

see how the Republican majority has turned this House into an undemocratic institution where the people who are elected by the people cannot even have the ability to speak their minds.

We are fighting for democracy in Iraq, but we will not allow democracy on the floor of the United States House of Representatives. For shame.

The average American is not stupid. In fact, the average American is very smart. The average American knows that when he or she has a budget they must live within their budget. They make a certain amount of money. They take home that money. They have to pay their bills with that money, and they know that they cannot week in and week out spend more than they take in. A person can do it for a while. They can charge everything on their credit card for a while. They can keep paying minimums on their credit card for a while, but sooner or later the bubble is going to burst. That is what we are doing here in the United States Congress.

My Republican friends talk a good game about balancing the budget and a balanced budget amendment, and by the way, the balanced budget amendment passed here in the House several years ago, failed by one vote in the Senate, and the Republicans, despite having the majority in both Houses, have not brought it up again.

The fact of the matter is that when Bill Clinton left office we had a surplus of \$200 billion per year, and now in two short years we have a deficit of \$400 billion per year, and these tax cuts, mainly for the wealthy, will dig us deeper and deeper and deeper in a hole.

We are leaving our children and our grandchildren with a legacy of debt. We are having an orgy now of tax cuts and saying to our future generations, you pay the bill. We are going to walk away. We are going to do things that are easy. Everyone likes a tax cut. Of course, a majority of people favor the tax cuts. Everyone wants more money in their pockets, but what are we doing to our children and our grandchildren and the fiscal responsibility of this country?

The Republican leadership, the Republican majority here wants to do this, in my estimation, deliberately. The ancillary benefits, giving their rich friends a tax cut, is only an ancillary benefit. They want to starve this government and make it impossible for there to be any kind of program, entitlement programs like Social Security or Medicare or Medicaid or education, for our children. They do not want it so a balanced budget goes out the window. Deficits and deficits.

Let us take a quote from the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the current majority leader. This is what he said in 1995, "By the year 2002, we can have a Federal Government with a balanced budget or we can continue down the present path toward total fiscal catastrophe." That was in 1995. I ask the majority leader and the people

on the other side of the aisle, what was true in 1995 is certainly true in 2003. We cannot continue to run these deficits. We cannot continue to have this kind of fiscal irresponsibility. The borrow and spend Republicans cannot continue to lead this country down a path of fiscal irresponsibility.

It is a disgrace that we now have to take to the floor of the House after the bill has been voted on because we could not get the time to talk before.

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

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

TAX CUTS AND THE ECONOMY

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

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, just 3 years ago when the President took office, San Jose, California's unemployment rate was only 1.7 percent. At that time, our Nation had a projected \$5.6 trillion 10-year surplus. Today, instead, we have an 8.5 percent unemployment rate in Santa Clara County, and with this tax package a \$2 trillion projected national deficit.

Since the President took office, San Jose has lost almost 16 percent of its jobs. When all is said and done, it is projected that we will, in fact, use the over \$12 trillion in debt ceiling that Republicans slipped into the budget resolution a few weeks ago. What a turnaround.

What does the President propose? For the most part, more of the same failed tax schemes. Tax cuts for a select few have done nothing to improve the economy so far and more of the same will not help. Further, the Republican tax plan does nothing to help unemployed workers and will leave millions of families out in the cold when their unemployment benefits expire on May 31.

Mr. Speaker, since the President took office, California has lost 239,000 jobs. Over 175,000 of those jobs were deleted from my home, Santa Clara County, and I hear from people at home, well-qualified, well-educated and talented people who have been laid off for over a year, people who have sent out 2,000 resumes who cannot get a job interview, people whose stock portfolios are shot, whose bank accounts are drained, whose unemployment insurance is running out and who cannot find work.

It is pathetic that the President's answer is this tax cut scheme. While there are a few temporary crumbs to small business and normal people, the vast majority of the financial impact is caused by the tax cuts for the few, which will not create economic growth. The President's words about creating

jobs and stimulating growth are right. It is just that his plan is disconnected from his rhetoric.

He must think the unemployed are also dumb, that they will not see the truth of what is happening here, but I think he is wrong on that score and is it not ironic that those few provisions in this tax bill we passed today, like the child tax credit and marriage tax reform and expensing for small businesses, the things that benefit normal people, those sunset. The real expensive part of the program that is skewed to the select, those go on forever.

The Republican plan is irresponsible, deceptive, will not create jobs or grow the economy and will saddle the country with debt to hurt our potential for long-term economic growth. We are actually borrowing money from the Social Security Trust Fund to cut taxes for the top 5 percent of households.

Economists tell us that this plan is the smallest bang for the buck in terms of creating economic stimulus of any of the plans that have been publicly discussed. It is projected to create less jobs in the next year than we have lost in the last 2 months.

Republicans both in this House and in the White House talk a lot about faith-based programs. The man who calls the shots here in the House, the majority leader, does not even believe in evolution, and I have heard that is true for the President as well. They have a right to have faith, even when it seems at odds with the facts in their religious lives, but when their faith in tax cuts for the few threaten the economic stability for our Nation, then I think it is time to draw the line on their blind faith.

Today, the Republicans in this House used their narrow majority to shorten debate and prevent consideration of the fiscally responsible growth plan. There is an aura of corruption that clings to the Republican leaders who celebrate the onset of democracy in Iraq but cannot abide real democratic processes in the Congress of our Nation that is supposed to be freedom's leader.

This is a watershed day, one that I think in later years we will recall with dread and with regret.

MORE MEDIA DEREGULATION WILL BE A DISASTER FOR DEMOCRACY

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

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I recently held a town meeting at St. Michael's College in Vermont to discuss an issue that for obvious reasons does not get much media coverage, and we had over 600 people, Vermonters, coming out to this meeting to discuss the issue of corporate control over the media and the impact that further media deregulation will have on the quality of our democracy.