

sign. The lobbyists who benefited from this and the fat cats who are having big dinners tonight who benefited from this, they are not going to pay this bill. These kids are. These kids and their kids and their kids.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. KINGSTON. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman cannot use pages as props for his speech. They can be of assistance in holding the sign, but they cannot be referred to as props in the manner in which my friend, the gentleman from Mississippi, has just done.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's inquiry of the Chair is appropriate. At this point the Chair would remind the gentleman not to refer to the pages by name or by their presence. The exhibits themselves may be an appropriate use at this time, but the gentleman whose time it is will decline to reference pages individually or collectively.

□ 1700

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. To the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON), if I had voted to stick these children with that bill, I would be as ashamed to look at their faces as the gentleman is.

I did not vote to stick these kids with that bill.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FEENEY). The gentleman is out of order. He has referred to pages as props when the Chair has ruled that their presence on the floor cannot be mentioned.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is not referring to the pages themselves as pages. He is referring to the pages that the pages are holding, the 914, 878, 724. This is a parliamentary inquiry for clarification, Mr. Speaker. He was referring to the pages that the pages are holding.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is right. He is using the pages in an incorrect manner.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. I have not yielded my time. Under the House rules, the pages are allowed to hold these pages, and as long as the gentleman does not refer to the pages by name, he can refer to the pages.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct, that the pages are permitted to facilitate the presentation of exhibits, but any reference in any speech to the pages or to visually suggest that they are part of the exhibits themselves or any suggestion that the debate should involve the pages individually or collectively, is not in order.

The exhibits themselves may be referred to. The pages may not be referred to.

The gentleman may proceed.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) has 30 seconds to not refer to the pages but to refer to the exhibits.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I know that most Americans are at work right now. Some of you are watching. If you care about your country, you have got to be upset that in almost a little over 2 years almost \$1 trillion has been added to the national debt. To make a reference from that, we went all the way from 1775 to 1975 and did not borrow that much money.

The next time one of my Republican colleagues looks you in the eye and tells you he is a fiscal conservative, ask him about that trillion dollars and the \$1 billion a day that we will pay in interest on that money and will pay for the rest of my lifetime, your lifetime, and, God bless them, Mr. Speaker, these kids' lifetime.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is advised that in addition to the admonitions, that Members must decline to address the television audience. In addition, the Speaker is taking under advisement the future use and appropriateness of using pages.

CONGRESS SHOULD DO WHAT IS RIGHT FOR AMERICA

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate our friend, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR), for advancing the cause of fiscal restraint, something that we do need to do in this House. And it is interesting, particularly since the Democrats are right now promoting an expansion of welfare in an unfunded way, and proposing to increase spending on welfare \$3.5 billion, and that is to give a tax rebate to people who have not paid taxes.

It is an idea that is ironic since 197 of them voted against it originally in May 2001, but they all seem to want to spend more regardless of what our budgets are doing.

I have just come from an appropriations meeting. And what is interesting about that is that on the appropriations bills, we have 13 of them, I believe, Mr. Speaker, every bill, it is particularly interesting since every one of our 13 appropriations bills, no matter what we propose in the Republican Party, the Democrats make a counterproposal to spend more. And I realize that my friend, the gentleman of Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR), is in the minority of the Democratic Party where they do wake up in the morning and worry about spending. And I am glad that he does because I share his con-

cerns about it. But I just point out that the majority of his party, when it comes to spending bills, wants to spend more. And no matter what it is, we are not spending enough for this cause; we are not spending enough for that cause.

I want to also point out, sometimes it is easy when you are in the minority and you do not have to necessarily make the vote for war, but we are in a situation after 9-11 where America was under attack. Americans were hurt, injured, and killed in their workplace. And while some on the left sat around and said what did we do wrong or why do they hate us, others in the greater majority, not just the Republican Party but in America as a whole, said, look, we are going to defend our borders. We are going to defend our domestic areas. We are going to just defend our homeland. And to do that, unfortunately, you do have to spend money because it costs money to go to Afghanistan, to send helicopters and tanks over there. It costs money to send troops to the Middle East. And that does add up to some deficit spending.

It is something we do want to get under control. But I would certainly hope that the gentleman and others were not suggesting that the war for the liberation of Iraq was wrong, the war to find bin Laden was wrong, the war to liberate Afghanistan from Taliban rule was wrong. Because I believe most Americans support those actions and most Americans are glad that we are taking these steps.

When people say to you things like, how can you look the children in the eye, well, to me how could you not look the children in the eye and say, you know what, we are going to defend our homeland and we are going to secure our borders.

There is an international war on terrorism and America seems to be leading the way. America has also been the victim of it, but we are going to win that battle.

And if the gentleman and others would look at the budget, they can see that that is where the majority of our spending went and it is going to continue to go. But we want to work with the Democrats to get spending under control. My concern of it is not in just dollars and cents, but my concern is the encroachment of the government on the private sector. Every dollar we put in the government, that is more freedom we lose, particularly in the private sector.

So I hope as we begin the appropriations process this year that we can have a lot of amendments from our Democrat friends that actually reduce spending so that when we run the legislative branch bill out here, when we run military construction out here, when we run the education bill out here, if they have ideas for saving money, I want to do everything I can to make those amendments offered by my friend, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR), or anybody else over there, the so-called Blue Dog Caucus, I want their amendments to be in

order so we can work together in a bipartisan fashion and reduce spending. Because I think that the best of our party and the best of their party should do what is right for the best of America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina 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 Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CONGRESS NEEDS TO WORK IN A BIPARTISAN MANNER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman very much; and I appreciate my good friend, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON), insisting that we have a balanced budget.

Might I remind him that as we speak, the Committee on Rules is meeting and having the opportunity to review the \$82 billion tax proposal of the Republicans of this House, when all that we ask for and all that is necessary is that we take the Senate bill that has just been passed to fix the major error that occurred last week when this body, this Republican House and Republican Senate, refused to provide a child tax credit for working families making \$10,000 to \$26,000 a year.

The Senate fixed it last week. The bill from the Senate is right here at the desk. All this House needed to do was to adopt the Senate language. It would immediately go to the President's desk. It would be immediately signed by the President, and now 19 million children would be able to have the same child tax credit refund that the rich have been able to get by the President's tax bill. But lo and behold, the very same party that has stood up and indicated that they are willing to fight the deficit, they have now before us an \$82 billion jump of a tax cut that has all of the kitchen sink in it, and they want to keep the children of America from getting their tax cut.

I hope we can work on this issue in a bipartisan manner, Mr. Speaker. I hope the Committee on Rules right now will reject the proposal by the Committee on Ways and Means, the Republican Committee on Ways and Means. This potpourri of taxes that eliminates the opportunity for us to move quickly to the President's desk with a clean,

stand-alone tax cut that provides a refund to the children of America, a simple \$154 that we can give to 19 million children and their families and those that make \$10,000 to \$26,000 a year. I hope we can do that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to finish on this very important concern that I have, and that is that over the weekend we heard a lot of scrambling on the Sunday morning talk shows about a call for congressional investigations about the question of the existence of weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know if there are weapons of mass destruction. And I am not intending to be in an argument with my administration on the question of their veracity. But I do want to be in an argument on behalf of the American people. They need to know the truth. So I am calling for an independent investigation, a special prosecutor, or a special commission to investigate what was known by the administration and what level of intelligence was given when we made the decision to go to war with Iraq. What kind of intelligence and documentation of the intelligence that would have given the necessary impetus or basis of going to war, what was known by the intelligence community, what facts did they give about the weapons of mass destruction, why was a decision made to go to war with respect to the intelligence given when we know that the U.N. inspectors were doing the very same thing?

The argument that the administration made is that we know there are weapons of mass destruction, we know that they are there, and the U.N. inspectors are not doing their job and they are not doing it fast enough. Two months later after the official part of the war has ended, although we are still at war, we do not have the weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Speaker, this is a constitutional question of war and peace. We were supposed to declare war under article I of the Constitution. We did not do that. Members of this House were moved to tears when they made the decision to vote on the question of going to war. What a tragedy if we did not have the sufficient intelligence or the accurate intelligence or the intelligence community did not truthfully give the facts necessary to make an intelligent decision that sent young men and women off to their deaths.

I believe we owe the American people the truth. The Congress is not going to do it. I understand there is a complete collapse in the other body with respect to bipartisan hearings on the question of what kind of intelligence was given to make the decision. Then forget about it. Give the American people the truth. We need to have an independent investigation, an outside commission, and/or a special prosecutor, which I am calling for and will make an official demand for it in the following days to come.

I hope that we realize that truth to the American people is our obligation

as members of this government. The American people must depend upon our veracity, and as well they must depend upon the right decisions being made on their behalf and on behalf of the young men and women in the United States military. We salute them for their willingness to offer the ultimate sacrifice, but I believe truly it is important for us to have the truth on this issue, and an independent investigation is well needed.

MEDICARE PROBLEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House currently to discuss the Medicare issue, and this is a tough issue that is facing us. It is one where by Members can choose a political route, or they can choose a route of policy.

The numbers that are presently in front of us cannot lie. These numbers are cold. They will not go away, and that is that we have this: the demographics, the baby boomers when they become seniors, there is a smaller population behind them, and the present Medicare model as we know it cannot exist unless we go to a 20 percent payroll tax.

There is a desire here within Congress to deliver a prescription drug benefit to Medicare. Well, if we just add prescription drugs to Medicare without addressing the long-term solvency, we have only exasperated the insolvency of Medicare as we know it.

□ 1715

Therein lies our challenge. So I believe if we just added a prescription drug benefit to Medicare without making this long-term solution to the solvency of Medicare, that is a very faulty approach.

Right now within the Republican Caucus there is a discussion about two approaches on how to do this. These are two completely different approaches.

The country has had an opportunity to see the approach sponsored by the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) as chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, because Congress has passed this measure two other times, and that is an insurance-based product, a defined benefit. We provide a cash assistance to beneficiaries to help them manage their drug bill and to make that assistance then targeted to those who need it.

We create this insurance pool for the purchase of drugs-only insurance which the Federal Government would then underwrite. These are two different approaches.

The first approach that I mentioned, really, is there are five of us that have come together and have drafted this approach. This insurance-based approach, though, really begins to concern us. It concerns us because there