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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 7, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable GEORGE HOLDING to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

WHY WE FIGHT

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, the "Band of Brothers" episode, "Why We Fight," reminds me of an experience my father, Jack Brooks, shared with me. At age 23, dad was a combat engineer in General Patton's army. Near war's end, dad was ordered to help at a German concentration camp. Dad and his fellow soldiers saw human bodies decomposing and stacked like cordwood, 5- and 6-foot high, with lime sprinkled on them to retard the

spread of disease. Those concentration camps helped my dad, and America, understand why we fought in Europe.

Today, Washington is in an epic political battle that will affect America's future for decades and centuries to come. Some see a fight between Republicans and Democrats. I see a fight between those who are financially responsible and those who are not, between those who have the understanding and backbone needed to prevent an American bankruptcy and those who do not.

Why do I fight? I fight for America's children and grandchildren. I fight for America's future.

President Obama's five deficits have averaged \$1 trillion per year, the worst in history. America soon will blow through the \$17 trillion debt mark, the worst in history.

Mr. Speaker, it is challenging to grasp trillion-dollar deficits and a \$17 trillion debt. Let me simplify. In each of the last 5 years, the Federal Government borrowed 20 to 30 percent of its operational costs. How many American families or businesses could avoid bankruptcy if, year after year, 20 to 30 percent of what they spent was borrowed money? Not many, and not for long.

Economic principles don't care if you are a family, a business, or a country. If you borrow more than you can pay back, you go bankrupt. America has been warned of the consequences of financial irresponsibility. Greece is further down the debt path than America. Greece's unemployment rate is 27 percent, worse than any year in America's Great Depression.

Earlier this year, Cyprus confiscated as much as 60 percent of their citizens' savings and checking accounts. The Detroit and Stockton municipal bankruptcies risk retirees losing their pensions.

President Obama's former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral

Michael Mullen, warned Congress that America's greatest national security threat is not Iran, not al Qaeda, not China, not Russia; it is our debt. Admiral Mullen is prophetic. In recent history, no enemy has done as much damage to America's military and national security as have debt and sequestration.

President Obama's Comptroller General, Gene Dodaro, warned Congress and the White House earlier this year that America's deficits and debt are unsustainable, which brings us to today's fight involving a government shutdown, debt ceilings, and socialized medicine. No question, a government shutdown hampers the economy. Between 1976 and 1995, there were 17 government shutdowns. Yet, America's economy boomed in the 1980s and 1990s. Shutdowns can be overcome.

No question, not raising the debt ceiling poses economic risk. No one knows for sure how much risk, because America has never crossed this threshold before. Whatever it is, it can be overcome.

Knowing these risks, why do I fight over funding bills, the debt ceiling, and socialized medicine? Because too many Washington politicians pander to the next election's voters without caring one whit about America's future—because appropriations bills, continuing resolutions, the debt ceiling, and the like are the only leverage I have to cajole financially irresponsible Washington politicians into doing what must be done to prevent an American bankruptcy.

It is because, as bad as government shutdown and debt ceiling risks may be, they are relatively inconsequential compared to the economic devastation resulting from an American bankruptcy. Think about the chaos and hardship that will ensue if America has no national defense, no FBI, CIA, or DEA, no Social Security, Medicaid, or Medicare, no NASA, no justice system

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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