

And while the Taliban has become adept at fighting counterterrorism, the Afghan government has become adept at exploiting counterinsurgency.

Take narcotics. How does a country that has few and terrible roads, like Afghanistan, get 93 percent of the world's opiates out of its country?

One way is by air. And in January 2013, the U.S. government said it would no longer grant contracts to a private Afghanistan airline because the U.S. military's anti-corruption unit said the airline "was involved in bulk opium smuggling."

But the Afghan government howled, and the U.S. lifted its ban.

There are other examples, but only one conclusion. As Michael Lumpkin, assistant secretary of defense for special operations/low-intensity conflict, said in a letter on Oct. 7: "In our opinion, the failure to reduce poppy cultivation and increase eradication is due to the lack of Afghan government support for the effort."

But over 12 years, the U.S. government pounded \$7.6 billion down the drug eradication rathole in Afghanistan.

In a report last week, John Sopko, the U.S. special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction, said: "By every conceivable metric, we've failed. Production and cultivation are up, interdiction and eradication are down, financial support to the insurgency is up, and addiction and abuse are at unprecedented levels in Afghanistan."

To our government, the solution was clear: Pound more money down the rathole.

As The Washington Post recently reported: "The State Department requested \$137.5 million in funding for counter-narcotics efforts in Afghanistan for fiscal year 2014, a \$31 million increase over fiscal year 2012."

Further, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee recently wrote a report saying we should give Afghanistan "between \$5 billion and \$8 billion annually for at least a decade" even though most U.S. troops will (supposedly) be long gone by then.

So we have spent \$7.6 billion on a drug eradication program that increased drug production. And now we are planning to pour \$50 billion to \$80 billion into that same country over the next 10 years.

And you know what worries me? Pretty soon we are going to be talking about real money.

Mr. JONES. In recent days, the waste of billions of dollars in Afghanistan has been dominating the headlines:

March 20 of this year, "Afghanistan Can't Manage Billions in Aid, U.S. Inspector Finds"; March 14, 2015, "C.I.A. Cash Ended Up in Coffers of Al Qaeda"; May 4, 2013, "Karzai Says He Was Assured C.I.A. Would Continue Delivering Bags of Cash."

Mr. Speaker, the squandering of billions of U.S. taxpayer dollars by the Afghan Government is one small aspect of the rampant waste, fraud, and abuse in Afghanistan.

The House is looking to vote on the budget produced by the Republican majority this week which continues billions of dollars the military deserves, but the billions of dollars going to Afghanistan are a waste. The Republican budget also provides billions of dollars for emergency war funding to get around sequestration. Why do we have sequestration in the first place? Because Congress has not passed an honest budget in years.

A couple of weeks ago, the House Armed Services Committee had a hear-

ing on U.S. policy in Afghanistan, where I asked General John Campbell, U.S. Army, commander of the International Security Assistance Force and United States Forces in Afghanistan, if he will ever have a successor who will be honest with Congress and the American people about the fact that we have done as much as we can do in Afghanistan. He did not give me a direct answer, but his response was this: "For very little continued investment, we can make this a shining light of central Asia."

Mr. Speaker, if I had had more time, I would have asked General Campbell what his definition of "very little continued investment" is when we have already spent billions and billions of dollars and spilled blood in Afghanistan.

There are bridges, roads, educational needs, and veterans benefits to provide here in the United States. Let's focus on their needs rather than on chasing something that will never happen. History has proven Afghanistan will never change. It is a graveyard of empires.

Mr. Speaker, without a debate in Congress, President Obama signed a Bilateral Security Agreement with Afghanistan to keep our United States troops there for 9 more years. Let's cut the 9 years to 3 or 4 years and bring our troops home.

Finally, with an ever-climbing \$18 trillion debt, the American people are frustrated. Congress needs to impose spending controls to save taxpayer money.

Mr. Speaker, may God continue to bless our men and women in uniform, and may God continue to bless America.

THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, this week marks the latest chapter in the drama of Republican control of Congress. This is their first opportunity with complete control of both Chambers to bring into focus what they would do governing, and the results aren't pretty.

We are discussing this week a budget that has been labeled by press accounts that actually give them the benefit of the doubt as being phony or a disaster. It has been condemned by many conservative commentators as a sham.

The purported \$5.5 trillion in budget savings over the next 10 years provides no good explanation about how it can actually be achieved. There is a trillion dollars in unspecified reductions "other mandatory programs." They would abolish the Affordable Care Act, but somehow keep all of the revenues that finance it.

There are a few areas of clarity which are hardly comforting. The ratcheting down support for our low-income college students through Pell grants is hardly a step forward and will

be widely condemned the more clearly people understand it.

We are back to the Medicare voucher, which may have a different name but is still toxic. A measure of their understanding of its unpopularity is their refusal to put it into effect for seniors now. Instead they would have people approaching retirement age in their mid-fifties who will be able to enjoy the benefits and uncertainty of a vouchered Medicare program.

It is silent on the transportation crisis that is already upon us. The latest transportation extension expires May 31. Resources are not going to be available to get us through this fiscal year, let alone the next fiscal year that they would budget for. And if the budget that they have foreseen would somehow be enacted as written, the next fiscal year would see massive cuts for every single State across the country for transportation.

It continues to chip away at the ability of the Federal Government to hire and maintain the skilled workforce Americans depend upon. One of the most bizarre examples is their continued attack on the ability of the IRS, the Internal Revenue Service, to perform the functions necessary to finance our government.

What business cripples its accounts receivable department? And the proof of this approach is available to any American who tries to call the IRS to get information. It is almost impossible to get through now, let alone with the budget cuts that are anticipated. You can ask any CPA in your district about the devastating effects of crippling the IRS on not just the average citizen, but even on people who can hire the best legal and accounting services available.

While the IRS may be an attractive target for their assault on government, the attack is not limited to the Internal Revenue or the EPA. This budget will have crippling effects on the American way of life all across the country. This budgetary approach that is already baked in produces fewer people to be able to deal with the services for the exploding number of retired people seeking help from the Social Security Administration. It shortchanges the maintenance of our national parks. It underfunds medical research that can make a huge difference for American families.

Mr. Speaker, there are things that could be done. I introduced legislation this week, the REIN-IN Act, which would cut \$100 billion of unnecessary spending on nuclear weapons over the next 10 years. These savings could be used to shore up the Department of Defense without resorting to the budget gimmicks that they are using.

That is the bitter reality of their budget approach. It is not their theatrics or the creative terminology. Republicans are avoiding the hard questions and reasonable solutions. It is simply an assault on providing Americans with the services they want, need,

and deserve. The more people understand this, the sooner we are likely to get the changes we need in the political process to get us back on course.

This budget may be a sham and a fraud, but it contains dangerous elements that will affect every family in America. We can and should do better.

CELEBRATING THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE HONORABLE THOMAS HOWARD KEAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the distinguished public service of the Honorable Thomas Howard Kean, 48th Governor of New Jersey, who will become 80 years old next month. Governor Kean is one of the most respected statesmen in the country due to his tremendous contributions to the civic life of New Jersey and of the Nation.

Governor Kean was born on April 21, 1935, in New York City, to Elizabeth Stuyvesant Howard and Robert Winthrop Kean. His father served for 20 years in the House of Representatives and became the ranking member on the Ways and Means Committee. His grandfather, Hamilton Fish Kean, was United States Senator from New Jersey. Historians can trace his family's long and proud history of public service to William Livingston, signer of the United States Constitution and the first Governor of New Jersey. Governor Kean was graduated from Princeton University in 1957, and after military service returned to Livingston, New Jersey, named for his ancestor.

Governor Kean started his own career in public office with election to the New Jersey General Assembly in 1967. Known as a thoughtful and diligent legislator, he was elected to lead the chamber in 1972, when he became the youngest speaker of the general assembly in New Jersey history. Governor Kean's two successful campaigns for Governor of New Jersey were each of historical significance: in 1981, his election marked the closest margin of victory in State history, while his 1985 reelection was the largest margin of victory ever recorded in a gubernatorial race in our State.

Mr. Speaker, New Jersey saw significant improvements to public education, environmental protection, access to high-quality health care, and stable taxing and spending policies during the Kean governorship. His most defining legacy was his record of inclusive public engagement that facilitated progress, compromise, and the advancement of the best interests of New Jersey. Following his time in Trenton, Governor Kean served for 15 years as president of Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, where applications, the physical structure, and the endowment increased dramatically.

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, President

Bush turned to Governor Kean and former Indiana Congressman Lee Hamilton to chair the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States. The two chairs led an exhaustive review of the intelligence, homeland security, and governmental response before and after the acts of terror perpetrated against this country. The 9/11 Commission's work and leadership drew bipartisan acclaim and resulted in major reforms to improve our Nation's security preparedness. The United States is safer today thanks to the tremendous work of Governor Kean and his colleagues.

I had the honor to serve as an assistant counsel to Governor Kean in Trenton and am honored now to call him a constituent in the congressional district I serve. I have learned continually from Governor Kean, whether through observation or instruction, and I am among the many New Jerseyans who consider him a mentor.

Governor Kean is a wonderful son and brother, husband, father and grandfather, educator, leader, colleague, and friend. He and his wife, the former Deborah Bye of Wilmington, Delaware, have raised three fine children, twin sons, Thomas and Reed, and daughter, Alexandra. His son, Thomas H. Kean, Jr., is my successor as minority leader in the New Jersey State Senate.

On his 80th birthday, I congratulate Governor Thomas H. Kean and wish him many years ahead of good health and happiness. The United States of America owes him a significant debt of gratitude for all that he has done in service to the Nation.

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REPUBLICAN FISCAL YEAR 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise against the Republican fiscal year 2016 budget resolution. This budget proposal would reduce critical economic investments, undermine growth in our jobs, as well as attempt to reduce the deficit on the backs of our students, seniors, low-income families, and the American middle class.

The Republican 2016 budget abandons our students. Our students, overall, are our country's future. It abandons our students by making cuts to college aid, research, job training, and innovation. It also abandons our most vulnerable. It would end Medicare as we know it and make harmful changes to Medicaid, threatening our seniors across this country.

The 2016 Republican proposal also threatens low-income families by reducing the food stamp program and by repealing the Affordable Care Act, leaving 16.4 million Americans who now have access to quality, affordable health care coverage without a viable option. In my State of Alabama alone,

over 171,000 Alabamians have selected a plan and/or were automatically enrolled in the ACA—that is over 171,000 Alabamians. These citizens will be abandoned by the Republican budget proposal and would not have insurance for quality health care.

Furthermore, the Republican budget proposal does nothing to help incentivize job creation or put Americans back to work. We are currently on a path towards growth and prosperity.

Under President Obama's leadership, the economy has added more than 12 million private sector jobs in the last 60 months. The Republican 2016 budget proposal would reverse those valuable gains—12 million private sector jobs in the last 60 months.

Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that instead of putting forth a budget that would create jobs, balance our budget, and spur economic growth throughout our country, we are once again seeing divisive politics at work. Instead of attempting to balance the budget on the backs of American families, as this budget proposal does, we should be seeking to find a fair and balanced plan to responsibly reduce our deficit, to grow our economy, to strengthen our infrastructure, to spur innovation, and to create jobs.

As we move forward, it is my hope that we will pass a 2016 Federal budget that works for all Americans and leaves no one behind.

I ask my colleagues to vote "no" on the Republican 2016 budget resolution.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET PROPOSAL

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the House Republican budget proposal released last week will serve as a strong blueprint to put our country on a long-term path to fiscal responsibility and sustainability.

Unlike the President's proposed budget, which is the same tax-and-spend policies that have not worked for the President or the American people, the House Republican proposal aims to balance the budget within 10 years without ever raising taxes.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, marked the fifth anniversary of the Affordable Care Act being signed into law. Let me be clear: ObamaCare is certainly not worth celebrating.

The House majority budget proposal would repeal ObamaCare in full, including the tax increases, erroneous regulations, and mandates, all while promoting freedom of choice, affordability, and true patient-centered health care solutions.

Furthermore, the budget proposal aims to further ensure a strong national security, economic competitiveness, and an atmosphere that will foster positive growth throughout Pennsylvania and all across the country.