

Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform to not increase taxes through a VAT tax as a means of balancing the budget.

High taxes aren't the solution, less spending is. We must reduce the spending of this Federal Government if we are to exercise fiscal responsibility.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the Democrat leadership continues to talk a good game, but has not yet shown a willingness to act in any significant measure to get our fiscal house in order.

LET'S GET OUR FACTS STRAIGHT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I was going to talk about energy, but listening to my friend from Florida, I am compelled to respond.

First of all, the Democratic Party is called the Democratic Party, not the Democrat Party. We are democratic, and we give the same respect to our Republican fellows. I would hope that we would show more respect on the floor in properly referring to the Democratic Party by its proper name.

But maybe much more important, let's get our facts straight. When President Clinton left office in 2000, he left this country with a surplus, with three back-to-back budget surpluses, and surpluses as far as the eye could see, under Democratic economic management, a booming economy that created more jobs than any other administration in history, and economic and budget surpluses that actually had created some concern on Wall Street that we were going to fully pay down the national debt over the next 10 or 12 years and put in jeopardy the treasury market and the bond market. There were actually stories wringing their hands about that.

In 8 brief years, the Bush administration and their allies in this Congress took care of that. They took record surpluses and turned them into record deficits. Three things alone added \$6 trillion to the national debt: unpaid wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; an unpaid new entitlement program, the Medicare part D drug prescription benefit; and, of course, the unpaid Bush tax cuts that we were told by Republican friends on that side of the aisle would lead to unprecedented prosperity, enormous economic activity. It would unleash innovation, creativity and job creation in America.

You know what? It led to the most anemic job growth, barely positive, in any Presidency. As a matter of fact, this year alone, the economic policies of this Democratic President will create more jobs than were created in the entirety of the 8 years of the Bush administration and their allies here in the Congress.

They led to unprecedented debt accumulation in the United States. They took a record surplus and turned it

into a record deficit. That's their record.

The idea that they have clean hands, and they can come back to us, the American public, and tell us how we ought to manage our fiscal house, when they're the ones that put the fiscal house in disorder, they're the ones who ran this economy into a ditch, the worst economic meltdown in 80 years, the worst economic meltdown on Wall Street, the worst job performance in generations, an economy that was absolutely in a tailspin and close to the precipice of depression. That's their record. And to come to the floor and lecture us on how we ought to manage the fiscal house is a bit much.

The idea that somehow it's unprecedented that we haven't adopted a budget resolution—really? Because in the 12 years the Republicans were in charge of this Congress, for 4 of them they failed to pass a budget resolution, and somehow the Republic did not come to an end.

So lecturing us about whether or not we're going to have a budget resolution this year, let's get at what's really important: Are we going to get our arms around this economy?

Well, on our record, in 15 brief months, this economy is now growing again. Jobs are being created again. I've sat and listened to my friends on the other side frequently say, Where are the jobs? Well, we've actually created a lot of jobs now in the private sector, and we're going to create a lot more, it's estimated, in the balance of the year, a lot more than they did in the 8 years in which they were in charge.

We inherited a mess, a fiscal mess and an economic mess, and we've had the untidy task of having to clean it up. But we're doing it, and we're showing results. And what we don't need is lectures on the floor about how to do it the way they did it in the 8 years in which they were in charge.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 40 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Florida) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

"The sufferings of the present, Lord, are nothing compared to the glory to be revealed for us."

So as children of promise, we live with undying hope.

Empowered by Your Spirit, we work in this world as the free children of revelation, knowing we can change and we can change the world around us.

As their Representatives in government, help Members to undertake the sufferings of Your people and the birth pangs of new creation; that in and through Your redeeming love and purified wisdom, a new order of prosperity and peace may be established for the whole created world, both now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 4173. An act to provide for financial regulatory reform, to protect consumers and investors, to enhance Federal understanding of insurance issues, to regulate the over-the-counter derivatives markets, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 707. An act to enhance the Federal Telework Program.

S. 2868. An act to provide increased access to the General Services Administration's Schedules Program by the American Red Cross and State and local governments.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 4173) "An Act to provide for financial regulatory reform, to protect consumers and investors, to enhance Federal understanding of insurance issues, to regulate the over-the-counter derivatives markets, and for other purposes," requests a conference with the House of Representatives on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and that on May 25, 2010, appoints: Mr. DODD, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. REED, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CORKER, and Mr. GREGG, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate, and from the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry appoints: Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr.

HARKIN, and Mr. CHAMBLISS, to be conferees on the part of the Senate.

OILY APOCALYPSE OR GREEN WAVE?

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KUCINICH. We are now in the 36th day of a man-made environmental disaster which is fast becoming an ecological apocalypse for countless species of marine life. The ecosystems of the Gulf of Mexico cannot survive wave and wave of toxic substances hitting the beaches.

The ultimate surprise is not that it happened. Oil companies, Democratic and Republican administrations, refused responsibility and rejected alternatives. In this privatization of the natural world, damage to sea life is the cost of doing business. The ultimate horror is that we can't stop the flood of oil, won't stop consumption of oil products, and fail to admit the limits of technology.

This is a morality play writ large as environmental collapse becomes the new normal. Can we realistically look to Washington alone to protect the natural world? More permits for offshore drilling have been issued. We must look to the consequences of our own demand and consumption: the energy we use, the kind of cars we drive, the products we buy, the food we eat, and our individual impact on the natural world.

We can seize this moment. We as individuals can begin a green wave of sustainability to save the planet and ourselves.

WHERE'S THE BUDGET?

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, back in my beloved Indiana and all across this country, families are hurting. This is a difficult time in the life of our economy. Families are sitting down and making hard choices. They are writing a family budget. Small businesses and family farmers are doing the same, sitting down, sharpening their pencils, and making the tough choices to keep the doors open and the lights on. They are doing that everywhere but in Washington, D.C.

The American people deserve to know that this Democrat majority has not produced a budget. For the first time since the adoption of the Budget Act, the House of Representatives has decided to abandon its responsibility to sit down and write a budget. It's truly extraordinary.

The chairman of the Budget Committee, the distinguished gentleman JOHN SPRATT, said famously, "If you can't budget, you can't govern." Well, by abdicating their responsibility to sit down and make the hard choices, this

majority is arguing that they in and of themselves cannot govern, they are unwilling to govern. The American people deserve leadership in the Congress that is as good as our families and our small businesses. They deserve a Congress that writes a budget.

Mr. Speaker, where's the budget?

ADDING THE CREST OF MONTEZUMA TO THE CIBOLA NATIONAL FOREST

(Mr. HEINRICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. Speaker, central New Mexico has been flanked by the majesty of the Sandia and Manzano Mountain ranges for thousands of years. Most of these mountains have been preserved as part of the Cibola National Forest, the Sandia Mountains Wilderness, and the Manzano Mountains Wilderness.

Today I am introducing legislation that would add the Crest of Montezuma to the north end of the Cibola National Forest and extend a wilderness designation to the Manzano Wilderness Study Area to the south. To families living near Placitas, this legislation will ensure their access to critical water infrastructure for farm irrigation and other important uses. It will also ensure that East Mountain families can use these places for recreation. Finally, it will preserve the area's critical role as a wildlife corridor for animals that migrate from north to south across our State.

I urge my colleagues support this legislation that will protect some of the greatest natural assets that make our State the Land of Enchantment.

FAILURE TO PASS A BUDGET RESOLUTION

(Mr. CANTOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

MR. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, not since 1974, when Richard Nixon resigned from office and Happy Days was the new hit show on ABC, has this House failed to pass a budget resolution. There is no doubt that passing a budget can be hard work. But just because something is hard work doesn't mean you don't have to deal with it. Our constituents did not elect us to make easy decisions; they elected us to make the hard ones.

Two weeks ago, House Republicans unveiled the YouCut program. So far, more than 500,000 votes have been cast. Leading the field this week by wide margins, with 40 percent of the votes, is a proposal to eliminate the next round of nonmilitary Federal employee pay raises.

As USA Today recently reported, Federal salaries are significantly outpacing their counterparts in the private sector. This vote won't be easy for everyone, but it is exactly the kind of choice we must begin to make to get us off the path towards financial ruin.

290,000 STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, the most recent report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed that the economy has taken another 290,000 steps in the right direction. Two hundred ninety thousand, that's how many jobs the economy added in the month of April. This comes on top of the 230,000 jobs added in March.

According to Commissioner Keith Hall from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are now numerous bright spots, the trend is encouraging, and the growth is widespread. The growing consensus is that the economy is steadily improving, and that the private sector will continue hiring. This real possibility of hope on the job front is one of the reasons that an additional 800,000 people entered the labor force last month.

As you can see from this chart, the declining red is the number of jobs lost in the prior administration. The blue shows the jobs and the trend in the right direction, showing that policy does matter. This V chart is not for victory, but it certainly shows that we are moving in the right direction. There is now reason to hope, and there is real progress on the jobs front.

PASS THE U.S.-SOUTH KOREA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

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

Mr. DREIER. Our friend from Columbus, Indiana, the distinguished conference chairman, said it perfectly when he talked about the challenges that families are facing across the country in trying to put together their own budgets. He also pointed out the fact that for the first time in history since the implementation of the 1974 Budget and Impoundment Act, we have seen no budget provided from Washington, D.C. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's not surprising that that has been the case.

How can you put together a roadmap of where it is you are going when you have no idea where you are going? And that's really where we are today.

I am happy to say that we have a wide range of very positive proposals that we have put forward. Our whip just talked about the YouCut program. There are lots of things that we need to do. Tragically, today we are dealing with very anemic job creation and economic growth, and there is something that we can do that will help deal with national security as well, and that is the challenge of destabilization of the Korean Peninsula.

Mr. Speaker, if we were to have the President send to us immediately the U.S.-South Korea Free Trade Agreement, we could implement the largest