

something we can put off for another 3, 4, 5 years. We must deal with it now. We know that entitlements are the biggest part of the budget. Yes, discretionary is important. We have to deal with discretionary and we have to deal with defense. We overspend in defense in so many wasteful programs, but the big issue is going to be entitlement spending.

Congressman RYAN put out a very bold budget the other day—the first person to come forward with a bold proposal to deal with entitlement spending in this country. The President's debt commission put out a proposal, but the President, unfortunately, ignored his own debt commission and didn't put any of their recommendations in his budget. But both Republicans and Democrats are going to have to deal with this spending problem—this spending binge we have been on—otherwise we are not going to have the same United States of America we have all been enjoying our entire lives. We are literally going to become an economy that cannot exist the way we exist today because we cannot afford it. Our debt will literally collapse the economy of the United States.

A recent study came out, done by two incredible economists named Rogoff and Reinhart. These are viewed by both sides of the aisle as well-respected studies. They studied sovereign debt over the last 200 years of about 64 countries. What they found is any time the debt reaches 90 percent of the economy, or 90 percent of the GDP, it causes a net decrease of about 30 percent of economic growth going forward.

Those are numbers. But what does it mean? It means a loss of jobs. In the United States, we have over a million jobs that will be lost, that would otherwise be created. So this is real stuff. Where are we in the United States? Currently, we are about 94 percent of GDP. So we are already there, and it is going to get worse and worse.

That is why this debate we are having over spending is so critical, and critical that we get it under control. We need to forget about which party is going to have a political advantage. I am one of those Senators—and there are quite a few of us—who is not running for reelection. Everybody in this body needs to forget about whether they get reelected and do what is right for the country. It is so critical right now that we put our country first.

House Republicans have sent over a proposal that would do a couple of things. One, it would fund the troops. Let's not let our military come to work and not get paid. That would be ridiculous. Let's at least fund the troops and pass this 1-week spending proposal that would fund the government. It does cut \$12 billion out. The only significant rider in there is the DC abortion rider that says DC can have funds to provide abortions. This is something that was in law and that President Obama signed, in a bill that

many Democrats on the other side have signed, so it should not be that controversial.

In the meantime, since we have agreed on the spending number, we can work out some of these other controversial things in the next week. I believe that is the right thing to do to keep the government open, so people can continue to get their paychecks, so people can continue to visit national parks, and on and on and on. I think we all know the problems if the government shuts down.

I think it is critical that we start doing what is right for the country instead of what is right for somebody's reelection. Let's sit down and make the serious and tough choices so we can put this country on the right path.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands in recess until 2 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:10 p.m., recessed until 2 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BLUMENTHAL).

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, it is my understanding we are now in morning business. I ask if there is a time constraint when making speeches.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Senators are limited, under morning business, to 10 minutes each.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Thank you, Mr. President. We are facing a moment in the issue that all Americans are looking at and wondering: What is happening here? What is going to come about? What are we going to do?

But I wish to remind everyone, in 1773, a tea party was held in Boston Harbor. It was to protest a yoke of oppression that hobbled the start of freedom in our new Nation and that new Americans wanted removed. Those here then wanted the liberty to choose their own customs and their way of life.

While that was 238 years ago, we again struggle to keep a fringe group from taking away the rights of a majority of American citizens who treasure choices they are free to make in our democracy. Although these attacks are marked in the cloak of fiscal responsibility, it is very clear that this group, unlike our forebears, is determined to restrict the freedoms most Americans choose to protect.

So while we are not latter-day Paul Reveres, we sound the alarm for the

American people to beware. I come to the floor to warn every parent and grandparent to beware for the well-being of your loved ones. If you want your children and your grandchildren to have the best health care American research can produce, beware.

If your chest swells with pride when your 2-year-old repeats numbers or words learned at a Federal Head Start schoolhouse, beware.

If your child suffers when toxic air overwhelms them and they are gasping for a breath of fresh air, beware. Look at your family, and if you have a son or a daughter anxious, ready, and able to go to college and you cannot afford to help, beware.

If you are a woman dependent on Planned Parenthood, where every year women receive tests for breast or cervical cancer that could endanger their health and maybe their lives, beware.

If you are a retiree who believes Medicare is freely available to help you live longer or function better, beware. Watch out. Tea party Republicans have seized control of the House of Representatives and will use their power to eliminate current services to children, adults, and retirees from the government, as promised.

They are continuing to brew a toxic tea, a sleight of hand trick to push pain on America's most vulnerable citizens, as we look at this placard: "House GOP Brewing a Toxic Tea for Americans."

Across our country, millions are worried sick about losing jobs, losing homes, and losing an established way of life for their children's futures. What do the tea party Republicans propose? Cut their programs to protect the wealth of the richest among us. But tea party Republicans do not want to solve problems. Instead, they are trying to use the budget process to push an extreme ideology that they believe is the only way others should live their lives. Do it their way or no way.

They are willing to shut down the government to prove a point, to change the condition we have operated so well under for many years. They are willing to sacrifice America's financial standing to impose their extreme views on millions who do not agree with these radical extremists.

They refuse to step up, compromise, and move ahead, so America can continue leading the world as it has been. The President and the Senate Democrats have come to the negotiating table with a responsible plan that protects our country's fragile economy, economic recovery, and invests in our future.

But the toxic tea Republicans in the House would rather recklessly shut down the government than budge off their foul scheme. Last week, they stood outside the Capitol and chanted: "Shut it down. Shut it down." That was their mantra, shut down the government.

When Speaker BOEHNER told them to prepare for a shutdown, they gave him