Only by disclosing all the facts will the credibility of the Defense Department be maintained. For this reason, I have several questions I would like you to answer formally;

Did U.S. forces encounter any Iraqi forces in the hospital?

Were U.S. troops fired upon during the rescue operation? If so, please describe specifically the nature of the interchange.

Did U.S. have any information suggesting that Iraqi forces had abandoned the hospital?

Did Private Lynch sustain any gunshot or knife wounds?

Did U.S. officials have any information suggesting that Iraqi medical staff were trying to deliver Private Lynch to American forces?

Did U.S. forces at any time fire on any ambulances?

In addition to posing these questions, I would like to make two additional requests. First, there has been a great deal of commentary on the manner in which the Department edited and aired a videotape of the rescue operation. Several media representatives have requested that the full tape be released so the American people can make an independent assessment of these conflicting claims. I see no reason for the Department to reject this request. Therefore, I request that you order the public release of the unedited footage taken by the military cameraman. Of course, if you have security or other concerns, I would be happy to review the tape myself and discuss those issues with you personally.

Finally, I understand the Department has ordered an investigation into the facts surrounding Private Lynch's capture by Iraqi forces. I also understand, however, that investigators were not asked to examine the circumstances surrounding Private Lynch's rescue. In light of the controversy that has arisen regarding this case, I suggest that the Pentagon's ongoing investigation also include the facts surrounding Private Lynch's rescue, as well.

If you have any questions about this request, please call my Chief of Staff, Jaron Bourke, at (202) 225–5871. I look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

DENNIS J. KUCINICH,
Ranking Minority Member, Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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

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

TAX FAIRNESS FOR EVERYONE, EXCEPT LOW-WAGE WORKING FAMILIES

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans passed a bill last week which will provide a $90,000 tax cut to the Nation's millionaires, but let us look at what else it does.

The independent Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center estimates that making the earned income tax credit marriage penalty relief effective this year would have offered an average tax cut of $340 to 4 million working American families. But the President decided to make them wait until 2008 for the marriage penalty relief he offered their more affluent neighbors. House Republican leadership had several opportunities to correct the President's mistake and restore fairness to the tax bill, but they decided to cut working families loose. So that is $90,000 for millionaires, not a cent for working lower-income families.

The gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS), the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, said, ''If you are not going to incentivize marriage, at the very least make sure you don't punish it.'' The gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the House majority leader, said, ''A country founded on freedom should not maintain a tax code that arbitrarily places an extra burden on husbands and wives.'' Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), said, ''We need a tax code that doesn't punish married couples. They don't need the Federal Government picking their pocket.''

$90,000 for a millionaire, but nothing for married, poor, or working families.

Any one of those powerful officials could have taken a stand, could have spoken up for low-wage working families, could have ensured that no legislation would pass this House that valued the marriages of families of wealthy Americans above those of their less affluent neighbors. But none of those Republican leaders said a thing. None of them raised a voice of concern or lifted a finger to stop the advance of a bill that says loud and clear to millions of Americans, your marriage is worth less than your neighbor's marriage or your boss's marriage.

$90,000 of tax cuts for a millionaire, but not a cent for low-income working couples.

Given that track record, it was disappointing, but not surprising, to learn the White House and the congressional Republican majority used their last-minute back-room deal in the tax bill to take another cheap shot at low-wage working families. The final conference bill brokered by Vice President CHENEY included a last-minute change that freezes 12 million low-wage families out of the bill's child tax credit increase.

$90,000 for millionaires, nothing for working families, lower-income working families.

At the signing ceremony for this bill, the President said, ''We are helping workers who need more take-home pay.'' But 7 million American families who pay income tax will get no benefit at all from this bill.

$90,000 for millionaires, nothing for low-income families.

Now that the word is out, some of our Republican colleagues are saying they did not know about these changes. They are looking for someone to blame for the decision to cut low-wage working families loose on the child tax credit. But the deal was cut by the Vice President and his party's leadership, so the ''I did not know it'' excuse just simply does not wash.

If the White House had wanted to correct the injustices in the tax bill, if Republican leadership had been serious about fairness for married couples and children, there were plenty of opportunities. They could have dropped the average tax cut for millionaires, like the President's friend, Enron's CEO Chair Ken Lay, from $93,000 to $88,000, and that would have left enough money to give that tax break to working families.

They could have dropped the dividend tax cut that the President and Vice President worked so hard for, just over 2 percent, and the capital gains provision cost just 2 percent; and that would have paid for those lower-income working families who do pay taxes.

So they could have offset the cost by including some responsible corporate tax loophole reforms. We all know corporate expatriates like Tyco and Stanley use loopholes in the law to abandon their U.S. headquarters and reincorporate overseas. So they give tax breaks to them, they give tax breaks to millionaires, but not a cent for so many low-income working families in this country.

The simple truth is this was not a mistake. Any Republican Member of the House who thinks it was should listen carefully to today's statement by their elected majority leader. Asked about the prospects for legislative proposals to restore just some fairness, just a bit of fairness to the child tax credit, the majority leader, DELAY, said, ''There is a lot of other things that are more important than that.''

□ 1815

Mr. Speaker, $90 million for millionaires, not a cent for working, lower-income families. It is shameful.

PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES RUN ROUGHSHOD OVER AMERICAN CONSUMERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, it was Will Rogers who said, ''All I know is what I read in the newspapers,'' and I was reading yesterday's Wall Street Journal, and I would invite my colleagues to read the Wall Street Journal of yesterday, as well, because there is a story there that is just shameful about American policies as it relates to prescription drugs.