trying to pass a new law to mandate the spending of billions of taxpayer dollars every year—to go mainly to this country's biggest corporations and largest landowners. A huge new Federal corporate welfare program, in other words.

Remember, these are the same Republicans who are looking to cut billions from housing for the poor, and nutrition programs for our kids, and student loan programs, and a hundred other programs that benefit the working people of this country.

I believe that if we pass this bill, we're going to see the absurdity of false takings claims like the one at the Summitville mine repeated over and over and over.

If you're concerned about the deficit, if you're concerned about entitlements, if you're worried about bureaucracy and red tape, and if you're worried about taxpayers, you should be very worried about this takings bill.

WE ARE GOING TO BALANCE THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Speaker, I wanted to take this time to kind of just register my concern and to just discuss a little bit the commitment I think we have on this side of the aisle to get our financial house in order, and my purpose for speaking is not to take a partisan tone, but to just express a tremendous amount of concern about what is really shaping up to be a battle between the White House and Congress over something that, if we work together, would be extraordinarily helpful for our Nation. I speak of the fact that, when President Clinton was elected, he found that he had a national debt of $4.3 trillion, and he felt that he had worked out a plan to bring our annual deficits down, but we are going to see under his 5-year plan that he presented to Congress just last month that our national debt by the year 2000 will be $6.7 trillion, that it will go up $2.3 trillion, or 54 percent, during this period of time.

What concerns me is the fact that there are some who are saying, well, this is a smaller percentage, but it is a smaller percentage on a larger base, and so this two trillion, 2.3 trillion, will be the largest increase ever experienced at any time in our history, and I look now and think what are we going to do to resolve this? What opportunities do we have as Republicans and Democrats to get together?

One of the things that the President deserves high marks on is the fact that we have, in fact, started to get a handle on what we call discretionary spending, what we vote out of the Committee on Appropriations, and this has resulted in some hope for the fact that at least with what we spend in defense and what we spend in nondefense that we are starting to show the kind of restraint that we need. We have simply decided that we will not add to discretionary spending. We have not in the last few years, and we are destined to keep it at a freeze for the next few years, but where we see the challenge is with, in fact, entitlements which constitute half of our budget, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and what we refer to as other entitlements.

The concern that I have is that the President has really taken a hard position that he is not going to touch entitlements, which is really the same old story. Republicans have not wanted to cut defense, and they did not. Democrats have not wanted to slow the growth of entitlements, and they did not. And Republicans and Democrats for 20 years got together and voted out budgets with large deficits so that we saw the national debt just continue to go up, and up, and up, and up.

The challenge we have today is that the fastest part of our budget are entitlements that are growing at 10 percent annually. I am talking particularly of Medicare and Medicaid. We need to slow the growth of Medicare and Medicaid to about 5 percent annually. We are going to spend 5 percent more next year than we did the year before, and 5 percent the year after. We are going to see Medicare and Medicaid grow. But if we cannot get those numbers down, we will never ever get our financial house in order.

I look at this budget, and I see that our foreign affairs expenditures are actually going down each year. I see the defense is going down each year. I see the domestic discretionary spending is basically at a hard freeze. Then I look at Medicare, and Medicaid, and other entitlements, food stamps, AFDC, and they are going up at triple the amount of inflation. What an opportunity we have to work together as Republicans and Democrats to get our financial house in order, but the kind of response we are getting when we start to try to make logical changes.

I happen to think the welfare state is dead. I think that 12-year-olds having babies, I think that 14-year-olds who are out selling drugs, 15-year-olds killing each other, 18-year-olds who cannot read their diplomas, 25-year-olds who have never had a job, 30-year-olds who are grandparents, is the legacy of the welfare state. It is dead. It is not going to be allowed to continue, and what I am pledging as one Member of Congress is that I believe that we Republicans in particular are going to get our financial house in order, and I speak as someone who is a moderate Republican, and I would like to think I am extremely moderate, someone who comes more from the center than from the right or left, and I can tell you that we have absolute conviction that we are going to work together to get our financial house in order. We are going to balance the budget.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. MILLER of California addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. BRYANT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. BRYANT of Tennessee addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. BROWDER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. BROWDER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. WELDON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. WELDON of Florida addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. TOWNS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. TOWNS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. GRAHAM] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. GRAHAM addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. KAPTUR] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California [Mrs. SEASTRAND] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. SEASTRAND addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] is recognized for 5 minutes.