

that were shoving pork into the bill. Of course, both sides do that, we find out now. But only one side is the one that is preaching about how they are holier than thou and about how they are self-righteous. And it is just upsetting, it is disappointing. Because I think what it comes down to is there are a lot of people in this Chamber and down in the White House who think that the American people are stupid. That does not sound nice. It really does not sound nice. But I think they really believe the pollsters, and I think they believe the pundits that they can somehow fool all the people all the time. It just is not the case.

I remember last year when we went through the Medicare crisis that we went through, the President of the United States had the Medicare trustees put a report together, and these Medicare trustees came back saying that, unless Medicare was reformed quickly, we would go bankrupt in 3 or 4 years. Well, that is serious.

I think of my grandparents. I think of my mother and father, my mother in a week, I should not say in the House, but my mother in a week will turn 65 years old. This deeply affects all of us. And I think I am going to have to apologize to my mother for that for revealing her age. But it deeply affects all Americans. It deeply affects middle-class Americans who are struggling to put up with the bills and the debts and the crises that they have to deal with day in and day out without having to worry about Medicare going bankrupt and having to take care of their parents, which they want to do but economically cannot do it.

So when the President's Medicare task force comes out and says Medicare is going bankrupt, something has to be done, then doggone it, something has to be done. And so, we walked right into that. We, as the Republican Party, tried to do something about saving Medicare. And we know, most of the newspapers, most of the magazines said that what we did was laudable, that what we did was correct, that we could extend the life of Medicare for another 10 years.

And so, we passed the bill and then the President vetoed the bill, shut down the Government by vetoing every appropriation bill we sent his way and said that we were slashing Medicare, that we were cutting Medicare, that we were hurting Medicare, that we were hurting senior citizens. Well, I guess, is it the chickens that come home to roost? I guess the chickens came home to roost last week, because a nearly identical bill came before Congress this year, and the same President and the same Democrats that last year were talking about how we were slashing Medicare voted almost unanimously to pass the bill. And they did so because they had to because now, instead of Medicare going bankrupt in 3 or 4 years, we find out that Medicare is going bankrupt in 2 or 3 years because, as usual, we choose politics over good

practice and we choose demagoguery over common sense when it is time to gain political points in Washington, DC.

It is sad. It is regrettable. It is unfortunate. But it is the way that this White House does business, and it is the way they have done business. And I think things not only need to change, I think things will change, because I do not believe that Americans are stupid. I do not believe that Americans think the worst of other people. I think Americans are a generous people. I think we are a proud people. And I think we are gifted. I think we can recognize what is right and what is wrong.

If we have to save future generations from a staggering \$5 trillion debt, we are going to do that. If we have to cut taxes for working-class Americans because they are spending half of their year paying off the Federal Government, I think we will do that. If we have to save Medicare, if we have to save Social Security, I think in the end we will do that.

We have done great things, great things over the past 20 years. Throughout the 1980's, we had the longest expansion of the economy ever in this history during peacetime, and we won the cold war. In the 1990's, we have had a strong, strong economic expansion. Our economy is growing and we are doing some great things, but we have to continue and we have to fight. I think we have to look for the best in people. I think we have to give American people credit, that we just cannot trot out and say, oh, my opponents hate children, my opponents hate senior citizens, my opponents hate flood victims; because I think we are underestimating the brilliance of the American people.

I think what has happened in the past couple weeks is regrettable, and I hope other Members will come to the floor and will set the record straight and will not run away from criticism like scalded dogs but instead will come to the floor and say three very simple things. The first thing is say, the liberals say we are trying to hurt flood victims. We are not trying to hurt flood victims. The money is still going up there, and we have proof and show the proof.

The second thing they need to come out and say is, the Democrats and the liberals attack the conservatives, saying that they were not going to give the President a clean flood bill. What we need to say is, look at all the garbage that is shoved in that bill. If it is not a clean bill, the parking garage that was put in there and subsidies for apple orchardists that was put in and all the other things that were put in there did not make it any cleaner. We need to work together to make sure this type of bill never passes again.

And the third thing we need to say is, OK, Mr. President, you have been saying for 3 years you do not want to shut down the Federal Government. OK, Mr. Vice President, you have been saying

for 3 years you do not want to ever shut down the Federal Government. OK, Mr. Minority Leader, minority whip, you have been saying for 3 years you never want to shut down the Federal Government again. OK, fine, let us give the American people the insurance policy to make sure that the Federal Government never shuts down again, that flood relief is never cut off, that housing assistance to the poor is never cut off again, that all these other things that the Federal Government has been doing never gets cut off again by passing the insurance policy to keep the Federal Government running that this Congress passed a few weeks ago and that the President vetoed.

I do not think we can afford those types of vetoes. We cannot afford the zigzagging. We cannot afford the mixed messages that we have been having for too long. And in conclusion, we cannot afford to have a silent majority in this House who will not stand up and speak out and tell the American people the truth.

The American people are grown up. They are intelligent. They are brilliant. They have created the greatest governmental experiment, the greatest country in the history of civilization. They can take the truth. It is time for this silent majority to once again reassert itself, become a vocal majority, go out and tell the American people the truth, and prepare this country for the 21st century so my children and their children and the American people's future generations can prepare for the 21st century and chase the American dream into the next century like I was able to do.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Member (at the request of Mr. SCARBOROUGH) to revise and extend her remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for 5 minutes each day on June 17 and 18.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

(The following Member (at the request of Mr. SCARBOROUGH) and to include extraneous matter:)

Mr. BENTSEN.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. SCARBOROUGH) and to include extraneous matter:)

Mr. HOUGHTON.

Mr. DINGELL.

Mr. HAMILTON.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Oversight, reported that that