

an expansionary monetary policy similar to pre-bubble Japan, a tax policy that favored borrowing, sizable current account deficits, and an explosion of Swedish debt.

Within 5 years, the rate of debt to the gross domestic product rose from 85 percent to 135 percent. This credit boom led to a resulting boom in real estate prices. The speculative bubble had been created, and the Swedish economy became vulnerable to an implosion.

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In seeking to rectify policies that had led to high inflation and high nominal interest rates, asset prices began to fall and economic activity headed south. Between the summers of 1990 and 1993, Swedish GDP dropped by 6 percent, unemployment rose to 12 percent, and the banking sector had loan losses of 12 percent of the gross domestic product. What is perhaps most instructive is for us to consider how differently these two nations responded.

The response of the Japanese government was largely predicated on the "understanding" that it would keep the banks afloat. The absence of any systematic overarching policy framework led to what could be best characterized as an ad hoc approach. And as a consequence, the Japanese financial system consisted of a large number of "zombie banks" which had the effect of undermining the confidence in the banking system. Furthermore, this unwillingness to address the reality of insolvent institutions rendered the banking system as a whole insolvent.

The response of the Swedish government to its financial collapse contains noteworthy contrast. This was explained by Swedish Central Bank Chairman Urban Backstrom. Due to the serious nature of the Swedish financial crisis, efforts were made to maintain the bank system's liquidity. Significant emphasis was given to the need for transparency and a realistic disclosure of expected loan losses. Banks applying for support had their assets valued by the Bank Support Authority using uniform criteria. In order to minimize the problem of moral hazard, the bank guarantee provided protection from losses for all creditors except shareholders. A separate authority was set up to administer the bank guarantee and to manage the bank that faced solvency problems.

The clear distinction between the Swedish model and the Japanese model was an overarching set of rules rather than a series of ad hoc responses. In contrast to their Japanese counterparts, the Swedish government quickly wrote down the value of bad assets and did not prolong the agony for the economy. Sweden, unlike the Japanese government, did not have an understanding that insolvent banks would be forever protected. We ought to look at the Swedish model.

ECONOMIC STIMULUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise to emphasize the important responsibility that we have in this Congress, and the responsibility is now.

I am glad to have had the opportunity to listen to my good friend and colleague from California. I believe the emphasis of his remarks is that the re-ordering of our economy requires a multitask effort, particularly two direct tasks: the recapitalizing of our markets, particularly our banks, which Secretary Geithner has spoken to eloquently and forcefully this morning, and as well, spending; the economic stimulus package. I think where we need to have common agreement and bipartisanship is you can't do one without the other.

So I believe it is important that we answer the question of spending. The government is the spender of last resort, not the reckless spender, but the spender that will create jobs, create jobs in Indiana and Florida where the President is traveling, and create jobs in Texas.

Yesterday I traveled to one of our work source sites, our sites where individuals are able to get information about unemployment benefits. I was able to walk through and talk to those who have been unemployed for a year or more, and now even more recently. I listened to their descriptions and their hardships of trying to find work, listening to the construction worker who came from Florida who is well skilled, 17 years of using heavy equipment, but yet cannot find a job.

Madam Speaker, we need a stimulus package that is not nickel and diming but actually is fiscally responsible by spending the money where it needs to be spent. The mayor in the small town of Indiana where the President was yesterday said we need money spent. Republicans, Democrats, Independents, this is an American issue. We need jobs created for Americans.

So I would hope as we move to conference, we will ensure that the infrastructure mark of \$12 billion is in place because that will put people to work in my own city of Houston. It may create an opportunity for \$180 million for the Metro system, the mobility system, to begin work, and workers utilized for utility work. Remediation work is important. It will keep the money for school renovation and repair. That is important. Keep the \$10 billion for schools. We know that 598,000 jobs were lost. We now have a total of 21.6 million Americans who are unemployed or have gotten out of the system it is so bad. We need the stimulus package so 95 percent of working Americans can get tax cuts. We need it so that it creates and saves 3 to 4 million jobs, including the green energy jobs, the jobs that will allow us to green America, to produce alternative energy and be able to retrofit our buildings and save energy, the weatherization of our homes.

It will invest in renewable energy to create green jobs and promote health information technology to modernize our health system. We know how problematic it is for seniors and people with young children to go from doctor to doctor and not have those systems.

With 21.6 million Americans unemployed, we need a stimulus package that works. We also need language in the stimulus package. Do you recognize that there is no whistleblower protection for transit security offices, the TSA officers that you see that are airport screeners, they can't tell you when something wrong has happened that creates an unsafe situation, an insecure situation. We need to keep language in there that allow those individuals to be protected by whistleblower language. Why do we have people who are in security who can't tell us that the security system is failing? So I am going to argue vehemently that the language in the House bill remain to protect transit security officers at our Nation's airports so they can tell us what is wrong and what is right.

What we need most of all is to ensure that we have a stimulus package that complements the recapitalizing of our Nation's banks. We need to make sure that as the government takes some of these toxic assets, working with the private sector, we are spending money to create jobs, building highways, bridges, creating Metro systems, making sure our buildings are safe, and making sure that children can go to schools that are redone, repaired or built from the ground up.

What kind of America are we? We can put Texans back to work, and Houstonians back to work, and those from the Midwest and the East and the South. We can do it if we assure ourselves that we have the kind of effective program that is here.

What we want to do also is make work pay. We want that tax credit that provides money to the families. We want to increase the earned income tax credit and give tax relief for 60 million children through the expansion of the child tax credit. That puts money in America's hands. So today is an important day. Vote for the American people. Vote for the stimulus.

As a Representative of 18th Congressional District, I have made it a top priority to help Houstonians who have retained their jobs during this economic situation and bring jobs back to my district for those citizens who are still looking for work.

Just yesterday, I spoke to a man who lost his job in Florida and went to Houston because he heard there were jobs there. But a grim reality greeted him when he arrived. The job prospects in Houston were no better than what he faced in Florida.

In 2008, Houston's unemployment rate increased from 4.5 percent to 5.4 percent over the course of only a year. I toured an unemployment benefits office in Houston yesterday. It is understaffed and overwhelmed. On an average day, more than 100 people would visit that office. Unemployment experts expect even more job losses in Houston this year.

It is critical that Houston residents receive the tools they need to reverse the high rates of job loss and the skyrocketing mortgage foreclosure rates leaving many families helpless in our region.

Any economic stimulus bill will need to increase unemployment benefits by \$25 to seriously address the economic crisis and ensure that Americans have money to live and pay their creditors. It will help families survive and put food on the table while they look for work. It is also our duty to provide up to 33 weeks of additional unemployment benefits. It will buy our citizens more time to find employment during this grim economic climate.

Retaining the House version of the increased Earned Income Tax Credits, and increased credit for the refundable portion of the Child Credit will give families some much needed tax relief to make it through this economic climate.

Children are the forgotten victims of our economic times. The Economic Stimulus Bill will help create jobs for our educators. Schools in my district in Houston are old and in need of repair. Some are at risk of being shut down. Our children are our future. They not only deserve to learn in buildings that are up to standard, but the schools also need to be modernized with high tech tools to help them compete in 2009 and beyond. We cannot forget about our children.

The House version of the stimulus bill sets aside 79-billion dollars for our Nation's schools. The money will go towards repairing and modernizing the buildings that will shape the future leaders of this country. An additional amount was set aside for school construction. School construction is critically important because it will create jobs and allow Americans to invest in the future of our children. The Senate Stimulus Bill only provides 39-billion dollars for our schools. That is almost half of the funds proposed by the House Stimulus Bill. Our children deserve better.

The story of my constituents in Houston is also the story of Americans throughout the country who are desperately trying to care for their families and make ends meet.

Last month, the U.S. lost more than 500-thousand jobs, bringing the total to 21.6 million unemployed Americans. The economy is expected to hit record lows in 2009.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, America's unemployment rate rose to 7.6 percent in January. Houston's unemployment rate is not as high yet, but any amount above 4 percent full employment is a bad sign. That is unacceptable.

The Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act is critical to avoiding an economic disaster. The Senate Bill cuts additional funding to basic public safety such as Federal aid to firefighters, the Coast Guard and officers with the Transportation Safety Administration. These are hardworking men and women who watch over the security of our homeland. They keep our families safe.

The House Stimulus Bill provides additional dollars to programs such as Head Start and Violence Against Women. The Senate bill takes dollars away from women and children, by cutting funds to these programs. As Members of Congress, there is no justification for taking dollars away from our most vulnerable citizens—none.

The Senate bill cuts federal aid to NASA, one of Houston's main employers. That means

more loss of employment. We need to start creating jobs, not cut them.

This recovery package needs to become a reality with as much funding as we can spare to help our citizens. It should address the mortgage foreclosure crisis. We need to invest federal dollars into our country's infrastructure projects, particularly Houston Metro.

The Economic Stimulus Bill in both the House and Senate is not simply a wish list or an appropriations bill. It is a necessity. I am fighting to ensure that Texans get the Federal dollars needed to get citizens out of the unemployment office and back into the workforce.

HONORING DR. JEANA BRUNSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the life and work of Dr. Jeana Brunson. Dr. Brunson was born and raised in Mobile, Alabama, a city located on the resplendent coast of the Gulf of Mexico which is best known for being the home of the first and true Mardi Gras in the Americas.

Dr. Brunson would remain in Mobile until she earned her bachelor's degree in studio art from the University of South Alabama. She then moved from her beloved Mobile to the University of Texas in Austin where she earned her certification as a teacher. Her pursuit of academia then took her to Lubbock, Texas, where she would earn her master's degree in museum science from Texas Tech University while also serving as a research assistant for the costume and textile division for the Museum of Texas Tech.

Her work in Lubbock earned her a position of cataloger and curatorial assistant for the Kansas Museum of History in Topeka, Kansas, and then on to the curator for the Camden County Historical Society in Camden, New Jersey.

The position of registrar for the Museum of Science in Tallahassee, Florida, finally brought her to the place which she has been calling home for the past 20 years. She quickly moved up the ranks as she proceeded from registrar to curator to senior curator. During her time as head of research and collections, she earned her Ph.D. in historic costume and textiles. Finally in 2001, she was able to enjoy the fruition of her labor and the realization of her dreams when she became the director and chief curator for the Museum of Florida History in Tallahassee, Florida.

From this post in Tallahassee, Madam Speaker, she has been able to collect political materials, women's suffrage materials, garments, and assorted other pieces of historical significance for a new exhibit to be produced in 2013 honoring the accomplishments of the women of my home State of Florida.

Among the honorees will be another great woman of Florida and a person

whom I have always admired, a constituent of my congressional district but a person who belongs to our entire State and to our Nation, Roxcy Bolton. Roxcy Bolton is a pioneer among Florida's women. She was inducted into the Florida Women's Hall of Fame for forcing police and prosecutors to make rape crime a priority as well as illustrating to health departments the need for rape treatment centers. In fact, the rape treatment center in our public hospital in Miami-Dade Florida is named after Roxcy Bolton.

Dr. Brunson also has traveled across the country earning prestigious positions and meritorious accolades for her fine work. Each stop has had its pitfalls and its windfalls, but she has never succumbed to the temptation of acquiescence in the face of adversity. The lessons that the good doctor learned on this long road have been to the benefit of our entire Nation. As the director and chief curator for the Museum of Florida History, Dr. Brunson has become the steward of Floridian culture. She has worked tirelessly to preserve the work of courageous women, like Roxcy Bolton, so their stories can be preserved for the benefit of our next generation.

I pray that we may all learn from the examples set by Dr. Jeana Brunson, that we may never let our passions be eroded by our difficulties, and that we may persevere and never falter in the pursuit of our dreams.

Congratulations, Dr. Brunson.

A POLICY THAT DOESN'T WORK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, Benjamin Franklin warned us that "Passion governs, but she never governs wisely."

As the Congress and the President rush to enact the latest in a long line of mega-spending bills, I think we would be well advised to spend a little more time on the dispassionate math of the matter.

The Congressional Budget Office issued a report last week that warns us, as reported by the Washington Times, that the spending bills may "help in the short term but result in so much government debt that within a few years they would crowd out private investment, actually leading to a lower gross domestic product over the next 10 years than if the government had done nothing."

We are already running a \$1.2 trillion national deficit this year with a spending bill racing back toward this House to add another \$800 billion on top of that.

Let's put that in perspective: a \$2 trillion deficit, that is 150 times the size of the annual deficit that has brought the State of California to the brink of bankruptcy. That is \$6,500 of new debt for every man, woman and