

economy? Well, we now have the highest unemployment rate in 9 years. Severe cuts in State budgets and programs and the largest among deficit in national debt in our Nation's history. Not content with these successes, the Republicans now want more tax cuts largely skewed to the wealthiest Americans, the top rate income tax reduction in dividend taxation provisions are particularly egregious when 8.8 million Americans are unemployed, with the average length of unemployment now at about 20 weeks. The Republican tax cuts ignore the situation of those Americans. Furthermore, our Nation will have to borrow to pay for the funds to pay for these tax cuts at a time when the United States has a \$6.4 trillion national debt and spend \$1 billion per day on interest payments for that debt. In fact, debt interest payments are now the third largest expenditure in the Federal budget. Money that could instead be used for homeland security, health care, prescription drugs for our seniors, or education for our children.

Almost as outrageous as the provisions of the Republican tax plan was, the House leadership decision not to allow the Democrats to offer their alternative was even more egregious. Our plan was far more fiscally responsible, costing only \$129 billion in immediate spending, and even those costs would be offset for long term economic gains such as income taxes from newly employed Americans. The Democratic plan would create 1 million new jobs, more than double the estimate for the Republican plan. Additionally, it would put money in the pockets of families most likely to spend, provide tax relief for businesses most likely to invest, and hire and provide direct financial assistance to States that are struggling to provide health care and other vital human services to their citizens. This financial assistance would forestall State tax increases or service cutbacks that would otherwise deepen the recession and destroy jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply disturbed by the outcome of today's vote, as well as the heavy handed tactics used by the Republican leadership that denied a debate on our responsible alternative. I will maintain my opposition to irresponsible tax and budget policies that are leading this Nation down a path that could put the economic survival and stability of our Nation in jeopardy.

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

(Ms. WATERS 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 Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

BUSH ECONOMIC STRATEGY LEAVES AMERICA BEHIND

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my Democratic colleagues in expressing my outrage with the Bush administration and the Republican majority who are truly waging economic warfare against the American people, most notably our children and our grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, the tax package the Republicans undemocratically and very brutally rammed through here today represent dropping a big bomb on American families. It is un-American to devastate the lives of American families who happen not to be rich. This budget, this tax cut will leave a huge crater in the economy and the Federal budget that will take decades to repair.

What is most troubling about this irresponsible, unfair, and ill-advised plan for economic disaster? What does it mean for our children, especially our most vulnerable children? You simply cannot be for leaving no child behind when you are handing out massive tax cuts for millionaires at the expense of our children. What do we tell the parents of these children when they ask what is our government going to do to create jobs? What is our government doing to help kids? What is our government doing to expand health care to help senior citizens or to improve education or to ease inequality?

I guess we tell them that we have a President and a Republican majority in Congress who care more about eliminating taxes on stock dividends than eliminating poverty. We tell them we have a President who is slashing Head Start funds, cutting job training programs and after school programs and spending the entire Social Security surplus. We tell them that this may be the first President in over half a century who may serve an entire term in office without creating one single job. And we tell them we have an administration that is seeking to wipe out affirmative action because it is apparently blind to the enormous inequalities in our country. And we let them know that this mean-spirited tax cut will disproportionately affect African American and Latino children. We tell them that we have a President who is, yes, waging war at home, a war on our future, a war on opportunities for our children, a war on equality and war on our economy. There are 9 million people unemployed in this country, including 2 million unemployed African Americans and almost 1.5 million Latinos. That is a disgrace and there is no help for them in this Bush plan.

We are in a jobs depression. What our economy needs and what Americans need are more job opportunities. How do you benefit from a tax cut when you do not even have a job? Where is the compassion in this?

We need increased technical training for young people and transition assist-

ance for displaced workers, many of whom are victims of our trade policy. Just look at NAFTA. Under NAFTA we have seen a quarter of a million actual and potential jobs disappear. Now the administration is looking to expand NAFTA to virtually every single country in the Western Hemisphere. How many jobs will we lose then?

As Marian Wright Edelman, President of the Children's Defense Fund, said, It is awfully hard to be a poor child in this country. It is awfully hard to be a parent. It is hard to be one of the millions of Americans desperately searching for jobs and not finding them while their unemployment benefits are expiring.

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It is hard for tens of millions of people in Bush's mark. We could be turning the tide on this jobs depression. We should be investing in our future, but on the eve of Mother's Day, rather than saying Happy Mother's Day, the Republicans are shattering the lives of millions of mothers by cutting taxes for the rich, sacrificing the poor and neglecting the middle class.

Mr. Speaker, the President waged an immoral war in Iraq and now he is doing it right here at home. Wake up, America, and fight this very unpatriotic assault on American families and children. You must fight back.

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

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

ALLOW DEMOCRACY ON THE FLOOR OF THE HOUSE

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, we have seen many Democrats here speaking out of a sense of frustration. The bill we voted on today is a bill of tremendous importance, and yet all we had was one hour to debate this bill. Many of us that wanted to come down and participate in the debate could not even get one minute's time to debate this bill because the Republicans kept a closed rule, which said there will be one hour of debate, 30 minutes for each side, and no substitute allowed.

I did a little calculation. There are 435 Members of the House of Representatives in this country, and if every one of us wanted to speak on this bill with only one minute total time, that would leave each of us a grand total of eight seconds each to speak on a bill worth billions and billions and trillions of dollars. Surely our Founding Fathers are rolling in their graves when they