

for cancer, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, AIDS, autism, bacteria, ADHA, schizophrenia, depression and much more.

□ 1520

But treating these and other diseases will depend on discoveries yet to be made. Discoveries of basic science. Discoveries that can only be made with Federal funding and the work of agencies like the NIH. I suspect that to some this might just sound like pie in the sky.

But just think back into our not too distant past. Think back to the polio of the 1950s, to the children who were crippled and to the patients in iron lungs. Think about 30 years ago, when almost all the children who were diagnosed with non-Hodgkins lymphoma were not expected to live more than 5 years. Think back to the time when AIDS was the equivalent of a death sentence. Polio is now eradicated. The 5-year survival rate for NHL is over 84 percent, and AIDS is treatable, survivable.

This is all because of basic research, much of which was funded by the NIH. Because of the basic research we have funded and made possible. Because of our past investments in our Nation's future. The Founding Fathers had the wisdom and the foresight to write into the Constitution a role for the Federal Government in promoting the progress of science and useful arts. If we are to remain competitive in the global economy, if we hope to remain a leader in biotechnology, if we hope to continue to advance the world's understanding and treatment of diseases such as cancer and Alzheimer's disease, we must continue to invest in the basic research and in the dedicated young scientists who make it all possible.

I yield back the balance of my time.

THANKSGIVING

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Even though this body is composed of a lot of people who have a lot of different political steadfast beliefs, it is still an honor and pleasure to serve with friends like CAROLYN MALONEY.

So it is an honor to serve, and even though we disagree sometimes on the way we get to the end, I know that, for example, Mrs. MALONEY's heart is always in the right place.

It is a pleasure to serve with her.

Mrs. MALONEY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GOHMERT. Certainly.

Mrs. MALONEY. I would like to thank you for that very kind statement, and I look forward to finding common ground on things we can agree on and work to help the economy and growth of this great Nation, and I hope you can help and support the funding

of NIH and basic research which has been so helpful to your great State and your great universities and scientists.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you. I certainly appreciate my friend from New York.

There are some areas of research that if the Federal Government doesn't do it, it's not going to get done, and I'm sure there are areas we can certainly agree on.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. I wish I were coming to the floor just full of excitement because we had a vote today on the balanced budget amendment. I came to Congress nearly 7 years ago believing we needed a balanced budget amendment, knowing that Thomas Jefferson regretted not having one, that Ronald Reagan wished there had been one. But since I have been in this body, it has become abundantly clear that this body is more likely to have the will to raise taxes than it is to cut spending.

I came here not believing that that was the case. But after we added over 80 fantastic freshmen coming up here with the right motivation, wanting to get our fiscal House in order, knowing that we went from 2006, when we were last in the majority before this year, when we spent \$160 billion or so over what we took in, and then, because we didn't have our fiscal house in order as the Republican majority, it's my belief that's the reason, the biggest reason, actually, that the public turned over the reins to our Democratic friends. We haven't done a good job of avoiding overspending.

But also in 2006, November, when we lost the majority, I would never have believed that we would go from a time when we were spending \$160 billion more than we were bringing into the Treasury in just a few short years to spending a trillion dollars more than we were bringing into the Treasury. That was just unfathomable. And it appeared very clear that after a year ago, when the majority—we were in the minority at the time—made a pledge, we were going to return to pre-bailout, pre-stimulus spending, and in the first year, we pledged we would cut \$100 billion.

And here we are, we have just at the end of September finished the fiscal year of 2011, and we really didn't make any cuts. The jury's out. Initially we were told we may save \$27 billion over the year before. It is just chicken feed when you're bringing in \$2.2 trillion or \$2.3 trillion and you're spending about \$1.3 trillion more than that, \$3.6 trillion, \$3.7 trillion. And all we could find to cut was \$27 billion?

Then we have had more recent word that we may not even save that much. Some have told me that actually we may have spent just a hair more than we did.

So it became abundantly clear to me, and I know that my friend, Chairman PAUL RYAN, voted against the balanced budget amendment because he knew it ought to have more restraint on spend-

ing in there, a spending cap. And Mr. AMASH, I haven't talked to him about his reasons for voting no, and Mr. DREIER, who doesn't believe we should have one at all.

It's really not fun not voting with the people that you serve with, that you're in the same party with. You share so much in the way of common experiences. Because I am a strong advocate for a balanced budget amendment.

But the bill on the floor today did not have a spending cap. This past year, we had just witnessed the largest wave election since the 1930s. And all of the over 80 new freshmen came forward with one central charge: stop the wasteful government spending.

Following a pledge to make massive cuts in spending, it really appears that Congress finds it easier to talk about "new revenue" which is just code for more taxes, than to cut spending.

It doesn't live up to the pledge that we made.

We made a pledge to the American people to restrain government and to get our fiscal house in order. And we should be doing it. Eleven months into this majority, we should have made more progress than we have.

President Obama has ramped up spending with the help of former Speaker PELOSI, Leader REID, both majorities in the Houses when they were Democrats, by over an additional trillion dollars. It's far more than the Democratic Congress increased the debt under President Bush in 2007 and 2008.

□ 1530

It just is mind-boggling that we could not find enough Members to return even to the liberal Democratic spending of 2007 or 2008. It's clear that, if we had passed a balanced budget amendment without at least having a spending cap, then future Congresses would use the requirement of a balanced budget to increase taxes in order to balance the budget.

We are already at a point at which almost 50 percent of the American public is not paying income tax. We are on the threshold of arriving at that point beyond which no representative societies have ever been able to come back to greatness. When one more than half who is voting is receiving more from the government than they're putting in, you're done. You're doomed. It's over. All that's left is the slow walking and the low talking, but you're virtually at the end.

And we are getting close.

On Wednesday, the national debt exceeded \$15 trillion, which left the United States with one of the highest public debt-to-GDP ratios in the world. This \$15 trillion mark further enhances the uncertainty that is thwarting our economy from moving ahead. It's apparent America is on a route headed for ruin, and if we continue to spend more money that we don't have, we will arrive at that destination.

Washington, this government, needs to stop the runaway train of spending. This President's policies have added \$4.4 trillion to the national debt, all in a fraction of the time that that debt accumulated under President George W. Bush. If we'd at least had a spending cap as part of the balanced budget amendment, which wasn't even demanding the two-thirds supermajority in order to raise taxes—just a spending cap, make it a relevant spending cap—then what we voted out of committee in the regular order—which we promised that we wouldn't bring bills to the floor unless they went through the regular order—produced a balanced budget amendment that had a two-thirds requirement in the way of a vote before taxes could be raised. It had an 18 percent spending cap, where 18 percent of the GDP was the most we could spend. That was produced through the regular order, but that's not what we voted on here today.

I deeply regret having to vote “no,” but I've seen what we're capable of and what we're not; and we need it in the Constitution that the budget must be balanced and that a spending cap must be there.

Some have said, Well, States don't really have a spending cap. They can't print their own money. They can't go out and borrow money the way we do in the Federal Government. It's different, and it needed to be addressed differently.

We were told, Well, we had to vote for this as Republicans because it's the only one that had a chance to pass. Then, on further inquiry, we were told the people who were saying that didn't believe it was going to pass the Senate, that they knew it wouldn't pass in the Senate, and didn't think it had much chance of passing in the House. Then why weren't we pushing what came out of regular order?—which is what I think most of the Republicans believed was the best bill.

I don't know.

I also know, in going back through this country's history, that, even during some of its most difficult and darkest days, there was a day set aside, sometimes many days set aside, for thanksgiving.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 19 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOHMERT. I want to share a Proclamation of Thanksgiving from the year 1798, signed by President George Washington.

In 1798, it was toward the end of President Washington's time as President. It was a difficult time; we were not a strong Nation. We were struggling, and some thought we ought to run to the aid of France; but their convictions in France did not appear to be based on sound doctrine and a desire for liberty. There was too much envy and jealousy involved in that revolution, and we were not a strong Nation.

Despite all the difficulties in the United States in those early days,

George Washington proclaimed the following:

Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor; and whereas both Houses of Congress have, by their joint committee, requested me to recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.

Now, therefore, I do recommend and assign Thursday, the 26th day of November next, to be devoted by the people of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being who is the beneficent author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be; that we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country previous to their becoming a nation; for the signal and manifold mercies and the favor, able interpositions of His providence in the course and conclusion of the late war; for the great degree of tranquillity, union, and plenty which we have since enjoyed; for the peaceable and rational manner in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national one now lately instituted; for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed, and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and, in general, for all the great and various favors which He has been pleased to confer upon us.

And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations, and beseech Him to pardon our national and other transgressions; to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually; to render our National Government a blessing to all the people by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed; to protect and guide all sovereigns and nations (especially such as have shown kindness to us), and to bless them with good governments, peace, and concord; to promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the increase of science among them and us; and, generally, to grant unto all mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as He alone knows to be best.

Signed by George Washington in 1798.

But in the darkest throes of this country, in 1863, during a war that saw the death of more Americans than in any war in our history—more than the Revolution, more than World War I, World War II, Vietnam, Korea, more than any of the wars—the Spanish-American War—there was this proclamation from President Abraham Lincoln simply entitled “A Proclamation.”

Lincoln said this:

The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God.

In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign States to invite and to provoke their aggression, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere except in the theatre of military conflict; while that theatre has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union. Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defence, have not arrested the plough, the shuttle or the ship; the axe has enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore.

Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege and the battlefield; and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years with large increase of freedom. No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy.

It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American People. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity and Union.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this Third day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States the Eighty-eighth.

By the President: Abraham Lincoln.

□ 1540

We all know—or hopefully most know that John Hancock presided over the Continental Congress from which we got the Declaration of Independence. In 1791, he was Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and signed this proclamation, from John Hancock:

In consideration of the many undeserved Blessings conferred upon us by God, the Father of all Mercies; it becomes us not only in our private and usual devotion, to express our obligations to Him, as well as our dependence upon Him; but also specially to set a part a day to be employed for this great and important purpose: I have, therefore, thought fit to appoint, and by the advice and consent of the council, do hereby accordingly appoint, Thursday, the seventeenth of November next, to be observed as a Day of Public Thanksgiving and Praise, throughout this

Commonwealth: Hereby calling upon ministers and people of every denomination, to assemble on the said day—and in the name of the Great Mediator, devoutly and sincerely offer to Almighty God, the gratitude of our hearts, for all His goodness towards us; more especially in that He has been pleased to continue to us so a great a measure of health—to cause the Earth plentifully to yield her increase, so that we are supplied with the Necessaries, and the comforts of life—to prosper our merchandise and fishery—and above all, not only to continue to us the enjoyment of our civil rights and liberties; but the great and most important blessing, the Gospel of Jesus Christ: And together with our cordial acknowledgments, I do earnestly recommend, that we may join the penitent confession of our Sins, and implore the further continuance of the divine protection, and blessings of heaven upon this people; especially that He would be graciously pleased to direct, and prosper the administration of the Federal Government, and of this, and the other States in the Union—to afford Him further smiles on our agriculture and fisheries, commerce and manufactures—to prosper our university and all seminaries of learning—to bless the virtuously struggling for the rights of men—so that universal happiness may be allies of the United States, and to afford His almighty aid to all people, who are established in the world; that all may bow to the Scepter of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the whole Earth be filled with His glory.

And I do also earnestly recommend to the good people of this Commonwealth, to abstain from all servile labor and recreation, inconsistent with the solemnity of the said day. Given at the Council-Chamber, in Boston, the fifth day of October, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-One, and in the sixteenth year of the Independence of the United States of America.

This is from James Madison, the fourth President, 1815. Many credit James Madison as being the most productive person in the writing of our United States Constitution. The greatest building block for any Nation in the history of man.

This is James Madison's proclamation:

No people ought to feel greater obligations to celebrate the goodness of the Great Disposer of Events of the Destiny of Nations than the people of the United States. His kind providence originally conducted them to one of the best portions of the dwelling place allotted for the great family of the human race. He protected and cherished them under all the difficulties and trials to which they were exposed in their early days. Under His fostering care their habits, their sentiments, and their pursuits prepared them for a transition in due time to a state of independence and self-government.

Signed James Madison, fourth President, March 4, 1850, Thanksgiving Day proclamation.

And then in conclusion:

Know that the Lord Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name. For the Lord is good; His loving kindness is everlasting and His faithfulness to all generations.

Mr. Speaker, it is the wish here that you and all those in this body and around the country have a wonderful

day of Thanksgiving in the week ahead.

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

THE FAIR TAX

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, this is my first time down here as a freshman during Special Orders, my first time trying to coordinate charts and talk the talk and walk the walk all at the same time.

But I'm excited about it because I'm down here to talk about the Fair Tax. And if folks don't know what the Fair Tax is, it's H.R. 25. You can find it at www.thomas.gov, that site that everybody should have bookmarked if you care about what goes on here on the House floor. Because if you don't know, everything that goes on here is available in realtime at www.thomas.gov. It's done through the Library of Congress. It's not a Republican thing or a Democrat thing. It's just the real deal, what's actually happening down here.

And if you go and you look up H.R. 25, it's the Fair Tax. What the Fair Tax is is a bill that repeals all income-based Federal taxes and replaces them with consumption-based taxes.

Now, my friend from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) was just down here on the House floor, Mr. Speaker. He was talking about our Founding Fathers and those things that were happening between 1776 and 1787. And in that time, we funded all the Federal Government with consumption taxes—it was not income taxes; it was consumption taxes—under the theory that if you had enough resources to go out and buy that silver tea set from England, then you had enough resources to help fund the Republic. And if you spent all your time working on your farm, and you just barely had enough money to buy thread at the local five-and-dime, then we weren't going to tax you as heavily.

□ 1550

If you look at this poster, Mr. Speaker, in 1913, right before the income tax began, we had 400 pages of Tax Code in America. Just the last century, in the 1900s, 400 pages of Tax Code and regulations. By World War II, that 400 pages had grown to 8,000 pages, 20 times as much Tax Code by the end of World War II. By the time we were in Korea, 14,000 pages of code and regulation. By the 1970s, 19,000 pages of code and regulation. And in the 1980s, 26,300 pages of Tax Code and regulation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm a reader. I love to sit down and educate myself through the written word; but I have to tell you, 26,000 pages of Tax Code and regulation is going to make a criminal out of all of us because you can't possibly understand all of the ramifications of the tax consequences of your decision.

Do you remember 1986? That was the last time we fundamentally overhauled the Tax Code. 1986. In fact, if you go to www.Thomas.gov, like I suggested, and you look at the laws and regulations, you'll see the Tax Code of 1986. It was the Tax Code of 1954, updated Tax Code to 1986. That was the last time we flattened rates and broadened the basis. Flattened the rates and broadened the base. And where did we end up? Between 1984 when we had 26,000 pages of Tax Code and regulation, we went through this process of simplifying the income tax, and 10 years later in 1995, we have 40,000 pages of Tax Code. By simplifying the income tax, we grew it from 26,000 pages to 40,000 pages.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if you're like me, you go out and you shop around. Are you going to use the H&R Block tax software? Are you going to use the Microsoft tax software? What kind of tax software are you going to use, because you hate paying accountants to do your taxes for you.

You know, I used to just sit down with a pen and paper and do it myself. I used to go through with my calculator and do it myself, but it has gotten too complicated. Why? Because since I have reached the age of majority in 1988, here we have 1995 when I'm coming out of college, between 1995 and 2004, we added another 20,000 pages to the Tax Code, from 40,000 pages to 60,000 pages. In 2007, to 67,000 pages; 2008 kept it to just a little over 67,000 pages. And in 2009, it jumped another 3,000 pages; 70,000 pages of tax legislation.

And to be clear, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about tax legislation, we're talking about the ways in which the government separates you and me and all of the American people from our paycheck. That's all there is in the Tax Code. All the Tax Code is, is how do we separate the American people from their productivity? It takes 70,000 pages in 2009 to sort that out. And 71,000 pages in 2010. And now, 72,000 pages of Tax Code in 2011.

Folks, what the FAIR Tax does, H.R. 25, it asks the question that if we could start from scratch—and by scratch I mean from the 72,000 pages that we do today, to just a blank sheet of paper—if you could start from scratch and draft the Tax Code that America ought to have instead of the one that has been forced upon us, what would you do? What would you do?

Well, there's a lot of difference of opinion on what to do, but simplification seems to be one of those things that we can all agree on.

You know, I didn't come to this House to try to be a good Republican. I came to this House to try to be a good American, and there are lots of opportunities to do that. I like to think those things occur simultaneously more often than not. But look at what folks are saying about the United States Tax Code.

I'll quote House minority leader NANCY PELOSI: Any tax reform and