

national debt, over the next 10 years. That is progress, paying down the national debt.

I am also often asked, what about taxes? Taxes are too high. Forty percent of the average family's income goes to government today. Twenty-one percent of our economy is consumed by the Federal Government. That tax burden is too high, too unfair, too complicated.

Unfortunately, the President vetoed our effort to eliminate the marriage tax penalty on married working couples, to eliminate the death tax on family farmers, family businesses, because he wanted to spend the money. Now he says he wants to raise taxes by \$238 billion so he can spend more. That is really what we are getting down to in the last few days of this session of Congress. We are getting down to some real fundamental issues.

If we look at the President's budget and the Democratic budget, as well as the Republican budget, there is a big difference. We had a key vote last week. We chose between government waste and social security. We made a commitment that we are willing to cut waste, fraud, and abuse in government by 1 percent, reducing the Federal budget 1 cent on the dollar in order to stop the raid on social security.

That is a fundamental, key vote, because when we think about it, do we want to waste our dollars, or protect social security? We voted in the Republican majority to save social security.

What I was very concerned about is recently the leader of the Democrats, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) said, and I will quote, "I understand that there is a feeling now that since we have a surplus and since we have to get ready for the baby boomers, that we really ought to try to spend as little bit as possible." What is interesting is he is saying he is willing to spend social security on other things.

Our commitment is to stop the raid on social security. That is an important commitment, because when folks pay into their retirement security plan, called social security, they expect when it is their turn it is going to be there. Washington has been raiding the social security trust fund for far too long.

I was very pleased to note that the Chief of Staff to the President understands what we want to do. The Republicans' key goal is not spend the social security surplus.

Let us work together. We can work in a bipartisan way. Let us stop the raid on social security, let us balance the budget and stop the raid on social security.

THE AFFORDABLE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, many of us have come to the House floor one after another talking about lowering the high cost of prescription drugs, especially for the elderly and underinsured. Unfortunately, Republicans have simply refused to join Democrats to fight the drug companies and reduce these high prices and help protect public health.

Let us look at the numbers. More than 75 percent of Medicare beneficiaries have no coverage or inadequate MediGap coverage for prescription drugs. At least one-third of Medicare beneficiaries have no drug coverage at all. Forty-four million Americans do not have health insurance. That means they also, obviously, do not have coverage to help pay the high cost of prescription drugs.

Meanwhile, drug companies charge Americans higher prices, in many cases twice as high, sometimes three times, four times, five times as high, compared to prices paid by the citizens of any other industrialized Nation.

An average dosage, 60 tablets of Zocor for high cholesterol, costs \$44 in Canada and \$102 in the United States. One month's supply of Tamoxifen for breast cancer sells for \$156 in the United States and only \$12 in Canada.

The drug industry repeatedly tells the American people that any reduction in prices will cause them to dramatically curtail and cut back their research and development efforts. It is difficult for some of us to take these threats seriously. Who pays for a majority of research and development costs for new drugs in the United States, anyway? The answer is American taxpayers.

The fact is Congress, where the drug industry's multi-million dollar lobbying campaign and operation has such great influence, has granted this industry enormous tax breaks for research and development.

At the same time, the National Institutes of Health and non-governmental research organizations fund more than half of all research and development for drug companies without charge. Then drug companies take the information they patented and they market another new and very lucrative miracle drug to Americans, and charge them the highest prices in the world.

It is no secret what is going on here. Drug companies simply are doing what they need to do to maximize profits. Unlike every other industrialized nation in the world, the U.S. does not in any way tamper with or regulate drug prices. What is the effect? Drug companies charge us the highest prices of any country in the world by multiples of two, three, and even four times what other countries pay.

Who are the victims? The victims are always those with the least bargaining power: those without insurance, those who are elderly, those who are poorest. From a market perspective, what the drug companies are doing is appropriate. They are maximizing their profits. That is their job.

It is equally appropriate that Democrats in Congress are taking the lead in protecting seniors and the uninsured, and to address the ramifications of what drug companies are doing to the disadvantaged. That is our job.

Understand, again, 50 percent of all research and development costs for the research and development of new drugs in this country are paid for by taxpayers. Understand also that Congress has bestowed on those drug companies generous tax breaks on the money they do spend on research and development. Then understand that drug companies show their appreciation to American taxpayers by charging us two and three and four times what citizens of every other country in the world pay.

How can we lower prescription drug costs? We can lower prices through competition. I have introduced a bill that would permit competitors, that would permit generic companies to enter the market for drugs when they are unreasonably priced, whether the drug's patent has expired or not. The patent-holder would receive royalties for being the first on the market. Generic companies would compete with them, and Americans would receive a price break fueled by competition.

The bill would require drug companies to publicly disclose audited information justifying the prices that they do charge.

I urge my Republican colleagues to stop stonewalling. I urge them to join Democrats in lowering the cost of prescription drugs. Let us act before it is too late.

A SALUTE TO THE WORLD WAR II GENERATION AND ITS CONTRIBUTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, every day America is losing one of our most precious resources. This resource provided our country what it needed to overcome the economic calamity of the Great Depression. It was a resource that saved the world from the twin threats of Nazism and Japanese militarism, and then, when that job was done, turn to rebuilding a shattered planet and, when they deserved to let others pick up the load, they then went and took on communism, which for decades loomed as a threat to democratic government and individual rights everywhere.

I am, of course, talking about a generation, perhaps the greatest generation, of Americans, which is now passing from the scene. One year ago my father, Donald Rohrabacher, or Lieutenant Colonel USMC retired Don Rohrabacher died. Just a short-term ago, a friend of mine, Bob Smiley, Robert Smiley, Junior, lost his dad.

My dad joined the Marines in the Second World War. Robert Smiley,