

Democrat in the White House, came together to pass the biggest spending reduction bill that we'd had in our lifetime prior to this point.

We can't balance the budget on the discretionary spending side of the ledger alone. As you know, Madam Speaker, if we zeroed out everything—and I mean everything. I don't mean cut by 5 percent, I don't mean cut by 10 percent, I mean zeroed out everything except Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, interest on the national debt, those mandatory spending programs that I'm talking about, those autopilot programs, if we zeroed out everything else, the budget still wouldn't be balanced. That's how far out of whack we are. And that's how big those categories are.

We're going to do something that hasn't been done since 1997 and that is, go through reconciliation, where we ask the committees of this House, we go back to our communities and ask in town hall meetings, what can we do on that mandatory spending side of the ledger to tighten our belts, to do better to provide more bang for their buck to the American taxpayers.

Those bills are going to start coming to the floor in the month of May, for the first time since 1997, in a serious way. Now, it's going to be a small process at first. We're talking about just the amount of money to cover some of our necessary defense spending needs. But we're going to start to talk about priorities here. And when I say talk about, I mean legislate on.

Madam Speaker, the talking has already been done. "Every day families sacrifice to live within their means. They deserve a government that does the same." President Barack Obama, 2011.

"Families across the country are tightening their belts and making tough decisions. The Federal Government should do the same." President Obama 2010.

At stake right now is not who wins the election. At stake is whether new jobs and industry take root in this country or not. Madam Speaker, we are bankrupting this country. We are bankrupting this country. We have doubled, doubled the annual spending deficits that we've seen in this country. We've seen the public debt of this Nation increase by 50 percent in the last 3½ years. And that was with the efforts of the most conservative U.S. House of Representatives we've seen in our lifetime. That was with the efforts of this U.S. House of Representatives that has cut spending, not 1 year in a row, not 2 years in a row, but 3 years in a row.

Madam Speaker, the good ship United States of America is in troubled waters. The President is saying all the right things. I come to the floor here tonight, Madam Speaker, to ask you to encourage him to do the right things. Join this U.S. House of Representatives, join these 100 new Democrat and freshman Members in this body as we

try to do something that hasn't been done since 1997, and that's take programs off of autopilot and make sure that every dollar leaving this institution is doing the very best that it can for the hardworking American taxpayers that have entrusted us to spend it.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for being here and yielding me this time this evening.

I yield back the balance of my time.

OUR FRIEND IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, there's a lot going on in the world these days. I had an interesting trip to Afghanistan this weekend, a country into which we are pouring billions and billions of dollars and have military there that is keeping President Karzai in office.

And he's a very grateful man. That was demonstrated when he told our government, this Obama administration, that DANA ROHRBACHER, my very dear friend, one of the greatest patriots I know, would not be allowed into Afghanistan, as if he had that power, because he had been very critical of President Karzai.

So we're spending billions and billions of dollars so that a cantankerous President of Afghanistan, who is only there because of the lives and treasure that Americans have sacrificed, can turn around and tell Americans, we don't want Members of Congress that actually control the purse strings to money flowing into this country, we don't want them here. It was rather interesting.

And as might be expected, President Karzai had his facts entirely wrong. He was representing that Representative ROHRBACHER had a bill that was attempting to partition, divide up Afghanistan. Entirely wrong. I knew that because I assisted with the bill and co-sponsored it, proudly, because it was a resolution that basically was encouraging Afghanistan to allow elections of their regional governors. It encouraged elections.

Somehow President Karzai found this very offensive, as a threat to him. And I can see it from his standpoint. If one puts one's self in his position, you realize, gee, I'm President Karzai. I get to appoint every regional governor. And gee, that would be a system, like ancient Rome, where you would be appointed to be governor, but you had to kick back to Caesar in order to keep your seat. Interesting.

That is a plan fraught with the potential for corruption. That's one of the reasons that DANA and I, and so many others, think it would be a good idea, help strengthen the country, if the people in the various regions were able to elect their governors.

President Karzai not only appoints the governors, he appoints the mayors. They don't get to elect them. He appoints them. You want to be a mayor of a city, you better go suck up to President Karzai because he's going to make the appointment.

If you would like to be the chief of police, don't worry with some local city council in Afghanistan. Don't worry with the governor. You'll be appointed, that's right, by President Karzai.

We're told by Afghans that actually it goes so much further than that. He even appoints many of the teachers. You want to be a teacher at an upper level? Afghans tell me that he appoints them as well.

President Karzai gets to appoint a slate of potential legislators. He has tremendous control of the purse strings in Afghanistan, not someone to be countered with, you would think, unless perhaps you're from a government that assists the government of Afghanistan in meeting its budget needs.

□ 2010

As I understand it, Afghanistan has a budget of \$12.5 billion. As I understand it, Afghanistan provides \$1.5 billion of that \$12.5 billion budget. That's all the revenue—taxes, fees, all kinds of things. That's the extent of their revenue.

Gee, what would happen to President Karzai if all of a sudden this Congress did what the 1974 Democratic-controlled Congress did when, without any regard for those who had fought with us in Vietnam and in Southeast Asia, every penny was just completely shut off, when every penny being spent in Vietnam back in '74 was cut off? What happened after we left was an absolute horrible bloodbath of those who had assisted the United States in any way.

So I don't think this Congress will be as abrupt as the Democratic Congress was in 1974, but it certainly has the ability to do that. The difference is, I think, there are enough people in this Congress who realize, unless we empower those who fought the Taliban in late 2001, after 9/11, and in early 2002 when they basically routed the Taliban with U.S.-embedded support and air support, unless we empower those allies by allowing them to elect their own regional governors, by allowing them to elect their mayors, taking some of the power away from a central administration where, regardless of whether or not reports may or may not be accurate about corruption at the highest level, then there is certainly corruption in Afghanistan.

It is also interesting that this administration refuses to replace the inspector general, who is supposed to supervise and audit the money that's going into Afghanistan. Surely, that couldn't be because it's an election year. Surely, that couldn't be because, if we had somebody actually monitoring where all of the billions of dollars were pouring into Afghanistan are going, the report would indicate widespread corruption, which would reflect poorly on this

administration, throwing away billions of dollars not only to the Solyndras around the country but to corrupt administrations who are fattening their bank accounts while Americans don't have any.

Many Americans struggle to have any money in their bank accounts, yet we're propping up an administration over there that thinks that, on a whim, they can say, I don't like this Congressman because he has been critical of my administration, so we're going to keep him out.

I realize that Secretary Clinton inherited a very difficult situation that was not of her making, but it is important in dealing with matters of foreign policy and in dealing with matters of State that we not be duped by people who have made careers out of duping Americans and Russians and other nationalities.

So we have a great ally in the nation of Israel. They believe in freedom as we do. They have a truly representative government, one in which the Prime Minister of Israel does not forbid the elections of other officials so that he will be the only one who has the power to appoint. Israel allows elections, and as others have pointed out, they're more likely more free than any of the other neighbors immediately surrounding Israel. Even Muslims in Israel have greater freedom to elect whom ever they wish in fair and free elections. We have an ally in Israel.

Now, I realize there are differences in views, whether the Old Testament, the Torah, the Tanakh have valid legitimacy these days. Some of us believe them and are proud to do so just as the Founders did. Heck, of the 56 signers of the Declaration, over a third of them were ordained Christian ministers who believed every word of the Old Testament.

So I've been looking in the Old Testament for wisdom in application to our current situation because we know, back earlier this year, The Washington Post was told by this administration that the window during which Israel was going to likely attack Iran was between two different dates during a certain period. Well, that's not very helpful to an ally when we tell the world about when an ally may choose to defend itself. That's more a heads-up to an enemy of Israel's and the United States, a sworn enemy of the United States, led by people who have sworn to the destruction of the United States and Israel.

So it's a little bit confusing to see how this administration could be going about betraying our friend Israel. It would seem, when this administration leaked to the media that our dear friend and ally Israel was going to utilize the relationship with Azerbaijan to attack, that such a release was not something you would do for a friend but, rather, a betrayal of a friend and ally.

It appears that those were efforts to keep Israel from doing what it needed

to do to defend itself when this administration is telling Israel, Hey, just trust us. Trust us. We'll take care of your national security, and yes, there is a window beyond which you could no longer do any good in trying to stop the nuclear proliferation in Iran and beyond which we in the United States could. So, if we can just force Israel past that window, then they would have to rely completely on the United States to do all in its power to protect Israel.

If Israel looks at what has been happening already this year with a couple of betrayals of our friendship, that would not bode well that the top in this administration for this country will protect Israel at whatever cost. That has to be considered by Israel.

Then we have this report. This was dated April 19, 2012, from the Middle East Media Research Institute. The introduction reads:

An important element in the renewal of nuclear negotiations with Iran in the talks in Istanbul April 13-14, 2012, was an alleged fatwa attributed to Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, according to which the production, stockpiling, and use of nuclear weapons are forbidden under Islam and that the Islamic Republic of Iran shall never acquire these weapons. Indeed, U.S. leaders, among them Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and even U.S. President Barack Obama, along with other representatives to the talks, the International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors, and even highly respected research institutes considered the fatwa as an actual fact, and examined its significance and implications for the nuclear negotiations with Iran that were renewed in Istanbul.

However, an investigation by the Middle East Media Research Institute reveals that no such fatwa ever existed or was ever published, and that media reports about it are nothing more than a propaganda ruse on the part of the Iranian regime apparatuses in an attempt to deceive the top U.S. administration officials and the others mentioned above.

Iranian regime officials' presentation of facts on nuclear weapons attributed to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei as a fatwa, or religious edict, when no such fatwa was issued by him, is a propaganda effort to propose to the West a religiously valid substitute for concrete guarantees of inspectors' access to Iran's nuclear facilities. Since the West does not consider mere statements by Khamenei or other regime officials to be credible, the Iranian regime has put forth a fraudulent fatwa the West would be more inclined to trust.

□ 2020

It goes on to talk about, and I'll just read from this:

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton clarified that she had discussed the fatwa with "experts and religious scholars," and also with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan. At the NATO conference in Norfolk, Virginia, in early April, she stated: "The other interesting development which you may have followed was the repetition by the supreme leader, the Ayatollah Khamenei, that he had issued a fatwa against nuclear weapons, against weapons of mass destruction. Prime Minister Erdogan and I discussed this at some length, and I've discussed with a number of experts and religious scholars. And if it is indeed a state-

ment of principles and values, then it is a starting point for being operationalized, which means that it serves as the entryway into a negotiation as to how you demonstrate that it is indeed a sincere, authentic statement of conviction. So we will test that as well."

During his visit to Tehran in late March, in an interview with Iranian state television, Prime Minister Erdogan said, "I have shared the Leader's [Khamenei's] statement with U.S. President Barack Obama and told him that in face of this assertion, I do not have a different position, and the Iranians are using nuclear energy peacefully."

On April 7, 2012, Kayhan International reported, citing Press TV, that Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu had told the Turkish Kanal D TV that there is no possibility that "Khamenei's fatwa forbidding the possession and use of nuclear weapons might be disobeyed in Iran."

So we can all celebrate. There's has been a fraudulent false report of a fatwa by Khamenei. So, gosh, nobody in Iran would violate this fatwa making it against the Islamic religion to develop nuclear weapons. When the truth is, if Israel is not going to defend itself by itself, as President Obama said it absolutely must on more than one occasion, if it is going to rely on the representations of this administration to, Trust us, we'll take care of you, we got your back, then Israel may want to note how easy it is to deceive this administration into believing what it wants—that Iran would not develop nuclear weapons.

It is important to note that this administration has been praised in messages coming from the Islamic Society of North America and other groups actually named coconspirators in funding terrorism in the world. They've been praised by these named coconspirators in funding terrorism for their cleansing of training materials of our FBI, of our intelligence, of our State Department. We have gone through and eliminated words like "jihad," words like "Islam," words like "radical," replacing them with things like "violent extremism." When the trouble is, it is so easy to deceive national officials in any country where they refuse to study the enemy who has sworn to destroy them. If you will not study the enemy who is sworn to destroy you and your country, then you will continue to be easily duped.

So we have these named coconspirators for funding terrorism out there praising this administration and their meetings inside the hearts of the administration at the State Department, in the White House, in the Justice Department. They've been praised for eliminating all of these references to such inappropriate things as "Islam."

Well, this weekend, despite efforts by some in this administration to prevent it, a few of us met with our allies, members of the national front, one of which could be elected the next President of Afghanistan. These are people who, while we in America were burying Americans, they were burying family members who had fought with us against the Taliban. These are the enemy of our enemy, the Taliban. They

should be our friends, and they are my friends.

Therefore, when I saw my Muslim friends there at the home of my friend Massoud, there were big hugs all around. This administration calls them war criminals because some of them fight as viciously as the Taliban that they fight against, but they were friends. They fought with us. They did much of our fighting for us before we became occupiers in Afghanistan.

Yet, when this administration throws our allies under a bus, it means for them to stay there. Well, some of us believe that if we ever hope to have other allies, then it is critical that we treat our allies with respect. We don't stab them in the back. We don't throw them under the bus. But that's a lesson hard learned.

There are international reports that say President Karzai may be willing to resign a year early. That's been heard different places around the world. Gee, wow, isn't that wonderful if Karzai would resign a year early. But in meeting with my friends who have talked to some of Karzai's circle, they point out: Do you in America not understand that when this President Karzai says he's looking at retiring a year early, it's not because he is some big-hearted, wonderful, democracy-loving person? If he loved democracy, he'd let us elect our governors. He'd let us elect our mayors. But he wants to appoint them, and he's not ready to give up power. But the Afghan constitution apparently says that if you've served two terms, you cannot run for a third term.

So, this President Karzai is looking at a way, when perhaps if he resigned a year early, then he could argue, I didn't serve two terms. I served 1 year short of two terms, therefore I can run for a third term.

□ 2030

Being as how the President of Afghanistan appoints the governors, the mayors, the chiefs of police, so many of the positions of power in Afghanistan, it's quite conceivable that he could ensure that he got elected again next time if he ran a third time. And if he were to be allowed to run a third time and get elected, that puts him beyond 2014, which means the United States will not be around to enforce the promises that President Karzai made.

Oh, it's a hope and prayer that this administration will quit living on the false promises of people who say they're going to help us, but are sworn publicly and privately to destroy our way of life. And there are those we continue to hear say, Look, Israel is just occupiers. They're occupiers in this land. The Palestinians have more claim. But as Newt Gingrich pointed out, the term "Palestinian" is a very recent word that found usage. If you go back, as one reporter did, who ended up being let go, she marveled that these people ought to go back to Poland or wherever they came from, when actually if you look at where they came

from 1,600, 1,700 years before Mohammed existed in the city of Hebron, a King named David ruled for 7 years. He then moved the capital up to Jerusalem, and a beautiful capital it was.

Some have said, "Well, where is the evidence of the Israelis being in Jerusalem?" Well, we know that Mohammed never went to Jerusalem. He had a dream, as I understand it at one point, that he had gone there; but he never physically went. That's for sure. But here is the current city of Jerusalem. This is the city of David here, south of the Temple Mount, Mount Moriah, where Abraham went. It's interesting, because people have said, gee, where is the archeological evidence? And we see people around the country in Hebron where Jesse was buried, where his tomb is, in what I call Shiloh and they were calling Sheloh. The Ark of the Covenant, they've found the location, it certainly appears, where it was kept for over 300 years, long before there was a Mohammed.

People have said, well, where is the evidence? It is beginning to show up in droves. Quite interesting, as the archeologists have begun to look, they've realized, you know what, the city of David may have been south down the hill from where the current Temple Mount is. They began excavating, and they found all kinds of dramatic evidence of Israel's existence. It's dramatic. There is no question from the things that are being found and the way they're being dated and the dates that are coming to light that Israel existed in the land where it has its country now. Not just in part, but throughout the West Bank. That was Israeli territory many, many centuries before a man named Mohammed lived.

I'm not attempting to push my religious beliefs on anybody else. These are simply the facts of history that we have to look at and understand. Until we have an administration that stops blinding those who are supposed to protect us, we're in big trouble. So it is important that we pay tribute to our dear friend Israel, stop the betrayals, and say thank God for the nation of Israel and the dear friend that they are to the United States.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today and April 27 on account of personal reasons.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 35 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, April 27, 2012, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5797. A letter from the Secretary, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting the Commission's "Major" final rule — Swap Dealer and Major Swap Participant Recordkeeping, Reporting, and Duties Rules; Futures Commission Merchant and Introducing Broker Conflicts of Interest Rules; and Chief Compliance Officer Rules for Swap Participants, and Futures Commission Merchants (RIN: 3038-AC96) received April 3, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

5798. A letter from the Deputy Chief Management Officer, Department of Defense, transmitting the annual report for FY 2012 for the Investment Review Board and Investment Management; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5799. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting authorization of 3 officers to wear the authorized insignia of the grade of brigadier general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5800. A letter from the Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy, Principal Military Deputy, Department of Defense, transmitting notice that the Navy intends to donate the destroyer *EXEDSON* (DD946) to the Saginaw Valley Naval Ship Museum; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5801. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting Report to Congress: Tobacco Prevention and Control Activities in the United States, 2008-2009; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5802. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Creation of a Low Power Radio Service [MM Docket No.: 99-25] received April 3, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5803. A letter from the Program Manager, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Summary of Benefits and Coverage and Uniform Glossary [TD 9575] (RIN: 1545-BJ94) received April 10, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5804. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's annual report prepared in accordance with section 203 of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act), Pub. L. No. 107-174; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5805. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Management of Chief Financial Officer, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's report for fiscal year 2011 on the Acquisition of Articles, Materials, and Supplies Manufactured Outside the United States, pursuant to Public Law 110-28, section 8306; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5806. A letter from the Director, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's annual report for FY 2011 prepared in accordance with Section 203 of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act), Public Law 107-174; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5807. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's annual report for Fiscal Year 2011