

Once again, the specter of a swap for Cuban spies being held in prison here has been raised. I would continue to encourage the administration to reject that notion, particularly when these Cuban spies are being held for participating in a murder conspiracy against other American citizens that were shot down over international water.

I would remind the administration that Cuba remains on the list of terrorist nations—nations that are specific enemies of this country and want to do harm to this country; a country that is harboring fugitives from U.S. justice, and a country where, just this week, peaceful dissidents in Cuba were attacked once again, according to reports from Cuba, by relatives of a political police captain on the island that attacked supporters of the peaceful group the Ladies in White.

Once again, I would urge, as I have done so many times, that the international community continue to denounce the atrocious human rights abuses on the island nation of Cuba.

FOREST SERVICE IN TOMBSTONE, ARIZONA

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

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. How many of us have heard of a little town called Tombstone? It's popped up in movies, American folklore. Guess what? The Forest Service seems hell-bent on ending its existence. This town is older than my State. Its water rights are older than my State. Yet the Forest Service is restricting the town from 87 percent of its water supply because there's Forest Service land around Tombstone.

This picture isn't a picture of a bunch of cowboys out having fun. They're not allowed to take a little Bobcat up the mountainside to get the springs to fix their water, so you have to go up by hand up a mountainside to remove the boulders.

Is there an adult in the Forest Service who has a lick of sense?

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF COLD SPRING OFFICER TOM DECKER

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to lend my voice to the chorus of Minnesotans that are grieving at the loss of one of our finest, Cold Spring Police Officer Tom Decker, who was senselessly murdered while responding to a call for help.

A 6-year veteran of the force and a father of four, Officer Decker exemplified what it means to serve and protect. He loved his job and the community that he served, and those he served admired and respected him in return. He was absolutely one of the good guys: a dedicated husband, father, and police officer.

So today, Mr. Speaker, let us honor Officer Decker's life and the incredible devotion he gave to his community. He was a hero. But more importantly, he was an incredible human being. He and his service will be absolutely and deeply missed. Let us all keep Officer Decker and his loved ones, fellow officers, and community in our prayers.

THE 147TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an important day in American history. Tomorrow, we will celebrate the 147th anniversary of the abolition of that regrettable institution of slavery. On 6 December 1865, the State of Georgia became the 27th State to ratify the 13th Amendment, marking the three-fourths supermajority necessary to amend the Constitution. The 13th Amendment accomplished something that the Emancipation Proclamation did not and perhaps could not do. It declared the non-existence of slavery in the whole of the "United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

The triumph the 13th Amendment represents not just for African Americans but for all Americans should be celebrated every December 6.

[From the Raleigh News & Observer, Dec. 5, 2012]

THE DAY SLAVERY OFFICIALLY ENDED (By James A. Wynn Jr.)

The movie "Lincoln" highlights the struggle over the passage and ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, the historic proviso that officially ended slavery in America. The triumph that the Thirteenth Amendment represents—not just for African-Americans but for all Americans—should be celebrated, and we should celebrate it tomorrow, December 6.

No amendment has a greater or simpler declarative force than the Thirteenth. It states uncompromisingly that "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude . . . shall exist within the United States." The amendment also empowered Congress to enact laws to enforce its substantive protections.

The significance of the Thirteenth Amendment cannot be overstated. Among other things, it extended the phrase "We the People" in the Preamble to the Constitution to all Americans, it ended the implicit sanctioning of slavery in the original Constitution and it made clear that abolishing slavery was the sovereign will of the people.

The U.S. Supreme Court, with its notorious 1857 Dred Scott decision, left no doubt that the phrase "We the People" in the Preamble did not include slaves. According to the court, African-Americans were not intended to be included in "We the People" because "[t]hey had for more than a century before been regarded as an inferior order . . . and so far inferior, that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and that the Negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit."

The Thirteenth Amendment repudiated and effectively overruled Dred Scott and all it stood for, making clear that neither African-Americans, nor anyone else, could "just-

ly and lawfully" be enslaved in this great country.

Further, the Thirteenth Amendment ended the original Constitution's implicit sanctioning of slavery. Although the word "slave" appears nowhere in the original Constitution, the document tacitly accepted slavery. For example, as a result of an infamous compromise between Northern and Southern states, Article I of the Constitution based political representation in the House of Representatives on the population of "free Persons" and three-fifths "of all other Persons" in each State.

Thus, despite the Declaration of Independence's majestic pronouncement that "all men are created equal," the original Constitution indicated otherwise. With the Thirteenth Amendment, the Constitution expressly rejected slavery.

Finally, the Thirteenth Amendment, "ratified by the Legislatures of three-fourths of the several states," as required by Article V of the Constitution, abolished slavery through the sovereign will of the people and the democratic process. By contrast, the Emancipation Proclamation, an 1863 declaration freeing slaves in Confederate territory, was a wartime measure issued unilaterally by Lincoln.

The Thirteenth Amendment has been the subject of far less litigation than the Fourteenth. As a result, it has suffered unjust obscurity. And to the extent we celebrate it at all, we do so on the wrong day, February 1—the anniversary of the day President Abraham Lincoln signed a joint resolution submitting the proposed amendment to the states for ratification.

Addressing a crowd outside the White House after he signed the joint resolution, Lincoln remarked that the occasion was one "of congratulation to the country and to the whole world." In 1948, President Harry Truman declared February 1 "National Freedom Day."

Yet despite the symbolic significance of Lincoln's act, the Thirteenth Amendment had no legal effect until the states adopted it. Indeed, Lincoln's signature was unnecessary, and no other proposed amendment has been submitted to a president for signature.

The Thirteenth Amendment was put to all 36 states, including those formerly part of the Confederacy. Georgia became the 27th state to ratify the amendment, on Dec. 6, 1865, marking the achievement of the three-fourths supermajority necessary to amend the Constitution. The Supreme Court has held that constitutional amendments take legal effect when ratified. Thus, Dec. 6, 1865, marks the arguably most significant, and yet perhaps most unrecognized, date in African-American history.

Sadly, Lincoln never lived to see the Thirteenth Amendment ratified: He was assassinated on April 15, 1865, nearly eight months before Georgia provided the decisive vote in favor of ratification. No doubt Lincoln would have celebrated the day our nation constitutionally enshrined an abhorrence of slavery, the evil institution against which Lincoln had fought so hard.

No longer should the Thirteenth Amendment rest in silence. We should begin our holiday season by celebrating on Thursday the 147th anniversary of the Thirteenth Amendment's ratification. It is a day not just for African-Americans, but for all Americans, to commemorate our bettering our Constitution by spelling out the truth that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. rightly called self-evident: "All men are created equal."

□ 1240

TAXING AND SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hour, and I appreciate you being here with us this afternoon.

You know, it seems like just yesterday to me that you and I showed up here on Capitol Hill. It was that giant freshman class of 2010, and golly we came to do something.

I remember back in freshman orientation, folks hadn't even been sworn in yet and they were already trying to get focused on what the first votes in January 2011 would be about and the constant noise in the room was about how do we make a difference, how do we make it matter. This was a freshman class full of people who didn't come because they wanted a business card that says "Congressman." They didn't come because this was just part of a career path they had been planning since they were kids. They came because they were men and women, moms and dads, small business owners, big business employees, folks from back home who said: golly, the country is in trouble, and if we don't have leadership who's willing to stand up and do the right thing for the right reasons, this country might just go over the edge.

There were 99 of us, Mr. Speaker. You remember. It was Republicans and Democrats. Now, there were more of us as Republicans than there were of them, but we came together in those early days to say: What can we do to make a difference?

Mr. Speaker, you can't see it here, but I have a chart of our spending as a percent of the share of our economy and tax revenue as a percent of the share of our economy. Now, Mr. Speaker, what you see on the chart with the green line is historical tax revenue. What you see is, going back to World War II, going back to the mid-1940s, that it really has not mattered in the history of this Nation whether the top tax rate was 90 percent as it was before the Kennedy years, or 70 percent as it was at the beginning of the Kennedy years, or 28 percent as it was in the Reagan years. It really has not mattered what the top bracket is. All Americans are willing to give to government is about 18 percent of GDP.

It turns out, Mr. Speaker—this will be no surprise to you—it turns out Americans are pretty smart. If what you decide, as the Federal Government, is we're going to tax this behavior, well, Americans start engaging in this other behavior instead. If what you say is, no, I'm going to tax that behavior, they say, well, that's okay, I'll go do this instead. Americans are pretty smart, and they change their behavior to maximize the benefit for themselves

and their families, their kids and their grandkids.

So, going back—just a historical truth—through modern American history, post-World War II history, no matter what we've done with the Tax Code, Americans have only contributed about 18 percent of GDP. That distinguishes it, Mr. Speaker, from our spending trajectory in this country.

Now, on the chart I have our spending in red. Historical spending is represented by this jagged line. Projected future spending is that big smooth line that rises right off the chart. This red line, Mr. Speaker, represents what happens to Federal spending if we do nothing. That's important. What does it mean to do nothing? What I mean is, if we were to close down the White House tomorrow and not sign one new law; if we were to close down the U.S. House of Representatives tomorrow and not pass one new law; if we were to close the United States Senate—and I know what you're thinking, Mr. Speaker, you're thinking we're not going to be able to tell much difference there anyway, that's not true—if we close the United States Senate and pass not one new bill through the United States Senate, this trajectory of spending is what faces America. This trajectory of spending is what happens if we do nothing.

Mr. Speaker, there is no set of circumstances, not a historical set of circumstances, not a set of circumstances that we could conjure up where we could possibly raise enough money through the Tax Code to pay for the spending that this Congress, past Congresses, this President, past Presidents have promised the American people.

Here's the thing, Mr. Speaker: you and I are lovers of freedom, so we would never propose such a plan; but if we were to go out today and nationalize everything, if we were to put a 100 percent tax on every American worker in this land, if we were to put a 100 percent tax on every business in this land, if we were to take everything from everybody—their house, their business, their stocks, their bonds—if we were to sell every business in America at the auction block, if we took it all, the present value of that wealth would not be enough to pay the future promises that Presidents and Congresses have made.

We are in a spending-driven crisis. The question is: How do you tackle that, Mr. Speaker? Candidly, coming up with a clever idea to raise taxes is pretty easy. You just look at what taxes are today, and you say let's make them higher tomorrow. It doesn't take a lot of thoughtfulness to put that together. We can all agree on a plan that has the number that taxes are today and we make that number higher tomorrow. That's not an intellectual challenge. It's the wrong tax policy, and we see it in the President's budget from 2012.

I tell every town hall meeting, Mr. Speaker, that I have, every audience

that's there that I appreciate this President. I appreciate this President because the law of the land is that every year the President of the United States will submit to the Congress his or her proposed budget, and every year this President has been in office he has done exactly that.

That's important, because a budget is a statement of your values, Mr. Speaker. You know that. I mean, when we talk about where we're going to spend the tax dollars that we take in, what those priorities are, that tells us what our values are. When we talk about how much money we're going to take from the American people—who those folks are who are going to have to pay more, who those folks are who are going to have to pay less—we talk about our values. So every single year the President has put his values statement forward.

Now, that distinguishes him from a body that has disappointed me so terribly much, Mr. Speaker, in my 2 short years in this Congress, and that's the United States Senate. In the 2 years I've been here, I've never seen a Senate budget. I thought that was odd until I talked to colleagues who had been here longer and they said, actually, Congressman, we haven't seen a budget in almost 4 years from the United States Senate. No budget in 4 years. No statement of values. No statement of solutions. No recognition that there is a problem and then a proposal to make it better.

But what I have here, Mr. Speaker, is a chart that represents the President's budget from February. As he has done faithfully for these 4 years in office, he submitted his budget in February that would take us through the 2013 year. In that budget he raised taxes by \$2 trillion. Now, that's not a values statement about that. If I were to issue a values statement, I would tell you I don't want taxes to go up by \$2 trillion. I think it's a bad plan, I think it's bad for the economy, I think it's bad for the American people. But the President laid that plan out there for the American people to decide. In fact, he ran a campaign on that all spring, all summer and all fall, and the American people sent him back to service for another 4 years.

But what you see in his budget, Mr. Speaker, as represented on this chart, is facing \$16 trillion in public debt—largest public debt in American history, about \$55,000 for every man, woman and child in this country, their burden of the debt, a debt that's threatening to sink our economy. Thank goodness we're the best of all the worst economies in the world, Mr. Speaker, because folks are still investing here. Whenever the rest of the world bounces back, we're going to be in bad, bad shape. You don't know how fast that spiral is going to get started.

□ 1250

But the President, looking at that same set of facts that I have just