

in. It was projected that we're going to have unemployment going down. If you pass the stimulus bill, it's going to go down here; if you don't pass it, it may get up to 8 or 9. In fact, we passed the stimulus bill, it gets to 9.7.

If you take a look at the other graphs—I don't know that I have that graph here today—what you find is that the employment in the private sector has been going steadily down and the government employment has been going steadily up. So, so much for the first step of economic policies in the administration. That was followed, of course, by all of these different nifty big tax increases. Now, that says something's wrong when you have a recession and you're doing tax increases.

I'm joined in the Chamber tonight by a fellow that is very aware of how these things interact, has done a fantastic job for his district, and I'd like to invite him to join me in our discussion tonight, Congressman SCALISE, please.

Mr. SCALISE. I'd like to thank my friend from Missouri for leading tonight's discussion about the economic problems that we're facing today in our country. And of course, as you showed those comments from Henry Morgenthau, who was the Treasury Secretary under FDR, who in fact not only pointed out the problems of the massive spending back then, but really was kind of prescient because some of the things he talked about back then are still as relevant, if not more, today because he predicted the problems, he discussed the problems of government spending and borrowing and borrowing and borrowing with no results, and in fact with detrimental results because of the damage it's done. And of course here we are today seeing the results of that same failed policy of history, unfortunately, repeating itself.

Mr. AKIN. We just didn't learn.

Mr. SCALISE. And of course those who are running things right now—the liberals who are not only in the White House, but here in Congress—have not learned the lesson of history. And there is that saying that if you don't learn from history, then you're doomed to repeat it. Unfortunately, we've been trying to prevent history from repeating itself, and yet we're seeing that happen right now.

I represent southeast Louisiana, and of course we are battling this devastating oil disaster—

Mr. AKIN. Maybe I should just interrupt for a moment and recognize, gentleman, you have really studied up on the whole oil spill situation and shown tremendous leadership there. I'm very thankful for the fact that you have stepped into what appears to many Americans and many conservative Congressmen as a leadership vacuum. You have really stepped in, and I'm very thankful for you doing that. I would encourage you to make the connections here.

Mr. SCALISE. I thank the gentleman for his kind comments. All I've been

trying to do is not only represent the people of my district and my State, but also to make sure that the President is meeting his responsibility under the law. And of course under the law in this case, with the Oil Pollution Act, the President himself is responsible for directing the recovery, and the responsible party, BP, is responsible for paying.

BP ought to be paying. The problem is the President is allowing BP to still run the show on the ground in too many different areas, which is not his job. And now something that has really added insult to injury is that the President came out a few weeks ago with this ban, this moratorium on offshore drilling across the board, not focusing on finding out what went wrong on that rig, why the Horizon exploded—and we still continue to battle this oil today. In many cases our local leaders tell me, including just yesterday, our local leaders are spending more time fighting the Federal Government than fighting the oil, which is inexcusable, and it's still going on to this day.

Mr. AKIN. Could you hold that right there for a minute because I think you're on something that I think we ought to be exploring a little bit here tonight, but we do have an item of business.

I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ARCURI).

#### REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5175, DEMOCRACY IS STRENGTHENED BY CASTING LIGHT ON SPENDING IN ELECTIONS ACT

Mr. ARCURI, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 111-511) on the resolution (H. Res. 1468) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5175) to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to prohibit foreign influence in Federal elections, to prohibit government contractors from making expenditures with respect to such elections, and to establish additional disclosure requirements with respect to spending in such elections, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

#### THE ECONOMY AND OTHER CURRENT ISSUES

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, I think we were just talking a little bit about the situation in the gulf that's gotten everybody's attention.

My background is engineering, gentleman, and my first reaction when there's a problem is, how do you fix it? That's the first thing I'm saying. What has puzzled me and actually made me pretty frustrated is it seems that the administration is more interested in affixing blame than they are in fixing the problem.

I recall that President Bush took a whale of a beating after Hurricane

Katrina because it took him about 2 or 3 days after he had been rebuffed by the Governor and the Mayor of New Orleans, it took him a couple of days before they sort of got going. And then of course our FEMA didn't respond very well; the Federal response was a bit weak in terms of the magnitude of the disaster. And yet, by comparison, what we're dealing with here in the gulf is it took 50 days for the President to call the head of BP. Now, he had the power, if I'm not mistaken, is it right, he had the power to basically declare that a national emergency, get together a team of people, a fusion cell, get the very top resources in America. They could have pulled that together, they could have processed the different questions, sorted through the conflicting claims and started to put this thing together, put together a series of, We're going to do this, this and this. If this doesn't work, this backup plan is already getting set up.

We could have managed the process. Instead, after 50 days he calls the head of BP and just wants to ream the guy out. Well, BP did a terrible job, but after the crisis started it was the administration's problem to deal with, and I didn't see it fixing the problem. Am I mistaken in that? I mean, that's just an outsider looking in. I'm up in Missouri, we don't have too much coastline up there.

Mr. SCALISE. Well, obviously you've been studying this. I know you, and I have spoken about the problems on the ground, and I appreciate your concern and the interest you have in trying to help us. I wish that the President had that much interest in helping us in the day-to-day problems we're facing. Just the other day I was talking to one of the local fire chiefs who was there on the ground after Katrina, who is there on the ground right now battling the oil, and he said that the level of government dysfunction is higher today—more dysfunction today—than it was during Katrina. A case in point just happened yesterday when this sand barrier plan that our Governor and our entire congressional delegation fought for over 3 weeks to get the President to finally approve. In fact, last week, when the President gave his address to the Nation from the Oval Office, he actually bragged about the fact that he approved this sand barrier plan. Well, yesterday the Federal Government shut it down.

Mr. AKIN. Wait. The President approved the sand barrier plan that we've been waiting a month to get approved, and now it's been shut down by the Federal Government?

□ 1845

Mr. SCALISE. It was shut down yesterday by the Federal Government. Spoke to our Governor's office about it. They basically said it was a Federal agency that shut them down. I talked to the Federal agency today, and they said they didn't shut them down. We went round and round, and of course