

the rhetoric that's coming out of the White House and from the President.

I was watching the news this morning, and the President indicated that they were going to have these budget talks down at the White House today. And he said, and I quote, that the Republicans, in effect, have a gun to the head of the American people. That just isn't the kind of rhetoric that should be used right now when we're talking about the huge budget deficits we have. And if I were talking to the President, I would try to admonish him to not do that in the future.

And then, when we were talking about Libya, I think it was just about 4 or 5 days ago, he said that we in Congress are making Libya a cause celebre, indicating that it's not an important issue, and we're just trying to puff it up so that we can make political points.

□ 1100

The fact of the matter is it is a war. The President went to the Arab League, he went to the French, the English, he went to the United Nations, and NATO and decided that he was going to be involved in an attack on Libya and Muammar Qadhafi. But the one place he didn't come to talk about this issue was the Congress of the United States—the House of Representatives and the Senate. The first place that a President ought to go if he thinks we ought to go into a conflict of any kind is the Congress.

The Constitution is very clear on the responsibilities of the President before he goes into a conflict. It has to be a threat to the United States, a threat to our interests, and it has to be approved by the Congress of the United States. The Congress of the United States is the only body that can declare war. He can't do that. He can manage a war. He is the Commander in Chief once we go into war, but he can't start a war unless it's in our national interest or there's a threat to the United States. That was clarified by the War Powers Act during the Nixon administration because there was some question about the latitude a President might have using the Constitution.

The Constitution was explained very carefully in the 1970s in the War Powers Act. Now, that's never been tested in the courts. Some people say it's unconstitutional. But the fact of the matter is it's the law of the Nation. The President cannot violate the law or the Constitution, and in our opinion, he's violated both.

Let me just tell you what's going on in this war that the President says is not a war.

We have flown almost 30 percent of the sorties. That means we have flown 3,475 flights into the combat area. We have dropped bombs and missiles 132 times on targets, and several times we've hit civilians.

Nobody likes Muammar Qadhafi. Nobody wants him in office. But the fact of the matter is, we've been involved in a war to get rid of him.

On May 22, the figure was that of the missiles that were fired, there were 246 missiles fired, and 228 were the United States' missiles—at \$1.1 million per missile. And we're paying approximately 60 or 70 percent of the total cost of this conflict through NATO or directly from the taxpayers of the United States.

Now, the reason I came down here today is to say that we should not be in that conflict because it was not in our national interest and there was no threat to the United States and it was a violation of the Constitution and the War Powers Act.

The President said he had to do it because it was a humanitarian issue. If it was a humanitarian issue and we really needed to go in there, he should have come to Congress. The previous President, President Bush, did go to Congress on Afghanistan and Iraq to get approval before he did it, but President Obama decided to do this unilaterally. So we are in a war now, and it's costing the taxpayers close to a billion dollars in a war that we should not be in.

He said it was for humanitarian purposes. If that's the case, we ought to be in a war in the Ivory Coast. Right now in the Sudan, there are thousands and thousands of people being executed and killed. And if that's the case, we ought to be in the Sudan. In Syria, we all know what's going on in Syria right now. If that's the case, we ought to be in Syria. There are wars of opportunity every place.

I just like to end, Mr. Speaker, by saying this: The President should always come to the Congress if it's in our national interest or a threat to this country before he goes to war. It's constitutionally required.

DEBT CRISIS

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

Mr. WOODALL. I came down to the floor today to talk about the fiscal crisis that we're having in America. There are those when I open the front page of the paper, Mr. Speaker, and I read the headline, it talks about having a debt limit vote crisis in this country. I went back, I looked, and apparently we've raised the debt limit over 70 times with a vote right here in this body. Apparently having a vote isn't particularly a complicated thing to do.

What we're having is a debt crisis. I think that's an important distinction. I was talking to a freshman colleague of mine yesterday about that. Understand that we can have the vote, Mr. Speaker. It's within the House's authority to bring a vote to raise the debt limit tomorrow. In fact, we brought that vote to the House already: Should we raise the debt ceiling or should we not? Mr. Speaker, we defeated it. We defeated it by a wide margin here in this body.

What we have is a debt crisis.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if it were just existing debt, perhaps we could work out

a way to finance that, but it's not. It's continued borrowing each and every day to the tune of 42 cents of every dollar that we spend. In other words, if we paid for Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, interest on the national debt, those other mandatory spending programs, just those, Mr. Speaker, we've already spent every nickel in Federal revenue.

That means every nickel that we spend for education, every nickel that we spend for transportation, every nickel that we spend on national defense, on homeland security, on the environment, on the courts, every other nickel we borrow, with absolutely no plan, Mr. Speaker, for changing that going forward.

If the President were here today, Mr. Speaker, I would say we do not have a debt limit vote crisis. We have a debt crisis, and there is only one body in this town that has put together a budget that will address it. I am proud to say as a freshman in this Congress, as a freshman in this House, it was the U.S. House of Representatives that took on that responsibility, Mr. Speaker.

It's been 799 days since the United States Senate last passed a budget. Hear that. Three years ago since the Senate last passed a budget. Not a balanced budget, mind you, Mr. Speaker, but a budget at all.

These are serious challenges that require serious people to offer serious solutions, and the only one that has been offered in this town, Mr. Speaker, came from this body. I encourage the President to go back and take one more look at that, because when we come down to game day, come down to the crisis—understand what we're talking about when we talk about a crisis, we passed the debt limit back in May, Mr. Speaker, as you know. We've just been shuffling the books in this town because that's what Washington does so well: raiding this fund to pay that, raiding this fund to pay this, over and over and over again. Apparently the games just run out on August 2.

Mr. Speaker, the games cannot continue. The games must stop, and they must stop here, and we must lead as we have always led in this body.

We do not have a debt limit vote crisis. We have a debt crisis that is driven by our addiction to borrowing and spending. The borrowing and spending stops here, Mr. Speaker, and I thank you for your leadership on that.

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 11 o'clock and 7 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. WESTMORELAND) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

In these most important days and debates here in the people's House, we beg You to send Your Spirit of wisdom as the Members struggle to do the work that has been entrusted to them. Inspire them to work together with charity, and join their efforts to accomplish what our Nation needs to live into a prosperous and secure future.

In this week in the wake of celebrating the great blessings bestowed upon our Republic, please bless those men and women who serve our Nation in uniform wherever they may be. Give them the protection of Your loving embrace, and grant them the trust to know they have our eternal gratitude.

Please keep all the Members of this Congress and all who work for the people's House in good health, that they might faithfully fulfill the great responsibility given them by the people of this great Nation.

Bless us this day and every day. May all that is done here this day be for Your greater honor and glory. 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 California (Mr. BACA) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BACA 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

TRIBUTE TO DAISY OUTDOOR PRODUCTS

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

Mr. WOMACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Daisy Outdoor Products, a Rogers, Arkansas, company celebrating its 125th anniversary.

Daisy moved to Rogers from Plymouth, Michigan, in 1958. Since that move, Daisy's impact on the northwest Arkansas economy has been substantial—not only in providing jobs, but the incredible recognition this famous brand brings to our region.

As the world's oldest and largest BB gun manufacturer, Daisy has a storied history. Its contributions to the shooting sports, the United States military, and the character of young men and women nationwide is noteworthy. And who can forget Ralphie in the famous movie "A Christmas Story" and his coveted Red Ryder, the most famous BB gun ever produced?

Mr. Speaker, 125 years in business is a significant milestone by any measurement. It is a tribute to the vision, commitment, and hard work of the company leadership and the employees of Daisy.

Congratulations, Daisy. I'm proud of you, and our Nation is proud of you.

COMMEMORATING CAPE VERDEAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the rich history of Cape Verde as we mark Cape Verdean Independence Day.

This week, we honor the people of Cape Verde and those individuals of proud Cape Verdean descent here in America and around the world who are celebrating 35 years of independence. In doing so, we honor the many milestones and important Cape Verdean leaders like Amilcar Cabral, who fought for the liberation of Cape Verde. We also honor the lives, work, and rich history of Cape Verdean Americans throughout our country and particularly in my home State of Rhode Island.

Cape Verdeans have made significant contributions in the areas of art and culture, business, and public service. Cape Verdeans have brought jag to local restaurants and added zuca to the music enjoyed by our community.

Rhode Islanders of Cape Verdean descent, like speaker of the house Gordon Fox, have been prominent leaders in Rhode Island politics.

I would also like to take a moment to pay tribute to the late George Lima. Mr. Lima served during World War II as a Tuskegee airman, the first group of black fighter and bomber pilots in the history of what was then the Army Air Forces. He then served our State honorably as a State representative and as head of the Rhode Island NAACP.

Cape Verdeans are generous, skilled, proud, caring members of our community, and I am honored to celebrate Cape Verdean independence with them this week.

YUCCA MOUNTAIN: A NUCLEAR DISASTER

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the President says he supports nuclear power development, but his actions have sadly stopped construction at Yucca Mountain after more than \$10 billion of ratepayer money has already been invested, killing jobs in Nevada.

Utility companies across the country have been mandated by the Federal Government to collect over \$33 billion for the Nuclear Waste Fund to build Yucca Repository. The Federal Government promised citizens of South Carolina and Georgia that nuclear material being stored at Savannah River Site would be sent to Yucca for permanent disposal. Now, this high-level waste will sit at SRS, and as reported by The Post and Courier, at more than 106 other sites across the country. The Post and Courier has editorialized that the President's position is "breath-takingly irresponsible."

I agree with Brian Tucker, president of the North Augusta Chamber of Commerce, that the administration should quit playing political games and follow through on promises to be guided by science and not by politics.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

PROTECTING MEDICARE

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, when former President Harry Truman and his wife, Bess, were officially enrolled as the first Medicare beneficiaries on July 1, 1966, only 50 percent of America's seniors could afford private health insurance.

The high risks associated with covering America's over-65 population made seniors basically uninsurable. That all changed 45 years ago last week when Medicare was established as a guaranteed benefit, providing a basic level of care for seniors regardless of income or illness.

From the beginning, Medicare has proven resilient, adapting to rapid changes in medicine and surviving in wartime and peace, economic boom times and in recession. Despite some alarmist claims, Medicare has faced more difficult financial challenges in the past than the ones it faces today. Preserving Medicare's guaranteed benefits for future generations is our solemn duty, and we must stop the push for vouchers, which will ruin America's middle class.

On the 45th anniversary of this landmark program, we must rededicate ourselves to protecting Medicare as a guaranteed benefit for tomorrow's seniors, not butchering it with a voucher