

had all been changed. But they wanted to preserve them and protect them and call them endangered streams.

And so I began going to the hearings for the rules. And in the rules they wrote that these streams, and according to the geographical boundaries that are defined here, and—"waters hydrologically connected to them" shall be declared protected streams and shall be under the purview of the Department of Natural Resources, which regulates for the EPA. And I began to ask the question. And here's how language gets stretched. I asked the question, What does "waters hydrologically connected to" mean? And the regulators would stand before the public meeting and they would say, We don't know. You're here presenting a rule and you don't know what it means, "waters hydrologically connected to them." No, we don't know. Then take it out. We can't. Why can't you? We can't. How do you know you can't if you don't know what it means? Well, we're here to defend this rule.

So I followed that road show around the State, and they knew when I walked in actually the second meeting who I was and what I was there for. And I asked one question and I didn't get an answer. I just opened my mouth for the second question and they said, Only one question per person. And I said, I drove 2½ hours to get here. It's going to take me 2½ hours to get home. And I've got a lot more than one question. I'm going to stand here until I get them all answered.

Anyway, it came to this. They had decided what amounted to every square foot of the State of Iowa under rules that were "slippery" deceptive. And it was the language that said "waters hydrologically connected to." I know that moist soil will have in it a water content of 25, 28, 30 percent and still be fairly stable. So that would regulate us all the way up to the kitchen sink. Two water molecules touching each other are hydrologically connected. And that's one of the things that environmental extremists sought to impose upon us in the State that gave them all kinds of latitude.

And another one would be when they decided to declare wetlands by aerial photographs. And the aerial photographers would look down, take a shot, and if there were a certain amount of vegetation growing in the field, they declared it to be a wetland that otherwise would have been farmed.

And so there could be somebody missed with the herbicide on top of the hill and the foxtail would grow. It would show up in an aerial photograph. The Corps of Engineers would declare that to be a wetland on the top of the hill where water drained completely away. This is how government regulation gets out of hand and starts to take over the property rights of the individuals who have a right to use that property in a responsible way as a means of an income to produce crops, even if it happens to be cotton, which we don't have much of in my district.

So I just think here that this Congress should do this: we should bring every rule before this Congress for an affirmative vote before it can have the force and effect of law. We can do it en bloc. Bring them all in together. We need to give any Member an opportunity to divide a rule out and force a separate vote on it, and we need to give Members the opportunity to amend them.

And the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) has a bill that addresses this in this fashion. It's not as broad in scope as I would go, but it is a very, very good start on getting this Congress under control and the regulators under control and giving Congress the authority that's vested in us in the Constitution rather than subcontracting it off to the agencies and letting them run this government at will.

So I appreciate the gentleman from Texas giving me an opportunity to vent myself on these frustrating issues. I appreciate your leadership.

Mr. CARTER. Reclaiming my time, our friend from Kentucky has been down here with me talking just about that act. I don't know if you were in when we first started this. I have just proposed, because I see this tidal wave of regulation, this hurry up and regulate everything you can in a hurry going on by the administration, I will tomorrow morning file a bill to declare a moratorium on all regulations. And they would have to come to Congress showing good cause why it's in the national interest for the good of all mankind that there be an exception to that moratorium so that we would basically just call a king's X, time out, and let's wait for the end of this administration and we'll see what happens in the next one. And by that time we can settle down and create a few jobs in this country because they wouldn't have to, at least for the next 2 years, worry about regulations. So I'll get you a copy of that. It's real simple: no regulations for the next 2 years.

Mr. KING of Iowa. If the gentleman would yield.

Mr. CARTER. Yes, I will.

Mr. KING of Iowa. If the title of that bill is the king's X bill, I'm going to be very interested in signing on.

Mr. CARTER. I like king's X.

I thank you, STEVE KING. You're a good friend for coming down here and joining me. I have gone over what I have to say here tonight. I just want to finish up by saying nobody is against doing the right thing. I'm against people who are creating regulations for the sake of regulations and damaging the people who are the job creators in this country. I'm for protecting the environment, but if you're belching out pollutants in China because you moved out of the United States because of onerous regulations and you weren't belching out those pollutants in America because we had a good Clean Air Act in place before you wrote the bad regulations, then you're not helping the environment at all by sending that

to an unregulated place in China or India.

So let's get real. Let's try to set up an environment in this Nation that creates jobs so Americans can go back to work. It's all about going back to work.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### OBAMACARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. NOEM). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentlelady for recognizing me here on the floor of the House, Madam Speaker, and appreciate the privilege to address you. I came to this floor, one, to hear from Judge CARTER and to listen to the presentation that he made. And the other component of it is I came here to talk about one or perhaps two subject matters. One of them is ObamaCare, as one might imagine.

I would make this point that—first, Madam Speaker, if it's possible that there's anybody that doesn't know why ObamaCare is so bad, if they maybe haven't heard the argument in some time and they're forgetting about how bad ObamaCare is, and if they're starting to hear the language about what is redeemable about ObamaCare, I want to make it real clear: nothing. There is not one single component of ObamaCare that is worthy of us making any effort to do anything except to repeal it all, eradicate it all, pull it all out by the roots.

I listen to some Members of this Congress that will say, Well, don't you want your children to be on your insurance when they're 26? No. I raised them to grow up. I want them to take their own responsibility. If they can be elected to the United States Congress when they're 25, then I think that's a pretty good age to at least say you are free, on your own—well, first, you got your car keys when you were 16—your license, anyway.

□ 2050

Then you get to vote when you're 18 and choose the next leader of the Free World. Then you get to go out and, let me say, go into the tavern legally when you're 21 and get elected to the United States Congress when you're 25. Then they kick you off of Mommy and Daddy's insurance when you're 26? Somehow I think that delays the growing-up process.

I think that we need to have people growing up and taking personal responsibility at an early age rather than delaying it to a later age. If the States want to have it at 26, let them have it at 26. If insurance companies want to provide for that market, let them write the policies to provide for that market; but the Federal Government should not stick a mandate on this that requires all health insurance policies to keep the kids on until they're 26.

Let's just say there's a young person who gets elected to Congress, like—well, yes, I would think that there are some Members of the new class that would fit very close to that category. Would one really think that they would come in here at age 25 and transition from their parents' health insurance on over to the Federal opportunity of health insurance that they can access and pay their share of the premiums that come with this job of working in this Congress and maybe never have a window where they were responsible to go out in the marketplace and buy their own health insurance?

I think that's actually a bad idea, but if people want it, let them drive that through their States.

Some will say that we want to cover preexisting conditions so that children cannot be denied insurance on policies that their parents have. Well, that's a good idea, and it's one that can be sustained by demand in the marketplace. If that doesn't do it, it can certainly be sustained by mandates within the States, but it does not require, Madam Speaker, that the Federal Government get involved in mandating to the States, actually mandating to everybody in America, what shall be done with insurance.

So now I've used up, I think, the two things that had some popularity in ObamaCare. That's it—insurance for 26-year-olds and no denial because of preexisting conditions to children whose parents have policies.

If I want to go out and buy a policy that ensures that my children could stay on it, that policy is available in the marketplace. I will say this, that before ObamaCare wrecked the markets and drove out a number of health insurance companies, we had 1,300 health insurance companies in this country which were viable in the marketplace, competing, providing all kinds of policy varieties for customers to choose from—in fact, over 100,000 health insurance policy varieties and 1,300 companies. There were 100,000 policy varieties. We had plenty of competition. ObamaCare has driven out competition. It has not added to it. It has driven out competition. It has made it harder. It has driven up the cost of health care.

The indecision and the fear of what's happening has caused the entire health care industry to be frozen in place. Now they come along and say, Well, if you're not going to repeal it, can you accommodate me in some way?—perhaps in some way like granting them a waiver. I'm hearing individuals say, I want my waiver. They know that there have been 1,040 waivers to ObamaCare.

Madam Speaker, I know that there are people out there who are listening who maybe don't understand what that means. It is this: ObamaCare is the law of the land. It is imposed upon everyone in America. A law is to be applied to every individual in an equal fashion. We might sit in different categories.

We might have Medicare that applies differently to somebody who's 65 than it does to somebody who's 60 years old; but these are waivers to statutes and to individuals and to entities.

From my standpoint, it's unheard of, and where that authority came from I did not see coming; but this administration has found out that they pushed a law that's so bad—so bad—that they are granting waivers to companies, to entities, and to entire States, like the State of Maine.

Now we find out that one of the people who has taken credit for helping to write ObamaCare, the gentleman from New York, who, I believe, is a candidate for the mayor of New York City, is now calling for a waiver for the City of New York to ObamaCare. So maybe, if he gets his way, it won't be 1,040; it will be 1,041 waivers.

That's appalling to think that you would sit in a strategy meeting/session and try to drive a policy that, I believe, is flat out socialized medicine and argue that it's good for everybody in America because they're too ignorant to take care of their own health care and now find out that the policy is so ignorant you want a waiver from it for the largest city in America. That's appalling to think that that would happen.

1,040—1,040 waivers. Let me see. The IRS will enforce this. It will punish people with an extra penalty if they don't comply. Let me see. The E-Z formula. The E-Z form for the IRS is the 1040EZ. We've had 1040 waivers, 1,040 waivers. It's E-Z for them, Madam Speaker, but it's not going to be easy for anyone who doesn't get a waiver.

We have this thing called the equal protection clause. It's in the Constitution, the 14th Amendment. Everybody is going to be protected with equal protection. ObamaCare, itself, violates the equal protection clause because it gives some American citizens a different standard than others. I'm thinking of Florida and their Medicare Advantage, which they have an exemption from under ObamaCare. Even though the cornhusker kickback was removed because, actually, Nebraskans rejected it—to their great credit—Floridians didn't reject their exemptions so that they kept their Advantage. That was an existing policy that exempted them from the wipe-out of Medicare Advantage, which happened to people like Iowans, for example. The equal protection clause? Not hardly. It's a violation of the equal protection clause. It's an unconstitutional bill, ObamaCare.

But I forgot to tell you, Madam Speaker, all of the reasons why it's bad. It cannot be afforded. It's a \$2.6 trillion total outlay for the first full 10 years once it would be implemented, and it increases taxes almost to that much over that period of time. It cuts Medicare, which is going to have a huge increase from 40 million to 70 million recipients of Medicare over the next few years. That huge increase cuts Medicare by \$532 billion. It purports to

reform Medicare. While this cut we know has got to actually happen, it just simply calculates it into the CBO score.

We can't afford ObamaCare. It's unsustainable therefore. It will reduce the research and development. It will increase lines and delays. It will ration care, and it will take that care out of the cost of many people and put it on a mandate that will force more people into Medicaid, and there will be companies that will be forced off the coverage they now provide for their employees and force those people onto a program that's federally subsidized, where there is a fund that will fund their health insurance premiums, which is also unaffordable.

All these things are bad. There are so many bad things about ObamaCare that I don't think there is any one person in the country who could stand up in 30 minutes and list all of the bad things about ObamaCare. It boils down, though, to this: it's unaffordable. It's unsustainable. It reduces research and development. It reduces the quality and lengthens the lines. It delays the service. It rations the care.

It takes away one more thing. The most important thing about ObamaCare is this: I believe it is the unconstitutional takings of American liberty. It is unconstitutional in numbers of ways, three or four ways at least. American liberty is something that is precious; and to think that the Federal Government would step in and commandeer, usurp, the God-given liberty and right that we have to manage our own health care and turn it into a rationed service, according to formula, in which only government would decide who would get what service and when and who would be on the waiting list for surgery and who would be on the waiting list to die without surgery, is a result of ObamaCare. It cannot be argued or refuted.

They put you on a waiting list for a hip replacement, or they put you on a waiting list to die without. That's one of the things that happens. They don't seem to think that's what they're doing willfully, and I don't accuse them of willfully wanting to do that. It's a consequence of the thick-skulled action of people who believe that there is a Socialist model to produce their version of Utopia rather than the individual dynamics that come from people who have free choices.

But we are a vigorous people, Madam Speaker. We're a unique people. We're the kind of people who recognize from the beginning that our rights come from God. We are endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights. Among them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That pursuit of happiness wasn't the pursuit of hedonism; it was the pursuit of perfection, just the pursuit of perfection—both intellectual and physical improvements. That's the pursuit of happiness in the Greek form, and that's what our Founding Fathers understood.

□ 2100

They're unique, vigorous people with rights that come from God, and of all the things that flow through with this, these rights, many of them laid out in our Bill of Rights: freedom of speech, religion, and the press; freedom to peaceably assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances; the right to keep and bear arms—the right to keep and bear arms; the property rights that are the Fifth Amendment; the right to protection of trial by jury, to be tried by a jury of your peers, and the right to protection against double jeopardy; the rights that are endowed to the States and then the people, respectively, in the Ninth and mostly the Tenth Amendment.

All of those are unique things to Americans. They don't apply to Western European democratic socialist states or, should I say, social democratic states. They don't apply to people in Canada. They don't have that same level of rights. They don't apply to people in Mexico or anyplace in this hemisphere or anyplace else on this planet. These rights, as understood and envisioned by our Founding Fathers, apply only to Americans. And they are the foundation of why Americans are a unique and vigorous people, and they're the foundation of why we are the unchallenged greatest Nation in the world. And we have a unique vigor, and that vigor comes from the foundation of these rights.

But, Madam Speaker, I would take the position this, that you could take all of these rights that we have, that we identify as coming from our Creator, from God, and you can bestow them upon any other people on the planet and ask them to go out and build a vigorous society that would match and mirror that of America, and I will submit that that effort would fail. It would fail no matter if they had unlimited natural resources, if they had free enterprise to no end, if they had a reverence for the Constitution the way we do.

You could take this package, this vision of American rights and Constitution, you could put it in the richest land in the world or the poorest and offer it to any people on the planet, and I will submit that they could not succeed in producing another country that has the vigor and the success that this country has. And I'm not standing here, Madam Speaker, taking credit for this. I'm standing here giving reverence to this gift that we have that is America.

And I will continue, that of all of the rights that are foundations of those beautiful marble pillars of American exceptionalism and the free enterprise component that goes along with it—property rights, freedom of speech, religion, and the press, and the list goes on—there's one other component that no other nation can have, and that is the unique vigor of the American people.

And we are a people that have been blessed by the vigor of every contributing, every donor civilization on the planet, no matter the country. The people that came here, the legal immigrants that came to the United States, came here with the vision of the American Dream. They were attracted to the vision of the American Dream. And so we were able to, by good sense of circumstance and forethought and vision, skim the cream of the crop off of every donor civilization on the planet: the people that had a vision, that had a dream, that had a vision, that wanted to test themselves, that wanted to build something that went beyond their generation; people that wanted to leave the world a better place than it was when they found it; people that wanted to prepare the ground for the next generation to farm, so to speak, and in some cases literally, these are the people that we got that came to America from every country, whether it would be England or Scotland or Wales or Poland or Germany or Italy or any of the countries on the planet, all across Asia, all across Central and South America; people that had a vision that they wanted to live free and breathe free and build something and have children and grandchildren that could benefit from their labors.

And their vision and their intuitiveness and their creativity and the entrepreneurial nature, they came to America, and that set up a natural filter, natural filter for people to save up enough money and to get passage to come to the United States. Some of them sold themselves for as long as 7 years of labor just to pay the passage to get here. That's a dream. You don't get any calls that come like that. You get people that are vigorous, and we attracted them, and that's the American spirit.

This vigorous American spirit is totally unsuitable for a social democracy or socialism or hardcore leftist communist Marxism or any of those other utopian philosophies that many of them emerged out of the non-English speaking portion of Western Europe, and their philosophies permeated a lot of the components of the globe because they're built upon class envy, but they're not built upon the truths of human nature nor are they built upon our rights coming from God.

And so here we are in this country, fantastic that we are the recipients of such gifts, and the gifts that we have and the vigor that we have, we need to understand what it's rooted in. And it's rooted in these freedoms and it's rooted in the filter, the filter that filtered out people that wanted to come here but didn't have quite the ambition to make it happen. It was hard to get here, and you had to have a dream to want to come here; and when you came here, we respected hard work and smart work and people that planned and invested and they were rewarded, and we admired them and raised our children to emulate them.

How many people like Donald Trump today, even though—like I said, I don't have anything bad to say about Donald Trump, not here into the RECORD. It's because he's been successful, people admire him. Bill Gates, because he's been successful. Steve Jobs, they admire him because he's been successful. They've been successful because they've been entrepreneurs. They've been creative. They've worked within the free market system. They have made our lives better and improved the quality of our lives and lowered the cost of the services that we need for our quality of life to be upheld and made those contributions and gotten rich in the process. That's the free enterprise system.

So here we are, these vigorous people, and some of the nanny state advocates here in this Congress—actually, it was a majority of them last year—decided they want to impose ObamaCare on us and take away our personal vigor. They wanted to take over the responsibility of managing our health care. What they finally did was, because ObamaCare is right now the law of the land, they nationalized our skin and everything inside it, a government takeover of my body. The government took my body over and the body of 308 million Americans, and now they're going to tell us when we get health care, under what conditions we get health care, that we must have their health insurance policy that they prescribe for us. They've taken away our individual responsibility. They've nationalized our skin and everything inside it.

And they had the audacity—and the President's fond of that word “audacity.” It was in the title of one of his books, “The Audacity of Hope.” The President of the United States had the audacity to impose a 10 percent tax on the outside of the skin that he nationalized inside of if you go into a tanning salon to turn yourself a little browner. That is a reach of the nanny state to impose a tax. They wanted to tax your non-Diet Coke. They want to manage our lifestyles in such a way that they will tax us if we eat fat foods and then presume we should get a discount if we eat healthy foods.

This is a nanny state personified. ObamaCare is so bad. It's bad because of all the things that I've listed about the cost and the quality and the lines and the rationing and the net result of all of that, Madam Speaker, but the worst part is it is an unconstitutional taking of American liberty. It takes from us the ability, the right to manage our own health care, and it must go.

And when that legislation was passed and signed into law—I believe the anniversary date was March 23 of this year—I laid awake most of the night and slept a little bit and got up in the middle of the night and drafted a piece of legislation to repeal ObamaCare. It was waiting at the door of the service team to be formally put into the form

of a bill when they opened up that morning.

Very interestingly, Congresswoman MICHELE BACHMANN of Minnesota had done the same thing, and her legislation came down within 3 minutes of mine, exactly the same 40 words that said we're going to repeal ObamaCare and, "as if it had never been enacted" were the last words in the bill. Forty words, repeal ObamaCare, gives the names of the bill, the numbers of the bill, et cetera, the last line, "as if it had never been enacted."

□ 2110

Rip it out by the roots, Madam Speaker.

Now, that was not necessarily unheard of, but there aren't many precedents in the history of Congress for repeal legislation to be filed actually the next day after a huge piece of legislation has been passed. But that is what we did, and we started down that path immediately, working to get signatures on the bill and building up the support to repeal ObamaCare.

By mid-summer we had a discharge petition. By the end of the 111th Congress, going into the election as the only part that counted, we had 173 signatures on my discharge petition, people that wanted to see ObamaCare repealed come to the floor, bypass the committee process, bypass the Speaker's ability to kill the bill before it got here, and bring it to the floor for a vote. We had 173; we needed 218.

And the message that went out across America was useful in that some Members of Congress that are here today will say straight up they wouldn't be here if it were not for the discharge petition and they could challenge their opponent to sign it. And almost every Democrat refused to do so. And now there are 87 new freshmen Republicans. Every single one has run on the repeal of ObamaCare. As far as I know, everyone has run on the defunding of ObamaCare. And I know that every single Republican in the House of Representatives voted for H.R. 2, which is the repeal of ObamaCare. And I know that every single Republican in the United States Senate voted to repeal ObamaCare. The language that we generated then is the language that emerged into H.R. 2. And today every Republican and some Democrats are on record voting to repeal ObamaCare.

Now, that didn't stop there. The strategy that I put together almost a year ago was this: that we needed to win the majority, which we did; bring the repeal of ObamaCare, which we did. It didn't succeed in the United States Senate, but behind that always was this majority here in the House of Representatives has an obligation to cut off all funding that would be used to implement or enforce ObamaCare.

And I have been consistent with that language all the way through last summer into last fall and past the election and beyond. Repealing ObamaCare,

then cut off the funding to ObamaCare. Stop the implementation of ObamaCare and stop the enforcement of it by shutting off the budget dollars and hold this waste of money to this unconstitutional bill of ObamaCare until such a time as we can elect a President who will sign the repeal.

The date for that to happen in my strategy is January 20, 2013, Madam Speaker. And that's the date that the next President of the United States will be inaugurated out here on the west portico of the Capitol Building.

And when that President stands there and takes that oath of office, it's my vision and my dream and my commitment to work towards it, I am going to ask him take your oath of office with pen in hand, Mr. President-elect, and I'm going to ask you to solemnly swear to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States to the best of your ability so help you God. And once that statement is made and it's completed and the oath of office is finished and he's formally the President of the United States, and before that new President on January 20 of 2013 shakes the hand of Chief Justice John Roberts, I want that pen in his hand to come right down to the parchment, and I want him to sign the repeal of the ObamaCare right there on the podium of the west portico of the Capitol, right out there as the first act of the next President of the United States. That's my vision. That's my commitment.

But until then shutting off funding to ObamaCare is a must-do. And most of America knows by now that there is \$105.5 billion automatically appropriated in a deceptive way by the way the bill was drafted up in NANCY PELOSI's office, not going through committee, not having the work of the will of this Congress, but drafted up in her office and dropped on us with hardly any notice and certainly no time to inform the American people of what was in it, automatic, unprecedented in their scope, appropriations to the tune of \$105.5 billion, Madam Speaker.

And already it automatically appropriated in the 2010 budget. So that's \$18.6 billion and \$4.95 billion in the 2011 budget. It totals up to \$23.6 billion, already appropriated, almost all of it set aside for the purposes of implementing ObamaCare.

We must have a showdown. We must face the President down. If the President demands that ObamaCare be funded, what are we going to do? Say, no, Mr. President, that he vetoes legislation that would otherwise fund all of government?

And if President Obama does that or if HARRY REID continues to perform as his proxy and shuts off anything that we send over that way even though we've demonstrated our desire to keep the legitimate functions of government, all of them, functioning, if the President shuts it down or HARRY REID shuts it down and this government comes to a halt, here's the irony.

The irony is this: lights would go out in Federal offices around this land. Not all of them because essential services will keep going. But lights will go out. And as the lights go out in the non-essential service Federal offices, what will be going in the other offices? ObamaCare will continue even in a government shutdown to be implemented because there's \$23.6 billion sitting in their pot to spend out of to implement ObamaCare, and we could have shutdown after shutdown, and ObamaCare is implemented and implemented.

We must hold the line. We must stand on this principle. It is our obligation. It is unconstitutional. We take an oath to uphold the Constitution too. And that includes defending the Constitution and opposing unconstitutional legislation with every tool at our disposal.

The President and the Democrats, I believe, Madam Speaker, plan to shut this government down. That's why they agreed to a continuing resolution in December that funds the government until March 4. It was to bring this to a head. They wanted to box us into a corner and then blame Republicans for shutting the government down.

Well, it's real clear: Republican leadership wants to avoid a shutdown. It's clear to me that Democrats are determined to provide a shutdown and try to blame it on Republicans. And it's clear to me that if we fund all the functions of government except ObamaCare and if the President brings about a shutdown, it won't be the House Republicans; it will be HARRY REID as proxy for the President.

If that happens, what we're going to see happen here is the President of the United States could veto an appropriations bill that funds everything except ObamaCare. It would be a Presidential executive tantrum that he would be throwing. That tantrum that he would be throwing would be saying this: that his signature piece of legislation, ObamaCare, means more to him than all of the other legitimate functions of government combined.

That's the scenario that we are in. The American people will render a verdict when that day comes that there is that kind of a showdown. And it must come. The American people will render a verdict. They will side with us. They are not going to side with the President who has imposed ObamaCare when 62 percent of Americans want it repealed, 51 percent intensely want to do so, and only 24 percent want to keep it in any kind of a vigorous way.

So, Madam Speaker, I will say this: we have an obligation to stand and hold our ground. This showdown will come. It must come. If it doesn't, we will be capitulating to the President in every way that he's willing to fight. I say let's stand our ground now. Let's have our fight now. Let's get it over with, and let's get on with the business of the 112th Congress.

With that, Madam Speaker, I would yield back the balance of my time.

#### CONCERNS ABOUT LIBYA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. PEARCE. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the assembled body tonight.

As one of the few combat veterans in the U.S. Congress, I rise to express deep concerns about what we are doing in Libya at this moment.

Madam Speaker, we have committed the U.S. taxpayers and we've committed U.S. troops to engagements that have extended almost a decade. Having been involved in one of those long overseas engagements before in Vietnam, I know the strain that these actions place on our families and on our young soldiers, and I don't think that the administration has adequately thought out what we are doing and what we're asking the taxpayers of this country to do and the young people of this country to do, engaging in yet a third front with questionable ideas and questionable values at the heart of why we're engaging in the discussion.

□ 2120

I've been an ardent supporter of the war on terror. I believe that we're going to be committed to the war regardless if it is there in their back yard or in our back yard.

But I rise tonight to say that I'm adamantly opposed to extending our forces any further than what we've already extended them without asking our allies to provide their tax money and to put the lives of their young people on the line.

The entire world is benefiting from the sacrifices that this country is making to establish order and to establish some modicum of peace in regions that are not given naturally to such. And since the world benefits, then the world has a responsibility. So I think the President should be calling on our allies to fund the NATO mission and to provide the people, the personnel, and the weapons.

And, yet, as I look at a breakdown of the missions that have been flown and fought so far, I find a dominance of U.S. cost in lives, in hours, monetary resources and in morale.

As a veteran, I find it disturbing that we're in two wars and now intervening in a third with no end in sight. Our mission is unclear.

Having served in Vietnam at a time when our Nation was beginning to withdraw support for that war, and remembering being there in those countries when funding was made short and gasoline and fuel was taken from state-side missions in order to fly combat missions, I remember with dismay a Nation that was not fully supporting the combat troops.

I find these actions to be questionable on behalf of our Commander in Chief as it regards Libya. Despite his speech last night, President Obama simply raised more questions. He explained that America is different. I'm not certain of exactly how that rationale applies to putting young men and women in harm's way, but I don't think it is a deep enough explanation.

What is the time frame? The President has yet to clarify. Are we there to enforce a no-fly zone? Then let our friends and neighbors in the U.N., the United Nations, enforce the no-fly zone.

If we're there to enforce a no-fly zone, why then are we bombing ground troops? They don't affect the no-fly zone.

If the goal is to protect civilians, why did Secretary Clinton meet with the rebel leader in London? Why is Secretary Clinton calling for Mr. Qadhafi to step down if we're only enforcing the no-fly zone and protecting civilians?

This war is going to go back and forth, and already you see our leaders wondering if we can be out by the end of the year. And I wonder if we can be out by the end of the decade.

Now, make no mistake about it: if Libya had done something to harm us, to put our troops in danger, I would be 100 percent supportive, but I question extending us and our troops to one more war zone.

Why are we fighting a war that Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said bears no strategic interest to the U.S. and does not jeopardize our national security?

Why are we working on the side of the rebels?

Their own commander has stated that al Qaeda members who fought our troops in Iraq are now fighting Mr. Qadhafi. In Libya we're working with the same people we're trying to kill in Afghanistan.

Not only that, but it looks like we're arming those same troops. And I worry that our armaments supplied to troops in Libya will show up in the fight against Americans in Afghanistan and Iraq.

As a combat veteran, I find these concerns to be deeply disappointing in an administration who, for nearly 2 weeks, could not point to whether NATO, the U.S., France or the United Kingdom was in charge. This is poor management, a management I saw during the Vietnam war, with little sense of purpose and always a confusion about exactly why we were there and how long we would stay.

Humanitarian missions are admirable. However, sending troops into combat with no apparent overarching mission is dangerous. Everyone in this room remembers Somalia in 1993.

Why are we singling out Libya? There's a war going on in the Ivory Coast right now. Saudi troops have cracked down on protesters in Bahrain in recent weeks, with civilian deaths reported. Not a whisper of American intervention there.

According to the Genocide Intervention Network, since 2009 almost 1 million people have been displaced in ongoing fighting in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; 5.6 million civilians are estimated killed since 1996. Are we going to intervene there?

Saddam Hussein killed hundreds of thousands of his own people using mustard gas and other weapons. The President was totally opposed, as a Senator, to that war, despite the fact that it had congressional authorization. And, yet, here he is leading us into this new conflict.

The President needs to consider the fact that the mission is unclear, despite his speech last night. He needs to realize that America cannot intervene in wars where we face no threat to our national security and have no strategic interest. He should listen to his Secretary of Defense.

As we engage in this yet third conflict, we're going to continue to put budget pressure on a budget that is straining beyond belief. In this country, the greatest threat that we face right now is a mounting national debt that is almost \$15 trillion, almost the equivalent of our entire gross domestic product.

At the time when we're expending more resources and more dollars in a conflict that has to be yet determined as to its scope, purpose and length, we're straining our budget even further. And while we're conducting these outside forces to greater cost to our U.S. Government, we are conducting a war on the West in this country, in choking the West of jobs right now. So at a time when the cost to our government is increasing, we're choking down the tax resources by simply regulating and taxing jobs out of existence.

In the past 10 days, most of us were at home at work in our districts. I, like everyone else, made a lot of miles in the last 10 days. We drove almost 1,300 miles and did 20 and 30 and 40 events, meeting with people and listening to their concerns. And everywhere we heard the same concern: What are you doing about jobs?

And my sad report had to be that this government, instead of creating jobs, is, in fact, choking off jobs. This government is, in fact, making it impossible for employers to bring on new laborers to expand the workforce and create that sense of prosperity that this Nation has always had available to it.

And people would ask why. And they would also ask how, how's our government choking off jobs? They find it incredible. They don't want to believe me when I say that in our speeches to begin with. How is our government choking off jobs?

So I use as an example the forest service. This Nation used to have a vibrant logging industry, a timber industry that employed hundreds of thousands. Just in New Mexico, a very small State, over 20,000 people made their living in the timber industry in New Mexico.