

spent to give tax refunds to profitable corporations, some of it was spent to give huge new tax breaks to people who earn over \$300,000, and some of it was spent on other Federal Government purposes.

Now, they are projecting that the first quarter next year, we will borrow more money in one quarter than any quarter in the history of the United States of America. So they maybe should get some new-found fiscal responsibility on that side of the aisle. They have raised the Federal debt by 62 percent in 5 short years. George Bush has more than doubled the Federal debt in 5 short years.

Now, DICK CHENEY, the Vice President, of course says deficits do not matter, but I think they do, and I think the American people know they do. They know they cannot spend more money than they know they have in income every month forever. They know they cannot continuously borrow money on their credit cards or from the bank.

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Likewise, the United States of America. Now, what are they doing about it. Well, they are bringing up with great fanfare a bill tomorrow called the reconciliation bill, \$53.9 billion of supposed new income or cuts and programs. There are some real cuts. There are real cuts that will hit hard at middle-income and struggling families. The biggest cuts are to the student loan programs, \$14.3 billion, adding about 6,000 bucks to the average kid's public school 4-year cost with new interest charges and up-front charges. Cuts in foster care, cuts in long-term care. This is the family values side of the aisle over here, they like to claim, remember. And many other vital Federal programs.

And then they are assuming some phony revenues, 50 times as much per acre to lease out the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge with unknown reserves, as we just got a few months ago for the naval petroleum reserve with known reserve closer to the pipeline. So phony baloney and mean cuts.

But that is not even the end of the story. They are going to follow these mean cuts and the phony baloney with \$70 billion in real cuts to the richest among us, predominantly weighted toward those who earn over \$300,000 a year, particularly toward those who earn over a \$1.2 million a year. They are averaging \$120,000 a year in tax cuts now. Under their proposal, it will be even more generous, and that is because those wealthy people, also their contributors, are going to trickle down on the rest of us and bring new prosperity to America and wipe out the deficits with that new prosperity.

After all, when we wax their yachts, when we cut their lawns, when we do other things that they will employ us to do when they are not spending the money overseas or on luxury items produced overseas that will bring jobs to

America. As they say famously on that side, they never saw a poor person give anybody a job. No, those poor people are doing the work and paying taxes, unlike the rich people who they are favoring and showering money upon, and they are borrowing money and taking money from programs that are important to middle-income and poor people to give to the rich people.

Trickle down economics. And in the end, guess what? They are actually going to increase the debt of the United States and the deficit because they are going to cut taxes for rich people by \$70 billion. They are going to assume some phony baloney and make mean cuts against middle-income and working families for \$54 billion. They are going to increase the deficit by \$16 billion although they claim that is not true because the rich people are going to trickle on us and that will create more revenue than the \$16 billion of new deficit that is created.

You might think it is April Fools, but it is not. It is just another move by the arrogant majority, thinking that America is not watching. Well, I think America is beginning to pay attention; and I urge my colleagues to oppose this mean-spirited, short-sighted legislation. Assume real fiscal responsibility, reimpose tax fairness for this country, and let us give a fair deal to the American people.

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

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

#### ACCOUNTABILITY OF CONGRESS

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to go out of order and address the House for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, indeed, tomorrow this House will hear the debate on the budget resolution, and I think the country needs to hear the debate. I think the country needs to see that all of us in Congress, on both sides of aisle, are accountable. They need to see that we are results driven. We are results oriented, and they need to see some success from this body.

Now, our commitment, my commitment is to the hard-working Americans who pay taxes in this country. I think we have an obligation to the taxpayers of this country to redesign government when necessary, to reform programs if they are not working well, and always ensure that those Federal programs,

those Federal agencies are working at peak performance.

Mr. Speaker, it would not be saying too much to say we need to rebuild some confidence in America. If we can cut some red tape then I think we should. Where local solutions will work, we need to empower local authorities to envision and utilize those solutions. The Secretary of Health and Human Services was addressing our committee yesterday and talked about preparation for pandemic flu and he was challenged and someone said, Mr. Secretary, you need to have a plan. Do not let the local people have to come up with a plan. And the Secretary does have a plan. But he said, local activities are going to be important as well. You do not need the Secretary of HHS telling every school district across the country when they can and cannot open their doors.

I could not agree with him more. Mr. Speaker, we need to modernize some of our Federal programs, where we are using tin-can telephones when the rest of the world is using satellite communications, and it is not right. We need to reform government. We need to set priorities. And sometimes that means making some tough choices. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, we need to learn from the past, learn from the past, whether it be the Spanish flu outbreak of 1918, learn from the past of previous wars this country has fought; but along those same lines, we need to utilize that information from the past to plan for our future.

Now, Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago, 2 weeks ago, my committee, the Committee on Energy and Commerce, spent 3 days, 3 days on a markup to produce a plan, a plan that reforms government and leads to greater value for dollars spent, particularly in the Medicaid program. We held hearings through the spring and the summer leading up to this legislation. We heard testimony from Members; leaders of the National Governors Association, a body of 35 bipartisan Governors in this country, who came to us with a set of principles and said we had a lot of ideas that we put out on the table, but here are seven things that everyone of us, 35 out of 35 agreed upon.

And, Mr. Speaker, we crafted legislation that incorporated at least six of those seven principles. We left out some judicial reforms that I would have liked to have seen in the bill, but maybe that is for another day. But those other reforms were crafted in legislation and then we spent 3 days, 3 days on the Committee of Energy and Commerce talking about that.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, I think we have crafted a legislation that is going to save Medicaid for the poor, the truly infirm, the people that really need it in this country. The default position was to see more and more people turned off the Medicaid roles by the States as they could no longer afford to keep up with the expenditures in Medicaid. So we are

going to provide more services. And maybe we are going to deliver a little greater value. And, Mr. Speaker, if that means that a few dollars are saved in the process, well, I am all for that.

But consider the numbers involved here. Medicaid, with no reform, is going to grow at a rate of 7.3 percent over the next 5 years. With the reforms we put in place, Medicaid is going to grow at a rate of 7 percent over the next 5 years. We are talking about a miniscule amount of savings by adding some value to the program as it exists today. As a consequence, more patients will be served by this program.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know, because I sat in that markup for 3 days, I know right now it is popular to vilify the productive segment of American society. I have heard it done from every angle. There is angst, genuine angst over reinvesting in the productive segment of American society. We hear it all the time, why \$55 billion was given to people who really do not need it.

But, Mr. Speaker, those are the taxpayers. Those are the people who create the jobs. I know, because I was one three short years ago. That 38 percent tax rate I paid on my business allowed me to employ 50 people in my town of Lewisville, Texas. It allowed me to purchase equipment for my practice. But what do we hear out of the other side? They want that \$55 billion back, but that \$55 billion that we reinvested produced \$262 billion for the American Treasury this year in additional tax revenue. So they would have to double the tax and double it again to even approach the amount of money.

Well, this is the default position on the other side. This fall is not the time for Democrats to roll out positive agenda, said a House Democrat aide. That is a shame. We need their ideas. We need their enthusiasm. We need their energy. I look forward to this debate tomorrow. I think at the end of the day we are going to have a good product for the American people.

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

#### WHO NEEDS THE FIRST AMENDMENT?

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 5 minutes out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, who needs the first amendment when we have the Republican Party? Their view is that the American people just do not need to know what their government is doing in their name. We just do not need to know that this country now has secret CIA-un prisons around the world where prisoners are sent or sentenced because they get no representation. After all, DICK CHENEY, our President of foreign policy, supports us looking and acting like Cold War countries we used to fear. We do not have any skills in building facilities to be ashamed of, so we rent those old Cold War prison camps in places where people went in and were never heard from again.

Republican leaders just do not think this is the kind of information the American people need to know. After all, we might talk about it. Someone might write about it. Someone might question why we want to behave like the Cold War all over again. But this time, we are on the other side. The American people would not know any of this except for The Washington Post reporting about prisoners and policies that sound more like the enemy than the good guys.

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This did not sit well with DICK CHENEY and he let Republican leaders on Capitol Hill know it, behind closed doors of course, his favorite location. Almost immediately Republican leaders fell in behind the President of Foreign Policy and carried out their orders. Find the person who dared let America know what is really going on behind those closed doors.

Republican leaders intend to find out who let the American people know about the dirty little secret that the administration did not want us to know. It is detention at a whole new level where suspects simply vanish, and they did not want us to know. And we would not have known except for journalism's ability to report all the news thanks to the first amendment.

Why do they want to keep us in the dark? Because Americans would be appalled, because American know that we can fight and win a war without sacrificing the principles that made us America in the first place. America does not need a mask over its face to beat the people wearing masks over theirs. And America does not need secret prisons hidden in other countries as if that somehow that absolves us from responsibility. This kind of perverse policy says a lot about how out of touch this administration is, especially its President of Foreign Policy, with the values and strengths of America.

Do you think Americans will not be ashamed or that the world will not be appalled again by our actions? Did we not learn anything from Abu Ghraib? What will it take for this administration to stop acting in ways that cause the average American to shake his head and avert his eyes? What will it

take for this administration to realize that every time it deploys another deplorable policy, it puts our soldiers in Iraq and everywhere else at greater risk. What kind of arrogance and abuse?

This happened before in another Republican administration that became so flushed with power they forgot who they worked for. They too tried to hide black ops aimed at subverting political opponents and anyone who dared challenge their power. Nixon and his cronies almost got away with it except for the reporting of the same paper.

In the end, the corruption ate away at the pillars of the Republican power until it all came crashing down around them. A Vice President and a President resigned from office. The country was appalled by their conduct.

The first amendment of the Constitution was America's last defense against the Nixon administration and it is true again today. It is no wonder Republicans want to replace the first amendment with amendment 1-R. That is where one Republican will tell the American people what you are supposed to know and attack anyone who dares challenge them. Everything you need to know will come out only from the Republicans in power. That is what they want, government behind closed doors.

We used to recognize the rule of law and the Geneva Convention. Now we are at the point that we do not recognize America's strengths and values. Dare to challenge these Republicans and they will out you one way or another.

Prisoners are not the only ones vanishing under the policies and direction of the Bush administration, so is the truth. And the first amendment is America's last line of defense.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot let the Republicans do away with the first amendment. It is our only hope in a democracy.

#### DEMOCRATS CONTINUE TO SING THE SAME OLD SONG

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the majority that is committed to fiscal responsibility. The Democrats' needle is stuck in a groove and it is playing the same song over and over: Tax and spend.

Republicans have already passed a budget that cut \$100 million from the deficit. Democrats refuse to vote for this budget. In fact, over the last 3 years Democrats have tried to bust the discretionary budget in the appropriations process by over \$60 billion in additional spending. Along with the billions more in spending, Democrats also offered amendments totaling almost \$400 billion in additional taxes.

I guess it is hard to learn a new tune when the old one is playing over and over again in your head.