunch of the money out; we had to give a stop work order to our crews, and now we are going to charge you, the American taxpayers, more money.

I have got another executive summary here that goes into more detail, and I thought it might just be good to give a few of the examples of this money that was cut by the Democrat majority, which they skipped over very quickly, and tell the American people a few details about these projects that they moved off the table with one push of the hand.

Training ranges, command and control, training barracks, 19 projects, \$560 million, including training facilities at Fort Bliss, Texas; maneuver training at Fort Benning, Georgia; air defense artillery at Fort Sill; and battlefield trauma lab at Fort Sam Houston. In fact, I have been to the battlefield trauma lab. That is where we train our combat medics to save lives in the war fighting theaters in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Cannot start communications/electronics, RD&E, center phase one at APG, that is Aberdeen Proving Ground, to close Fort Monmouth and support the global war on terrorism.

Cannot start on human resources command at Fort Knox, Kentucky; recruiting facilities at Redstone Arsenal; power projection platform at Ft. Riley or other operational projects at Shaw Air Force Base, Benning and Leavenworth.

Armed Forces reserve centers, 27 projects, \$700 million in 16 States.

Examples of fiscal year 2007 BRAC quality of life requirements, eight projects, youth and child development centers, Benning, Riley, Bliss, Sam Houston; dental clinics, Bliss, Sam Houston; medical clinic, Ft. Riley, Kansas. That is where the big red one is returning from Europe.

All fiscal year 2007 BRAC projects and follow-on MILCON are synchronized with modular force build, operational rotations, BRAC and GDPR.

What that means is that we are now trying to produce some 42 combat brigades, and we are trying to modularize them so they have the same equipment, they have got the same training, so that they are interchangeable so you can move out with a combat fighting force and you can move a brigade in from another area and you can have that from another particular division and that brigade is interchangeable. It does not have equipment that is noninteroperable, and it means you can fight more effectively and more consistently.

□ 1730

That modularity has been hampered by these cuts. So these are the cuts that were made by the Democrat majority, pushed off the table, projects pushed off the table with one push of

the hand and with barely a mention on the Democrat side.

So I would just say, my friend from Georgia, glad you got that sign up there, Official Truth Squad. You know, I think sometimes it is important to know the entire story. That is a part of the real story about what we did today.

I thank the gentleman for letting me come down and talk a little bit about the Army's position and the Army's position against the cuts that were manifested in this continuing resolution.

I thank the gentleman.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for his insight. Nobody knows more about these issues than you and I. I appreciate you bringing that perspective.

You mention a number of items. You said there was barely a mention about this. I was listening pretty closely. I didn't hear a single word about it from the other side that talked about the cuts that are in place.

Mr. HUNTER. No.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. And that things were skipped over quickly. They were. We had 1 hour of debate on a \$463 billion appropriations bill. Phenomenal. Phenomenal when you think about it.

Mr. HUNTER. Let me tell you something.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Please.

Mr. HUNTER. The other side tried to appeal to the hearts of American veterans. I am a veteran. But you know something else? I have a son who just did 4 years of active duty with the U.S. Marine Corps, trained at some of these bases that we are talking about, witnessed and was training sometimes in facilities that were somewhat deficient, that needed to be improved.

I will bet you, if you look in the family of every American veteran that the other side was playing to, in passing the CR and saying we are doing good things for you guys, for you old guys like me, they were not doing good things for our sons. Because our sons are on active duty right now. They need to have that quality of life for our military families.

I can remember being with my son as Lynne and I would follow them around the United States, as a lot of military moms and dads do, trying desperately to get a little time with our grandchildren, and we would be often in substandard housing. We would see the efforts that had been undertaken by DOD to upgrade housing and to upgrade facilities and to make life better for families. A lot of those programs are in those cuts that the Democrats side of the aisle just made.

So if you are playing to us old veterans, remember, there is another thing that is very near and dear to us old veterans, and that is our kids who are on active duty or recently on active duty. We are concerned about them. So don't take away from them to give to us on the basis that we will then appreciate it, and we will appreciate them, and we somehow will not

look at the reductions that they made to the active force. The active force and its benefits are very, very important to every veteran.

I thank the gentleman.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Thank you very much. I appreciate it. Those are facts.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask to insert in the RECORD the letter from Lieutenant General Melcher.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, OFFICE
OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF
THE ARMY,

Washington, DC, January 31, 2007.

Hon. DUNCAN HUNTER,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE HUNTER: Sir, you recently requested a quick summary of Base Realignment and Closure impacts to the Army as proposed in the Joint Resolution H.J. Res. 20. The attached information accurately portrays these impacts. The following identifies key Army concerns:

Army will not begin with approximately \$2.0 B of our BRAC program which is a key enabler to grow and position the Army; this leaves more than half of our FY07 BRAC program (56%) unexecutable

Operational impact on the Training, Mobilization, and Deployment of Forces in support of the Global War on Terrorism

Unravels the Army's synchronized stationing and BRAC plan—puts growth of the Army, stationing, and BRAC at risk

Delays transformation of Reserve Component—has operational consequences

Breaks the Nation's obligation to provide Soldiers and Families adequate quality of life—affects the All Volunteer Force

Delays capital investment and inhibits economic development—affects local jobs and growth across the U.S. (over 80,000 jobs)

Limits predictability and military construction acquisition efficiencies—results in higher construction costs

I trust this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

DAVID F. MELCHER,
Lieutenant General,
U.S. Army, Military
Deputy for Budget,
Assistant Secretary
of the Army, Financial
Management
and Comptroller.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I also want to highlight a statement in a letter from the Office of Management and Budget from the Executive Office of the President about these BRAC closings, because I think that it highlights one of the very egregious activities that occurred in passing this omnibus, this appropriations bill, that the Democrat majority did today.

It says, quote, the President's budget requested \$5.6 billion to implement the recommendations of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

That is something that all of us had voted on here on the floor of the House.

The administration strongly opposes the committee's reduction of \$3.1 billion from the President's request.

Remember, this is \$3.1 billion cut out of a \$5.6 billion appropriation.

This will, quote, significantly delay BRAC implementation, increase the risk that the Department of Defense would not meet its statutory deadline to implement BRAC, reduce BRAC sav-

ings, delay or postpone scheduled redeployments of military personnel.

Did you hear that? Delay or postpone scheduled redeployments of military personnel and their overseas stations to the United States and negatively impact many specific plans in response to BRAC.

So, in addition to the challenges and the difficulties that we have in trying to make certain that our men and women have anything at their resource to be able to fight this global war on terror, I doubt that anybody on the other side of the aisle, when they ran for office last November, said, boy, I sure want to cut the military's budget as they fight the global war on terror. I doubt that happened, but, in fact, that is exactly what happened on the floor of the House today.

What we are here to do today, as The Official Truth Squad, is to make certain that we hold people accountable. There are people watching. There are people listening. The American people know that there are two different philosophies of how government ought to work. We have a philosophy that it ought to be efficient, that it ought to be as small as possible, that it ought to respect individuals, that it ought to strongly support the global war on terror in our military.

Our good friends on the other side of the aisle oftentimes talk like that. But when it gets right down to votes, that is not how they vote. We are here today to bring some facts to the issue and some accountability.

I am so pleased to be joined by my good friend from Texas, who was past budget chairman for the Republican Study Committee during the last term and this year has assumed the helm of the Chair of the Republican Study Committee, I think one of the finest groups of individuals in this Congress, the individuals who are as concerned as anybody that I know about economic responsibility, financial responsibility, and accountability for this Congress.

I thank you for joining us this evening and look forward to your comments.

Mr. HENSARLING. I thank the gentleman, and I certainly appreciate his great work as a Member from Georgia. We particularly participate his participation in the Republican Study Committee, the conservative caucus within this caucus.

It has been a rather interesting day here on the House floor. I didn't know that it was possible, but apparently our Democrat colleagues created a new record in the House. Now, I am still doing my homework. Maybe they just came in second or third place. But if I did my homework correctly, never in the history of America has a Congress spent more money with less accountability than this Democrat Congress did today just a few hours ago, \$463 billion spent in 1 hour, 1 hour of debate to spend \$463 billion.

Now, I have been a Member of Congress for a while, but, ladies and gentlemen, that is still real money. That

is \$7.7 billion per minute that this Democrat majority managed to spend. We just heard from the distinguished ranking member of the Armed Services Committee. Apparently, they didn't spend it very well. They seemed to have forgotten the war fighter and his quality of life when they were putting this massive spending bill together.

Now, earlier, as the Democrats took control of the institution, and elections have consequences, I understand that, they won fair and square, but Speaker PELOSI is on the record shortly after the election saying, quote, Democrats believe we must return to accountability by restoring fiscal discipline and eliminating, eliminating, deficit spending. Now this is the Democrat leader, the Speaker of the House, telling the American people that this was their intention. So now we spend \$463 billion in 1 hour.

Mr. Speaker, families all across America will spend more time deliberating on the purchase of a washer and dryer than this institution did in spending \$463 billion of their money, their hard-earned money. It is somewhat mind-boggling to spend that much money with such little accountability.

Now, let's talk about the Speaker telling the American people that she and the Democrats were going to eliminate deficit spending.

Well, as this bill passed earlier today, if the Senate takes it up, all of a sudden every American's share of the public debt has gone from \$28,860 to \$30,399. Now, I didn't major in math at Texas A&M University, but I can figure out, if you are trying to eliminate deficit spending, you are headed in the wrong direction, which makes me kind of question why you passed this bill in the first place.

Now, the American people were led to believe that this body was going to pass something called a continuing resolution. Now, I understand that is kind of inside baseball, but what it says is, you know, we are going to continue government at the same funding level. There are families all across America who face hardships who have to actually get by on less. A continuing resolution actually says, we are going to, frankly, grow government under the baseline, what we did last year.

Had this institution done it, which is what they led the American people to believe, we would have had a continuing resolution which, by the way, fits on a single piece of paper. Instead, we had a 150 page, I believe it was 150 pages, of what we call an omnibus, everything thrown into a massive spending bill.

Mr. Speaker, the Democrats told us, they led us to believe we were going to have this continuing resolution. We end up with this omnibus. They tell us we are going to eliminate deficit spending. Instead, they increased deficit spending. They tell us they are going to have accountability; and, instead, we spend 1 hour, 1 hour debating the expenditure of \$463 billion.

Let me tell you what else they told us. They told us there would be no earmarks. You know, these are these little perks that Members of Congress take for their own district. Well, at last count, there was near 30 earmarks. Now, maybe they are good earmarks, maybe they are bad earmarks, but don't tell us there aren't going to be any earmarks in the bill and then put them there.

I mean, they are the poster children, too often. They are the poster children of fiscal irresponsibility. We have the golden oldie here. The rain forest in Iowa has made another appearance here. Now somebody earlier today said, well, that is a Republican earmark. Well, at least they acknowledge that earmarks were in the bill.

Last I looked, the Democrats have a majority in the House; they have a majority in the Senate. Obviously, it would not be in the bill unless Democrats wanted it in the bill.

We also had this institution pass a continuing resolution instead of this omnibus. Also, we would have saved \$6.2 billion of American families' money. That is what would have happened had the Democrat majority done what they told the American people they were going to do. That is \$6.2 billion that could have been applied to, again, quote, unquote, eliminating deficit spending.

So they had an opportunity to put their actions where their words were, and they didn't do it. They had extra money, and they spent it.

Again, as the gentleman from California illuminated, they didn't spend it very well. They certainly didn't consider the quality of life for the war fighter when they were putting together this omnibus.

Also, we were told there would not be any gimmicks. We would have accountability. Well, we look in here and there is gimmicks. There is \$3.5 billion here. Now, this is inside baseball, I admit it, but I have served on the Budget Committee for 4 years, and I am starting to recognize these gimmicks.

But they put \$3.5 billion here by rescinding contract authority for highway programs without decreasing what we call obligation limitations. Then, again, I know that is inside baseball. But let me tell you, what happens is there is no savings. They are claiming savings where there are none.

They also make a one-time change, a one-year change in what we call entitlement spending. Again, it is a trick. It is smoke and mirrors. It will not be there.

Where is the accountability? I am looking for it. Clearly, we need that magnifying glass of The Official Truth Squad, because nobody can find the vaunted Democrat accountability that we were told would be here.

There is a better way. We can have true fiscal accountability.

Another gentleman, a colleague of mine from California (Mr. CAMPBELL), offered an amendment that would have

given us that continuing resolution that would have saved us \$6.2 billion that would have done what the Democrats told the American people they were going to do. But their Rules Committee said, no, we are not going to allow that one. That is kind of a dicey vote. That one was never allowed on the floor, the one that would actually use \$6.2 billion to help reduce this deficit.

Another thing we can do is embrace the President's call for a balanced budget in 5 years without raising taxes. Now, that is true fiscal responsibility. I would hope that all Members of this Congress could sign up for that program.

Now, Democrats will tell us that all the tax relief that was passed on our watch is the source of every fiscal problem known to mankind. Well, as a member of the Budget Committee, we have now received testimony from the head of the GAO, the Government Accountability Office, we have received testimony from the head of the Congressional Budget Office. It is not what we hear from them.

□ 1745

What we hear, Mr. Speaker, is that until we do something to help reform entitlement spending and Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security and work on a bipartisan basis to get better retirement security, better health care at a lower cost, that is the fiscal challenge to America.

And, by the way, there is an inconvenient fact for our Democrat colleagues, and that inconvenient fact is we have cut marginal rates. We have cut capital gains. And guess what? We have more tax revenue than we have had in the entire history of America. If you allow the American people to keep more of what they earn, they will save it. They will invest it. They will go out and expand businesses. They will create small businesses. They will put out a new barbecue stand. They will do a new transmission repair shop. And now we have created over 7 million new jobs with a future.

Now, I know maybe their goal for America is 7 million new welfare checks. But the Republican goal for America was 7 million new paychecks. And under our watch, that is what we achieved. Seven million new paychecks and the greatest amount of tax revenue that we have had in the history of America. We are awash in tax revenue. That is why the deficit is coming down.

Now, I am not here to tell you that every time you design tax relief that it creates more tax revenue, but if you do it right, particularly if you put it on the side of helping working families and helping entrepreneurs to save and invest, it will more than pay for itself, and that is what has been done here. But now, Mr. Speaker, the Democrats want to take that tax relief away. They say it is bad. They want to take the 7 million jobs away. And what is really humorous is that they want to

take really the tax revenue away that this explosion of economic activity has created in the first place.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are many ways that we can embrace true fiscal responsibility. But to spend \$463 billion of the people's money with no hearing, with almost no debate, in 1 hour, to set the land speed record for spending money in the shortest period of time, today the Democrats get the gold medal, the gold medal, in that Olympic competition. Never has more money been spent in less time than today. So how they expect to live up to Speaker PELOSI's goal of eliminating deficit spending, restoring fiscal discipline, and return to accountability, I suggest they enter a different Olympics and try to spend less money with more accountability, and that is something that the American people could truly respect.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I appreciate the gentleman from Texas so much for his wonderful cogent comments. And talking about the individuals on the other side of the aisle, who have indeed said one thing and then come here and done another, one would think that they are beginning to foster a culture of hypocrisy. That kind of has a little ring to it that rings true on the other side of the aisle.

I do want to thank you as well for your comments about tax revenue. Sometimes a picture tells a better story than words, although your words were cogent and so appropriate.

But this graph helps me understand the benefits of tax decreases, Mr. Speaker. When you decrease taxes, which is what we did here in Congress in 2001 and 2003, this line here is revenue to the Federal Government and what happened was that the revenue was going down, but we decreased taxes appropriately, as the gentleman from Texas said, and what happens is that the revenue goes up. The Federal Government, in fact, gets more revenue because there is more economic activity, more economic vitality.

We have touched on so many things tonight. My good friend from Virginia has joined us. We are running a little short on time, but I do want to make certain that you get an opportunity to join us for the Official Truth Squad and make some comments possibly about BRAC.

My good friend from Virginia, THELMA DRAKE, is just so wonderfully active here in Congress and so cogent and appropriate on issues of the military, representing the military installations in southeast Virginia.

So I welcome you and look forward to your comments.

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman for recognizing me tonight, and I would like to apologize for being late for your hour. But as I was coming over here today, I was connected by my office to a constituent who is serving in Iraq right now. I stood out in that hallway just beyond those doors and had a conversa-

tion with him with much better reception than I usually get on a local call from my cell phone. So it was absolutely remarkable, and I just wanted to share with you a little bit of what he said.

First of all, he is a contracting officer working with our reconstruction teams. I asked him, because we often hear that we are not employing Iraqis, that these are all major companies that are doing this work. He was quite surprised that I asked that question. He said that we have an "Iraqi First" program, and all jobs are offered first to Iraqi companies and to Iraqis, and if they can't perform that job, then other companies from other countries are brought in. They are completely screened. He even has an Iraqi who works with him on staff.

I asked if he had a message for us tonight. And the answer was that he asked us not to forget them.

I think that brings up the issue you just mentioned, Mr. PRICE, that what just happened today on the House floor. And what we know and the Department of Defense is now putting out information that there was a \$3 billion reduction in the funds that have been appropriated in the bills that both of these bodies had passed for 2007. Not for those but for the military construction, the bills that the House had passed and had not been passed by the Senate.

So we heard on the floor here today that that was not a reduction. It was actually an increase. That is not the way that this is being viewed, and it is not the impact that it would have on people who are serving today.

But Mr. PRICE and Mr. Speaker, I would say to you that there is no one in America, no one in Congress that wants America to be at war. There is no President that wants to be a war President. And I have said to people if I believed this war we are engaged in was about democracy in Iraq or about a people who have fought each other for centuries, I would oppose this war, too.

But it is a war about our civilization with an enemy who has vowed to kill us and to end our way of life, an enemy who has attacked us and who works and plots constantly to attack us again. I truly believe if Americans just had the facts that they would make the right decision.

My constituent said it very clearly. He said we cannot let this enemy win. And every Iraqi that I have ever talked with, this is something America never hears and I think if they did hear it, it would make a difference, but from President Talabani on down, whether they are Iraqis I have met when I have been on trips there or Iraqis here, they all say, "we are grateful to America for our freedom." And we, as Americans, never get to hear that.

The real question is what are our options? To let this enemy win and to say that they defeated the Russians in Afghanistan and the Americans in Iraq?

What would that do to us? What would that do to our allies, and who would ever believe us again?

And if we were to make that decision and to allow this enemy to win and pull our troops out of Iraq before the Iraqis are ready to govern and secure themselves, the real question is how will we manage the cost of this defeat? How will we manage the murder of all those Iraqis who have joined in the freedom of Iraq, the person who was working for my constituent right now, those who have served in government, in the police, in the Iraqi security forces?

Thank you for yielding. I know you have a lot to talk about, and I appreciate the work that you are doing on the floor.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Thank you ever so much, Congresswoman DRAKE. We appreciate your heartfelt words and the message from your constituent and that perspective on what truly is a portion of this global war on terror. The incredible importance of making certain that we as a Congress and we as a people support our men and women at every turn. So I thank you very, very much.

And that highlights what happened today on this floor about the appropriations bill, the omnibus bill, that the other side of the aisle, the Democrat majority, passed. And, in fact, what they have done is made it more difficult for our military to function. We have heard a letter from a lieutenant general in the Army about that. We heard from our own administration about that, about how it makes it more difficult. And we heard from our good friend from Texas about the Olympics award that the Democrats won today by spending more money in 1 hour than any Congress in the history of the Nation. And, again, it would be humorous if it weren't so serious, Mr. Speaker. It would be humorous if it weren't so serious.

And I am so pleased to be joined by a good friend from Florida, Congressman MICA, who has some interesting perspective on what went on here today on the floor of the House.

I appreciate your coming and bringing some accountability to what occurred today.

Mr. MICA. Thank you, Mr. PRICE, for yielding to me. Also, I want to thank you for the nights that you have spent on the floor during this session of Congress, the 110th, trying to bring the truth and also facts to the American people that are so important.

You said that I would talk tonight a little bit about my perspective, and I have an interesting family history. I have a brother who served as a Democratic Member of Congress from 1978 to 1988 here in the House of Representatives, Dan Mica; another brother, a Democrat, who served as an aid to Laughton Childs and to former Congressman Brademas. We are the first two Members and brothers to be from different political parties since 1889.

Almost everybody else is from the same party.

I say that because I truly am from a bipartisan family. When I came here some 14 years ago, we were in the minority, Mr. Speaker. And I served 2 years in the minority, and I want to tell you that I was treated very fairly by some of the Members of the majority. I will even cite Mr. ED TOWNS of New York, who took me in as a freshman new Member, gave me every opportunity to participate, recognized me. I was a full participant as a minority Member.

There were others who I will not name who did not allow me not to speak, who actually told me to be quiet, and who actually adjourned meetings, so I didn't have the opportunity to speak or participate. So I saw how bipartisanship and I saw how dictatorial rule works. And for some 12 years, the good Lord gave me the opportunity to be chairman of three subcommittees over 12 years. So I always employed the golden rule, the ED TOWNS rule, of treating everybody fairly.

I say that in context because today is January 31 and this month, the beginning of this Congress, is one of the saddest hours in the history of the Congress of the United States, at least that I am familiar with or that I have read about.

Now, we started here with the swearing in of NANCY PELOSI. I am an Italian American. I was proud of NANCY PELOSI's being the first Italian American and woman to take that position, and I think we were all very pleased for her on both sides of the aisle and congratulated her.

But then began, unfortunately, the saddest chapter in the history of Congress with the passage of six major pieces of legislation without the Congress even being organized, without the committees being organized, without one of those pieces of legislation going through the committee process.

What an incredible insult to the people of America who just finished an election. They elected us as representatives, 435. We, in turn, elected a new Speaker of the House, and the entire democratic process was obliterated. It has been the saddest month in the history of the United States Congress. Six major measures.

And the irony, I sat here in the week of celebrating and honoring Martin Luther King, one of the great civil rights leaders of our time, whose sole goal was to give rights to the minority that they had been denied. And the new majority completely obliterated in that week the rights of the minority. It was one of the saddest chapters I have seen. So all of their measures, all of them, are just floating out there. The other body hasn't taken them up. They were passed while trampling on the rights of the minority.

There are men and women fighting today, tonight, tomorrow for those rights to protect the minority. This is

not Bolivia. This is not Venezuela. This is not Cuba, where someone takes power and tramples on the rights of the minority. This is the United States of America, and every representative should have the opportunity to participate in that democratic process. Again, I am just offended.

And then the final offense today, the 31st, to pass the largest spending measure in the history of Congress in one sole bill without consultation, without participation, without the democratic process is the ultimate insult to the citizens of the United States, who expect a representative form of government, and to the Congress, to the rights of the minority.

□ 1800

This was a \$463 billion earmark. And we just got through an election in which the Republicans were chided for passing earmarks in the stealth of the night, for which the Democrats also were offenders. We paid a penalty. We lost the majority.

But you do not pass a bill of that size without the ability of even to participate in this bill, this \$463 billion earmark, the most costly in the history.

Now they think they pulled one over on everybody. But I guarantee you. I guarantee in that bill, since no one had a chance to see it or participate in it, they will find day after day embarrassing provisions that we did not have an opportunity to take out, to adjust, to correct.

So they will pay the price. When you do things in the stealth of the night, when you illegitimately conduct the process of Government, you will pay the penalty. We paid the penalty. They will pay the penalty. Marital law is not the way this Congress was intended to run.

This should be, in fact, bipartisan. Bipartisan means two working together. I am committed to that. I will continue to be committed to working that way. I come from, as I said, a bipartisan family; and we have got to work together.

So I hope today, January 31, 2007, a very sad day, ending of a sad chapter in the history, mark my words. This will go down in the history of this Congress as one of the darkest hours ever.

I thank you.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida. I appreciate so much his emotion and his passion and his perspective.

As you are living through these times, it is oftentimes difficult to get people to pay attention to what truly are historic occurrences, and I share with you that disappointment and sadness. I truly do.

Having served in a legislative body at the State level and seeing how bipartisanship can work and seeing how democracy truly is supposed to work, this has been a disappointing month. It has been a disappointing month, because most of what you can talk about in terms of getting your arms around

where the problem is is process. I talked about that at the beginning of this hour, Mr. Speaker, and I mention that the reason that process is so important is because that is what enables the minority to have participation. But not just the minority. It enables every single Member of this House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, as you well know, every single Member represents approximately the same number of people. We go to great pains to make certain that districts are basically of equal size every 10 years through the census process and through redistricting; and we do that because each individual in this body, each Member of this body, represents basically the same number of people and therefore should have essentially the same say in the process and in the deliberation.

Some folks have called this month the death of deliberation, and that truly has been. That is disappointing. That is very saddening for all of us whose constituents, whose American citizen constituents who go to the polls and vote, do indeed express their will to us.

If we are unable to express their will through this process here, then they are muted, they are silenced, they are disenfranchised; and that, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest is an unfair process, is a wrong process and is an undemocratic process. It doesn't have to be that way.

So I encourage my good friends on the other side of the aisle, and I know some of them are feeling pained by some of the decisions that their leadership has made over this past month, and I encourage them to continue to work for a process that will allow for the inclusion of all.

Because, as I mentioned earlier, Mr. Speaker, we do not have Republican challenges or Democrat challenges, we have American challenges. The American people send us here to take care of those challenges and put forward the best solutions, and the best solutions come when all of us are involved in that process.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in a very positive way as we move forward and do what is best and what is right on behalf of the American people.

I want to thank my leadership once again for the opportunity to spend this hour on the floor of the House, Mr. Speaker.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to be here once again to continue the discussion of the 30-something Working Group. We want to thank Speaker