

□ 1915

When they went today to sell debt, the number of people that wanted to buy that debt dropped to a low level—dangerously low level—and in fact they had to pull back. And you saw the markets drop dramatically because I think it is a sign. It's a sign that people are very concerned about these runaway deficits and what this is going to do to the value of the dollar down the road. And that's why we've got to be fiscally responsible. We've got to say "yes" to fiscal responsibility and stop this out-of-control spending that is going on in Washington.

Mr. AKIN. I guess you could say we are spending too much, we are taxing too much, we are borrowing too much. That is kind of a summary of it.

If you just take a look at these bar charts about the budget imbalance, you can see that. This is not the equation of how to fix an economy that's in trouble. That's not what JFK did. That's not what Ronald Reagan did. That's not what Bush II did to stop those recessions. This is even worse than what FDR did.

The problem we have is if something doesn't work, it just doesn't work. It's not like you're being negative. You're saying, Look, it's never worked in history. What we have to do is go back to the time-tested principles of the country we love—and that's just to trust the Americans, the inventors and the investors, the entrepreneurs, the people who love this country, who live the American Dream, who come here with some crazy new idea, give it a try and, by golly, the thing works.

They wake up some day and they've been sleeping under a park bench 10 years before and some guy and his wife realize they're millionaires and they didn't even know it was going to happen to them. That's what this country is all about.

The government can never create any wealth but, boy, we can sure keep other people from ever doing any by overtaxing them.

Mr. CARTER. I'm glad you made that point. What makes America great is the giving of the opportunity to succeed. The parents right now that are sending their children off to college and times are tight. Now they're not throwing money out the window for other projects. They're not going out and buying five flat screen TVs as a good idea to make things better for themselves. No. They're saving that money. They're cutting those costs. They're not eating out every night. They're doing these things so that they can do the projects that they want to do, which is send their kids to college.

That's normal budgeting. What we're doing here, what the President's proposing is not commonsense budgeting. It's voodoo economics.

Mr. AKIN. It strikes me as it may be worse than that. What we're doing here, we're killing the American Dream. That is what's going on. We're killing the dream for people that want-

ed to come to this country, own their own house, be able to send their kids to get a better education than they got before.

This is a country that is so unlike anything else in the world. We are such a special country. We are unique in so many different ways. Whenever you see there's a tsunami or hurricane, you see our people out there helping. We've been a bastion of freedom for people all around the world. They look at America and say, Hey those Americans have got it down. You could live the American Dream over there. They come flooding into our country. We're worried about the immigration because they understand what this country has always been about. It's never been about this kind of stuff—this irresponsible, runaway government spending. This is killing the dream that Americans have always come to believe in.

I yield to my friend from Louisiana.

Mr. SCALISE. Thank you. I see our time has about expired, but I think the important note that we're finishing on, and I appreciate your passion because there are so many people that are passionate, and that's what's great about this country, and we can stop this runaway train by continuing to have this debate tonight.

Mr. AKIN. This is taxing too much, spending too much, and borrowing too much.

STIMULATING THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. CARTER. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I enjoyed visiting with my neighbors and talking in the previous hour. They are welcome to join me if they would like to talk some more.

I'm going to be joined here in a minute by a good colleague of mine, LOUIE GOHMERT, a Congressman from east Texas, and we are going to talk about an idea that LOUIE has got. It's an idea that an awful lot of people find interesting. It's the idea that maybe the easiest way in the world to get money in the hands of the American people is to just give them their own money.

It's not real complicated. It's pretty simple. But I want to let him talk to you about it because the option that we've got right now is that as we look at that stimulus package that was supposed to stimulate the economy, and if you look closely at it—and I don't want anybody to take my word for it. I want you to go to the library or on the Internet and pull either a review of that bill, or that bill, and look into it and see how the money is spent. And you will see that it's spent on industries that don't exist, but maybe they can make them exist. It's spent on things that people wish existed, and maybe they can exist. But they are investing in those things.

Maybe they won't create jobs over the next 5 years, but maybe they will create jobs in the next 10 years. That's great, except that stimulus is supposed to be about now. It's supposed to be about doing it right now. If you believe that the economy gets saved by spending money, you need to spend the money now to stimulate the economy. If you're not, then you're putting off the rescue that you anticipate.

I would argue, however, that government spending was tried very extensively from 1931 until 1941, and the unemployment in 1939, according to the Secretary of the Treasury at the time, was the same as it had been in 1931. In that 10-year period, the largest expenditures in the history of the Republic at the time—we're fixing to top those tomorrow—but at the time had been spent, and we had not gotten out of what is called the Great Depression.

I want to make a point, too, that what TODD said in the other hour that I think is important that you hear. I want to tell you because I believe it's important that anybody that stands up here, confess your own sins.

We as a Congress cut taxes, but we failed to cut spending. We deserve to be told by the voters that we didn't do it. And they did. They told us. The Democratic Party said: We'll do it better. And they hired them to do the job.

But the key is both formulas cut taxes and cut spending and the economy will blossom. It has and it will. And it always has and always will. That's what the message is about.

People say, Well, that's the same old thing. I'm sorry, but let's be honest. Let's look at the last 8 years and then look at any time in the history of the country where you were involved in two major wars, came in with a recession, and had the largest single weather disaster in the history of the Republic in an 8-year period, and yet the economy after the first three quarters grew every quarter up until the last quarter of the Bush administration. This is what you look at to say: Are we in a recession or are we not in a recession? Are we growing? We were always growing. We are not growing now. Nobody's anticipating we're going to grow for the rest of this year, although some say maybe around Christmas Santa Claus is going to bring us some growth. And maybe he is. But I have my doubts.

My friend LOUIE GOHMERT, who should be here in a few minutes, has basically said, You know, if you want to stimulate the economy, there's an easy way to do it. Let's just give people a tax holiday. Just tell them for a couple of months, You don't have to pay taxes. You get your full paycheck. You know what? That might just be the solution.

So I'm looking forward to LOUIE talking about this tax holiday. In the meantime, let's talk about the budget just a little bit and what we're looking at.

I see that one of my classmates is here, all dressed up and looking dapper.

Doctor, would you like to let me yield you a little bit of time to say a couple of things?

Dr. PHIL GINGREY.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much my good friend JOHN CARTER for yielding time. I know I came in kind of late in the discussion, but I had a couple of things that I wanted to offer as suggestions.

As we look at the budget and what President Obama and the Democratic majority want to do in regard to spending, it's based on some projections. I was watching television this weekend and I think the chairperson of the Council of Economic Advisers, Christina Romer, was saying over and over how confident she was that this budget and this plan of stimulating and restoring the vigor in the economy would work and that the President would be able to afford to cut taxes, let the Bush tax cuts expire, and that the GDP would grow and be robust.

Her projections that I recall were 4 percent GDP growth for a number of consecutive quarters. Of course, at this high unemployment rate that we're facing right now, my colleagues, it would come back down to the 6 percent range.

Well, here's a suggestion. Why don't we put some triggers on this budget and say that you can't let those tax cuts expire until you've had two or three consecutive 4 percent or more growth in the GDP and until the unemployment rate comes back down to 6 percent. If you're that confident in your program, put those triggers in there.

If my colleague will continue to yield, I've got one other suggestion, and that's based on this new program that we heard from Secretary Geithner and the Federal Reserve in regard to buying those toxic assets or troubled assets. They want the government to go—we, the taxpayers, Mr. Speaker—to go into partnership with the private sector. But who they mean by the private sector is these Wall Street Fat Cats—maybe some of them who got us in trouble in the first place. They've got cash on the sidelines. So they go into this partnership with the Federal Government but they get the best end of the deal and we, the taxpayer—my colleagues may have already gone over this, Mr. Speaker—but it's like the private sector has everything to gain, very little to lose, and the public sector—we, the taxpayer—has very little to gain and quite a lot to potentially lose.

Here's what I would suggest. If it's so good a program, why don't we just simply do this: To every person in this country who has an IRA or 401(k), maybe they're retired, to be able then for a one-time deal to put up to 10,000 extra dollars in their IRA and put that into a government fund and let them have the opportunity to invest in these troubled assets. Let the public invest and not just give this sweetheart deal to all these Wall Street Fat Cats and

we, the taxpayer, who don't want to be involved in that, we would not be on the hook at all.

Honestly, I think a lot of people who have sat here and watched over the last year and a half, particularly the last 6 months, Mr. Speaker, their IRA value, their 401(k)s drop by 40 percent, the value of their home drop by 40 percent, this would give them an opportunity—praise God, hopefully—to recoup some of their money.

I just wanted to make those suggestions. It was brought to me by one of my constituents and a good friend in my district.

Mr. CARTER. Reclaiming my time, it's pretty amazing because I got an e-mail from a very good friend of mine, a very good businessman, John Avery back in my district, basically saying exactly the same thing. He said it would be criminal for the people who put us in this position to be able to put 5 percent down and get 50 percent of the profits from buying up these assets. It would be criminal. And I happen to agree with him.

I actually think you have put forward a good plan—a place where those who have seen their 401(k)s go to 201(k)s, as we like to joke, that they be able to invest in people who would offer a group—but become involved in buying these at 5 percent down and 50 percent of the profits, these bad assets.

□ 1930

But don't let the guys that put us here get out of the mess and make 50 percent of the profit for a 5 percent investment. As my friend from back home said, it is criminal. And I agree with you, I think that may be part of what the plan is. And it frightens me with this bonus money we have already battled with that someone would plan a \$1 trillion expenditure of our Federal funds that basically is going to prop up the very guys that put us in this mess.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. If the gentleman would yield for just 15 more seconds. I want to pay attribution to my colleague, a financial wizard, really, and a good friend, Tom Garr from Marietta, Georgia in the 11th Congressional District. Because it is, Mr. Speaker, our constituents a lot of times that bring us these great ideas. And we think we know everything up here in the halls of Congress, and sometimes we don't, or a lot of times we don't and it gets to be a bizarre world, I call it. Even though the President is a great basketball fan, there is no place in this Congress or over down there on Pennsylvania Avenue for March Madness. It seems like that is what we have had here for the last couple or 3 weeks, and we need to get over that and move on. And I yield back to my friend.

Mr. CARTER. I am going to yield some time to another good Georgian, Dr. BROUN, to take as much time as he chooses to use.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. I want to commend Dr. GINGREY, because we

have been proposing all along some method of trying to develop a market for these toxic assets so that the taxpayers don't have to bail out Wall Street by giving money to the individuals that have created this mess through their own greed, through seeking their own end and putting the bill on the backs of the taxpayers, in fact, the people who can least afford to have that burden put on them, and that is small business in this country.

I want to remind the Speaker, as well as those here in the House and those listening, that Republicans offered an alternative to the TARP bill that was presented in the last Congress. Secretary of Treasury Hank Paulson was totally wrong. A lot of us on the Republican side voted against it, there were some Democrats even that voted against it. And we had an alternative, an alternative that would not have created this huge debt on the backs of the small businesses and the taxpayers of this country, and we need to find solutions.

We have proposed suspending capital gains tax. That would bring in a tremendous influx of cash offshore that is just sitting there. It would bring in a tremendous influx of cash into the financial system that would be placed in banks so that they would have money to capitalize loans. And, it would help stop some of the problems that we have with frozen credit markets in this country.

We have proposed suspending the mark-to-market accounting that the Federal regulators are still requiring the banks to go by, which is continuing to freeze up assets so that banks cannot lend out money to people with good credit. It makes absolutely no sense. We need to suspend mark-to-market and find some other means of accounting that makes sense, that doesn't just totally torpedo the capital assets of all these financial institutions.

Republicans have presented these plans. Unfortunately, the leadership, last year President Bush and under the directions of Hank Paulson, wouldn't even listen to us. They wouldn't consider those things. And it is one of the big mistakes I think that the last administration made. But, more importantly, we see the same kind of policy coming on right now today through Secretary of Treasury, as well as this current administration, as well as the leadership here in this House. And we as Republicans presented proposal after proposal after proposal, and the leadership here in this House and in the Senate have been obstructionist. They will not listen to any other alternative but their own steamroller of socialism that is being shoved down the throats of the American public. And it is going to strangle the American economy. It is going to choke the American people economically.

So I commend Dr. GINGREY for a proposal of creating a market for these so-called toxic assets. They have value as you, Judge CARTER, and Dr. GINGREY

were just discussing, and I applaud that.

We can solve an economic problem, and we can do it in the private sector, without increasing the debt of the Federal Government; because the Federal Government is borrowing too much, it is taxing too much, and it is spending too much, and we have got to stop it. I believe very firmly that if we don't have these alternatives considered, that it is going to strangle the American economy, it is going to lengthen the recession, it is going to deepen the recession, and maybe even push us into a frank depression. And we have got to stop it; not only for the good of small business, which is the engine that creates jobs and is the economic engine that pulls along the train of economic prosperity here in America, but also for the people who are going to be most disserved by this philosophy that the leadership in this House and the Senate are proposing, and that is, it is going to hurt the people on limited incomes, it is going to hurt the people that are on the lower end of the economic ladder here. We need to help them up the ladder by giving them good jobs, good-paying jobs. And the policies that have been proposed by this administration, particularly this new budget, are going to hurt the people that our colleagues on the other side supposedly want to help the most. But it is going to hurt those poor people. It is going to help to put those people in more economic straits, dire straits, where they are going to be struggling even more.

So I do congratulate Dr. GINGREY for bringing us another proposal, one that makes sense economically, one that makes sense to get us out of this economic downturn that we are suffering under.

Mr. CARTER. Reclaiming my time, if I may. Actually, I agree with everything you have to say.

And the real point here is that the American people have common sense. We talk about all of this budgetary language here. If we are honest, it is confusing to us, and it is certainly confusing to the American people. But they understand that when they have a budget shortfall in their budget back home, they have either got to make more money, work harder and make more money, or they are going to have to save. And if they don't have the opportunity to make more money, they are going to have to cut back on something.

Like I said a minute ago, you know, I have talked to people who say, I am sending my kid to a State school in Texas, which we are very blessed to have. They are expensive, but they are still reasonable, State schools. And, I have found that if my wife and I will just cut out buying our lunch every day at work and just take a sack lunch from home, we have got almost enough money to pay the tuition. We save almost enough money to pay the tuition.

So the American people know how to budget. They know how to look at

what they have got and what they have got to get, and figure out a way to make it work.

So Dr. GINGREY's suggestion, which happens to be a suggestion of one of my constituents, too, is an outstanding suggestion because it basically makes sense. Sure as heck, if somebody puts the country at risk by their poor decisions on investing, then certainly don't let them get the benefit of a government program spending \$1 trillion worth of taxpayers' money by letting them bail themselves out with a 5 percent investment. I agree with that. That is perfectly good common sense. And I think every American in America would say, I don't want those guys that created these bad assets to be able to pay 5 percent of the value that they are going to set, understand that, and then get 50 percent of the profits when they clean up those assets and sell them. And that is what is available potentially under the plan that has been put forward by Secretary Geithner.

Now, if he will step up, and I think we owe a duty now to tell him the American people don't want that, so that he can make rules that say all you guys that bought all these bad assets, don't you come in here with your 5 percent and try to bail this deal out. We have other people who want to invest in it. And then a great idea would be let people who lost on their 401(k)s join investment pools and maybe invest in some of these that might make them good money. A 50 percent return on a 5 percent investment is not a bad deal.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. If the gentleman will yield.

Mr. CARTER. Yes, I will.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. I appreciate the gentleman for yielding.

You made a couple points that I would like to point out to the folks who are listening to us tonight, is that we have a proposal by the Democratic leadership, by Secretary Geithner and by the administration, that is going to continue to borrow and borrow and borrow. And who are they borrowing from? Short term, they are borrowing from China and other foreign entities; but long term, they are borrowing from our children and grandchildren.

But, Judge CARTER, you made an excellent point, a good commonsense point that people all over this country do when they have economic problems, and that is that they tighten their belt and stop spending. And that is exactly what the Federal Government needs to do. We need to live on a balanced budget, just like the American people do every day. Unfortunately, there is not much common sense around here in the Federal Government, and we just see this policy of borrowing and borrowing and borrowing. We are borrowing way too much. And all it is going to do is just continue us into a deeper and deeper hole, because you cannot borrow and spend yourself to prosperity. And I think that is a great point that you just made.

And these assets, these so-called toxic assets have value, they have real

value. They are not zero that the mark-to-marketing accounting rules require banks to mark them down to just because they don't have a market today.

Mr. CARTER. Reclaiming my time. I think we have made an excellent point here, as we both talked about; we came here because our good friend LOUIE GOHMERT, my colleague from Texas, has a proposal that deserves to be heard. And so I am going to yield such time as my good friend LOUIE GOHMERT may choose to use tonight, and I will just be here to try to help.

Mr. GOHMERT. I appreciate my friend from Texas yielding, also a former judge. Actually, he served on the bench longer than I did. And, Mr. Speaker, we appreciate the opportunity to try to point out some of these things tonight.

What struck me months ago was hearing that trillions and trillions of dollars were being committed on behalf of the Federal Government to try to help the economy recover. So I wanted to know how much money gets spent into the Federal Government by taxpayers just paying their taxes, ordinary individual taxpayers. And the answer we got was \$1.21 trillion was what was expected to be paid from individual taxpayers for the entire year of 2008.

So I am thinking \$1.21 trillion, that is less than supposedly Fed Chairman Bernanke and Chairman Paulson and now Secretary Geithner are committing of our money. Can you imagine what would happen with the United States' economy if you just told all the taxpayers in America: No taxes. For the whole year of 2008, no taxes. And if you paid it, you are going to get it back; and if you haven't paid it yet, don't worry about it before April 15th, because you are getting all your money that you have already paid in.

Can you imagine the cars that would be bought, the car dealers and the car manufacturers that would be bailed out by Americans choosing which car they wanted to buy? That was my thinking. That was the thought process.

I got a message from Newt Gingrich; he liked the idea. He said, what would you do if you added FICA in there? Well, if you added FICA, that is \$65 billion per month. You could have 2 months of allowing every American to get back every dime that was being withheld for Federal withholding, both FICA and individual income tax, and do that for 2 months and still have spent less than the \$350 billion that the Obama administration was looking to get from the half that was left over.

□ 1945

It turns out there was more than half left over. There may have been \$450 billion from the original 750. We haven't got the final figures, which is another reason we all opposed that bailout back in September. It was a terrible idea because it was just too open-ended.

So anyway, Human Events had an article, this was their headline, Nobody

Pays Taxes For 2 Months, the Gohmert Tax Holiday Plan. Now one Texas conservative is challenging Congress and the White House with a commonsense plan that is much more likely to help our economy recover more than bank bailouts or any handouts to car makers. Two months' break from income or withholding for all taxpayers. The total cost would be actually less than \$350 billion. It is effectively a 70 percent tax reduction for a year.

Also it was indicated by Moody's Economy, they did their own study and found that this idea would increase the 1-year gross domestic product more than any other plan that involved taxes. So I thought it was a good idea. And then I had my friend, Judge CARTER from Texas, point out that apparently other people had beat me to the tax holiday idea.

Mr. CARTER. I have been on the floor of this House talking about the fact that we need to resolve some ethics problems that are out there so that we can be sure that we feel comfortable trusting people that are making decisions around here. And then when my friend, Brother GOHMERT, talked to me about his tax holiday, I realized that I've been talking about two tax holidays now for a month. Mr. RANGEL took a tax holiday for \$10,800 for 20 years. He didn't pay his taxes on his Dominican Republic rentals for 20 years. He took a tax holiday. And then when he finally ended up paying them, he didn't pay any penalty or any interest. So that's a tax holiday.

Mr. GOHMERT. What gets interesting, CNN had this report and had the quote from our President. He said, "I campaigned on changing Washington and bottom-up politics. I don't want to send a message to the American people that there are two sets of standards, one for powerful people and one for ordinary folks who are working every day and paying their taxes." That was February 3, 2009.

Well, here is a chart that indicates that may have been going on, anyway, in spite of what the President said. You have got some powerful people here that have taken a tax holiday for a number of years, no penalties, no interest, where on the other side you have ordinary folks who are paying their taxes, and that is the quote from our President, "ordinary folks who are paying their taxes," he said he didn't want two sets of standards. Well, we have had two sets of standards. They don't get any tax holiday. The leadership here has fought it tooth and nail. If you don't make your payments, there are no excuses. They come after you for the penalty and interest and all kinds of stuff to go with it. So, unfortunately, despite the assurances of the President, there are two standards that have been taking place here.

Mr. CARTER. Reclaiming my time for just 1 minute.

That has been my exact point. And that is why I introduced legislation to put forward the Rangel Rule. And the

Rangel Rule is very simple. Everybody that owes taxes that doesn't want to pay penalty and interest, just write at the bottom of your tax form "exercising the Rangel Rule," and the IRS won't be able to charge you penalties and interest. They will have to treat you just like Mr. RANGEL. I thought that was fair. And I thought I was being reasonable about that.

Then we have the Secretary of the Treasury come along, and he took a 4-year tax holiday on \$43,200. Although he did pay some interest, he still hasn't had any penalty assessed against him either. So I guess we could change it to the Rangel-Geithner tax holiday or the Rangel-Geithner Rule. But I just kind of like Rangel Rule. It has a nice ring to it.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Will the gentleman yield?

Let's call it the Rangel Dangle Rule. I like that better.

It seems like people around here don't mind, there are a number of people around here that don't mind raising other people's taxes because they don't pay any themselves. So I compliment the gentleman. I appreciate your allowing me to throw in that. But I like your Rangel Rule. Can I do that?

Mr. CARTER. Reclaiming my time, you can certainly sign on to my Rangel Rule bill, and we are going to try to get that thing before this Congress, and we are going to start getting pretty serious about getting it done.

Mr. GOHMERT. It is really ironic, but it has been about 30 years ago, back then, a comedian, he wasn't so much an actor back then, I think he had been with a group called the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band. But he was out on his own as a comedian. Steve Martin was originally from Waco, Texas. He went to Waco High. Anyway, as part of his comedy schtick, he would say, you know, I'm going to write a book, "How to Have \$10 Million and Not Pay Taxes." And then he would lead the audience on. Well, they would want to know, how do you get \$10 million and not pay taxes? He would eventually say, okay, okay, I'll let you in on the secret how you do it. First, you accept \$10 million, which is pretty funny, because nobody just gets themselves \$10 million unless you're a special person or something. And then he said, you just don't pay taxes. This is what Steve Martin said 30 years ago. Just don't pay taxes. And if they ever catch you, all you have to do is say, "I forgot."

Now, 30 years later, it is basically what we are seeing. People, powerful people. We don't want two sets of standards, one for powerful people. Well, the powerful people are able to file their forms, and if they have not paid their taxes, then they could just write, yes, "Rangel Rule," or perhaps they could say, "I forgot." Or "it was just an honest mistake," or, the favorite one apparently of powerful people, "Look, I used TurboTax. It's not my fault. TurboTax did that. I didn't do it." And then that saves you penalty

and interest. So there ought to be a number of things, Rangel Rule perhaps, but TurboTax Rule. Maybe that would also free you up from interest or penalty on your taxes.

I yield back to my friend.

Mr. CARTER. And I thank you.

We have got here, what's really interesting is when the IRS gives you the money to pay the taxes, and gives you a form that tells you you owe the taxes, and says, now here is the check, you're responsible for your own taxes, be sure and pay them, and you sign that form agreeing to pay them, and then you say, it was only \$42,000, and I just forgot. I mean, that is kind of what like our friend, Mr. Martin, said.

We make a little bit light of this, and we do that because, quite frankly, I don't want to be accused of being mean-spirited. But the facts are that we want people that are giving us ideas to save us from what could be an economic disaster. We want them to speak openly and honestly and come from a situation that we can trust them. And my whole issue that I have been raising are these issues of trust. I am not doing what has been done in the past and accusing people of being corrupt and that type of thing. I am not doing that.

I am pointing out accusations made by other people. And I'm saying that these accusations need to be resolved so the American people can trust the folks they are counting on to fix this economy. And the head of the tax committee of the House of Representatives, they need to be confident they can trust him. Our Ethics Committee needs to finish the investigation and get that done. And if he is exonerated, wonderful. But the American people have the right to know. The Americans have the right to know, can they trust the Secretary of the Treasury when he doesn't pay his taxes and he says, "TurboTax messed up"?

First off, I kind of thought he was in a pay grade a little higher than TurboTax. But the point is, it's about trust. It is about the American people trusting the people they send here. That is why I continue to come up here every week and talk about these issues of lapse of memory or whatever it may be, and they need to be resolved by a finder of fact, whoever that may be, to resolve this issue.

Let me yield to my friend from Georgia for a moment.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

We were just speaking a few moments ago about many alternatives that have been presented to this House that would be in the private sector that wouldn't borrow from our grandchildren, and our good friend, Mr. GOHMERT, with his Federal tax holiday, has provided us with a plan that would stimulate the economy and help hard-working Americans without growing the size of government.

My friend from Texas serves as a constant reminder that we are spending

the people's money and that policies like those supported by Secretary Geithner are just the most recent examples of policies from this administration that are not for the people, of the people, or by the people.

Mr. GOHMERT's plan is especially necessary as Secretary Geithner attempts to increase his power while moving away from the dollar, now that he is apparently open to moving the world economy towards an IMF-controlled currency system. Maybe he was at IMF too long and he is embracing a world currency based on IMF. I believe that the Secretary of the Treasury needs reminding that we are part of a government that is directed by the Constitution of the United States.

In fact, Congresswoman BACHMANN just yesterday asked him where in the Constitution is the authority that he is wanting to claim and expand his powers? He couldn't answer that because there is none there.

And that document, the Constitution, does not provide for any evolutionary changes in the Secretary's power without explicit Congressional approval, and, by extension, approval from the people of the United States.

Right now, neither has granted such approval.

This expansion of the powers of the Treasury Department is a cause of great concern and should be of great concern to every American. I was concerned when former Secretary Henry Paulson first started us down this path towards nationalization and government-run industries. And I'm even more concerned as I stand before the American public today and before this House today.

There are many good and justified actions that Congress can take to get us back on the path to economic prosperity, like a Federal tax holiday of Mr. GOHMERT's. But these recent developments, spearheaded by Secretary Geithner, are not only ill-advised, but they do not begin to fall into the realm of constitutional duties or authority.

I hope and pray that there is economic success in America's near future. But I believe that any gains to be made will come in spite of the actions of Treasury Secretary Geithner and not because of them.

It is my sincerest hope that people all over this great Nation will contact their friends, contact their family and contract their elected representatives to tell them to prevent the unconstitutional extension of the Secretary's power.

I'm pleased that Mr. GOHMERT has led the charge today to discuss these commonsense plans to restore power back to the people of this country, and I wish that congressional leaders would spend much more time considering our, the Republicans', commonsense alternatives that return power to the people instead of promoting the Treasury's grab for more and more power, particularly in view of the fact that it is unconstitutional and they have no con-

stitutional authority to do that. I am very concerned about the Secretary's grab for power, nationalization of banks, nationalization of all businesses, such as they want to control AIG and others.

We have got to stop it. We have a steamroller of socialism going on here. That steamroller of socialism is being shoved down the throats of the American people. It is going to strangle the American economy. It is going to choke the American people economically. That steamroller of socialism is being driven by NANCY PELOSI, HARRY REID and the President of the United States. And that steamroller needs a speed bump. It needs a stop sign.

□ 2000

And Mr. GOHMERT's plan is an excellent plan. In fact, I'm a cosponsor of your bill. And I applaud this ingenious way of helping to stimulate the economy. And I'm also, should be a cosponsor of Judge CARTER's bill, for the Rangel rule. I love it. I think it's a commonsense way of saying that everybody should be treated equal under the law. That's what the Constitution calls for. Everybody should be treated equal under the law. And if Mr. RANGEL, Mr. Geithner, and others have the ability to do that, every American in this country should have the ability to write "Rangel rule" on the bottom of their tax form. And I love it. I think it's something that just puts a microscopic focus on the problem we have in this country today. The powerful, the elite, want to live in a way that all the other people in this country cannot, and it's wrong. It's absolutely wrong. And we must stop it. And I congratulate you, Judge CARTER.

Mr. CARTER. Reclaiming my time, and I thank you for those comments. Now I'd like to yield so much time as he chooses to consume again to my friend, LOUIE GOHMERT from Texas.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you. I appreciate the time. And I appreciate your leading this debate.

Mr. Speaker, it's good to have a chance to talk about these things. And I appreciate so much my friend from Georgia, Dr. BROUN, points being made. And as he said, this is an incredible power grab that's going on.

Now, we've had, made some light and been a little tongue-in-cheek tonight. But it's a little scary what's going on. And when you look at all the things that have happened so fast in 3 months, I'm telling you, I had no idea we could ever move this far this fast down the wrong road. And some say, a road to socialized, or to socialism like Europe, European socialism. It's not European socialism. It's socialism. That's what it is.

And what I struggled with, as I heard our President saying not only are we going to make it harder to get energy, because for folks, Mr. Speaker, that might not know at home, today, we passed an omnibus land bill that was 170 different land bills combined into

one, 100 of which or so that had not been properly through committee process and had the vetting they required. And so many of those put more and more land off limits to production of energy, took natural gas and oil away. It's going to help raise the price of gasoline at a time when people have lost their jobs, other people are cutting what they're willing to take, so that others will keep from losing their jobs. It is a tough time for many people.

Now, I really feel like if the President would quit spreading the gloom and doom that our President did start—George Bush went out first and said, you know, depression's coming. But, good grief, you know, President Obama, with his gifts of communication, I thought, would help turn that around. Then he came in and also tried to set the bar low so it would be easier to get over it. Turns out that's been hurting the economy. Market's up a little bit this week, but good grief, at what price? Look at what's happened in the past.

So then when I hear our President say, you know what? We're going to cut the amount you can deduct for charitable deduction. And as I heard him, as I heard a replay of the interview, he said, basically, that a deduction shouldn't be the reason that you make a contribution to a charity. Well, that's nice. But it encourages people to make charitable deductions. So we start demeaning people who are making charitable deductions. Goodness, they shouldn't be doing it just to get a—you shouldn't make charitable contributions to get a deduction. So you're going to belittle the people that are helping the charities, when most of us know it's the charities, after a disaster, that can move straight in and immediately start helping people, not only in this country, but in other countries around the world. But whereas the U.S. government, we have to go through the government in another country, and often, whether it's a famine or something, we've been propping up governments that had no business being propped up because we're trying to get charity to the people, whereas charities can run right in and take care of it.

But anyway, I've struggled. Now, why would the President here, at this time when we're taking over AIG, taking over the car dealers, taking over Wall Street, why, at this time, would you choose to limit the deductible of charitable contributions?

And then it hit me. It hit me. It's all about the GRE. All about the GRE. That's what all of this is about, the GRE, the Government Running Everything. That's what it's about, the Government Running Everything. And that's what all of these things are about.

You know, people in positions that should have known better, not paying taxes. People, I mean, Secretary Geithner, for goodness sakes. I was on a conference call with constituents.

One lady I didn't know before the call was telling me she had just retired from the IRS. She said, IRS employees are incensed that they now have a boss who didn't pay his taxes when he knew he was supposed to.

And she went on to say at one point, I'd gone over to the boats at Bossier City in Louisiana, and won \$600. And when I went to file my tax return and filed it, I forgot I had gotten that \$600 that I won over there. So I immediately filed an amended return. And because I was filing an amended return, under the IRS rules, she said, an IRS agent who underpays taxes, no ifs, ands or buts, there's no excuses. You're fired. That's it. No recourse.

She said, I was being fired, and the only thing that saved me was my supervisor pointed out that I had not underpaid my taxes. I was getting money back, so the amended tax return didn't actually cause her to have to pay anything. Therefore, she was able to scramble, with her supervisor's help, and keep her job over \$600, where she'd paid all the taxes that was due.

But now, everybody else in the IRS has a boss that has done exactly what she was about to be fired for if she hadn't overpaid her taxes.

It isn't right. And it appears that there are two standards already under this administration, one for powerful people, and then the other one for ordinary folks who are working every day and paying their taxes. That isn't right.

And we don't need the government running everything. Look at what we've done. You know, the government should be about making sure there's a level playing field so everybody can play fairly. And then we're to provide for a common defense against enemies, foreign and domestic. That means cheaters. So if people are cheating out on the playing field, we move in, we go after them.

But it turns out we have been so busy trying to tell auto makers how to make cars, trying to tell banks who they have to loan to, what they have to do, we have been so busy trying to tell everybody how to run their life, the government running everything, that we haven't been taking care of going after the cheats like Madoff. That should never have happened. I don't care which administration's in charge. Apparently it was going on under a lot more than one. It doesn't matter. The government needs to quit trying to run everything. Go after the cheats. Make sure everybody plays by the same rules, and if they don't, then punish them. But we should not be running everything, and that's what we see over and over.

And I hope the American people will think about these things, Mr. Speaker, as they start seeing gas prices go higher and higher, at the very same time we're putting more and more of our energy, our own energy off limits. And we're making, having more and more dictation, this cap-and-tax, going to

add thousands of dollars to people's budgets they have to pay when we've got a budget here running out of control. And it is deeply disconcerting.

I know there are some people that are saying, well, maybe the American people will forgive the Republicans for overspending previously now that they've seen the Democratic majority has just more than doubled anything Republicans ever did, and give us another chance. I hope they will. I know those who were pushing the overspending before have learned their lesson.

But the trouble is, I don't know how much more of this damage to the country we can survive for the next year and a half before the next election. But I appreciate the chance to point these out.

And I would yield back to my dear friend, fellow former judge, Judge CARTER.

Mr. CARTER. Reclaiming my time, I thank Judge GOHMERT, Congressman GOHMERT, for a really heartfelt explanation of why he is trying to come up with alternative ideas. It's the same reason that Dr. BROUN and I are trying to come up with alternative ideas. We just see this phenomenal number that is looming on the horizon of expenditures, and we can't help but be just absolutely scared to death as to what it means for our grandchildren. I don't have any right now, but, by golly, I plan to, and I want to make sure that when I do, that I'm not leaving them \$100,000 a person debt, which is something that at least one of the pundits has said, that when they finish with this, every American's portion of the debt will be over \$100,000. That's today, without any interest stacking up on it. What's it going to be for our grandchildren and our great grandchildren? Because, believe me, the kind of numbers that they, the Obama administration, is putting forward in 60 days, they've done almost \$3 trillion. There's another trillion on the drawing board that we just heard about that we're going to bring out of the Fed, which is ultimately still got to be paid back. We're not even looking at the numbers that are over in the Fed. And then we've got a \$3.6 trillion budget proposed, which supposedly is going to be crammed down our throats next week, without much participation on the side of the minority.

So, yeah, we're worried. And yeah, that's one of the reasons that I come up here every week and talk about it's time for us to resolve these issues of trust. And I want to make it very clear, I sat here, when we were in the majority, in the chair that the Speaker's in sitting here tonight, and heard the term "corruption" used to every member of the Republican Party every single night. And I'll tell you, there were some people that deserved it. But the vast majority of the people didn't. And those issues got resolved, and they got it resolved in the Court and they got it resolved by the rules of the Republican conference.

There's nothing resolving the issues that are being brought up. And there's lot more than I've talked about here today, and I will talk about those too, because nobody's accusing anybody of being corrupt, but somebody is saying there are accusations that should be resolved. And it's a trust issue.

Can the American people trust our economy, trust our soldiers on the battlefield, trust our health care to people who have trust issues with the American people?

And I think the American people should say, whoever's in charge of resolving it, resolve it. Tell us, is this something we should be concerned about? Because they are. Or shouldn't we be concerned about it?

That's the reason I'm here. I think that's the reason Dr. BROUN's here. We're here to say, these are serious issues, serious issues for the American people.

I would like to have a little more time at the end. But I would like to yield some time to my friend, Dr. BROUN from Georgia.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Thank you, Judge CARTER. I appreciate your yielding.

You brought up a whole lot of very, very good points here. The American people should not trust this budget that's being presented because all it's going to do, in my opinion, is deepen the depression or recession, and probably put us into a recession.

I believe very firmly that if there is corruption, people should go to jail. If there are people who we cannot trust, as Congressman GOHMERT was talking about, if an IRS agent can't be trusted, they're fired. The American people need to be firing people who can't be trusted.

And we, as Republicans, are presenting a lot of things that the American people can trust in that look to the private sector, and will solve this economic problem. I applaud Congressman GOHMERT's plan of a 2-month tax holiday. That's the reason I very strongly endorsed his bill. In fact, I presented my own bill, or actually it was an amendment to that stimulus or nonstimulus, "porkulus" bill that we had here. My idea was if the Democratic majority was so bent on spending \$835 billion, let's just divide it amongst the American people who are taxpayers, legal resident taxpayers in this country, and bail them out, instead of bailing out Wall Street. And if you divide that out, per legal resident taxpayer, we would have sent every single legal resident taxpayer in this country right at \$9,000. A couple would have got almost \$18,000.

□ 2015

But the Democratic majority would not consider my amendment, one which makes sense and one which does not borrow from our grandchildren and put them in hock the way we see with this new budget coming forth on this floor next week.

So I applaud you, Judge CARTER, for bringing out these issues of trust. I know the American people did not trust Republicans, and they took us out of the majority in 2006. I was not here then. In 2008, they actually took more Republicans out of office.

We have, I think, presented many things to the American people that they can look at, and they can trust the Republicans to bring forth ideas and to stand firm on good ethics. On the trust of the American people, we are presenting solutions after solutions that make sense economically and that do not borrow from our grandchildren, and hopefully, the American people will trust us.

I just applaud what you are doing, Judge CARTER. I yield back.

Mr. CARTER. I thank you for your comments.

I want to thank my friends for coming out tonight and for joining me in this hour of talk and discussion. I want to thank the Speaker for being patient with us tonight and for staying here with us, and I thank those who work to make a recording of what is said here, which I happen to know from long years of experience is a very difficult job, and I always have a lot of sympathy for the court reporters who have to take down people who talk like I do, so I want to give them some credit here tonight.

I want to thank the American people. To those who did listen in, let's use some common sense, and let's get everything out on the table, and let's resolve any ethics issues we've got so that America can trust the people who are talking to them. If we talk straight and if we try to come up with straight ideas, I think the American people know that good, solid, commonsense ideas can fix things. I hope that they will participate in this representative form of government by contacting their Representatives and by making suggestions. I have gotten good ones from my constituents. They will send me more good ones, and I hope that everybody in America will contact their Representatives and will let them know how they feel about things and will give them the good ideas, because that is what a representative form of government is all about, and that is why we have a Republic. I am proud to be a small part of this Republic.

With that, I would like to yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. WESTMORELAND (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today and the balance of the week on account of an illness.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. CUMMINGS) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. HOYER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KRATOVIL, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SUTTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SESTAK, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFazio, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHERMAN, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. GUTHRIE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. HUNTER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. POE of Texas, for 5 minutes, April 1.

Mr. JONES, for 5 minutes, April 1.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, March 30, 31 and April 1.

Mr. CASSIDY, for 5 minutes, March 30, 31 and April 1.

Mr. FORBES, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. BIGGERT, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at their own request) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BARTLETT, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FLAKE, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 17 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 26, 2009, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1048. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Installations and Environment, Department of the Navy, transmitting notification of the result of a public-private competition, in accordance with 10 U.S.C. 2462(a); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1049. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; District of Columbia; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference [DC103-2051; FRL-8775-3] received March 13, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1050. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Redesignation of the Greene County 8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area to Attainment and Approval of the Maintenance

Plan and 2002 Base-Year Inventory [EPA-R03-OAR-2007-0176; FRL-8777-3] received March 13, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1051. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; Amendments to the Open Burning Regulation [EPA-R03-OAR-2007-0200; FRL-8773-1] received March 13, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1052. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Redesignation of the Clearfield/Indiana 8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area to Attainment and Approval of the Maintenance Plan and 2002 Base-Year Inventory [EPA-R03-OAR-2007-0624; FRL-8777-4] received March 13, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1053. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Alabama; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference [AL-200822; FRL-8759-9] received March 13, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1054. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Revisions to Permits by Rule and Regulations for Control of Air Pollution by Permits for New Construction or Modification [EPA-R06-OAR-2005-TX-0026; FRL-8780-5] received March 13, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1055. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Final Determination to Approve Research, Development, and Demonstration Request for the Salt River Landfill [EPA-R09-RCRA-2008-0354; FRL-8777-9] received March 13, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1056. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Pendimethalin; Pesticide Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions [EPA-HQ-OPP-2008-0513; FRL-8400-1] received March 13, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1057. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Pyraclostrobin; Pesticide Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions [EPA-HQ-OPP-2008-0936; FRL-8402-8] received March 13, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1058. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference [MD202-3118; FRL-8775-2] received 13, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1059. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification of