

other Members have signed on, and we're going to send that letter on to him also, raising these issues.

We and the others made six recommendations. These recommendations are:

1. Ask Congress for a clear authorization for the use for military force in Afghanistan and Pakistan;

2. Define the goals objectives and benefits of U.S. involvement in Afghanistan;

3. Determine the human and financial resources needed to carry out our efforts;

4. Develop a timeline for the redeployment of our troops and military contractors out of Afghanistan;

5. Clearly describe the role of NATO, the United Nations and other international partners;

6. And finally, meet the immediate humanitarian and economic needs of the Afghan people.

Madam Speaker, these six steps offer a good blueprint for avoiding a repeat of the mistakes that the United States made in Iraq. We need nation building, not empire building, because the way to defeat our enemies is to help the Afghan people to rebuild their country and to give them hope for a better future. Schools and roads will win us more hearts and minds than bombs and bullets.

And a new foreign policy, based on conflict resolution and humanitarian assistance, is the most responsible and smartest way for us to achieve our goals in the Middle East and Central Asia. I hope that President Obama's new plan for Afghanistan will reflect this strategy and these values, because if we don't learn from our Iraq experience, we are doomed to repeat it.

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

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

26TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI PEACE TREATY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, today I wish to acknowledge and express deep gratitude to timeless leaders President Jimmy Carter, Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin for their historic, unprecedented and courageous journey toward peace in the Middle

East three decades ago today. March 26 marks the anniversary of their signing of the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty, momentous in that it was the first such treaty between an Arab nation and the nation of Israel. It followed the Camp David Accords which these leaders had signed the prior year. They signed it right here on the White House lawn.

I can remember the day. History will record for all time that incredible step forward of lions and lambs lying down their arms and their fears. I can still recall the day of that signing. It was a sunny day, as the three leaders pledged their political and personal capital to that unprecedented feat. It was historic. It was bold. And it was costly. In 1981, an assassin in Cairo would take the life of President Anwar al-Sadat. In 1983, Menachem Begin resigned. President Jimmy Carter lost his re-election campaign.

President Jimmy Carter and his gifted National Security adviser, Zbigniew Brezezinski, carry the collective living memory of that pristine moment of the Camp David Peace Accord and the Egyptian Israeli Peace Treaty. To date, only one other Arab nation has signed a peace accord with the nation of Israel, Jordan, in 1994, well over 10 years later, through the equally courageous vision of its timeless leader, King Hussein.

Looking back, as today's upheaval across the Middle East reminds us of old fractures and unmet potential, we can ask, how did these men do it? How did they make history?

The enmity between people and nations was no less. The prospects forward seemed very dim at that time. Yet, their inspired and dogged efforts did not take no for an answer. That peace agreement ended 30 years of war between Israel and Egypt. Now we have seen 30 years of peace between them. By anyone's measure, this remains the most important set of diplomatic achievements in the Middle East in modern history. We need to celebrate them.

And as we honor the achievement of these leaders, and the nations to which they dedicated their lives, let us remember what they did.

President Jimmy Carter stated, "War may sometimes be a necessary evil. But no matter how necessary, it is always an evil, never a good. We will not learn how to live together in peace by killing each others' children."

Prime Minister Menachem Begin said, "If through your efforts and sacrifice, you win liberty and with it the prospect of peace, then work for peace because there is no mission in life more sacred."

And President Anwar al-Sadat said, "Peace is much more precious than a piece of land."

Could we only recapture that moment again. How much our world still owes these men for leading history forward, for showing us the way. They did not allow the status quo or entrenched

rivalries and worn-out dreams to quash the prospect of peace. They gave their all to it. Today, we commemorate and we celebrate their greatness.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN'S FUTURE

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to come here today with some of my colleagues to talk about several issues that we think are of very much concern to the American people. Whatever we do here in terms of spending, we know has a major impact on our country. And it's not just for today that it has an impact but it's for a long, long time. And so we are highlighting today what is happening with the budget that has been made public today and that's going to be debated next week, and probably adopted, unfortunately, unfortunately for the American people and for our children and our grandchildren, maybe even our great grandchildren. So we'll be talking about that for the next hour.

And I'm joined by two of my colleagues that I want to yield some time

to to ask them to make some presentations on some particular issues they are very familiar with and do a wonderful job of explaining. So I'd like to yield now to my colleague from Georgia, the distinguished physician, Mr. GINGREY.

□ 1315

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from North Carolina for yielding.

As she was pointing out, next week, the budget—the House version of our budget for fiscal year 2010—will be on this floor, and I think there is the full intention for that budget to be voted on and passed this coming week. Those of us who do not sit on the Budget Committee are not sure of all of the fine details in that budget, but we do know what our President has proffered to the Congress and to the American people as to what he would like to see as the Office of Management and Budget develops this \$3.6 trillion budget. I think this is the highest amount of spending that we have had in this country since we originated our country way back in 1776 and 1779.

The bottom line in regard to it is really simple as we look at it, as we, the loyal minority—the Republican party—look at that budget. There is no question but that it does three things: It spends enormously; it taxes painfully, and it borrows dangerously. Said another way, President Obama's budget spends too much; it taxes too much, and it borrows too much. We feel that that is wrong. As I talk today with my colleague VIRGINIA FOXX, I think it is important that people understand that there is a better way.

According to Republican philosophy, it has always been our feeling—and I think this is a major difference between the Republicans and the Democrats—that we think “less government.” We think people have an opportunity to hold onto more of their hard-earned dollars and to pay less taxes to the Federal Government and to limit spending. That is the best recipe to get us out of this economic ditch that we are in. You have heard, and I have heard my colleagues on the other side of the aisle many times say, “The first rule of a ditch is that, when you're in one, you need to stop digging.” Well, without question, this budget that the President has submitted to us is just digging a deeper and deeper hole in regard to the amount of debt—well, deficit spending, red ink—from year to year. In the aggregate, of course, you accumulate more and more debt, and you have to pay interest on that debt. It is just something that we, in our lifetimes, will never pay back. Our grandchildren will never pay it back, but our great grandchildren—maybe they will pay it back, but what a burden, what a legacy to leave to the next generations.

So I thank the gentlewoman. I am really happy to be sharing the time with her and with my other colleagues.

I will yield back to Ms. FOXX, and we will continue to discuss some of the finer points of this budget that we are going to be voting on next week.

Ms. FOXX. Well, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for setting the stage for this and for reiterating what we, as Republicans, believe so strongly in—that the President's budget spends too much, taxes too much and borrows too much.

Well, what we know now is that the budget presented by the Democrats in the meetings in the Budget Committee yesterday is basically the same. They kept trying to say their budget was going to be different from the President's. They have heard the firestorm. The American people are beginning to wake up. They realize that some things that were said to them in last year's election are not turning out the way they thought they were going to turn out, and they are getting a little spooked by that, so they've been trying to backpedal from that. They were saying there is going to be less spending, smaller deficits, lower debt, but in the meeting yesterday, during the markup, we know now that the two budgets are really the same. Here are some of their comments that prove that. We don't have to say it. We just use their own words:

“This budget resolution shares the President's priorities.”

“This is a key step to making the President's plan a reality.”

“The President has proposed, and under this budget, we support his plans.”

The chairman's mark “embraces and supports the President's budget.”

These remarks admitted the obvious. The mark could be described as different only if one believed the following: that the 5-year budget window as opposed to the President's 10-year plan is not designed to hide the explosion of cost after 2014 for the President's ambitious, big-government agenda; that the Alternative Minimum Tax will be fixed in a deficit neutral fashion—that is, by raising other taxes, though the Democrats, themselves, have rejected this approach for the past 2 years; that Making Work Pay Tax Credit, a key provision in the President's budget, will not be extended unless offset, and it was created as an emergency; that the Troubled Asset Relief Program, the TARP, is over, and the Treasury Secretary's financial stabilization plan will get no more funding; and that the mark's numerous reserve funds, also known as tax-and-spend, will not be used to increase spending and taxes in the President's plan for a sweeping expansion of government.

So we know now that the Democrat budget, presented by the Democrat leadership, is the same as the Obama budget, so we will go on to show why we think this budget is not the right thing to do.

Before we spend more time on that, I want to give some time to my col-

league from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE), who has an excellent presentation to show how we are getting into the messes that we are getting into as a result of the action of the majority. I know there are still some people out there who don't understand that this Congress is controlled by the Democrats. It has been controlled by the Democrats since January of 2007, and while they keep talking about what they have inherited, they have to own up to the responsibility at some point.

I yield now such time as he may consume to my wonderful colleague from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

(Mr. LATOURETTE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LATOURETTE. Well, I thank the gentlelady from North Carolina.

You know, I think the gentlelady from North Carolina and the gentleman from Georgia have correctly hit on the fact—and I think anyone who realistically looks at the budget that we are going to be asked to pass judgment on next week—spends too much, taxes too much and borrows too much from future generations, but of as much concern or maybe of more concern to me is, basically, that there are things occurring in this House that I never thought would occur.

This is my 15th year in the United States Congress. I am proud to represent my corner of Ohio. There is this notion that we can rush legislation through without reading it and without knowing what is in it. Especially on our side—and I will talk about the stimulus bill in a minute—we got about 90 minutes to read 1,000 pages, 1,000 pages in the stimulus bill. They gave us 90 minutes to read it, and then people are surprised when funny things happen. The funny thing I want to just mention and why I hope we don't go down this road with the budget that spends too much, taxes too much and borrows too much is what happened in the stimulus bill.

So, again, this was put forward as “we have to get it done.” We had to get it done by the President's Day recess for some reason. I don't know what the reason was, but we had to get it done and get it done in a hurry. On the Tuesday of the week that we considered the stimulus bill, we had a vote here in this Chamber. The proposition was—and it was a silly proposition—before we would be asked to vote on the stimulus bill, every Member would be given 48 hours to read the bill, and it would be posted on the Internet so our constituents and anybody who was interested could also read the bill and could have 48 hours to sort of digest it. Everybody voted. Everybody who was here that day voted to do that—every Republican and every Democrat.

Well, then we came along to Friday, and the bill was filed at a little after midnight on Thursday night. I apologize that I wasn't up to receive the 1,000 pages to read it then, but when I did get into the office, there were 90

minutes to read 1,000 pages between the time I got to work and the time that we had the vote. That was the length of the debate.

People said, "Well, don't worry about it, you know. It's only 1,000 pages. It only spends \$1 trillion. Why would you want to read the thing?" Well, sadly—and we warned—what happens when you do things like that is that people get embarrassed, and in fact, people did get embarrassed.

Some folks may remember that, for the last couple of weeks, people have been upset about these million-dollar bonuses, these multi-million-dollar bonuses, included in the bill, that went to executives at a company called AIG, which many point a finger to as at least participating in the economic decline that we, sadly, are experiencing.

When the stimulus bill was considered in the United States Senate, across the Rotunda on the other side, two Senators—a Democratic Senator by the name of WYDEN from Oregon and a Republican Senator by the name of SNOWE from Maine—authored an amendment that went into the stimulus bill that said—and it was pretty simple—that if you are a firm that is getting billions of taxpayer dollars, do not give million-dollar bonuses to your executives. I mean that is something that I certainly support. As a matter of fact, it passed just like our thing—that we were going to get 48 hours to read the bill. It passed in the Senate by voice vote. Every Senator said, "Aye." Again, that sounded pretty reasonable to a lot of us.

Now, there are those people who may not follow how everything works here—and God help you if you do follow everything that works here—but know that, once they have passed their bill on the Senate side and once we have passed our bill over here, we each appoint conferees. They go into a conference room, and they hash out the differences between the House bill and the Senate bill, and then it comes back to each body. We vote on it and we are done.

Well, there's a funny thing. One of my favorite movies when I was growing up was "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum." A funny thing happened on the way to this conference report. The Snowe-Wyden amendment, which said no bonuses for people who got billions of dollars of taxpayer money, was taken out. What was put in instead, Madam Speaker, are these 47 words that are next to me. The 47 words not only removed the Snowe-Wyden amendment that said "no bonuses," but this language specifically protected the bonuses, and authorized AIG and anybody else who got TARP money—who got billions of dollars in financial help from the Federal Government, from our taxpayers—to pay out the bonuses. I'm going to talk about how it got in there in just a minute.

The thing that was amazing last week was that we had people all over

town who were shocked. "I am shocked that they paid out bonuses." "I am shocked that we all had this happen." "We want our money back." "I am shocked." Well, it is a little bit, Madam Speaker, like the guy who takes a bath with the clock radio on the side of the bathtub, and the thing falls in, and he's surprised and he's shocked. Clearly, anybody who voted for the stimulus bill voted to approve the bonuses to AIG and to all the other banks that have sort of led us into this mess, but then they were shocked.

Ms. FOXX. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. LATOURETTE. I would be happy to yield to the gentlelady.

Ms. FOXX. My memory is this—and maybe you said it and I missed it. My memory is that every Republican voted against the stimulus; is that correct?

Mr. LATOURETTE. That is my recollection, yes.

Ms. FOXX. All right. And 11 Democrats joined us?

Mr. LATOURETTE. That would be correct.

Ms. FOXX. Right. So no Republican voted for that stimulus bill which took out this provision; is that correct?

Mr. LATOURETTE. The gentlelady is correct.

I would just say that, in talking to my Democratic colleagues who voted for the stimulus bill, I think some of them were surprised that this had happened, but I think the point is that this is not the way to legislate. You don't give the power to three or four people to go into a room, to take out an important provision, to then put in an important provision, to not give anybody time to read it, and then say you are surprised that there might be something goofy or embarrassing in the piece of legislation. So, basically, anybody who voted for the stimulus bill voted to give millions of dollars of bonuses to AIG officials and to everybody else.

Now, when they found out and people were embarrassed—and we went through this political theater last week, a charade—a lot of people got up on the floor and said, "We want our money back." You know, "give us our money back." So they used the Tax Code in a way that I have never seen, which said we are going to tax these bonuses at 90 percent. That was their fix. You know, even that fix is—I will use the word—"stupid" because it is only 90 percent. So the top guy at AIG got a \$6.4 million bonus. Even under their fix, he still gets to keep \$640,000. They are either entitled to some money, to all of their money or to none of their money. There is this notion that we fixed it and that we were mean to these people in that we only let them keep \$640,000.

You know, the gentlelady, Ms. Foxx from North Carolina, a person who works in my district outside of Cleveland, Ohio who makes \$40,000 a year would have to work for 16 years to make \$640,000.

Anyway, we had a lot of fancy speeches, and people said, "We are going to fix it." So we have been talking for 2 weeks, Madam Speaker, about how it happened, and nobody is willing to take responsibility. I mean, obviously, the thing, you know, didn't just drop down from the sky, and one paragraph goes out and this paragraph comes in. Somebody had to do it. We started last week with a number of our colleagues, and we said, you know, there are 435 Members of Congress. There are 100 Senators, and so we started with 535 suspects.

□ 1330

Through good detective work by a lot of my colleagues, we have been able to narrow that down because sadly, not one Republican was invited in this room where this deal was cut. So you can take out all 178 Republican Members of the House, all 38 Republican members of the Senate. And then we continued to cram it down.

And we have had public statements from a number of people. There was a report by CNN's Dana Bash that this thing was hashed out over 8 hours. And the President's chief of staff was here and the President's director of the budget was here. And so while we got down and eliminated a lot of Members of Congress, we had to add some people.

So, Madam Speaker, what we have arrived at—and this was one of the favorite games that I played when I was a young person, and I enjoyed very much playing it with my children, and I bet a lot of people in America have played the game of Clue. With apologies to our friends at Hasbro, we now find ourselves with the sad situation where somebody put into this bill the authorization to pay out these millions of dollars of bonuses to AIG and everybody else, and now we're shocked.

Well, those of you who play the game of Clue know you need to have a suspect—or the person that committed it—where it happened—in the House—and what the weapon was.

Now, we started with a great advantage here because we didn't have to go lead pipe, wrench, gun, all of that other stuff. We know the crime was committed with a pen. So we're one-third of the way home. We also have the rooms located here in the Capitol that indicate where activity took place. And I will tell you that we're not there yet, and we really are seeking the person that did this. Just come forward. Just tell us you did it and we can move on to something else. And then maybe you can tell us why you did it, and we will be happy.

But the reports indicate, first of all, they were all pointing to the senator from Connecticut, Senator DODD. And why? Because he was the Chairperson of the Senate Banking Committee, and he is the person who has made some observations that his staff put it in at the suggestion of somebody else's staff and so forth and so on. And I don't know. But it went to him.

But I am not really suspecting Senator DODD because I think he has a vested interest in making sure we clean this up. And, you know, when there is a mystery and you can't solve it, people begin to speculate and people begin to pass out nasty rumors and you become the subject of rumors.

And two rumors that have coordinated around Senator DODD that makes people think, well, he must be the guy. Well, one, is he is the largest recipient of campaign donations from AIG and their executives. And that makes some people say, "Well, of course he did it. He's paying back AIG." I don't think that's true.

Second, there was a second report in the Hartford Courant this week that his wife was employed by a subsidiary of AIG. So that causes the tongue wagers to say, Hey, you know what? We really think it's him.

But, Madam Speaker, I am a big fan of Agatha Christie novels. And the great thing about those novels is you read them, you always think it's the butler and you get to the end of the book, it's not the butler. So I really don't think it was Senator DODD who did this.

The other folks that we have listed here—and I am also ready to give up on the distinguished chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. RANGEL of New York. And I think the only reason that we have him here still is was he was quoted coming out of the room—because he was in the room—but when he came out of the room, he said, "It's very frustrating when the Congress is run by only three people." So I think since he's expressing disappointment by that, I don't think he's one of the three people that actually got it done.

Press reports indicate there was shuttle diplomacy between the Speaker's office and the Senate leader's office, and that's why we have the distinguished Speaker of the House, NANCY PELOSI of California, and the distinguished majority leader of the Senate, Mr. REID of Nevada, over there. And these are their offices.

And we are told that these two people—well, we will start with this fellow. He used to serve with us in the House. He is a fine fellow. He is now the President's chief of staff. His name is Rahm Emanuel from Illinois. And he was here for 8 hours shuttling back and forth between these two offices. And so is this fellow, who may not be as familiar to the Members as Mr. Emanuel, that's Peter Orszag, who happens to be the budget director for the new administration.

So we know from events that a lot of shuttling back and forth over an 8-hour period between these two offices, a deal was eventually struck, this language is inserted, the Snow White language is removed. And the problem we have is nobody will say they did it. And I think that that is a sad state of affairs. I think whoever did it should come forward and tell the American people you

did it. Because whoever did it embarrassed—anybody that voted for the stimulus bill has to be embarrassed by the fact that they authorized the bonus to AIG.

Ms. FOXX. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. LATOURETTE. I would be happy to.

Ms. FOXX. But no Republicans need to—in the House—need to be embarrassed, right, because none of us voted for this.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Well, the gentleman is right. And that's why we have really done some hard work. I have to give credit to a lot of my cohorts on this. They've really done a lot of work from going from 535 that I think we really are down to these 6 and 7 people.

I should explain the question mark down there because the Secretary of the Treasury has twice appeared before the Financial Services Committee and given testimony. And when asked directly who did it, he said staff at the Treasury communicated with staff and Senator DODD's office. Now, listen, that is the biggest "what, are you kidding me?" I've ever heard because staff can't write legislation, the Treasury can't write legislation. Members of Congress write legislation. And to hide behind the skirts of some unknown, unnamed staff member I think is a tremendous act of cowardice, and so just come out.

But I put the question mark there because that question mark we hope to eventually fill in with the staffer at Treasury who apparently is somehow involved. All we're going to ask that staffer is, "Who told you to do it?" It has to be somebody in power. It can't be the staff got together and said, "Hey, I got a good one. Let's give out some bonuses to AIG." So we are going to continue this quest.

But the point in your special order that I just wanted to raise is that we have this budget next week. And this bill where this horrible thing happened only—and I can't believe I have been in Washington so long I can say "only spent a trillion dollars," the proposal next week on the floor proposes to spend \$3.6 trillion.

And I would just hope under the straight-faced test, can I look at myself in the mirror when I wake up in the morning, that whoever is in charge, whoever happens to be in the next room where this is being negotiated says, You know what? I've got a novel idea. Why don't we let everybody read the bill, understand the bill, so we can have an intelligent debate on the bill. And when it goes to the conference committee and it goes in these rooms and there are only five or six people involved, maybe you check back and say, "You know what? I have made this change. Here's why I made the change. I hope can you go along with it."

But this back door, backhanded sneaky stuff, it doesn't belong not only in the United States Congress, it doesn't belong anywhere.

So I thank the gentlelady for yielding, and I would enlist the gentleman from Georgia, the gentleman from Pennsylvania and the gentlelady from North Carolina as junior sleuths. And we will continue this discussion next week, and we're going to find out who did it, what room it happened in, with the pen.

I thank the gentlelady.

Ms. FOXX. I want to thank the gentleman from Ohio for coming up with this very innovative way of describing this process, and I hope that the folks who created the game Clue are going to appreciate that there may be a revival of interest in it and that our young folks who are listening will look up the word "sleuths" and if they don't know that word, it's a good word to learn today. I advocate young people learn one word every day, and they can join us as sleuths and perhaps become identified with what we are doing here in terms of figuring out who is spending all of this money, who is putting these items in these bills that nobody has a chance to read because they are coming up at the last minute. They have to be done right now, and if they are not done right now, the world is going to come to an end.

But I know that our colleague, Mr. THOMPSON from Pennsylvania, is going to be sharing some great insights with us about the budget and, again, other activities that we are doing. He has just joined the Congress in this session, but he's already making a great name for himself in terms of presenting items on the floor and doing hard work as a Member of Congress.

So I would yield the floor to Mr. THOMPSON from Pennsylvania.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentlelady for yielding me some time here.

Obviously, today there are serious concerns about the President's budget, a budget that borrows too much and spends too much and taxes just way too much.

Prior to my running for Congress this past year, I spent 28 years in the health care business. And one of the first things you learn in the medical profession is "do no harm."

So, Madam Speaker, I come to the floor today to speak briefly about the harm the President's budget will cause back in rural Pennsylvania. My rural district is much like the heartland of this country. Mom-and-pop shops, family farms, small businesses. Just run-of-the-mill folks looking for a fair shake.

So in evaluating the President's budget, I asked myself one question: will this proposal help or hamper the economic growth in my district. And truth be told, it didn't take long for me to answer this simple question.

Increasing taxes on small businesses, as this budget proposes, will penalize the very segment of the economy that is best equipped to get us back on track. Small businesses are creating 7 out of every 10 jobs. They are the backbone of rural America. They are the

farmers that harvest much of the food that we eat. They are the small, independently owned energy companies whose employees go to work each day with the goal of achieving American energy independence. They are the independent truckers that haul the goods that we consume.

You see, Madam Speaker, these are not Republican or Democrat jobs, but they are jobs that are at risk of being eliminated if this budget proceeds as currently written.

The President's new cap-and-tax energy policy, which will inevitably drive up the cost of every manufactured and processed good we consume, will increase utility bills and will cost more just to fuel up at the tank and will devastate rural America.

Madam Speaker, oil was discovered in my district 150 years ago. We are also home to the most promising natural gas play in the country and the third largest in the world. Many of my constituents make a living by harvesting the natural resources that we are blessed with. These same natural resources, I may add, that are used to build windmills, solar panels and bio-refineries.

You see, without natural gas and oil, there would be no windmills or solar panels. These very natural resources are the key feedstock in manufacturing the next generation of clean energy sources.

So we should celebrate the American energy industry, the fuels that made this country what it is today, the fuels that will serve as a bridge to the renewable energy future; not penalize it, as does this budget that the President proposes.

All is not lost, however. The Speaker will have an opportunity to allow fruitful debate and deliberation next week when the budget comes to the floor. House Republicans will put forward a budget proposal that offers smart government solutions and address the very issues I've laid out.

The American people are hurting. The economy is on life support. And if the Democratic leadership asks themselves this simple one question—will this budget help or hamper economic growth—they will come to the table and work with Republicans to find a reasonable compromise for the good of the entire country.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Will the gentleman yield for just a second?

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. I certainly will.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. I appreciate the gentleman yielding to me because I had some interesting statistics that follow right in with what Representative THOMPSON was talking about.

And in regard to those small businesses in his district, I think he described his district is very much like mine in northwest Georgia.

But just before we started this hour with Ms. FOXX controlling the time on discussing this budget, I had met with

a good friend from the American Chemistry Council, and we sat down. He talked to me about this budget, this \$3.6 trillion budget that borrows too much, spends too much, it taxes too much.

And he said, PHIL, let me just tell you what this does to jobs that are—business are part of the American Chemistry Council membership. But in your district, the 11th of Georgia, we're talking about 1,500 direct jobs and 95,000 indirect employees of the chemical industry in the 11th District. And he was talking about the same thing Representative THOMPSON was talking about in regard to that energy tax, that hidden energy tax. And this business in chemicals and plastics, they are very energy dependent.

And then on top of all of that, this cap-and-tax where the President is trying to get \$600 billion to spend on education and a single-payer health care system and green energy, it's really hurting these small businesses that depend on electricity. And there is a Superfund tax of \$2.8 billion over 2 years. They do a lot of things with accounting that hurts small businesses.

But I just wanted to—because it's so important. It goes along right with what is going on in western Pennsylvania.

I appreciate the gentleman for yielding, and I will yield back to him.

□ 1345

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman for his remarks. The fact is, it sounds like our districts are very similar, and we're hurting right now, and we need leadership, leadership with a vision for smart government solutions, and that's not what I'm seeing with this proposal coming forward next week from the President.

With that, I thank the gentlelady.

Ms. FOXX. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for coming and sharing his perspective. As he indicated, we all represent small businesses. We all represent people who are struggling in this country. Middle class families and small businesses are making tremendous sacrifices when it comes to their own budgets. They're learning to live within their budgets, but Washington continues to spend trillions in taxpayer dollars on bailouts and other government programs.

We have people up here who are so out of touch with the American people. Some of them never go home. Some of them have been in Washington 50 years. A vast majority of the majority party has been here for a long, long time. Many of them have parents who served in Congress. They really are out of touch with the average American, and I think it's extraordinarily unfortunate.

I'd now like to yield some time to our distinguished colleague from Michigan, the chairman of the Policy Committee, Mr. MCCOTTER, who always has an interesting perspective to bring to us and usually some words we have

to look up in the dictionary to see exactly what the definition is.

Mr. MCCOTTER. I thank the gentlelady. I will try to not use any words that anyone finds indecipherable or offensive.

One of the reasons that we are here today addressing this budget is tied directly, intellectually, to the Clue game that our colleague from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) put forward.

In trying to find out who put into the stimulus bill the AIG bonuses, protections, and approvals, we are getting to the heart of what type of policy we can expect from this administration. Do we have an entrepreneurial, humane economy or do we continue to go with the too-big-to-fail model that has already failed and cost taxpayers hundreds of billions of their dollars? This AIG amendment clearly shows that the mistakes that were made last fall with the Wall Street bailout are being perpetuated today. We cannot have this.

The reason our economy is recessed is because of misfeasance and chaos within our financial institutions. Today, the budget that we have before us of \$3.6 trillion sends the signal to the American people not just that it borrows too much, not just that it spends too much, not just that it taxes too much, but that the misfeasance and chaos, the collapse of the financial markets, is on the verge of collapsing our political institutions.

The dot.com bubble which hurt so many people was, as we know now, replaced with a housing bubble. This housing bubble has collapsed. This budget is an attempt to replace the housing bubble with a government bubble, a bubble in the trillions of dollars of taxpayers' money. And when the government bubble breaks, as inevitably it will, where will we be?

We have to get back to commonsense priorities, not only in our political institutions, but within our financial institutions. And one of the fundamental concepts has to be that responsibility will be encouraged and rewarded here, irresponsibility will not be.

So to see the situation in our country, a very dire one economically for so many, including those in my home State of Michigan who have experienced 12 percent unemployment, for them to see this institution believe it can simply spend trillions of dollars to get us out of this situation tells them that their government is on the verge of making chaotic, shortsighted, long-term, injurious decisions. And you can see this in their comments to my office, and I'm sure my colleagues can see this in their comments to you.

They want order, sanity, justice, equity restored not only to these financial institutions that failed but to the political institutions that are supposed to work for them. And yet as we watch proposals to go through to allow too-big-to-fail to continue to be the operative theory, we are on the verge of seeing the United States government too-big-to-succeed.

Big government does not stop chaos. Big government is chaos. And with the expansion in the trillions that is proposed today, we can talk about the items such as cap-and-tax that will hurt my blue collar and white collar people in the manufacturing industry; we can talk about how all those costs will be passed on to hard pressed consumers to shrink their family budgets for consumer goods that have had this tax added on and passed on or into their home energy prices at the very worst time for them; we can talk about abstract numbers and deficits. But let us be clear, the American people know that this is an irresponsible budget and that in a very chaotic time all it will do is increase the chaos around them that threatens their hearths at home.

We have to stand firm. We have to say “no.” We cannot borrow and spend our way out of prosperity. We cannot tax our way into prosperity, but we can do the opposite.

And I would encourage all Members of this caucus, this Congress, to remember one thing: our prosperity is from the private sector, not the public sector. The corporations are pass-throughs for taxes. They do not pay them. They collect them from you. And the more we allow the private sector, individual, hardworking men and women to have to pay more for the cost of government, the longer it is going to be before we can hand to our children the Nation’s greatest economy on earth which we inherited and which today we have to preserve for them.

I thank the gentlelady for the time.

Ms. FOXX. I thank the gentleman from Michigan for his comments, and I actually had a constituent come to me this week and say what do you think about the phrase “America, too big to fail”? That’s a scary notion because that phrase has been used for these agencies and institutions that have been failing, and it is scary for us to think about that.

This is the greatest country in the world. We have been extraordinarily successful by being very prudent in the way that we spend money. For two centuries, Americans have worked hard so their children could have better lives and greater opportunity. Democrats now want to reverse that order by having our children work hard so we don’t have to make the hard economic choices now that need to be made.

It is a terribly cynical approach to governing, and it is one that I can hardly believe we’ve come to in this country. But it appears to be that way, and I thank, again, Mr. McCOTTER from Michigan for always putting things in a very strong philosophical light to make us think about them in the larger order. And of course, we always need to think that way. I’m very grateful to him for doing that.

I now want to yield back to my colleague from Georgia for a few more comments about where we are, and then I will wind up our Special Order for today and hope that we give the

American people a lot to think about this weekend.

Most of us are going home to our districts where we’ll be dealing with our constituents. They will be telling us how this budget’s going to affect them and what’s happening to them on a day-to-day basis, and this is the kind of thing we always need to stay in touch with.

So I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Once again, Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from North Carolina, my good friend, VIRGINIA FOXX, and thank her for bringing this information to our colleagues on both sides of the aisle because here it is, late Thursday afternoon, but we will be right back here on Monday and probably be in session next week until maybe even Friday or Saturday—I think it’s possible we’ll be here until Saturday—to try to pass this House version of the budget.

I’m very hopeful that there will be some significant cuts, as Mr. SPRATT, the chairman of the Budget Committee, brings that budget to the floor for a vote, and I hope there will be an opportunity for a Republican alternative. Certainly, we have a very good Republican alternative. I think there was a press conference on that today led by JOHN BOEHNER and PAUL RYAN the ranking member on the Budget Committee.

We need to make sure that all people are represented in this people’s House, and, hopefully, we will have a good debate next week and come up with a budget that’s more reasonable than what the President has sent over here that was drawn up by his economic advisers, Christina Roemer and Larry Summers and, of course, Peter Orszag, the OMB, Office of Management and Budget, director. Our Congressional Budget Office, bipartisan to the core, said that his predictions of the amount of deficit were \$2.3 trillion short.

And before I yield back to Ms. FOXX, I want to just talk about some of the things in that budget that almost are incredulous.

You know, Madam Speaker, this weekend I guess starting what, tonight, we go right back to pick up, as we go home—and I’m sure lots of folks across the country will be enjoying March Madness as the Sweet Sixteen gets down to the Final Four late Sunday afternoon. So this March Madness is wonderful for sports fans, and I know that President Obama is a big sports fan, in fact a big basketball fan; but I have had people in my district say there is no place in Washington for March Madness, but that’s exactly what we’re looking at in regard to this budget. I mean, it’s unbelievable.

Listen to this, Madam Speaker, in regard to increasing taxes during a recession, preposterous. Total tax increases during this recession over the next 10 years, \$1.4 trillion; taxes on small businesses—which by the way we all know, nobody disputes the fact that they cre-

ate about 75, 80 percent of the jobs in this country—this cap-and-tax, or cap-and-trade as President Obama calls it, this is a hidden tax of \$646 billion on every man, woman, and child in this country. It causes the energy costs, electricity, natural gas, it just goes up, and it’s a hidden tax.

But every month, the middle class, the small working people, the small businesses are paying that tax so that we can take that money, put it in a reserve fund and pay for national, government-run health care, which I quite honestly think that the people of this country spoke loud and clear, Madam Speaker, back in 1993–94 when they totally rejected HillaryCare.

So, you know, we do need to reform health care, and we need to have our market-driven system improved. And we’re all for that on this side of the aisle and reduce the number of uninsured, and we can do that without giving a blank check to the Federal Government.

But I could go on about some of these taxes, but I know Representative FOXX, who’s leading the hour, has a number of things that she wants to talk about in the final 15 minutes or so. So I just want to thank the gentlelady for letting me join her, and I look forward to seeing her back next week as we try to bring some sense into the budget process.

Ms. FOXX. Well, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his help on this Special Order. I think that having a variety of folks come in and speak about this issue is much better than having one talking head here. We have lots of different perspectives. We come from different experiences. I think that’s very important to us.

But I want to summarize some of the things that we have been talking about, and frankly, I hadn’t thought about using the term “March Madness” for what’s going on, but I certainly do think it’s an appropriate term for the proposals that have been made for this budget.

But I want to again reiterate some of the things that have been said before. This budget will give us the largest tax increase in the history of this country. It will be more borrowing than all the other Presidents have proposed in the history of this country.

□ 1400

If you take every President from President George Washington to President George W. Bush, what President Obama has recommended and what the Democrats have endorsed in this Congress is going to create more gross debt in 10 years than all the other President’s combined. That is a pretty staggering thing to think about.

Thomas Jefferson was a very wise man. He’s represented here in this Chamber. We have a lot of folks in the gallery today. I’ll point out to you that around the top of the House there are these profiles of people. All of them are ancient lawgivers except two. Behind

me, over the Speaker's podium, there are two Americans—Thomas Jefferson to my right and George Mason to my left. The rest are ancient lawgivers—with Moses being over the center door in full face.

We honor Jefferson in this country. The Democrats supposedly honor Thomas Jefferson for his wisdom. But this is what he said—and they have certainly forgotten this—“I sincerely believe that the principle of spending money to be paid by posterity under the name of funding is but swindling futurity on a large scale.” Thomas Jefferson, 1816.

Our Founders understood this. They wanted a small Federal Government, not one that would oppress the people, not one that would give us huge tax increases and take money from the people. They can spend better than the government can spend it. That's what Thomas Jefferson believed in—and I believe in that—and I'm so sorry that the Democrats have forgotten the lessons he taught their party and taught our country.

Another thing in this budget is a new energy tax that will cost every household up to \$3,128 annually. The President promised tax cuts. There's going to be about \$600 in tax cuts given to the average family. But, in exchange for that, they're going to be \$3,128 more for energy. It doesn't sound like a good deal to me. It's also going to cost American jobs.

We know the cap-and-tax plan, in addition to all these taxes, are going to cost jobs, because the majority of the tax increases are going to fall on small businesses. They're not going to be able to keep being the engine of job creation that they have been.

There's going to be a new tax on charitable giving, which could cost American charities at least \$9 billion a year. The cynical attitude behind this is: We don't need the private sector doing all these things. We're going to take your money because government knows how to spend the money better.

In fact, it will destroy many charities in this country that are doing wonderfully good things. But it will hurt them and, in some cases, destroy them, all in the name of having the government run our country.

Some people have said that this sounds a lot like Animal Farm. I would say to people: If you haven't read 1984, if you haven't read Animal Farm in a long time, or, if you've never read them, get them out and read them and think about what's happening in this country as it compares to what was written in those books.

This will be the highest level of borrowing ever. It's going to be unchecked spending, which will result in borrowing hundreds of billions of dollars from China, the Middle East, and other nations that own our growing debt.

As I said earlier, for the first two centuries of this country, Americans have worked hard so their children could have better lives and better op-

portunities. Democrats want to reverse that order by having our children work hard so we don't have to make the hard choices now.

Let me show you another chart here. Again, you don't have to take my word for it. I can show it to you graphically.

This is going to be doubling the debt held by the public. Look how those numbers go up. This is what it was under Republican control of the Congress and a Republican administration. This is what it is under Democratic control.

According to the CBO, President Obama's budget would add \$9.3 trillion to the national debt. This will lead to unprecedented borrowing, with debt held by the public increasing from 41 percent of GDP in 2008 to 82 percent of GDP in 2019. We have never seen that kind of debt, even in wartime.

In 2010, the budget's going to spend \$172 billion on interest on the national debt. Just think about that—\$172 billion just on interest. It's going to be piling up more and more debt and less money to spend on real priorities.

This is not the way for America. Putting our children and grandchildren into debt is wrong.

After we had the bailout last fall, I went home and I was taking my grandchildren to school and they said to me, “What were you doing in Washington? We know you were up there, you came back, you went back.” I said to my 12-year-old grandson and 9½-year-old granddaughter—I said, “Well, what the Congress just did was put you, your children, and your grandchildren into debt for more money than you're ever going to be able to pay off.” And my 9½-year-old granddaughter Rana said to me, “Grandma, why do you want to put little children into debt? I said, “Rana, I don't. That's why I voted “no.” That's why most Republicans voted “no.”

We understand what's happening here. We don't want to do this. But what is about to occur here is even worse than what happened last fall, even worse than what happened with the stimulus. These people are going headlong in because they don't want to take the responsibility to do what needs to be done now—trim spending and make tough decisions.

Somebody said the other day that we're pretty soon going to be like Argentina, because the Federal Reserve is printing dollars trying to get the economy stimulated. The government's spending, spending, spending. We're pretty soon going to go into a situation where we're going to look like a third-world country.

I don't think that's what most Americans want. Most Americans love this country, they want us to continue to be the greatest country in the world, and they want us to continue to be successful in what we do. They want us to leave a country that is good and economically and fiscally healthy to our children and our grandchildren and to our posterity.

That's not the direction the Democrats are taking us. They cannot blame this on the Republicans because they have been in charge of the Congress since January 2007. They started the spending going that way.

The President, who's promised so many good things and led the American people to think that he would be a moderate person and who would bring good change to this country, is bringing change, all right—the kind of change that is going to lead us down a very, very dark path and create problems that will take a long, long time for us to fix.

So I want to say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that this is the wrong thing to be doing. You've been cramming things down our throats and down the throats of the American people for the past 2½ months. This is not the direction this country should be going in.

We need to be fiscally responsible. We need to remember our oath to the Constitution. We need to be looking after this country and the people who elected us here to do that.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

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

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to speak on behalf of the Congressional Progressive Caucus about the importance of the Employee Free Choice Act.

First, I want to thank Representatives LYNN WOOLSEY and RAÚL GRIJALVA for their leadership as co-chairs of the Congressional Progressive Caucus. Each week we come to the floor to speak to the American people about important progressive values that we share.

I want to thank also Chairman GEORGE MILLER for his strong leadership on the Employee Free Choice Act and for being a stalwart champion for working people throughout his impressive career. I feel fortunate to consider Chairman MILLER both a friend and a mentor, and especially when it comes to workers rights.

It's time for us to set the record straight about the Employee Free Choice Act. Due to the well-funded opposition campaign by corporate interests, a lot of misinformation about the Employee Free Choice Act has filled our airways, our newspapers, and public discourse. Well, it's time for that to stop. Let's set aside the myths and talk about reality.

First, to fully understand the importance of the Employee Free Choice Act, an appreciation of the history and context of organized labor in America is a prerequisite. In 1935, the Congress