

we learn about the population's reaction to the long-term presence of foreign troops on their soil? Could Afghanistan degenerate into a civil war along ethnic and religious lines, as happened in Iraq?

Is the Government of Pakistan a viable partner? Are they serious about helping us? Are elements of their military and security services still supporting the Afghan Taliban who are attacking our troops? What if President Zadari is overthrown, as has happened with previous leaders?

Will our allies actually provide the troops the President is requesting? And if they commit 10,000 troops and we have 90,000 troops, will it be seen as an international effort or an American war? If European countries' troop casualties rise sharply next year, will those nations pull out of Afghanistan and leave our troops to bear the future burden?

Should we pay for the war openly and up front? Or should we commit troops and consider how to pay later? How would we pay for such an escalation, including the long-term costs of caring for our wounded veterans? Is the Department of Veterans Affairs hiring enough psychological counselors to treat the number of veterans who need counseling and treatment for posttraumatic stress disorder? Do we even know how to treat PTSD of veterans who have endured two, three or more combat tours? What should we make of the fact that the estimated \$100 billion we'll spend on the war each year is equal to the cost of the health reform bill each year that we are debating now?

Are there alternatives to the President's approach that Congress and the Nation should explore? What is truly the best way to secure our country against future terrorist attacks? Are we putting the right emphasis on a military approach to counterterrorism policy? When extremists can transmit their ideology and recruit terrorists over the Internet and via extremist madrassas and youth groups, are we fighting on the right battlefield in Afghanistan? Are we doing enough at home to prevent future tragedies like the one that occurred at Fort Hood?

Fulfilling our constitutional obligations regarding matters of war and peace requires that Congress get answers to these questions and many more, and help the American people get these answers.

#### THE PLIGHT OF IRANIAN DISSIDENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I join my colleagues as a member of the Subcommittee on the Mideast and South Asia on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Today our committee debated a very important

initiative dealing with Iran sanctions. But it is interesting that we find ourselves in one domino effect after another: Iran, Iraq, and then, by extension, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Today I rise with a plea to this government and to the State Department to save those who are now huddled at Camp Ashraf in Iraq; this government that we have propped up, that we have seen thousands of our treasure lost in Iraq so that we could have a democratic government, so that it would have its own boundaries and its own sovereignty, so it would not be governed and be a puppet of some other country. But yet Iranian dissidents are now huddled, fearful for their lives. In fact, Assistant Secretary of State Jeffrey Feldman said, We're actually more concerned about an Iraqi desire to move Camp Ashraf to someplace else inside Iraq. The expectation is that they would try to forcibly move them to a different location in Iraq and that, too, would lead to bloodshed.

Iraqi authorities under Amnesty International says it must not forcibly relocate 3,400 Iranian opponents and that forced removals of the residents of Camp Ashraf would put them at risk of arbitrary arrest, torture or other forms of ill treatment and unlawful killing.

I've met with Iranians, their families, many of whom are in this camp, a niece, a mother, a brother, and they have no relief. They have no refuge but us. And so it is crucial that we intervene with the present Iraqi Government, seemingly sometimes a puppet of Iran, to not in any way cause the bloodshed and the loss of these dear souls.

All they wanted to do is to be in freedom. Yes, they have disagreement with the present government, but they are refugees in the world order; in the world sense they are refugees, fleeing oppression. And let me tell you where Iraq wants to send these huddled few thousand who simply want to be left alone, who have already been under the eye of the storm, who have seen loved ones lost, bloodshed inside the camp.

And where do they want to send them? To the east of this area is Al Busayyah and to the west is Al Shabaka, the resting place for tribes and migrants who live in the Iraqi desert. Moving sand hills, which in the summer reach temperatures of 158 Fahrenheit under the heat of the sun, prevent growth of plants and creation of waterways and toilets for the migrant tribes. Some of the small and large wild trees which cover a small part of the area are desperate to survive during sandstorms and the relocation of moving sand hills. Many of them have been trapped under the moving sand hills while many others, despite having deep roots, are taken in the sandstorm to locations dozens of kilometers away. This is where the members of Camp Ashraf will be sent—a vast desert of death.

And so it is imperative that this government that we have propped up, that

we have sent our soldiers to die for, don't have the authority to kill 4,000 Iranian dissidents who simply want to live in peace and alone. I hope that we can reach our government to provide safe solace for them, which is one of the reasons that I supported H.R. 2194, the Iran Refined Petroleum Sanctions, which deals with the question of who might attempt to supply refined gasoline to Iran or prevent them with the materials to enhance their oil refineries. This is to make a firm stance against Iran's nuclear proliferation, but it is also a stance against its human rights abuses and its penetration in countries around its area, including Iraq, where they cannot seem to be independent enough, that is, the Iraqi Government, that they would do the bidding of the Iranian despotic government and try to move these innocent persons—women, men and children—to a place where they will surely die.

I am grateful in the language that was submitted in this bill, H.R. 2194, that my language was kept that had to do with concerns of human rights in Iran and that this was put in the findings. It is important that we acknowledge that throughout 2009, the Government of Iran has persistently violated the rights of its citizens. Again I believe it is important for the United States to support the dissidents inside Iran who continuously charge the government with an irregular and illegal election. I hope that we can move forward in saving these lives.

Madam Speaker, as I close on Pakistan and Afghanistan, Pakistan is an ally to the United States in trying to bring peace to Afghanistan.

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

(Mr. FRANKS of Arizona addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### FRESHMEN REPUBLICAN HOUR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

This evening's Speaker is a fellow freshman and it is an honor to serve with you, Madam Speaker. Thank you for your time this evening as we proceed into Hanukkah and the Christmas season.

We are as freshman Republicans going to spend some time with you reviewing the episodes of the last 12 months: Where are we in terms of America's fiscal house? Where have we been in the last 12 months? And, more importantly, where are we going as we prepare for the new year 2010?

I am joined this evening by my colleague, LEONARD LANCE of New Jersey, and we will be joined by other freshman Republican colleagues throughout the next 60 minutes. We look forward to this opportunity to cover these subjects with you this evening.

We began our freshman year by approving a \$350 billion TARP extension without accounting for the first half of the TARP.

□ 1845

We then moved into a \$787 billion stimulus package; \$1.1 trillion, if you include interest. And STEVE AUSTRIA, our colleague, will be discussing this evening how that and other bills were shaped by the fact that they were done without the kind of transparency that we expected to see when we came here and which our new President campaigned on.

We then moved into a \$410 billion addition to the 2009 budget. We then moved into bills that would take over the financial services industry, the automobile industry, the student loan industry, that created the largest tax increase in history by way of an enormous cap-and-trade bill that places a tax on every single American that consumes energy. And we passed, about a month ago in this House, a health care bill that created an additional roughly trillion dollars in obligations for this Nation, that bill now being debated in the United States Senate.

During the course of this year, all of those complicated pieces of legislation which were passed, frequently without the opportunity to read the full bill, created enormous debts for this Nation, and we want to talk about this fiscal picture this evening.

Before we do, I want to yield to my colleague, Mr. AUSTRIA, to discuss the issues of transparency and the issues of the speed in which some of that comprehensive and complicated, lengthy legislation was brought to the floor.

Mr. AUSTRIA.

Mr. AUSTRIA. I thank the Congresswoman from Wyoming for her hard work here in Congress and for putting this freshman Special Order together this evening. I think it's a great opportunity for us, as new Members of Congress, to be able to give our points of view as to coming to Congress, as to what we're seeing and how we think we can do better in the future. I thank you for putting that together.

As our class president, I think you would agree with me that we have a lot of talent that came in with this freshman class on both sides of the aisle. And I think most of us would probably say it's been very challenging, to say the least, our freshman year, sometimes very frustrating, but we're all committed to working very hard to represent our constituents, and that means listening to our constituents and understanding what they're talking about.

And I think this week marks a defining moment for this Congress and our

Nation. You know as we, as freshmen, finish our first year in Congress, our national debt continues to grow. It's now over \$12 trillion as government encroaches into every aspect of our life. And I fear that this administration and this Congress, as they continue this outrageous spending and running up debt, that we're reaching a point of no return, and it will take another piece of our liberty with it.

I served 10 years in the State legislature in Ohio before I came to Congress, and in Ohio, we were forced to balance our budget. That meant tough decisions sometimes. We were willing to make those tough decisions. And those 10 years in the State legislature, I think, were a good learning experience and a training ground for Congress, but I don't think anything could have prepared us for what we've seen these first 12 months in Congress. If you think back to when we were sworn in, and when the President came in after his inauguration, in his first sentence of his Executive order, President Obama stated, my administration is committed to creating an unprecedented level of openness in government.

In November 2006, Speaker PELOSI pledged to lead the most honest and most open Congress in history. Yet, what we've seen in our first year is that, time and time again this congressional leadership has rammed through costly bills with devastating consequences for America's small businesses and working families that no Member of Congress, in many cases, has had an opportunity to even read, and I think that's outrageous as a freshman in Congress.

If we put things in perspective, the first 4 or 5 months in Congress, we were faced with voting on the second half of the bailouts, the TARP bill, the \$700 billion for the financial markets. We were asked to vote on a \$400 billion omnibus bill that contained over 9,000 earmarks. We were asked to vote on a stimulus bill, a 1,073-page, nearly trillion dollar stimulus bill that was posted online at 10 p.m. the night before it came up for a vote and that not one Member of Congress had an opportunity to read before we voted on that, and I think that's unacceptable and outrageous. We should have an opportunity to read the bill before we vote on it. And that bill, as we found out, contained a tremendous amount of infusion of government spending, expansion of government. It wasn't targeted on helping small business create jobs, small businesses that can sustain those jobs over the long run.

Then we moved into the month of June and we took up an energy policy known as the climate change bill or cap-and-trade bill. What we saw was at the very end, a 300-page amendment that was tacked on to a 1,200-page bill, which turned out to be a national energy tax bill at 3 a.m. in the morning that came up for a vote that, again, the Members of Congress didn't have an opportunity to read that amendment and

fully understand what was in that bill before we voted on it. That's unacceptable, in my opinion. It was a bill that's not good for Midwest States like Ohio, that I represent, that have a lot of manufacturing in Ohio, and nearly 90 percent of our energy comes from coal. This bill, in my opinion, is going to cause unemployment and raise the cost of energy for Ohioans and Americans across this country. And during a time when we're going through a difficult economic time, that's not a good thing.

This freshman class then came together, as you know, as the Congresswoman from Wyoming, as you know, because you participated in this, Congresswoman LUMMIS, and that was we had a press conference. We were upset about not having the opportunity to read this bill. And as a freshman class, we came before the national press, and we expressed our concerns about having an opportunity to read the bill before we vote on it and the importance of having that transparency, the importance of being able to let the American people know what we're voting on here in Congress.

What we saw shortly after that—and we saw a number of people come to Congress the day before or a couple of days before we voted on the health care reform bill. What we saw, what was rolled out shortly after that press conference, was a 2,000-page health care reform bill that we spent days setting up a reading room to try to read through and understand what was in that bill and trying to get that message out to the American public. And what we found was it was a huge spending bill again, a \$1 trillion health care reform bill that would raise premiums for many Americans to pay for that, would increase taxes by over \$700 billion. Most of that burden is being put on small businesses to pay for the health care reform bill, when we should have been focused on lowering costs and making it more accessible, or more accessible to families and maintaining that doctor/patient relationship. So we can do better.

And what has all this led to? It's led to a tremendous amount of debt. You know, we're now borrowing 50 cents on every dollar that we spend. And I have three teenage boys at home, and I didn't come to Congress to run up these types of debts. And what we are doing is we're further increasing our Nation's debt and placing an astronomical amount of debt and burden on the backs of our children and our grandchildren, and that's unacceptable. And what we're seeing as a result of this tremendous amount of spending, this runaway spending, this huge amount of debt, is we're seeing unemployment now reach the highest it's been in recent decades at over 10 percent, and that's unacceptable.

It's time that this administration and this Congress understand that government spending alone is not going to turn this economy around. We need to be helping our small business. We need

to stop government spending. We need to stop increasing our debt, and we need to be focused on helping those that create jobs across this country, the economic engine across this country, and that is our small businesses. We have it backwards.

I think as a freshman class, you know, we meet on a regular basis, and one of the things that we've talked about is how we believe that Americans, that we in Congress should allow Americans, allow small businesses, the taxpayers, give their money back to them, give them an opportunity to spend it to invest it back in the economy and be able to create jobs and sustain jobs, but unfortunately, what's happening here is we've got it backwards.

Congress is taking the American people's tax dollars, and government thinks that it knows how to spend those dollars better than the American people, and they've got it backwards. And unfortunately, what's happening is that this leadership in Congress is brokering deals behind closed doors or not listening to the American people and their constituents. And that message is very clear to me, and that is that more government is not the answer.

And with that, I will yield back to the Congresswoman from Wyoming. And again, I thank you for having this Special Order tonight with our freshman class.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman from Ohio.

And the consequence of what the gentleman from Ohio pointed out is illustrated in this chart. Here is the Federal budget deficit when we began as Members of Congress. The budget when we came in had a \$459 billion deficit, or just under half-a-trillion-dollar deficit. But since we've been here, this amount of roughly half a trillion has been increased by almost a trillion, 950 billion in increases from 2008, for a total of over \$1.4 trillion in deficits. Now, how did we get there?

Three hundred twenty billion dollars of that, roughly, is from lower tax receipts due to the recession. That's the roughly 27 million Americans who are either unemployed or underemployed, and they're paying less in taxes, as are businesses and as are our families. So we're experiencing lower tax receipts because of our recession.

In addition, the stimulus bill has added \$200 billion to our deficit for this year alone, half in spending and half in lower taxes.

Then, an additional \$154 billion for bailouts for financial institutions and the auto industry; \$91 billion in bailouts for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Those, of course, are the GMAs that do housing programs.

Seventy-three million dollars in unemployment benefits due to the recession, again, associated with this loss in tax revenue due to the fact that so many Americans are unemployed and the fact that the stimulus dollars that

we spent were not adequately weighted towards infrastructure construction like was the bill that Mr. AUSTRIA and Mr. LANCE and I cosponsored at the beginning of this year.

And then \$112 billion in other accumulated bills throughout the course of this year has gotten us to this point, \$1.4 trillion in deficit.

Now I'd like to yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) to talk more about what are the consequences of all this debt.

Mr. LANCE. Thank you very much, Congresswoman LUMMIS, for your leadership. And certainly, it is a pleasure to be associated with this Special Order. And I commend you for your knowledge about what is occurring here in Washington. It's also a pleasure, always, to see our distinguished freshman colleague, Congresswoman DAHLKEMPER in the chair.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to draw this body's attention yet again to our ever increasing national debt. In the next day or so, we're going to be asked to vote to raise our Nation's statutory debt limit.

Back in April, the Democratic majority voted to raise the debt ceiling here in the House by \$800 billion, and that would increase it to \$13.29 trillion. That bill is still pending in the Senate. Now we are being told that due to the pace of spending of the administration and the congressional majority, an \$800 billion increase in the debt ceiling will not be enough to get us through this fiscal year. We've been told that we will ultimately need to raise the debt limit by nearly \$2 trillion, and that will be a total debt ceiling of roughly \$14 trillion.

Some blame the previous administration and the previous majority for our current fiscal situation. The fact is that the \$2 trillion increase needed for next year is roughly equal to the total budget deficits from 2001 to 2008. It is also true that prior to the onset of the economic crisis, the budget deficit had been decreasing for the previous 3 fiscal years, reaching a low of \$160 billion in 2007.

2008 then saw a dramatic increase in the deficit as we started dealing with the fiscal crisis, and we hit a \$454.8 billion deficit in 2008. Unfortunately, the deficit for fiscal year 2009, which ended on September 30, nearly quadrupled to \$1.47 trillion due to the TARP program, as Congresswoman LUMMIS has explained, and spending in the stimulus bill and other aspects of spending this year. Now we are being told that for 2010, we must go another \$2 trillion in debt.

I implore our colleagues to stand with us in insisting that we get this spending under control and do so now. The pace of irresponsible spending is not only unsustainable; it is dangerous to the long-term viability of our economy and, indeed, it is a matter of national security. This Congress must impose some kind of restriction on spending, and I will not be supporting

any increase in our statutory debt limit unless it is directly attached to implementation of a bipartisan commission tasked with advising Congress on how to get its spending under control as quickly as possible.

□ 1900

I remain disappointed to hear that a \$2 trillion increase may be attached to a bill to fund the military, including funding for our brave men and women currently serving in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. We all wholeheartedly support our military and believe it should be provided the funding it needs. The attempt, however, to use the military as a political tool to pass a potentially massive increase in our debt limit is terrible public policy. There should be an up-or-down vote on raising our debt ceiling.

As a matter of history, Madam Speaker, in this decade, in 2001 there was a budget surplus of \$128 billion; in 2002 the deficit for that year was \$157 billion; the next year \$377; the next year \$412; the year after that \$318; the year after that \$248; the year after that \$160; and the year after that \$454 for a total for the 8 prior years, from 2001 to 2008, of \$2 trillion. That is 8 years. I am not excusing that. That is a great deal of money.

This year, however, in the fiscal year that ended on September 30, we had a 1-year deficit of \$1.47 trillion. That's \$2 trillion over the 8 years between 2001 and 2008, and in the fiscal year that ended this September 30, roughly \$1.5 trillion. And that will be replicated again this year in the fiscal year in which we now find ourselves.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Will the gentleman yield briefly?

Mr. LANCE. Certainly.

Mrs. LUMMIS. And the consequence of what you're just saying, which is so critical to this discussion, is the chart that appears here. The interest payments on that debt create a checkmark. In other words, this is 2008, the beginning of this chart. And we were seeing a bit of a decline in the interest dollars that we were paying. But here we are, today, right here, the end of 2009, and from here on, because of that accumulated \$2 trillion that you discussed over the earlier part of this decade, and then, the additional \$1.4 trillion of this year alone, boy, those interest payments just take right off. And it creates this checkmark effect to the point that at the end of this chart, 2019, U.S. net interest payments over \$800 billion.

My gosh, that is as much as the stimulus bill that we passed at the beginning of this year.

Mr. LANCE. Thank you, Congresswoman LUMMIS.

Madam Speaker, Congresswoman LUMMIS has pointed out what we are going to face over the course of this decade. And we have to pay our interest payments first before we feed any hungry children, before we engage in housing for those who need housing and jobs for those who need jobs. Before we even fund the military we have

to fund our debt. It crowds out other needed spending. It also makes it much more difficult for there to be borrowing in the private sector, raising interest rates in the private sector to get this economy moving again.

It is also ultimately a matter of national security, because who is purchasing our debt? It is being purchased by foreign nations, by China, by Saudi Arabia and by other nations across the globe. And ultimately, he who pays the piper calls the tune. And this is a matter of national security. And undoubtedly the American people will recognize now what Congress has not yet recognized, and that is we have to get our Federal spending under control.

No one in Congress thinks that we can balance the budget this year. However, we need a glide path toward a balanced budget. And instead, we have a rocket in the other direction with ever-rising levels of annual deficits.

The Congressional Budget Office predicts that by the end of this next decade, our total debt may approach \$20 trillion. That is simply unacceptable. It places an undue burden on the next generation. For the first time in the history of this country, there is an open question whether the next generation will have a higher quality of life than this generation. The promise of America has always been that each generation works as hard as possible to make sure that our children will have a higher quality of life. Whether or not we will have a second American Century here in the 21st century the way the 20th century was an American Century is now in question based upon this fundamental issue that confronts all of us in Congress, and that is the issue of out-of-control Federal spending and a massive debt that is increasing enormously.

Let me state, Madam Speaker, that in the 1990s, with a Democratic President, President Clinton, and a Republican Congress, we did a better job. In 1997, the annual deficit that year was \$21 billion. The next year, there was a surplus of \$69 billion, the next year a surplus of \$125 billion, the next year a surplus of \$236 billion, that's in year 2000, the last year of the Clinton Presidency, and in the first year of the Presidency of George W. Bush, a surplus of \$128 billion.

I want to give credit to President Clinton. I also want to give credit to the Republican Congress then in power. And I think that it is a responsibility of the Presidency and the Congress working together. In the 8 years of the Bush Presidency, 6 years with Republican control of the House and Senate, there was a combined debt in those 8 years, let me repeat, of \$2 trillion, and in this last year, the fiscal year that ended on September 30, we had in that 1 year a deficit of over \$1.5 trillion. And this year, we're going to have that amount yet again. I implore the White House to get serious on this issue of annual Federal deficits and the overall Federal debt.

We, the Republican freshmen, want to do our part. We came here to reform the system. We want to reform the system in a bipartisan way. And Congresswoman LUMMIS is taking the lead for the freshman class on this, in my judgment, the most important issue confronting the American Nation, as important as reforming the health care system, as important as the burden that we share with others around the world, including the brave young men and women who fight in Afghanistan and Iraq. Because this, the debt issue, is a matter of national security as well as a matter of economic prosperity.

I yield back to the congresswoman.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I applaud the gentleman from New Jersey for his view that we need to have tied to an increase in the national debt a mechanism that will begin to address this problem. One of the mechanisms is one that you mentioned that you support, and that would be legislation that would create a commission to begin to advise us on this structural deficit. And this chart illustrates why this structural deficit is so much worse than it has ever been.

One of the points in this chart you brought up in your discussion, and that was a point right here, this is the years when we had the Clinton Presidency and a Republican Congress, and you saw tax revenues increasing over expenditures as a percentage of gross domestic product and creating the very surplus that you discussed. But what's really interesting about this chart is the fact that it runs from the 1970s, actually from the year 1969 to 2009, so it's a 40-year chart that compares spending to gross domestic product, taxes to gross domestic product, and then the deficit to gross domestic product. And the amazing thing is that when you look at gross domestic product, that is, the value of everything we produce in this country every year, and use that as your constant, so we're comparing that over 40 years to the way that Congress has spent money, the way that Congress has taken in taxes, and then to the deficit, what you see is remarkable stability, remarkable stability for 40 years. It has always hovered around a little over 20 percent of gross domestic product in terms of spending, and around 18 percent in terms of taxes.

So there has been a structural deficit for all those years of roughly 2.4 percent, meaning for about 40 years we've taken in a little bit less in taxes than we've spent. And so it has created some deficits over time. But even the deficits have hovered within that average of about 2.4 percent. The average then is this dotted line down here, remarkably stable over 40 years.

Now, look at what is happening in the future. These are projections. The sources are the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Management and Budget. So we're talking about government agencies that are projecting this. Here is the line for where we begin the next decade starting in

January. Spending and taxes separate dramatically. As you can see, the year 2009, which is illustrated by this tremendous separation right here, this is where we are now, and the reason we've taken in less taxes is because of the recession. But the reason that we've spent so much are all the bills that we discussed from the beginning of this hour. It has just become completely out of the realm of anything we've ever seen in the last 40 years.

So it creates a structural deficit, meaning a very, very wide gap going forward between taxes and spending. This gap is projected by CBO to be between 5 and 6 percent. That's more than twice of what it has ever been over the last 40 years. And it goes on and on from there. And so you can see this projected deficit in the decade coming forward, down here, is an enormous gap over what it has been. That is what you were talking about when you said, will we give our children a better country than we received? And there is a real question about that now. And that is why we have to address it.

I know you're on a committee where Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke has come, as am I, and said, you've got to come up with a plan to deal with this problem, this specific problem, the structural deficit. This is the structural deficit. And it is caused by the mismatch between taxes and spending. And while we as partisans get under each others' skin by saying, Democrats, you have spent too much; and the Democrats saying, Republicans, you gave tax cuts at a time when we were at war. Well, we're both right. And now here we are. I yield back.

Mr. LANCE. Thank you, Congresswoman.

Madam Speaker, the fact that for a generation, spending has been at roughly 20 percent of gross domestic product for 40 years is noteworthy. And the chart that Congresswoman LUMMIS has is extremely informative and revealing. However, we are entering a new era where as a percentage of gross domestic product, governmental spending is rising dramatically to 25 percent. This is a significant and very disturbing difference. And the fact that over the next decade our projected deficits are so much larger than they have been historically as a percentage of gross domestic product is also disturbing. And in a bipartisan fashion, we have to have a glide path toward fiscal responsibility.

I think that it is impossible to balance the budget until we get out of this deep recession. But once we are out of this deep recession, and in my judgment we are still in the recession, because unemployment rates in this country are at 10 percent, the highest they have been since 1983, a generation ago—once we get out of this deep recession, we have to have a plan to make sure that we move toward the historic average of no more than 20 percent of spending in the governmental sector at

the Federal level as percentage of gross domestic product.

My own view is that we need a bipartisan commission to advise us, like the BRAC commission regarding the closing of military bases, and then there can be an up-or-down vote on what is recommended by that commission here in Congress. Some oppose that, but do not provide an alternative as to how we are going to do a better job. And to do nothing is to condemn the next generation to a lower standard of living. It is to condemn the next generation of businesses across this country with much higher interest rates because the government crowds out private-sector borrowing.

□ 1915

The government is the borrower of first resort.

And of course ultimately it could mean a lowering of the credit rating of the United States of America. Obviously, we now have the highest credit rating, but there are some who predict that over time that will not occur. And also, there are some who predict that there should be a new currency worldwide, that the dollar should no longer be the currency that is favored across the world. Obviously, all of us in Congress, including freshmen Republicans who are discussing this issue tonight, favor a continuation of the American currency.

The dollar is the currency that is honored across the world, but the Chinese, for example, have floated the idea that there should be a new international currency, not the dollar, regarding international trade. This is as a result of the fact of these ever-rising deficits year in and year out and the result of the fact of an overwhelming Federal debt, now at \$12 trillion. In the next week before Christmas we're going to be asked to raise it to \$14 trillion.

We are not going to be asked to raise it on a stand-alone vote on that issue. It is going to be part of a bill related, I believe, to the military. I call again for a stand-alone vote on this issue, and that stand-alone vote, Madam Speaker, should include the establishment of some sort of mechanism to get a handle on this situation, this, the most critical issue confronting us not only economically but also as a matter of national security.

I yield back to the Congresswoman from Wyoming.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for yielding.

The Federal Reserve Bank, in my opinion, is now overleveraged. The Federal Government is overleveraged, meaning we have taken on too much debt both at the Federal Reserve, while they've been trying to help our banking system right itself, and we, in Congress, by not recognizing that in this recession we, too, should be making sure that government isn't growing in an outsized way when it is, in fact, the private sector that creates wealth.

We are joined by the gentleman from Colorado, who is on the Small Business Committee. And small businesses in our communities are really hurting, as are community banks.

Among the things that we have talked about with the Federal Reserve Chairman is the issue of how community banks sometimes have loans that are performing, that every year the borrower is making the payments, principal and interest. But when bank regulators come in and look at those loans, they are worried that the asset that is backing that borrower might be a little shaky, so they might require the banks to write down that loan even though it's performing. I know that the Federal Reserve Chairman says that should not be happening if the regulator is the Federal Reserve because they've instructed their regulators not to do that, but we also know there are multiple regulators, including the Department of the Treasury, the Comptroller of the Currency, and some of these regulators are still requiring that these loans be written down. That is a tremendous disservice to our community banks and to their borrowers whose loans are performing.

I yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Well, thank you, Congresswoman LUMMIS.

That certainly is the case. I think that smaller banks in the United States are paying for the sins of the larger banks. The Comptroller of the Currency has just come down on these banks and has mandated a 20 percent increase in their capital requirements, and that forced them, as well, to pull back on lending. And so credit is really the lifeblood of small business, and small business is the economic engine in terms of jobs for this country.

Small businesses in my district and districts across this country are hard hit right now in terms of credit, in terms of their ability to get extensions on their credit lines and their ability to fund capital purchases. All of these things have led to downward pressure in terms of their ability to be that employer, that engine that drives this economy.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Indeed, we are finding that there are changes in our economy that are going to exacerbate some of the problems that we have discussed.

Here is another fund chart. I want to point out that some of the things that I am discussing tonight have been influenced by an article that I read in the National Journal by John Maggs, which I commend to your attention. The date was Saturday, November 7, 2009, National Journal. The name of the article, "The Debt Problem is Worse Than You Think," not a very uplifting title, but I think very reflective of the problems that we are in and that we, on a bipartisan basis, need to begin to address after the first of the year.

This chart I found to be tremendously interesting. The source, again, is the Congressional Budget Office.

Look at how, in the 1970s, which are represented by this quadrant of the chart, then followed by the eighties, nineties, and this first decade of the 21st century, look how much defense accounted for as a percentage of the Federal budget near the end of the Vietnam War, or, I guess, 1969, probably about the height of the Vietnam War. A tremendous amount was spent on defense and very little on medical care for the indigent and the elderly as a percentage of our Federal budget; whereas, Social Security and non-defense discretionary funding—which is, of course, what we spend most of our time talking about here in Congress—have been remarkably stable over that time.

Defense has dropped dramatically over time. Here you see the decade that then caused the buildup into the end of the Cold War. And then you see a declining, the "peace dividend" as we called it, during the 1990s, which allowed Congress and the President to balance the budget. It has stabilized at a point of about 20 percent, even in this decade that we have just completed.

So it's amazing how much defense has declined as a portion of the Federal budget. But what is equally amazing is the amount in which Medicare and Medicaid have risen as a portion of our Federal spending and increasing. This is an ever-increasing line, the red line, because of people like the three of us in this room. We are all baby boomers, and as this massive generation approaches retirement and Medicare, that number is just going to go up and up. So unless we address Medicare in particular as part of this commission that you mentioned, we are not going to get there.

I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. LANCE. Thank you very much for yielding, Congresswoman LUMMIS.

In 1982 and 1983, President Reagan established a bipartisan commission to deal with the issue of Social Security. Based upon that bipartisan commission, action occurred here in the Congress with the support of the administration that had the result of making Social Security solvent for almost a generation. We now have another challenge regarding Social Security, and particularly Medicare and Medicaid. I think we should replicate what occurred in 1982 and 1983 with a Republican President, President Reagan, and a Democratically controlled House of Representatives—and the Democratic Party controlled the House of Representatives from 1954 until 1994, for 40 years. We should come together in a bipartisan fashion to establish another commission to deal with the enormous Federal debt. This commission could also have the responsibility perhaps to discuss and evaluate the Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security issues. Perhaps there should be a second commission for that.

But it is clear, based upon the chart that Congresswoman LUMMIS has in

front of the Chamber, that Medicare and Medicaid are rising rapidly. The largest cohort is the baby boom generation, those born between 1946 and 1964. Those of us who are on the floor this evening are in that generation. Obviously, Congresswoman LUMMIS is at the end of that cohort, whereas Congressman COFFMAN and I are in the middle of that cohort. Let me say that it is the responsibility of us working together to address this issue.

Let me also say that we count funds that go into the Social Security Trust Fund as part of Federal revenues. If we had segregated them separately, our annual deficits would be even higher than they are. And when I state that the deficit for the year that ended September 30 of roughly \$1.5 trillion—precisely \$1.47 trillion—that includes the monies that are paid into the Social Security Fund. So if we were to place them in a separate pot of money, the annual deficit would be even higher than it already is.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Will the gentlemen yield?

Mr. LANCE. I certainly will.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Will the gentleman remind us to whom has the so-called Social Security Trust Fund been lent? And I yield back.

Mr. LANCE. Thank you.

It has been lent to the fact that we are funding these programs that we cannot pay, and really the deficit is much higher than that. And Medicare will be in the red in the next several years, and Social Security not too far beyond that.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LANCE. Certainly.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Are you telling me that Social Security dollars that Americans paid into a Social Security Trust Fund have been lent to the Federal Government to spend on these programs we've been discussing tonight?

And I yield back.

Mr. LANCE. I thank you for yielding, Congresswoman.

Absolutely, 100 percent accurate. It is not going for the purposes for which it was intended based upon the Social Security program established in 1935. I do believe that those who established the Social Security program—Franklin Roosevelt, distinguished Members of Congress, including Sam Rayburn, Francis Perkins, the Secretary of Labor—that that generation would be appalled by how we use Social Security funds in this year of 2009.

And I yield back to the Congresswoman.

Mrs. LUMMIS. And I yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Thank you, Congresswoman LUMMIS.

I think there is a fear of the American people, as well as some of us in Congress that are here tonight discussing this issue, and that is that the health reform bill that has passed the House and they are debating iterations of it over in the United States Senate,

that both versions—the one that is being debated in the Senate that we're aware of and that which was passed in the House—plant the seeds for new entitlements. And so I think that the American people are distrustful because they know what government promised in terms of what the impact of Social Security would be. They can remember what the impact of what Medicare would be and how explosive the realities of those are in terms of Federal deficits, and now the rising debt for this country, and how damaging that will be. And so I think there is real concern, and that concern is very legitimate.

So I think that before the Congress of the United States engages in new entitlements, it needs to take care of the ones that we have and get them under control so that they don't totally envelop this country's budget and capacity to borrow.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Yes.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Is it true that the health care bill that passed the House of Representatives a few weeks ago accumulated about 10 years of taxes and fees to pay 6 or 7 years of benefits?

And I yield back.

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Thank you, Congresswoman LUMMIS.

Yes, that's accurate. Because what it did is the—I don't think the benefits were effective until 2013, but the taxes started right away. And so it is deceptive in terms of saying that—you have to use some fuzzy math, some new accounting, new age accounting, to be able to say that it's deficit neutral.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Yes.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Are you saying that, then, 10 years of taxes are going to begin right away under the House health care bill and the benefits are not going to begin to be paid out until year 2013?

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. That's correct.

Mrs. LUMMIS. And so what happens at the end of 10 years?

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Well, as in all, it seems, programs that Congress starts, unfortunately, historically they've been financially disingenuous, because at that point in time, clearly we are moving forward into a deficit situation.

□ 1930

Mrs. LUMMIS. You are telling me that there is going to be a structural deficit in the very health care bill that we passed, in addition to the structural deficit we have been discussing tonight?

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Welcome to government accounting, and I think that that's unfortunate.

I would hope that the American people would grow to understand this particular issue and ought to express their concern to their Members of Congress,

because we already have deficits and debts that are out of control, and I believe that can very well choke off the ability for this economy to ever recover because of interest rates and inflation that are derived from deficits, prolonged deficit spending. This is merely going to exacerbate the problem.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman from Colorado for raising that point.

Mr. LANCE. This has the potential of bringing about generational conflict, because we rely on the working generation to fund programs through the taxes that they pay, not only the income tax, but also payroll taxes such as Social Security and Medicare. If the next generation, beginning in the workforce, is going to shoulder this tremendous burden regarding our debt, and, in addition, shoulder a tremendous burden regarding Social Security and Medicare and Medicaid, there is the potential of generational conflict.

It is incumbent upon those of us who serve here to make sure that that generational conflict does not occur. It is the height of irresponsibility and, might I suggest, it is, indeed, immoral to place on the backs of the next generation this ever-increasing Federal debt. This is new in its percentage.

As you have rightly pointed out over the course of the last generation, spending has been at roughly 20 percent of GDP. It is going to expand greatly, and the chart indicates, to 25 percent, and some have indicated—some economists have made it, increased it to 30 percent of GDP. That is a dramatic and unprecedented expansion.

The yearly deficit for the fiscal year that just ended on September 30 was the most amount of money, as a yearly deficit, as a percentage of GDP, since 1945 at the very end of World War II, when we were fighting for our existence and, obviously, during World War II, the most extensive war in the history of the human condition. We were in a situation where we had to have deficit spending.

But the fiscal year that ended on September 30, 2009, had the highest annual deficit as a percentage of GDP since 1945. Let me repeat: That I believe that in this new fiscal year that runs from October 1, 2009, until September 30, 2010, we are likely to have an annual deficit that approaches the \$1.5 trillion annual deficit of last year.

This is simply unacceptable. Before we raise the debt ceiling, as the majority intends to do in the next week, we should have a fundamental discussion about where we are headed. We certainly should have an up-or-down vote in this regard.

I have written the Speaker of the House for an up-or-down vote. I am joined by freshman Republican colleagues in this request and, instead, we are likely to have a vote that is part of a larger appropriations act for the Defense Department.

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Congresswoman LUMMIS, you and I were both State treasurers; you from the State of Wyoming, myself from the State of Colorado.

One thing that we had, I am sure that you had in the State of Wyoming, was a balanced budget requirement that every year we had to balance the budget. It created a sense of fiscal discipline where you had to make tough decisions in terms of tradeoffs. You simply couldn't have everything and drive your State into deficits and further into debt.

What is absolutely essential to have in the Congress of the United States is a balanced budget requirement where the tradeoffs have to be made, where hard decisions have to be made, where there has to be a reference point that at the end of the day, revenues have to equal expenditures. Without that, I really fear for the future of the country, I think, for the first time in my life, when we look at these deficits, when you look at the debt, when we think about the future of the country.

I know that Democrats have pointed to Republicans and said, well, you did it in the past. Now it's our turn.

Well, but, you know, I used to use that with my mother when I was growing up. I used to say all the other kids are doing it. My mother didn't buy it, and the American people aren't buying it today.

The American people aren't buying it, and they realize, I think, that they have unease about what is going on in the Congress of the United States. They have an extraordinary feeling of insecurity about what is happening in this country, not simply because the way the economy is right now, but they understand that the political class in Washington, led by the majority party, is pushing this country over a cliff, and the American people get it.

Mrs. LUMMIS. The alarm you expressed is shared by others. I would like to quote one sentence from this article to which I referred earlier by John Maggs in the National Journal, "The Debt Problem is Worse Than You Think," for your reaction.

"Simply put, even alarmists may be underestimating the size of the problem, how quickly it will become unbearable, and how poorly prepared our political system is to deal with it."

Your reaction?

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Well, the tragedy of what I have seen in my first year here in Congress, as one of your fellow freshmen here, is that it is all about the politics of the moment. It is all about the immediacy of how can we placate the American people through spending and not the consequences of what's going to happen to the next generation.

The only thing is that it's done at such a rapid pace right now that it's going to envelop this generation even before it hits the next generation in terms of its adverse effects.

I just think it's extraordinary. Again, I believe that the deficits are

such, and I think the American people are beginning to understand, that unless Congress can control its spending, that the ability of this economy to ever fully recover, that the consequences of this level of debt, in terms of higher inflation, in terms of higher interest rates, will choke off this economy's ability to ever fully recover.

In addition, the situation is so bad that internationally the focus is on the United States and the mismanagement of fiscal policy, where you have a country like China, the largest holder of U.S. public debt, foreign holder of U.S. public debt, stating their concern about what America is doing to itself.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Are you prepared to say that the Republicans were wrong when they simultaneously passed Medicare part D, the Bush tax cuts, and tried to sustain that during wartime. Are you prepared to say that?

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. They were absolutely wrong. There is no question about it.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I would like to ask the gentleman from New Jersey, do you agree with that? Do you think we were wrong?

Mr. LANCE. I campaigned last year against the policies, when it was a Republican President and a Republican-controlled Congress that had these deficits. I point out that over the 8 years there was a \$2 trillion deficit. That was too large. It's even larger now, and we have to work in a bipartisan fashion to get this under control.

Let me also say that I commend both the Congresswoman from Wyoming and the Congressman from Colorado, both having been State treasurers, because you had constitutions in your State that required a balanced budget.

Unfortunately, in New Jersey, we have had a system where we have borrowed without voter approval for about 15 years. That was put to an end last November when we changed our State Constitution. My constitutional amendment, the Lance amendment, that prohibits further borrowing in New Jersey without voter approval. New Jersey is in the equivalent situation of California, and we have not discussed here the fact that there are quite a few States, including California and New Jersey, that have tremendous annual deficits.

Of course, this comes out of the other pocket of taxpayers' in these States, and taxpayers are burdened not only here at the Federal level but at the State level as well.

I certainly agree that we have to work in a bipartisan capacity. I also agree with my colleague from Colorado that simply because, in the first decade of this century, the 8 years from 2001 to 2008, there was a deficit of \$2 trillion, that does not mean that we should continue on this route and, indeed, accelerate on this route of irresponsible spending. Two wrongs do not make a right.

I agree with my colleague from Colorado. My late mother, when my twin

brother and I were children in the little town of Glen Gardner, Hunterdon County, New Jersey we would say other children are doing this. My late mother would say, I don't care what other kids in Glen Gardner do. You are not going to do that.

We have to acknowledge that, what occurred in the past, recognize that there has been overspending. There is overspending now. It has accelerated, a yearly deficit of \$1.5 trillion, to be replicated, in my judgment, this year. This will mean leadership will pass to China or to some other Nation in the world. And all of the democratic values we share together, freedom of speech, in which I am now engaged, freedom of association together here on the floor of the House of Representatives, freedom of religion and all of the other values we share together, is ultimately based on American leadership.

We do not want that leadership to pass to some other place on Earth, to China, to India or to some other country as a result of these massive Federal deficits year in and year out and an overall Federal deficit now of \$12 trillion and rising, based upon nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office analysis, to \$20 trillion in the course of the next 10 years or so.

Mrs. LUMMIS. It is the rare man who has a constitutional amendment named after him. The Lance amendment in New Jersey will help right the ship in New Jersey. We compliment you for that work.

We are now about to begin to summarize. I would ask the gentleman from Colorado to summarize this evening's discussion.

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. As freshmen we went to an orientation where part of it was on the financial crisis which has morphed into an economic crisis. And we had economists from all political stripes brief us. They said, You know, that it was right to do a stimulus, it was right to deficit spend, but it had to be very temporary. It had to end with 2010 because the economy was expected to improve and you didn't want public-sector borrowing colliding with a greater demand for private sector-borrowing.

It also said that it also needed to be timely and that it needed to be fast-acting. Unfortunately, it hasn't been. Also it needed to be targeted, and they differed about what being targeted was. But it was interesting, the fact that they all felt you had to start controlling the deficit by the end of 2010 or you were going to have dramatic effects on the ability of the economy to fully recover.

It seems that when we look at this \$787 billion stimulus bill, more money, I think, will be spent in 2011 than has been spent this year. It hasn't been fast-acting. It certainly isn't temporary, and it goes on, and I would argue that it is not targeted, although the economists differed on what was targeted.

One thing they did say: They questioned if you went to the bureaucracy,

if you chose government to be the stimulus, would it be fast enough? Could the government bureaucracy and the Federal Government move the money through fast enough? Clearly we have been able to see that it hasn't been able to get the money out the door to make a difference to the economy.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I wish to thank my Republican colleagues this evening, the gentleman from Ohio, the gentleman from New Jersey, and the gentleman from Colorado. We are hoping that in the next year we will see a bipartisan effort to address this problem.

#### JOB CREATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. SUTTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. SUTTON. I am pleased to be here with my colleague from New York, Representative PAUL TONKO. I am BETTY SUTTON, and I proudly represent the 13th Congressional District of Ohio.

I am a member of the Task Force On Job Creation of our caucus and, in fact, I am the co-Chair. Mr. TONKO serves on that committee, and we are here today to talk about just that. We are here to talk about the need to create jobs, jobs, jobs in this country, both in the near term and for the long term that will be sustainable for our constituents and people across this great country.

As we move forward, we have to make sure that we secure an economy that will work for and with ordinary Americans, because we may recall that before the Bush recession began, the Republican recession began, the reality of it was we had an economy that wasn't working for many Americans already before it went off the cliff.

As we revitalize our economy, it's incredibly important that we don't just go back to the old ways where Wall Street ran rampant and Main Street suffered, but that we create and—facilitate, I guess, is a better word—facilitate an economy that will work for and with ordinary Americans, and that the prosperity of this great Nation and the promise of a middle class will be restored. That is what America is at its best, where the promise of a middle class is vibrant and well and thriving.

□ 1945

So before the recession, before the Republican recession hit, the reality is productivity and profits were up, and as I said, Wall Street was reveling. And ordinary Americans, what was happening to them? Their wages were flat, at best.

So the task force is here to say enough is enough. We need an economy that offers economic opportunity to people who live in neighborhoods across this country, who live in rural areas across this great country, not just those who make a living on Wall Street.

So, though the actions that we've taken already, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, have been helpful to many, and, in fact, the CBO has estimated, actually found that it has already created or retained 600,000 to 1.6 million jobs, we still have an unemployment rate that is staggering at 10 percent and nearly 16 million Americans out of work. So, far too many Americans across the country are without a job and far too many more are concerned about what tomorrow will bring. Forty percent of those who are unemployed have been jobless for at least half a year.

So we know, Representative TONKO and I, that we have to put people back to work, and it is not a simple task but it is an ongoing task. In fact, I'd say it's a mission because, you know, I have heard it said that we're in a jobless recovery.

Have you heard that, Mr. TONKO?

Mr. TONKO. Yes, I have. And that certainly doesn't cut it with the American public, with middle class working families across the country. It simply does not cut it.

But, Representative SUTTON, I do want to commend you for the leadership as co-Chair of our task force on job creation. And I found your introductory comments to inspire a thought: Let's really look at how this started.

We went from a record surplus under the Clinton administration to a record deficit. Had we stayed the course, the deficit reduction plan of President Clinton would have been completed. It would have completed its mission this year. We haven't seen deficit wipeout except for one Presidency, that of Andrew Jackson. So this could have been an historic year if we had stayed the course. What we found was that people will talk about the deficit, which the deficit has driven this recession which went longer and deeper than any forecasted, and now it's the daunting task of all of us who serve here in Washington to stop the bleeding. And great indicators out there suggest, many key indicators suggest that that has happened, as you alluded to, with 1.6 million additional jobs coming into the picture, direct and indirect measurement. We have also seen corresponding to that a .3 to a .9 percent reduction in unemployment. That at least is welcomed news that we could stop the bleeding. But now the overwhelming task, the challenge, is to grow this economy. And how are we going to do that?

There are a lot of needs out there that require us to create those jobs, to funnel the resource to those jobs so as to improve America's competitiveness. We are asking our businesses and our workers to function in a global economy, and there are investments that we can make, Representative SUTTON, that will take us out of this economic catastrophe and allow us to climb back.

But the last 8 years have been devastating. They have put us into a deep

financial hole. And as we cleaned up the mess, as we put the war in Iraq online in the budget, as we took the doughnut hole that was created that has hurt our seniors who are Medicare eligible as they have had to reach into their pocket to work with Medicare part D's doughnut hole, that was not put online in the budget in a way that really reflected the costs of these programs. So now we have truth and honesty in our budgeting, but that has produced an even deeper deficit because we're doing it with fairness and frankness.

Now, with the task force and many Members in a bipartisan bicameral way, we hope, we can then get to the picture of job creation. And that's what it's about right now in Washington. How can we create the programming that will allow for the increase of jobs, be it in the energy-related field, in manufacturing, in our parks, in our municipal levels of government with public safety, fire, and police numbers, teachers in the classroom? All of these efforts need to be brought in and built, if we can, and we must build an innovation economy that will be sparked by our growing the competitive edge for our businesses so that we can win and retain and grow jobs.

Ms. SUTTON. Representative TONKO, I know this is your first term, but it's hard to believe. I have to tell you, we are very inspired to have you here, and you didn't arrive a moment too soon.

The point that you make about the deficit, turning the surplus that was well established under President Clinton into such an extraordinary deficit under the last administration is a point that is a reality and, unfortunately, is one that we have to deal with; right? Because, you know, fighting two wars that weren't paid for and, as you point out, a lot of the costs done offline that weren't budgeted for.

But it wasn't just an economic deficit that was created; it was this jobs deficit that was created that we also are here to deal with not only tonight but until we resolve it. It has to be our mission.

Mr. TONKO. Right. Some were shipped off into a foreign economy. Others simply evaporated. And we saw in record numbers the losses that were out there because they simply could not compete and stay effective.

I meet people every day in my district, and I represent a capital region in New York State so that we have the benefit, the buffer, of public sector jobs. But our unemployment numbers are hanging near in excess of 9 percent. This is unacceptable. We need to do much more work as we go forward. And we applaud the efforts to date to take that surplus and apply it as a downpayment. But that's as it's seen, as a downpayment. There are many more installments to come in order for us to build hope in the lives of people, and that's what it's about.

You hear it. We've talked about it. I hear it in my district. The fear with