

debt. Currently, nearly one-third of our debt is foreign owned with China easily being the largest debt holder at nearly \$1.2 trillion. Other estimates peg the figure at closer to \$2 trillion. The effect of such indebtedness is the shift of our wealth assets into the hands of a foreign nation, losing the market for American-made products to a country with lax labor and environmental standards, which manipulates its currency and creates unbalanced and unfair trading conditions.

China's involvement on the world stage is also of significant concern. While it aggressively pursues its own mercantilistic agenda, China lends little constructive hand to creating conditions for international stability. China is seen as an enabler of North Korea, who is actively pursuing nuclear weapons capabilities; and they continue on their march toward more aggressive missile testing, as well, despite the protest of the international community.

Over recent months, as the U.S. and the European Union have accelerated important efforts to curb Iran's nuclear ambitions, China has been conspicuously absent from the leadership table in this discussion. China continues to be a top buyer of Iranian oil—one of the key leverage points of economic sanctions against Iran. At a discussion I attended, a Chinese official in so many words said the U.S. is to blame for Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons capability. And he went on to say, while China does not desire this outcome, we're going to do business as usual.

Africa is becoming a lost continent, diplomatically and economically, in favor of international players who do not have the same regard for human rights as we do. China's influence in resource-rich Africa is growing rapidly—with disturbing consequences. Direct Chinese investment in Africa has grown exponentially over the last 2 years. One million Chinese nationals now do business in Africa, and Chinese energy and mineral resource companies are quickly acquiring oil fields and mines.

In the process, China has forged strategic alliances with war criminals. According to China's Foreign Ministry spokesman, China shares a "deep and profound friendship" with Sudanese war criminal Omar al-Bashir. I should note there was a bright spot this week. When approached by South Sudanese President Salva Kiir for assistance as Sudan and South Sudan march toward war, China's President Hu Jintao echoed the United States in calling for peace and negotiation between the two countries, rather than continuing to back Omar al-Bashir. The international community will look upon China's new role as a diplomatic figure in this conflict with great interest.

Beyond this, an honest discussion is necessary about Chinese industrial virtues. A Chinese official has said that in dealing with "differences in corporate

culture and the degree of openness to the outside world, Chinese companies always take the domestic business practices with them." Chinese companies always take "domestic business practices" with them. Those practices, according to witnesses who have given congressional testimony, include fertility monitors on factory floors, invasively examining female employees for pregnancy and reporting pregnant women to the Chinese family planning police. China has practiced the violence of forced abortions. China also has tragically high suicide rates for workers, who use suicide as their only means of collective bargaining against dire and oppressive labor conditions.

As China continues to advance as a world economic power, it has a choice. It can join the responsible community of nations in respecting the dignity and rights of all persons while conducting affairs with other nations in an ethical fashion, or it can stand by current practices that exploit relationships in order to fuel its own brand of corporate collectivism, undermining international stability in the process.

Madam Speaker, it is my belief that it is important to seek reasonable and good relationships with China, a country with a rich cultural history, a country which is rapidly ascending onto the world stage. We must do so ideally and practically for the sake of our own national security. But we must do so with open eyes, fully understanding the implications when all of us buy products with that "made in China" label.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) is recognized for 18 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WOODALL. Madam Speaker, I thank you for the time and being down here with me. I will set up my charts tonight because I can't commit it all to memory. I'm glad to be here at the end of the leadership hour. We've talked about China, we've talked about U.S. energy, and we've talked about the big issues that are on the floor of this House and that are here in Washington, D.C.

I want to say to folks, I come from a conservative part of the world. I come from the Deep South. I come from the suburbs of Atlanta, Gwinnett County, Forsyth County, Walton County and Barrow County. But I brought with me tonight quotes from President Barack Obama because, as I have said in town hall meeting after town hall meeting, I disagree with about 80 percent of what the President does, but I believe in about 80 percent of what he says. I think if we can come together on some of those principles that he is enunciating, we might be able to make some real progress.

This is from the President's 2011 inaugural address. He says this:

At stake right now is not who wins the next election. At stake is whether new jobs and industries take root in this country or somewhere else.

That is absolutely true. Folks come down to the floor of this House every day. They say what they're doing, they're doing for job creation. They say what they're doing, they're doing for economic growth. But we have a substantial disagreement about what that means.

□ 1950

I happen to believe that one of the things that encourages job creation and economic growth is fiscal responsibility. We need fiscal responsibility in our families, we need it in our businesses, and we need it in our government.

The President said this, Madam Speaker, his State of the Union address in 2010. He said:

Families across the country are tightening their belts and making tough decisions; the Federal Government should do the same.

State of the Union address, 2010, "the Federal Government should do the same."

It wasn't just in 2010. I'm not cherry-picking comments. Here we are in the President's State of the Union address in 2011, Madam Speaker:

Every day, families sacrifice to live within their means. They deserve a government that does the same.

He said it in 2010. He said it in 2011. In fact, go back to the beginning of his Presidency. Here we are in 2009, the same State of the Union address:

Given these realities, everyone in this Chamber, Democrats and Republicans, will have to sacrifice some worthy priorities for which there are no dollars, and that includes me.

Madam Speaker, he was right there in front of where you sit tonight. He said:

Given these realities, everyone in this Chamber must sacrifice some worthy priorities for which there are no dollars, and that includes me.

The President of the United States.

But what's the reality, Madam Speaker? We can put the words back up. We can put the words up from 2009, from 2010, from 2011, but what's the reality? The reality, sadly, is this chart, Madam Speaker. You can't see it from where you are, but it's a chart from *The Wall Street Journal*, entitled, "The Debt Boom." It charts the public debt of the United States from the year 2000 to the year 2012.

What we see, Madam Speaker, is that as a percent of GDP, the debt was entirely too high during the Bush years. Don't get me wrong. There is not a party in this town that is blameless in this debate. For Pete's sake, we were having economic boom times and our debt was running 35 percent of GDP. Thirty-five percent of all the economy of the United States of America was being borrowed in debt. But look what

happens. Look what happens. President Obama is sworn in in January of 2009. You see a debt boom, where we rise from 35 percent of GDP as our debt level up to 80 percent of GDP as our debt level.

Now, again, I can put the words back up: “Time for sacrifice.” “Families are tightening their belts, we must do the same.” “Everyone must sacrifice priorities, including me,” the President of the United States. I can put the words back up. The reality, Madam Speaker, is that the President has continued to promote spending with reckless abandon.

And it’s not just in the debt.

Madam Speaker, this chart is a chart produced by the Budget Committee on which I have the privilege of serving. What it charts is the debt of the United States. We see it on the white dotted line here. And it charts the proposed plan of President Barack Obama.

The President, to his credit, introduced a budget in January—the law requires him to do it and he did it. In fact, he has every year that he’s been in office. The law requires the Senate to produce a budget every year. They ignore that law and have again this year for the third time in a row. But the President produced his budget.

I can, again, go back to the words where he talks about sacrifice, where he talks about tightening his belt, where he talks about what American families are doing and says America deserves a government that does the same, but look at this chart. The white dotted line represents the current debt path of America. The red line represents the President’s proposal from February of this year. If you look closely, Madam Speaker, what you can see is that under the President’s proposal of February of this year, enacting the President’s proposal raises the deficit in the United States year after year after year after year—2012, ’13, ’14, ’15, ’16, ’17, ’18, ’19, and ’20—more than doing nothing.

Madam Speaker, you ask: How can that be true? The President’s proposal includes \$2 trillion in new taxes on American families. That’s true. That’s true. The President has made no secret of his desire to work our way through our current economic crisis by taxing the American people. I don’t believe that’s the right way to go, but he has introduced that as a plan. And, yes, his budget raises taxes by \$2 trillion, but he spends so much more that even with a \$2 trillion tax increase, Madam Speaker, we don’t see any improvement in our debt in 2013 or ’14 or ’15 or ’16 or ’17 or ’18 or ’19 or ’20 or ’21.

Now, I’ve blown up, Madam Speaker, just so folks can see it, way out there in 2022, you finally begin to see a better debt trajectory from the President’s budget than if we had done something. Nine years from now, America would have a slightly lower deficit under the President’s plan than if we did nothing and just left all of our systems on autopilot. That doesn’t jibe with what we heard.

Can I go back to the beginning, Madam Speaker?

At stake is not who wins the election; at stake is new jobs, new jobs that come through fiscal responsibility.

Go back to his State of the Union address:

Families across the country are tightening their belts and making tough decisions. The Federal Government should do the same.

Madam Speaker, there’s not one tough decision made when you tax the American people by \$2 trillion but you spend even more.

I believed the President. I believed the President when he said:

Given these realities, everyone in this Chamber, Republicans and Democrats, will have to sacrifice some worthy priorities for which there are no dollars.

He was right when he said that. That was an applause line, Madam Speaker. Folks got to their feet here in the House Chamber. He’s right, that sacrifice is necessary. His budget includes none of it.

The good news, though, Madam Speaker, is we’re not limited to the President’s ideas in this town. We have a freshman class here in Washington, D.C., Madam Speaker, of which you are a critical part, that says we can do better; in fact, we must do better; in fact, we cannot take “no” for an answer.

Let me show you what I have here, Madam Speaker. It’s a chart of discretionary appropriations. Now, discretionary appropriations, for folks who are in the freshman class who haven’t followed that back in their offices, that’s the part that we have to affirmatively act on every year.

About two-thirds of the Federal budget is on autopilot. If we closed the doors of Congress tomorrow, that money would continue to flow out the door, but not so with one-third of the Federal budget. We call that discretionary spending. You and I, Madam Speaker, we have responsibility to do oversight on that every year.

Look what we see here. FY 2010—that’s the first year I’ve charted—we spent about \$1.3 trillion in this discretionary spending. That was 2010. You and I were not yet here, Madam Speaker. You and I showed up while we were still working on the FY 2011 budget. You will see we spent less in this Congress—and I don’t just mean we proposed spending less. I don’t just mean we talked about spending less. I don’t mean that we got together as Republicans and said this is our idea, but we’re not going to be able to get the Democrats to go along with it. I mean, as a body in this House, as a Congress on Capitol Hill, with the cooperation of the President’s signature, we actually passed into law a budget for discretionary spending that went down in 2011 from 2010 levels.

And guess what? We didn’t stop there, Madam Speaker. As you know, we passed another set of appropriations bills that took spending down even further. From 2011 levels, we went down further in 2012. And guess what? This

freshman class, we’re not done yet. This House leadership, they’re not done yet. For 2013, we are on track to reduce spending—I don’t mean reduce rates of growth. I don’t mean reduce projected increases. I mean reduce the actual dollars going out the door for a third year in a row. The third year in a row. It’s unprecedented. It hadn’t happened since World War II. It’s happened because the American people said we have to do better. It happened because the American people said we can’t just talk about it; we have to do it.

But I’ve got some bad news, Madam Speaker. We’re going to keep working on this discretionary spending side of the ledger. We’re going to keep trying to drive those numbers down. But that’s not where the real spending is. As I said a few minutes ago, that’s only one-third of the budget. Two-thirds of the budget is on autopilot.

I have it up here, Madam Speaker. In yellow, you see what they call mandatory spending. That’s the autopilot money. Again, you could close the White House tomorrow, you could close the Congress tomorrow, this money still flows out the door. If we’re going to stop it, we have to act affirmatively to stop it.

This little piece of the pie up here is the defense part. You would think that national security is one of the biggest things we spend money on around here. Madam Speaker, it’s down to less than 20 percent of the money that goes out the door in Washington, D.C. goes towards national security. This 17 percent here is everything else, everything else that’s in that discretionary budget. The 63 percent, 64 percent, so says the Congressional Budget Office, this is the mandatory spending that’s on autopilot.

□ 2000

I have it displayed here in a slightly different way. The red bar represents our discretionary spending. And you can see that discretionary spending, as a percentage of the budget, has been in decline each and every year since 1962. Now, those aren’t actual dollars going down, that’s just a share of what we do in Washington, D.C. It’s been this Congress that’s brought the actual dollars down, as I said, for the first time since World War II.

But over time we’ve had a shift in this country. Discretionary spending has declined as a percentage of what we do, and this out-of-control mandatory spending, this autopilot spending is increasing. What are we going to do about that?

There’s not enough time tonight, Madam Speaker, to get into the details. But I encourage all of our colleagues, Madam Speaker, and I hope you will help me to encourage them, to keep an eye out on what’s coming down the road, because what’s coming down the road in this body is a process called reconciliation. And I put to you that we haven’t had a real reconciliation process in this House. In 1997, Republicans in the House and Senate, and a

Democrat in the White House, came together to pass the biggest spending reduction bill that we'd had in our lifetime prior to this point.

We can't balance the budget on the discretionary spending side of the ledger alone. As you know, Madam Speaker, if we zeroed out everything—and I mean everything. I don't mean cut by 5 percent, I don't mean cut by 10 percent, I mean zeroed out everything except Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, interest on the national debt, those mandatory spending programs that I'm talking about, those autopilot programs, if we zeroed out everything else, the budget still wouldn't be balanced. That's how far out of whack we are. And that's how big those categories are.

We're going to do something that hasn't been done since 1997 and that is, go through reconciliation, where we ask the committees of this House, we go back to our communities and ask in town hall meetings, what can we do on that mandatory spending side of the ledger to tighten our belts, to do better to provide more bang for their buck to the American taxpayers.

Those bills are going to start coming to the floor in the month of May, for the first time since 1997, in a serious way. Now, it's going to be a small process at first. We're talking about just the amount of money to cover some of our necessary defense spending needs. But we're going to start to talk about priorities here. And when I say talk about, I mean legislate on.

Madam Speaker, the talking has already been done. "Every day families sacrifice to live within their means. They deserve a government that does the same." President Barack Obama, 2011.

"Families across the country are tightening their belts and making tough decisions. The Federal Government should do the same." President Obama 2010.

At stake right now is not who wins the election. At stake is whether new jobs and industry take root in this country or not. Madam Speaker, we are bankrupting this country. We are bankrupting this country. We have doubled, doubled the annual spending deficits that we've seen in this country. We've seen the public debt of this Nation increase by 50 percent in the last 3½ years. And that was with the efforts of the most conservative U.S. House of Representatives we've seen in our lifetime. That was with the efforts of this U.S. House of Representatives that has cut spending, not 1 year in a row, not 2 years in a row, but 3 years in a row.

Madam Speaker, the good ship United States of America is in troubled waters. The President is saying all the right things. I come to the floor here tonight, Madam Speaker, to ask you to encourage him to do the right things. Join this U.S. House of Representatives, join these 100 new Democrat and freshman Members in this body as we

try to do something that hasn't been done since 1997, and that's take programs off of autopilot and make sure that every dollar leaving this institution is doing the very best that it can for the hardworking American taxpayers that have entrusted us to spend it.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for being here and yielding me this time this evening.

I yield back the balance of my time.

OUR FRIEND IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, there's a lot going on in the world these days. I had an interesting trip to Afghanistan this weekend, a country into which we are pouring billions and billions of dollars and have military there that is keeping President Karzai in office.

And he's a very grateful man. That was demonstrated when he told our government, this Obama administration, that DANA ROHRBACHER, my very dear friend, one of the greatest patriots I know, would not be allowed into Afghanistan, as if he had that power, because he had been very critical of President Karzai.

So we're spending billions and billions of dollars so that a cantankerous President of Afghanistan, who is only there because of the lives and treasure that Americans have sacrificed, can turn around and tell Americans, we don't want Members of Congress that actually control the purse strings to money flowing into this country, we don't want them here. It was rather interesting.

And as might be expected, President Karzai had his facts entirely wrong. He was representing that Representative ROHRBACHER had a bill that was attempting to partition, divide up Afghanistan. Entirely wrong. I knew that because I assisted with the bill and co-sponsored it, proudly, because it was a resolution that basically was encouraging Afghanistan to allow elections of their regional governors. It encouraged elections.

Somehow President Karzai found this very offensive, as a threat to him. And I can see it from his standpoint. If one puts one's self in his position, you realize, gee, I'm President Karzai. I get to appoint every regional governor. And gee, that would be a system, like ancient Rome, where you would be appointed to be governor, but you had to kick back to Caesar in order to keep your seat. Interesting.

That is a plan fraught with the potential for corruption. That's one of the reasons that DANA and I, and so many others, think it would be a good idea, help strengthen the country, if the people in the various regions were able to elect their governors.

President Karzai not only appoints the governors, he appoints the mayors. They don't get to elect them. He appoints them. You want to be a mayor of a city, you better go suck up to President Karzai because he's going to make the appointment.

If you would like to be the chief of police, don't worry with some local city council in Afghanistan. Don't worry with the governor. You'll be appointed, that's right, by President Karzai.

We're told by Afghans that actually it goes so much further than that. He even appoints many of the teachers. You want to be a teacher at an upper level? Afghans tell me that he appoints them as well.

President Karzai gets to appoint a slate of potential legislators. He has tremendous control of the purse strings in Afghanistan, not someone to be countered with, you would think, unless perhaps you're from a government that assists the government of Afghanistan in meeting its budget needs.

□ 2010

As I understand it, Afghanistan has a budget of \$12.5 billion. As I understand it, Afghanistan provides \$1.5 billion of that \$12.5 billion budget. That's all the revenue—taxes, fees, all kinds of things. That's the extent of their revenue.

Gee, what would happen to President Karzai if all of a sudden this Congress did what the 1974 Democratic-controlled Congress did when, without any regard for those who had fought with us in Vietnam and in Southeast Asia, every penny was just completely shut off, when every penny being spent in Vietnam back in '74 was cut off? What happened after we left was an absolute horrible bloodbath of those who had assisted the United States in any way.

So I don't think this Congress will be as abrupt as the Democratic Congress was in 1974, but it certainly has the ability to do that. The difference is, I think, there are enough people in this Congress who realize, unless we empower those who fought the Taliban in late 2001, after 9/11, and in early 2002 when they basically routed the Taliban with U.S.-embedded support and air support, unless we empower those allies by allowing them to elect their own regional governors, by allowing them to elect their mayors, taking some of the power away from a central administration where, regardless of whether or not reports may or may not be accurate about corruption at the highest level, then there is certainly corruption in Afghanistan.

It is also interesting that this administration refuses to replace the inspector general, who is supposed to supervise and audit the money that's going into Afghanistan. Surely, that couldn't be because it's an election year. Surely, that couldn't be because, if we had somebody actually monitoring where all of the billions of dollars were pouring into Afghanistan are going, the report would indicate widespread corruption, which would reflect poorly on this