The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 3473. An act to amend the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 to authorize advances from Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 111–148, the Chair, on behalf of the Republican Leader, appoints the following individuals to serve as members of the Commission on Key National Indicators:

Dr. Wade F. Horn of Maryland (for a term of 3 years); and

Dr. Nichols N. Eberstadt of the District of Columbia (for a term of 2 years).

NOTIFICATION OF TERMINATION OF SUSPENSIONS WITH RESPECT TO ISSUANCE OF CERTAIN PERMANENT MUNITIONS EXPORT LICENSES FOR EXPORTS TO CHINA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 111–120)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 902(b)(2) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991 (Public Law 101–246) (the ''Act''), and as President of the United States, I hereby report to the Congress that it is in the national interest of the United States to terminate the suspensions under section 902(a)(3) of the Act with respect to the issuance of permanent munitions export licenses for exports to the People's Republic of China insofar as such restrictions pertain to the LightScanner® 32 System used for gene mutation genotyping for individualized cancer treatment. License requirements remain in place for these exports and require review on a case-by-case basis by the United States Government.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *June 9, 2010*.

THE ISRAEL BLOCKADE AND THE FLOTILLA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. AKIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY.)

Mrs. LOWEY. I thank the gentleman. I'm just going to complete my statement, and I appreciate your generosity.

The administration focused today on humanitarian and development assistance to strengthen the Palestinian Authority so it can serve as a viable partner in peace to Israel. But Abu Mazen must make clear to all the Palestinian people that their security and prosperous future—and we've seen an 11 percent growth in the West Bank—depends on rejecting Hamas, recognizing Israel, and working with the international community and Israel to achieve a two-state solution.

Despite the current tense environment, some positive steps have been taken that will improve Israel's security as well as bolster U.S. national security interests. Iran continues to be an existential threat to Israel, the region, and the world. I am pleased today's agreement by the U.N. Security Council to impose multilateral sanctions on Iran will hold the regime accountable for its reckless pursuit of nuclear weapons, and I look forward to Congress finalizing strong bilateral sanctions and urge European partners and other responsible countries to do the same.

We must continue to strongly support the U.S.-Israeli partnership which provides invaluable benefits to both of our countries' national securities.

Mr. AKIN. I yield to my good friend from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. I thank the gentleman, and I will be brief. I rise in support of everything that my colleagues have said.

The U.S.-Israel relationship is a special relationship, and it's a relationship that needs to be strengthened. The United States is Israel's only true friend. In fact, when you look at the United Nations or the so-called Human Rights Council in the United Nations, it's really a kangaroo court stacked up against Israel. No wonder Israel doesn't accept what the so-called ''international body'' says about them, because they can never do anything right. They're always condemned no matter what they try, no matter what they do.

My colleagues have pointed out that Israel, like every other sovereign nation, has the right to defend itself, that Israel has at least twice seized large caches of arms aboard Iranian ships bound for Hamas and Hezbollah, and a blockade is an appropriate security measure when employed in the face of hostility such as that directed by Hamas against Israel.

Hamas doesn't recognize Israel's right to exist, has vowed to destroy Israel, won't abide by any agreements that have been signed by Israel and the previous Palestinian governments, and so Israel has to make sure that terrorist attacks don't come from Gaza into Israel as they have for such a long time. As my colleagues have pointed out, Israel has offered to inspect the flotillas and let all the humanitarian aid on the flotillas go to Gaza, but these people on the flotilla were obviously not interested in delivering humanitarian aid. They were interested in provoking a violent reaction from Israel.

I just want to stand in support of the U.S.-Israel relationship, a strong relationship. Israel is our best friend and ally in the Middle East. Hopefully, soon there will be a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, two states side by side living in peace and harmony, a Palestinian state and an Israeli Jewish state. That is something that we all strive to work for.

I want to thank Mr. WEINER for organizing this. I want to thank Mr. HOYER, our majority leader, for always being a stalwart. I want to thank Mr. AKIN for giving us the opportunity to speak. When it comes to Israel, this Congress is united with strong bipartisan support, and we're going to keep it that way.

Thank you.

Mr. AKIN. I thank the gentleman. I think you're articulate, and I think that that's accurate to say: there is a good bipartisan sentiment that when a small nation is trying to defend itself, we have always stood for people.

The basic principle of people being allowed to be free and have some self-determination as to how they're going to rule their own country and be free from the fear of terrorists, that's something that Americans can really agree on. I appreciate you taking time on that subject, and also my good friend from New York taking the time to organize the hour. Very good job. Thank you.

Mr. WEINER. If the gentleman would briefly yield, I, too, want to add my thanks to you. I don't know if they have C–SPAN in Israel, but sometimes it's easy in that little country to feel beset on all sides. We share the same common sense that they do, that they're victims of terror, and I want to thank you.

We disagree on a lot in this place—and you're going to spend the next hour or so pointing out some of those things—but there are some things that have broad bipartisan support, and the support of Israel is one of those things, and I want to thank you for being at the forefront of that.

Mr. AKIN. Well, thank you very much, gentleman. And thank you for the leadership you've shown tonight.

DEMOCRAT'S MANAGEMENT OF THE ECONOMY

Mr. AKIN. I would now change gears here and get on to another subject.

We're dealing with some weighty topics tonight; the previous was of course international relations, the other is closer to home, and it's really the question of the economy: the Democrats' management of the economy, what should be done with the economy, how does that affect jobs and how does that affect all of our lives. I guess it sounds like kind of a boring subject in some ways; but on the other hand, it so much influences and affects every single person in our country that I guess

we have to put up with a little bit of talk about economics just to make sure that we're not destroying our country or destroying our jobs and putting our grandchildren into debt. And so the whole topic of economics and jobs can be a little perplexing, but it doesn't have to be.

I do apologize ahead of time that I am, by training, an engineer. Someone once said that engineers shouldn't be allowed in political office perhaps because they're too logical, or whatever the reasons are. But I do think it's important to back up just a little bit to say where we are here in the economy and how we got to where we're going and what mistakes have been made.

I'm not one to want to just criticize and not offer a solution, so I'm going to try to do that. I'm going to try to draw some practical applications as we wrap up in a while as to what we should be doing, what policies should be changed, what does America have to do to pull ourselves out of the economic nosedive that we're currently in.

It's not a graveyard spiral. There were days in the early days of airplanes that when a pilot pulled his airplane up into a stall, fell over backwards, he would get into what was called a graveyard spiral. And the pilot would grab the stick of the airplane, pull it back violently to try to get the nose of the airplane to pull off from the ground and the airplane would just keep spiraling down and crash into the ground. It ruined the pilot's whole day. Our economy may be at a graveyard spiral, but there are things that we can do to prevent it from crashing, but we're going to have to do that and do it soon. So that's what I want to take a look at.

I want to back up just a little bit to the days back at this superconservative oracle, The New York Times. This is September 11, 2003. This is really the beginning of President Bush's Presidency, and he goes to the New York Times—and this is September 11, but it's not 2001, it's 2003—and it says here, this is the article: The Bush administration today recommended the most significant regulatory overhaul in the housing finance industry since the savings and loan crisis a decade ago. That's interesting. President Bush was saying in 2003 that we've got to take a look at this finance industry and the overhaul of this housing finance industry. And under the plan disclosed at a congressional hearing today, a new agency would be created within the Treasury Department to assume supervision of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the government-sponsored companies that are the two largest players in the mortgage lending industry. Interesting. This is way before the mortgage-backed security thing hit the fan and the whole stock market crashed and all that sort of stuff; this is way before that.

So President Bush, he's saying, okay, let's regulate these because they're out of control. They've lost $1 billion or something. And he thought, well, that's not pocket change. Here's the President asking for this authority, and what do we have from then in the minority? We had this from Representative FRANK, he says: These two entities, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, are not facing any kind of financial crisis. The more people exaggerate these problems, the more pressure there is on these companies, the less we will see in terms of affordable housing. Now, people who know Freddie and Fannie know that these guys were big players here on the Hill. They had lobbyists that were terribly effective, went around and distributed a whole lot of money to a lot of people, and they didn't want anybody playing in the deal they had going.

So what happened here? Well, what happened was the House—at that time in Republican control—passed a bill to regulate Freddie and Fannie. It went to the Senate, and what do you think happened to it? Well, in those days, Republicans had a majority in the Senate, but they didn't have the 60 votes necessary for cloture, and so the bill was killed by Democrats in the Senate. Freddie and Fannie continued on their merry way, and all of a sudden, a number of years later, what other people had seen—Bush had seen years before—was going to happen, it happened, and we had this great big crisis start. Now, that was all connected with ACORN, the organization that was pushing banks to make loans that normally a bank wouldn't make because the people that the loans were going to be made to couldn't afford to pay them.

So we started going on this track of passing out loans to people that couldn't afford to pay them, and every time we sold one of those loans, somebody made some money. And what did they do with all of those bad loans? They dumped them all on Freddie and Fannie. And as you know, you just keep doing something like this, pretty soon the music is going to stop and there are going to be people without chairs. That's what happened in the savings and loan problem.

□ 1945

Now, what is going to be the solution? Well, we are going to talk a little bit about that, about where we are going with the economy and about what we need to be doing.

I am joined now in the Chamber by a good friend of mine, Dr. PAUL BROUN, from the Atlanta, Georgia area, if I recall properly—not Atlanta but, rather, some other part of Georgia.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. The northeast corner of the State of Georgia. Athens and Augusta are my two major cities.

Mr. AKIN. I yield to the gentleman. I don't know what you think about Atlanta, so I won't say anything about that.

My good friend from Georgia, Congressman and Dr. BROUN, please join us.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Well, thank you, Mr. AKIN, for yielding.

I'll tell you what. I hope the American people paid attention to your explanation because it has been Democrats all along who have fought any reform of Freddie and Fannie. Freddie and Fannie are right in the middle of the cause of the financial downturn that we've seen today.

Just today, we voted on trying to name a committee of conferees from the House and the Senate to talk about financial services, and we tried to bring Freddie and Fannie into the fold, but Democrats across the board have rejected from 2003, all the way up to today, to solve the problem. When you have a fire going, you want to try and find out the source of that fire and put out the source.

I'm a medical doctor. When you have a medical problem going on, you try to find the source of that problem. If you have a cancer, you want to not just deal with the symptoms of the cancer or even of the metastasis—the spread—of the cancer, but you want to go with the primary tumor and get it out.

So Freddie and Fannie are the source of the problem, and Democrats across the board have resisted from 2003, all the way to today, the efforts the Republicans have made to try to cut out this cancer of Freddie and Fannie.

Mr. AKIN. I think what you're saying is important. You're using some doctors' analogies.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. I'm a doctor.

Mr. AKIN. I think that's good. It paints a vivid picture, but there is a problem with Freddie and Fannie.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Absolutely.

Mr. AKIN. The problem with Freddie and Fannie is you don't get something for nothing. I'm an engineer. I mean, it's one of those things, if it isn't there, it isn't there. So what we're doing is we're using Freddie and Fannie to make loans to a certain number of people who can't afford to pay them. Then that means, Where is the money going to come from?

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Taxpayers.

Mr. AKIN. That's the point.

So the deal is: Is it the job of the American public to bail out people who make irresponsible loans? How about all of the people who get loans, who make their mortgage payments, who do everything by the book, who then get hammered because somebody else didn't do it that way? That's the basic question.

Is there any sense of fairness in this? Is this a good way to run a ship? Because what we're doing is creating an incentive for people to do the wrong thing, which is to take loans they can't afford to pay. They put more stress on their own families economically.

How is that compassionate, by the way, when you're the dad, supposedly providing for your family, and you're in danger every month of the mortgage payment, and they're going to put you and the kids and the sofa out on the front sidewalk? That's not compassionate. Yet that's what these policies

on Freddie and Fannie are doing. So we need to reform Freddie and Fannie, and apparently, we're not willing to do that.

Hey, I want to jump forward just a little bit, gentleman. I want to jump forward now past Freddie and Fannie. We've got the whole trouble with Wall Street starting to melt down. We do the great big bailout of Wall Street. Then the center point of the Democrats' plan was the stimulus package. Unemployment started to go up, and the economy was dipping. They said, This is a great opportunity for us to spend money on all the things we want to spend money on. So they spent $800 billion on the stimulus package, which is a whole lot of money, and the idea was, if we spend enough money, it will get the economy going again in spite of fixing Freddie and Fannie.

Now, what do you think about that theory that, if the government spends tons of money, it's going to somehow get the economy going? You know, a lot of people believe that idea.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Well, I thank you, Mr. AKIN, for yielding.

This has been described as Keynesian economics, which means bigger government spending and more borrowing. You've got a great quote there by Henry Morgenthau, who was FDR's Treasury Secretary. During part of the Great Depression, he made this great quote, which reads, in part, that we have just as much unemployment as when we started all of this massive government spending, and an enormous debt to boot. That's exactly what we're doing.

Most American people know—not all, and it's unfortunate. Most American people know that socialism never has worked and never will work, but this is socialistic, this type of philosophy of bigger government, of central control from wherever the capital is. We saw it in the Soviet Union. It is what Stalin put up there in the Soviet Union. In fact, FDR sent his lieutenants to Russia. Back during that period of time when the Great Depression started, which was early on in the Roosevelt Presidency, he sent his lieutenants to look at what Stalin was doing because they thought this was the greatest thing in the world and that we needed to put in place that kind of policy here. That's exactly what is going on right now with our leadership. They may as well send their lieutenants back. They should go back and look at the history of what Stalin did, and they should understand from history that it doesn't work, because it will not and cannot.

Mr. AKIN. You know, I really appreciate your jumping a little bit ahead because you anticipated where I'm going.

There have been some assumptions made by the Democrats about the economy, and the question is: Are those assumptions any good or not?

One of the things that history does tell us is we should learn something from it. Of course, FDR's Treasury Secretary, Henry Morgenthau, after trying it for 8 years, turned a recession into the Great Depression, and we consider it the greatest depression we had. What they did was they just spent tons of Federal money, but at least they spent it on concrete, like great big dams and roads and building projects. Of course, the $800 billion that we spent wasn't spent on a lot of stuff. It was much more of just government giveaways.

We are joined by my good friend, Congresswoman LUMMIS. I would just be delighted if you could jump into our conversation here. We are focusing, really, on the economy: What assumptions have been done that are wrong? What do we need to get it fixed so as to straighten things out?

Mrs. LUMMIS. Well, thank you. I thank the gentlemen for allowing me to join you both this evening.

I thank the gentleman for his courtesy to the previous group that was talking about our policy with Israel. I thought that was appropriate to allow them to finish their remarks and to acknowledge the importance of our allies there.

One of the issues that we are going to have to address, as we address this economic downturn we are in, is the role of the Federal Government in exacerbating the problem.

As we all know, Federal employment and private-sector employment are not the same thing. A private-sector job pays for other people's jobs through taxes; whereas, a public-sector job consumes more than it pays in taxes. So it's important that we watch the relationship and the growth of Federal jobs versus the decline in private jobs.

This first chart that I have shows the Federal Government employment and how it has changed in the past number of years. I'd like to point out the years 2002, 3, 4, 5, and 6 when the Federal Government's employment was relatively flat—in fact, almost as flat as a pancake. Then we get into the Pelosi Congress, and it's going up markedly, with the year 2010 here on the end of this chart showing you that we're getting back to levels that are unprecedented since Republicans took over control of Congress in 1995.

I also want to illustrate what has happened to private-sector employment during this time period. This chart compares private-sector employment to public-sector employment, or government employment. The red line is government employment. This more flat line of the red line illustrates, once again, those years that were relatively stable—2003, 4, 5, and 6. Then the Pelosi Congress took effect, and here the government employment begins to shoot up.

The scary part of this chart is the blue line, which is what is happening to private-sector employment. It has crested. Then from the Pelosi Congress on, it has declined dramatically, and these are the years of the Pelosi Congress. When private-sector employment plummets, the ability to pay for your family plummets. Unemployment payments go up. Of course, those are coming out of the public sector. Tax collections go down. The number of jobs, of course, declines dramatically. This is an illustration of what has happened to our economy. Unless we get this number under control, we are in trouble.

Among the things that I oppose, which the majority party here in Congress is pursuing, are tax increases on the employer class. The employer class includes those small businesses all over the country which are employing less than 50 employees who are unable to borrow money because of the constraints on capital that you addressed earlier, Mr. AKIN. All of these create the downward spiral that we are seeing. In order to get out of that spiral, we have to make dramatic changes in our tax policy, in our spending policy, and in our overall economic policy in relation to other countries and in relation to the amount of debt that we are issuing.

I yield back.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Will the gentlelady yield?

Mr. AKIN. I yield you time, gentleman.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Well, I'm sorry. I apologize, Mr. AKIN.

I just wanted to address those things that you were talking about, Mr. AKIN—the Great Depression, the government spending and that the unemployment didn't go up. As to what Mrs. LUMMIS just so very capably showed us, government jobs are going up.

During the Depression, though, as you just said, there was a lot of spending on infrastructure during that period of time. It did not take care of the unemployment. If you look at the unemployment rate during the Great Depression, it stayed relatively flat. It went up and down some, but it stayed up a bit, and then it fell way off in spite of all the big government spending and all the spending on infrastructure.

Back then, though, under the Roosevelt administration, they created the WPA and the CCC camps and things like that. They put people to work, who were on government welfare, building all that infrastructure. Now we're paying people not to work.

Mr. AKIN. So things have changed, and it has gotten even worse, hasn't it?

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. It really has.

Mr. AKIN. Let me just jump in for a moment.

You know, the charts that you chose actually have a relationship to each other, and you alluded to the mechanics of what that connection is, which is, when the government creates a job by hiring somebody, it does create a job. The problem is it kills two other jobs in the private sector. So you think to yourself, hey, if we have unemployment, for the temporary sense, let's get the government to spend some money and hire a bunch of people, and that will take care of the problem in the

short term. Maybe the economy will rebound, and then maybe the government will shrink, and more private-sector jobs will come along. Not so. What happens, in fact, is, when the government creates jobs, it spends a whole lot more money. It takes money away from the private sector, and it drives the number of private jobs down.

So what you've just shown is an illustration and an example of a failed economic policy. It's a failed economic policy, and we should have known from Henry Morgenthau that it wasn't any good and that it wasn't going to work. He said, Look. We've tried spending money. We're spending more than we've ever spent before, and it doesn't work. Now we're turning around and are doing it over again. With 8 years in the administration, we've just as much unemployment as when we started and an enormous debt to boot.

So what are we doing now? Oh, we're repeating this same foolish policy.

Here it is. Nobody really wants to look at this graph. This is the deficit under the Democrat budget. Now, I'm a Republican, and I'll admit that we spent too much money when President Bush was President, but it wasn't as bad as it could have been. People didn't know how bad it could be. Now we do. Take a look at that. The very worst year of President Bush's spending was in the Pelosi Congress here in 2008. That was his highest amount of deficit in a given year. That's one-third of what it was under Obama, the next year, and this is even more so.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. AKIN. I do yield.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. I wanted to put some perspective on 2008, too. That's when the President's chief economic adviser—I guess the Treasury Secretary—told him that the sky was falling and that we needed to pass the Toxic Asset Relief Program, or TARP, which many Republicans voted against. I didn't buy the Democratic Treasury Secretary under a Republican President because that's exactly what Hank Paulson is. He's a Wall Street insider, a Wall Street banker. Wall Street believes in big government. That's the reason they support the Democrats. They overwhelmingly support Democrats financially.

That increase in 2008, under Bush, is principally because of the TARP bill that a lot of people didn't like. I did not vote for that. I've argued very much against it, and I have been a strong critic of the Bush administration's being big spenders, but they were pikers compared to the Pelosi Congress ever since she has been in charge.

□ 2000

And even that is just miniscule compared to what has happened just over the last 16, 17 months.

Mr. AKIN. It seems to me, gentlemen, that President Bush was Ebenezer Scrooge by comparison to what we've got here. I mean, this is runaway spending.

And this is created not just by TARP, not just by the, quote, ''jobs bill'' where we just dumped all kinds of money into increasing various government handouts and things. It wasn't concrete and roads; it was just government-handout kinds of things.

But this tremendous level of spending then creates the very problem which creates the unemployment, and it threatens our economy.

If you take a look at where this is going, you take a look at these numbers, and you start to put it—these seem like a lot of money. This one here is $1.4 trillion. Well, what does $1.4 trillion mean? Well, let's put it into context.

Here's the context right here. This is a comparison to these other countries over in Europe. This is deficit as a percent of GDP. United States, 10.3. We've got Greece at 9.4.

Now, Greece has been in the news. It's been causing a whole lot of trouble in the European Union. And its deficit as a percent of GDP is 9.4, and we're 10.3? These are not good numbers.

I think it's helpful to compare to the others. United Kingdom is a little worse off than we are. If you go debt, this is a larger term, this is going year after year after year, you see United States here is at 99, debt as a percent of GDP. And you've got Greece and Italy that are worse off than we are.

That's not a good sign when we're in third place to Greece and Italy from an economic point of view. So this rate of spending just does not work. This is a glide path.

I used the analogy of, you know, the guys, the World War I pilots that used to fly those airplanes, whatever it was that Snoopy used to fly. Many of those planes, they would get into that spiral and they would just start to head down for the Earth.

And that is what has happened, is, because of lousy economics, we are in essentially a graveyard spiral in America. And you, my friends, know what the solution is to fix this.

And there was a solution to the graveyard spiral. And maybe it seemed a little counterintuitive, but from a pilot's point of view, what they're supposed to do—their instinct is to pull back on the stick to pull the nose up. Instead, you had to do the counterintuitive thing, which is push the stick down. And that would stop the spiral, the plane would start diving, and when they had control, then they could pull the stick back up again.

And there's the same kind of thing in our economy, which we have to do or this economy is going to crash. And if you think 10 percent is bad for unemployment, it could get a whole lot worse.

I yield to my good friend, Congresswoman LUMMIS.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The chart he has up does compare the U.S. to Greece. But what is really frightening about that chart is, in 5 years, our debt to GDP will be at 112 percent, whereas right now Greece is 115 percent. In other words, in 5 years, we're going to be right where Greece is right now. And that illustrates the type of nosedive that the gentleman said we are in.

Mr. AKIN, could I ask you to put up the chart that you have there that is called ''Tidal Wave of Debt''?

The chart that he's going to put up was prominently displayed on numerous occasions today in the House Budget Committee, where we heard from Dr. Ben Bernanke, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve. Multiple questions made reference to this chart. And it is the trajectory on this chart that Dr. Bernanke expressed such concern about.

If you look at the line of 2010 and follow it through the year 2046, which is the end line of that chart, you see the enormous upward spiral of our debt. This is, of course, part of the unsustainable situation that Dr. Bernanke was asking us to address. And if we do not, we will put our country in terrible financial straits.

So, we talked about a number of alternatives. One is americanroadmap.org, which is the ranking member of the Budget Committee, PAUL RYAN's proposal. It is very comprehensive. It would have a slow glide path to bring both our deficits and our debt under complete control, and do it without raising taxes, and do it without affecting the Social Security or Medicare benefits of people over age 55 or 56.

The problem is, the longer we wait, the more out of reach that type of strategy becomes because of the enormous crowding out of our budgets that will happen by interest on our national debt. Consequently, we need to address the Paul Ryan proposal sooner rather than later.

Even under the Paul Ryan scenario, when compared to our anemic economy, the budget cannot be balanced and the debt cannot be eliminated until the second half of this century. So it takes over 40 years, given that scenario, to balance the budget and eliminate the debt. However, that is the kind of slow glide path that we have to take with an economy this anemic, and in a way that does not raise taxes.

And if we learned anything from the Japanese in the 1990s, it was: You don't raise taxes during a recession. That is what slowed and retarded their growth out of their economic slump.

Mr. AKIN. That's a great point. And let's repeat that. What you just said was, you don't raise taxes during a recession.

And what we are going to talk about here tonight—there are some bad assumptions that were made that are destroying our country and that are destroying our budget, our economy, and just killing jobs in America and creating a whole lot of hardship.

But it doesn't have to be that way. There is potentially good news. But we

just have to follow the principles, just like airplanes follow aerodynamics, we have to follow the principles of economics. And one of those—you just got to the bottom line—is, you've got to ease off on the taxes. And there is a logical reason for it.

Let's just take a look, though, so people understand the gravity of what we are looking at. This is who owns our debt. This debt is created because we are promising all kinds of benefits to American citizens, all kinds of promises that we are going to give them health care and we are going to give them housing and food and education and all the stuff that the Soviet Union also promised their citizens. And who is picking up the tab? A lot of foreigners are buying our debt.

Here it is. Foreign holding of American debt was 5 percent in 1970. That was when I graduated from college. Foreign holdings, 1990, 20 years later, go from 5 to 19 percent in 20 years. Now, 20 years later, in 1210, foreign holdings, 47 percent.

Is that healthy? How much longer are the Chinese and the other foreign countries going to continue to pay us money that we don't have to pay off American voters just to keep them happy? This is a glide path that will end up in a crash.

The gentlewoman, Congresswoman LUMMIS, has suggested that, even now, trying to pull this thing out is going to take a number of years. This isn't something that can be turned around overnight.

And I think this 20-year kind of pattern reflects the fact that what we are talking about is really serious here, but it still is basic economic principles.

Mrs. LUMMIS. In May of this year, we issued some Treasury bonds, and the sale was undersubscribed, which means there were not enough countries or individuals who purchased U.S. treasuries, our debt, at the price at which they are being offered, which means that pretty soon we are going to have to raise the interest rates that we are willing to pay people who purchase our debt.

When we have to raise our interest rates, that means that we are paying more in interest on the debt every year. That crowds out private investment from our economy. That makes it more difficult for the private sector to create the jobs that were on this chart earlier. That is part of the death spiral that we have been talking about.

Mr. AKIN. I would like to yield a little time to my good friend from Georgia, please, Dr. BROUN.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Thank you.

And I like this cartoon that you just put up, because this just shows what is going on here, not only with our debt, with health care reform.

I call it ''tax-and-trade'' because it is about revenue. The President himself said it was about raising more revenue for the Federal Government. It's not about the environment at all. In fact, a lot of what the President has said, he has admitted it is not about the environment. It is about revenue and a bigger government, greater control, central planning from Washington, D.C., and then the war tax.

They are adding tax after tax, and we are expecting the Chinese to buy our debt. In other words, we are spending our children and grandchildren's future, and the credit card is being held by the Chinese.

And it is something that is totally unsustainable. And what it is going to do, long term, is our children and grandchildren are going to live at a lower standard than we live today because this is totally unsustainable, totally unsustainable.

Mr. AKIN. I think you're an optimist. I really do. I'm not so sure that our children and grandchildren will live at a lower standard quite the way you're talking about. I'm not sure that this is not going to create a more catastrophic kind of crash, where the whole credit system of the United States—if your Treasury bill is no longer any good, you have, by definition, just crashed your airplane into the ground and it's going to ruin your whole day.

You are talking about a crisis unlike anything we have seen ever in our history. That is what is potentially there. I don't think we should be overly dramatic about it, but this is really serious stuff.

And what this cartoon is trying to point out is that there are a whole series of Obama policies; every single one of them is diving the plane faster and faster toward the ground.

First of all, there was the Wall Street bailout. Then there was the stimulus bill, which was supposed to create jobs. We saw how well that has worked. The private job creation is in the dirt, and we are creating all the jobs by hiring government bureaucrats who are paying more than the poor guys working in the private sector. That doesn't work.

And then you've got this cap-and-trade. ''Cap-and-tax'' is what I call it. It was passed out of the House. What a mess that is. I am an engineer by training. It is supposed to save us from global warming, but all it is, is more big government and more taxes. Fortunately, the Senate is not dumb enough to have passed it yet.

And then you've got, of course, the socialized medicine deal, which surely will break the budget unless they put in enough waiting lines for everybody and enough rationing so that it won't break the Federal budget.

So all of these policies together are creating those numbers and those graphs that we see.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Will the gentleman yield before you take the chart away?

Mr. AKIN. I do yield.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Well, there's a bull that's in that china shop that's not indicated in this cartoon, and that's the abject failure, non-stimulus bill, as I call it, which has been an abject failure. The non-stimulus bill has been an abject failure, and it's going to be a job-killer.

Everything that this administration, that this leadership in Congress today is doing is killing jobs. And it's not doing anything except for creating a bigger government and creating temporary government employees. It's creating a lot of jobs here in Washington, D.C., but they don't help my State of Georgia. They don't help New York State or California or Texas.

They are creating a bigger central government that's going to kill our freedom. And we've got to stop it.

Mr. AKIN. The thing is, you and I are not talking can tonight, we're not talking about tonight something that is speculative or based on theory. These graphs are ending in 2010. These are actual numbers. This is what has happened, and it doesn't work. It didn't work for FDR, and it's not going to work for President Obama and the Democrats. It just won't work.

That is what is happening to employment in the private sector. And the red line, of course, is government. And a whole lot of that is these census people running around and snooping on everybody and figuring out who lives in what house and everything, which, of course, makes you feel just wonderful that we're putting those kind of government jobs on instead of just killing manufacturing.

Let's get to the mechanics, though, because all of this stuff, it's not rocket science. This is basic, basic economics.

□ 2015

I just wish some of the Democrats had run lemonade stands when they were kids. They could understand some real simple kinds of economics here.

One of the things, we had a town hall meeting back in my district. I thought maybe I am getting too radical, maybe I have been here too long. You know that old folk song you have been on the job too long. So I asked them. I said, Now, if you wanted to kill jobs, what would you do? What are the job killers? You know what was the top of their list? Excessive taxation.

Now, this is a connection that you were making, gentlelady, a moment ago, between the taxes and these jobs going down. And of course part of what you use the taxes for is to pay for all these public sector jobs. So what's the connection here? Why is it that taxation just kills the economy? It's not just any taxation, but it's particularly taxation on what? On businesses. Why? Because businesses have to have money in order to add new processes, come up with new technology, new machines, a new building to do something in. They have got to have some money to do it with. And if you take it all away by taxing them, you make it so that they can't create the new jobs.

The places where jobs are created in America are largely, 80 percent of the jobs, are in corporations of 500 or fewer people, which you call medium or

small size. A lot of them are just mom-and-pops with, you know, 10 people, or five people, or 20 people. That's where the jobs are created. And if you tax the people that own those small businesses, you say, hey, that guy's making $200,000 a year, we are going to—that's what Obama said in the campaign, hey, if you are making 250,000, look out because I am going to tax you, but anybody under 250, you are okay. Of course he wasn't telling the truth, because he had that tax that they were pushing on this global warming deal where if you flipped a light switch, you would start getting taxed. But aside from that, the fact is he wanted to tax heavily the people that own these small businesses. Guess what that's going to do to employment? It's the worst thing in the world. And then there is some other points, too.

I yield to my good friend from Georgia.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Well, thank you, Mr. AKIN, for yielding. And you are exactly right. Not only does excessive taxation kill the ability to do all the research and development that you were just talking about, but small business can't even buy inventory. So they can't sell their goods to consumers. The consumers don't have the money to come and buy the goods and services. So it kills the economy. It's just very, very simple economics.

The thing is we are going in the wrong direction. You talked about the energy tax that's been proposed, that NANCY PELOSI jammed through the House of Representatives here. It's what's called a regressive tax because it's going to hurt people on limited incomes and poor people the most. It's going to make their gasoline prices go up. In fact, I have heard many Democrats, many Democrats here on the floor of the House of Representatives say they would like to see gasoline at $10 a gallon.

Now, somebody who is out working hard today trying to make a living, who is just making the house payment and paying their bills and just scraping to get by and trying to get by, if their gasoline price goes to $10 a gallon, they are going to be just really out of economic luck, so to speak.

Mr. AKIN. How are you going to pay that mortgage payment now?

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. That's right. They can't afford their mortgage payment now, or some are just barely paying those things. And then the energy tax on their electricity when they flip on the light switch, or when their heating unit comes on, up North particularly. I, thankfully, live in the South, so we are more concerned about air conditioning.

A lot of old people in Georgia and Florida and all through the Southeast and through the Southwest are dependent upon air conditioning just to live. And if their electricity bills go sky high, as the energy tax is going to make it happen, if that ever passes, there are a lot of people that can't afford to run their air conditioning anymore. And people are actually going to have a hard time with hyperthermia is what we call it in medicine as a medical doctor, which means their body temperature is going to go up, they are going to get dehydration, and people are going to have a lot of problems. And it's going to make a greater impact on our health care system and people are going to die because of that.

But it's going to kill jobs too. And it's going to be a job killer just like the ObamaCare that's been estimated by experts to kill over 5 million jobs in this country.

Mr. AKIN. Five million?

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Over 5 million. Five and a half million, to be exact, jobs that health care taxes. And what it's going to do, is it's going to mean that a small business man or woman who is trying to just make a living, they are not going to be able to hire new employees because of ObamaCare. We have got to repeal and replace ObamaCare. And that's just the bottom line.

Everything that this Congress has done since I have been here 3 years now, everything, and all of it has been under NANCY PELOSI's leadership, everything that this Congress has done in 3 years that I have been here is going to kill jobs, it's going to kill our economy, and it's going to be killing the future of our children and grandchildren. We have just got to stop this.

Mr. AKIN. You didn't even mention that little small detail of the government becoming the master. The government is getting so big, the government employees are making so much money it's effectively becoming not the servant, but the master.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Absolutely. In fact, it's going to kill our freedom also.

Mr. AKIN. I am very concerned about our discussion tonight because I am afraid somebody may be watching and they are thinking, oh, my goodness, there isn't any hope, things are terrible and bad. Yeah, we are in a big financial mess because we have been doing the wrong policies. But I want to take about 10 minutes, I want to talk about let's wipe the slate clean. Let's stop all of this foolishness and let's talk about what we do to fix it. Because we can do that. I want to go first of all to my good friend——

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Could you yield just a half a second?

Mr. AKIN. Let's talk something positive.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. I am going to.

Mr. AKIN. Good.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. And I want to remind the gentleman that during our debate over ObamaCare we were accused as Republicans of being the party of no. We are the party of k-n-o-w. We know how to solve this economic downturn. We know how to create jobs. We know how to lower the costs of health care. We know how to create jobs in the private sector instead of Big Government. We know how and are fighting to save freedom and to shrink the size of government, get government out of people's way so that they can run their lives without all this government intrusion. So we are the party of k-n-o-w. And I am excited about your launching into this idea about the solutions that we have.

With that, I yield back.

Mr. AKIN. I love talking about solutions, because you know what those solutions are about? Those solutions are about freedom. And that's a good word. And that's what America has always stood for. And that's what we need to talk about for a minute. But I do want to yield to my good friend, Congresswoman LUMMIS.

Mrs. LUMMIS. The Republican Study Committee has a proposal through JIM JORDAN's subcommittee on the economy that would balance the budget in 10 years. It would cut spending in areas other than homeland security and defense, and it does not touch Social Security. I am one of those who believe that we have to protect our entitlement system by reforming it rather than by leaving it alone. But let's save that discussion for another day.

Another proposal, one that I have with Representative SAM JOHNSON of Texas, would reduce the size of the Federal employment force through attrition. In other words, every time someone vacates a position through retirement or other means, that position would go into a position pool. And only those positions that are absolutely necessary to sustain the rolls of government as contemplated by the Constitution would be reclaimed and redeployed into the Federal employment force.

There are any number of ideas. The PAUL RYAN proposal, the JIM JORDAN proposal, this proposal. JEB HENSARLING has proposals, many that are comprehensive in nature that will provide that glide path to a better economy and do it without raising taxes.

So even though you hear frequently that the Republicans are being shortsighted in the fact that they do not want to consider tax increases as part of an economic recovery plan, you are correct that most of us don't. And the reason we don't is because we know we can recover this economy without raising taxes, and raising taxes will slow our ability to recover.

I yield back to the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. AKIN. Thank you for that insight and the wisdom that you have shared with us. This is a graph of actually what happens over time. And this is this effect I was talking about. You know, when you were flying those old-fashioned airplanes and you wanted to not drive your airplane into the dirt, what you had to do was push the stick forward, which would stop the spin. The plane would start to dive; but when you had control, you could pull the stick back. That seemed counter-intuitive.

Pilots for years would get in that graveyard spiral, and they would keep hitting the ground until this one crazy pilot said I am going to take my airplane up, I am going to put it in a graveyard spiral, and I have a solution, I believe, to pull it out of the spiral and live. So he bet his life on his solution. And he put it in the graveyard spiral, he pushed the stick forward, the plane stabilized, and then he eased the stick back, and the plane pulled out, and all the people on the ground went, whoa, that was a gutsy move.

That's a little counterintuitive. When you are out of control going down, your temptation is to jerk the stick up, which is what the Democrats are doing. They are raising taxes, making the situation worse, turning a recession into a depression. And what you have got to do is to learn from the pilots who had before you figured out how to do it. One of them, ironically, was JFK. Now, that guy's a Democrat, and they didn't learn from him. Because he was in a recession and he said less taxes, and the economy recovered.

Then a guy came along by the name of Ronald Reagan. He cut taxes like mad. Guess what happened? Recovery of the economy. Then comes along Bush. Cuts taxes. Recovery again. I mean, we have seen it over and over. Here it is and it's counterintuitive. Why in the world if you cut taxes could the government have more revenue and get the economy going?

Well, here is what happens. And think about it a little bit like this. Say you are king for a day, Congressman BROUN, you are king for a day and you are allowed to tax loaves of bread. And you are thinking in your mind now you have been technically trained as a doctor, you are a scientific thinker, and you have got these loaves of bread, how much are you going to tax a loaf of bread? First you think, huh, maybe a penny, because no one will notice a penny tax on a loaf of bread. Then you think, yeah, but if I taxed them more, I could get more money. So you say, huh, maybe $10. Then you think, ah, no, maybe they wouldn't pay $10 tax. So somewhere between $10 and a penny there is an optimum tax to tax a loaf of bread to raise money for the government.

Well, the same kind of thing goes on on a larger scale. And what this guy Laffer understood was if you drop taxes, what happens is the economy gets going. When it gets going, there are more transactions. And so even a lower tax rate will generate more revenue.

So here is what he did. This is like that airplane. He is dropping taxes here, and take a look at government revenues. Government revenues are going up and taxes are down. That seems like making water run uphill, but it's not. Because when you get the economy going, then a lower tax rate actually generates more money. And that's the solution out of this problem.

So let's talk about what is it we have to do. We have to learn, if nothing else, from the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union had the philosophy that the government is going to give you health care, the government's going to give you an education, the government's going to provide for your retirement, it's going to give you housing and food. The government's going to do all of that. And we laughed. Because we said you can't—that socialism, that communism-socialism doesn't work. And yet what are we doing here? The same thing.

We are deciding the government's going to do health care, the government's going to do your education, the government's going to do your housing, and then the food stamps. It doesn't work. So what I think we understand is the government is just going to have to get out of the business of taking care of everybody and get back in the business of just simply managing the economy, providing for the national defense, and they are going to have to push all of that decision-making down to the State level and let the States do it. So we have to have a good breath of freedom and fresh air instead of the big Obama welfare state that we are doing.

Congressman BROUN.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. AKIN, I am a pilot, and I want to say that you are exactly right about getting out of a death spiral. So we do push the yoke forward to stop the spin, to stop the stall, to get the airplane flying again. And that's exactly what needs to happen to our economy, by pushing the stick forward, by reducing taxes, particularly on small businesses.

I introduced my JOBS Act. My JOBS Act is an acronym for ''jump start our business sector.'' It would cut the taxes for business for 2 years. It would suspend capital gains taxes and dividend taxes. It would cut the two lowest income tax brackets down to 10 percent and 5 percent.

So if you think about it, that would leave dollars in the hands of business, leave dollars in the hands of consumers so that they would have the money to stimulate the economy. So it's something that would stimulate the economy and start creating jobs. And that is something that needs to happen. And it is by cutting taxes instead of raising taxes.

What we see here is our leadership here in the House, the Democratic leadership, wants to raise taxes. Our President wants to raise taxes. One thing that I want to go back to is something that you talked about when the President said he was going to raise taxes on people who made $250,000 or more, that these are rich people. The vast majority of those folks are small business men and women who are filing their sub S corporations as personal income taxes. And those are really not their individual income, but that's how much money comes into their business.

□ 2030

So they're not just wealthy people who are living lavish lives. They are men and women who are trying to make a living and create jobs and just take care of their families. So when we hear let's tax the rich, they need to pay more, actually what you're taxing people is out of jobs. You're killing the economy. You're taxing jobs. We need to lower taxes, and that's what you're fighting for.

Mr. AKIN. I really appreciate the gentleman for joining me tonight.

We, in a way, as Americans have got two choices here. One choice is the path to freedom, and the other path is the path of servitude to Big Brother government. Every solution that we've seen coming from the Democrats—now, we've seen an unusual year-and-a-half. I have been in Congress now 10 years. I've never seen a year-and-a-half like this. This is a total one-party rule. Almost every bill that passes, Democrats all vote one way, Republicans the other, and the Democrats have such a majority, and everywhere along the line they can do whatever they want and they have. And the solution is always more taxes, more government, and more government control.

So, on the one hand, you have the world of the Big Brother government taking care of things, and you're guaranteed that you can't fail because the government will always be there to bail you out, not just as a big corporation but as an individual. You can make bad choices. The government will be there to bail you out; that's what they promise, but it doesn't work that way.

In fact, what all of human history shows us is that one of the most dangerous things to human beings is big government because big government has killed more human beings than all the wars of history combined. Just take communism alone, which is a big government theory. Just communism alone has killed more people than all the wars since the time of Christ, and so this faith in big government is a very, very unlikely thing to put your faith in.

The other choice is freedom, the bright light and the fresh air of saying go out and do the best you can; you may fall on your face but get up and try again. That's what America was always founded on, the idea that government should just protect life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

My good friend, Congressman BROUN.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Thank you.

We have 1 minute left I think, and I just want to say that helping poverty is a very simple formula. It's a good-paying job and the education to fill that job. That's another thing that we know as Republicans. We've got to create those good-paying jobs, and the way we do that is in the private sector by reducing taxes on small business men and women so that they can create new jobs. We will continue to fight for freedom.

There's a wide gulf, just like you were saying, between the philosophies of the leadership of the Democrat

Party here and our leadership on our side. It is socialism on their hand. On our hand, it's freedom, personal responsibility, and accountability, and we're fighting for freedom and continue to do so.

Mr. AKIN. Freedom is a beautiful thing, but we have to realize there are a couple of things that come along with freedom. If you really want to be free, you're going to have to be responsible as well. You can't assume Big Brother government is going to do it all for you. The other thing is, if you want to be free, you have to tolerate the fact that other people near you may be successful. You have to suffer with some guy next door that's made millions of dollars and he gets to get in a fancy motorboat and ride around and maybe you'll feel jealous and even covetous of him. But that's freedom. You have to allow people to succeed, and you have to realize that you can also make a mistake and fail but you can have the freedom to get up and try again, but at least the government won't chain you down with regulations and bureaucracy and red tape and drive you into the dirt like an airplane that's not being flown right.

I thank you very much for joining me, Congresswoman LUMMIS and Congressman BROUN.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NYE). All Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the recognition. I want to thank the minority leader, Mr. BOEHNER, for granting me the privilege of speaking here this evening.

What prompted us to come forward this evening is an announcement that took place before the Memorial Day weekend by the majority in the House, the Democratic majority leader and others, that it was not anticipated that they would be producing a budget. This is my 16th year in the Congress, and I know that that has not happened in the previous 15 years that I've served here. And in checking, I'm not aware, since the Budget Act of 1974 was enacted, that the House of Representatives hasn't put forth and produced a budget.

Just like at home, the reason that a budget is important is that it allocates resources and says what you're going to spend on what and, in the case of the government, what you're going to overspend and are going to have to borrow from places like China to finance the deficit and the debt. As a matter of fact, the news reports indicate that we are projected to have a budget deficit—that's just spending more money this year than we have—of about $1.4 trillion, which is certainly significant.

The thing about that debt, it's not money that we just have laying around or we borrow from the guy down the street. Most of it is borrowed from the financial institutions on Wall Street that we spend a lot of time bailing out and also foreign countries. China and others own a good portion of our debt as well.

So it was alarming that the announcement was made that we wouldn't be producing or the majority would not be producing a budget. Alarming because you wonder, maybe we've been really busy here and we haven't had time to get to something as important as the budget. And then, of course, after the budget is passed, that leads to what's called the appropriations process where the Appropriations Committee gets together and determines what we're going to spend on defense, what we are going to spend on education, what we are going to spend on the environment and so forth and so on. So, until you have the budget trigger, there's no allocation to the Appropriations Committee so they can begin their work.

So it's not just a matter of not having a blueprint, not having a budget; it's a matter of them not having the spending bills in place. Although, again, we're sometimes late in delivering those, it's pretty unusual that we don't even start the process with a markup in the subcommittees of Appropriations, certainly preparing the bills for floor activity.

In thinking about it, the President of the United States, President Obama, he's also charged with delivering a budget, and I think we all know that President Obama has been pretty busy. I mean, there's a lot going on. There have been a lot of things happening since he became the President of the United States that require attention. Some have been disasters; some have been financial difficulties. We've seen Greece go bankrupt on the other side of the ocean. But even as busy as President Obama has been, he discharged his statutory obligation and delivered to Capitol Hill in a timely fashion a budget. Now, you may not be crazy about the budget. You may think that the budget spends too much as I do, the President's proposal, but at least he did what he was supposed to do and present a budget.

That caused me to sort of examine what it is that we've been doing here in the House of Representatives or, more correctly, what the majority has decided we should be doing in the House of Representatives here since the beginning of the year to determine what it is that we have been so busy doing.

It's particularly important to talk about that a little bit because the first 12 years that I served in the Congress—I happen to be a Republican—there were more Republicans in the House of Representatives than there were Democrats, and so we were the majority party and we determined what came to the floor, when it came to the floor, just like the Democratic majority does today. And we were doing such a bang-up job that in 2006 the voters replaced us and made the Democratic Party the majority party.

But one of the central themes of that campaign that the Democrats made all across the country was you need to put us in charge because the Republican Congress is a do-nothing Congress, they're just not doing anything. And, as a matter of fact, they indicated that we weren't working full time. Now, anybody that's been here knows that that's really a specious argument, a false argument, but it sold newspapers. It looked good on the talk shows when people would say, well, we're not even working a full week. Well, you know, some of the work is done here on the floor, a lot of the work is done in committee, a lot of the work is done back in our districts, but to say that we weren't here five days a week and they were going to change all that was an interesting campaign slogan.

But just walking over here, Mr. Speaker, I got a notice from the majority leader. We've just come back from our work period back in the district for Memorial Day. We didn't have any votes on Monday. We've done something called suspensions that I'm going to talk about the last couple of days, together with a bill that I guess we'll try and finish up tomorrow. But I just got an email, courtesy of the majority leader's office so that we know what our schedule should be, that we're not going to have any votes on Friday.

So, despite the fact that the Republican majority in 2006 was labeled as the do-nothing Congress and we didn't work 5 days a week, we have accomplished a whopping 3 days of floor activity here in the House of Representatives after being at home for Memorial Day for an entire week.

I thought to myself, well, maybe we should look to see what it is we've been doing because, clearly, if we're not producing a budget—and we're going to talk a little bit about other things that haven't been occurring around here—maybe we've been preoccupied with really, really important matters that needed to be addressed.

What I found out was, as I examined it, that there have been 337 recorded votes on something known as suspensions, and, you know, Mr. Speaker, but just so the record is clear, a suspension is a noncontroversial bill where it's cleared, usually by the majority who says to the minority, We'd like to do this on suspension. Most of those things are by agreement.

The way that works, it's called a suspension because you're suspending the rules, you're not bringing a bill to the floor pursuant to the regular order. You're bringing it in a way that's debated for 40 minutes. Each side gets 20 minutes, and then there's a recorded