

That said, these financial institutions that were quasi-public, the implication was that the government would be in the bag if something went wrong with Freddie and Fannie.

He is quoted, September 11, 2003, in the New York Times saying that Congress needs to give him authority to regulate Freddie and Fannie more. In a matter of a year or two, we here in the House, it was a Republican House at that time, passed a bill to give the President authority to get into Freddie and Fannie's finances and to regulate them more because they were out of control.

The bill went to the Senate, as you can expect; but it was killed by the Democrats in a filibuster on the floor. It never saw the light of day. It was never passed.

So it was that Freddie and Fannie, failing, along with other parts of that real estate market, which was created by laws that we had made, saying that banks had to make loans to people who couldn't afford to pay them, and also this wild speculation that came from a very, very low interest rate and a lot of liquidity created by Greenspan, you put that all together and you get a bubble in the real estate market. The bubble pops and things come apart.

Now, you could try and blame that thing on Bush, but it really wouldn't be accurate to do that. He saw, at least in 2003, that we were in trouble and recognized we should do something about it. It's easy to try to blame problems that are created by overspending and over-taxation on the Republicans, but the fact of the matter is this Congress has got 80 Democrats more than it does Republicans. This is not exactly what you call a Republican control of the Congress or the House.

Over in the Senate, the Democrats have a working 60-vote majority, so they could even break filibusters and pass what they want. They have had a year to work on this, and we can see what they have done.

We have seen what happened to their spending. We have seen all these different things they put money into. These ones that are foggy are the ones that are just done by the House. The Senate has not passed them.

We have seen what's happened to employment as a result of that excessive spending. It has not been good, and it's not been good for a reason.

We have, today, again, continued in the same policy. I think Americans are getting tired of it. I think they realize you can't blame it on someone else, that these are basic factors that people understand. It's businesses that create jobs; and if you tax the businesses too much, and if you have the wrong environment for the businesses, they are not going to be able to keep the economy going.

□ 2045

Ironically, something that suffers a great deal in a poor economy are governments. Governments depend on tax

revenues for their revenues, and the States really take a beating because many of them have balanced budgets that they have to meet. So if you happen to be some poor governor in a State when you have a Congress like this that's spending money wildly and forgetting the basic principles of economics, you've got a lot of problems.

So this cartoon is as a lot of cartoons that have a certain amount of sense and humor to them. "Now give me one good reason why you're not hiring." Well, we've seen a whole lot of reasons why we're not hiring, and the trouble is that we have essentially exasperated every single one of these things, and that's why there are not jobs here.

So we're closing up here, then, on this segment on unemployment and on spending and what it is that creates it. There's nothing here that's very complicated. Like most things in life, if you understand the mechanics and how they work, they're not very difficult. We're doing some things that are wrong in terms of jobs. If we want to have jobs, we can do it. It's not the government that's going to create the jobs. It's you, my friends, the American people that will create the jobs. But we have to give you an economic environment that is conducive to creating jobs, and that does not mean a whole lot more money in spending, such as our \$150 billion in stimulus II, "son of stimulus," if you want to call it that, the failed bill from last summer that didn't work. It does not include increasing the debt limit, as we did today, by \$300 billion. What it includes is the same basic principle that JFK, Ronald Reagan, and Bush used, which is getting the government off the backs of the people of the United States.

This is a sad situation. My father fought in World War II, and their mindset was, we're going to give of ourselves a whole lot so the next generation, our children, can have more than we did. Some of them didn't go to college, and they said we want our kids to go to college. We want to leave America a better place.

Is that the heritage of this day, that we want to leave America a worse place, that we want to leave our kids and our grandkids up to their ears in debt, having a less bright future than what we had? Can't we learn from the great generation that fought World War II that we want to leave America a better place?

I believe the American public will say we want to go back to leaving this a stronger, better, freer country than when we inherited it, and I think we will do that. But we will do that by changing these false premises and policies that are leading us down the primrose path.

I thank the Speaker for allowing me to talk on these very important questions, and I would say Merry Christmas, wonderful holidays to Americans. God bless you and goodnight.

THE IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN WARS AND HEALTH CARE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TONKO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, in some respects the policy regarding the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan comes down to the subject of leadership. And as I have said, leadership is sometimes simply a question of looking into the future, seeing what's inevitable, and doing what you need to do to make the future come faster. I think that's true in both the case of Iraq and the case of Afghanistan.

In the case of the Israelites in Egypt, Moses did not say to the pharaoh, Would you please let my people go starting 2 or 3 years from now? Instead what he said is "Let my people go" now.

We all know that sooner or later our troops will be withdrawn from Iraq. They will be withdrawn from Afghanistan. So the question is why not now?

Now, if you ask that question to the other side, the people who want to perpetuate these wars, the answer is always the same in one form or another. That answer is, something bad is going to happen. But what that really means when you get down to it is that something bad might happen. Nobody knows for sure what might happen. They're speculating that something bad might happen. But you can be sure that if the war is perpetuated, something bad will happen. And that is the loss of American lives, the loss of foreign lives, the loss of our national treasure.

In the case of Iraq, \$3 trillion already and the amount grows every day. This in a country like ours with a total net worth accumulated over more than two centuries of \$50 trillion. We have taken 6 percent of what our great grandparents and our grandparents and our parents produced and left to us and everything that we've toiled to produce over the course of our lives and everything that our children have produced. We have taken 6 percent of all of that and dumped it into the sands of Mesopotamia and lost 4,000 American lives and countless Iraqi lives to boot. Now, this is what happened because we entered into this war, because we continue this war, because the war continues to this day.

We have an enemy in this war. The enemy is called al Qaeda; al Qaeda in Iraq, al Qaeda in Pakistan, wherever they might be, but that's the name they go by. But ask yourself, what could they have possibly done to inflict that on us? What could al Qaeda have done to make us lose \$3 trillion, 4,000 American lives, countless lives of other people? What could they have possibly done? They would have literally had to vaporize New England in order to inflict the same amount of economic damage on us to destroy 6 percent of our economy. It simply wasn't possible. It isn't possible. It never was possible.

And that's why the war was such a mistake to begin with. It was born in sin, it lives in sin, and in the end it will die in sin. It never should have started, and it never should be perpetuated because every day the war continues. Every single day is another day that we risk American lives, on many occasions we lose American lives, other people die, and again our national treasure is dissipated until in the end it will be gone.

As Senator KERRY once asked, famously, "How do you ask a man to be the last man to die in Vietnam?" That's a good question. How do we ask a man today to be the last man to die in Afghanistan? How do we ask an American soldier today to be the last American soldier to die in Iraq? There is no good answer to that question. There's no good answer to why we continue to perpetuate these wars knowing full well that they will end. And they'll end only one way.

Paul Simon once had a song called "50 Ways to Leave Your Lover." There actually are 50 Ways or more to start a war. That much is true.

Once the Europeans fought a war because a pirate cut off a man's ear, the War of Jenkin's Ear, and that plunged two different nations into war for years. At another time a murder was committed. A man was shot, one man, only one man. He happened to be Archduke Ferdinand, and an entire continent was plunged into war. That was the origin of World War I.

There are all sorts of ways to begin a war. There are all sorts of ways to perpetuate a war. The Hundred Years' War in Europe was fought for more than a hundred years, left two different countries, both England and France, absolutely penniless, as many wars often do, for the simple reason that it takes an awful lot of effort to build a school, almost no effort at all to blow it up. And the same thing is true of anything that you can create. So wars destroy, and very often they destroy the countries engaged in them.

In the case of America, when America starts a war, when America is involved in a war, we are so strong, we are so powerful that the only way to end a war is for us to end it. There is only one way to end the war that America is involved in, and that is for us to decide as a country enough is enough, we're done. We spend more on our defense than all other countries combined, and the result of that is that these decisions are made by us, often by the people in this room, often by the President. And it's up to us to decide when enough is enough, when enough people have died, when enough money has been lost, when the price in both blood and money is simply too high. I submit that we've reached that point in Iraq a long time ago. We reached that point in Afghanistan a long time ago.

In the case of Afghanistan, within 2 months after 9/11, we had expelled the Taliban Government from the capital.

Within 3 months we had expelled al Qaeda from the country, and our enemies were no longer even in Afghanistan at that point. They were in Pakistan and they remain there today. It's not a secret. Everybody knows it. So the result of that is within 2 months or 3 months after 9/11, we had won our victory in Afghanistan, and at some later point even in Iraq I seem to remember our President standing on an aircraft carrier and behind him the giant sign "Mission Accomplished."

Yet both these wars go on and on and on for one reason, one reason only: It's because we Americans decide to perpetuate them. And we do so out of fear, out of the sense that something bad might happen, without realizing that something bad happens every single day that we are at war. So there may be 50 ways to start a war, but there's only one way to end it, and that's for us to end it and hopefully not too much longer from now.

I think the President missed an opportunity. He took office with a great deal of goodwill on the part of not only my party, the Democratic Party, but also on the part of good people all around America who simply want better lives for themselves. Let's not squander that opportunity. We all deserve a direction that we regard as the right direction. There are too many people in this country even today who think we're going in the wrong direction. In Iraq the wrong direction is simply the same direction. The same thing is true in Afghanistan. The wrong direction is the same direction. We voted for change. We deserve change. That's just as true with these foreign wars as it is with anything else.

We know that at some point in the future these wars will be over. And with regard to what the situation will be then, we will know that George Bush started these wars and I sincerely do hope, I sincerely do hope, that Barack Obama will end them, if not right now then as soon as possible.

Then at that point the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley will tell us what the circumstances are at that point, and I yield to Percy Bysshe Shelley for a moment or two. He described those circumstances in the poem "Ozymandias." This is what those circumstances will be like when these wars are over:

"I met a traveller from an antique land

Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone

Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,

Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown

And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command

Tell that its sculptor well those passions read

Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,

The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed.

And on the pedestal these words appear:

'My name is George W. Bush, king of kings:

Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'

Nothing beside remains. Round the decay

Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,

The lone and level sands stretch far away."

The lone and level sands will stretch far away when these wars are over, these monuments to the mistakes of our previous President. But in the end that's what it will be, simply a statue in the desert, pointless, endless, bare.

With regard to the issue of health care, we are now waiting for the Senate to act, this House having acted quite a while ago now.

□ 2100

And I have to wonder why. Why are we waiting so long? What facts are different today on this day in December than were any different in November, or any different in October, any different in September, August, July? What can we do today that we could not have done then? I think the sad fact is, nothing. Nothing has really changed. The fundamental facts are the same. Americans are still denied care every single day on the basis of pre-existing conditions, on the basis of reaching lifetime caps. There are still millions upon millions of Americans who have no health care coverage. There's a million, who, every year, go bankrupt because of that. And there are thousands upon thousands who die every single month for the simple reason that they have no health care coverage. That's been true, not only for this month, not only for last month, but for year upon year.

And we Democrats in the House of Representatives, we took it upon ourselves, with the political capital that you, the American people had given to us, we took it upon ourselves to make that our priority once we had done what we could to steady the shaken economy. We delivered. We did what we needed to do. And we have waited and waited and waited for the Senate to do what it needs to do.

I pointed out here on this pedestal several weeks ago that the cost of delay is death. People die every single day, 121 of them, 122, every single day because they have no health care coverage in America. And I pointed out that there are people here in this Chamber who are dead set against health care reform, even at the cost of the lives of their own constituents. I gave their names. I gave their numbers for how many people would die in each of their districts on account of our not passing health care reform. Now I think it's time to do the same for the obstructionists in the Senate, those people who think that health care reform doesn't serve their own purposes, and they are, therefore, willing to deny it to their own constituents.

This is not a case of one State opting out. This is a case of Senators, en

masse, deciding, one by one, that there will be no health care reform, not just for their States, but for all America. And so what I've done is I've created another list. This is a list of States and a list of those who die in that State, one by one, on account of there being no health care coverage, not once, but year after year after year. And now I propose to provide that list to you all. You'll be able to see it at our Web site later on today.

In the State of Alabama, the number is 541 deaths each year.

In the State of Alaska, 124 deaths each year.

In the State of Arizona, 1,185 deaths each year.

In the State of Connecticut, 326 deaths each year.

In my State of Florida, an astounding 3,542 deaths each year.

In Georgia, 1,640 deaths each year.

In Idaho, 217 deaths each year.

In Indiana, 727 deaths each year.

In Iowa, 272.

In Kansas, 329.

In Kentucky, 609.

In Louisiana, 800.

In the State of Maine, 123 deaths each year.

In Mississippi, 518 deaths.

In Missouri, 714 deaths.

In Nebraska, 216 deaths.

In Nevada, 450 deaths.

In New Hampshire, 132 deaths.

In North Carolina, 1,424 deaths.

In Ohio, 1,279 deaths.

In Oklahoma, 550 deaths.

In South Carolina, 693 deaths.

In South Dakota, 88 deaths.

In Tennessee, 883 deaths.

In the State of Texas, 5,857 deaths each year for lack of health coverage.

In Utah, 342 deaths.

In Wyoming, 69 deaths.

And on it goes.

And for those Senators who have shown some reluctance or some lack of interest in health care reform, I'm going to provide your names right now to go with your States.

In Alabama, I'm talking about JEFF SESSIONS and RICHARD SHELBY; in Alaska, LISA MURKOWSKI; in Arizona, JON KYL and JOHN MCCAIN; in Connecticut, JOSEPH LIEBERMAN; in Florida, GEORGE LEMIEUX; in Georgia, SAXBY CHAMBLISS and JOHNNY ISAKSON; in Idaho, MIKE CRAPO and JAMES RISCH; in Indiana, DICK LUGAR; in Iowa, CHUCK GRASSLEY; in Kansas, SAM BROWNBACK and PAT ROBERTS; in Kentucky, JIM BUNNING and MITCH MCCONNELL; in Louisiana, DAVID VITTER; in Maine, SUSAN COLLINS and OLYMPIA SNOWE; in Mississippi, THAD COCHRAN and ROGER WICKER; in Missouri, CHRISTOPHER BOND; in Nebraska, MIKE JOHANNIS and BEN NELSON; in Nevada, JOHN ENSIGN; in New Hampshire, JUDD GREGG; in North Carolina, RICHARD BURR; in Ohio, GEORGE VOINOVICH; in Oklahoma, TOM COBURN and JAMES INHOFE; in South Carolina, JIM DEMINT and LINDSEY GRAHAM; in South Dakota, JOHN THUNE; in Tennessee, LAMAR ALEXANDER and BOB CORKER; in Texas,

JOHN CORNYN and KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON; in Utah, ROBERT BENNETT and ORRIN HATCH; and in Wyoming, JOHN BARRASSO and MICHAEL ENZI.

Please remember these names. These are the people who have stalled health care in this country. These are the people who have watched when, day after day, month after month, people go broke, people remain sick and people even die because they have no health care in this country. And I want to assure each one of you who has done anything to obstruct health care reform in this country that people will remember. Maybe not the people who die, but the people who love them, the people whose names I read day after day at our Web site, NamesOfTheDead.com, and the people whose stories I told day after day. These are people who are gone, but the names, the list grows every single day until we solve this problem. And then, in the end, when we do solve this problem—and it's inevitable. Every other industrial country in the entire world has health insurance for everyone. When we do join the ranks of those countries, people are going to remember who made that happen and show kindness and love to them. People are going to remember who blocked it, and they'll show undying hatred. People are going to remember.

And you'll remember, too. You'll remember that when the time came for you to do something for your fellow man, to stop the suffering, to stop the hurt, to stop the pain and to stop the dying, you did nothing, or you didn't do enough. You're going to remember that, and you're going to know that blood is on your hands.

May God have mercy on your soul.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind the Member to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the Senate or its Members. Remarks in debate may include policy criticisms, but may not descend to personalities.

VACATING 5-MINUTE SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the request for a 5-minute special order speech in favor of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON) is hereby vacated.

There was no objection.

THE RELIGIOUS HERITAGE OF THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it's interesting following the gentleman from Florida. In the spirit of Christmas, it sounds like accusing previously Members of Congress and now Members of

the Senate of basically being responsible for deaths. I can't help but address that in this respect—ignorance is a dangerous thing, and the fact is, if you will examine, Mr. Speaker, the statistics of those, for example, you take numbers I'm familiar with of women who find a localized tumor, of breast cancer, they have a 98 percent chance of success, of complete elimination of the cancer. That's in the United States with our health care.

If we go to what the gentleman from Florida is proposing, as we see in other countries like England, it's about 20 points less. In other words, the program the gentleman from Florida is advocating would be responsible for killing one out of five women who find those type tumors. And you can run those statistics throughout health care.

So, despite what some have said—I know not intentionally trying to misrepresent, because I know the gentleman is an honorable man. As Shakespeare said, so are they all, all honorable men. But they're wrong about the facts. And the truth is, we have numerous proposals to reform health care and to provide health care for everyone. But one of the great misrepresentations that's been made this year in this House is that so-called health care reform is about health care reform. It is not. We've heard everyone from the President to lots of people on this side of the aisle say that yes, we want to insure 30 million more people. Well, the statistics tell us if they do their program, then they are going to be millions who lose their health care insurance. And even if you wanted to insure 30 million people, well, the statistics indicate those 30 million are in approximately 10 million households, and you can insure those 10 million households for potentially less than \$10,000. So for \$100 billion, you could insure all the people that they say they need to add to the health care insurance rolls for \$100 billion. And yet the estimates are anywhere from \$1.2 trillion to \$2.5 trillion as to what they're proposing will cost.

That makes it clear that the truth is their proposals are not about health care reform. They are about government control. And consistently, when you go through the statistics of the success rates with regard to different types of cancer, if you go to the programs being advocated, then people get on lists and they die waiting on those lists. People die waiting for the treatment, the therapy, the diagnostics that require lists in a socialized medicine setting.

But I want to get away from the partisan politics and the nasty allegations that have been made in here just prior to me speaking, and back and forth throughout this year, because this may well be the last hour that we have here in the House before we recess for Christmas and before we come back next year. So, instead of getting into all this rancor, I thought it would be