

you would be doing good. Well, we, of course, know that because of those tax cuts that you referenced just a moment ago, we have seen the growth in the economy of over 3 percent for the last 11 straight quarters. So it is because of this pro-growth economic policy you just set forth that we are seeing the economy grow.

And by having a strong national economy, obviously it is helping the revenue stream on this side and obviously it also affects the family budget.

Mr. MCHENRY. If the gentleman will yield.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I yield back.

Mr. MCHENRY. This is one of the great discussions of the day. If you cut taxes does government get less in income or taxation? What we have seen through the tax cuts is it is a pro-growth policy. We allow people to keep more of what they earn, therefore they can actually provide for their child. They can go out this time of year and buy shorts and T-shirts and tennis shoes for the kids.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. If the gentleman can yield for just a second.

Mr. MCHENRY. Absolutely.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I want to yield to the gentleman from Texas, because I think it is important for us to bring the deficit back into this. We are allowing the taxpayer to keep more of their paycheck, and the tax reductions in 2001 and 2003 certainly have done that. The gentleman from Texas can talk for a moment about the deficit and how we are speeding along and reducing that deficit faster than we had originally thought that we were because of the growth in taxes and because of the changes we have made in budgeting.

Mr. HENSARLING. Again, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. It is a very important point that we are going to have in this debate. Number one, there is no doubt that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle will be talking about tax cuts are bad; we can't have any more tax cuts.

Well, first, Mr. Speaker, nobody is talking today about any more tax cuts. Unfortunately, in this very odd budget process we have in Washington, tax relief is temporary and spending is forever. The only thing we are trying to do, Mr. Speaker, is make sure that the American people don't have a huge automatic tax increase brought about by the Democrats.

They will tell you, my Lord, if we allow the American people, if we allow small businesses to keep more of what they earn, that is going to cost government. Well, number one, Mr. Speaker, it is not the government's money, it is the people's money.

Second of all, we have given tax relief to American families and small businesses. And, guess what? The deficit starts to come down. Revenues are up. Again, don't take my word for it, go to the United States Treasury and here is what they will tell you. We cut

marginal rates in 2003. We helped small businesses. We helped families. We cut tax rates. And guess what? We ended up with more tax revenue. More tax revenue.

Individual tax receipts were up 14.6 percent. Corporate tax receipts were up 47 percent. A huge boon of revenue. That brings the deficit down because people are going out and they are saving and they are working and they are rolling up their sleeves and they are building new businesses. In just this year, in the first few months of this fiscal year, corporate tax receipts are up 29.6 percent. Again, don't take my word for it, go to the U.S. Treasury.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HENSARLING. I would be glad to yield to my friend from New Jersey.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Just for a quick point. I don't normally do this, but I would reference you to The New York Times and today's edition, because they verify that too. You can't go by what their headlines say, because their headline is a little misleading. But they did an article in the business section in The New York Times today saying who benefitted from the tax cuts that this Republican-led GOP Congress and this administration passed. And if you get beyond the headlines and you dig down into the weeds, even The New York Times admits that the benefits to them are to the middle class and the lower class, as opposed to the higher incomes, as the other side would argue.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. If the gentlemen will yield. As we wrap up our hour, I want to bring it right back to where we started, talking about the compassionate thing to do is to let the American taxpayer keep their paycheck, be certain that they have first right of refusal on that paycheck and not the Federal Government.

I also want to encourage our constituents to talk to us and our colleagues, to talk to our constituents so that we are certain that everyone understands our goal as the majority party here in this House is to be certain that we preserve individual freedom, that we preserve hope and opportunity, and that we allow the American taxpayer to keep control of their paycheck. And that as stewards of the taxpayers' money, that we are good and accountable stewards.

### 30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to address the House once again. As you know, those of us that are in the 30-something Working Group come to the floor if not nightly, every other day to share not only with the Members but the American people

about what is happening here, what is really happening here under the Capitol dome.

Unfortunately, many times we have to share bad news, but at other times we share very good news, the good news of saying there could possibly be a brighter future. Either one of two ways, Mr. Speaker, either the Republican majority says, hey, we want to work with the Democrats in a bipartisan way on issues such as national security, education, tax reform, issues that we can all rally around, health care for American workers, making sure that American companies wouldn't have to do what they did in Congressman TIM RYAN's district when the third shift showed up for work and they said there will no longer be a third shift. That is a problem, and that is something that we have to work on in a bipartisan way.

Or, Mr. Speaker, the American people can make the decision that they are willing to go with a Democratic House of Representatives and a Democratic Senate to move us in the direction of working together on behalf of all Americans.

First, we have to deal with the issue of incompetence, we have to deal with the issue of corruption, we have to deal with the issue of cronyism in many areas, and we have to deal with the issue of governance. And I think it is very, very important as we outline a number of these issues here tonight and also pepper it with Democratic proposals that we will hopefully be able to turn the tide in many of these areas.

Mr. DELAHUNT, my good friend from Massachusetts, and my good friend from New Jersey, and we are going to have another good friend from Ohio, and a gentlelady from Florida, and we may have some folks from Texas come in tonight, because we said last night, Mr. Speaker, that this is almost not fair. Some would believe that we just make up this information, that happens to be fact. And it is sad that it is fact.

If I was looking at this as some sort of political reason why we come to the floor to share what we believe the situation may be, it would be one thing, but we come to the floor and pull the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. We come to the floor to talk about a vote that just took place yesterday. We come to the floor with fresh statements from Members of the Republican, former members of the Republican Caucus, and also a past Speaker that gave birth to the Republican majority, making statements to the press of saying, listen, as an American, I have to say something. Not as a Republican. I have to say something. When you are the Speaker, you are the leader.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. MEEK, if the gentleman would yield.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I would certainly yield.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I think you are talking about Newt Gingrich, who was the father, if you will, of the Gingrich

revolution back in 1994. And, in fact, my friend and classmate, because we came in together into the House of Representatives back in January of 1997, STEVE ROTHMAN, we were here when Newt Gingrich presided over this House.

Both STEVE and I can attest that this was a man who was partisan, very conservative, and when you hear him saying, and this is as recent as this past Friday, "they," and by "they," he is referring to the Republican majority in this House, "they are seen by the country as being in charge of a government that can't function."

Mr. ROTHMAN. Can I first say a couple of things? I want to first thank Congressman MEEK and yourself, my dear friend Congressman DELAHUNT. We started out in Congress 9½ years ago. We are delighted to welcome this very bright young man who is now a veteran Congressman.

I represent, I suppose, the 50-some-things. I know, BILL, you are probably still 30-something. But I have been watching you young people, and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and others, and I have always been jumping up at my television saying, gee, I wish I had the time to add my voice. Well, something happened yesterday, gentlemen, and Mr. Speaker, that so outraged me that I had to come to the floor to speak about it.

Actually, it was this past week. We had the commissioner of the IRS, Mr. Everson, before us. He announced that he was going to, according to the President's policy, in order to collect some taxes that were acknowledged to be due by the taxpayers, the IRS is now going to hire private collection firms to collect the taxes of United States citizens.

It gets worse. Private tax collecting firms collecting taxes due by United States citizens to the IRS are going to charge up to 25 percent commission. A 25 percent commission. So for every dollar they collect from the taxpayer, they are going to keep 25 cents.

Now, what is interesting is, I asked certain questions and I discovered that a Federal employee in the Internal Revenue Service who collects taxes, their overhead is about 5 cents on the dollar. Five cents on the dollar. The private collection agencies are going to get 25 cents on the dollar.

So I asked the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service, I said, Mr. Commissioner, why are you giving away taxpayer money? Federal employees to collect taxes costs 5 cents on the dollar, you are giving 25 cents on the dollar to a private firm to collect these taxes. Why are you giving away 20 cents of our money?

□ 2115

He said, Well, you know, the President doesn't like big government and so we are going to privatize it, in essence he was saying. We are going to give it to the private sector so we do not have it on our books that we are paying people to collect taxes.

I said, Wait a minute, the bottom line is you are wasting money, am I correct, sir?

And he said, Yes, we are.

I said, Wouldn't it make sense, Mr. Commissioner of the IRS, and by the way, we have been carrying hundreds of billions of dollars of receivables from taxpayers who didn't pay their taxes on our books for decades. So if we hired some Federal employees to add to the IRS to collect taxes, they would have plenty of work for their whole career. Isn't this a waste of money, Mr. Commissioner?

And he said, Yes.

I said, Isn't there one other element that you find frightening, to have a private company handling the private details of a taxpayers' basic and most important financial documents? Doesn't that concern you, sir?

He said, Yes, actually it does, and he pointed to some effort in New Jersey where they tried to do it and it was rife with some corruption and he was concerned about it and they were going to take steps.

I said you are worried about corruption and you are worried about the violation of the citizens' privacy by hiring these private tax collection firms, and you are going to lose 20 cents on the dollar because it costs 25 cents for these firms versus 5 cents for the IRS employee and you are wasting tens of millions of taxpayer money, and he had no answer.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Let me thank you for asking those questions. And as you explained it, I was thinking that you found something rare, and that is somebody in this administration who gave you a straight answer.

Mr. ROTHMAN. I got another one today.

Mr. DELAHUNT. And an honest answer, by the way.

Mr. ROTHMAN. It was an honest answer, and I thanked him for that. He said that it was wasteful, and he said that is the budget that the President gave me.

My subcommittee had a hearing today and we had the Secretary of the Treasury in front of us, Mr. Snow. I said Mr. Secretary, a lot of people say that tax cuts that go to the richest people in the country, people making over a million dollars a year, but if you added up all of the tax cuts, people say that we get money back from the tax cuts and it fills up the government coffers far beyond what we cut in terms of taxes to the rich.

Another honest answer, he said, Congressman ROTHMAN, for every dollar we cut in taxes, we only get back to the Federal treasury about 30 or 40 cents. For every dollar we cut in taxes, we only get back 30 or 40 cents.

I said, Wait a minute, what about the supply side notion and all this talk about the economic growth generating revenues?

He said, Well, that is the consensus of opinion, that for every dollar of taxes cut, we only get back 30 or 40 cents.

I said, Wait a minute, we are losing money every time we do a tax cut and then you tell veterans in this budget, the Bush budget, veterans have to pay more for their health care and poor people have to pay more for their prescription drugs. A family who wants to send their child to college has to pay another \$2,000 or \$3,000 a year. There is money for nothing but tax cuts.

He said, Oh, by the way, that deficit that we have, the largest deficit in the history of the United States, the one we have today under this Republican majority and this President, one-third of the deficit said Treasury Secretary Snow today, one-third of the deficit is directly related to the tax cuts.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Another honest, straight answer.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. We have to talk to this guy. I just want to make a point because I am for tax cuts if they go to the right people, if they go to the middle class.

I couldn't believe we had other people citing this, but today in the New York Times an analysis finally came out that talked about the 2003 tax cut. What this says is that among taxpayers with incomes greater than \$10 million annually, their investment tax bill, just for the investments that they made, was reduced by \$500,000 so they got \$500,000 back, less in taxes, and total savings for someone who made \$10 million a year was \$1 million from the Bush tax cuts and the Republican bobble-head Congress who said yes, Mr. President, deficits do not matter. We can borrow from foreign countries to foot the bill for this.

We don't have money to give a guy or woman who makes \$10 million a year, we do not have the money to give them a million dollars back. We had to go out and borrow that million dollars.

Mr. ROTHMAN. Here is another interesting statistic. By the way, working people need tax cuts. They need incentives to save and incentives to work even harder than they already do, if that is possible.

But people who make over \$400,000 a year, people who make over \$400,000 a year, God bless them, this is a fact that we in America have to deal with in order to decide is the Republican majority and is the President or are each of them making the right policy judgments. People make tax cuts for people making over \$400,000 a year.

This year if you add up just those tax cuts, it will be a greater sum than all that we spend on homeland security. And yet the majority and this administration says we can only afford to inspect 5 percent of the containers coming into America, even though in Hong Kong they inspect 100 percent of the containers. This is the priority of this administration.

By the way, I asked Secretary Snow, I said, because he was very proud that perhaps tax cuts helped get us out of the recession that was very shallow. I said, Mr. Secretary, the recession is long over. It has been over for 3 years

or more. So why do we continue to give tax cuts to the wealthiest people in the country, accounting for a third of our deficit and when we tell working people and veterans and school kids we do not have money for you, in fact we are going to cut your budgets and keep those tax cuts.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I just want to point this out. This is publicly held debt. Tax cuts are given to a fellow, a woman who makes \$10 million a year giving a million dollars back in taxes. We do not have it so what do we do, we go out and borrow it. This is the publicly held debt by China. It had quadrupled under President Bush. In 2000 it was \$62 billion. In 2005 it was \$257 billion. We are borrowing money from the Chinese to give a person in America who makes \$10 million a year \$1 million in a tax cut.

Now somebody come down here and explain how that is a good thing for our country because the money that they get, that \$1 million, they are not investing it in Delphi stock. They are not investing it in General Motors stock, they are not investing it into the United States of America. They are investing it in China.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to have Mr. RYAN please tell us the phone call that you got, what happened in your district today to the workers?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. About 6:30, 7:00 this morning my e-mail goes off. I pick it up. The third shift at a General Motors plant that I have in Lordstown, Ohio, the third shift is being eliminated, and 1,200 United Auto workers, nothing is official, but the third shift is being eliminated and 1,200 people will be out of work. Those are average people in the United States of America that are making \$60,000 or \$70,000 a year, paying taxes and trying to send their kids to school and we are giving a person who makes \$10 million a year a \$1 million tax cut. That makes no sense to anybody except the Republican majority.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. RYAN.

This is something to be very concerned about. We started at the top of the hour, and I am glad the Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ has also joined us.

The bottom line is that Mr. ROTHMAN is 110 percent right. What they say on the Republican side, especially here in this Chamber and in this city and what the White House says, I am going to tell you, I am not talking about anybody, but I am just talking about what I am talking about. You hear one thing and there is another.

You got an answer out of the IRS official that came before your committee. You got an answer out of Secretary Snow, and you got to nail them to the wall to get the answer because the administration said this is the direction we are going to go, we are going to write it in the budget; and Mr. Secretary, you will do as you are told.

Secretary Snow, the Secretary of the United States Treasury Department, appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, he is a great American and I appreciate his service. But he has to do his job. He did not only send one letter that said we had to raise the debt ceiling or we are going to run out of money on the eve of New Year's eve, December 29th, 2005, he came back into the office while the rest of us were baking cookies and celebrating religious holidays back home with the family, to say we are going to run out of money because the Republican Congress has passed policies, Mr. Speaker, that cannot hold water and it is going to run us into a fiscal nightmare.

Not only did he write that letter, he turned around again when the Congress did not act, February 16, same letter. Hey, things are really getting bad, you all, we have to do something. Please help us. We have to do something about this debt ceiling.

March 6, and these are the Republican rubber stamps here, but on March 6 he writes again in almost desperation. Please, raise the debt ceiling. He begged the Congress to do it. Here is the gentleman who is in charge of what we do.

Now what Mr. RYAN was sharing with us a little earlier was the fact that when you have Members come to the floor and say Mr. Speaker, or what have you, or Members, we are fiscally responsible, our tax cuts are working for the American people. What Mr. RYAN was saying, and I am going to take it home a little further, tax cuts for whom? What, we are going to borrow money from another country, Mr. ROTHMAN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. Speaker, we are going to borrow money from another country to give millionaires a tax break here in this country? I am sorry, and it has been done by this Republican majority. Guess what, it is history in all the wrong way. In 4 years, and here is the President, here is the Republican Congress.

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, not only is the gentleman absolutely correct that this is what this President and the Republican majority have done for 5½ years, they want to make this policy permanent. They want to make it permanent. Permanent tax cuts for individuals making over a million dollars a year. Permanent tax cuts for people making over \$400,000 a year, the sum of which is greater than all we spend on homeland security, and they want to make it permanent. If we vote against it, you know what they say, there they go again, the Democrats want to raise taxes. We do not want to raise taxes, we want sensible fiscal policy that does not give us the biggest deficit in the history of the United States and does not give the people making millions of dollars a year a million dollar tax cut.

□ 2130

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ROTHMAN. Yes, of course.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Do you know what else we want as Democrats? We just want the Congress to do what American families all across this country do. They only pay for what they have money to pay for. They pay as they go. Now, there are a lot of families, unfortunately in this country that get themselves into trouble. They run up debt on their credit cards. They end up spending a lifetime hand wringing over how much debt they have because they have paid for luxuries on credit that they didn't have revenue in their household coming in to cover. That is what we are doing here. And there is no end in sight.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Will the gentleman yield for a second?

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Yes, be happy to yield.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I am just going to close out on this and then I am going to back up, because I know that Congressman DELAHUNT, sir, you were very reserved last night. We were limited to 50 minutes. I just want you to be able to share, because I know you are ready to come out of the locker room on some of this stuff, and I think it is important that we hear from you this evening.

But I want to make sure, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, that we break this down, because we don't want any Members to go back home and say, you know, I didn't quite understand that at the time I voted for it. I want to make sure that their constituents know exactly what is going on.

And the bottom line is that we are borrowing from foreign nations more than we have ever borrowed in the history of the republic, Mr. Speaker, in the history of the United States Congress.

You heard it. They want to make it permanent. It is not what we are saying. That is what the majority is saying. 1.05 trillion in 4 years. That is what the Republican Congress and the President has done, more than 42 presidents, and was only able to borrow 1.01 trillion over 224 years. 224 years. And I don't even need to get into what happened in the 224 years.

Who are we borrowing from? Well, let's just look at it. I am not going to pull this off because it came apart last night. It is just so much here.

Look at Japan, Mr. Speaker. Japan. We owe Japan. While folks are running around here defending people that are making \$10 million a year, that they may very well have to pay their fair share for homeland security and all of that as it relates to the tax cut that this majority wants to make permanent. Japan, \$882.8 billion of American apple pie. It pains me to stand here and hold this poster like this. I am glad it's not my creation. I am glad I voted against all of this debt that we have given foreign nations.

Mr. DELAHUNT. If the gentleman would just yield for a minute.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I would just yield for a minute, but please allow me to get through this.

Mr. DELAHUNT. 30 seconds. I will let you get back to it. But you know what? I am just looking at that, Japan at \$680 billion. Japan is actually subsidizing partially that tax cut, or that tax refund for the extremely wealthy in this country. I mean, that is where that money is going. I wonder if that extremely wealthy taxpayer might consider taking that tax refund in yen?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Just save the transactional cost.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Because the way we are going, we are going to bankrupt this United States of America.

Mr. ROTHMAN. Will the gentleman yield? I have a statistic you won't believe. I happen to serve on the House Appropriations Committee.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Yes, sir.

Mr. ROTHMAN. And we were only inspecting 5 percent of the containers. That was the Republican majority's policy. They were in charge. They made the rule. The majority rules, and they won.

We said in the House Appropriations Committee, we said to our colleagues, our Republican friends, if we cut \$5,000 from the 80 or \$100,000 tax cut, 80 or \$100,000 tax cut, depending how much money these folks make, if we just take 5,000 from the 80,000 we are sending them, we could triple the number of containers we inspect from 5 percent to 15 percent.

And do you know what every single one of my Republican colleague on the House Appropriations Committee did? They voted against it.

And I went to them and I said hey, man, what are you doing? I have nothing against people who are worth a fortune. This isn't class warfare. Do you want to give it to them, or do you want to spend it on inspecting our containers coming into the port? And they said, we are sorry, STEVE. This was the President's directive.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ROTHMAN. Yes.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Because I want to illuminate what you just said because actually, we put our action where our words are, because it is not just that we said that we should drop those tax cuts by just a little bit and make sure we could fund port security. Here is the third party validation that we always talk about.

On June 18, 2004, there was an amendment by Representative DAVE OBEY, who is the ranking member on the Appropriations Committee that Mr. ROTHMAN sits on. He offered an amendment to increase port and container security by \$400 million. Republicans refused to allow consideration of that amendment.

October 7, 2004 an amendment offered by Representatives OBEY and SABO and Senator BYRD that would have in-

creased funding to enhance port security by \$150 million. Republicans defeated this amendment along party lines.

September 29, 2005, just last fall, there was an amendment which Representatives OBEY, SABO and Senator BYRD, again, to increase funding for port and container security by \$300 million; all of these proposing to drop the tax cut for the wealthiest Americans by just a small amount of money. The House Conferees, led by the Republicans, defeated this amendment along party lines.

And March 2, 2006, Republicans blocked an effort by Democrats to bring the King-Thompson Dubai port deal bill to the floor, which would have expedited procedures to ensure a congressional vote on the Dubai port deal bill sponsored by a Republican and a Democrat. And Republicans voted against that 197-216. So who is for port security?

Mr. ROTHMAN. By the way, the incomes of the people who were going to have their tax cut reduced by 5,000 were only individuals whose annual income was \$1 million or more. And we said, can we take 5,000 from the 80 or 100 or 150,000 they are going to get in tax cuts, take 5,000 to increase our port inspection of our containers. And every Republican said no. Mr. Speaker, that is the priority of this Republican majority and this President.

Mr. DELAHUNT. You know, if I can interject for a moment, your point is well made. And I think the American people have to realize that these statistics that they are hearing tonight are accurate. That New York Times piece that we were referring to earlier, it goes on to say that because of these recent tax cuts, even the merely rich, even those that are very rich, making hundreds of thousands of dollars a year, and I am reading from that piece, are falling behind the very, very wealthiest. In other words, what we are doing, we are creating a super rich elite in this country.

There was another New York Times story that came across my desk. And for those that are listening to our conversation this evening, I would refer them to an article that appeared in the New York Times on January 29 of this year. Corporate wealth share rises for top income Americans. In 2003, and this is the most recent data, the top 1 percent of households owned 57½ percent of corporate wealth in this country. That was up from 53.4 percent the year before. This top group, this 1 percent, in 1991 had 38.7 percent. In other words, this 1 percent is doing so well that they are leaving everybody behind. The top 1 percent is gaining so much money and corporate wealth in this Nation that the other 99 percent have experienced a decline in their share of the wealth of America.

Mr. ROTHMAN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DELAHUNT. Sure.

Mr. ROTHMAN. You know, some people will say, oh, there the Democrats

go again, class warfare. There they go again, class warfare. Nonsense. We love rich people. We love poor people. We love middle class people. We love Americans. This is about the choices that America is going to make with their tax dollars.

What should we do with the tax dollars that people send to Washington? Should we give them, by the way, the recession is over. We are in the start of the fourth year of the war in Iraq. We are still paying for Katrina and Hurricane Rita.

With all of these problems and the recession over 3 years ago, is this the time not only to continue these tax cuts that benefit the wealthiest people making over \$400,000 a year, millions of dollars a year? Or should we, in fact, pay off some of the debt, spend down the deficit, pay for college for kids.

Mr. DELAHUNT. How about restraining spending?

Mr. ROTHMAN. And remember this, not only has this been the policy that has put us in the largest deficit in the history of the country, the Republican majority and the President want to make this policy permanent. They want to make their tax cuts for the rich permanent.

They will claim we are against wealthy people. Class warfare. Nonsense. We want the money that we send to Washington spent wisely and not given away.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. It is important to note that this is a matter of priorities. What is sad, and I am the least senior among the five of us, and what I have found the most sad since joining the Congress and joining you all last year, is how far astray we have come from when President Clinton was in office.

When President Clinton was in office and I was in my state legislature in Florida, what I watched Congress debate was what we were going to spend the surplus on. Were we going to use the surplus that we had at that time to shore up Social Security? Were we going to shore up Medicare? We didn't have a deficit. We had a surplus.

And Mr. MEEK, I think it would be a good idea for you to get back to really describing the scope of the foreign debt that we have here, because we got you mid map. But we really need to make sure that people understand the stark contrast between what we were able to debate during the Clinton administration and what we are forced to debate now. So I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. And if we could, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, I am going to go through this, because it was really to drive home a point that Mr. RYAN was making. And then Mr. RYAN was going to share that chart there, because I think these visual aids are needed at this particular time, because we have some Members that don't necessarily, I mean, I just don't want the American people to be hoodwinked. Some may say bamboozled. We say here in Washington, D.C., you

know, to get the Potomac 2-step on folks saying they didn't quite understand what they were doing while they were making history here in the United States of America of allowing these countries to own, Mr. Speaker, own a part of the American apple pie.

I am just, once again, going to mention Japan. We stopped there. But I think we could move across the country, okay? I think we can. \$692.8 billion. Japan has bought our debt.

Again, this Republican Congress is saying we want to make tax cuts permanent to billionaires and we want to give subsidies to companies that come in number one in profits this year, and that is one industry, which is the oil industry.

China, \$249.8 billion. They bought up our debt. That means that they have given us money to spend in a way as though we are spending our own money. We owe them this money.

America will be forever changed. But if you want to do away with allowing these countries to cover our States because of the debt that we owe them, then you can elect a Democratic Congress. I am going to slide this over a little bit.

The U.K, United Kingdom, \$223.2 billion that they own of our debt.

Now, you have got to remember. This is a 4-year deal. This is the Bush policies and the Congress, the Republican majority that have voted time after time to back the President up on this. They have even lost the former speaker, Mr. Speaker, of the House, Newt Gingrich. And we need to read his quote to the Knight Ridder newspapers that cover this Nation.

Caribbean nations. Many of you will be spending time there, vacation time there. It is important. It is important that people understand that they own \$115.3 billion of our debt.

Taiwan. You go in your room, unfortunately many of the toys there that your kids and grandkids may have may have Taiwan on it. We owe them \$71.33 billion that they have bought of our debt.

Canada, just north of us. We owe them \$53.8 billion of our debt.

□ 2145

We will take them off there. Korea, \$66.5 billion we owe Korea because this Congress has said that we have to give subsidies to industry because they wanted it and that is something that we need to get back to. I do not blame industry. I blame the Republican Congress.

Germany, \$65.7 billion we owe Germany. OPEC nations, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Iran, we owe them \$67.8 billion of the American apple pie.

Now, before I yield to you, Mr. RYAN, I just want to say it is almost like I bust through the door at home and say, Hey, let us go on a European vacation. We are living to from paycheck to paycheck, but let us go because I am going to put it all on the credit card. As a matter of fact, in this case our credit

cards are maxed out, but I am going to sign one of those little letters that come into the house that say just sign here, automatic country. That is what we are going to use to vacation on. Everyone is happy, jumping up and down, but guess what. The bill is coming in in 30 days.

And soon folks, Mr. Speaker, are going to start calling the House, and they are not going to call and say, "May I speak to Mr. MEEK." They are going to say, "I want to speak to KENDRICK," because they disrespect you when owe them. Too many men and women laid down their lives and that are bleeding now, getting sand in their teeth for us to have the right to salute one flag, and I will be doggone if we stand here like it is just regular business here in Congress and allow this Republican majority to go without anyone checking them on this. But it is not just us. We have even got Republicans coming out, folks over there are talking about spending, that we are responsible, that we are good spenders. Yes, you are great spenders and borrowers at the same time. And so when you come to the floor, majority, and start talking about fiscal responsibility, just because you say it does not necessarily mean it is happening. I want you to come to this floor, grab these charts here that are sitting right over here in the corner, and explain what is good about them because these are your policies.

So, Mr. RYAN, what you were mentioning earlier, I just want to drive this point home because when folks start talking about "we want to make sure the American people keep their money," well, we want to make sure the American people keep their money. But who are the people? Is it the \$10 million annual salary individual? Is it the individual sitting over there at some company that is getting a bonus at the same time they are telling their third shift that there will no longer be a third shift?

So the real issue here is whose side are we on? Whose side is the Republican majority on? And from what I am seeing of the polls, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, when I am hearing prominent Republicans saying "because we are Americans first," put that party stuff aside just for a moment and look at Democrats, Republicans, Independents, Green Party, nonvoters, they are all concerned about what is happening in this country. And I am going to tell you right now the Republican majority, and it is not what I am saying but what they are saying, cannot govern. We are ready to govern.

Mr. RYAN, I yield to you, sir.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I appreciate that, and I wish the Republican majority would start putting the country before their own political interests. It seems that time and time again they have chosen the loyalty to their own party.

We have got a nice third party validator here. The former Republican Director of the Congressional Budget

Office, who was talking about the borrow and spend Republican Congress, he said, Budgeting is about making choices, and this period the Bush presidency and Republican Congress is one that shows a complete absence of that.

They do not have to make any choices. Why? You get the credit card out. But let us take your analogy one step further. You have got the credit card. You are going to Europe, but you are living paycheck to paycheck. Who ultimately suffers in that little family scenario there? The kids. Because there will not be money for education. There will not be money for the health care bill, and they will become a burden on the rest of society. All the way down the line the ripple effect goes.

And as Mr. MEEK and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ were saying earlier, this is what they are doing. They have increased the debt limit in the United States by \$3 trillion, trillion with a big fat "t." In June of 2002, May of 2003, November of 2004, March of 2006, total over \$3 trillion, this Congress raised the debt ceiling that would allow the Secretary of Treasury to go out and borrow money from all the countries that Mr. MEEK showed. Time and time and time again.

I just want to reiterate the point that Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ made, and that point is this: The Democrats, whether it is port security or pay-as-you-go, time and time again we tried to restrain, pull in this Republican Congress, get yourselves under control.

And I know, Mr. ROTHMAN, you were probably in the committee when these amendments were being offered time and time again by Mr. OBEY, not once but twice, by Mr. SPRATT and the Budget Committee, by Charlie Stenholm when he was here. The Democratic Party was trying to say if you are going to raise the debt limit, you had better put some restraints on the runaway spending that these Republicans have gotten into a very bad habit of doing over the past 4 or 5 years. This is ridiculous. We are sacrificing the future of the United States of America, selling it off piece by piece, diminishing opportunity for our kids and our grandkids, and at the same time just spending money like it does not matter. Let us be responsible in the United States Congress, Mr. MEEK. Mr. Speaker, let us be responsible here. We have a solemn oath that we swear to when we come into this Congress. One of the great honors is to be in this Chamber. Only 10,000 people have actually served in this body. Let us take the responsibility seriously.

And one final point, like Mr. MEEK said, we have a responsibility. And people may grumble when we walk by them in the hall, and they may look at us a little cross eyed because we come down here every night, but we have an obligation to the American people. And if we have got to crack a few eggs to make an omelet, then so be it. And I have a lot of respect for the people on the other side of the aisle, and many of

them are our friends, but we have legitimate differences here.

And I would say this to my friends, Mr. Speaker: You have borrowed \$3 trillion from foreign interests, raised the debt ceiling, cut funding for education, and you gave tax cuts to people who make \$10 million a year. You have given them \$1 million back. Do you expect us to sit up in our office and go to the little refrigerator and get out a Diet Dr. Pepper and a bag of Cheetos and just sit there and watch VH-1 in our office? No, we are not going to do it. We are going to keep coming down here until the American people get the message.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. And that is because we did not come here to just sit idly by and not express the outrage that our constituents communicate to us when we go home.

The chart that you had up there a minute ago, Mr. RYAN, the one with the blue background that says "Borrow and spend Republican Congress," that really says it all because what Mr. ROTHMAN said earlier is that our critics, Democratic critics, like to throw around that Democrats are supportive of class warfare, and I am not going to repeat their message. I am going to make sure that we get across like we do every single night here in the 30-Something Working Group that what is going on here in Washington is a borrow and spend Republican Congress. And it is not true just because we are here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives saying it is true. We have third-party validators that say it is true.

USA Today on Monday, April 3, 2006, headline: "Growth in Federal Spending Unchecked." The borrow and spend Republican Congress. A USA Today editorial on February 21 of this year, the title of it was "Who's Spending Big Now? The party of 'small government.'"

"Tax cuts, they say, force hard decisions and restrain reckless spending. The last time we looked, though, Republicans controlled both Congress and the White House. They are the spenders. In fact, since they took control in 2001, they have increased spending by an average of nearly 7.5 percent a year, more than double the rate in the last 5 years of Clinton-era budgets."

Now, what we talk about on this floor every night is the difference between words and actions. They can say that they are the party of small government and more personal responsibility and the claptrap that they like to throw around that are just words.

Mr. ROTHMAN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MEEK. I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. ROTHMAN. It is important for people to understand that this majority came in saying that we needed to balance the budget and that is why the American people should elect a Republican majority. When I was the mayor of my hometown 25 years ago, a little

city in New Jersey, we had to balance the budget every year. And we did. We left them with a surplus, but at least balance the budget. And they said, well, let us make a constitutional amendment. And we said, Why are you amending the Constitution? You are in the majority. Balance the budget. You have the majority. Balance the budget.

So in terms of third-party validation, Mr. Speaker, the American people know that the Republican Party has been in power, in the majority, in the House and the Senate for about 5½ years, with President Bush as our President for 5½ years. And we have the greatest deficits in history. We are projected to have deficits for the next 15, 20 years with no end in sight, with budget cuts to education, health care, veterans, college loans, the environment, clean air, clean water. Cut, cut, cut, cut everything, except tax cuts for the wealthiest. And, again, I do not want to harp on that because tax cuts for the working people are important. But is this the time to continue that policy ad infinitum and make them permanent? I do not think so.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. What you are pointing out is there are consequences to the fiscal recklessness. That is what I have observed for the last 15 months. It is just fiscal recklessness.

The most glaring consequence is right here in front of us with what Mr. RYAN talked about that happened in a town in his district. Twelve hundred jobs gone. Seven point two million Americans today remain unemployed with an additional 4.2 million who want a job but who are not counted among the unemployed. Since this President took office, the economy has posted only 15 months of job gains that have 150,000 or more. That is just the number of jobs that we need to keep up with population growth.

But the most telling, which is the one that is evidenced by what happened in the town in your district, Mr. RYAN, is that there are now 1.3 million more unemployed private sector workers than in January, 2001. The long-term unemployment rate, people who are unemployed for more than 26 weeks, has nearly doubled since that time. And the manufacturing jobs that we have lost literally have reached 2.9 million since 2001.

There are day-to-day policy implications that affect people's lives that result from the fiscal recklessness. There are consequences. The Republican economic disaster is hurting real people.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Can I intervene here for one second because I am thrilled with everything that is happening here. But I came down here to listen to Mr. DELAHUNT a little bit.

Mr. ROTHMAN. That is a good idea.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I just want to congratulate you all for a very thoughtful conversation. You have hammered home the truth.

And I think what we are saying to the American people is that if you gov-

ern, you have to govern responsibly and that your rhetoric has to match your deeds. Otherwise, you fail the American people. And the truth is that today in America, this administration, this Bush White House, and this Bush Congress are failing the American people.

DEBBIE was making a point about the job growth. I think what is more telling is that the jobs that are being produced today and the jobs that currently exist are paying less. A family of four in America today is making less than that same family income 10 years ago. This is not about criticism. This is about telling the truth and being responsible.

□ 2200

We use terms like PAYGO. Well, I think we owe the American people an explanation of what PAYGO means. It means what they do most every day of their lives. They make decisions and choices based upon what they have in their pocket, and if they don't have the money in their pocket, they don't buy it. It is really that simple.

That is what we are talking about this evening and on other occasions. Let's go back to those real conservative values, those genuine American, conservative values. I can't believe I am saying this. But the longer I serve in this body and listen to the neoconservatives, I find myself describing my own philosophy as fiscally conservative.

Ironically, it is the Democratic Party today that stands for sanity and stands for responsibility and doing it the old-fashioned way. That is what we are. Maybe we are an old, traditional party. But, do you know what? We made America great. When America was in trouble because of the Depression, it was those great Democrats Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Harry Truman that brought the country back, because we know there is a social compact out there that doesn't say only the very, very wealthy get most of everything. In a society which is really a community, where there are mutual rights and responsibilities, everybody has a shot.

Today what we are seeing is America becoming much like a banana republic, where it is the haves, the elites, and then there are the rest of us, and that is sad.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I think the gentleman makes a great point. America is not the only country with really, really rich people. There are wealthy people in every country. The difference in America is that we had a strong, vibrant, energetic middle-class of people who worked as of last night on the third shift at the GM plant in Lordstown, Ohio. That is what makes America America, and that resolve to go back and say we want everybody on board here, at least to have the opportunity; not to give the top 10 million people who make \$10 million a year a tax cut, \$1 million back, but to

create that middle-class again and the economic environment that would do it.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I just want to give one quick statistic. Here is another third-party validator, the Tax Policy Center. And here is the startling contrast between the tax cuts that Mr. ROTHMAN was talking about that go to the wealthiest few and what the tax cuts have provided for the average working family in middle income America. In 2006, according to the Tax Policy Center, millionaires received an average tax cut of \$111,550, while the middle-class American received a tax cut of \$750.

When I asked in my town hall meetings, and I represent a pretty middle-income, even middle to upper-middle income district, I have a lot of wealthy communities and a lot of upper-middle class communities and some middle to lower-middle income communities, no matter what kind of room, other than the wealthiest few, that I ask people to raise their hands to tell me whether they got money in their pocket from the Bush tax cuts, maybe in rooms full of several hundred people I will get two or three people that raise their hand.

If this tax relief was benefiting a wide swath of Americans, the broad spectrum of Americans of varied income, in a district like mine you would get more than three hands.

Mr. ROTHMAN. May I just remind the Speaker that today Secretary of the Treasury John Snow said in his testimony before our subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee that the tax cuts of this majority and President Bush account for one-third of the deficit, and that every dollar that is cut for the wealthiest folks in tax cuts, we don't get back more than a dollar in revenue. We lose. For every tax dollar we cut, we only get back 30 to 40 cents. We lose 60 to 70 cents for every tax dollar we cut.

Whether that is a good thing or bad thing, the American people can decide. But in a time of war, the biggest deficits in our history, is that what we want to be doing with our money, and should we be making those tax cuts permanent?

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. If the gentleman would yield, as I was in my office and I saw this very focused message, let me just briefly say that today we added insult to injury by the debate on the floor regarding the 527s.

I know we are talking about the massive tax cuts, but I think the American people should know, rather than focusing on the seriousness of addressing these monumental tax cuts, frankly, as was distributed on the floor today, we are just passing legislation that allows random excessive spending as relates to campaigns.

So what I say to my friends on this side, the other side of the aisle, is why waste time with, as they say, this massive spending of dollars in campaigning, and not really providing transparency for the American people

to note, making a mirage on the Floor of the House that we are trying to do something good about scandal and corruption, and, at the same time, not spending our time focusing on correcting this deficit, correcting this increasing debt limit and spending the people's money by enormous tax cuts.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. If I can, as it relates to time, Mr. RYAN, if you could give our website. We have to close out.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I want to do one-third party final validator. The former speaker the House, Mr. Gingrich, the leader of the Republican Revolution in '94. He said the Republicans, they are seen by the country as being in charge of a government that can't function.

As my friend from Florida so eloquently put it earlier today on the House floor, it is scary when the head of the Republican Revolution is referring to his friends on the other side of the aisle as "they." I think that is a tremendous point.

[www.housedemocrats.gov/30something](http://www.housedemocrats.gov/30something). Madam Speaker. [www.housedemocrats.gov/30something](http://www.housedemocrats.gov/30something) for e-mails that folks may want to send to us. All these charts that were available here tonight, Madam Speaker, are available on this website. I thank everyone for the vigorous discussion.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, we would like to thank the leadership for the opportunity to speak tonight.

#### IRAN: THE NEXT NEOCON TARGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. Foxx). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for half the time remaining until midnight.

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, it has been 3 years since the U.S. launched its war against Saddam Hussein and his weapons of mass destruction. Of course, now almost everybody knows there were no weapons of mass destruction and Saddam Hussein posed no threat to the United States. Though some of our soldiers serving in Iraq still believe they are there because Saddam Hussein was involved in 9/11, even the administration now acknowledges that there was no connection.

Indeed, no one can be absolutely certain why we invaded Iraq. The current excuse, also given for staying in Iraq, is to make it a democratic state friendly to the United States. There are now fewer denials that securing oil supplies played a significant role in our decision to go into Iraq and stay there. That certainly would explain why the U.S. taxpayers are paying such a price to build and maintain numerous, huge, permanent military bases in Iraq. There are also funding a new \$1 billion embassy, the largest in the world.

The significant question we must ask ourselves is, what have we learned from these 3 years in Iraq? With plans now being laid for regime change in Iran, it appears we have learned abso-

lutely nothing. There still are plenty of administration officials who daily paint a rosy picture of the Iraq we have created. But I wonder, if the past 3 years were nothing more than a bad dream and our Nation suddenly awakened, how many would for national security reasons urge the same invasion? Or would we instead give a gigantic sigh of relief that it was only a bad dream, that we need not relive the 3-year nightmare of death, destruction, chaos and stupendous consumption of tax dollars? Conceivably, we would still see oil prices under \$30 a barrel, and, most importantly, 20,000 severe U.S. casualties would not have occurred. My guess is 99 percent of all Americans would be thankful it was only a bad dream and would never support the invasion knowing what we know today.

Even with the horrible results of the past 3 years, Congress is abuzz with plans to change the Iranian government. There is little resistance to the rise and clamor for democratization in Iran, even though their current President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, is an elected leader.

Though Iran is hardly a perfect democracy, its system is far superior to most of our Arab allies, about which we never complain. Already the coordinated propaganda has galvanized the American people against Iran for the supposed threat it poses to us with weapons of mass destruction that are no more present than those Saddam Hussein was alleged to have had.

It is amazing how soon after being thoroughly discredited over the charges levied against Saddam Hussein the neoconservatives are willing to use the same arguments against Iran. It is frightening to see how easily Congress, the media and the people accept many of the same arguments against Iran that were used to justify an invasion of Iraq.

Since 2001, we have spent over \$300 billion and occupied two Muslim nations, Afghanistan and Iraq. We are poorer, but certainly not safer, for it. We invaded Afghanistan to get Osama bin Laden, the ringleader behind 9/11. This effort has been virtually abandoned. Even though the Taliban was removed from power in Afghanistan, most of the country is now occupied and controlled by warlords who manage a drug trade bigger than ever before. Removing the Taliban from power in Afghanistan actually served the interests of Iran, the Taliban's arch-enemy, more than our own.

The long time neocon goal to remake Iraq prompted us to abandon the search for Osama bin Laden. The invasion of Iraq in 2003 was hyped as a noble mission, justified by misrepresentation of intelligence concerning Saddam Hussein and his ability to attack us and his neighbors. This failed policy has created the current chaos in Iraq, chaos that many describe as a civil war.

Saddam Hussein is out of power, and most people are pleased. Yet some