

He has not merely chronicled these developments. His insightful analysis has helped make communities better. That is the ultimate role of the journalist and is deeply appreciated by his many friends, admirers, and readers, to say nothing of millions of Americans who have benefited from his analysis. We thank you, Neal.

#### STEPHEN F. AUSTIN, FATHER OF TEXAS

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, on this day 212 years ago, the Father of Texas, Stephen F. Austin, was born. Austin, only 27 years of age, organized, financed, and led the first legal colony of Americans to settle a portion of Mexico called Tejas, or Texas as we call it.

In 1822, 300 families entered Texas, this fantastic frontier on the plains of civilization. Although the settlers were loyal to Mexico, a new Mexican Government soon began abolishing the civil rights of the colonists, so Austin went to Mexico to voice concerns over the abuses, but he was imprisoned for over 2 years.

After finally being released, Austin and other Texans decided to go their own way. Texas declared independence from Mexico. Thousands of well-trained Mexican troops poured into Texas to stop the rebellion. The outnumbered Texas volunteers and settlers fought and died at the brutal battles of Goliad and the Alamo, but ultimate victory occurred at the battle of San Jacinto in 1836. Austin and others, like Crockett, Travis, Bowie, and Houston, finally won the day for freedom. Texas was free, a new nation, a new republic. The rest, they say, is Texas history.

#### MISPLACED PRIORITIES

(Mr. BISHOP of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday of last week, the Education and the Workforce Committee, of which I am a member, passed the single largest cut to student aid in history.

By taking \$15 billion out of the Federal aid programs, the Republican leadership proved again that its agenda is replete with misplaced priorities. When we had the choice to lift up a generation of young Americans by helping them achieve the dream of a college education, we chose instead to give more comfort to the already very comfortable. Our differences are profound. It appears that so are our values and what we perceive to be America's priorities.

Future generations of Americans are entitled to a basic education, but they will not be able to afford it after we reconcile how to pay for the hurricane damage, the wars in Iraq and Afghani-

stan, and even two more tax cuts that have not yet begun to take effect and will not even benefit 97 percent of American families.

Madam Speaker, we cannot afford to hold sacred the tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans at the expense of the values, priorities, or needs of the middle class. Americans deserve better.

#### NEED FOR BUDGET RECONCILIATION

(Mr. MCHENRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to support our House Republican leadership and their pledge to control government spending through deficit reduction. We must restore fiscal discipline to the Federal Government, ensuring our children and grandchildren live in a society based on opportunity, not dependence on a bloated Federal bureaucracy swimming in greater debt.

It comes as no surprise to hear Democrats cry: raise taxes; spend more. I feel like Bill Murray in "Ground Hog Day," that great movie. Regardless of the day, regardless of the problem, Democrats have no new ideas, just crying: more taxes; more spending.

Higher taxes are a problem, not a solution, and always lead to larger, more intrusive governments, and larger budgets. As elected officials, Madam Speaker, we must make prudent decisions to reduce the deficit. I urge my colleagues to support deficit reduction and work constructively to control government spending.

#### REPUBLICAN BUDGET PRIORITIES

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Well, the government is in a fiscal crisis. We are borrowing \$1.2 billion a day to run the government under the Bush administration and the Republican leadership. They have raised the national debt to \$8 trillion in 5 short years, but now they are newly born as fiscal conservatives, and they want to cut \$50 billion.

From where? Student loans, the school lunch and breakfast programs, those kids are eating too much, foster care and child support enforcement to help the deadbeat dads. They will, unfortunately, more than overspend their cuts to those struggling people and those good programs. They want \$70 billion of tax cuts, \$20 billion more added to the sea of red ink that is drowning America in tax cuts for, guess who, the wealthy because trickle-down is the highest form of achievement in Washington, D.C. these days. They want to bleed struggling Americans to float the yachts of the wealthy on a sea of red ink one more time while lying about what they are doing.

#### THE AMAZING AMERICAN ECONOMY

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, if you were to listen to many folks in this Chamber, you would think there was absolutely no good news to be heard anywhere. With the challenges this Nation has faced over the past couple of months, the economy ought to be in awful shape. Right?

Madam Speaker, there is news that you just will not see on the major television stations or read in the newspapers, the one success of our economy, the amazing American economy. The gross domestic product, the most clear measure of our economic activity, rose by 3.8 percent in the third quarter. That is an increase of 3.8 percent. That is in spite of Katrina and Rita and all the damage that they brought to our shores. The past 10 quarters have been phenomenal. That is 2½ years. Growth during that time has been greater than 3 percent in every quarter and more often more than 4 percent. That is good news.

And the deficit? Well, that has improved as well, decreasing nearly \$100 billion in the last fiscal year alone. That is good news.

Madam Speaker, Republicans have a plan to reform the government in order to achieve savings for the American people. I urge my colleagues to embrace the good news in our plan.

#### REGARDING IRANIAN PRESIDENT'S DISTURBING REMARKS

(Mr. MEEKS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Madam Speaker, the world is much smaller today than it was; and when we particularly focus in on the Middle East, we need peace. However, I am deeply disturbed by the remarks of the new Iranian President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, when he was addressing 4,000 students, using the language of Ayatollah Khomeini, where he says and threatens: "Anybody who recognizes Israel will burn in the fire of the Islamic nation's fury."

Who is this guy? We cannot allow this kind of language to stand in this day and age. We must make sure that we condemn this kind of language and those kinds of acts. Here is a guy with a questionable background. Some of our hostages say that he is the individual who was there when they were held in Iran. The international community must come together and make sure that there are no nuclear reactors there. We must make sure that it is clear that we are going to stand by our friends and allies in Israel in this regards and that we are going to be the ones that are going to force peace to be in the Middle East and we are not going to have this kind of rhetoric language continuing. We cannot allow this