

for his passing. I would like Marlene and the children and grandchildren to know how much we cared for him. I hope that this hour that we have spent talking about him will help them understand the deep, deep effect he had on our lives and on the course of American history, on the course of how we deal with our public lands and how we deal with individuals.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the life and work of Wayne Owens and to send my regards and sympathy to his wife, Marlene and his children and grandchildren.

I had the privilege of serving with Wayne in the House, and I quickly developed a great admiration for his hard work, integrity and dedication to good public policy. We served together on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, where he focused his attention on the Middle East.

Wayne was active on a broad range of issues, and while he spent much of his career focused on weighty matters of international affairs, he never lost sight of the issues that mattered most to people in his home state of Utah.

Wayne was a very effective legislator, and he earned the great respect of Members on both sides of the aisle for his willingness to put politics aside and tackle the important issues of the day.

After Wayne left Congress I continued to have the pleasure of working with him on the Middle East peace process.

As President of the non-profit Center for Middle East Peace, Wayne worked tirelessly to promote continued dialogue between Arabs and Israelis in the Middle East. His goal was to help build economic interaction between Israel and her Arab and Palestinian neighbors and through that work, to support and promote the peace process. He spent much of the last decade meeting with leaders in the region trying to foster peace through economic development.

He was very effective in this role because all sides accepted him as an honest broker.

Even over the last couple of years, when many others gave up hope that Israelis and Palestinians would ever be able to resolve their differences, Wayne continued his work to find common ground.

He was often frustrated—as we all are from time to time—and he understood the realities on the ground, but he never stopped believing that peace was possible.

We will sorely miss Wayne, and his dedication and creativity. As we work toward a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, may we remember Wayne's life and works and let every action we perform be a tribute to his memory.

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to remember the life and work of former Congressman Wayne Owens. I did not know Wayne when he was a member of this body: I met him two years ago when he came to my office asking me to support the Middle East peace process.

Wayne's tireless commitment to Middle East peace, his willingness to reach across party lines, to go anywhere, and to talk to anyone, has been a source of inspiration to all who believe that Arabs and Israelis will one day live together in peace and security. He was a study in moderation and tolerance, a compas-

sionate man who believed that all people deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. Wayne was also a true patriot. He loved his country and he believed that our values of freedom, prosperity, and tolerance should be shared with the entire world, particularly the Middle East.

But what makes this moment most painful for me is that Wayne Owens was my friend. He was a true champion of peace, and he lived and died serving humanity. He will be missed dearly.

THE ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I take to the floor this evening for the first day of the new Congress basically to talk about the economy and my concern about the fact that the Republican majority, President Bush and the Republican majority now in both the House and the other body, really are not doing anything, in my opinion, to address the downturn in the economy, the loss of jobs, the loss of production.

It is of a great deal of concern to me and I know to my constituents. This is their number one concern, what is this Congress and what is this President going to do to turn the economy around. Today is a very important day in that regard, because the President today, in Chicago, we understand, is unveiling his economic stimulus package, what he claims will be the answer to try to revive the economy. Every indication that we have had so far, as Democrats, is that his proposal will not do anything significant to turn the economic situation around, will not create more jobs. It is primarily a plan that benefits the wealthy, the corporate interests, and does very little, certainly very little in the next year or two, that would make any difference in terms of the economic situation in the United States and the world.

Sometimes I think that the White House and the Republican leadership in both Houses here would like us to think that the situation is not that bad and so maybe we do not have to do much in Congress because the economic outlook really is not that bad. Let me assure them that that is certainly not the case. It certainly is not the case with my constituents in New Jersey and it certainly is not the case with any of my fellow Democrats that I talked to today or in the last couple of days since we have returned and since the swearing in.

Just to give some idea, and I will not talk too long about this, Madam Speaker, but since January 2001, when President Bush first took office, private sector employment has been reduced by 2.1 million jobs. The number of jobs that have been lost in that period now, which is essentially 2 years, is over 2 million in the United States.

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If we look at other indicators, business investment since the first quarter of 2001, that is down 10 percent. If I look at the budget outlook, that has deteriorated by \$5 trillion since January 2001.

I do not need to show the statistics. Members are aware that the stock market has declined considerably, unemployment is up, the budget surplus that existed during the Clinton administration which was the first time in almost 20 years that we had actually turned around a budget deficit and we had a budget surplus, and that meant that we were paying down the debt and more jobs were being created and Americans had more money and long-term interest rates were down because of the surplus. In the last 2 years during the term of this Republican President, we have seen that situation go the other way. We now have a budget deficit that is something like \$150 billion, and we anticipate that it will only get worse.

It is only going to get worse unless something is done in this Congress to turn it around. The sad thing is when I listen to some of the suggestions that have been coming out of the White House in the last few weeks, including today, I am concerned that their proposal continues this country down the path of larger tax cuts for the wealthy, for corporate interests, and larger deficits that are only going to make the economic situation worse instead of better.

One of the things by way of background that really bothers me in terms of what comes out of this Republican White House is the notion that somehow the recession began under the previous administration and that the recession is not a product of the Bush administration. Again, let me give some information on that. The National Bureau of Economic Research, Business Cycle Dating Committee, and this is a direct quote, "In November 2001, the committee determined that the peak in business activity occurred in the United States economy in March 2001." A peak marks the end of an expansion and the beginning of a recession. The determination of a peak date in March is, thus, a determination that the expansion that began in March 1991 ended in March 2001, and a recession began in March of that 2001.

So essentially we had 10 years of increased economic activity, of growth, and that ended in March of the first year that President Bush took office after a 10-year expansion that included the entire time that President Clinton was the President of the United States. I do not come here because I want to talk about who did this or who did that, but the bottom line is for Members to suggest that we are not in a bad situation economically today, by any indicator we clearly are, and clearly this recession began under President Bush and has only gotten worse in the 2 years he has been in office.

Now what is the President proposing and why is he proposing what he is proposing today? Well, he claims that he is trying to put together an economic stimulus package that essentially will turn the economy around, create more jobs, get consumer spending up and improve the business cycle.

If we look at what he actually has proposed, it is more of the same. It is more tax cuts, permanent tax cuts primarily for the wealthy. He thinks that he is going to turn the stock market around by a full exclusion of dividends; but, the bottom line is, again, that is only going to help wealthy people.

Media reports on possible elements of the administration's package include the following: full exclusion of dividends from individual taxation; acceleration of marginal tax reductions from the 2001 tax cut; acceleration of child credit increase from the 2001 tax cut; more corporate tax cuts; and possibly some State fiscal relief rumored at \$10 billion. But if we look at what the President is proposing today, it will primarily mean more of the same, more tax cuts and more benefits for the wealthy and for corporate interests, and it will balloon the Federal deficit. It will cost up to \$6 billion over 10 years with more than 80 percent of the cost after 2003.

I think what we are going to see from this administration is essentially more deficits, larger deficits, more money going to the wealthy, and very little, if any, short-term stimulus to the economy that will turn it around. Members do not have to believe me, though. I do not like to get in the well and just talk about what I think. I like to talk about what other third-party commentators have been saying about the President's plan; and I wanted to mention this evening, and I may read all or parts of two comments that were in the New York Times today in reaction to what has already come out about the President's tax proposals and the President's so-called economic stimulus package.

The editorial in today's New York Times is particularly revealing, and I will read parts to give Members an idea why I think what they are saying is so true. The title is "The Charles Schwab Tax Cut." It begins: "The Bush administration never met a domestic problem that tax cuts couldn't cure, and today in Chicago the President is planning to call for more of the same. The centerpiece of Mr. Bush's new economic plan is to eliminate the tax on dividends that will cost the Treasury about \$30 billion over the next decade. In a theoretical world, ending the dividend tax might make sense. Unfortunately, we live in the real one, where it's the wrong move at the wrong time for the benefit of the wrong people.

"Ending the dividend tax cut will not provide the economy with a short-term stimulus, the ostensible goal of the plan. Investors won't be seeing their savings until 2004."

Eliminating the dividend tax, admittedly, has something to commend it,

but as became all too apparent in the financial bubble of the late 1990s, the Tax Code currently contains some perverse incentives for companies to become overly indebted and to manipulate their short-term stock price, instead of paying dividends as a form of prudent profit sharing.

The editorial continues: "If Mr. Bush's mind had been on the long-term economy rather than on politics, he might have listened to the advice of his former Treasury Secretary, Paul O'Neill, and dropped the idea of further tax cuts altogether. But Mr. O'Neill is a former Treasury Secretary for a reason. The President cannot afford to look indifferent to the problems of average Americans in a sluggish economy. These days average Americans own stock, although most of it is in tax-sheltered retirement funds."

This is what they say in conclusion, and I think it is important: "Ending the dividend tax is something almost nobody has been crying out for, except the megabroker Charles Schwab, who made a pitch for it at the economic summit meeting at Waco last summer. The President happened to drop in on the panel on which Mr. Schwab was speaking and pronounced it a good idea. It may turn out to have been one of the most expensive courtesy calls in modern history."

What the New York Times is essentially saying and what the Democrats are saying is that this elimination of the tax on dividends is going to cost the Federal Government a tremendous amount of money, \$300 billion over the next 10 years, but it is not going to do anything to actually put money back into the pockets of consumers. It is not going to create any new jobs. It is not going to provide any real incentive for companies to start new production and create more jobs, do any investment in new production; and all it does is give another huge tax break primarily to very wealthy individuals who own most of the stock. How is this a stimulus? How is this in any way going to help the economy?

I wanted to talk about what the Democrats have in mind, and then I want to give some third-party validation of what we have proposed. Over the last month, the House Democrats have gotten together and basically thought about what needed to be done to try to give some short-term stimulus to the economy, to create jobs, to put more money in people's pockets, to turn things around.

We came up with a set of principles initially, and then yesterday we revealed our actual plan. I think the principles are important and need to be repeated before I mention some of the specifics of the plan.

The principles say any economic stimulus plan should, first, be front loaded and fast acting; second, avoid a mushrooming deficit in the long term; third, boost consumer demand and investment; fourth, help States through their fiscal straits; five, spur the econ-

omy by funding homeland defense; and, last, devote every penny to short-term stimulus.

We are not interested in looking right now at how something is going to impact 10 years from now. We need to get people back to work. We need to put money in consumers' pockets, and we need to make sure whatever we do does not have any ballooning effect and create more of a deficit down the road in 2 or 3 years.

What the Democrats have proposed in that regard is very detailed, but I wanted to just go over some of the more important points, if I could. With regard to individuals in terms of individual tax cuts, basically we are proposing essentially a rebate that Americans get back 10 percent of what they earned in 2001 up to \$6,000 of wages for a couple. This rebate is paid from the Treasury, not from the Social Security trust fund, because one of the other concerns that I have and all of us have as Democrats is not only do we do not want to increase the deficit, but we also do not want to delve into the Social Security and Medicare trust funds and aggravate the deficits that potentially could exist long term in those trust funds. We want to make sure that those trust funds have a surplus and that the money is available for Social Security and Medicare for senior citizens in the future. So our rebate plan does not tap any of the Social Security or Medicare trust funds.

Let me give a little more detail about what the Democrats have in mind. The Democratic plan is \$130 billion as opposed to the Republican plan, which is \$600 billion. Now the \$130 billion is a smaller plan because, again, we do not want to increase the deficit. We are trying to do everything in 2003 to stimulate the economy and not cause long-term deficits. But even with the \$130 billion stimulus, we can create as many as a million jobs, increase consumer spending, and help States out of their fiscal straits because if the States have to significantly cut back on their budgets, that is going to be taking more money out of the economy and could also aggravate the problem in terms of Americans losing their jobs and not having money to spend. We have to address the States as well.

The Democratic plan calls for a 26-week extension of unemployment benefits and a tax rebate of up to \$300 per person, \$600 per couple. It would also permit businesses to increase their write-off on new investments and provide \$31 billion to State and local governments to help defray the cost of domestic security, Medicaid, highway projects and other programs.

Just a little more detail because I do not want to get into all of the details tonight, but in addition to extending the unemployment benefits and offering a tax rebate, the plan would allow small businesses to write off up to \$50,000 of the cost of new investments made in 2003 as opposed to the current maximum write-off of \$250,000. The

plan would also permit companies to depreciate 50 percent of the cost of new plants or equipment in 2003; current law permits them to depreciate only 30 percent.

So we have a program that helps individuals by extending unemployment insurance for at least 26 weeks. We have a program that puts money back in consumers' pockets with the rebates that I mentioned, and we have a plan that helps small businesses, which is the backbone of our economy, to grow and invest in new production and create more jobs.

Lastly, we have an answer that we think can make a difference for the States: as I said, \$31 billion in State aid. The plan would give \$31 billion to States which as I said are struggling with these budget shortfalls, a one-time increase in the Federal share of Medicaid payments amounting to \$10 billion. It would also give them \$10 billion in grants to help them pay for domestic security needs like airport protection and public health preparedness, as well as \$5 billion in Federal aid for highways and \$6 billion for critical State needs to help those most hurt by unemployment and the lackluster economy.

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So, as I said, Madam Speaker, the idea is to help individuals, help small businesses, and help the States. But all of it is designed specifically for the year 2003 to turn the economy around, to provide a stimulus, to create jobs. It is really a job creation program. If you look at what the Democrats have proposed, it is a job creation program. If you look at what the Republicans have proposed, it is a stock market-oriented program. And we know about the volatility of the stock market. I would venture to say that it is highly speculative. Even the White House will say that their dividend plan will not necessarily result in a significant increase in the stock market's performance. Yet they continue to make the highlight of their economic stimulus plan related to eliminating the tax on dividends.

Again, I always say that rather than just listen to me, I would like to have some third-party validator of what I have mentioned this evening in the brief time that I have talked about the need for an economic stimulus. I saw an article, an op-ed that was in today's New York Times, also, by Paul Krugman. He basically criticizes the President's proposal and he talks about the Democratic alternative in a very succinct way. I would just like to read some sections of that now and include the op-ed in its entirety in the RECORD, if I could, Madam Speaker.

It says:

Here's how it works. Faced with a real problem—terrorism, the economy, nukes in North Korea—the Bush administration's response has nothing to do with solving that problem. Instead it exploits the issue to advance its political agenda.

Right now a sensible plan would rush help to the long-term unemployed, whose bene-

fits—in an act of incredible callousness—were allowed to lapse last month. It would provide immediate, large-scale aid to beleaguered State governments, which have been burdened with expensive homeland security mandates even as their revenues have plunged. Given our long-run budget problems, any tax relief would be temporary, and go largely to low- and middle-income families.

That is what the Democrats want to do. What does Paul Krugman say?

Yesterday House Democrats released a plan right out of the textbook: aid to States and the jobless, rebates to everyone. But the centerpiece of the administration's proposal is, of all things, the permanent elimination of taxes on dividends.

So instead of a temporary measure, we get a permanent tax cut. The price tag of the overall plan is a whopping \$600 billion, yet less than \$100 billion will arrive in the first year. The Democratic plan, with an overall price tag of only \$136 billion, actually provides more short-run stimulus.

And instead of helping the needy, the Bush plan is almost ludicrously tilted toward the very, very well off. If you have stocks in a 401(k), your dividends are already tax-sheltered; this proposal gives big breaks only to people who have lots of stock outside their retirement accounts. More than half the benefits would go to people making more than \$200,000 per year, a quarter to people making more than \$1 million per year.

Even the administration's economists barely pretend that this proposal has anything to do with short-run stimulus. Instead they sell it as the answer to various other problems.

I do not want to keep reading, but the point I am trying to make is very simple. What the President appears to have done, and I do not necessarily want to give him bad intentions, is rather than doing a real economic stimulus that is going to have a short-term impact on the economy, turn the economy around and create jobs and put money back in people's pockets, he is trying to simply make more tax cuts primarily for the wealthy, for the corporate interests that are the primary backers of the Republican Party. And he does not even care about the fact that on a long-term basis this is only going to increase the deficit. I just cannot believe that this is the President's and the Republicans' answer to this economic downturn.

I think that as Democrats, we have to do whatever we can over the next few weeks to bare this proposal for what it really is and to make it absolutely clear that this is not going to do anything to turn the economy around.

Madam Speaker, I include the following for the RECORD:

[From the New York Times, Jan. 7, 2003]

AN IRRELEVANT PROPOSAL

(By Paul Krugman)

Here's how it works. Faced with a real problem—terrorism, the economy, nukes in North Korea—the Bush administration's response has nothing to do with solving that problem. Instead it exploits the issue to advance its political agenda.

Nonetheless, the faithful laud our glorious leader's wisdom. For a variety of reasons, including the desire to avoid charges of liberal bias, most reporting is carefully hedged. And the public, reading only praise or he-said-

she-said discussions, never grasps the fundamental disconnect between problem and policy.

And so it goes with the administration's "stimulus" plan.

Boosting a stumbling economy ("It's Clinton's fault!" shouted the claque) isn't rocket science. All a sensible plan must do is focus on the present, not the distant future; on those who are suffering, not on those doing well; and on those who are most likely to spend additional money.

Right now a sensible plan would rush help to the long-term unemployed, whose benefits—in an act of incredible callousness—were allowed to lapse last month. It would provide immediate, large-scale aid to beleaguered state governments, which have been burdened with expensive homeland security mandates even as their revenues have plunged. Given our long-run budget problems, any tax relief would be temporary, and go largely to low- and middle-income families.

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And instead of helping the needy, the Bush plan is almost ludicrously tilted toward the very, very well off. If you have stocks in a 401(k), your dividends are already tax-sheltered; this proposal gives big breaks only to people who have lots of stock outside their retirement accounts. More than half the benefits would go to people making more than \$200,000 per year, a quarter to people making more than \$1 million per year. ("Class warfare!" shouted the claque.)

Even the administration's economists barely pretend that this proposal has anything to do with short-run stimulus. Instead they sell it as the answer to various other problems. (It slices! It dices! It purees!) Above all, it's supposed to end the evil of "double taxation."

Now lots of income faces double taxation, in the sense that the same dollar gets taxed more than once along the way. For example, most of us pay income and payroll taxes when we earn our salary, then pay sales taxes when we spend it. So why has it suddenly become urgent to ensure that dividends, in particular, never be taxed more than once!

That is, if they're taxed at all. In practice, the Bush plan would exempt a lot of income—rich people's income—from all taxes. Thanks to the efforts of lobbyists, today's corporate tax code has as many holes in it as a piece of Swiss cheese, and today's corporations take full advantage. Case in point: Between 1998 and 2001 CSX Corporation, the company run by the incoming Treasury secretary, John Snow, made \$900 million in profits, but paid no net taxes—in fact, it received \$164 million in rebates. This wasn't exceptional; the average tax rate on profits has fallen to a nearly 60-year low.

Anyway, even to debate the pros and cons of dividend taxation is to play the administration's game, which is to change the subject. Weren't we supposed to be talking about emergency economic stimulus?

No doubt the final version of the "stimulus" plan will contain a few genuine recession-fighting measures—a child credit here, an unemployment benefit there, a few crumbs for the states—for which the administration will expect immense gratitude. But

the man in charge—that is, Karl Rove—is clearly betting that the economy will recover on its own, and intends to use the pretense of stimulus mainly as an opportunity to get more tax cuts for the rich.

Ideology aside, will these guys ever decide that their job includes solving problems, not just using them?

I yield to my friend from Oregon.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I appreciate the gentleman coming to the floor to try and explain the differences between these two critical plans. I happen to represent a part of the State of Oregon which has the highest unemployment rate in the United States of America and a part of the State which is particularly hard hit and am very concerned about an effective economic stimulus package. Representing a district with a high and enduring unemployment rate, I do not find that the elimination of the tax on dividends is very high on the agenda of anybody that I meet with in my district and how we are going to put people back to work and how we are going to get the economy rolling again.

I share the gentleman's concerns. Certainly there are some interesting arguments to be made about how best to properly tax corporate profits and/or dividends which result from them, but if one looks underneath that whole issue, we find that many profitable corporations do not pay taxes and, therefore, the dividends are not being double-taxed in any way or form whatsoever. And also many of the individuals who realize these dividends are not the people who are unemployed or are worrying about their future or how to put food on the table for their kids. In fact, as the gentleman said earlier in the discussion, more than two-thirds of the benefits will accrue to people with incomes over \$100,000 a year. The question becomes, is that an effective economic stimulus?

Let us see. A year from now, people will begin to file their taxes, probably most of the folks who clip coupons and dividends would be a little later in the year, so maybe 15 months from now some of those people who earn over \$100,000 a year would realize an additional savings in their taxes or maybe a refund which would come in April or May or June and somehow that is going to provide an economic stimulus in the year 2003 when that does not happen until the year 2004? Beyond that, there is a whole issue of is this not a revisiting of trickle-down economics? If we give a little bit more to the people who are already doing relatively well, or in some cases very well, will they not spend that money in a way to put people back to work? I think there are some real questions about that, but it is at least more artfully presented than it was years ago under the Reagan administration. They are avoiding the words "trickle down."

But as the gentleman discussed, there are alternatives out there. We could certainly look at, as an alternative, things that are going to have a more immediate impact on the econ-

omy of the United States and put more middle- and low-income families back to work or on a more secure economic footing. If we look at, from my perspective on the Transportation Committee, the Nation's incredible underfunding of infrastructure, in my State alone, again the State with the highest unemployment in the union, has discovered that because of construction techniques used for the interstates back in the sixties, we have a \$4 billion bridge problem on I-5, the most vital interstate-international link on the western corridor between Mexico, California, Oregon, Washington and Canada. That is something, in a State in as deep a recession as we are, that is beyond our capabilities. We need some additional help from the Federal Government. We know what the problems are. We could get people to work within months, as soon as the contracts could be let on making those repairs. Critical water. There are a whole host of infrastructure needs, rail, bridges, highways, water, that would put people back to work and would provide secondary benefits to suppliers and small businesses in the communities where the workers would be. All these things would certainly have a much more direct economic impact than a tax break to people who are concerned about the taxation on their dividends that would accrue to them some 16 or 18 months from now. Hopefully by then this issue will be behind us.

The President's plan, of course, is so extraordinarily expensive. I mean, more than half of the President's entire plan is devoted to the concern about people who pay taxes on dividends as opposed to his rather small benefits for people on unemployment. We need a much more robust extension there. We need more worker retraining. There are other issues that could be debated. Whether or not we should have some sort of tax holiday on part of the FICA tax. More than half the families in America pay more in Social Security and Medicare taxes than they do in income taxes to the Federal Government. So if we could provide some relief there but not short the Social Security fund by putting that money back in; the States, as the Democrats have proposed, to provide to the States.

We have heard for years from that side of the aisle, Federal mandates, no unfunded Federal mandates. A whole host of new ones have come down, including the Leave No Child Behind Act and the testing that is required, yet there is no additional money flowing from the Federal Government; yet the States and particularly my State is strapped and the President's tax proposal would actually take money from the States, \$4 billion for the exemption of dividends, so States again would not be able to get taxes from those most well off and would be forced to either cut benefits for everybody else on programs, or essential schools, on health care, or they would have to raise taxes

again on the remaining smaller tax base.

I applaud the gentleman for taking the time to come and try and outline some of these differences here on the floor. It is critical that people know they have a very clear choice. I think over the last couple of years, that was not so clear to many people, but now it is our duty to show them that there are clear choices to be made on some of these very, very critical issues, and this is the first one out of the chute after the elections of last year. I am determined that we will draw the lines and we will show here is what we would do, it is more responsible, it would provide more direct stimulus, it would benefit more people and more people in need in particular as opposed to what is being proposed by the other side of the aisle which is fiscally irresponsible, not paid for, will not kick in for 16 to 18 months or even longer and is really just trying to do what they were already doing before we were in a recession or proposing before we were in a recession but justify it by saying it will help us with a recession.

I thank the gentleman for clarifying those issues.

Mr. PALLONE. I just want to thank my colleague from Oregon for coming down and saying what he said. The thing that is amazing to me, I tried to point out in the beginning that essentially this recession began in March of 2001, I guess 3 months into President Bush's term. Not too long after that he imposed or got the Congress, primarily Republicans, to pass this huge tax cut which primarily went to the wealthy individuals and corporate interests. That has now been around, I guess, for a little over a year approximately and the recession has only gotten worse. So why now are we talking about another major tax cut that essentially does the same thing, making permanent those tax cuts from a year ago and then coming up with this exclusion of tax on dividends which admittedly is being done in order to try to boost up the stock market and therefore again primarily benefits wealthy people. It is sort of like a failed policy has not worked, so why are you going to make it worse? But even beyond that, the idea, as you say, of having the majority of this stimulus package be directly linked to trying to boost the stock market is such a risky thing. We all know the stock market's volatility. It is not necessarily dependent on any one factor. So to suggest that dealing with dividends is somehow going to increase the indexes dramatically I just do not buy, and I think it is so speculative and it is so much easier to do the kinds of things that the Democrats have proposed. I just want to thank you again for joining us.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio.

Ms. KAPTUR. I want to thank my very able colleague the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr.

DEFAZIO) for participating and spearheading this special order this evening. I think when the gentleman from New Jersey reminded us that the current recession was triggered back in March of 2001, we have to ask ourselves, well, what happened there? What happened was again rising oil prices in the global market, which America does not control because we are totally dependent on imports, thrust us into a recession which has only gotten worse and all the pump priming on Wall Street cannot draw us out of it because we are not energy independent. Oil just went up to \$33 a barrel. There is instability obviously in the Middle East, certainly in Venezuela, Colombia, all these places where we are getting our oil, and the kind of short-term stimulus package that you are talking about would be an immediate shot in the arm here in the United States of America, whether it is building bridges, whether it is putting a small tax refund in the pockets of Americans that they can go out and buy things, ordinary Americans who are having trouble meeting ends from paycheck to paycheck. But beyond that, looking at how we can create entire new industries in this country so that we do not have to send our men and women to war for oil but, rather, that we can invest here at home.

Can you imagine the sentinel call it would be across just rural America if we really ratcheted up biofuels production and ethanol and biodiesel from coast to coast, what we could do to replace 25 percent of what we are importing today? I really wanted to say to both of my dear colleagues that there was an editorial in the New York Times on January 5 by Tom Friedman called "A War for Oil." I would like to place it in the RECORD this evening as a part of this discussion and to say with all the pomp and circumstance that occurred here in the House today, the reality is we are faced with a likelihood that we will be at war with Iraq very soon. To do so at a time when we are suffering this major recession here at home, where we have got these rising oil prices globally and we are not energy independent, we are going into huge debt in terms of the government with all these tax payouts left and right to some of the wealthiest people in our country and no help for job creation here in this country, even in the key industry where we are totally vulnerable, that is, new fuels production.

□ 1815

We are importing over 60 percent of what we consume today and paying exorbitant prices for it, and Mr. Friedman says in his article that any war we launch in Iraq will certainly be in part about oil and that the Bush team is preparing to launch that war for oil and to deny the fact is actually laughable. And he says that the Bush policy towards North Korea has made it abundantly clear that the war with Iraq indeed is about oil.

The question is whether it is only about oil. And I am sure that the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), who has been a leader in new-fuels production and energy independence for America, in his own region when we consider the biomass that is out there that could be turned to new-fuels production we can see the jobs and the investment here in the United States that could happen if we would really propel this new industry forward.

What good does it do to give shareholders in multinational oil companies on Wall Street more dividends when those dollars do not have to be invested in this country at all? So much of what Wall Street has been doing is not investing in the United States. They have been moving jobs to Mexico. The other day I just bought some windshield wipers for my car, turned the package over, made in Mexico. In fact I have a question. Is anything made in America anymore? If we look at this past holiday shopping season, what is actually out there that we make? I am glad we can still make bridges if we would only fund them in our country, but try to find an American-made clock, American-made clothing. I just talked to a gentleman today downstairs. He said, Boy, I wish I could find a good pair of shoes. He said, My feet are killing me. And I said, Well, they are not made in America anymore.

What is it that we do make that is not being outsourced somewhere else? So the recession is being exacerbated by the fact that so much of what Wall Street has done with the money is not to put it here but to put it elsewhere where they can pay slave wages to people and then ship all those goods back here. So all this investment, I would be very interested in entertaining a proposal from the Bush administration to require that any benefits to Wall Street be invested in the USA and to do it in a stimulus plan in some of the key sectors where we are strategically vulnerable, including energy, where we are totally dependent on these international imports now more and more every day.

And when we think about the fact that Iraq has the second largest reserves in the world, one of my questions of the Bush administration is, if they are going to go in and take over these reserves, who is going to benefit? Which companies are going to get the benefit of that? Maybe we should do some windfall profits taxes on the companies that are going to be getting all these Iraqi oil concessions and then use those dollars to buy down our public debt and pay off some of the bills that are being added every day with the tax cuts to the wealthiest people in this country.

So I just am very interested in what Tom Friedman said here, and he even talks about handing out drilling concessions to U.S. oil companies and how are those decisions going to be made by the administration. How is the administration going to get through this

issue of nation-building in Iraq? Is this going to be like Somalia? I thought we were not supposed to be involved in nation-building. We are not out of Afghanistan yet. We are paying more and more and more every day. Our troops are on the ground there. Of course there is a press blackout; so you really do not know everything that is happening. We are not going to be out of there for years. The President of Afghanistan was on the board of Unical Oil Company, and when one looks at the movement of oil globally, it is obvious that control of that country and the movement of pipelines is really very essential to the global movement of oil, which is a diminishing world resource.

So the real question I have is, if we are going to have a stimulus package, how do we get investment here at home and how do we displace particularly in the energy area the kind of imports that have now moved us to the brink of war again in the most oil-rich region of the world? I am deeply concerned about the direction of this country and whether or not we have an exit strategy from Iraq. And when we look at the amount of money we are going to be spending on defense in order to move these troops and planes and ships for long periods of time now, the Ohio National Guard just had the longest deployment in Ohio history in that part of the world, and they have just returned home, building airfields, preparing.

This is costing an enormous amount. Imagine if we could invest those dollars here at home and create entire new industries, not just off biofuels, ethanol and biodiesel in the rural countryside, but what about photovoltaics to really ratchet up our knowledge in that key area and manufacture those systems here in the United States not just for use here at home but for use abroad, to really move us into renewable resources of energy for the future. What an incredible job creator that would be, good jobs, high-paying jobs coast to coast in order to buy America true national security and energy independence here at home.

So I want to thank the gentleman for allowing me to share in this Special Order this evening and to say that I agree with Tom Friedman. I am not somebody who wants to go to war for oil. I think we should invest those dollars here at home and help America move beyond the petroleum age into a new age of renewables. I thank both gentlemen.

I include the following editorial for the RECORD:

[From the New York Times, Jan. 5, 2003]
A WAR FOR OIL?

(By Thomas L. Friedman)

Our family spent winter vacation in Colorado, and one day I saw the most unusual site: two women marching around the Aspen Mountain ski lift, waving signs protesting against war in Iraq. One sign said: "Just war or Just Oil?" As I watched this two-woman demonstration, I couldn't help notice the

auto traffic whizzing by them: one gas-guzzling S.U.V. or Jeep after another, with even a Humvee or two tossed in for good measure. The whole scene made me wonder whether those two women weren't—indeed—asking the right question: Is the war that the Bush team is preparing to launch in Iraq really a war for oil?

My short answer is yes. Any war we launch in Iraq will certainly be—in part—about oil. To deny that is laughable. But whether it is seen to be only about oil will depend on how we behave before an invasion and what we try to build once we're there.

I say this possible Iraq war is partly about oil because it is impossible to explain the Bush team's behavior otherwise. Why are they going after Saddam Hussein with the 82nd Airborne and North Korea with diplomatic kid gloves—when North Korea already has nuclear weapons, the missiles to deliver them, a record of selling dangerous weapons to anyone with cash, 100,000 U.S. troops in its missile range and a leader who is even more cruel to his own people than Saddam?

One reason, of course, is that it is easier to go after Saddam. But the other reason is oil—even if the president doesn't want to admit it. (Mr. Bush's recent attempt to hype the Iraqi threat by saying that an Iraqi attack on America—which is most unlikely—"would cripple our economy" was embarrassing. It made the president as if he was groping for an excuse to go to war, absent a smoking gun.

Let's cut the nonsense. The primary reason the Bush team is more focused on Saddam is because if he were to acquire weapons of mass destruction, it might give him the leverage he has long sought—not to attack us, but to extend his influence over the world's largest source of oil, the Persian Gulf.

But wait a minute. There is nothing illegitimate or immoral about the U.S. being concerned that an evil, megalomaniacal dictator might acquire excessive influence over the natural resource that powers the world's industrial base.

"Would those women protesting in Aspen prefer that Saddam Hussein control the oil instead—is that morally better?" asks Michael Mandelbaum, the John Hopkins foreign policy expert and author of "The Ideas That Conquered the World." "Up to now, Saddam has used this oil wealth not to benefit his people, but to wage war against all his neighbors, build lavish palaces and acquire weapons of mass destruction."

This is a good point, but the Bush team would have a stronger case for fighting a war partly for oil if it made clear by its behavior that it was acting for the benefit of the planet, not simply to fuel American excesses.

I have no problem with a war for oil—if we accompany it with a real program for energy conservation. But when we tell the world that we couldn't care less about climate change, that we feel entitled to drive whatever big cars we feel like, that we feel entitled to consume however much oil we like, the message we send is that a war for oil in the gulf is not a war to protect the world's right to economic survival—but our right to indulge. Now that will be seen as immoral.

And should we end up occupying Iraq, and the first thing we do is hand out drilling concessions to U.S. oil companies alone, that perception would only be intensified.

And that leads to my second point. If we occupy Iraq and simply install a more pro-U.S. autocrat to run the Iraqi gas station (as we have in other Arab oil states), then this war partly for oil would also be immoral.

If, on the other hand, the Bush team, and the American people, prove willing to stay in Iraq and pay the full price, in money and manpower, needed to help Iraqis build a more progressive, democratizing Arab

state—one that would use its oil income for the benefit of all its people and serve as a model for its neighbors—then a war partly over oil would be quite legitimate. It would be a critical step toward building a better Middle East.

So, I have no problem with a war for oil—provided that it is to fuel the first progressive Arab regime, and not just our S.U.V.'s, and provided we behave in a way that makes clear to the world we are protecting everyone's access to oil at reasonable prices—not simply our right to binge on it.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for her remarks. Two things or maybe three things that I really appreciate. One, I think it is very important to bring up the crises or I should say the increase costs of oil and how that has steadily gone up in the last 2 years or so and is a major factor also impacting the economy and that this administration has not done anything in the first 2 years to make us more energy independent. They have fiddled around and talked about a lot of things, but nothing has actually been accomplished.

The other thing is, in listening to the gentlewoman, it is almost as if President Bush is just going back to the old sort of trickle-down economics; in other words, we give all the money to the rich. Now we give this huge tax break with dividends primarily to the wealthy and somehow that is going to trickle down. But as the gentlewoman pointed out, that is not what happens because the money is just invested overseas, and one of the things that I mentioned before and that is an important part of the Democrat stimulus package is relief for small businesses, which is specifically targeted so that it has to be used to reinvest in new jobs, new means of production, and the majority of the jobs that are created in the United States these days are through small business.

So we are doing the opposite. They are saying we will give a big boost to the big corporate interests and the wealthy and they are somehow going to spend it to create jobs; but there are no strings attached, whereas the Democrats have a proposal that specifically targets small businesses and insists that whatever tax savings or credits are specifically for new jobs and new production here, which I think is crucial because otherwise it is a waste, and the gentlewoman has pointed that out very effectively.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to say to the gentleman, if one looks at the last 25 years, it is very important to point out that our last four recessions were all related to rising oil prices going back to the 1970's, the 1980's, and now the new 21st century. And if we do not learn from history, we are doomed to repeat it; and what has happened over a period of time is that there has been more and more military presence placed around the world in order to guard the oil lanes coming in here, and it truly would be destabilizing to our country if those paths

were eliminated, but the answer for America is not to become more and more dependent on foreign supplies but rather to use not just the short-term stimulus package but the long-term economic growth strategy for our country to create energy independence so that we are not so vulnerable, and every time some oil baron or king wants to make it a little tough on America, they raise prices and then we are thrown into recession. They know they do not want us to go into deep, deep depression because then they lose some of their revenue, but the point is we are like a puppet on the end of a string and we are not controlling our own destiny. So I would hope that as we move forward, pass this short-term stimulus package that the Democratic Party has offered, and then move into long-term economic growth, that we really look at energy independence as a major pathway to new job creation and investment here at home.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, that is a very good point. And the other thing too is that everyone is sort of assuming that this recession is at its worst and somehow we are now going to turn it around; but if the government goes in the wrong direction with President Bush's plan, it could very easily get worse. There is nothing in that plan that is going to stimulate the economy. The consequence could very well be that the recession gets worse and unemployment gets worse. I hope that does not happen, but I think it would be naive for us to suggest that we have necessarily hit bottom. One of the reasons we need to do this, what the Democrats propose, is that we do not want things to get worse. It is not just a question of getting better, but not having the economy even move in a further downward direction.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman raised the unemployment numbers. It is interesting that recently a survey has come out of rural areas in my State, particularly areas that were previously timber-dependent areas, about unemployment; and the numbers that we record today in unemployment do not reflect the real suffering or the true degree of unemployment. As high as unemployment is in the United States, and it is at some of the highest numbers it has been in a decade under this administration without an extension of unemployment benefits, which hopefully will be rectified here this week, but the numbers are actually much worse because the definitions have been cleverly changed to say, well, if they are unemployed and their unemployment benefits have run out, they are not considered unemployed anymore in the United States.

So if we follow that illogic through, if everybody in America lost their job today and all their benefits an out a year from today and nobody got their job back, no one would be working and we would have zero unemployment. It is an absolute absurdity. So the true measure of unemployment is actually

much, much higher than we are seeing; and the struggle, as the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) said, to bring some productive capacity back to this country and put people back to work, we were all first promised, well, they are losing their jobs in industry but they will all go into the new economy.

Well, the new economy has gone bust, and most of them did not get jobs there anyway or benefit during those good years; and one cannot, in my opinion, be a great Nation if one does not build things, and the reliance on foreign oil is extraordinary. The fact that our greatest balance of payment, the deficit, is to buy foreign oil, supporting people who hardly have any interest in the United States in mind and our future in mind and the investment in alternative fuels, alternative fuel technology to include fuel cells and all the other things that the gentlewoman talked about, bring those industries home to the United States and begin to export them into the rest of the world in addition to insulating ourselves from these people who are jacking up oil prices around the world would be an extraordinary benefit to the American people. And I hope that this administration, this unfortunately oil administration that we have in the White House, might be able to clear their vision a little bit, instead of saying we can somehow drill our way out of this, which we cannot. Even if there was as much oil as the most optimistic say up in the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge and along the coast of the United States, we still could not drill our way out of this problem. We would still have a growing dependence on foreign oil. We need to make dramatic steps and investments in that direction, and we should orient more longer-term packages toward the recovery of our economy toward those new technologies, toward those investments in our country, and those are the kinds of things we need.

An ephemeral investment or expenditure of \$300 billion to relieve people from paying taxes on dividends on stock, mostly people who earn over \$100,000 a year, as an economic stimulus is almost laughable. I mean, it is extraordinary to me. And if it does work and it stimulates the stock market without dealing with the underlying problems and the fundamentals of U.S. industry and their unwillingness to invest if this country, in the productive capacity of this country, it will create another bubble, and guess what, some people will ride the bubble up, get out, and it will pop again, and what happens? The people who are always stuck are the middle class and working people who cannot get in and out of the market because their only investments in the market are through their retirement funds which they cannot liquidate and speculate on the way that some of these other folks can. It may well cause a big run-up in the stocks that pay dividends in particular, but it is not going to generally leaven

the economy and put people back to work. I have yet to see a single credible economist make that assertion, that somehow this \$300 billion gift other than through the trickle-down theory is going to somehow put people in this country back to work.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the other problem that we have too, which we really did not dwell on too much but I think it is important, is that it really was disgraceful that the Republicans, who are in the majority, with the President went home after December 28 and the people that did not have their unemployment compensation just ran out.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, 28,000 people in my State alone saw an end to their unemployment benefits in the week between Christmas and New Year. Happy New Year from the Federal Government.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, in the State of Ohio it was 24,000 people who fell off their benefits right before the New Year and 1,100 additional people in my own congressional district.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the amazing thing, we were trying, the Democrats insisted before we went home that we would stay here to pass a package, but of course the Republicans just adjourned.

□ 1830

My understanding is, and I have not seen the proposal, I guess we may consider something tomorrow or Thursday, is that the Republicans are coming back with something like a 12-week extension which may or may not even be retroactive. That is a very short period of time, given what we are facing here. The Democratic proposal is for double that, basically 26 weeks, and goes back to December 28.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would keep in perspective, the total cost of the Democratic proposal, as I understand, it is to be twice as generous in terms of the extension of unemployment benefits; and to again, to begin to even penetrate some of those other people who have been longer unemployed or underemployed, is about one-twentieth, 5 percent, of what the President is proposing to gift upon the wealthiest by relieving them of the horrible burden of paying a small percentage tax on the dividends they earn by clipping coupons on stocks that they own.

Where are our priorities? Could he not do 10 percent for the unemployed and for their families? I mean, it is just extraordinary to me that the emphasis would be so thinly disguised.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, every single one of those families would spend that money on basics. They would be buying food.

Mr. DEFAZIO. From local small businesses.

Ms. KAPTUR. From local small businesses. They would be shopping at local stores. They would be making their mortgage payments, if they can hold on to their houses.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, if I could, in my State, we have an extraordinary, we have already exhausted this year's allocation of low-income energy assistance in our State; and we are, what, 3 months into the year, the beginning of the heating season; and there are tens of thousands of people on the waiting list in my State, and I am sure in other States across America. And to say, well, we just cannot afford those things, but we can afford for the people who live up on the top of the hill in the big houses with all of the lights on and the windows open, we are going to give them a little extra gift so that they can go to Antigua to avoid the colder months.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I was struck by the fact that here we are on the very first day of the 108th Congress, and I am proud to say it is the Democratic Party that is down here on the floor tonight talking about the economy and the recession and how we invest our way out of it; we are talking about war, how we avoid it; we are talking about new job creation for our country. I do not hear anything from the other side. I mean, it is easy to go to cocktail parties and leave for dinners because it is kind of a day of pomp and circumstance; on the other hand, we are a serious party, we are true to our traditions, and I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) for being a part of this this evening. I am very proud to be a Democrat tonight. We are doing our job.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, if I could expand on that, it is day 10 since the extended unemployment benefits expired, and Congress is not in official session this evening taking care of that problem. They are out, many of them downtown with the lobbyists on K Street celebrating with champagne beyond the weekly food budget of many of these families who are unemployed.

Ms. KAPTUR. I thought we would have extended the unemployment benefits today. I promised my constituents that it would be my top priority when I came back here to Washington; and, quite frankly, I was surprised that that bill was not offered today.

Mr. PALLONE. And we did have votes today. We did have the adoption of the rules package. So it was not that we only had a ceremonial session. We did have votes.

The other thing is that in the last few weeks I was hearing from some of our Republican colleagues about how maybe we did not even need to do it, to extend unemployment compensation because it has been going on too long, almost like it is some sort of welfare benefit or something. When the recession continues, and it is getting worse, there is no indication it is getting, things are getting better, it is only fair to extend it. I mean I could not believe I would even have to try to argue the case for it. But there are those on the other side of the aisle who do not think we should even do it.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I would have to say this also, that when the Bush administration's unemployment proposal was talked about, the President talked about this before the first of the year; he did not say what his proposal really was. His original proposal would have only taken care of the unemployed in three States. The State of Oregon was one of them, but our State was left out, the State of Ohio. I fail to see how an unemployed worker in Ohio who has exhausted his benefits is any different than an unemployed worker in Oregon or New Jersey.

Then there was the issue of how many weeks and at what level for benefits they had worked for. These are working people. They are people who have believed in our system of enterprise and have tried to make a difference in their lives. I was just amazed that none of the press talked about the difference in the bills, that we were as the Democratic Party talking about every State in the Union, every unemployed worker who had fallen off of benefits, and that we were talking about a realistic number of weeks, not just 6 weeks or 7 weeks, but so that people could plan, 26 weeks, which has been historic here.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, we should remember that unemployment benefits have been paid for by the employers and the employees. The employers have to pay a tax; most economists say that comes in the form of lower wages or at least is shared in lower wages by the employees, and there is a large and healthy balance in the unemployment trust fund. Yet our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, the President and the Republican majority, have refused to expend some of those taxes. That was money that was saved for a rainy day for families and individuals across this country. It is raining like hell out there right now, and they need that money. It is their money. That, in fact, does not have an impact on the deficit. Giving a \$300 billion tax break to people who clip coupons on their taxes does cost the Federal Treasury and will increase the deficit, but if we kept the books honestly, money spent out of the unemployment trust fund which has been accumulated over many years for a rainy day would not count as money that is spent and created out of nothing. There is money there to spend. It is just like we could invest in infrastructure by spending down the highway trust fund. We could invest in aviation by spending down the aviation trust fund. We could accelerate a whole bunch of projects across this country and put people back to work, really. I mean, in the phony way we keep books here, it counts as deficit; but in reality it would not be. The American taxpayers would be getting the money back that they paid for the purpose for which it was intended, which is unemployment benefits or investment in bridges, highways, roads and aviation.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I want to say a word about Amtrak. I represent the largest passenger terminal in Ohio, and it has been amazing to me to watch under this administration's purview how service has been cut back. I travel around the world, and I ride trains that so far surpass anything that we have over land in this country. It is actually embarrassing. We talk about a stimulus package. What about high-speed rail? Why has it taken us as a country to this point in the 21st century where we have an antiquated system that needs new stimulus, that needs new investment, coast-to-coast, in order to meet all of the congestion problems we have at our airports; to provide a real, third rail, one might say over the road, in the air, and over land, not counting the sea ways, but to take a look at our rail system and the investment that is needed in it, and to think that we are cutting back to allow Wall Street to put our investment in China or Mexico or somewhere else.

Mr. DEFAZIO. China is building a huge and very expensive multibillion dollar new high-speed rail system, probably with some U.S. investment behind it.

Ms. KAPTUR. Very interesting. Maybe some of those Wall Street dollars are going to China rather than inside the United States. That is why it is important to target the investment here and to make sure that it builds wealth in our country, not someplace else.

When the gentleman mentioned about infrastructure, that really struck me because northern Ohio has been seriously diminished in its ability to move passengers. And the equipment, the trackage, everything that we need really has been underinvested, and this is a system that when one goes around the world, I do not care whether it is France, Japan, the gentleman mentioned China, we are falling behind, falling behind.

Mr. PALLONE. There is no question about that. Again, part of our Democratic stimulus package does provide for money to go back to the States for infrastructure, airports, highways, and the things that the gentlewoman mentioned.

I think we are running out of time, so we are going to have to wrap it up; we only have a couple more minutes. But I just want to thank both of my colleagues. The bottom line is that this is just the beginning. The gentlewoman mentioned the media not comparing the different unemployment compensation packages. Part of it is because the Bush administration has not really said exactly what they are proposing. I gather from today that they are talking about 12 weeks, and we will find that out tomorrow. But we are going to have to insist beginning tomorrow that this package pass and pass in a way that is effective before we leave this week, let alone tonight. So I particularly appreciate the fact that my col-

leagues mentioned that, because I think it is something we are going to have to deal with literally tomorrow.

But I thank my colleagues again, and we will continue to point out these differences between what the President is proposing and the Democratic stimulus package, not because it is partisan, but just because we honestly believe that the Republican proposal will not do anything to reverse the economic downturn.

THE DROUGHT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OSE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I sat here with a great deal of interest listening to the previous speakers and the fact that Republicans were at cocktail parties and out with lobbyists, and I am a Republican and I am still here. I was very interested in the comments that I was listening to. I am not a very partisan person. I believe very much in fairness and balance. When I heard the President's economic stimulus package characterized over and over again as another round of tax breaks for the rich, what I was surprised that somebody did not answer was that part of the plan is \$3.6 billion going to the States that are to be distributed in \$3,000 increments to the unemployed as they pay for transportation and child care and training to get back into the workforce.

Now, the unemployed are not by definition wealthy people. So that \$3.6 billion does not go to the rich. The child tax credit increases by \$400 per child. Now, not all children, certainly in the United States, are born to the wealthy. So a family of three would have \$1,200 additional money in their pocket, and many of those families will be poor families. The marriage tax penalty has been accelerated. For the average married couple, that will mean \$1,716 that they will receive. Certainly, not all married couples in the United States are wealthy. Many that I know are not wealthy at all. Mr. Speaker, 92 million tax filers this year will receive an average tax cut of \$1,083. We certainly do not have 92 million tax filers in the United States this year that are wealthy people.

Finally, let me just say this. There has been a lot of mention of the dividends and how the dividends were tax breaks for the rich. But what most people do not seem to bother to mention is that roughly 40 percent of the American population now owns stock. Not all of those 40 percent are wealthy people. Many average wage-earners own stock and will benefit from any stock dividend reduction.

So just in the interest of fairness, Mr. Speaker, I thought we might mention the fact that there were some things that were not mentioned here