

that is acceptable in a democratic government. We reject that emphatically and proudly.

We have passed bill after bill after bill after bill that would open up this government, and Mr. SCALISE, Mr. Speaker, and his colleagues have almost to a person—not always unanimously—rejected that effort.

So I tell my friend: open up the government and we will talk, but we are not going to talk while you hold hostage the employees of this government—not all of them, but 800,000 of them—who are worried about whether they can put food on the table.

There are food lines. Our people at food lines—public employees—do we have no shame?

Do we have no moral commitment to those whom we ask to work to protect this country and to serve these people?

What is it that the President and his party refuse to open up the government?

This is historic. Never in the history—he talked about going back to George Washington in 1799—has this ever happened before that we kept the government shut down. The longest before that, of course, was the Republican shutdown of 2013.

It is not a tactic I tell my friend that we accept. We reject it emphatically, and we are not going to subject ourselves tomorrow to the same kind of blackmail or the day after to the same kind of blackmail or the day after that to the same kind of blackmail.

I will tell my friend: we will have a Democratic President at some point in time. And he ought to reject this tactic as well because it is bad for the government. Much more importantly, it is bad for the people of this country, the economy of our country, and the national security of our country.

Mr. Speaker, I have nothing else to say.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, once again, we are in a government shutdown. I could clearly argue that the gentleman from Maryland voted to shut the government down in December before we had hit an expiration of funding. Before there was a shutdown, we had a bill to fund government and secure the border. My friend can say it was dead on arrival in the Senate. The reason it was dead on arrival in the Senate is because Senate Democrats refused to negotiate over securing the border.

So here we are. We could talk about 2013. We are in 2019, and we are in the middle of a government shutdown that could end tomorrow. The majority just voted to adjourn again. Literally—and here is the quote my friend just said—the gentleman from Maryland said: “We are not going to talk until the government is open.”

So during the shutdown, the gentleman is not going to negotiate how to get out of a shutdown.

The gentleman wonders why people look and say: why can't you figure it out?

The President has offered idea after idea, and eventually you are negotiating against yourself when the other side says: we are not going to talk until we get everything we want.

Well, do you know what, Mr. Speaker? In divided government, Mr. Speaker, nobody gets everything they want, but you have to start talking today. The 800,000 people who are working or not working and not getting paychecks—which, by the way, we voted again today to pay all of them, we had a vote on the House floor to pay all of them, and we got 13 Democrats to vote for that. Last week it was only six. A growing number of Democrats are recognizing stop all this foolishness of saying: we are not going to talk to you when the President is trying to talk. We are going to reject your offer before you put it on the table. At 4 o'clock Saturday the Speaker rejected an offer that wasn't even proposed until 4:07.

So to say: we are not going to talk while we are in the shutdown, how do we get out of the shutdown unless people are talking?

I think the gentleman from Maryland and I could solve this problem. He quoted: Physical barriers are part of the solution.

I agree with the gentleman from Maryland on that. Unfortunately, the Speaker of the House doesn't agree with that. So rank-and-file Democrats who want to solve this problem are invited to the White House, but told by the Democrat leadership: you are not authorized to negotiate.

So I ask the gentleman from Maryland: Who is authorized to negotiate? And the gentleman from Maryland says: we are not going to talk until the government is back open.

But the government is not open because we are at an impasse, and the way you solve an impasse is to talk. You can't say: “We are not going to talk” and expect it just to solve itself and expect the President just to keep offering and offering and offering and the Speaker of the House say: we are not even going to let you come talk to the country; we are not going to let you have a State of the Union; my way or the highway.

That is not how you solve this problem. You have to talk to solve this problem. The country expects you to talk to solve this problem.

It is divided government. Sure, we are not going to agree on everything. Our experts—it is not the Republican Party saying \$5.7 billion is what it would cost to secure our border—it is the experts who secure our border who say it is going to cost \$5.7 billion.

Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman disagrees with that number, if he doesn't like the color of the wall or the style of the slats and the steel, if he wants to make it out of bamboo, I don't know what the gentleman's offer is because he has never put an offer on the table. But at some point the gentleman has to. He has to put a counteroffer on the table if we are going to get out of this.

I want to get out of this. I voted multiple times to get out of it and to pay people. The gentleman from Maryland can show votes, and I can show votes. Ultimately we need to talk to get an agreement.

So I continue to stand ready, the President stands ready; our minority here in the House and our majority in the Senate stands ready. But if only one side is saying: “We are going to talk,” and the other side says: “We are not going to talk”, that is not going to resolve itself.

We have to talk if it is going to resolve itself, and, hopefully, Mr. Speaker, we do.

I stand ready, and I yield back the balance of my time.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, is a motion to recess in order or is the Speaker empowered to recess on his own?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Speaker has the authority to declare a recess.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 41 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1600

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. UNDERWOOD) at 4 p.m.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

(Ms. FRANKEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FRANKEL. Madam Speaker, this week I met with south Floridians to talk about the impact of the cruel Trump shutdown, so many sad stories.

I learned about a TSA agent who just came back from maternity leave who had to send her baby to her mother in Massachusetts because she didn't have the money for daycare or Pampers.

The air traffic controllers told me that their stress level is so high now, it is a danger to all of us. And I heard from the service providers of victims of domestic violence who are worried that their shelters are about to close.

Now, Democrats, we support smart border security, not an ineffective, wasteful wall. But, listen, we can debate that at another time.

Right now, we have to open our government so that we can get back to the business for the people.