

money from hardworking taxpayers to give as much to farmers who are making more than \$750,000. We just don't want to subsidize them as much. That is not punishing success.

The other point is that this is one of those rare moments in which I think there is bipartisan agreement that a farm bill really ought to be for family farmers. The purpose of the farm program is to make sure that individual families can stay farming, and that means the safety net needs to be there for that family farm. I know in Wisconsin most of our farmers don't make \$750,000, so it probably doesn't affect many of the corn and bean or dairy farmers whom I represent. Maybe in North Dakota and in other States there are people with thousands of acres who make that kind of money. I think that is great—I think that is wonderful—but I still think that our taxpayers shouldn't have to subsidize them as much as the family farmer.

This is one of those opportunities in which I think Congress can speak with a bipartisan voice. I really believe, if the Hanna-Pingree amendment or the Blumenauer-Mulvaney amendment had been made in order, it probably would have passed. So this is our chance here in the House to speak with one voice on a bipartisan basis. Let's not subsidize folks at the high end as much, and let's protect that family farmer. Let's agree with the Senate and take this issue off the table as one of those contentious issues because we are agreeing bipartisanly and bicamerally that we ought to have a farm program for the family farmer and somewhere limit these subsidies. That is all we are asking for.

With that, I ask for its passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MULLIN). All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 380, the previous question is ordered on the resolution.

The question is on the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MORE DEMOCRAT VOICES MUST BE HEARD

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, more Democrat leaders are finding their voices and courage to speak out against the continued shutdown of government services by Senate Majority Leader REID. This was evident on Wednesday as District of Columbia Mayor Vincent Gray crashed a Senate Democratic press conference near the Capitol.

Mayor Gray took the opportunity to ask a simple and logical question of the Senate: Would the Senate vote on the House-passed measure to permit the

District of Columbia to utilize tax revenues it collects to fund municipal services during this shutdown?

This measure, H.J. Res. 71, passed the House more than a week ago with support from Washington Delegate ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON and other Democrats in the House. This targeted appropriations bill, like the many others the House has passed with bipartisan support, still languishes in the Senate.

When the Mayor approached Senator REID to discuss the funding for the District of Columbia, the Senate Majority Leader replied: I am on your side, okay? Don't screw it up.

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whose side the Senate Majority Leader is on, but it has not been on the side of the American people.

A WEEK IN REVIEW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield to my friend from Florida (Mr. DESANTIS).

OBAMACARE

Mr. DESANTIS. I thank the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say a few words about accountability.

Normally, the way it works is that Congress can consider a piece of legislation. Maybe it passes. Maybe the President signs it. You implement it. Then the voters can decide whether they like it, whether it lived up to its billing, so to speak.

With ObamaCare, it was interesting because this was rammed through Congress at the beginning of 2010; yet it is just now really being implemented. I am starting to get a lot of people in my district contacting my office who are really shocked at some of the stiff premium increases they are seeing. So I think it is useful just to review some of the promises that were made and whether any of those promises have been kept. I think what you will find is that this is a law not only that the public opposed, not only that was rammed through with no bipartisan support, but a law that in many ways is resting on false pretenses.

Promise one, the President made this: it will lower premiums by up to \$2,500 for a typical family per year.

I have not seen that true anyplace. In fact, people are seeing \$2,500 increases. There was a family in California, it was reported, who saw an increase of \$10,000. So I think, right here, as this is being implemented, we know that that is just not going to be the case.

□ 1830

Promise number two, the President said this: "If you like your doctor, you will be able to keep your doctor. If you like your health care plan, you will be able to keep your health care plan." Period.

Well, we know that that is not true. We see spouses losing spousal coverage. We see people with major companies losing their employer-provided insurance, getting pushed into some of these exchanges.

So the idea that "if you like your plan, you can keep it" is absolutely not proving to be true for thousands of people throughout the country.

This is just beginning. People who have looked at this from the Congressional Budget Office to other groups say you could have anywhere from 7 to 30 million Americans who actually lose their employer plans because of ObamaCare.

Of course, if you are losing your plan and you are getting pushed into an exchange, you may not be able to keep your doctor because that doctor may not be in the network, may not be available based on the plan that you are having to take because you have lost your original plan.

Promise number three—this is the President: "I can make a firm pledge: under my plan no family making less than \$250,000 will see any form of tax increase."

Well, we know that the individual mandate he said wasn't a tax. Then when it got challenged in the Supreme Court, his administration was saying, yeah, uphold it because it is a tax. That is eventually what the court did, saying that it is a tax. That is a tax that hits blue collar "salt of the Earth" people, forcing them to buy a product that essentially they may not even be physically able to obtain because the Web sites don't work, and if not, they are going to tax you. That certainly hasn't been true.

But there are a whole bunch of other things in the law that hit middle-income and lower-income people. There is a cap on flexible spending accounts. It is actually harder under ObamaCare to deduct medical expenses from your income taxes. Even a tax on indoor tanning salons. I think there are a lot of people who make less than \$250,000 a year who are doing the tanning salons.

Then, of course, there are a whole bunch of other taxes—over a trillion dollars—that may not be directly levied on somebody making less than \$250,000, but the costs will end up being passed on. For example, the employer mandate, the tax on health insurance plans, the medical device tax. Those taxes are on companies, but those costs are going to get pushed to individuals, and they are going to have to bear the cost of that. And, oh, by the way, certain good health care plans that a lot of union members have who are not making \$250,000 a year, those are considered Cadillac plans, and those will be taxed extra going forward.

Finally, the President said: "I will sign a universal health care bill into law by the end of my first term as President that will cover every American." It is interesting—people on the other side of the aisle will say, oh, you

Republicans, why don't you want everybody to be covered? The most recent analysis from the Congressional Budget Office said that in 10 years from now—so after 13 years of ObamaCare being the law—you will still have in this country 31 million Americans that don't have any insurance. Of course, we know ObamaCare is causing people to lose the insurance that they have.

So this is not something that is a universal health care bill, by any stretch of the imagination. There are going to be a lot of people who aren't going to have any insurance.

The point I just wanted to make with this is, there has got to be accountability in government. People want to have a redress of their grievances. These issues were not necessarily teed up in the election, and so now people are coming to terms with what has happened. So the point I would just make is, at a minimum when you are dealing with the broken promises of ObamaCare, we have got to communicate to the public that this has got to be based on some semblance of fairness.

For example, the Members of Congress who wrote this law must live under the exact terms of the statute. They should not be granted any extra legal relief from the burdens of ObamaCare. The fact that businesses have had the law delayed for them—and, of course, Members of Congress have gotten special treatment as well—I think individual Americans have got to be given the same deal. It is just wrong to have the IRS tax people to buy something from Web sites that aren't functional—and buy products that they may not like.

So accountability is key. This is a law that was passed. There were specific promises made over and over again. What we are finding now, unfortunately, is those promises are not being kept.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate so much my friend from Florida. I am always greatly appreciative and thrilled when I find somebody who attended an Ivy League school that got a good education.

The points are well made by my friend from Florida. There were many promises made and promises not kept. Go from top to bottom:

"If you like your insurance, you can keep it." Not remotely true.

"If you like your doctor, you can keep them." Not remotely true. So many stories are coming forward.

"It is actually going to be cheaper for Americans under ObamaCare." Not remotely true, unless perhaps you are in New York. There is a small part of the country, a small group of individuals, who were already paying so much because of a massive amount of waste or laws that allowed for a great amount of waste or abuse; in those there may be some people that actually saved money. But for most Americans, they are not only going to have to pay more, they are going to pay dramatically more.

As we have seen the government shutdown play out, it has been interesting to note the things that have been open and the things that have been closed. We were told that only essential government services would be provided.

We had also passed immediately before the shutdown and sent to the Senate a military pay bill. Now, that military pay bill was intentionally left broad enough so that it could take care of the need to take care of the death benefit, broad enough to take care of the needs of the family that are always provided by the military, by the Department of Defense, for those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in losing a loved one in the course of combat. And lo and behold, even though that was made clear, it also was made clear in the bill that civilian employees could be included. Even independent contractors under that law were allowed to continue working that were supporting the role of the military. So it was a very broadly worded act in order to give the Obama administration, and particularly the Defense Department, great latitude to make sure important things got done.

Now as we have seen, the Secretary of Defense has laid off hundreds of thousands of civilian workers, though the bill gave him latitude to leave them working and they supported the military. It was only after about a week that they finally said, okay, we are going to let a whole lot of those employees come back now that we have made the determination that the bill gives us enough latitude to allow them to work.

We told him it did. The bill gave him that kind of power. Perhaps he had talked to President Obama and they decided, yeah, let's put lots of people out of work, or perhaps he had not talked to the President. We don't know.

But as Peggy Noonan pointed out recently, talking about things that have gone on here in the last couple of weeks, she reminded us of Harry Truman's sign that was on his desk: "The buck stops here."

They didn't have to hurt all those civilian employees. They could have left them working. But they chose to send them home, creating more hardship. They chose not to pay the death benefit for families who were entitled to it after losing a loved one who is a patriot. They chose to do those things.

They have chosen to close parks, farms, different things that don't cost the Federal Government a dime, don't cost anything. But they have strategically chosen to close things that create suffering, some chaos, different problems for people. It is as if the park rangers, who were quoted recently, were exactly right in saying that they were told: make life as difficult as possible for people, because that is what the administration has done.

But there is good news. This story was published by FOX News:

National Parks Are Closed, the IRS Call Centers Have No Staff.

And I insert parenthetically here:

The IRS is still getting your money in, the money is still flowing in, they are just not helping people as it flows in.

The article says:

Countless government Web sites have been taken down.

We know even the panda camera was turned off, even though it required no monitoring.

Yet despite these changes, which range from inconveniences to major headaches, a number of not so essential government operations are still up and running. Here are a few that have evaded the partial government shutdown:

The Denali commission.

You have probably never even heard of the Denali Commission. But the tiny Alaska-based economic development agency gained some notoriety after it emerged that the group's inspector general was petitioning Congress to defund it.

But guess what agency survived the shutdown? According to its own contingency plan, because the Commission's staffers are paid under the prior year's budget, all 14 employees are exempt from furlough, and "reporting to work."

That is a commission that its own inspector general petitioned Congress to defund.

Another government function that was left up: "The White House Twitter." Oh, sure, there were plenty of government help Web sites that would have made life easier for people having to deal with the Federal Government. They were shut down because they would have helped people. But the White House Twitter was left up and rolling. As the article says:

Right as Congress missed the deadline last week to pass a spending bill, First Lady Michelle Obama's office informed its Twitter followers that: "Due to Congress' failure to pass legislation to fund the government," updates to the official First Lady Twitter account would be limited.

But the White House Twitter account is alive and well.

The account has blasted out a series of tweets calling on Congress to end the budget impasse.

Another item that has been left up and running despite all of the government Web sites and help call centers and all that have been shut down, and that is "Let's Move." The article says:

While a number of government Web sites have been temporarily taken offline, and the First Lady's Twitter account has been largely abandoned, not so for Michelle Obama's Let's Move campaign.

The Web site for the First Lady's healthy-living initiative remains operational—though it doesn't appear to have been updated much since September. The top of the site displays the message: "Cheers to Water!"

Another thing left up was the "Park Rangers on Patrol."

Despite national parks and monuments being shuttered across the country for lack of funds, the National Park Service is devoting considerable resources to putting up barricades and patrolling them.

An innkeeper along the Blue Ridge Parkway who was forced to close his business due

to the partial shutdown told FOXNews.com that park rangers have set up a “24/7 blockade” outside his inn—to prevent would-be customers from coming in.

Another thing, the “Obama Campaign Stop.”

President Obama canceled a long-planned trip to Asia over the budget impasse.

But he, nevertheless, ventured outside the beltway last week for a rally in nearby Rockville, Maryland, to pressure Republicans to pass a budget bill.

□ 1845

The article says budget bill, but actually we are past the budget time. Now it is appropriation time, and that is what we need.

The Patent Office. If you happened to invent something during the stalemate, good news. The United States Patent and Trademark Office is open for business. According to the office, it is using fees from the prior year to keep running and should be able to for roughly 4 weeks.

The IRS is taking but not giving. IRS call centers are closed. The IRS is not issuing refunds during the partial shutdown. The agency, though, will gladly accept tax payments during that time. The IRS says in a statement on its Web site:

The IRS will accept and process all tax returns with payments, but will be unable to issue refunds during this time.

Another article from the Right Scoop had talked about the Amber Alert Web site being taken down. Although some have been kept up, the Amber Alert Web site was allowed to go down. And, thankfully, the administration realized there was enough pressure. For heaven's sake, it is for children who are kidnapped, lost. So, thankfully, the administration finally decided after enough pressure to bring the Amber Alert Web site back up.

It has been amazing to me, and I saw it again today in some of our memorial sites, memorials that are down on The Mall, the Iwo Jima monument, or the memorial, we have spent—this administration, that is, has spent more money keeping people out of open-air memorials than it ever spends just to leave them open. They are open 24/7. I have been up to the Iwo Jima, the U.S. Marine Corps monument so many times since I have been in Congress, again, all hours of the day and night. I don't sleep that much while I am here on the Hill.

Although we have some park rangers who don't know the parking laws and give tickets to people who are lawfully allowed to be there—apparently not enough training for our rangers—but they have gone to the trouble to get barriers to make life difficult for veterans, World War II veterans that fought to secure Iwo Jima, being kept out of seeing the Iwo Jima monument. Why? Because they put barricades in the way to keep people from going up and being able to drive up there.

One of the times I went up there during the last couple of weeks, there were probably 200 people up there, but they

had to park over by the townhouses, go over rails, down steep embankments and get in there. Unfortunately, as this administration knows, our World War II veterans in their eighties and nineties that I have been with and that I have helped and pushed wheelchairs for, they are not able to climb over rails and go down steep embankments, although they sure did while fighting in the Pacific, European theater, and North Africa. But they cannot do it now. And for anyone to keep putting up the barricades at that Iwo Jima monument just to screw over our veterans is outrageous. I don't know who is doing it, but shame on the people who are doing it.

I was gratified last weekend, on one occasion I went up there, and there were plastic barricades that had been filled with water to hold them in place, make them too big for a person to push over, and yet there were three busloads of World War II veterans up at the Iwo Jima monument, and someone had rammed those plastic barriers, knocking them over, spilling the water everywhere. Once the water was dispersed, pushed them out of the way. A wooden barricade looked like it had been run over so the buses could go up there. I don't know if those buses did that or not. I like to think they did, that those World War II veterans were not going to have some mean-spirited person in the administration up there to prevent them from seeing the Iwo Jima monument for one time before they left this world.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the people in this administration that keep trying to punish the American people so that they can get the money that they are demanding, that S&P and Moody's has said you guys have to get responsible about the money you are spending, the money that American taxpayers gave the Republicans, the majority, in 2010 to do something about. My friends across the aisle are constantly saying elections have consequences. That is right. The American people didn't like ObamaCare, and so they voted the Democrats in the House out of the majority with people running on that main issue. We will do everything we can to get rid of ObamaCare.

It is true that the President won reelection. Many of us still believe that if we had had a candidate that could challenge the abuses of ObamaCare before the last election last year instead of one that gave a prototype for it in his home State, the President would not have been reelected. But Republicans chose a very nice man, a philanthropic man, a great businessman, a very caring American, but somebody who had already shown he supported a type of socialized medicine in his home State.

ObamaCare, as it was passed, as it was originating in the Senate and then passed in the Senate, sent down to the House as bill H.R. 3590, should have originated in this House because it raises revenue, called penalties. It is

called penalties throughout the bill. The Supreme Court noted that. In a very hypocritical opinion, the Supreme Court went to page 15 and noted that Congress called it a penalty. It only is applied if people don't do what is required. That makes it a penalty. Clearly, it is a penalty because the anti-injunction act makes very clear that if Congress passes a tax, then no Federal court can take it up and make a decision on it until the tax is actually imposed and the person suing has standing by virtue of having the tax actually imposed on them. That is a nutshell.

So if the Supreme Court had found that ObamaCare contained a tax and not a penalty, then it would not have jurisdiction. But the Supreme Court opinion at page 15 decided it is a penalty; it is not a tax. If it was a tax, we couldn't go any further on the opinion. The opinion would be over. We would have to dismiss and wait for the tax to actually be assessed. But since it is a penalty, like Congress called it through the bill, and since it is a penalty, as President Obama made very clear to the American public—it is not a tax; it is a penalty—the Supreme Court went on. Eventually, after determining that ObamaCare, as written, based on what the proponents said was the interstate commerce clause that gave it the authority to pass ObamaCare, the Supreme Court said, no, it doesn't. The interstate commerce clause does not give authority to Congress to pass a bill that takes over health care. That is not constitutional.

Then eventually they got over and took up the issue of exactly what was involved in the individual mandate, the business mandate, and the Court concluded that actually, despite Congress calling it a penalty, the President assuring America it was a penalty and not a tax, the Supreme Court ends up saying it is a tax, and, therefore, it is constitutional. So we, as the Supreme Court, will rewrite the law and uphold it as we have rewritten; because as it is written, it is not constitutional, but we will rewrite it. Though that would be legislating and it would be unconstitutional, they did it anyway.

So when I hear people say it has been upheld by the Supreme Court, no, the bill that was passed was not upheld by the Supreme Court. It was struck down as violating the interstate commerce clause, but the Supreme Court did them a favor. They rewrote it legislatively, violated the Constitution in doing so, and then sent it back.

And now Americans across the country, by the millions, are suffering as a result of a tax the majority of Americans did not want, that all Americans promised was not a tax, and now it is taking away their insurance. It is taking away their doctors. It is taking away, really, quality health care that most Americans had.

So it would seem if the idea behind ObamaCare was strictly to help those who are uninsured, we should have dealt strictly with those Americans.

But that is not what ObamaCare was about. It was about the G-R-E, the government running everything.

I am amazed at how many friends across the aisle who have screamed and hollered about we don't want the government in our bedroom voted for a bill that puts the government in your bedroom, in your bathroom, in your kitchen, in your closets. It puts the Federal Government everywhere. And you combine that with what the all Democratic majority House and Senate passed with President Obama at the helm, that created a bureau under the guise of making sure that credit card companies were fair, and now that bureau is gathering everyone's credit card information and debit card information under the guise of making sure they are playing fair. This Federal Government has seized more private information. They have been more vindictive through weaponizing the IRS, and we are finding out about other agencies and departments. It is more than any administration has ever done, and American people will ultimately pay the price.

I hope and pray that the Supreme Court will take up the origination clause litigation because that bill did not originate in the House; and the origination clause says any bill that raises revenue must originate in the House, and the only single thing in that bill that was left was the number. Even the title about being a change to the Internal Revenue Code to provide a tax credit for first time home buyers who were in the military or veterans, they didn't leave a single word of that bill; and they brought in something completely ungermane to that bill for veterans and military members.

□ 1900

And instead of taking care of the millions they said were uninsured, that was the whole purpose of ObamaCare, they have done tremendous damage across the country to so very many.

As the shutdown has gone on that was brought on, not by the House Republicans, who passed a bill, we said, Look, Americans are being devastated by ObamaCare. The health care industry is being decimated.

Since a majority of the American people didn't want it, gave us control of the House as a result of it, let's get rid of it. We have got to start acting responsibly about the money we spend. Taking away Americans' rights to decide whether they should have knee surgery, back surgery, get a pace-maker, taking away the right and the ability of Americans to determine what kind of treatment they should get is not something, when we are in financial difficulty, we should be doing. That was struck down. It shouldn't have been a surprise. HARRY REID didn't want to pass it. The President didn't want to.

Then the House began sending down one compromise which was turned down. Okay, let's just suspend it for a year. That would be the fair thing to

do. As so many have said, Republicans and Democrats across the country, it was not ready for prime time. It was a train wreck. It was a nightmare. Let's just suspend it for a year. We know the President wants it, so we are not talking about getting rid of it like a majority of Americans want to do. Let's just suspend it for a year.

When that didn't go and the Senate said, No, we want a shutdown, we are not doing this, then we sent down a further compromise to basically suspended for 1 year the individual mandate just as businesses had gotten, as the President rewrote the law. The Constitution doesn't allow him to do it. Congress is supposed to step up, as happened in past generations where I'm told no matter whether a Democrat or Republican President, no matter who controlled the House and Senate, when a President overstepped his constitutional authority this far, usually there would be a trip down Pennsylvania from leaders of the House and Senate, both parties, that would privately tell the President, You overstepped your bounds. Back off, or we are going to defund everything that you are trying to push through on this, and it would get worked out.

Unfortunately, at the other end of the Hall in the Senate, they are not bothered by the fact that the President, by a stroke of the pen, wrote legislation and undid what the law said and made up his own law. That is not supposed to happen under our Constitution, but it did. We were bothered by it in the House, so we said, Look, let's work this out like gentle people. Let's just postpone it for a year. When that didn't work, we said, Let's at least suspend the individual mandate. You have suspended it for the business community. Let's do it for individuals. They wouldn't even do that.

Then when that didn't work, we sent a bill to the Senate that said, Okay, we are not trying to push anything on you. Just sit down and talk. Here are our negotiators. You appoint your negotiators. That is what the Constitution, law, and the rules require, and we will have this worked out probably by the time people get up in the morning; and they would not even appoint negotiators. Why? Because I believe they believe the conventional wisdom from the last 3 years that if the Democratic Senate and President forced a shutdown, the Main Street media would blame Republicans. It would enure politically to their benefit, and it would be worth causing the pain of a shutdown. So they refused to even negotiate at that point. It was not until the polls showed that the President had dropped to 37 percent from a favorable rating of 53 percent to an unfavorable rating that we finally had a willingness to sit down and talk.

During those times that so many things have been shut down, including the Normandy Cemetery—this story emerged yesterday from Market-place.org:

Coming Soon to Your Favorite TV Shows: Plot Lines About the Affordable Care Act.

Hollywood Health & Society, a program with the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center got a \$500,000 grant this week from The California Endowment to help TV writers tell better stories about the new health insurance law.

That is \$500,000 to Hollywood for propaganda to tell people who are suffering from the ravages of losing their insurance, losing their doctors, losing the ability to make decisions under new policies as they once did, telling them how good they had it. That \$500,000 would have paid to open a lot of memorials and parks. It would have kept the Moore farm going for years that doesn't get a dime of Federal money and hasn't since 1980, but may lose the farm because of the outrageous actions of the National Park Service in forcing it closed; as the park Ranger said, making it as difficult as they can for people.

Here is an article from Ken Blackwell:

When President Obama signed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act on March 23, 2010, it was the starting gun for a massive Federal effort to get the new system up and running. The administration had deliberately allowed for 3½ years for the launch, October 1, 2013.

That's a long time. It's 1,288 days. You would think, in that length of time, we could have brought a system online that would not be bedeviled with glitches. And more glitches.

By comparison, FDR had 912 days from the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, to D-day, June 6, 1944, the Allied invasion of Normandy. The D-day Museum at Portsmouth, England maintains a Web site that offers some idea of what was involved in mounting the invasion.

It says further down:

Today, Obama administration officials are making the rounds of TV talk shows touting the millions of Americans who have logged on day one of ObamaCare. They are not able tell us how many of those millions have actually signed up for ObamaCare. But that, of course, may be due to the fact that 85% of Americans already have health insurance and the rest, primarily healthy young adults, may have reasons for not having health insurance.

It's interesting to hear administration spokespersons dodging and weaving about how many Americans actually are eager to give all their personal data to the IRS and then be guided about by navigators chosen by Mr. Obama out of his compassionate concern for his people. Obama Cares was an inspired idea for a bumper sticker last fall. It helped the incumbent easily gain a second term in the White House.

It's odd, though, that after 4 years of major liberal legislation, the FDR comparisons have largely disappeared.

Americans today can judge how warm-hearted President Obama is. His administration has ordered the closure of the World War II Memorial in Washington. Ninety-year olds on Honor Flights faced barricades as they made that last trip to see the monument to their heroism on D-day and a thousand days.

White House spokesman Jay Carney raced to tell reporters that it was not the intent of the Obama administration to deny death benefits to families of soldiers recently killed in Afghanistan. It just seems to have

been another glitch. The Obama spokesman's efforts to avoid responsibility were strenuous. But he might have consulted another veteran of that great WWII generation. Harry Truman kept a plaque on his desk in the White House: The Buck Stops Here.

That was the article I was thinking of earlier.

Here's another article from October 10 by Jocelyn Maminta from New Haven, Connecticut.

In the midst of major changes in health care, UnitedHealthCare has sent thousands of pink slips to Connecticut doctors.

Termination letters went to physicians caring for Medicare patients. Those letters were sent out to doctors caring for "Medicare Advantage" patients. It's a plan, marketed to seniors to provide additional services through UnitedHealthCare.

A mix of primary care and specialty doctors are affected by it. And it comes at a questionable time.

Open enrollment for Medicare starts next Tuesday, and it's still not clear at this time as to which doctors are still in the United network.

The Connecticut State Medical Society is fighting back. The biggest concern is patient access to healthcare.

"What the government is looking for is to manage better care by adding a patient-centered medical home so that you have a doctor who is totally invested with taking care of every aspect of the patient and coordinating it. This is clearly not a patient-centered decision," said Dr. Michael Saffir, president of CT State Medical Society.

Perhaps that is Connecticut Medical Society.

Anyway, it has an update at the bottom:

In an email statement, UnitedHealthCare spokesman Ben Goldstein told News 8, "With the many changes happening in health care, we are building a network of health care providers that we can collaborate with more closely to have the most positive impact on the quality of care for our members.

And what a lot of people didn't realize, but they soon found out, ObamaCare, the so-called "Affordable Care Act," actually cut over \$700 billion in Medicare reimbursements. It took money that was going to be used for senior citizens' health care and put it towards trying to get this horrendous, this unworkable bill to the American people.

May I inquire as to how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 15 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOHMERT. In an article from WND Radio published October 10, they wrote:

Sticker Shock! Americans Floored By ObamaCare Cost.

The technical problems with the ObamaCare insurance exchanges are no surprise, are further evidence the whole program should be delayed or scrapped and Americans will be even more horrified when they can get somewhere on the Web site, according to health care policy expert Grace-Marie Turner.

The first 10 days of the ObamaCare insurance exchanges have been a technological and public relations mess for the administration. Many Americans have suffered through hours of stalled or crashed Web sites, no reporter has yet been able to navigate the site, and many people have entered personal in-

formation that online security experts believe could make them targets for identity theft.

□ 1915

When WND spent hours online and on the phone trying to get a cost estimate for an ObamaCare plan, it was told to expect a quote by January 1. As WND reported, anecdotal evidence on the government's own health care Facebook page suggests both problems are significant factors.

A few users seemed simply confused, but the overwhelming number of comments were critical, and many of those were scathing. Complaints about the application process had three recurring themes: long waits, glitches, and sticker shock. There was also much ridicule of the site's ability to handle "tremendous demand."

Information technology experts told The Wall Street Journal the Web site "appeared to be built on a sloppy software foundation."

Another article from WND published yesterday—I am not sure I like the title, "Pulling Out Hair' Over ObamaCare Web Site 'Nightmare.'" Sometimes people look okay with their hair out. Sometimes they don't.

The article says:

Forget, for a minute, all those arguments about the new health care law's "death panels," the forced cancellation of existing coverage, the violations of religious liberty, and the transformation of full-time jobs into part-time work. Even people who want to sign up for ObamaCare are finding it impossible.

Digital Trends reports the healthcare.gov Web site already has "shut down, crapped out, stalled, and misloaded so consistently that its track record for failure is challenged only by Congress." That is even though taxpayers paid "more than \$634 million" for "the digital equivalent of a rock," the report said.

The site itself, which apparently underwent major code renovations over the weekend, still rejects user logins, fails to load drop-down menus and other critical components for users that successfully gain entrance, and otherwise prevents uninsured Americans in the 36 States it serves from purchasing health care at competitive rates—healthcare.gov's primary purpose," the report said.

It goes on to talk about the massive nightmares of the people that are trying to sign on to it.

Here is an article from Peggy Noonan from The Wall Street Journal: "Now is the Time to Delay ObamaCare":

The Obama administration has an implementation problem. More than any administration of the modern era, they know how to talk but have trouble doing. They give speeches about ObamaCare, but when it is unveiled, what the public sees is a Potemkin village designed by the noted architect Rube Goldberg. They speak ringingly about the case for action in Syria but can't build support in the U.S. foreign policy community, in Congress, among the public. Recovery summer is always next summer. They have trouble implementing. Which, of course, is the most boring but crucial part of governing. It is not enough to talk; you must perform.

There is an odd sense with members of this administration that they think words are actions. Maybe that is why they tweet so much. Maybe they imagine Bashir Assad seeing their tweets and musing: "Ah, Samantha is upset—then I shall change my entire policy, in respect for her emotions!"

That gets us to the real story of last week, this week, and the future, the one beyond the shutdown, the one that normal people are both fully aware of and fully understand, and that is the utter and catastrophic debut of ObamaCare. Even for those who expected problems, and that would be everyone who follows government, it has been a shock.

They had 3.5 years to set it up! They knew exactly when it would be unveiled, on October 1, 2013. On that date, they knew millions could be expected to go online to see if they benefit.

And it goes on. It is an excellent article. She says:

A quick summary of what didn't work. Those who went on Federal and State exchanges reported malfunctions during login, constant error messages, inability to create new accounts, frozen screens, confusing instructions, endless wait times, help lines that put people on hold and then cut them off, lost passwords and user names.

After the administration floated the fiction that the problems were due to heavy usage, the Journal tracked down insurance and technology experts who said the real problems were inadequate coding and flaws in the architecture of the system.

... The founder of McAfee slammed the system's lack of security on Fox Business Network, calling it a hacker's happiest nocturnal fantasy. He predicted millions of identity thefts. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius—grilled, surprisingly, on "The Daily Show"—sounded like—and that is unkind, but—she failed to justify why, in the middle of the chaos, individuals cannot be granted a 1-year delay, just as businesses have been.

More ominously, many of those who got into the system complained of sticker shock—high premiums, high deductibles.

She goes on to say, talking about Republicans:

They would make a mistake in dropping ObamaCare as an issue. A few weeks ago, they mistakenly demanded funding—a move to please their base. They will be tempted to abandon even the word "ObamaCare" now, but this is exactly when they should keep, as the center of their message and their intent, not defunding ObamaCare but delaying it. Do they really want to turn abrupt focus to elusive Medicare cuts just when it has become obvious to the American people that parts of ObamaCare (like the ability to enroll) are unworkable?

The Republicans should press harder than ever to delay ObamaCare—to kick it back, allow the administration to at least create a functioning Web site, and improve what can be improved.

There is an article from CNN from today about Utah's national parks will reopen despite ongoing government shutdown.

Utah will reopen its five national parks by Saturday, as well as three other nationally run locations. Utah's Governor Gary Herbert made the announcement Thursday, saying a deal had been reached with the U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary Sally Jewell. "Utah agrees to pay the National Park Service up to \$1.67 million—\$166,572 per day—to reopen eight national sites in Utah for up to 10 days."

The sad thing is, they don't have to do that. We passed the bill to keep them all going. We did it at a rate, at an amount the Senate already agrees to. All they have got to do is pass it, send it to the President, and it will be taken care of.

I have an article here from the Mercatus Center, George Mason University. It is a research summary.

Before I mention that, I want to mention something about one of our Senators, a Senator from Arizona. Some people have tried to take things I said in an inappropriate way.

I know that Senator from Arizona. We owe him a great deal for what he endured on our behalf in North Vietnam. There is no question about it. And I know that Senator would never intentionally hurt this country. But he has made mistakes that have hurt it but certainly it was never intentional.

Let me mention this Mercatus Center, George Mason University research summary. It says, "The Debt-Limit Debate 2013: Addressing Key Myths." Mr. Speaker, I think it is very important the people understand that there are a lot of myths about the debt limit.

One myth is this:

Standard & Poor's U.S. credit rating downgrade in August of 2011 was caused by Washington's brinkmanship over increasing the debt limit. Congress must, therefore, avoid attaching spending cut demands to the current debt limit increase if they want to avoid jeopardizing the Nation's fragile economy.

The reality, it says, is:

Washington's failure to deal with unsustainable Federal spending mostly related to entitlement programs and debt caused the 2011 S&P downgrade and is spurring warnings of another downgrade by the credit rating agencies.

Of course this administration went after them through the judiciary system—after they got a bad rating, they got a downgrade. But they point out that in June of 2011 that:

S&P reported: "If the U.S. Government maintains its current policies, it is unlikely that S&P's ratings services would maintain its AAA rating on the U.S. Government. From the same report: "One contributing factor in our negative outlook decision is our view that there has, as yet, been no significant progress in addressing these long-term cost drivers nor any consensus developing among the Obama administration, the Senate, and House of Representatives regarding the specifics of a comprehensive plan to address the long-term budgetary challenges."

On July 14, 2011, S&P warned it would downgrade U.S. debt if "Congress and the administration have not achieved a credible solution to the rising U.S. Government debt burden and are not likely to achieve one in the foreseeable future."

So the downgrade was because we did not adequately address the massive debt that had been building up.

Another myth—and there are plenty more to back up their contention about that, just facts: "Had Congress and the administration failed to raise the debt limit by the Treasury's stated deadline in 2011, the Treasury would have been forced to default on the Nation's debt." Make it very clear. The reality, "had the 2011 agreement to increase the debt limit been postponed, the Treasury could have met Federal Government obligations, including Social Security benefits and interest on the debt until the end of the fiscal year, possibly longer."

And then it goes into the options that the Treasury Department had. Another myth: "If Washington agreed to significant spending reforms and cuts—and then actually followed through on them—it would cripple the recovery and devastate the economy." The reality is that "the most dangerous thing Washington can do is continue on its current course. The economic literature is clear: Chronic overspending and its result, chronic excessive debt, lead to economic harm. Washington must agree on meaningful spending reforms—and begin implementing these policies immediately to satisfy markets about the credibility of spending cuts.

"Myth number four: The real problem with the last debt limit deal was that it failed to apply a 'balanced approach' of spending cuts and tax increases." The reality is, "Replacing borrowing with higher taxes does not solve the fundamental problem: Federal spending—including Social Security, Medicaid, and especially Medicare—is unsustainable.

"Fiscal reform that focuses on large revenue increases and modest spending reductions is likely to inflict the most damage on the economy. A study of 21 countries looking at 37 years of data representing 107 episodes of fiscal reform, shows that reform efforts that focus on a package of both spending and revenue reductions"—that is, tax decreases—"tend to be much more effective than those that have modest spending reductions but continue to increase revenue.

"Of more than 100 attempts to reduce the debt-to-GDP ratio in all developed countries over the past 30 years, some 20 percent succeeded. They had two common components: one, a focus on spending cuts; and two, policy reforms that increased competitiveness." And that is the truth.

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

HOURLY MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. MULLIN (during the Special Order of Mr. GOHMERT). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9:30 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

□ 1930

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S SHUTDOWN AND ITS IMPACTS ON OUR DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY NATIONAL LABORATORIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PERRY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that

all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order, the Federal Government's Shutdown and Its Impacts on our Department of Energy National Laboratories.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. I also want to thank Science Committee Ranking Member JOHNSON for her support of national laboratory employees.

Mr. Speaker, I came to Congress knowing that in the policies I helped and worked to enact and the legislative agenda that I would work on that I could either help people or hurt people. And the decision for me was quite easy, Mr. Speaker: I came to Congress to help people. I came to Congress to think big.

I was very excited when I was told prior to being sworn in that I was going to be serving on the Science Committee. I was even more thrilled when I learned that I would have the opportunity to serve as the lead Democrat on the Energy Subcommittee, knowing that the Energy Subcommittee would have partial jurisdiction over two national laboratories which are in my congressional district in Livermore, California: Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratory.

These two national laboratories, with about 6,500 employees at Livermore and 1,500 at Sandia, work every day to uphold our national security mission to maintain our nuclear weapons stockpile and also provide for energy security for citizens in the United States.

Prior to being elected to Congress, I had the opportunity multiple times as a city council member in Dublin to visit these national laboratories. And since being elected to Congress, I have had opportunities to visit the laboratories and also interact with their officials here in Washington.

What I have learned about these employees, these scientists, these engineers who work at our national laboratories is they care deeply about our country, but they also care very deeply about the science and the research that they work on every day and the laboratory environment that allows them to do that. So you can imagine how hard it is right now. We are in day 11 of a government shutdown, and laboratory employees were told about 2 days ago that, effective next week, they will be furloughed, too.

As you all know, Federal workers across our country from almost every agency have been furloughed or are working without pay. But at our national laboratories, which operate as GOCO facilities, which stands for government-owned/contractor-operated, these workers are not Federal workers but they are government contractors. They are scientists.