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THE PEOPLE HAVE SPOKEN

(Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, we just returned from, I think, the longest August recess that I have ever experienced; and I come back refreshed, refreshed from listening to my constituents back home. And they wanted me to deliver a message when I got back here. They said, Stop the spending; raising taxes on us in the midst of this economic downturn makes no sense whatsoever, get control of the budget—at least adopt a budget and follow it as we are required to do in our homes and in our businesses. And, yes, Mr. Speaker, they asked me to deliver this message: stop picking on the employers of America. If you want employees, you need employers. And stop making it more difficult for the small business men and women in my district to continue to operate. Get government out of the way.

The people back home are willing to take the lead if we will just let them do it. Let's return to old-fashioned American principles. That's the way we march to the future.

SPECIAL ORDERS

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

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

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

MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise tonight to recognize and encourage continued support for the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind.

Founded in 1931 in Little Havana in my congressional district, the Miami Lighthouse is invaluable to my south Florida community. Most of us take our vision for granted; but for the millions of vision-impaired Americans, even performing everyday tasks can become a challenge. The Miami Lighthouse is a resource for the visually impaired of south Florida, providing not only the tools and the training that they need, but also a loving and supportive community.

I have recently had the privilege of visiting the Miami Lighthouse for the

Blind and participating in their children's summer camp program. As I toured this state-of-the-art facility, I saw firsthand the wonderful impact this organization has had in the lives of the children, adults, and seniors that it serves.

Miami Lighthouse is truly helping people of all ages regain their independence. Their innovative programs cover everything from employment training to computer usage to daily skills like cooking and grocery shopping. Miami Lighthouse also offers programs to build a supportive community where awareness and support are always available. They offer play dates for blind babies, summer camps for children, and social groups for seniors. Every child at the Miami Lighthouse summer camp showed me that the work Miami Lighthouse is doing has a significant impact on their future and on their quality of life.

Miami Lighthouse truly goes beyond treatment and rehabilitation; they bring the visually impaired closer to our community. But as those at Miami Lighthouse will tell you, incidences of vision loss are on the rise. Over the past 5 years, Mr. Speaker, the number of program participants at the Miami Lighthouse has risen dramatically, and this is a trend that extends across the country.

We as a Nation must dedicate the time and the resources to prevent blindness and its related conditions. Early detection is the key to fighting vision loss; and effective, accessible screening programs must be the cornerstone. Centers like the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind are leading the way. Its Heiken Children's Vision Program provides school children in Miami with eye exams and prescription glasses at no cost to families. Thanks to this program, hundreds of students now have an easier time reading and seeing the blackboard in class and have a chance for a brighter future.

I thank each and every one of the caring staff and the many volunteers at Miami Lighthouse. It is through your commitment that so many vision-impaired individuals in our community can live happy, active lives. I look forward to again visiting the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind in the future and learning of all of its latest successes.

WITHDRAWING COMBAT TROOPS FROM IRAQ

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, beginning in January 2005, speaking from this very spot just about every single night that I could on the House floor, I've declared again and again my conviction that we must bring our troops home from Iraq. I was actually the first Member of Congress to bring legislation to the House floor to end the

war in Iraq, and now at long last it is finally happening. Eighty-eight months after President Bush declared "Mission Accomplished," President Obama has kept his promise to redeploy our fighting forces out of Iraq.

To be sure, however, there is still a long way to go before we can declare that this war is over. There are still Americans in harm's way in Iraq—50,000 servicemen and -women as well as countless contractors, but they are remaining behind to train Iraqi Security Forces, and it is expected they will leave by the end of next year.

Every single American, Mr. Speaker, has sacrificed for this policy of invading a sovereign nation without provocation and under false pretenses. The Iraq war has drained the American people of nearly three-quarters of \$1 trillion. This is money, much of it borrowed from foreign creditors, which we are essentially taking from our children and grandchildren.

And then there are the things you can't quantify—the moral authority we have squandered; the national credibility we have lost; the trust of our global neighbors that we won't soon recover. Of course no sacrifice was greater than the one borne by our men and women in uniform and their families; 4,400 Americans died unnecessarily, upwards of 30,000 are wounded, and tens of thousands more are suffering from post-traumatic stress. The men and women deployed to Iraq, Mr. Speaker, have served with courage, they have served with honor, and we owe them our never-ending gratitude, and we owe them our concern and our support.

Now that the occupation is drawing to a close in Iraq, however, the Iraqi people have a chance to build the brighter future that they deserve. To help them in that endeavor, even as we phase out the military campaign, we must step up our commitment on other fronts.

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We must embrace the smart security platform I have spoken of so often in these chambers. That means a civilian surge of aid workers, diplomats and other experts who can help the Iraqi people rebuild their country, strengthen democratic institutions, and empower their citizens with education and economic opportunity.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me say this: We are still a Nation at war. The conflict in Afghanistan, often forgotten when Iraq was at its worst, lingers on hopelessly and disastrously. There are some who believe more time is needed in Afghanistan to turn the corner. But if we've learned one lesson from Iraq, it's that prolonging the war only emboldens the very forces we're trying to defeat.

Just as President Obama kept his word to end combat operations by a date certain in Iraq, he must do the same in Afghanistan. I strongly urge the President to stick to his own deadline of next July, and I, for one, will

not rest until all of our troops are out of danger and brought safely home.

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.)

CONTINUING ON THE ROAD TO RUIN

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, throughout what was supposed to be a recovery summer, the President has repeated a familiar theme, that the Republicans ran us into a ditch and now they want the keys back. That's an important point. We need to understand exactly what it was that the Bush administration did to run us into a ditch.

In fact, President Bush made two major policy blunders. The first was to preside over unprecedented regulatory intervention into the housing market that deliberately enticed people who couldn't afford homes to buy them anyway. At the same time, these policies deliberately encouraged lenders to make irresponsible loans by promising them that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac would cover the risk. This created a massive artificial housing bubble that ultimately burst with catastrophic impact.

But my question of President Obama is, if we know that this road leads to ruin, why does he continue down it at even higher speeds? Failing to learn from the damage that government intervention does by creating artificial bubbles in the economy, the President has repeated and amplified Mr. Bush's blunders not only in the housing market with mortgage subsidies and home purchase credits, but now also in other markets like automobiles and home improvements. Each time he has squandered billions of dollars merely to borrow from future demand, leaving behind economic craters each time these bubbles have burst.

President Bush's second blunder was to increase Federal spending at an unsustainable rate, transferring economic decisions from the productive sector to the government sector and crowding out the capital market by excessive government borrowing. Now remember, the \$168 billion stimulus bill was a Bush brainchild. That's when we all got those \$600 checks. If massive deficits and record government spending create prosperity, well then the final Bush years should have produced a golden age for the American economy. Has the President reversed these irresponsible Bush-era policies? On the contrary. He has amplified and expanded them.

In his first 19 months in office, this administration has run up more pub-

licly held debt than all 8 years of Bush combined, with a promise that this would keep unemployment under 8 percent. Yet all this has accomplished is to crowd out trillions of dollars of capital that could otherwise have gone to employers to add jobs or to homebuyers seeking to re-enter the housing market or to consumers seeking to make consumer purchases. Thus, instead of the sharp V-shaped recovery that normally follows a recession, America is now entering its third year of economic distress.

The reason these policies have not worked is because they cannot work. They didn't work under George W. Bush, and they have not worked when Barack Obama doubled down on them. The core of Obamanomics is the proposition that, if government can inject enough money into the economy, it can stimulate consumer spending and, therefore, demand for production.

Unfortunately, government cannot inject a single dollar into the economy that it has not first taken out of the same economy. It's true, if the government takes a dollar from Peter and gives it to Paul, Paul will have an extra dollar to spend—but Peter now has one less dollar to spend in that very same economy.

On paper, the economic effects of income transfers always net to zero. In practice, transfers net to much less than zero because they shift huge amounts of capital away from decisions that would have been made in the productive sector based on economic return towards decisions that are made in the government sector based on political return.

We see very clearly the government jobs that are created when government puts that dollar back into the economy. What we don't see as clearly are the productive jobs that were prevented from forming as government first takes that dollar out of the economy. We see those lost jobs reflected in a chronically high unemployment rate and a stagnating economy.

It's time that we stopped wrestling for the steering wheel and recognized bad public policy for what it is, whether the driver is a Republican or a Democrat. The problem is not the driver but the direction, and the direction hasn't changed.

We all know the road to prosperity. We've taken it before. When we've reduced the burdens on productivity, the economy has blossomed. It worked when Ronald Reagan did it. It worked when John F. Kennedy and Harry Truman did it. And it will work again, but we will need leaders with a far better sense of direction than what we have today.

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.)

A TRIBUTE TO TAN'KO

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

Mr. SABLON. Mr. Speaker, in the Northern Mariana Islands, as in the rest of America, baseball is the national pastime. And no single person in our islands' history did more to establish and maintain the sport of baseball than Francisco M. Palacios. Yet he did it without playing a single game.

The American military brought baseball to our islands during World War II. Along with the rifles and planes came gloves, bats, and balls for the soldiers' recreation. Schoolboys and young men on our islands picked up the game naturally from the military. Then play became formalized. Teams were organized around neighborhoods, and the first league was formed in 1953.

As a young man, Palacios would walk the 3 miles to Garapan to watch the Sunday afternoon games. He wanted to play but didn't have the skill to make the starting nine of his district team in Chalan Kanoa. So, sitting on the bench in the dugout, Palacios decided to contribute by becoming the scorekeeper.

He learned the art of scorekeeping from a Navy man stationed on Saipan, and a look at Palacios' score sheets reveals a military preciseness and meticulousness. The system he used was invented a hundred years ago earlier by American Henry Chadwick, who is now in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Soon after becoming his team's scorekeeper, Palacios began keeping score for the entire league, and he remained the official scorekeeper for every baseball league on Saipan until his retirement in 2006—a span of six decades.

Palacios, called "Tan'ko" in our vernacular language, raised over a dozen children and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. But he always made time for his duties as scorekeeper.

Without a scorekeeper, there is no game; without a record keeper, there are no records. And baseball, more than any other game, depends on its records. The box score preserves a game for all time no matter when or where it's played. Season records give us a way of comparing players, even those who never played against each other. The records connect the past to the present.

Thanks to Tan'ko, Saipan was the only island in all of Micronesia that maintained yearly statistics, season after season.

Thanks to Tan'ko's dedication as a volunteer, baseball grew. Frank Palacios was there to help when Little League was first organized in 1973. Since then, teams from the Northern Mariana Islands have been frequent contestants at the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pennsylvania; at the Junior League World Series in Taylor, Michigan; at the Senior League