

budget that the gentleman from Tennessee is advocating raises the debt ceiling. It is kind of interesting that it is not without its flaws. It raises the debt ceiling. In fact, over the period of time of the budget, almost as much, not quite as much, but almost as much as the budget that we will be presenting here on the floor hopefully by the end of this week, the interesting thing about it is that the debt ceiling will go up under the exact budget that the gentleman from Tennessee was advocating.

I respect the fact that the budget came forward, but it is one thing to say that our budget will require the debt ceiling to be increased. It is another thing to look inward and to say, guess what, we are doing the exact same thing. And why? Because the choices are pretty tough at this particular time. We have got to make sure that we fund our defense and homeland security. We have to make sure that we fund those important programs such as making sure that our seniors have a prescription drug benefit. And we have to make sure that at that same time we are able to keep the economy growing and providing opportunities for the future. If we assume those few things, there are very few choices left except to raise taxes; and as I say, that is where there is a departure on both sides.

We will not raise taxes. That is not what we are going to do in this budget. That is not what we are advocating at this time in our economic history. And that is the reason that we oppose this particular motion to instruct. We believe that we should manage our economy, which includes our debt ceiling, in a responsible way. And we believe our budget does that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I think it is important, in light of the chairman's closing comments, to restate that I will vote to increase the debt ceiling because to do otherwise would be irresponsible. But I think it is critical for us to seriously consider changing a little bit the game plan that we are under and that is reinstate pay-as-you-go. The chairman and the gentleman from Ohio made eloquent defenses of their economic game plan, and that is all past. I am worried about today forward. We keep talking about everything we have done in the past. We keep talking about 9-11-01. And, yes, this country was thrown into a crisis and, yes, we had to make some additional investments, all of which are very true. But what about today forward? Why continue blindly because of a philosophical belief that the perfect plan that we put into effect 3 years ago, 2 years ago, 1 year ago is still good, when, in spite of the gentlemen's eloquent arguments, the structural deficit of this country is a major problem that will not be cured by growth, will not, based on an overwhelming consensus of economists?

□ 2045

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman tonight has made an eloquent argument for his philosophy. But it is interesting when you look at the last 44 years, under Democrats, the economy grew 5.7 percent faster than debt. For 24 years of Republican leadership, the debt grew 6.8 percent faster than the economy. And when we look at the current 4 years, the debt is going to increase 10 percent greater than the economy.

Yes, we rejoice at the good things that are happening in jobs, and we hope they continue. But should we get that kind of economic recovery by borrowing \$2.3 trillion on the future of this country?

The gentleman continues to want to talk about tax cuts, and the Blue Dog budget supported tax cuts for purposes of getting the economy going again. But we also believe in pay-as-you-go.

We are fighting three wars. I would defy anyone in this body to find any time in the history of our country in which we have fought a war by cutting the amount of revenue available to fight the war. With all due respect, that does not make sense to me, and I believe, as the gentleman from Tennessee said, that is morally wrong. That is not a philosophical difference. That is not something we come out here and vote about. That is passing on a debt to our children and grandchildren that we should not be doing today.

Now, I appreciate the opportunity tonight to debate, and all we are saying is, we should have a vote on it. I will vote to increase the debt ceiling. I will vote for it tomorrow, provided we put pay-as-you-go back into place so that it forces this body to make tough decisions on spending and on revenues.

The gentleman from Iowa voted with us in 1997 when we had a tougher pay-as-you-go rule. We said we would sequester if the revenue did not magically appear. I do not want to get into these chart arguments, but revenue has collapsed under the economic program the gentleman is defending here tonight. It has collapsed. We have less revenue to spend and we are fighting a war.

So what are we doing? We are borrowing on our children's future.

Let me remind everyone, the baby boomers are about to begin retiring, and I suspect that the people of America pretty soon are going to be wondering, what the heck are we doing here having the philosophical arguments we are talking about tonight and ignoring the pressure on the economy of the United States that is going to occur when the baby boomers begin to retire in 2011?

The largest single economic pressure on this country is going to occur, and all we are doing tonight is digging the hole deeper and deeper and deeper, and it is structurally going down. No matter how eloquently my friends on the other side come on the floor and talk about it, the deficits are going to con-

tinue to go up, because the economic game plan we are under cannot work.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLINE). All time for debate has expired.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

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#### KEEP ROOSEVELT ON THE DIME AND HAVE A NATIONAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I received a letter in the mail from a young friend.

"Dear Congressman BROWN:

"I'm happy to be writing to you.

"I have an issue I think is important.

I don't want the FDR dime to be changed to the Reagan dime because FDR has a real story. The story is when FDR tried to find a cure for polio, he asked children and grown-ups all over the United States to send dimes to the White House. By the end of the year, they had collected more than \$1,000 in dimes.

"There would be no particular reason to have Mr. Reagan on the dime, but there is a reason that FDR should be on the dime. It is almost like having a monument to FDR in your pocket.

"I think another very important issue is health care. I believe we should have a national health care system. If people don't have health care and they get sick, they could die. If I get a very bad disease, I might get very good antibiotics and live. I would get those antibiotics because I have health care. But other people couldn't get antibiotics if they didn't have health care and couldn't afford them.

"Thank you for letting me write to you."

It is signed Alex Friedman.

"P.S. I am an 8-year-old in the third grade."

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#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order