

position that he held at the time of his death. He also served on the board of the Missouri Higher Education Savings Program and continued to be active in local and State politics.

Beyond the titles and the accolades, he was a mentor and a friend to all who knew him, including me.

Ron is survived by his wife, Patty; his children, Kara and Chad; his grandchildren; and siblings and numerous family members who loved him.

It is an honor and privilege to have known him and to have had him as a constituent, as well. He exhibited a life of service, and we mourn his untimely death. Our prayers are with his wife, Patty, and the rest of his family and friends.

I will say that my life in public service began as a freshman, green, wet behind the ears, and Ron was my speaker. He was my leader. While being speaker wasn't the last role that he had—he was able to be the president of the senate—to me, he was always my speaker. Missouri lost a good one.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUARTE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, we go home every weekend. In June, when we go home to Wisconsin, what do we think of? What is going on in June? June is Dairy Month in Wisconsin. It is Dairy Month around the whole country.

Of course, last weekend, I spent Dairy Month at Breakfast on the Farm in Winnebago County and Breakfast on the Farm in Manitowoc County, having milk and all sorts of different cheeses.

Whether you like Colby or provolone, cheddar or mozzarella, whether you like your milk pasteurized or raw, whole or 2 percent, whether you like cream cheese or just plain cream, Wisconsin is America's Dairyland, and everybody has to remember, June is Dairy Month.

Now, on to our next topic. I have just been reading about a KGB defector. What he wrote should be required reading for all Congressmen and all young children. His name, he has since died, is Yuri Bezmenov. He was a Soviet defector in the 1980s.

When he defected—he defected to China—he gave an interview about the KGB. He said things that I think are far different than what the average American thinks about the KGB.

He pointed out that about 85 percent of the KGB employees were not spies. They were not going around looking for nuclear secrets or finding out more about our military. They were wide out in the open. They were engaging in psychological warfare, subversion to destroy the American psyche.

He pointed out that what they do is out in the open, if only the press would pay attention. Well, you can see he was a newcomer to America, as he thought the press might pay attention.

He pointed out that, at the time, people might think we were at peace, but in fact, we were at war. It was a war, psychological warfare.

Nikita Khrushchev said the same thing. He felt we would destroy America from within. It would not be a military attack that would destroy America. It would be America losing confidence in itself.

There are a variety of ways in which the United States is, in my mind, in danger. Last week, we talked about the huge deficit, and President Biden, through a variety of bills last year, certainly put the value of the dollar at risk.

You can say we are in danger because we are losing the value of the family. Of course, John Adams said that our Constitution is built for a moral and religious people, totally unfit for any other kind.

We have a situation here in which a group called Black Lives Matter, which had a lot to do with the Democrats maintaining their majority in 2020, Black Lives Matter was opposed to the traditional nuclear family. Of course, they have a lot of allies here in Congress who presumably didn't object to that.

That is another way we could tear down America, through our growing welfare state, having more and more people without the psychological background of a family.

We certainly have a problem at the southern border. No normal country could survive unlimited immigration. We see two things going on down there. We see over 200,000 people a month streaming across the border, and we also see, compared to past administrations, even people who break the law are not deported.

□ 2110

You could say that is another way we are being destroyed from within. It is not a military attack, but it is over 200,000 people who have not been trained how to become Americans, who have not had drilled into them the freedoms that we should respect and that we are a great country because our great Constitution is supposed to have a limited government, guarantee us a limited government, and we are supposed to be self-reliant. That is certainly a problem.

We have the bizarre transgender movement. I ran into a gal the other day who had literal surgery taking away some of her organs at 15 years old and puberty blockers. That is another way to completely try to blend the difference of the sexes, which would be another way to destroy society.

What I am going to focus on tonight is the Biden obsession with racism. I think if there is one issue that Joe Biden seems most obsessed over, it is

this idea that supposedly in the United States we are a racist country. He brought it up four times in his inaugural speech and talked about white privilege once. This year, in his State of the Union speech, again Joe Biden talked about the racist police and if you are a person of color, you have to tell your children to watch out for the racist police. Obviously, this is an important message from Joe Biden.

He has certainly acted on it, as well. Right now, his Department of Labor nominee—she may make it; she may not—claimed in the past that we are a society built on white privilege, kind of this bizarre hatred of White people that I thought was merely in academia, but Joe Biden decided to try to appoint someone head of the Department of Labor who felt that way. I sure hope the Senate rejects her.

He is trying to appoint General Charles Q. Brown to be head of the Joint Chiefs. He right off the bat said we have too many White officers. He wants to restrict the number of White officers in the military to 43 percent. In other words, he doesn't want qualified White people becoming officers, because he has got some psychological problem there. I think we have to pay attention to that sort of thing when it comes to the Biden administration.

This is not limited to President Biden. Not long after he took office, both Senator DUCKWORTH of Illinois and Senator HIRONO of Hawaii threatened Joe Biden saying they did not want any more White men, that they were not going to vote to confirm any more White men in his administration. He met with them. They backed off that to a degree. I should say, he shouldn't appoint White men unless they are gay, which gets back to this kind of obsession with breaking away with the traditional family that we sadly have among the Democratic Party right now.

In addition to that, President Biden wants in his budget to have new equity action teams in all of our government agencies: the Department of the Interior, the Department of Justice. These equity action teams presumably will enforce the type of things that Senators DUCKWORTH and HIRONO want. They want to look at people's race before anybody gets hired. They want to look at somebody's race before they get a government grant. I think it is something that the American public is not discussing anywhere nearly as much as they should.

It is kind of particularly ridiculous, because, of course, you are never probably going to have a country in which more immigrants, who have different ethnicity than the native born, have succeeded so much and are so accepted. If you look around, the most successful ethnic group in America today are Indian Americans. You look at other wildly successful groups: Filipino, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Cuban. Thomas Sowell wrote 40 years ago—I can't vouch whether it is today or not—but

by the second generation, immigrants from the Caribbean of African descent outperform the average American.

At a time when the overwhelming evidence is that racism has very little role in America, Joe Biden is trying to elevate the potentially hard feelings by doing all he can by not treating people equally and looking at people racially.

Now, I think we should have a discussion over this, and the discussion does not necessarily have to be in Congress, but it should be here, as well. I think the discussion should be in periodicals, online, as people debate what the answers to various questions are.

First of all, how long should this go on? Affirmative action—in other words, preferences based on race or based on sex, as well as preferences for women—have been going on since 1965. We have been going on with this thing 58 years. I have a feeling when Lyndon Johnson really kicked it off in earnest—there was a more mild policy under President Kennedy—when it was kicked off by President Johnson, I don't think even he would have dreamed that this would have been going on for 57 years. The question is, should there be a time when it ends.

When we give people preferences or identify people by their ethnic group, what defines somebody's ethnic group? Right now, we identify or put on the government forms African American, Latin American, Asian Pacific Islander, Native American. What makes up a person in these groups?

Right now you self-identify. In the extreme case of ELIZABETH WARREN, who was something like a 64th or a 128th Native American, she felt that was enough that she should be a Native American. I think she is relatively rare. I don't think a lot of Americans would do that, but apparently it is legal. It was a way for her to become a professor at Harvard Law School. But what should be the cutoff? A half a percent? A quarter a percent? One-eighth?

On the face of it, it seems a little bit strange, because a lot of these people you would never even guess what ethnicity they are, but that is the way the system works nowadays. We do have DNA tests nowadays. I think we should put some sort of standards as to who gets preferences.

Then where you come from. Right now, if you are somebody whose ancestry was in Spain and you come to the United States, you are considered a European, but if your ancestry is Spain and your ancestors spent three generations in Cuba, you are considered an ethnic minority. To me, that seems a little bit silly. I am not sure what the difference is.

Maybe the person from Spain just came here right now and the person from Cuba, one-quarter Cuban, came here 50 years ago. Does this make any sense that when you fill out the forms or see who is going to get the government contract or who is going to get into Harvard Law School, that the person from Cuba is treated different than

the person from Spain? If we have someone from Italy or somebody who was of Italian descent but spent three generations in Argentina, should that person be given preference? I think that is something we should have a public discussion over.

Should you have to be from America? Right now, the way these programs work, if you show up, if you are not even a citizen, you can get preferences on the form.

You have an example right now, the Vice President's own dad who came here from Jamaica. Originally, at the time this affirmative action kicked in, I thought it was a little bit to make up for slavery or make up for Jim Crow. Well, somebody like the Vice President's dad, he wasn't mistreated in America. He wasn't in America at all. He came here for the land of opportunity, came here to become a professor at Stanford University. Is that fair?

When we try to identify different groups as somebody who really never suffered in the United States at all, because they are a recent immigrant, should they be getting these preferences? I think that is something that should be talked about. I don't know.

Should there be a wealth component? We are supposedly helping the underserved communities, but the way the programs work today and the different areas that they pick out—I think it is government employment, employment in businesses that do business with the government, government contractors, if you have a business, and admissions to universities.

□ 2120

Should there be a wealth component? If I am the son of a multi-multimillionaire who is a member of a favored group, do I get preferences?

It kind of seems wrong to say I am an underserved group, but that is the way it works today, which is typical, and we will come back in a second to what Thomas Sowell says about affirmative action.

He wrote a book on the topic. Usually it benefits the well-off people, as things that come up from the progressive background usually do.

Should there be some familiarity with your background? I mean, if I am going to claim to get preferences because my ancestors came from Peru, should I have to know something about Peru?

Somebody that doesn't even know Spanish, has spent generations here, never lived in a Spanish country, should I get preferences there? Should that have something to do with this?

Are there jobs that should be exempt from preferences where it is entirely based on merit? One of the things that is going on in America today is a lot of medical schools are saying you don't have to take the MCAT test.

Now, when I was younger, we usually associated doctors with the ones that did the best on the test because if you

were going to be a doctor, it was a matter of life and death. We wanted to take the smartest person no matter what.

Now we have medical schools saying we don't want to look at any test to determine your intelligence. We want to base your admission on things like what you say on an essay or how many groups you volunteered for, that sort of thing.

I think we should have that discussion. Maybe we should have preferences for certain jobs like college professor where you can say it is not a matter of life and death if we have somebody who is not as good, but we should make sure we always get the better people for the medical field or for dentistry or for airline pilots or air traffic controllers.

Should we say, well, we can afford to have people that aren't good air traffic controllers because what is the worst thing that could happen?

I think that is another question that we should be asking right now because the Biden administration is clearly walking down this path.

That is why they have these what we are referring to as equity action teams. We want to know exactly what standards the equity action teams are using.

I had a fellow come up to me a few years ago whose son worked in one of our Federal agencies, and he loved the job. He went to college for the job.

He was told after 9 or 10 years why he was not being promoted. He was told, you are a White guy who is not a veteran. We give preferences to veterans too.

Is that fair? If they are going to continue down that path, shouldn't we at least make it public so this guy wouldn't have gone to school to learn about a field that he wanted to excel in, only to be told 10 years later that he is a White guy, he is not a veteran, too bad? I think that is something that ought to be discussed before we hurt any other people.

In any event, I think this is a topic to look at. I think it is certainly one way to cause hard feelings in America.

I have talked about Thomas Sowell who wrote a book dealing with affirmative action about 40 years ago now. He pointed out that other countries that went down this path—America's not all the way down the path—but have the same experiences as America.

First of all, it begins, and it is supposed to be temporary; 57 years later, it is still here. It is supposed to be restricted to maybe one or two ethnic groups, but here in America, first people of African decent, and then people who never were mistreated in the United States come here and are automatically given preferences based on where their ancestors were born centuries ago.

We begin to add other groups. I make another point about why this is relevant, because Joe Biden is also trying to add another preference group.

He wants to add Middle Eastern and North African people. Right now, I rattled off all the different backgrounds

that we are supposed to be keeping track of, but we don't keep track of people from Algeria or Syria or Iraq, and Joe Biden wants to do that, as well.

I think we should have a discussion there. There are not a lot of people in this country with backgrounds from those countries, but there are more and more people coming here.

Joe Biden apparently says that if you are from America, and you apply for a job, and we have an immigrant from Algeria or an immigrant from Iraq, people like that should be given preferences.

Well, I think maybe that is something we should talk about here a little bit and see what the appropriate course of action is.

Whatever the course of action is, it should be after a thorough public discussion, not just something, you know, pushed in under the table because it is a sensitive topic.

In any event, I would ask the press to look into this situation. We want to find out what rules President Biden's equity action teams are operating under.

We want to have a public discussion. Is it right to add North African and Middle Easterners to this topic?

Should we give preferences to people who have no background of discrimination in America, people who just show up and immediately get preferences?

I obviously have my strong opinions, but I would like to hear what the pundit class, that so many of us read, has to say.

I would like to see maybe sometime the Committee on Education and the Workforce or the Judiciary Committee look into this and see what the different viewpoints are because it affects a lot of Americans. We are kind of moving down this train without having a public discussion.

Those are my comments on that topic. I think it is a topic more people ought to look into. I think they ought to review how some people want to destroy America from within.

I think they ought to review what happened in other countries as they went down the affirmative action path, be it Nigeria, be it Sri Lanka, be it Malaysia or Singapore, and I think a lot of times it doesn't work out very well.

It is something we ought to have a discussion about, and nobody else is talking about it around here, so we throw that open for discussion.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ENGAGING IN DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY) for 30 minutes.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Wisconsin who frequently comes down to the floor and engages and uses the Special Orders, as we call them. It is great to see him down here.

I often state I wish we would have more engaged debate on the floor of the House, actual debate, not just the kind of fake debate where we go back and forth for an hour equally divided over a bill that we pretty much predetermined will be passed on a partisan basis but actually pick an issue and engage in thoughtful debate back and forth about a topic.

I would encourage any of my colleagues who are willing to do so on, frankly, either side of the aisle where we have reasonable disagreements that we could engage and try to deal with.

The fact is for too long, in this country, in the House of Representatives, we have been dealing with a uniparty.

We have been dealing with essentially not a lot of difference in terms of the total output of what this town does.

We have strong disagreement here on the floor. We pass bills. We get them passed that nobody on that side of the aisle is going to vote for and vice versa, knowing they are going to go to the Senate and die or knowing they are going to get to the White House and not be signed or knowing they are not going to have 60 votes in the Senate.

When push comes to shove on the things that matter, when we come to a spending bill, it is all the same. It ends up being effectively the same. It is the only explanation for being \$32 trillion in debt.

Now, by virtue of the bipartisan effort of this body, the bipartisan effort of the Senate, the signature of the President, we now know we will be roughly \$36 trillion in debt in January of 2025.

We know this, and we did it. We embraced it, but we didn't materially change the trajectory. Yeah, we dented it a tiny fraction.

We had a spending freeze for 2 years that is a part of a deal that isn't even yet consummated because we haven't done the appropriations process.

We patted ourselves on the back—some of us did—for oh, well, we had to get this done because we might default.

Every time we talk about this effort, it is that we must raise the debt ceiling, or we are going to get to a place where we are going to default on the debt.

The fact is, it is just simply not true. We were never going to default on the debt. The President of the United States was never going to choose in terms of the prioritization of payments to end up in a place where we were not going to make the payments on the interest on the bonds. That is just a fact.

□ 2130

We play this game. To raise the debt ceiling and increase the borrowing level, we say, wait, maybe we should get some changes for that.

We get up to the date, and what happens? People say we are going to default. All of Wall Street calls all the folks and say, well, you are going to do that, aren't you? Everybody hops, both sides of the aisle.

Here we sit, yet again, going from \$32 trillion to now, predictably, \$36 trillion in January 2025. As sure as the Sun coming up, the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the President just agreed to mortgage your children's future again because that is what we do. That is what the House of Representatives does.

The point here is, as I said, we were never going to default on our debt. What we are going to do with almost the same amount of certainty as what I just described is default on the American Dream. That is where we are headed, a full-scale, unequivocal default on the American Dream.

This is all led by the people who are supposed to be representing the American people in this great Republic but who are barreling us right down the path, if we are not there already, to default on the American Dream.

The hardworking American family right now, today, is sitting out there in this country unable to afford groceries, unable to afford gas, unable to afford housing, and unable to afford healthcare.

I talked to staffers in this building in their twenties, and they looked at me and asked: How am I ever going to afford to buy a house?

They genuinely mean it. They don't know.

The hardworking plumber in the district I represent in central Texas who never took out a student loan is now being forced to pay for his neighbor's master's degree.

The veteran is paying for some liberal arts major to get the same student loan benefits he earned by risking his life for America.

The nurse wants to save lives without a Federal bureaucrat telling her she needs to take a needle in her arm to keep her job.

The blue-collar workers are watching their way of life sacrificed to the climate cult and billions of corporate crony tax subsidies in the so-called Inflation Reduction Act, enriching elite, wealthy investors—true—and corporations—true—all while empowering the Chinese Communist Party, weakening our own grid, and undermining our own national security—all true.

The rancher right now in Texas who is putting diesel in his truck is forced to subsidize a tech worker making six figures to buy a Tesla hundreds of miles away. This body just encouraged it.

Minority and poor taxpayers are trying to make ends meet but have expanded IRS audits, three to five times more than other Americans.

The fact is, we are on the verge of defaulting on the American Dream.

It is not enough to play politics and just pass something and then try to point the finger at the other party. Well, we just got this, and it is better. That ain't working. It is simply not working.

We had a rather raucous meeting in our Republican Conference this morning. I make it a practice not to talk