

Energy is another area where Republicans have offered and will continue to offer commonsense solutions. Last year, even before gas prices hit the roof, we proposed a sensible approach of finding more and using less. Republicans are also proposing a dramatic expansion of nuclear power. This would match the high demand for energy in the world's largest economy with a growing public desire for cleaner, more efficient energy sources.

Health care and energy are just two of the areas where Republicans will continue to offer better ideas in the coming months. We hope our friends on the other side are more supportive of these ideas than they have been of our proposals on the economy.

On this point, it is interesting to know that just a few weeks ago, Democrats showed strong support on the Senate floor for Republican proposals to protect small businesses and middle-class taxpayers, as well as a proposal to keep the Nation's debt at a level we can manage. They also expressed strong support for a Republican proposal that climate change legislation not lead to higher gas and electricity bills.

Yet these Republican proposals which drew such broadspread support on the Senate floor just a few weeks ago were, for some reason, taken out of the final product that came out of the closed conference.

Democrats cannot have it both ways. Americans are suffering. They are losing homes, and they are losing jobs. Republicans have offered, and will continue to offer, proposals that put the concern of these ordinary Americans first: Democrats' overspending, taxes, and debt.

Massive spending and debt is not the answer to a recession. A one-party solution with no checks and balances is not the answer for health care. Opposing clean, nuclear power and expanded use of other domestic energy sources is not an answer for our energy needs.

Voting for tax relief before voting against it is not the way to show the American people you have their best economic interests in mind. Republicans have not been hesitant to offer our strong public support for the new administration, and, again, I commend the President on his approach to Afghanistan and Iraq. But we have not been hesitant to state our differences clearly.

That has been the story of the first 100 days for Senate Republicans and will continue to be the story for Senate Republicans: Principled support, principled opposition, and pragmatic, creative solutions to meet the challenges of the day.

TRIBUTE TO ROBLEY REX

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise because my State and our country have lost one of our last links to a by-gone era. On Tuesday, April 28, Robley Rex passed away a few days shy of his

108th birthday. He will forever be remembered as Kentucky's last World War I-era veteran.

Ninety years ago, a teenaged Robley Rex landed in France, caring a rifle and wearing a U.S. Army uniform. He was a long way from Christian County, KY, where he was born in 1901 and raised.

Wanting to see the world and fight for his country, Robley enlisted in the Fifth, and later the 28th, Infantry Division and was deployed to Europe. After leaving the Army in 1922, he returned to Kentucky and settled in Louisville, where he became a postal worker and ordained Methodist minister.

Robley was not only the Bluegrass State's preeminent veteran, he was also its preeminent volunteer on behalf of veterans. Decades after his own active service ended, he continued to serve his fellow soldiers by volunteering at the Louisville Veterans Affairs Medical Center, right up until the last years of his life.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars honored him for over 14,000 hours of service in 22 years. I was proud to call Robley a friend of mine. Our lives intersected a number of times over the last 20 or 30 years. A few weeks ago when I was in Louisville, I had the pleasure to read a wonderful article about Robley in the Southeast Outlook. On a sad note, the article mentioned how Robley was looking forward to his impending birthday. I know a lot of the rest of us were too. His friends were planning a special birthday celebration at the Louisville VA hospital next month. Instead, it will be an opportunity to remember how much Robley meant to all of us.

As much as we will all miss him, I take comfort knowing that Robley is reunited with his beloved wife Gracie, who passed away in 1992, after more than 60 years of marriage.

Because I wish to share with my colleagues this article on Robley Rex's long and exciting life, I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Louisville, Kentucky, Southeast Outlook, Apr. 2, 2009]

107-YEAR-OLD ROBLEY REX

(By Ruth Schenk)

Eighteen-year-old Robley Rex weighed just 115 pounds when he landed in France at the end of World War I carrying an 84-pound pack.

Every soldier had a blanket, a quart of water, 160 rounds of ammunition, a Springfield M6 Scout gun and a small khaki-colored New Testament. His uniform was made of a drab olive wool.

Rex signed up for the Army on May 21, 1918, a few weeks after his 18th birthday. He convinced his mom to sign to papers after recruiters told him it was the "chance of a lifetime" and assured the teenager who grew up on a farm in Christian County, Ky., that he'd "see the world, and the world would see a lot of him."

Army pay back then was \$36 a month.

At that time, everybody thought the war would end any day. The Germans and the Al-

lies signed the Armistice on Nov 11, 1918, but they hadn't yet signed the Treaty of Versailles.

Rex, now one of the last World War I-era vets living in the United States, is a celebrity at Christopher East Nursing Home in Louisville and an icon among veterans. In 107 years, he has lived through 20 presidents, two world wars, the Korean conflict, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf and the war in Iraq.

He has seen a lot of world change in his lifetime.

Rex was a Private First Class when his ship landed in northwestern France. Word of the armistice hadn't yet reached the trenches, so bullets still were flying. His first job was guarding German prisoners. Remnants of war were everywhere—in the rubble of buildings, hundreds of acres of "torn up" land and big puddles of green water that reminded Rex of gangrene.

French soldiers told him they would have lost the war if it weren't for the Americans.

Back then, military life meant absolute, complete obedience. No one questioned authority.

"If the corporal told us to pick up something on the ground, we picked it up. There was no need to explain or question why we were going to climb a mountain or go to a town," Rex said. "If the captain said you were going, you were going—without any explanation."

Most everyone attended religious services.

"They weren't mandatory, but if everybody from Company B was told to be at the 8 a.m. service, they were there," Rex said. "We went because we wanted to do the right thing."

Rex believes that Army coffee must come from the bark of trees, and that there are no atheists in foxholes.

The faith he'd learned at home carried him through scary times. "When I was walking down a road in Germany or in France, and the fear would rise up in me, I would say, 'I have no fear for Thou are with me' from Psalm 23 or Isaiah 41:10, 'So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.'"

There's not much Rex doesn't remember.

All the great military heroes of that day were in Europe: Dwight Eisenhower, George Patton and John Pershing.

"The soldier we wanted to see most was Douglas MacArthur. At that time, he was considered the world's greatest patriot," Rex said.

After 2½ months in France, Rex was sent to Germany with the 3rd Army Intelligence Unit because he had finished two years of high school.

He saw destruction—and need. Rex said he'll never forget seeing German citizens wait for the food the American soldiers threw away so they could take it to their own homes.

Rex spent three years in Europe. The recruiters were right: He saw people and places he never would have seen if he had stayed in Kentucky.

In 1921, Rex returned to the States, was discharged from the Army and settled into civilian life with a job at Marathon Tire in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. By then, he was 22 years old and ready to "settle down." If the job was good, meeting his wife, Gracie, in the Camp Taylor area of Louisville was 100 times better.

It was close to love at first sight.

Rex doesn't remember where they went on dates, but he says the secret to his long life is "marrying the right woman."

According to Rex, Gracie was the best cook and "saver" in the world.

"Grace could walk across the yard, cut off a handful of grass, fry it and it would be

good," he said. "And she never let us spend more than we brought home. If I earned \$10,000, and she said we'd save \$2,000, we'd save \$2,000. If I made \$6,000 and she said we should save \$2,000, we'd save \$2,000."

The two only had each other, as they never had children.

For Rex, that was enough.

Rex began volunteering at the Louisville Veterans Medical Center when he was in his 80s. His job was to get needed medical records to the right place in the hospital before 8 a.m. He continued volunteering until 2005, when he was 104 and confined to a wheelchair. By then, he had put in 22 years and more than 14,000 hours.

He always took time to talk with wounded veterans.

"Each one has a great story to tell," Rex said. "I've heard soldiers tell how they lost legs and arms in battle, how they were taken prisoner and managed to survive horrors of combat."

His advanced age has not diminished his sense of humor either.

Ask Rex about his best birthday celebration and he says, "The one coming up."

The hardest thing in Rex's life wasn't the war or the Great Depression.

It was Aug. 24, 1992, the day Gracie died. He still tears up when he talks about it, and he still wears his wedding ring with tape wound around it to keep it on his finger.

Rex doesn't think he's anything special. Just an ordinary boy from Kentucky who served his country.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I know all my colleagues join me in honoring the memory of this great patriot and soldier. Through his long lifetime of service, Robley Rex proved his faith and devotion to his country. Now his country will forever be faithful and devoted to him.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent there be a full hour of morning business as under the previous order.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE PRESIDENT'S FIRST 100 DAYS

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, President Obama's first 100 days in office make for compelling news stories, but what we should focus on is how the first 100 days will affect our future. This will go down in history as the most expensive 100 days for the American people.

Since his inauguration, President Obama has signed into law \$1.19 trillion in new spending. That is \$11.9 billion of spending for each day he has been in office. Those figures do not include the \$3.7 trillion budget for next year, a measure now awaiting final action on the Senate floor.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that if this budget is passed and signed into law, by 2019, the public debt will reach 82.4 percent of our gross domestic product. That means more new debt will be created under this one budget than all the combined debt created by all the previous 43 Presidents, all the way back to President George Washington.

His own advisers acknowledge the budget will put us on an unsustainable course. It proposes a sweeping change of course for the U.S. economy that will shift the balance of power away from the private sector toward the Federal Government.

It is not just the uncharted levels of spending and debt; this budget levies higher taxes on every household in the form of a national energy tax and puts taxpayers on the hook to pay for a larger and more intrusive Federal Government.

In other words, this budget spends too much, taxes too much, and borrows too much. On spending, President Obama has made his proposed new spending sound more palatable by describing it as an "investment" that will pay off by saving us money down the road.

Most of the new spending, however, is for services and programs whose long-term value continues to be debated. Nor is there any intention of cutting spending in the future. This budget does not propose one-time investments followed by areas of reduced spending. Instead, billions in new outlays will continue indefinitely, meaning the permanent accrual of power in Washington.

Rolling back the Federal Government's reach in the coming years could prove a Sisyphean challenge. Those of us in Washington need to keep in mind that families and small businesses, now more than ever, make sacrifices and tradeoffs in their own budgets. Should Washington not do the same?

This budget continues business as usual, making no hard choices about how to rein in out-of-control Government spending. In fact, the budget is so big that, according to the Heritage Foundation, a quarter of a million new Federal bureaucrats may be required to spend it all.

Federal Government employees represent the largest group of new jobs created under this bill. In response to concerns about the spending, President Obama has instructed his Cabinet to cut \$100 million from the budget in the next 90 days. Wow, \$100 million. That represents just .003 percent of the budget. Let me put it in context. It is hard to imagine an Arizona family using the same math to trim its budget. A typical Arizona family makes \$47,215 per year. Say they would like a budget similar to the President's. That means their budget would be \$71,848 in the coming year. But they have to cut .003 percent. That is \$2.05. So they still have a debt of \$24,631 to put on the family credit card. Unsustainable.

No family would decide to do this. It would not put them on a course for future prosperity. We need to cut a lot more than that .003 for this budget to be fiscally sustainable.

On the matter of taxes, the President has said he will cut taxes for 95 percent of Americans. But his budget would raise taxes by \$1.4 trillion over the next 10 years. It would implement a

new \$646 billion energy tax that will affect every American household regardless of income and is estimated to increase energy costs for every family by as much as \$3,168 annually.

It is described as a downpayment, meaning there is much more to come. This tax is touted as a way to curb greenhouse gas emissions. But it will unavoidably tax every economic activity, since almost every aspect of our daily lives requires energy from fossil fuels.

I recall President Obama telling the San Francisco Chronicle that: "Under my plan of a cap-and-trade system, electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket."

Mr. President, how much time do I have remaining?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has used 5 minutes.

Mr. KYL. Economic historian John Steele Gordon draws a good analogy to an energy tax in the April issue of *Commentary* magazine:

"If passed it will act on the economy as a whole exactly the way a governor acts on a steam engine, increasingly resisting any increase in revolutions per minute," Gordon writes.

He continues:

With the supply of licenses to emit carbon dioxide fixed, the price of the permits will inevitably rise as economic activity picks up. That means that any increase in overall demand will increase the price of energy. . . . That will damp down demand. The more the economy tries to speed up the more [this tax] will work to prevent it from doing so.

Does this sound like a good idea—especially in time of recession?

The budget also lets some of the existing low tax rates expire, thus raising taxes, which also hurts our economy.

We need to keep in mind that our economy is a complex and dynamic force, made up of individuals and families deciding on how much they want to save, spend and invest and whether to create new jobs or open new businesses.

Usually, it resists policymakers' attempts to manipulate and control it. It is not a ball of clay that Washington can mold any way it wants to and expect never to encounter adverse results. There are negative consequences to what we do.

We are obviously straying too far from the principle that the purpose of taxes is to pay for the costs of government in a way that does the least damage to the economy. Now we are using tax policy to redistribute wealth. How many activities or services can we now think of that the Government does not tax or is not aiming to tax?

Finally, there is the matter of borrowing too much, the debt and the deficit. In 5 years this budget will double the public debt; in 10 years it will triple the public debt. That is why we can say that just this one budget accumulates more debt than every President of the United States combined previous to now. The Congressional Budget Office projects that the President's budget