

including China, when I was first elected to this Congress in late 2002, a lot of debt to have built up since the founding of our country.

But how about this number, \$7.775 trillion, our total debt today? Yes. In just the 28 months since I was first elected to this Congress, we have seen a 25 percent increase in national debt.

But wait a minute, if that is not bad enough try this one, \$8.184 trillion, the current maximum permissible debt of our country. The debt ceiling has increased for a third time in as many years, voted on by this Congress or at least by a majority, and a majority that did not include me, just a few months ago, currently estimated to be reached and breached in January 2006. An increase in our total national debt of 32 percent in just the 3 years since I joined this Congress.

But wait. In the budget resolution for 2006, just passed on this floor 6 days ago, over the objection of every Member of the minority party and 15 Members of the majority, hidden in that resolution, glossed over, buried, shunned, avoided, turned away from, concealed, an automatic authority to increase our debt ceiling a fourth time in as many years to \$8.965 trillion.

When might we reach that total debt, bump up against that debt ceiling at the rate we are going and why is it so crucial to pass another debt ceiling bump way before we are even close to the ceiling we just bumped up against? When? Late 2006, most likely December 2006, after the 2006 election. Coincidence? I surely doubt it. Can it be that our colleagues cannot stomach another ceiling increase in mid-election?

When we reach that level of debt, there will have been added to the debt load we all face \$2.767 trillion, a 45 percent increase in just 4 years since I joined this House.

This administration and its supporters in Congress would have us believe this is normal, that this debt is in balance with our gross domestic product, with our collective ability to pay it, or that this debt is because of our commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan. Well, let us strip both of those arguments down.

First, total debt increase over the past 4 years, almost \$3 trillion total. Cost of Iraq in the same time period, almost \$300 billion, 10 percent of total debt increase. So clearly that is not the reason.

What about this gross domestic product argument? This is from the President's own budget, and it shows total Federal debt as a percentage of gross domestic product, in other words, the ability of our economy to carry the load, and that total Federal debt percentage of our gross domestic product will hit 68 percent in 2008 under the President's own budget. Guess when the last time that percentage was that high? Couple of years ago? No. Couple of decades ago? 1955, after a full 10 years, 15 years, of war and Cold War and war again. So, clearly, that is not the reason.

This debt is completely unusual. This debt is completely out of control. Something is wrong. Something is terribly wrong, and do not let anyone lie to you about it.

The first step towards addressing any crisis, and this is the crisis of our time, is to know you have one, to look yourself in the mirror and say, yes, I have a problem. Then you can get to work. So let us quit letting ourselves be fooled and get to work.

The House Blue Dog Coalition is way past being fooled, way, way past being fooled. We are at work and we welcome the participation of anybody who realizes that this is the crisis of our time.

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#### DEFICIT AND DEBT CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. INGALLIS of South Carolina). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COOPER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, I join my fellow Blue Dog, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. CASE), in speaking about the deficit and debt crisis that our Nation faces. He gave a lot of stunning numbers. Let me put it on a time line.

What are the milestones that we are facing as a Nation? First, the year 2004, the year past, the Comptroller General of the United States, David A. Walker, said that arguably it was the worst year in American fiscal history, clearly setting our Nation on an unsustainable path. Those are tough words, and they are from our Nation's leading auditor. Arguably the worst year in American fiscal history.

Our history goes back many, many decades, and it stretches through periods of trial and turmoil, like World War II, the Civil War, and other conflicts. Yet the year 2004 was the worst year in American fiscal history according to the Comptroller General.

Now, in 2005, what has happened in our budget and deficit this year? The House Republican majority ran through last week on Thursday night, under a so-called martial law rule, the entire budget of the United States of America, \$2.6 trillion. And from start to finish, from first time to look at the budget to final passage in this body was no more than 2 to 3 hours of time. Literally, no one in this body had any clue what was in the budget because no one can read a document of that complexity in that short amount of time, especially under a martial law rule.

Let us look forward. By the last year of the Bush administration, by the year 2008-2009, we will be spending, according to the House Republican budget, more money on interest payments to the creditors of our Nation than we will be spending on all regular government in America. Let me repeat that: more money will go to creditors of our Nation, bond holders, than to the citizens of our Nation in regular government, at least in the form of domestic,

nondefense discretionary spending. That is a tipping point. That is an outrage. And that is the result of profligate Republican spending policies, the latest evidence of which is in this Cato Institute report that came out on May 3, 2005, that says the Bush administration is the worst spending administration since Lyndon Baines Johnson.

Let us look forward. The Wall Street Journal reported about a month ago that if current trends continue, the last living U.S. bond holder will sell his or her holding to the People's Bank of China on February 9, 2012. Then the Chinese will own virtually all of our foreign-held debt. That is not a good situation for the security of our Nation, either defense security or fiscal security.

Let us look forward again. The year 2017. That is the year in which the Social Security surpluses will run to zero, and that will be the first year in modern times that the American people will get an honest picture of the size of the Federal budget deficit. Because no longer will the Social Security surplus be able to be used to hide the true size of the Federal deficit. For example, in 2004, most folks, most experts think the deficit was \$412 billion. Wrong. The real deficit was \$567 billion, or \$155 billion larger than is represented, because our government has used the Social Security surplus to hide the true size of it.

Let us look forward again. By the year 2040, only 35 years from now, if current trends continue, the Comptroller General of the United States says that it will take all revenues collected by the Federal Government, every dime collected in taxes from our people, just to pay interest on our debt. This is a truly stunning finding of the GAO, because it indicates that there will be no money left by the year 2040 for any national defense, any Social Security, any Medicare, any money to meet the needs of our people.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, that is an unsustainable path. Clearly, I think we need Presidential leadership. Because being practical, even though we have a strong package of Blue Dog budget deficit reforms, even though both parties should come together, it is hard for a group of 435 in this body or 100 people in the other body to exert the leadership that the President should be demonstrating. But the President has vetoed no legislation during his entire Presidency. He has not disciplined Congress in any way. He is the first President since James Garfield in 1881 to fail to veto a single measure of this body. President Garfield was only in office for 6 months before he died. President Bush has been in office for 5 years now.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to focus on the deficit and debt crisis that this Nation faces.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. TANNER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

**REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST THE CONFERENCE REPORT TO ACCOMPANY H.R. 1268, EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR DEFENSE, THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR, AND TSUNAMI RELIEF ACT, 2005**

Mr. DREIER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109-73) on the resolution (H. Res. 258) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 1268) making Emergency Supplemental Appropriations For Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

**DRUG SAFETY**

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, I come here tonight concerned about drug safety and to speak out to protect our children from the acne drug Accutane, manufactured by Hoffman-LaRoche. As a legislator, I have called for more restrictions on the distribution and use of this drug, which is known to cause severe birth defects and a form of impulsive behavior and depression in young people taking this drug.

This drug has devastated my family, with the loss of our son BJ, and more than 268 other families who have lost a son or daughter while he or she was taking the drug Accutane.

Recent news stories have quoted an FDA safety reviewer, Dr. David Graham, when he spoke before the Senate Committee on Finance. Dr. Graham said: "I would argue that the FDA as currently configured is incapable of protecting America against another Vioxx." He told the Senate Committee on Finance that "there are at least five other drugs on the market today that should be looked at seriously to see whether they should remain on the market." He cited the acne drug Accutane.

Why Accutane? Accutane is the post-er child for why we need an independent body to approve and review drug safety. Accutane causes horrendous birth defects and causes psy-

chiatric disorders such as depression and suicide. It is linked to 268 suicides, according to the FDA.

A recent study by Dr. J. Douglas Bremner, and published this month in the American Journal of Psychiatry, demonstrates how Accutane affects the brain, possibly causing impulsive behavior due to changes in the orbital frontal cortex. This is the front part of the brain. This is the area known to mediate depression.

As Dr. Bremner demonstrates in this study, as we see in this PET scan here, there is a decrease in the metabolism or function of the brain. This PET scan establishes a baseline of a person before they start Accutane. Notice the red activity in the brain. The second PET scan is of the same person 4 months later on Accutane. Notice the first PET scan from the second PET scan. The red color, after 4 months on Accutane, is missing, representing a decrease in brain activity in the frontal part of the brain.

In the second PET scan, here, notice again very little or no red, representing decreased brain activity, in the same person after 4 months of Accutane treatment. Accutane decreases the metabolism or brain function in the front part of our brain.

In this one slide that Dr. Bremner has shared with us, there is a 20 percent decrease in brain metabolism or function. This decrease in brain function only occurred in some Accutane patients. Dr. Bremner did PET scans with other patients taking oral antibiotics for acne and none showed any brain changes.

It is not all Accutane patients who demonstrate a brain change, just those who complain of headaches. Is the excessive dosage found in the current formula of Accutane that is prescribed to our young people the cause for the change in the brain that we see? The medical evidence is clear that Accutane causes changes in the brain, and this may be what leads some young people to take their own life through impulsive behavior.

Let us join with Dr. Graham, the CDC, and other health care groups who have expressed strong concerns about the safety of this drug, and who have called for Accutane to be withdrawn from the market as far back as 1990. Let us pull this drug Accutane from the market until we have all the answers surrounding this powerful drug.

At the very least, the FDA should immediately require a large-scale review and a study on the drug's effects on the human brain. Is this decreased metabolism we see here reversible? Will the brain repair itself? What amount or what dose of Accutane is safe? What amount of Accutane can be safely taken by young people so that the brain is not affected? Has the FDA done enough to protect our children from the side effects of this drug? Has the FDA seriously looked at Dr. Bremner's study and similar studies in animal testing, which also dem-

onstrated that Accutane harms the brain?

It has been 7 or 8 months now since I have shared this information with the head of the FDA, Dr. Crawford. We still have had no response to our concerns. It is time for all of us to join together to protect our children. It is time to withdraw Accutane from the market until all of our important safety questions are answered.

**IMPENDING CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS IN U.S. SENATE**

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to address the House. This issue before us in this discussion this evening, Mr. Speaker, is the issue of an impending constitutional crisis that I believe is taking place over in the other body, and it is something that has been dealt with and worked with and rolled around by the Senate with regard to the confirmation of the President's appointments to the judicial branch of government. It is an unprecedented use of the Senate rules with regard to filibusters.

About 2½ years ago, something like that, this process began, and it began with a gentleman that was appointed to the D.C. Court of Appeals. His name was Miguel Estrada, a very, very highly qualified individual, an immigrant from Honduras, someone who English was his second language. He learned that, studied hard, and worked his way up through the process. He was very, very highly qualified.

But as highly qualified as he was, he was also apparently a political threat to the minority on the other side, Mr. Speaker. So Miguel Estrada hung on the vine because of this unprecedented utilization of the Senate rules called filibuster, requiring 60 votes to gain cloture so that they could go to a vote on the floor of the Senate.

In the history of this country, Mr. Speaker, there has never been, until these last 2 to 3 years, that rule, the rule of the filibuster used against judicial nominees when that nominee had a majority of the votes on the floor of the Senate. The unprecedented use of that hung Miguel Estrada on the vine for 28 months and 5 days, where he finally could not stand it any longer. He had to get on with his life. He had to make a living, had to take care of his family, and so he withdrew his name.

I think that should have been lesson enough, but what happened was that the minority in the other body continued with the filibuster process. They held up a good number of the President's nominees, and I believe that number was 10. Today, the President has pledged to reappoint those nominees that were held up in the 108th Congress, and so now those names are before the Senate again.