

personal income tax level and it raised its corporate tax level. So, as a result of this, just a few days ago, we saw The Wall Street Journal put out an editorial which basically said Illinois has raised \$300 million in revenue because of the corporate tax increase. Oh, but however, because of the businesses threatening to leave Illinois, they've already spent \$240 million in giveaways to corporations to keep them there.

This idea, this thing that we've been on over the last couple of years of tax, borrow, and spend our way to prosperity isn't working. I remember when the President's economic—well, you know what? In my own home district, unemployment exceeds 11 percent in many of the counties. People are asking me: What are you doing to create jobs? Well, I tell them this: Look, the Federal Government can do one thing. We can create an environment for job creation, but the Federal Government doesn't create jobs, and that's been the problem, because in the last 2 years we've been counting an \$800 billion stimulus as a miraculous job recovery bill.

In fact, the President promised that by this time unemployment would be 6.7 percent. How's that working out? The President's team promised that if we passed an \$800 billion stimulus bill unemployment would never exceed 8 percent. We saw it approach 10 percent, and now it's back on the rise again.

Mr. Speaker, you don't solve our jobs problem by spending more money, because we spent money, and where are the jobs? Where are the jobs? What we need to do is to understand that jobs are not created by this body, but they're created by the private sector, by the folks who get up every day and they put their minds together. They come up with an idea. They risk their capital. They risk their financial well-being, and they hire somebody in hopes that this dream that they have succeeds. In many cases, it doesn't. A lot of folks with an idea to begin a small business are not successful, but then they get up and they try again.

But if you talk to any small business owner, you talk to any manufacturer in the United States, they will tell you that the biggest impediment to job creation is government regulation and taxation.

Is there really anybody that believes—now, I understand some people can argue we have to raise taxes to get more money to government, fundamental disagreement, but I understand people can argue that. But is there anybody that truly believes that raising taxes creates jobs? Is there anybody who really believes that? And what's the number one issue we have right now.

We want to take people, the almost 10 percent, the 9.1 percent of folks in this country that desperately want to have a job, we want to take them from a tax recipient to a taxpayer because they want to be a taxpayer, too.

The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and over

and over and over and expecting different results each time. But you're going to get the same result. When this body spends money, when we spend \$800 billion on a stimulus, we've got nothing but a future of debt, doubt, and despair. Well, I believe we have a future in this country that's prosperous, that never accepts second best.

There's a lot of youth watching here today, but you have a job when you graduate from college, a country that never accepts anything less than being a world leader, and I believe we never ever accept second best. So when we talk about what to do in the future, we need to talk about the most important thing. We do have to rein in spending, but we have to get people back to work, and more and more spending isn't going to do that.

MEDICARE

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about Medicare, Medicare in a fact-based universe where truth matters.

With Medicare, people's health is at stake and their financial life is at stake as well. Republicans and Democrats don't agree on much these days, but most people agree that the long-term deficits of this country are driven by ever-rising health care costs. If you solve the problem of skyrocketing health care costs, our deficit problem would largely go away. What to do is the problem.

Democrats feel we have an unbreakable compact with seniors. Democrats think basic health needs of the elderly should be guaranteed and the elderly should never be driven into bankruptcy. Republicans think there is no compact with the elderly and that bankruptcy is just natural economics.

So the Republicans have wanted to kill Medicare ever since it was passed in 1965. As recently as 1993, Speaker Gingrich said: We want it to wither on the vine. The craziest thing about the Republican plan to kill Medicare is that their plan does nothing to control costs. Despite all the Republican screaming about budgets and deficits, their plan does nothing to fix the single largest problem that threatens the whole of our economic situation in this country.

□ 1030

The Republican plan is to give seniors a coupon for about half their monthly premium and then walk away. If you can't pay the other half of the premium, too bad, no health care for you. If you can pay and it bankrupts you, too bad. Costs will continue to skyrocket.

We Democrats think that the Ryan wrecking ball is the wrong way to go. Democrats are responsible stewards of the Medicare system. Democrats want

to lower costs, improve care, and keep the elderly from going bankrupt.

Now, it's important to keep the debate on Medicare reality based. The fact is that when we passed the health care law last year, the Republicans went around wildly screaming about death panels and scaring as many voters as possible. It was all politics, and it was not true.

The fact is that the health care reform had 165 measures in it to improve Medicare. Medicare is about paying for doctors, nurses, hospitals, drugs. The health care law improved Medicare by helping doctors focus more on taking care of patients, by keeping nurses from drowning in paperwork, by making hospitals more efficient, and by getting fairer prices for drugs.

The Democrats worked with hospitals to improve the payments and, so, saved the country \$157 billion in the hospital payments. The Republican plan did nothing to save Americans money. It just shifted the cost from the government onto Grandma and her kids. The Democratic health care law saved \$136 billion by reducing payments to insurance companies. The Republican plan gave a runaway train of money to insurance companies.

The annual Medicare trustee report came out last month, and it said that the new health care law was a sizable improvement to Medicare. \$500 billion of savings and better care for more people. Those are the facts. It's what any good company would do—*increase quality and lower costs.*

The Democrats have a plan for Medicare, and we passed it in the Accountable Care Act last year. That's why the Republicans want to repeal it.

You've got to understand what all this repeal talk is about. They want to get rid of the improvements that we made in health care. We cut money from one place that didn't make sense and improved care for prevention, for other places for seniors. We knew what we were doing.

But the Republicans' goal has always been to end Medicare as we know it. They have been very clear from 1964 right straight through Newt Gingrich and through the Ryan plan. They don't want to have a Medicare that guarantees seniors' security. They want to give them a little coupon and say: Now go find an insurance company that will take care of you, Grandma.

Think about that.

What seniors really want is certainty. When you get old, what you worry about is: How am I going to take care of myself? And how am I going to help my kids and leave a little something to them? Am I going to have to go to my kids and say: I can't go to the doctor because I can't pay for it?

That Medicare card is their security. The Republicans want to get rid of it. We have already passed a plan to save it.

BISHOP JOHN M. SMITH'S GOLDEN JUBILEE, 50 YEARS OF PRIESTHOOD AND EXTRAORDINARY SERVICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, words are inadequate to convey my profound respect, admiration, and gratitude for Trenton Diocese Bishop Emeritus John Mortimer Smith, who celebrated his golden jubilee, an amazing 50 years as a Catholic priest, on May 22 at a mass attended by over 800 people at the St. Mary of the Assumption Cathedral in Trenton, New Jersey.

The mass, concelebrated by several bishops, including Bishop David M. O'Connell, now bishop of Trenton, and several priests, including Bishop Smith's brother Father Andrew Smith, was filled with joy and reflection, befitting acknowledgement of a great servant of God.

In his moving homily, Cardinal Theodore McCarrick noted that Bishop Smith is an "extraordinary brother and an extraordinary friend. A man filled with faith, filled with zeal—zeal for the church, zeal for the people he serves, and, in a special way as a bishop, zeal for his priests." The cardinal said we are called to "model Jesus Christ to our people and imitate Christ. Mort Smith," he continued, "has lived it well."

Cardinal McCarrick brought smiles and laughter throughout the cathedral when he said, "I'm not here to canonize Bishop Smith, although that may come," and then went on to call Bishop Smith "the world's greatest kibitzer" due to his legendary penchant for telling stories, usually long, no usually very long, and happily, usually very funny.

Once when I was about to give an address at the St. Thomas More dinner in Trenton, I turned to Bishop Smith, seated with my wife and me at a table, desperate for a joke. He gave me two, and I, courtesy of his jokes, had them rolling in the aisle. Bishop Smith's uncanny ability to infuse humor and hope-filled lightheartedness into almost all things is not only entertaining but makes presentation of the gospel to an often confused and stressed-out world more efficacious.

Bishop Smith connects amazingly well with the youth. I have witnessed it many times at schools and at the annual Catholic Men's Rally. Bishop Smith has an uncanny way of challenging everyone, especially our young people, to faithfully and courageously live the gospel. And you know, it never fails. Within a minute or two of being with Bishop Smith, you always find yourself smiling and your spirits lifted.

For the many years that I have known him, Bishop Smith not only radiates the love of Christ, but he works hard and smart. Often I don't know where he finds the time.

Ordained a priest on May 27, 1961, he has really done it all. Bishop Smith has

earned several degrees and got his doctorate from Catholic University of America in the sixties and was deployed as a pastor in the Newark Archdiocese.

Over the years, he has chaired or been the director of numerous boards, including the Institute for Continuing Theological Education, the U.S. Bishops Consultation IV, and the Archdiocesan Vocational Board. He has also served in leadership positions on the Bishops' Committee on Migration and Refugee Services and served on the board of directors for St. Vincent de Paul Seminary, Notre Dame Seminary, St. Joseph College Seminary, Catholic Relief Services, St. Francis Medical Center in Trenton, and Pontifical North American College in Rome. I would note, parenthetically, he made five humanitarian trips to Africa as part of Catholic Relief Services' mission there.

As bishop, his pastoral plan, Led by the Spirit, identified seven pastoral priorities, including dealing with charity and justice, pastoral leadership, ethnic diversity, youth and young adult ministry, faith formation, and Sunday worship. Today, all 111 parishes in the diocese of Trenton are developing action plans to implement Led by the Spirit.

Bishop Smith also created the Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry, which has formed and commissioned approximately 100 people to date. He also updated and expanded the strategic use of media to advance the gospel and the culture of life and created Realfaith TV, an award-winning teen talk show. And he has boosted the Trenton diocese's online outreach to the Hispanic community to protect the sanctity of human life and to reach an even wider audience with news and commentary published in the excellent diocesan newspaper, The Monitor.

Faced with declining enrollment in the diocesan schools, largely due to escalating costs, which include some 36 elementary schools and eight high schools, Bishop Smith's "Commitment to Excellence" initiative established benchmarks to make an already effective education program even better.

Mr. Speaker, my wife, Marie, and I were among those offering prayers of thanks at Bishop Smith's jubilee mass. We rejoiced with his family and friends for his accomplishments that are without number. We rejoiced over his bold, consistent, and compassionate commitment to defending unborn children, their mothers, and the sanctity of life. We rejoiced and were inspired anew by his life well lived.

And, Mr. Speaker, we gave thanks that, while his extraordinary ministry has changed in "retirement," he is far from done.

NOT AS OWNER OR TENANT: NO MILITARY BASES IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from

California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, a year and a half ago, we were promised a new way forward in Afghanistan, a way that would include a significant military drawdown. The date for the redeployment to begin was July 1, 2011, just 2 weeks away. Then last year, the goalposts were removed and it was decided that, in fact, our troops would remain in Afghanistan through 2014.

□ 1040

But apparently that wasn't enough. Negotiations are now under way with the Karzai government—negotiations that are happening apparently in secret and without proper accountability and transparency—for the construction of military bases in Afghanistan. Officials are being very careful not to say that these bases would be permanent, but it's clear that our government could be hammering out the details of an agreement that would call for a U.S. military presence in Afghanistan for as far as the eye can see.

I can't understand the logic here, Mr. Speaker. Why can't we grasp the very idea that the longer we are perceived to be an occupying power, the more resentment we breed in Afghanistan? The longer we're there, the more we fuel the insurgency, the more we leave our troops vulnerable, the more we put our own national security in jeopardy. Erecting permanent bases would be the biggest favor we could do for the Taliban.

I salute my good friend and fellow Californian, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, for her leadership on this issue, and I would urge my colleagues to consider my legislation that would require the President to negotiate a Status of Forces Agreement that would clearly prohibit the establishment of permanent bases.

Mr. Speaker, the outgoing Defense Secretary, Mr. Gates, says we're seeking joint bases where the United States acts as a tenant as opposed to an occupying force, but I don't believe for a minute that the Taliban appreciates the subtlety of that distinction.

As long as there are boots on the ground, and not just boots but large installations with American trappings and English language street signs and so forth, the more we embolden the very radical forces we're trying to defeat.

We're going exactly the wrong direction, Mr. Speaker. At a moment when the American people are crying out for this military occupation to end, our leaders look as if they are preparing to extend it into perpetuity. At a moment when casualties are on the rise, we're preparing for a long-term presence that will further endanger, not protect, Americans.

We can't afford permanent war. It's unsustainable. We can't afford the cost in blood, treasure, lost credibility or dwindling moral authority. It's time to bring our troops and our contractors