

A number of the Presidential candidates came there and made their presentations, and we intermixed it with good thinkers on policy issues of the day. That was one of the things that took place. But even then, as I listened to the Presidential candidates, and as I have the privilege to talk with them and get to know them, and it is an extraordinary privilege to know these Presidential candidates in this way, I like them all. I respect them all. Mr. Speaker, every one of them, in my opinion, would make a better President than the one we have. I will have no hesitation about endorsing and campaigning for the eventual nominee.

But there have been a couple of things missing. One of them is an economic policy plan. As I listened to the candidates, they would talk about what they would repeal, but I wasn't hearing very much about what they would do on the proactive side. So I even toyed with this idea, Mr. Speaker, and the idea of advancing some of those repeals in my own way. But as I watched the Presidential candidates, they want to tweak the tax policy some and they all want to repeal ObamaCare. I think that looks like plank number one in the platform of the nominee or any of the candidates as they compete for the nomination going forward. Plank number one, repeal ObamaCare.

Then they have their tax cut plan and how they would structure the taxes. But I have not seen all year long a significant economic proposal. One of those that has emerged now that people can identify with is Herman Cain's 9-9-9 plan. The 9-9-9 is a bumper sticker that does get people's attention. They can remember it. It has a unique ring to it, and it causes them to pay attention and look into it and understand each of the three components. Well, there's a marketing brilliance in the 9-9-9 plan. I'm going to try to avoid discussing the economic components of it, but there's a marketing brilliance.

Then Mitt Romney had, prior to that, a 59-point plan. Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry, I can't get through 59 points. What I can't memorize, I can't defend and explain. But subsequent to Herman Cain's 9-9-9 plan, then Rick Perry's 20/20 plan. Let's see: cut, balance and grow, or pretty close to that. I call it the 20/20 plan—that also caught people's attention—to go to a flat tax. Steve Forbes is one of the advisers on it. It looks like Art Laffer is one of the advisers on Herman Cain's 9-9-9 plan. Both are very respected economists.

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I'm one who goes for a fair tax, so it's hard to move me on these other policies. But we're starting to see now the

Presidential candidates differentiate themselves on their economic policies.

But, Mr. Speaker, what I bring this up for is that I'm looking yet for a candidate for the Presidency who can articulate a vision for America on what their view is, what their vision is on how to take America to the next level of our destiny. What does America look like in a generation if they're able to bring their policies into play and lead with the bully pulpit of the Presidency of the United States? What does America look like? What are our fundamental principles that can be inspired by a President with that kind of vision? And how does that mesh in, how does that couple with the policies that they would advocate?

I take you back, Mr. Speaker, to Ronald Reagan, again, who for his entire political career talked about America as the shining city on the hill. He didn't talk about the shining city on the hill that he promised we were necessarily going to have. He said, America is a shining city on a hill and standing strong and true on a granite ridge. That is pretty close to a Reagan quote. It may not be exactly right, Mr. Speaker, but this gives you the concept. All of his political life, he had the vision for America as a shining city on the hill. He articulated it. When we heard it from him, maybe we didn't see it with the clarity that Reagan did, but we knew he saw it with the clarity. That was the vision thing. That is what inspired America to come behind Ronald Reagan, and that's what inspired America to become, again, this resurgent Nation where the malaise speech was put behind us and the imagination, the hope and the robust future for America unfolded from the Reagan administration. That's the biggest reason why we see him as the greatest President of the 20th century.

The next President of the United States needs to articulate a vision, needs to tell us what America looks like, what are our foundational principles, how they will refurbish those pillars of American exceptionalism, how they can strengthen the measures of life and marriage, how they can strengthen the family, that basic building block of our civilization, and how they can restrengthen the constitutional understanding. I want to hear from Presidential candidates how they would make appointments to the Supreme Court of Justices who will read and interpret the Constitution, the text of the Constitution, to mean what it was understood to mean at the time of ratification.

We have a President who is intentionally nominating activists to the Federal courts. It's a tragedy that those kinds of judges would remove the

understanding of the Constitution from the American people. And so far we've kind of moved forward accepting the idea that the people in the black robes understand more about what's written and what is meant in this Constitution than other people.

All of us in here took an oath to this Constitution. Our Federal workers take an oath to this Constitution in the executive branch. Our troops all do the same thing, and many of our State officers do the same thing. You can't take an oath to a Constitution that is living and breathing. You can only take an oath to a Constitution that means what it says. And some of them take the oath and set about seeking to amend it de facto, amending the Constitution by redefining it.

I want a President who understands the pillars of American exceptionalism, who can articulate them and can transfer them into the future as the timeless values that have gotten us to the present; one who can articulate the great, great difficulty of moving to a balanced budget, how we get a balanced budget amendment that will guide this Congress so we can be bound by our obligation to our constituencies; one who has an understanding of foreign policy; and one who has a full and complete tax plan that transforms America.

All of those things are things that fit within the vision. And the vision, right now, is what I've tuned my ear for. And I'm hopeful, Mr. Speaker, that we will be able to hear this vision come from the Presidential candidates and, before we get into January, that we'll understand or hear with that clarity from the next President what their shining city on the hill speech is for us.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of official business in the district.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of a death in the family.

Mr. FATTAH (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, November 2, 2011, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for speaker-authorized official travel during 2011 pursuant to Public Law 95-384 are as follows: