

can tell you that they pattern themselves after what we have done here in the United States.

In 1999, when the then-dictator of Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milosevic, was trying to do his ethnic cleansing of Albanians in Kosovo, the United States intervened and bombed and prevented ethnic cleansing from happening. And so today, Kosovo is a multiethnic society, and will continue to be so. And minority rights of Serbs and others must be and will be protected, and institutions, religious institutions, monasteries, orthodox monasteries must be protected, and will be. I know the president and prime minister of Kosovo very well and know the political leadership, and know that they are all committed to building a multiethnic society.

But problems remain. The Serb officials have occupied the northern part of Kosovo. The city of Mitrovica is a divided city. The mine in the north, Trepca, is occupied by Serb forces, and that must not be allowed to stand in the long run. Kosovo must not be partitioned, whether it is de facto partition or de jure partition. Kosovo's borders must be respected.

The United States has a very, very important role to play, and we will continue to play that role. First under President Clinton, then under President Bush, and now under President Obama, we must continue to let the people of Kosovo know that the United States stands with them every step of the way.

And when I mentioned that they are a multiethnic society, the majority of the population is Muslim. They are secular Muslims, and they debunk the theory that somehow the United States is opposed to Muslim religion, which of course is not true. And these people understand that the United States is the best ally and the strongest ally, and will continue to support them.

As co chair of the Albanian Issues Caucus, along with the gentleman from Illinois, Congressman KIRK, I want to say to the people of Kosovo that we will continue to support them, to be with them, to watch them as they build their nation, and the democracy and freedoms that the United States stands for and that the people of Kosovo stand for will always be strengthened.

And let me say in conclusion, on last February 17, when Kosovo declared its independence and there were flags all over the capital of the Kosovo, Prishtina, there were Albanian flags around, there was the Kosovo flag. But the American flag was being waved more so than any other flag in the country. That is still true today.

The people of Kosovo want to continue their great partnership with the United States, and I say to the people of Kosovo: We will be with you, we will stand with you, we will help you build you a new democracy, and we will work together and continue to welcome you into the league of free nations of the world.

I again congratulate the people of the Kosovo for their 1-year anniversary as a free and independent nation.

STIMULUS PACKAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I just got off a call with Carolyn Greco, a constituent of mine from Lumber City Borough in Clearfield County, Pennsylvania. Now, this young lady, who is now retired, has voted in every primary and general election since her 21st birthday; yet, she has never called an elected official before to voice her concern regarding legislation until this now so-called stimulus package.

When asked why, her response was somewhat heartening: "I had faith in the system," a notion that she is now questioning for the first time in her life based on this legislation alone. Let me repeat that. She had faith in the system, a notion she is now questioning for the first time in her life based on the stimulus package alone.

Mr. Speaker, the more the American people have an opportunity to evaluate and dissect this massive spending measure, the more frustrated they grow. Does Congress need to act? Absolutely.

House Republicans stand ready to work with our counterparts across the aisle, if given the opportunity to sit at the table, to craft a package that creates and preserves jobs, invests in our roads and bridges, and offers tax relief to middle-class Americans and small business owners. I don't think you can find one person in this Chamber who believes that we should wait this out.

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But this backroom deal is not what the American people want nor deserve. Yesterday the Secretary of the Treasury spoke about accountability and transparency. It is time for the House and Senate Democratic leadership to heed the Secretary's advice and instill that same transparency and accountability into the legislative process.

Mr. Speaker, for the past three decades, I have been working, prior to coming to Congress, as a health care professional. And the first rule you learn as a health care professional is "do no harm." And as I look at this stimulus package, I find few good provisions that will fulfill the intent of an economic stimulus within the period of time dictated. Other provisions I find ineffective at best. And overall, I find this bill is harmful, harmful in the sense it will lead to a deeper and a worse recession through deficit spending which will lead to increased inflation, and it will provide a legacy for this Congress of a bloated national debt well beyond where we are today. It enhances and increases our foreign financial dependence. And it provides

for non-stimulus, wasteful spending that will only detract from the true strategic priorities and the real needs that our country faces.

Mr. Speaker, there are 435 able-minded Members of this body. And while we all come from different corners of the country with differing opinions, and I do believe that is what makes us stronger, and unique backgrounds, this is the people's House where debate should be encouraged and thoughtful deliberation should be the standard. This backroom style of politics is not the change President Obama promised. And it is not the change the American people voted for in November.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN JOHN DINGELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, 5 minutes is not nearly enough time to do justice to Congressman JOHN DINGELL's record-breaking 53 years of service in the U.S. House of Representatives, but I wish to highlight the profound impact his work has had on the lives of Americans.

It is not the length of time you serve here but rather what you do with that time that counts. Today we are honoring not only JOHN DINGELL's record tenure but also his many successes over the past 53 years that have improved the lives of all Americans and made our country a better place. Whether it was passage of landmark environmental laws, implementation of Medicare or passage of the Civil Rights Act, the history that dominates the past half century was being shaped by JOHN DINGELL.

From his first days in the House, Mr. DINGELL has carried on his father's fight to provide health care for every American. He has proposed a national health insurance bill in every Congress since 1957.

In April of 1965, Mr. DINGELL was presiding over the U.S. House of Representatives for the historic vote to create the Medicare program. Those who have had the pleasure of visiting Mr. DINGELL's office know that the gavel he used on that occasion sits on his desk. Congressman DINGELL was there to see history in the making as President Johnson signed the Medicare bill into law at the Truman Library in Independence, Missouri.

More than 40 years after that historic day, Chairman DINGELL was instrumental in expanding and improving Medicare, to make it a widely successful effort at improving health care for our Nation's elderly and preventing them from falling into poverty.

In 1993, Mr. DINGELL took the lead in the House in working with the Clinton administration to push for universal health insurance coverage for all Americans. Although Mr. DINGELL