

a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I believe it was Mark Twain who said that humans were the only species that had the capability of feeling embarrassment or needed to, and I think that we are going to see many of my friends across the aisle in the Republican Caucus who have sincere and legitimate embarrassment about what they did at about 1 a.m. awhile back when they passed the tax cut that is so grievously unfair to 12 million children and 8 million families in this country.

You have heard, Mr. Speaker, previous Members here address the fact that this child care tax credit was left out for these families earning \$10,000 to \$26,000 a year. I think in doing so, the Republican Caucus has given a new meaning, a new definition to the term women and children first. The "women and children first" principle used to mean that you take care of those who are least capable of caring for themselves first. But the Republican Caucus has given a new definition of that term. It means that you cut out and you give tax cuts to everyone else first and children last.

Because what happened here is pretty obvious. It is pretty clear that the Republicans had a choice to make. They decided that they were only going to do a tax cut with a total cost to the Treasury of \$350 billion, and they had to make a decision at the last instant who to deprive of the tax cut. They had a clear choice to make. They could cut .1 percent, or 1/1000th of the amount of the tax cuts given to millionaires, or they could decide to deprive it and not give children the benefit and those families earning \$10,000 to \$26,000 a year. They decided to deprive the children of that benefit rather than the millionaires who were paying these taxes.

They now are rightfully, sincerely, and I think greatly, embarrassed by this disclosure that has now come out from this middle-of-the-night tax cut that was passed. And why did that happen? Why did that happen? It is not because the Republicans are not good folks. It happened because this tax cut and its bottom line, its basic theory, was not an economic principle or an economic plan; but rather it was a knee-jerk fixation, an ideological predisposition to starve the government and to do a disproportionate tax cut that is not in keeping with the needs of working families.

What I mean by that is if you were going to do a tax cut that had an economic theory behind it, you would give tax benefits to these working families that are going to turn that money around and get it right back into the U.S. economy. These are the first families that ought to get a tax cut, not the last. The reason they are the first families is that these are the folks that are going to get the money right back into circulation.

But in the Republican plan it is the last group that gets tax relief. The reason is because this plan was based on an ideological fixation that they want to starve government rather than the economic theory of getting money back into the U.S. economy. That is why it is doomed to failure. That is why their last tax cut produced nothing. That is why we have had 2½ million new lost jobs after their last tax cut, and that is why this one is not going to be any better for the U.S. economy.

Mr. Speaker, we need an economic plan to grow jobs, not an ideological fixation; and we need to help children first, not last.

UNFAIR TAX CUT

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, the billion dollar tax cut that President Bush signed into law last week was supposed to give everyone who pays taxes a tax cut. In fact, President Bush said, "My jobs and growth plan would reduce taxes for everyone who pays income taxes." The President declared that several weeks ago.

Well, now as it turns out, that is not exactly the truth; and the devil is in the details. Because what the President did not tell the American public and what he did not tell America's families waiting for their tax cut was that a back-room deal he struck with the leadership in the House and the Senate, a bill that was sent for his signature, excluded 2.5 million taxpayers and 12 million children from the benefits of this bill. These are mostly single-parent households, with a child 16 years or older, that earn between \$10,000 and \$26,000 a year.

It was not a mistake. It was not an oversight. The Republican tax writers who crafted the final compromise all by themselves, with no Democrats in the room, under the supervision of Vice President CHENEY, made a conscious decision to roll back the benefits of the child tax credit for 12 million children to save \$3.5 billion. And they did not take that savings and put it into the Treasury against the massive deficit they created. They took that \$3.5 billion, and they gave it to corporations who run overseas to avoid taxes; they refused to close the Enron loopholes that destroyed corporations and many people's retirement. They took that money from those 12 million children, and they gave it away so that they would not have to close corporate tax loopholes.

Now, what does this mean, and why are we here late into the evening to discuss this matter? Why have so many Democrats lined up to speak on this matter? Because this is an issue of basic fundamental values about our families in this country, about equity,

and about fairness. And the Republican tax bill violated all of those values. They made a conscious choice to take families, a husband and a wife earning \$15,000 to \$20,000, a little bit more, raising a couple of kids, a single parent raising a couple of kids, who are struggling to get by in a tough economy, and they decided that they were simply going to exclude them from the benefits of this tax bill. They were not going to give them the child credit.

Now, Congress had made a decision over the past many years, from Ronald Reagan on, that we should have a child credit; that we should try to help offset the cost of raising children for middle-income families and lower-income families and that has been the policy in this country on a bipartisan basis. But this extreme Republican leadership in the House, along with Vice President CHENEY and now the Republican leadership in the Senate, decided that these children had less value than other children in the Nation.

What kind of person makes that decision about these children that they do not even know, about these parents struggling to raise their children and to pay their health care, to educate them, to provide them the necessities and maybe a little extra on salaries that do not exceed \$26,000 a year? What kind of mind, what kind of person was in that room that night when they made a decision to deny these children, to deny these parents this increase of \$400 in a tax cut to come this summer, that these children and these families would not get to participate in? It is a corruption and a corrosion of any sense of the public interest. It is a corruption of the process of this Congress that they would do this in the middle of the night in a secret deal and tell no one.

It was only after the President signed the bill did they have to admit that this was what was done. First they tried to say it was not true. First they tried to say that this did not affect these families. They were playing a little fast and loose with the truth down at the White House that day through the President's spokespersons. Well, the truth came out. Twelve million children denied the benefits of the child tax credit.

This is extremism at its far point. This is a denial of the value of America's families at the extreme. This act must be overturned. It must be overturned soon so that these families too can get that \$400 check that they are entitled to under the laws of this land and a decent system of fairness and equity.

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

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