

increase the budget deficit by a very substantial amount, billions and billions of dollars, at least \$100 billion just by this one action. So we have passed a bill. The Senate has passed a bill. The Senate still has its bill. It has not passed over here.

Mr. BLUNT. I will look forward to that coming back from the Senate. I would say whether the administration does it or we do it, this policy of taking revenue we don't have now, that we don't think we should be collecting and creating a situation where we have to come up with another tax to collect it, and you mentioned the administration did that, and I believe you are right, that they did anticipate that, I think that was a wrong thing for them to do. I think it is unfortunate we have let this tax get into this situation.

Mr. HOYER. I understand the gentleman's position, but you understand for the last 5 or 6 years the Republican budgets have done the same thing.

Mr. BLUNT. And I understand for the last 5 or 6 years we have taken the initial step necessary by June to not let this encumber the tax collecting system. And even if we now are able to clarify this, it is so late that it is going to have impact on how people can file their taxes next year. I certainly would agree with any premise to suggest this should have been taken care of long ago. And as my good friend knows, we did send a bill that I voted for to President Clinton in 1999 that would have eliminated this tax. We should have done that at that time. I am sorry we couldn't figure out a way to work together and eliminate that tax then so we wouldn't have to wrestle with this issue every year between then and now.

Mr. HOYER. I appreciate the gentleman's observation about the 1997. I don't believe that was paid for either. I am not absolutely positive on that, but that is why I believe the veto occurred. But we all agree we ought to eliminate the AMT. But there is no doubt there is a very significant philosophical and policy difference between the President and your side and our side in terms of whether or not, when you eliminate and you make the patch, there is no money to do the patch. So when you take that money away, you have to fill it either with borrowing, as we have done over the last number of years, or you fill it with additional revenues. If you fill it with additional revenues, future generations are not paying the bill. If you fill it with borrowing or just leaving the emergency spending hole, future generations have to pay for it.

Now, I know we disagree on that, but it is, I think, a very honest philosophical and policy difference, and the bills reflect that.

Mr. BLUNT. They do, and it is a difference. I think the third thing that should be considered, that unfortunately we still are not able to bring ourselves to consider, is how you manage to deal with that revenue shortfall by savings and spending, by just not planning to spend it. But the Presi-

dent's budget did, your budget did. I don't agree with the President's budget and I voted against the majority's budget, and we do have to look at savings as one of the options. The President's budget, the President would have increased spending by over 6 percent, by over 4½ percent in the bills left, and I think that is the number right now we are trying to deal with. I look forward to working with the gentleman as we deal with that, get the work of this year's Congress done, and let our Members go home and talk about what we have done or what we have failed to do.

Mr. HOYER. I think we all agree that we want to get our work done. We have had great difficulty doing that. Not so much in this body because this body, whether your side is in charge or my side is in charge, we have a Rules Committee, we can structure debate, and the majority rules.

Unfortunately, in the Senate, the majority does not rule. The Senate has decided that they will let the minority rule. They did that when we were in the majority, and it was done when your party was in the majority. We have both discussed the problems that causes a body that can, in fact, allow the majority to rule. Having said that, we are working towards trying to do what the gentleman suggested, getting our work done. To the extent that we can cooperate with one another, that will facilitate that objective.

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Mr. BLUNT. I appreciate that. I do know whoever is in the majority on this side has to spend a lot of time explaining why an apparent majority on the other side of the building doesn't really become a majority on that side of the building.

I thank the gentleman for his information.

Mr. HOYER. We do find agreement from time to time, apparently.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I yield back.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2007

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10:30 a.m. on Monday next for morning-hour debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SARBANES). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland? There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

LOUISVILLE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL 3-A CHAMPIONS

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, we watched two African American coaches make history in the Super Bowl. This week, Ty Scroggins made history again, guiding Louisville's Central High School to the Kentucky 3-A Championship, becoming the first African American football coach to win a Kentucky State title. As alma mater to Muhammad Ali, Central is no stranger to athletic success. Still, it took a total team effort, led by Darrell Taylor's inspired rushing, to give the Yellow Jackets their first championship.

As the first predominantly and historically black high school to win the Kentucky Gridiron State trophy, their landmark win is a victory for a Commonwealth proud of overcoming adversity as we progress toward real equality. The school that began 125 years ago as Louisville Colored High School now sends 92 percent of its students to college. Renowned for economic excellence, successful magnet programs, and unique entrepreneurial opportunities, few schools so thoroughly prepare students for careers in business, law, technology, and medicine.

Four decades ago, Central gave us The Greatest. Today, the school continues to give us greatness. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Central High School, Coach Scroggins, and Kentucky's 2007 3-A football champs.

THE NON-ENERGY BILL

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, this winter it's going to be cold in the Northeast. Home heating oil is needed for those who want to keep warm in the northern States. Gasoline prices continue to rise above \$3 a gallon, and crude oil may go to \$100 a barrel. So what does the House of Representatives do? Makes it more expensive for American oil companies to do business in America. How so? The non-energy bill that passed this House contains a \$21 billion tax increase on the production of oil and natural gas in America. That tax will be passed on to the consumer in the higher prices of energy.

The bill doesn't open up new sources of exploration off our coast or in ANWR. Now, only Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama allow drilling off the coast. You see, States like California, Florida, and northeastern States don't want drilling off their coast but they don't have a problem with consuming the crude oil from States that allow offshore drilling. This bill punishes oil-producing States like my home State of Texas. The Wall

Street Journal stated, In this bill, the biggest winner is OPEC. So, Mr. Speaker, maybe to survive, Texas and the other oil-producing States should just join OPEC and get a better deal on our crude oil.

And that's just the way it is.

NON-INTERVENTION AND NEUTRALITY

(Mr. DUNCAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, Bruce Fein is a nationally syndicated columnist who was a high-ranking official during the Reagan administration. He does not support a neocon, globalist, world policeman-type of foreign policy for the U.S., a foreign policy that used to be considered as the policy of liberals.

Last week, Mr. Fein wrote a column describing the traditional conservative view. He wrote: "Non-intervention and global neutrality should be the national security creed of the United States. Every soldier deployed abroad should be returned to deter and defend the United States at home. Non-intervention and neutrality everywhere, coupled with the threat to annihilate any United States attacker would make the country safer, freer, and more prosperous. Foreign adventurisms create more enemies than they destroy.

He also quoted George Washington's farewell address, in which President Washington warned against "overgrown military establishments which, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty."

In other words, Mr. Speaker, the traditional conservative view is what was expressed by President Bush during the 2000 campaign when he came out very strongly against nation building and said the U.S. needed a more humble foreign policy.

AMT PATCH

(Mr. MCHENRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, at \$2.9 trillion, the Federal budget is bigger than the entire economy of every single country on Earth, except Japan. Bigger than the economies of China, bigger than the economy of Britain, bigger than the economy of Germany. Just the Federal budget is larger than all of those economies.

So, Mr. Speaker, my friends on the other side of the aisle, I want to ask them this question: Out of \$2.9 trillion, can't you trim enough money to stop impending tax increases on the middle class and every American in this country, rather than proposing new tax increases? Unfortunately, the actions of this Congress say no, that the Demo-

crat majority is intent on raising taxes in order to grow and expand this rather large and bloated Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important the American people know what the Democrats in Congress are intending to do, and that is to raise taxes and grow government.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

STOPPING YOUTH VIOLENCE IN AMERICA

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

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an extraordinarily important issue, one that, quite frankly, is not often discussed on this very floor and needs in so many ways to be brought forward, not only to the attention of the Members of this body, but a dialogue that needs to reach out all across this country to discuss the devastating trends of youth violence. I am pleased to note that colleagues today, including STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES, BOBBY SCOTT, YVETTE CLARKE, DONALD PAYNE, SHEILA JACKSON-LEE and LINDA SANCHEZ, will be coming to the floor under these 5-minute Special Orders to also address this issue of youth violence.

There isn't a day that goes by that we don't thank our veterans for the sacrifice that they have made and note the loss of life that has taken place in Iraq and in Afghanistan and the wounded. And we take great pride, and rightfully so, in this Chamber for making sure that we are providing for our veterans, providing especially for those that come home with post-traumatic stress syndrome, and addressing these concerns in a meaningful and significant way. And yet here in our own country, in our cities, in our suburbs, most recently out in Nebraska, violent deaths and shootings take place and seemingly go unnoticed.

JOHN LEWIS traveled with me to Hartford, Connecticut, to address there a group of citizens concerned about violence in the neighborhood, where in 2006, 16 shootings took place in a single week. At that hearing, a Vietnam veteran, Steven Harris, stood up and said, I appreciate what Congress is doing on behalf of veterans and providing them with post-traumatic stress syndrome relief. But what about the kids in my neighborhood who have to deal with this on a regular basis? What about the youth all across this country who are perishing?

There are incredible statistics, Mr. Speaker, that this body needs to discuss in a way that will send hope out to

our communities and our neighborhoods. Homicide is the second leading cause of death among 15 to 24-year-olds overall. Homicide is the leading cause of death for African Americans between the ages of 10 to 24 and the second leading cause of death for Hispanics of that age. Guns are a factor in most of these homicides.

In a nationwide survey of high school students, 6 percent reported not going to school on one or more days in the 30 days preceding the survey because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to and from school. Children who have witnessed violence in their communities are vulnerable to serious, long-term problems. This country stood and paused and we said the world had changed forever after September 11. But for grandmothers in their communities, the world had changed before that, because this kind of senseless violence continues.

This Nation, this Congress, must solve this problem. The problem cannot be addressed explicitly through incarceration. We have ample amounts of punitive measures that exist on our books today. What we don't have is a comprehensive approach to it, reaching out into these communities, assisting and helping and providing the plans such as BOBBY SCOTT has outlined, "From Cradle to College," that provide the hope, that provide the leadership for communities coming together in a manner in which they care about our children.

We are aware of what is happening all around the world, and we can come to this floor and chronicle it. But in our own cities, in our own States, we must begin to speak and save our children there.

□ 1500

BORDER AGENTS CAMPION AND RAMOS

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, at this time of the year, it is common for whatever President is in power to review requests for pardons and for commutations of sentence. And yesterday, the President exercised his constitutional authority and pardoned numerous individuals, at least 29 of them, and I have all of their names here. I count seven drug dealers that were pardoned, one individual for receiving kickbacks in defense procurements contracts, and he commuted one sentence of an individual that was aiding and abetting the distribution of cocaine.

I want to make it clear; the President has the absolute power under the Constitution to pardon anybody he wishes or commute the sentence. And I want to read part of the Constitution, a pocketbook Constitution that many