

Virginia, has said defense programs could join others on the cutting board." But, of course, they haven't done that.

New York Times, January 27: "Representative Chris Gibson, a tea party-endorsed freshman Republican and retired Army colonel, made it clear that no part of the Pentagon's \$550 billion budget, some \$700 billion including the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, was immune. 'This deficit that we have threatens our very way of life, and everything needs to be on the table.'" However, they have not done that.

Congressman MIKE PENCE, on January 7, said: "If we are going to put our fiscal house in order, we have to be able to look at defense." We need a strong defense. I am a supporter of a strong defense. But to take those dollars off the table is irresponsible and inconsistent with the representations that our Republican friends have made.

Those words are sounding very hollow, however, today. Why are Republicans breaking their word, Madam Speaker? Because, in my opinion, they know that the only way to get their conference to support this spending bill is to bribe it with a year of defense spending left untouched and a divisive social policy provision as well, which is what they said they would not do.

What we need to do is sit down and over the next 72 hours, now over the next 48 hours, frankly, come to compromise. That's our job. "My way or the highway" is never going to get it done.

Finally, Republicans showed their priorities in their budget for the upcoming fiscal year. We will have a lot to say about that in the days ahead.

Their budget ends Medicare as we know it. Seniors thought that they were going to protect Medicare. Well, their way of protecting it is ending it. It dismantles Medicaid and other vital programs for our seniors. We will talk a lot about that in the coming days.

And on top of that, it includes yet trillions more in tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans.

We can do better. Rather than using our debt as an excuse to pass a nakedly partisan agenda, we need to take a bipartisan approach that puts everything on the table:

Keeping our entitlement programs solvent; scrutinizing our spending, defense and non-defense, for waste and low priorities; and passing deficit-reducing tax reform.

Those are the hard choices and shared sacrifices that Americans have a right to expect.

NO JOBS AGENDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, the Republicans ran on a jobs agenda; but so far this Congress, they have not done one thing to help Americans find jobs. For 14 weeks, they have been running the House with not one mention of jobs.

The Republicans have put their budget proposal out now, and now we have

their real agenda: a radically ideological plan to protect giveaways to corporations and to attack the elderly, the poor, women and children of the country. Reaganomics drove this country to the brink of bankruptcy in the 1980s. Reaganomics drove the world economy to the brink again in the Bush years, and now the Republicans are trying for a third time to impose their intolerance and everyone-for-themselves economics on the American people.

We need to be fiscally responsible. I think there are things moderate Republicans and Democrats can agree on, but the Republican plan is to dismantle the social safety net of this country.

□ 1030

This is a debate we should have.

Republicans often chuckle that winning at politics is worth the cost to their conscience of being straight with the public. I think we need to let citizens come to their own conclusions by giving them some facts. And here are some indisputable facts about the Republican budget plan:

First, the Republican budget has mostly fictitious numbers. The media has picked up on the Republican number of "\$6 trillion in savings" like catnip, but the Republicans made up most of the numbers of the plan to get there. To create this big number, the Republicans ignored the Congressional Budget Office. That's quite a strategy. If the nonpartisan budget scorekeepers don't say what the Republicans want, the Republicans just ignore it and make up their own numbers.

Secondly, the Republicans' answer to the people in need is to dismantle Medicaid and leave health care for the poor to the States. The Republicans will drop millions of low-income people, children, seniors, disabled, and pregnant women off their rolls. Not only that, those patients that are left on the rolls will get a different kind of care from State to State, and some of that care is very bare bones. You shouldn't have to care about where you live if you are poor, elderly or a child in this country. There are some States that you don't want to live in.

Third, the Republican plan does nothing, not one thing, about the hundreds of billions of dollars of tax breaks American people give corporations every single year. The Republican plan even cuts more for the superrich in this country.

Republicans say they don't like to pick winners and losers. But they pick winners and losers all the time when they give money to oil companies and Wall Street and then push the disabled people living in poverty off the Medicaid health insurance.

And the Republican Party does nothing, not one thing, about the defense budget. Iraq is winding down, Afghanistan is winding down, and Libya will be over shortly, but they don't take one thin dime out of the defense budget. They can't find anything to save anywhere.

Now, the American people need to know the facts. The fact is that if we restored the fair Clinton-era tax rates, what we had in effect before 2000, and kept all other spending at the same point, our deficit drops by two-thirds. That's where we are today. In 10 years, it drops by two-thirds. That's a simple plan that is very doable without destroying the safety net in this country, without going after all the poor and the dispossessed in this country.

We still have to work to lower the deficit even more. We need the right priorities. And the right priorities should be figuring out more ways to save on health care spending. We spend too much for too little results. If we don't deal with health care costs, this deficit is going to be very tough to deal with.

But the Republican plan is to demonize poor people and union workers. Take a good look at Wisconsin. You'd think all the problem in Wisconsin was because of school teachers. Now, that blaming everyone else for the economic disaster is simply to avoid the admission of what they have done. The Republicans take zero responsibility for their disastrous policies and then say the situation they created is the reason why we need to implement every form of their radically failed philosophy. It's cynical. It's ugly politics. And it's the Republican strategy.

Consider what they're doing to seniors. They're saying to seniors: Now you have a set of guaranteed benefits. We're going to take it away and give you a voucher. Go look for some health insurance. And good luck.

CUT AFGHANISTAN, NOT SUPPORT FOR SENIORS, SCHOOLCHILDREN, AND WORKING FAMILIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, my friends on other side of the aisle released their budget blueprint for 2012 yesterday. Let's leave aside for the moment that they're prepared to shut down the government rather than fund it at acceptable levels for the rest of fiscal year 2011. If you thought H.R. 1 was bad, wait until you see what they have in store for 2012 and the decade to come.

It's an appalling, radical, and reckless proposal. They want to shred the social safety net and decimate the programs for the most vulnerable Americans, the programs that they depend on to get through day-to-day life. They demand sacrifice from working families and the middle class, but none, no sacrifice from special interests and the big oil companies.

I saw a lot of words in their budget proposal. But one that I don't believe was mentioned a single time is "Afghanistan." The war in Afghanistan, in addition to having cost us more than 1,500 American lives, is costing the taxpayers nearly \$7 billion a month and is