

tried to prevent Congress from creating the independent commission in the first place. Since then it has failed to hand over critical documents and fully cooperate with the commission's stated goal of providing a full and complete account of the circumstances surrounding the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, including preparedness for and the immediate response to the attacks. Even more recently, the White House refused to support the commission's request for more time to complete its work.

To me, it seems like the White House is less than enthusiastic about getting to the bottom of these catastrophic events. As part of the deal struck for allowing Dr. Rice to testify, the 9/11 Commission had to agree in writing not to require additional public testimony from any White House officials, including Dr. Rice. The 9/11 Commission agreed to these terms, but this deal means that regardless of what the commission may learn in future months, no other White House official will be allowed to publicly testify under oath.

That is like an attorney asking a judge if half of the witnesses to a crime can skip the trial. It is a ridiculous concept.

President Bush and Vice President CHENEY will meet with the commission, although privately, and from what I understand, will read their remarks without taking questions. This is very disappointing. I think the American people, and especially the families of the victims of September 11, deserve to know what their leaders knew and when they knew it.

I remember when the country rallied together in September and October of 2001. These episodes of unity begin and end with the President. Tough times call for strong leadership. It is once again time for President Bush to lead this country forward, towards truth and reconciliation. He should help us grow as a people by being the very first person to volunteer himself for public testimony. He should avail himself and his staff to the 9/11 Commission so that we might learn something about our past and protect ourselves for the future.

The American people, Madam Speaker, deserve no less from their Commander in Chief.

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

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

SOCIAL SECURITY

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. Madam Speaker, this is a good budget we

passed out of this House and sent to conference. I am hoping that the kind of frugal budget that we sent to conference is going to come back to this House for a final budget of the House and the Senate.

One thing that the budget did not deal with is unfunded liabilities. Unfunded liabilities are the promises that politicians make when they do not know where the money is coming from in later years. Last week, the actuaries of the Social Security Administration and the Medicare trust fund came up with their estimates of unfunded liabilities, and that is what this chart shows. It should scare the heck out of us.

The Social Security and Medicare trustees have calculated that these programs have \$73.5 trillion in unfunded liabilities. Now, if you divide the population of the United States, which is roughly 290 million, into that \$73.5 trillion, you end up with over a quarter of a million dollars for every man, woman and child that somehow is going to be responsible for paying for these benefits over and above what we have promised because the money coming in from the FICA tax, and that FICA tax supports Social Security and Medicare, over and above the money coming in in revenues from that tax, we are still short \$73.5 trillion.

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Medicare part A is short \$21.8 trillion; Medicare part B, \$23.2 trillion; Medicare part D, the drug program that we passed 4 months ago, \$16.6 trillion.

It is interesting on the prescription drug bill that Tom Savings, one of the actuaries, estimated at the time it was passed that the unfunded liability would be \$7 trillion. His estimate now is \$16.6 trillion.

The danger, of course, is that what we are doing in effect is acting like our problems are so important today that it justifies taking the money of our kids and our grandkids that they have not even earned yet. The unfunded liabilities, in addition to the debt that we are accumulating, now over \$7 trillion, is a huge liability to leave to our kids.

I am a farmer from Michigan. What we have traditionally tried to do is pay off the farm so that our kids had a little better chance than we did. Instead, we are now faced with a situation, and here is my political take on it. Right now roughly 50 percent of the working population pays less than 1 percent of the total income tax in this country. What we have done is become more and more progressive with the easy flow of language and justification to tax the rich, but here is 50 percent of the population that has little stake but to ask candidates that are running for Congress for more government services rather than less, and politically it has seemed to be to the advantage of politicians to make more and more promises. This represents how many prom-

ises we have made over and above our ability to pay for it.

I did this chart, this was also with Tom Savings' help, just to show that in 16 years it is going to take 28 percent of our general fund budget to pay for the makeup difference in Medicare and Social Security. By 2030, it is going to take almost 53 percent of the total budget.

So what do we do? How do we deal with this? Here is what this Congress, the House and the Senate and the White House has done in the past. This is when we run short of funds in Social Security.

It started out with 2 percent in 1940, 2 percent of the first \$3,000. It ran short of money, so in 1960 we raised it to 6 percent of the first \$4,800. In 1980, we ran short again, so we raised it to 10.16 percent of the first \$26,000; and then in 2000, 12.4 percent of the first \$76,000. In 2004, now, today, 12.4 percent of the first \$89,000. So what we have done is either reduced benefits, increased taxes or a combination of both. That is what we did in 1983.

I just call on my colleagues and I call on the American people, Madam Speaker, to ask their Members of Congress what bill have you written, what bill have you signed on to to make sure that we keep Social Security and Medicare solvent and not leave the total bill up to our kids?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida). 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.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to replace the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) on the list.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

THE BUDGET

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

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, what would your nightmare budget look like? Can you imagine a budget that would cut support for homeland security and small business development, that would do virtually nothing to improve one of the most sluggish economic recoveries in American history, that would break the Contract with America by raising the debt ceiling under cover of a budget resolution, that would balloon the debt and the deficit to previously unimagined dimensions, and that would do all of