I think we'd be far poorer if we did not have a foreign aid budget. And don't just take my word; take the word, for example, of the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mullen, who said to Congress last year, the more significant the cuts to foreign aid, the longer military operations will take, and the more lives will be at risk. That's the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, not some crazy, wild-eyed, naive person, but the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff saying cutting diplomacy in the State Department and foreign aid threatens the lives of our warfighters, of our men and women in uniform.

Or how about when Secretary of Defense Gates, then under President Bush, said in 2008, referring to cuts, proposed cuts to foreign aid, that it has become clear that America's civilian institutions of diplomacy and development have been chronically undermanned and underfunded for far too long. This is Defense Secretary Gates, under former President Bush, relative to what we traditionally spend on the military and, more important, relative to the responsibilities and challenges our Nation faces around the world.

My goodness. Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Iran, North Korea, China—to say now is the time to have fewer people understanding foreign languages, fewer embassies, fewer diplomats to try to avert war and nuclear proliferation when it constitutes less than 1 percent of the budget already? That's going to solve our problems? That not only won't solve our economic problems, that will create more and more danger to U.S. national security.

That is why, while we need to cut spending, while we need to get rid of waste, while we need to find additional sources of revenue, like the unnecessary $4 billion that this Congress now gives already to the oil and gas and energy industries, to do what—$4 billion to do what? To encourage them to look for energy. Well, I thought they were making a profit at that already, the greatest profits in their histories. Yes, they are. So why give them $4 billion in subsidies? Let's use that for other purposes. Cut taxes—use that to reduce our deficit. Use that not to cut foreign aid, which returns probably 1,000 times per dollar than what we contribute in terms of the 1 percent of our budget that goes to diplomats, embassies, the State Department, and the meager foreign aid we provide to our essential military allies who are helping us protect against al Qaeda and the Muslim Brotherhood, who are helping us protect our vital sea lanes and economic lifeblood around the world.

I look forward to working with my Republican colleagues, but priorities are priorities, and we ought to make cuts where they make sense, not where they jeopardize U.S. national security.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 29 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BONO MACK) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, our strength and salvation, You are worthy of all praise because true guidance has been granted this free Nation throughout its history.

Members of Congress, now chosen to make decisions that will honestly address the present needs of Your people, need Your help. Reward their efforts to establish equal justice for all and to make judgments in accordance with Your commands.

You can reach down and shatter any present barrier that hides the vision to progress. You can raise up Your forces beyond any wall of anger or prejudice and set all free; so united they may advance Your holy will.

We place all our trust in You, now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

TRIBUTE TO RONALD REAGAN

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, yesterday, Byron York, in the Washington Examiner, correctly recognized the memory of Ronald Reagan on the 100th anniversary of the President's birth.

Without question, President Reagan stood for policies like lower taxes, less regulation, and a strong national defense.

Having served President Reagan's Energy Secretary, Jim Edwards, as deputy general counsel from 1981 to 1982, I saw firsthand his success in reducing regulations; I witnessed the success of a strong national defense by being an International Republican Institute election observer in Bulgaria, witnessing captive nations achieve freedom and democracy, with victory in the Cold War causing the defeat of communism across Europe and Asia.

Ed Meese was quoted for his contrasting the liberating policies of Reagan as opposed to the Big Government agenda of the current President.

The resources for conservatives are highlighted in California at the Reagan Library at Simi Valley and the Reagan Ranch Center of the Young America's Foundation at Santa Barbara.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

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

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, the unemployment rate last month dropped from 9.4 percent to 9 percent, but only 36,000 jobs were created. Wow, 36,000 jobs equals 0.4 percent.

How did the rate drop so much with only 36,000 new jobs? Madam Speaker, it's an illusion. If you are chronically unemployed and have given up looking for a job, you don't count as unemployed in America. You fall out of the statistics. So as more and more people are out of work for longer periods of time, they are literally left out of the system. Houdini couldn't have performed an illusion as clever as the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

But shouldn't the government of, for, and by the people care about its most vulnerable in this economic climate?

I want to remind the government of the urgency of our economic situation. Send me your resume and your story to resumesforAmerica@mail.house.gov. I want to have your story entered into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to remind the Congress of the fierce urgency of ''now.''

Madam Speaker, stop the illusions. The American people need jobs, and they want to go to work. We have too many Americans who are chronically unemployed, and we don't even count them anymore. We need to do something about it, and we need to do something about it now.

URGING EXTENSION OF THE TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE FOR WORKERS PROGRAM

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, my colleagues, the American people are watching. More than anything else, this Congress will be judged on what it does to help move this struggling economy forward.

One of our most important and effective programs to assist workers displaced by changes in the global economy has been the Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Act. Unfortunately, key provisions of this program are set to expire this week unless Congress takes action.

Last year, displaced workers in North Carolina received over $56 million through TAA, the second largest amount given to a single State, to ensure that they had the support and training necessary to transition into an emerging sector of the economy.

This program is working. We must support the economy and these workers by immediately approving a long-term extension of the Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Program.

CLEAN AIR ACT

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, in 1970, our air was so polluted that breathing was literally a public health threat. Recognizing that need to give Americans clean air, Republican President Richard Nixon signed into law the Clean Air Act.

In its 40-year history, the Clean Air Act has saved the United States trillions of dollars by keeping Americans out of hospitals, in schools, and in the workforce.

The nonpartisan American Lung Association estimates that in 2010 alone it saved over 160,000 lives. But despite saving 160,000 lives and trillions of dollars in the last 40 years, the Republican majority claims this legislation is destroying the American economy. They believe that act must be repealed so Big Oil and corporate polluters can no longer be held responsible for destroying our air and endangering public health.

If Republican efforts to repeal the EPA's Clean Air Act authority are successful, we will return to a time when every breath you take will endanger your life. History disproves Republican claims and illustrates that the Clean Air Act saves lives, creates jobs, and saves the government tens of trillions of dollars. But, apparently, these facts that Richard Nixon understood do not matter.

GET OUR FISCAL HOUSE IN ORDER

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, one of the things that we are going to hear from our good friends on the Democrat side of the aisle day in and day out is how the Republicans are callous because we are cutting spending, and they can come to the floor and enumerate hundreds and hundreds of programs that are so good for America that they cannot be cut and, therefore, we shouldn't do anything to reduce our spending.

We have a $14 trillion national debt. We are $1.5 trillion short this coming fiscal year. If we don't do something, we are going to feel it; but our kids and our grandkids are going to have a lower quality of life because we cannot sustain this kind of spending.

So I would just like to say to my colleagues, I anticipate listening to you rant and rave about how we are cutting programs; but long term, unless we get our fiscal house in order, the future of America is really at risk. And I think the people across this country understand that it's time to take a scalpel to the budget.

PATRIOT ACT EXTENSION, H.R. 514

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

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, yesterday afternoon, 26 Republicans joined me and 121 of my Democratic colleagues in defeating a misguided attempt to extend, without badly needed changes, three soon-to-expire provisions of the Patriot Act.

We must remember that the powers of intelligence and enforcement are among the most important powers of government but also the most fearsome. They must be used very, very carefully.

Last year, I joined Representative CONYERS and other members in offering the USA PATRIOT Amendments Act. This bill would have revised the three controversial provisions we debated yesterday, and other provisions, to ensure that government agents would have to demonstrate a clear connection between the target of surveillance and terrorism investigation. It is that bill we should be voting on, and I ask the House leadership to schedule hearings and a vote on that bill.

□ 1210

HONORING THE LIFE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF GENERAL VANG PAO

(Mr. DENHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DENHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and accomplishments of General Vang Pao. General Pao passed away on Thursday, January 6, 2011, and today marks the sixth and final day of the Hmong spiritual practices which are traditionally conducted by the Hmong community after the passing of an individual. I stand here today to support the internment of General Vang Pao in Arlington National Cemetery.

The accomplishments and service that General Vang Pao has given to the United States are not only numerous, but are everlasting. Not only was General Vang Pao determined to protect his country, but he served to protect the lives of American soldiers. He fought to cut off the Ho Chi Minh Trail so that supplies could not be utilized to fuel the enemy's war efforts. He provided aid and support to downed American pilots, in addition to defending American outposts.

The leadership of General Vang Pao helped save thousands of U.S. servicemembers' lives and was an influential force during the Vietnam War. The dedication and service of the general not only earned him the title of Lord Protector of the country, but has also made him a hero in both the Hmong community and the United States of America.

PROTECTING HIGHER EDUCATION

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, as we look for ways to put our economy back on track, we have to be mindful of the quality of higher education that we are providing our future generations. I agree that difficult decisions must be made in order to guarantee this country's economic prosperity, but access to higher education should not be negotiable.

In California, we have seen tuition increased by as much as 10 percent on higher education, and Governor Brown has proposed a $1.4 billion cut to higher education funding. We argue that sensible solutions to our economic difficulties are essential to prevent this burden from being passed on to the next generation. But let's look around. Our next generation is here. It is at higher education. Students are dropping out of colleges not because their GPA is too low, but because they can't afford the higher tuition costs.

Our future doctors, our engineers, our politicians, our educators, this is what we are talking about. We cannot rebuild our economy when we do so at the expense of our future generations and their American Dream.

TIME TO BEGIN THE DIALOGUE ABOUT JOBS

(Mr. ELLISON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, I spent this morning talking with people at the Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference. This conference is dedicated to building jobs for Americans that are