

Through hard work, love of family and community, they have contributed greatly to the prosperity and peace that we all enjoy as Americans today.

Although the anniversary of Greece's independence is cause to celebrate, we must also use this occasion to remember the ongoing struggle for freedom and demand for human rights on the island of Cyprus. The United States and the international community must remain steadfast in our resolve to unify the Greek and Turkish Cypriots who have been divided for far too long.

Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate my strong commitment to the Greek communities in my district, the country, and throughout the world. Their strength and dedication to democracy and peace in the world has made them an inspiration and model for modern civilization.

I urge my colleagues to join me as we celebrate Greek independence.

Mr. McMAHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Greece on her 188th anniversary of Independence.

The U.S. tradition of democracy was built upon ancient Greek political and philosophical thought. And, the flame that ignited the first discussions of democracy in Ancient Greece, shined luminously throughout the Mediterranean on March 25, 1821.

Fortunately, this anniversary not only marks the creation of a promising, new democratic state, but of a steadfast and loyal friend to the United States.

I am proud to say that Greece has stood by the United States as a strong NATO ally.

A quick and reliable partner in World War II, the Balkans and most recently, Iraq.

And as a leader through its chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

I would also particularly like to congratulate the nearly 15,000 Greek-Americans of Staten Island and Southern Brooklyn whose strong family ties, established customs and tradition of hard work have added to the character and longevity of my district.

These Greek Americans and their relatives in Greece are a tight community. Their relatives in Greece deserve to have the same level of access for tourism and business travel to the United States that most other European countries have. This is why I support Greece's prompt membership into the visa waiver program and look forward to future global opportunities to partner with our friend and ally, Greece.

On this important occasion I would like say once more: Congratulations.

Mr. WEXLER. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 273.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the

Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

REDUCING THE DEFICIT

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

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, the President's budget as recently unveiled spends too much, taxes too much, and borrows too much. We need to stop talking about reducing our deficit and actually go to work and do it.

We cannot continue to put off the tough economic decisions that must be made. In the words of Missouri's Harry Truman, the buck stops here.

It is just plain wrong to pass off more and more debt to our children and grandchildren. Folks back home in Missouri have made it clear to me if they have to balance their checkbooks, then so does Washington.

Unfortunately, the President's budget doesn't do that. Instead, it continues to mortgage the future of our children and grandchildren. I support reducing our Nation's deficit, which is precisely why one of the first bills I filed and sponsored was a constitutional amendment to balance the budget.

Now, let's be clear. Raising taxes is not the way to do that. Putting Washington's fiscal house in order is.

I am urging all of us to remember the buck stops here, not with future generations.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

AMERICAN SCHOOL KIDS AND THE LONE SURVIVOR OF WORLD WAR I

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in 1918, the war to end all wars was over. It was called World War I. It started in 1914, ended in 1918. And during that time, it was a stalemate until 1917 when the United States entered the war. The United States went overseas to Europe. Those doughboys fought in a land they did not know and for a people they did not know. They broke the trench warfare stalemate, and on the 11th day of the 11th month at the 11th hour of 1918, that Great War was over.

Fifteen million people in the world died because of World War I. And the casualties for the United States? Well, 4,734,991 Doughboys and Marines went over there to fight in that Great War; 116,561 were killed representing and de-

fending our country. They fought in the woods, in the forests of Belleau Wood, the Argonne, and the fields of Flanders. Many of them are still buried in those forests in graves known only to God. When they came home, thousands more had contracted the Spanish flu, and they died here in the United States.

When the war was over, America moved on, and now 101 years later, we honor troops from that last century. We have on the Mall here not far from this Capitol the Vietnam Memorial where we honor the 55,000-plus that were killed; we honor the Korean veterans with the Korean Memorial that has those American soldiers going through a minefield in the snow; and we honor the Greatest Generation with the World War II Memorial.

But in the tall weeds of the Mall, there's a little-known memorial for the D.C. veterans that fought in World War I. It is decrepit, it is falling apart, and like I said, it is in the high weeds. It was built largely because the kids here in Washington, D.C., saved their nickels so that memorial could be built.

But Mr. Speaker, we do not have a memorial on the Mall for all of the Americans who fought in the great World War I. America just never got around to it. So I have introduced the Frank Buckles Lone Survivor Act to expand the D.C. memorial so that it honors all that fought in World War I.

Why Frank Buckles? Because you see, Mr. Speaker, Frank Buckles is the lone American survivor from World War I. He's 108 years old. In World War I, he lied to get into the Army; he was probably 16; he should have been 18. But he went off to war in Europe and drove an ambulance and rescued other doughboys that had been wounded in France. After the war was over, he came back to America. And during World War II, he was captured in the Philippines by the Japanese and held as a prisoner of war for 3 years. And now he lives in West Virginia.

Mr. Speaker, here is a photograph of Frank Buckles, 108 years old. It is taken in front of what is left of the D.C. memorial. And what I am asking Congress to do is authorize the expansion of the D.C. memorial to include all who fought in World War I.

You know, the men that fought there should be honored by America. Even though I have offered this bill into legislation, government bureaucrats are opposed to this memorial, saying we don't need any more memorials on the Mall. That dishonors America's war dead, Americans the bureaucrats never even knew.

But kids across the Nation are answering the call of Frank Buckles. And let me explain. What is occurring is, service-learning projects in schools throughout the country are teaching their kids hands-on about World War I and those that lived and fought and died in World War I. It started in Creekwood Middle School in my home district, and now it has spread to

schools in Kentucky, Connecticut, Michigan and Ohio. And because of that, these kids are raising funds to build this World War I memorial for all that lived and died in this war.

Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that we as a Nation honor all that fought in the four great wars in the last century. And it is a shame we haven't built a memorial to them. But I can tell you something, Mr. Speaker. America's school kids will not be denied because they are the grassroots campaign to build that memorial, and they are raising funds to do it.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more powerful than American school kids that have made up their minds, and they have made up their minds that America shall honor the war dead of World War I, the Frank Buckles and all of those four million-plus that served with him. And we're going to build this memorial whether the Federal bureaucrats like it or not.

And that's just the way it is.

SCHOOLS INVOLVED IN THE EFFORT

Terryville High School, Terryville, CT
 Bristol Eastern High School, CT
 Kingwood High School, Humble, TX
 Creekwood Middle School, Humble, TX
 Riverwood Middle School, Humble, TX
 Zeeland public schools, Michigan
 Buckeye public schools, Ohio
 University of Arkansas at Montecello
 Michigan State University ROTC Program
 Hudsonville Public Schools, Michigan

□ 1530

CELEBRATING THE 33-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE COVENANT BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, the covenant to establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in political union with the United States of America defines the unique relationship between the Northern Mariana Islands and the United States, recognizing United States sovereignty but limiting, in some respects, applicability of Federal law. The commonwealth accordingly enjoys a greater degree of autonomy than most United States territories.

The covenant was negotiated over the course of 27 months, from December 1972 to February 1975, by the Marianas Political Status Commission, made up of representatives of the Northern Mariana Islands and a delegation representing the United States.

The proposed covenant was signed by negotiators on February 15, 1975, and unanimously approved by the legislature of the Mariana Islands District of the Pacific Islands on February 17, 1975.

On June 17, 1975, the covenant was submitted to Northern Mariana Islands

voters in a plebiscite. At the time, 95 percent of eligible residents had registered to vote, and of the 95 percent of all registered voters who cast ballots in the plebiscite, 78.8 percent voted to approve the covenant.

The covenant was subsequently approved by this House on July 21, 1975, and by the Senate on February 24, 1976.

On March 24, 1976, President Gerald Ford signed Public Law 94-241, enacting the covenant. Some provisions became effective on that date. Remaining provisions became effective on January 9, 1978, and November 4, 1986.

On January 9, 1978, the Northern Mariana Islands Government was established, and the first elected governor took office.

On November 4, 1976, qualified residents of the Northern Mariana Islands became United States citizens.

On May 8, 2008, President George W. Bush signed Public Law 110-229 and gave to the Northern Mariana Islands the seat in Congress that I presently have the privilege to occupy.

Today, Mr. Speaker, the people of the Northern Mariana Islands mark the 33rd year of the date when the covenant took effect.

The 33 years of our political relationship, Mr. Speaker, has been beneficial to both the Northern Mariana Islands and to the United States, such that the political agreement continues to be celebrated by very proud citizens in that most western part of the United States. I join my people in their celebration and bring their joy to this Congress.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this joyful and historical day with Congress, the Nation and with the American people.

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

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

THE BUDGET

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express grave concern regarding the budget that the Budget Committee is acting upon this week and which some have proposed be brought to the floor of this House next week.

I would suggest that it is very much in need of dramatic changes and would ask that the leadership of this Congress take that budget back and start over again because a debt of the magnitude that this country is already facing, added to the projected deficit for next year alone, now up to \$1.8 trillion, is a staggering sum of money, and it is not something that is sustainable.

We have known this for a long time. In fact, one of the namesakes of the an-

nual dinners that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle hold, the Jefferson-Jackson dinners that are held all across the country, he has been known throughout American history for his strong stand against piling on greater and greater public debt. In fact, late in his life he said, "There does not exist an engine so corruptive of the government and so demoralizing of the Nation as a public debt. It will bring on us more ruin at home than all the enemies from abroad." And we are, in fact, seeing this statement made long ago coming to haunt us in very severe ways at this time in our history.

You know, we had up until last year a \$9 trillion national debt that had been accumulated over more than 200 years of our Nation's history. And yet the projection now is that in the next 10 years, according to this budget—and that is based upon optimistic projections I would say with regard to government spending—the liabilities the government already has for a number of different programs, but the projection already offered by the administration is that that debt will increase by one-and-a-half times in the next 10 years.

That is staggering to consider that we could outstrip all of the spending that has taken place over all of that period of time in such a short period of time, and I want to show you exactly how that works with this chart.

This chart shows the doubling of the debt held by the public in a very short period of time. Projections now are that it will be even greater than this. This one shows that it grows to \$16 trillion. We now have a new projection that says \$23 trillion will be the national debt in total.

The public portion of the national debt, that portion of the debt that we owe to American citizens and other people around the world, will grow to \$16 trillion from less than \$6 trillion just last year. That is a stunning figure, but this doesn't even tell the whole story because what this shows is just the public portion of the debt.

Every year, the Congress borrows from the Social Security trust fund, and other trust funds, additional funds, and the government simply puts an IOU in those trust funds, funds so important to our senior citizens and others who are counting on those funds to be there in the future, to make sure that Social Security and other programs are actuarially sound, and yet the money has been borrowed, such that the total amount of our national debt by 2019 will come to \$23 trillion.

We have in this budget that has been offered in this Congress too much spending, too much taxation and, what we're focusing on today, too much debt. Let me call the words of President Jefferson to mind again: To preserve the independence of the people, we must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. We must make our election between economy and liberty or profusion and servitude—and that is