

because there has been no jobs legislation put on this floor since we've been here this year.

FDA:

2,100 fewer food safety inspections, an 18 percent reduction in making sure that the food we eat is safe and healthy.

On top of these, it also erodes our military readiness, with one-third of our combat aircraft on the ground, not being flown, training not being done.

As the Washington Post columnist David Ignatius pointed out last Friday, sequestration is forcing the military to cut back on training programs vital to our defense readiness, and yet we fiddle while Rome is burning.

David Ignatius writes:

The Army is sharply cutting training above the basic squad and platoon level. All but one of the combat training center rotations scheduled for brigades this fiscal year have been canceled. Depot maintenance has been halted for the rest of the fiscal year. The Army will cut 37,000 flying hours from its aviation training.

The list goes on and on, Mr. Speaker.

In February, Army Chief of Staff General Ray Odierno told Congress:

Should a contingency arise, there may not be enough time to avoid sending forces into harm's way unprepared.

On July 12, Mr. Speaker, civilian defense personnel at the Pax River Naval Air Station, which I represent, are scheduled to begin furloughs as a result of the sequester. That's a personal concern to me, it's a concern to their families, but more broadly than that it's a concern to the national security of every American citizen. Those folks are among the hundreds of thousands of civilian defense workers in Maryland and across the country who are set to be furloughed next month unless—unless—Congress acts. Congress can end these arbitrary and irrational cuts by replacing the sequester in its entirety as part of a big and balanced solution to deficits.

We had a deal. It was called the Budget Control Act. OMB now estimates it cut \$1.4 trillion. It's not as if we've ignored the deficit—\$1.4 trillion. But we didn't get all the way to where the Speaker said we needed to be and, therefore, we adopted the sequester, which irrationally cuts across the board the highest priority and the lowest priority.

□ 1020

Our ranking member on the Budget Committee, Democrat CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, has tried seven times to bring to this floor legislation to exactly modify this policy so that we have a rational, national security protecting, vulnerable citizens-protecting alternative while saving and getting to the same budget deficit reducing number—the same. However, our Republican colleagues have refused the opportunity to consider that on this floor.

We hear a lot about the Speaker saying, Let the House work its will. Seven times we have asked this House leader-

ship to give us the opportunity to work our will. The best way to achieve the balanced alternative to the sequester and put America's fiscal house in order would be through a bipartisan agreement on a budget. Leader PELOSI is going to name our conferees in just a few minutes. This Saturday will be the 100th day since the House passed its budget and after we demanded that the Senate pass a budget, Mr. Speaker. Still, 100 days later, no action on this floor by the majority party to go to conference—to sit down and try to come to an agreement. That's what democracy is about, coming to an agreement. This House should not be going into recess without first appointing conferees.

Ten percent of Americans think we're worth anything. I need to talk to them because they're not sure what's going on here, apparently.

I believe there is a bipartisan majority of Members—I hope that's the case—who will support a balanced approach that restores fiscal discipline and ends this irrational, commonsense-defying sequester. Let the House work its will, Mr. Speaker. It's time to appoint budget conferees. It's time for a balanced alternative to the sequester. As the sequester continues, there is no time to waste; and we ought to stay here and get the job done. Regular order, regular order, regular order—I hear it all the time. The problem is we are not following regular order—to the detriment of our country and our citizens.

ATTACK ON SHIITE MUSLIMS IN EGYPT

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. First of all, I want to say nice job to CHUCK FLEISCHMANN for his comments on his father.

Then, before my colleague from Maryland leaves, I want to make sure that he understands that we understand the history of this whole budget process.

The Nation is \$16 trillion in debt. It was the President's proposal to sequester; and it was his vote, along with my vote, that passed the Budget Control Act that enacted sequester. So, many of us are not just going to come to the floor and get lectured to on this process of how do you eventually get control of this national debt.

Sequester is a tough process. It's a tough pill to take. It's the first time we've ever cut real dollars. As I tell my colleagues, in the big picture of a \$16 trillion debt, it's pocket lint. It's such a small percentage of our future obligations, and that's where the debate on entitlement programs has to go. It's Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and the interest payment on our debt that, if we don't get control actuarially in the out-years, we will continue to have to cut the discretionary budget, which is damaging to all of those things my colleague mentioned.

Yet for him to come down and profess outrage over a proposal that the President presented to this body and then to profess outrage when he voted for the bill, I think it's just the height of hypocrisy.

That's not what I came down to the floor to talk about, but this gives us an opportunity to respond. I did want to talk about the recent occurrences in Egypt which identify persecution.

The Middle East is a continually changing region. We have had citizens protesting their nondemocratic governments numerous times in calling for change and freedom across the region. In 2012, the world would watch incredible change in Egypt following the election of Mohamed Morsi, when he became the President. This country continues to struggle in instituting a democratic government. However, the work of the Morsi government is not met without opposition, and attacks on minority groups are still an ongoing issue.

In the recent past, Coptic Christians have been persecuted; and on Sunday, June 23, Shiite Muslims were attacked by a mob of Sunni Muslims in the village of Zawyat Abu Musalam. Four Shiites died in this attack, and many others were injured. Shiite Muslims make up roughly 2 percent of the Egyptian population of 80 million people.

While President Morsi has condemned these attacks, further steps need to be taken to address the ongoing persecutions of Egypt's religious minorities. Persecution will continue if sentiments towards minorities are not changed. For Egypt to have a successful, lasting democratic government, people of all religions will need to be included.

The United States was created on the principle that all people should have the right to practice their religions freely and openly and without fear of persecution. As a Christian and as a Member of the House of Representatives, which is composed of a vast array of Members with different beliefs, it is my hope that this country will continue to be an example that Egypt can look to.

I urge the Egyptian Government and the people to continue to condemn these religious-based attacks and to take positive steps towards religious freedom. I will continue to keep the country of Egypt and their religious minorities in my prayers, and I ask my colleagues to do the same.

END HUNGER NOW

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise once again to address the House on the need to end hunger now. This is the 14th time that I've done so this year.

Next week, the Members of this House will return home to their districts for the 4th of July district work