

and pharmacists that are the loyal opposition for a free Syria against Bashar al-Assad.

This is not a Russia interested in defeating ISIS for the sake of the peace of the world. This is a Russia interested in rebuilding the Soviet empire and propping up their dictators in the Middle East, regardless of that dictator having killed a quarter million of his own people. This is not a choice between Bashar al-Assad or ISIS. Mr. Speaker, to defeat ISIS, you must defeat Bashar al-Assad. The two choices are not separate. They are one and the same.

Sometimes in my party's Presidential debate I hear candidates, one or two in particular, that say Assad is our best choice in the Middle East. Mr. Speaker, if you would allow me, as a Christian, to say, as a follower of Jesus myself, no Jesus Christ I follow would call a man who brutally murders 250,000, at least, of his own people, especially women and children—no Christ I follow would call that man an ally or a friend in any way.

This is not a choice that is just one layer deep. This is a complicated situation in the Middle East that must be handled with American leadership. Mr. Speaker, I hope that the President sees this as an opportunity to reassert America's role in the Middle East. It doesn't mean he has to send 300,000 troops back into the Middle East. Not a single person I have heard on either side of the aisle has suggested even once another 300,000 troops in the Middle East.

What is being suggested is that, in the absence of American leadership, chaos, violence, death, and poverty follow suit. What we are seeing in the Middle East is a lack of American leadership and a situation spun out of control.

Mr. Speaker, I know George W. Bush has taken his licks for his policy in the Middle East, but at the end of the George W. Bush administration, if you looked at the Middle East then compared to the Middle East today, it is no comparison.

Mr. Speaker, I hope I wake up tomorrow and hear on the news that President Obama has said that America will reassert its leadership in the Middle East, but I won't hold my breath.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DESERVE RESPONSIBLE GOVERNING

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL has described the Republican House and Senate as a "responsible right-of-center governing majority." But how responsible is it that we are about to start a new fiscal year with no plan for how to fund our government? We are hours away from a shutdown, and Congress has yet to even begin budget negotiations.

Instead of doing the job the American people sent us here to do, we are celebrating that maybe we have found a way to keep the government open for 2 months—2 months. That is what we consider a bipartisan victory these days. Now, we may prevent a shutdown today, but let's be clear. Doing the bare minimum to keep the government from closing is not responsible. It is hardly governing at all.

The American people sent us here to take on the big issues and to get things done. They want us to fight for infrastructure, for education, for jobs, not just to keep the lights on. We are letting partisan games get in the way of governing, and it is not only hurting our government, it is hurting our constituents.

Unreliable, unpredictable short-term funding prevents the government from operating effectively and efficiently, and it costs taxpayers money. We are short-term funding, and we are ignoring changes in our policy priorities and restricting agencies from shifting dollars around to meet emerging challenges.

Defense officials recently warned that forcing the Pentagon to operate on a short-term CR would hurt our national security by restricting our ability to respond to new threats. Moreover, a CR severely limits the government's ability to plan ahead or start new projects. That is because there is no guarantee the money will be there in 2 months.

How do agencies manage this uncertainty? By freezing hiring and training, shortening terms for grants and contracts, forgoing maintenance, and delaying scheduled pay raises. In addition, agencies have to waste countless resources preparing for contingency plans for shutdowns that may or may not happen.

Republicans like to talk about running government more like a business. Is this how they would run a business? What successful business budgets 2 months at a time?

What we need and what Democrats have been demanding is for Republicans to sit down with us and craft a long-term, bipartisan budget so we can finally get rid of the harmful, across-the-board spending cuts of sequestration so we can reprioritize and restore funding in areas like education, R&D, infrastructure, and national security in a fiscally responsible way so we can plan for the future.

The best way to do that is to return to regular order. That means offering pro-growth budget resolutions that address our long-term fiscal challenges in a responsible way. No partisan austerity plans that keep the indiscriminate and harmful sequestration in place. It also means bringing appropriation bills to the floor free of ideological policy riders. There is a time and place to debate controversial issues. That is why we have authorizing committees.

I am confident that, as long as we can put partisan politics aside and ig-

nore obstructionist demands, we can get back to passing budgets under regular order, not a partisan budget that fails to address the sequester, not a CR that operates to keep agencies from planning more than 2 months out, and definitely not the threat of another shutdown.

My hope is with the new Republican leadership will come a renewed effort to bring back long-term budgeting under regular order. That is the kind of responsible government the American people expect of us. That is the kind of responsible governing that the American people deserve.

PROTECTING PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

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

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I have come to this floor numerous times to stand for a priority that I have committed myself to here as a Member of this Congress, and that is to stand up for individuals and protect the private property rights that our fellow American citizens enjoy in owning their properties, their homes, their family farms, and their other property that they have worked tirelessly to obtain.

I care about defending the constitutional rights given to all Americans and the generations that will follow us in the future. I fundamentally believe, Mr. Speaker, the American citizens' land is their land; it is not our government's.

Every day, Mr. Speaker, I am getting more and more input in our office about examples of Big Government taking people's property without just compensation and abusing the power of eminent domain. I have heard of family farms. I have heard of homes. I have heard of rights that have been squashed time and time by Big Government.

And individuals have nowhere to go. They essentially have two choices, either roll over, submit to the government and take what the government gives them or they try to fight and they use up their own precious resources while they fight a Big Government that seems to have endless amounts of resources and time, Mr. Speaker, on their side.

I want to put this in a personal perspective for my fellow Members and American citizens. This gentleman is a gentleman by the name of Charlie Birnbaum of Atlantic City, New Jersey. Mr. Birnbaum is the son of immigrants who came to America after surviving the brutality of the Holocaust. His parents bought a home, raised a family, and passed that home on to Charlie. They lived and are living the American Dream.

Mr. Speaker, this is that home. This is something where they have raised their family, enjoyed family memories, and where Mr. Birnbaum is living the American Dream and providing resources by teaching piano lessons out