Today, I would like to make a special appeal to Congressman NORWOOD that we lower our voices and make a sincere effort to humanize our discussion. Instead of focusing on the overwhelming but abstract statistics such as the 56,000 hard-working Americans who die each year from job related causes, from now on let us emphasize instead the individual workers with names and faces.

There are workers in Mr. NORWOOD's district like William McDaniel, who without adequate restraining protection fell 80 feet off a television tower to his death in Pendergrass, GA. Like Paul Powell, who was crushed in the unguarded drive shaft of a machine at an Augusta, GA, plant. Like Earnest Gosnell of Homer, GA, who was operating a timber log skidder that had no safety belts when the machine overturned and crushed him. these fine Americans were all residents of Mr. NORWOOD's district in Georgia.

What's really alarming here is that Mr. NORWOOD and so many other Republicans show no concern whatsoever for these workers and the other 56,000 hard-working Americans who die each year from work-related causes. It is really disappointing and tragic that so many Members of Congress like Mr. NORWOOD, would rather launch a cold-hearted and sweeping attack on a Federal agency than do everything possible to protect their own constituents.

It is the duty of every Member of Congress to recognize and remember that OSHA protects the lives of workers in every district.

Mr. Speaker, one of the great things about the Vietnam War Memorial is that the Vietnam War Memorial names names of each individual soldier who gave his life for his country. I do not think we should ever again have monuments for unknown soldiers. Why have celebrations of unknown soldiers when you could name the names and have the faces? It will make it less likely than for those who make decisions about war in the future to be careless or casual when they are making those decisions.

In the same way we ought to try and humanize all the work we do here in Congress. In the budget that has been prepared by the Republicans, OSHA has been drastically reduced. OSHA next week will be under attack in the Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee. An omnibus bill which will deal with work-related protections will be on the floor of the committee, and OSHA will again be under attack.

OSHA saves lives. Stop and consider that OSHA saves lives. Fifty-six thousand people every year die of accidents on the job or work-related causes, diseases they contract on the job or accidents they have and later die in the hospital away from the job. Six thousand die immediately in accidents on the job, but 56,000 people a year is as many people as died, almost as many people that died, in the Vietnam war over the whole 7-year period of the Vietnam war.

□ 1345

It is a very serious matter. Accidents in the workplace, conditions in the workplace, are very serious. Let us not condemn our workers to unsafe conditions unnecessarily. OSHA protects lives.

Medicaid protects lives too. In the same budget that is going to reduce OSHA, we have tremendous reductions for Medicaid. I am not talking about Medicare, because we can talk about Medicare and the reductions there. That also needs to be debated. But Medicare will be protected. It will be discussed at length on this floor.

Greater cuts have been made in Medicaid than have been made in Medicare, and the Republican budget proposes to get rid of Medicaid as an entitlement. Medicaid is health care for poor people. We are going to have a second-class health care system sanctioned by the Federal Government. One system for those not in Medicaid, those who are in Medicare and can afford Medicare and can afford private insurance, and another system for the poor, that is financed by the Government, a second-class system that will be left to the States to run it. And there will be no Federal entitlements. When the States run out of money, if you are sick or ill, you will not get any help.

Those are human beings out there with faces. Those are people that we all know. Somebody will know the workers who are killed in accidents or the workers who die from job related causes. Somebody knows somebody who is going to die as a result of those cuts in Medicaid and Medicare. Let us not proceed with an across-the-board cut in Medicaid of 18 percent, higher than the cut in Medicare, across-the-board cut, and assume that human beings are not going to die as a result.

Second-class health care is dangerous health care. I once had a situation where a hospital about to go broke in my district told me that we are down to such a level that we cannot afford to really sterilize our towels properly. We do not have the equipment.

I said to the administrator of that hospital, if you cannot sterilize your towels properly, it is time to close the hospital. Let us not try to keep it open.

The provision of second-class health care is dangerous and deadly. If we treat people as numbers and do not treat them as human beings, we run the risk of destroying lives. Let us lower our voices and look at the faces again.

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

[Mrs. ROUKEMA 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 Oregon [Mr. DEFAZIO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

MEDICARE: CUT OR LOSE?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, the distinguished majority leader probably has a point when he was saying—excuse me, I mean the distinguished minority leader, force of habit—Mr. GEPHARDT, was giving a speech a few minutes ago saying that Medicare is going to be cut. And I think to some degree that you can argue that there is going to be certainly a modification of Medicare, and you may want to say that that is a cut. But I would say, what is better, modifying Medicare or losing Medicare? It will be broke under the current Medicare system in 6 years. It is not a matter of let us keep business as usual and avoid changing Medicare. We have got to do that.

You know, I wish that the critics, and most of the critics right now are coming from the minority side of the aisle, would enter into the solution as freely as they have entered into the criticism of the Republican plan. If they could enter the debate with facts and substance, instead of just with tactics and strategy, it would be so helpful. We need the help of the leadership and the wisdom of the Democrat Party.

We on the Republican side would be shortchanging ourselves if we said we had all the answers. And that is why our Founding Fathers had a two party system. We need the ideas from both sides of the aisle in order to come up with the solution.

The fact is, though, that the Clinton cabinet is the one who said Medicare is going to go broke in 6 years. The Clinton cabinet also has come out with statistics showing that baby boomers are going to be retiring in the year 2002, the Social Security trust fund runs out of money in the year 2030, and these are huge problems.

I yield to my friend from Michigan, Mr. SMITH.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. I thank the gentleman very much for yielding. You know, what is so very interesting is that it was 2 years ago that the trustees of the Medicare trust fund came to Congress and said, ''This trust fund is going broke, and it will be out of money by the year 2000.'' This time they came back and said it might last until 2002.

But the fact is, it is a political hot potato. For the last 2 years, with the existing majority in Congress and the President, they did not want to deal with it because they knew it left a target. They were politically vulnerable.

Republicans met and said, do we want to save Medicare? If we do, are we

willing to take the hits that we knew were going to come from the other side of the aisle? ''Oh boy, are you guys cruel and unreasonable.'' The fact is, there is going to be less money coming into the Medicare trust fund in the next 2 years than the payouts. There is a little reserve there in part A that is going to allow us to continue until 2002, and then it is bankrupt.

Mr. KINGSTON. If the gentleman will yield back, what is bothering me is we still seem to have folks on the other side of the aisle debating that Medicare is fine and dandy and there are no problems. We can go on ad infinitum with Medicare.

We cannot do that. We are driving straight into a brick wall that we will collide with a bus full of senior citizens in 7 years, period.

The tragedy of this is look at the wisdom on the Democrat side. I am envious as I look at the Democrat Party. They have a lot of talent and brains over there. I would like, as the Republican Party, to recruit some of their folks. Some of the people I would rather not recruit. I am sure there are folks over here they would rather not recruit. But good gracious, the wisdom of getting the two parties together to come up with a solution for Medicare, would that not be the responsible thing to do for senior citizens? We are wrapping ourselves around momma's bath robe in the name of Mother's Day. We have heard the speeches for the last 40 minutes. What my momma told me to do is put aside party differences and do what is right. That is what we need to do.

Medicare needs to be reformed. The Clinton administration, Senator KERREY, many Democrats, have come out front and said that. Republicans have certainly said that. Take it a step further: To reform it, the American people need the Democrat and the Republican Parties working together on this.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. I was just saying on reform, testimony before our Committee on the Budget indicated there was $40 billion of fraud and abuse in the system. So, for a start, last year we had a proposal by the administration that the Federal Government should take over all of the medical health care needs in this country.

The fact is that we have seen Medicaid and Medicare grow at the rate of 10 and 12 percent a year. The private practice health care has been 6 and 7 percent. In fact, last year it was about 4 percent, with many parts of the country being zero. The private sector is growing at 4 percent, the public sector, where we have Medicaid and Medicare, where the Government is responsible, has been growing at 10 and 12 percent. To say it is a solution to have the Federal Government take over everything does not jibe. We have got to do something the corporations and the rest of America are doing. We have got to make smart shoppers out of every American, including senior Americans.

Mr. KINGSTON. I think the gentleman ran out of time a little while ago. I wanted to hear about your charts. Alice Rivlin said today there are other places to cut in the budget. She said where the Republican Party was cutting was idiotic. I am sure there are things that the administration does that the Republican Party and Americans think are idiotic. Has the administration cut the budget in their proposal, in the President's budget proposal?

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. KINGSTON, what I learned is I am not a better number drawer when I have extra time than I am with short time. All this says is that the only budget that—and I do not want to be partisan, but that the President has sent the Congress is figured in the same way as the Republicans are figuring their budget as far as deficits. These are the deficits that are going to exist under the President's budget that he sent us about 8 weeks ago, and the Republican budget passed out of the House, very similar to the one passed out of the Senate.

In year 1996, the deficit under the President's plan is $211 billion, $156 for the Republican. Every year you see our deficit keeps going down and down. We are trying to brag about it. We are saying for the first time since 1969, the end figure is zero as far as the deficit. The zero at the end is the fact we are balancing revenues with expenses. The projection down here for the President is going up on the deficit in those out years.

Mr. KINGSTON. The figures are right. It is atrocious, your momma is ashamed of you. But if I read that correctly, in the year 2001, the President's budget has a $276 billion deficit. The Kasich Committee on the Budget proposal has a $108 billion deficit. The year 2002, the President is at a $318 billion deficit. We are at a $15 billion surplus.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. We are actually starting to pay back some of this huge, gigantic, $6 trillion debt that the kids and grandkids are going to owe at that time if we do not change.

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 gentleman from Guam [Mr. UNDERWOOD] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. UNDERWOOD 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 Texas [Mr. GONZALEZ] is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

COMMENTS ON THE DEBT

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

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, just some comments on the debt. You know, we have made a decision in the U.S. Congress to require that the Senate vote, that the House vote, that the President sign, any time that we increase the debt ceiling. Right now we have a debt ceiling of $4.9 trillion. That was done 2 years ago, when this administration came into office.

Now, that is good, no more charts. That debt ceiling was increased 2 years ago in 1993 to $4.9 trillion. Today—today our debt, subject to the limit, is $4.77 trillion. We are going to hit the cap of $4.9 trillion in September or October. So this House is going to have to decide, do we want to vote to increase the debt limit again.

Several of us, Congressman CHRIS SHAYS, myself, about 20 others, are saying look, if we are going to vote to increase the debt limit, should we not have something solid to get us on a glide path to assure that we are going to have a balanced budget sometime in the next 4 to 7 years? And I think the answer is yes.

So I think we need to send a strong signal to the President of the United States, look, unless we are on that glide path, unless we have got a law, a reconciliation bill, a balanced budget amendment, or something that can somehow guarantee to the American people that we are not going to pick their pockets any more, we are not going to vote to increase the debt limit.

So we are sending that message to the President. We are also sending a letter signed by about 25 of us to the majority leader in the Senate, to the Speaker of the U.S. House, saying look, do not plan on our vote to increase again the debt ceiling of the U.S. Government unless we have got the kind of firm, absolute, tough legislation signed by the President that helps make sure we are going to get there.

Mr. KINGSTON. If the gentleman will yield, I want to ask you, because you are a distinguished member of the Committee on the Budget: Now, on the tax increase decrease, can we decrease taxes and balance the budget? Are we being hypocrites?

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. The gentleman has as good an answer as I do, so I will let you complete the answer. My part of the answer would be that most economists that appeared before our Committee on the Budget agreed that increasing taxes is not the way to balance the budget if we want to stimulate job growth in this country. And as everybody knows, or should know, 2 years ago in 1993, what this Congress