

Mr. Speaker, you are the Speaker of this House. This House has both Democrats and Republicans, and you need to lead us. It's that time. I will make a quick suggestion. Here is what you can do in three easy steps:

Step No. 1, open the government;

Step No. 2, let us pay our bills; and

Step No. 3, let's negotiate. Let's come together as Democrats and Republicans and negotiate a real budget that starts to address our debt. Let's make sure we don't leave our children and grandchildren a mountain of debt. Let's do what our parents and grandparents always did, which was to leave the country better off for the next generation.

That is what it takes—leadership. Mr. Speaker, now is the time for that leadership. You are the Speaker of this House, and we need you to lead us as Democrats and Republicans. America is watching, and we need to put the people's interests first.

THE DEBT CRISIS

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, the debt limit exists for a simple reason: to assure that public debt isn't recklessly piled up without Congress periodically acknowledging it and addressing the spending patterns that are causing it. If a debt limit increase is supposed to be automatic, as the President suggests, then there is really no purpose to it.

A new dimension has now appeared in this discussion. Unlike every one of his predecessors, this President has vowed that unless Congress unconditionally raises the debt limit, the United States will default on its sovereign debt.

But a failure to raise the debt limit would not, by itself, cause the Nation to default. The Government Accountability Office has consistently held that the Treasury Secretary has "the authority to choose the order in which to pay obligations of the United States" to protect the Nation's credit. Such authority is inherent in the 1789 act that established the Treasury Department and entrusted it with "the management of the revenue" and the "support of the public credit." The affirmative duty of the Treasury Department to do so is underscored by the 14th Amendment.

Our revenues are more than 10 times our debt payments, so paying the debt first to prevent a sovereign default is well within the financial ability of the Federal Government—and indeed, it is a fiscal imperative.

Now, earlier this year, the House passed H.R. 807, which not only explicitly requires the payment of the national debt in the case of an impasse over the debt limit, but even allows the President to exceed the debt limit, itself, in order to protect the Nation's credit. That measure languishes in the

Senate under the threat of a Presidential veto.

Protecting the sovereign credit by prioritizing payments would mean delaying paying other bills. That is also untenable, unthinkable, and something much to be avoided, but it would not imperil the Nation's sovereign credit. Only the President can do that.

The House leadership met with the President last week and offered to extend the debt limit until November 22 with no strings attached. The President refused. Senate Republicans offered a 6-month extension, but the Senate Democratic leader refused.

What the President threatens to do would be catastrophic and unprecedented. The full faith and credit of the United States is what gives markets the confidence to loan money to the Federal Government. Even a threat of default—exactly the kind the President is now making—could have dire consequences to a Nation that now owes more than its entire economy produces in a year.

So where do we go from here?

Republicans have miscalculated on two key assumptions: first, that the Democrats would negotiate the issues that divide our country—they have not; and second, that Democrats would seek to minimize the suffering caused by the impasse—they have not.

Given the ruthless and vindictive way the shutdown has been handled, I now believe that this President would willfully act to destroy the full faith and credit of the United States unless the Congress acquiesces to all of his demands—at least as long as he sees political advantage in doing so.

If the Republicans acquiesce, the immediate crisis will quickly vanish, credit markets will calm, and public life will return to other matters. But a fundamental element of our Constitution will have been destroyed: the power of the purse will have shifted from the representatives of the people to the Executive. The executive bureaucracies will be freed to churn out ever more outlandish regulations with no effective congressional review or check through the purse. A perilous era will have begun in which the President sets spending levels and vetoes any bill falling short of his demands. Whenever a deadline approaches, one House can simply refuse to negotiate with the other until Congress is faced with a Hobson's choice of a shutdown or a default. The Nation's spending will again dangerously accelerate, the deficit will rapidly widen, and the economic prosperity of the Nation will continue to slowly bleed away.

This impasse may have started as a dispute over a collapsing health program, but it has now taken on the dimensions of a constitutional crisis. Yesterday, in Washington, a group of America's veterans rose up to take a stand against these unconstitutional usurpations. I believe the salvation of our Nation now ultimately depends on the American people joining them.

HONORING 12 MEMBERS OF THE 1ST SQUAD, 2ND PLATOON, HOTEL COMPANY OF THE 26TH MARINE REGIMENT

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

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor 12 members of the 1st Squad, 2nd Platoon, Hotel Company of the 26th Marine Regiment. These brave men made an important contribution to the war effort in Vietnam, but their efforts could not be honored at the time without exposing ongoing intelligence operations. Like so many of our Nation's heroes, they have not received the recognition they deserve, and I am here today to share with my colleagues in Congress and our entire Nation the details of an incident that helped change the way the Vietnam war was fought.

On May 29, 1967, at the end of Operation Hickory and the beginning of Operation Prairie IV, the 1st Squad, under Sergeant Thomas Gonzalez, was on a reconnaissance patrol when they recovered a spent Russian SA-2 surface-to-air missile inside the demilitarized zone which divided North and South Vietnam. While Russian involvement in the Vietnam war was widely suspected, discovery of the SA-2 was a major find, and the command and control mechanism of the missile was transported to Washington, D.C., for analysis.

Due to the ongoing cold war and heightened political sensitivities regarding Russian involvement in the war, public disclosure of the incident was withheld.

While the unit was never fully recognized for its accomplishment, the intelligence it collected had a direct impact on combat. Prior to discovery of the missile, U.S. aviators flying B-52 bombers to attack Vietnam struggled as enemy forces became more proficient at targeting and shooting American aircraft. This forced Americans to limit their missions to areas further south; and, as the North Vietnamese Army continued to move their surface-to-air missile launch sites south into the DMZ, B-52 aircraft were forced to fly even further south, limiting the effectiveness of their missions to provide support to troops engaged in ground combat.

As a result of the recovery of the SA-2 missile, B-52 bomber crews had a better understanding of the threat, and they used the intelligence collected by the 1st Squad to alter their tactics. Changing the strategy of the B-52 bomb strikes allowed the aircraft to provide better combat support to marines and other ground troops and ultimately saved countless lives.

Forty-six years later, it is time for our Nation to recognize these American heroes. Today, let us honor these men: Sergeant Thomas Gonzalez, Corporal Gerald D. Eggers, Private First Class Ronald W. Blaine, Private First Class Charles L. Melton, Private First

Class Albino Martinez, Private First Class Anthony Astuccio, Private First Class Richard P. Light, Private First Class Michael McCombs, Private First Class Hector L. R. Rodriguez, Private First Class Lloyd Parker, Private First Class Thomas J. Lehner, and Navy Corpsman Mel Overmyer.

These young men, like so many of their generation, answered our Nation's call to service. They risked their lives in defense of their comrades in arms and our Nation. We owe them a great debt of gratitude for all that they have done, and I stand here before Congress in recognition of their accomplishment and their sacrifice.

THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE MUST DISABUSE ITSELF OF THE NAME "REDSKINS"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I submit to my colleagues and some 181 million sports fans all over America who love the game of football just as much as I do, having played football for 4 years in high school, again and again, Mr. Speaker, this issue will not go away; and with all due respect, Mr. Speaker, I call upon the 32 football club owners of the National Football League and NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell to get rid of this derogatory word or racial slur, "redskin," which currently describes the Washington football franchise.

Mr. Speaker, the National Football League cannot just casually pass the responsibility to Mr. Dan Snyder, owner of the Washington team. The Washington football franchise is about a \$1.3 billion business, rated third in the NFL, but the NFL is also a beneficiary and, I'm sure, gets a fair percentage of the proceeds from television broadcasts and concessions for selling clothing and sports souvenirs by these 32 club owners.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank President Barack Obama for weighing in on this issue just 2 weeks ago, and I hope NFL Commissioner Goodell will seriously pursue this matter. If Commissioner Goodell feels that if we are offending one person that we should listen, then listen to the leaders of the National Congress of American Indians, the oldest and the largest Native American organization, which represents the vast majority of some 5.2 million Native American Indians today. And when I say "majority," Mr. Speaker, I'm talking about 2.6 million Native Americans who do have an issue to pull with the NFL using this racial and derogatory slur's name.

I also want to thank Mr. Ray Halbritter, leader of the Oneida Indian Nation, for taking the initiative to get this to the American people so that they will better understand and appreciate why this word is so offensive to the Native American community.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it is time for the NFL commissioner, Roger Goodell, and the NFL to do the right thing. Change the name "Redskins." It is a racial slur and a derogatory term for the American Indians.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 19 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PETRI) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

Prior to the Great Compromise, Benjamin Franklin addressed the Constitutional Convention:

We indeed seem to feel our own want of political wisdom since we have been running about in search of it. In this situation of this assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, have we now forgotten our powerful friend?

Lord, You are the powerful friend referred to by Franklin, and we turn again to You to ask that Your wisdom might break through the political dark of these days.

Bless the Members of the people's House and all of Congress with the insight and foresight to construct a future of security in our Nation's politics, economy, and society. May they, as You, be especially mindful of those who are poor and without power.

May all that is done today be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

STAND DOWN ON INDIVIDUAL MANDATE

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker:

Consumers will be able to go online. They will be able to get a determination of what tax subsidies they are eligible for; they will be able to see premium net of subsidy; and they will be able to sign up.

Those were the words spoken by the head of the Office of Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight 3 weeks ago at a committee hearing of Energy and Commerce. I had asked for a yes or no answer to the question: Will the exchanges be ready on October 1? You heard his answer.

In The New York Times this weekend, a very insightful article: "From the Start, Signs of Trouble at the Health Portal." The exchanges have been called excruciatingly embarrassing by no less than the President's press secretary for his first term. He went on to say:

I hope some people are fired, those people who were supposed to be able to make this work.

The blame-shifting between contractors and agency officials is just beginning. Further quoting from the article in The New York Times this weekend:

"These are not glitches," said an insurance executive who has participated in many conference calls on the Federal exchange.

The extent of the problems is pretty enormous. At the end of our calls, people say, "It is awful, just awful."

But here is the deal: everyone is required to sign up for this enormously embarrassing glitch that has been foisted upon us by the executive branch. It is time for us to stand down on the individual mandate.

END THE NIGHTMARE

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, the worst-kept secret in Washington, D.C., is there is a majority in the House of Representatives to reopen the government today, to reach that grand compromise that Father Conroy spoke about a few minutes ago.

Over 30 House Republicans have said that they would join Democrats to pass a clean CR, which the President has said he would sign on the spot. It has already cleared the Senate, and we could end the damage that is being inflicted on this country every passing day.

Day 14 is where we are today. Our National Guard, our veterans, Meals on Wheels—the list goes on and on—the National Institutes of Health, they are being crippled in this shutdown; and the power is here in this Chamber to end it by signing a discharge petition which was filed on Saturday morning.

If the Speaker won't bring the bill to the floor, then the Members should do