

Just last Sunday National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice told the American people that "Iraq was the most dangerous regime in the world." Where is the truth?

Mr. Speaker, this administration would never be able to justify the war on Iraq because we cannot believe a word they say. They have never been honest about why we went to war. Just ask the former Treasury Secretary, Paul O'Neill. He told the Nation this administration was hell bent to go to war from day one, even before the President took oath of office.

And it is not just Iraq. It is almost on every issue, every comment, every deed. We cannot believe a word they say.

The Bush administration proposed a \$550 billion Medicare prescription drug bill and told us it will only cost \$400 billion. They cut down trees on public land and call it "Healthy Forests." They let industry pollute our air and call it "Clear Skies."

The President himself, President Bush, proudly told the American people that his budget would cut the deficit in 5 years, but his budget does not pay for Iraq. It does not pay for Afghanistan. It does not pay for his tax cuts for the rich.

Mr. Speaker, instead of searching for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, we should be searching for the truth right here at home. The Bible tells us, "The truth will set you free." And we will not find it at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue. The British novelist John Le Carre once said, "I think the single greatest enemy is the misuse of information, the perversion of the truth in the hands of terribly skillful people."

On the eve of the anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, we must reflect on these words. President Bush and his administration have misused information. They have perverted the truth, and now 600 Americans are dead, 10,000 civilians are dead in Iraq, hundreds of thousands of our sons and daughters, brave men and women, young people, 18, 19, 21, 23 years old, have been torn from their homes, from their families, and sent thousands of miles from home.

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I would ask the President, what are they fighting for? I would ask him why so many of our young people are dead and wounded, but I do not want his answer. I do not want the answer from the Vice President or Secretary Powell or Secretary Rumsfeld. The American people do not want more of what we have been hearing for the past year. What we want, Mr. Speaker, and what we need more than anything else, is the truth.

WASHINGTON WASTE WATCHERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire). Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with several of my colleagues from the Washington Waste Watchers, a Republican working group dedicated to rooting out the rampant waste, fraud, and abuse in the Federal Government.

Over the last 3 weeks, my colleagues on the Committee on the Budget have been discussing the Federal budget and debating the growth of government spending. With a historically large deficit and with Federal spending now exceeding \$20,000 per American household for only the fourth time in American history and for the first time since World War II, many Democrats say, it is time to raise taxes yet again on the American people. Democrats are demanding that we roll back the tax relief that is responsible for the unparalleled growth that we have had in our economy, the tax relief that is bringing down our unemployment, the tax relief that amounts to only 1 percent, 1 percent of the \$13.1 trillion 5-year spending plan the Committee on the Budget approved today. In other words, 99 percent of our budget woes lay on the spending side.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, we have a spending problem, not a taxing problem in this town. And I, for one, say it is time to take the trash out of Washington. It is time to go after the costly waste, fraud, and abuse that permeate every nook and cranny in our Federal Government.

Albert Einstein once said that the definition of insanity was doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. Well, Mr. Speaker, each and every year, we pour more money into the Federal Government with scant accountability; and we continue to throw billions of dollars of American taxpayers' money away in waste, fraud, and abuse.

Let me discuss just a few examples. The Office of National Drug Control Policy awarded one advertising agency a \$150 million grant to craft ads keeping American youth away from drugs, even though this company had a history of overbilling the Federal Government. In 2002 the firm had to repay the government \$1.8 million for overstating its labor costs, and some representatives of the company are currently under indictment for filing false claims. Now, the ads are part of a 5-year, \$1 billion campaign whose effectiveness has been greatly scrutinized. A private research firm concluded that teenagers viewing the ads were no less likely to use drugs than if they had not viewed them and that some were even more likely to use drugs. False claims and ineffective ads, yet Democrats want to raise our taxes to pay for more of this.

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, is currently undertaking a major crackdown on phoney claims for power wheelchairs and has recovered \$52.5 million thus

far. One 89-year-old from Florida said that she and her husband were approached by a salesperson who pressured them into an unnecessary order. Medicare was then billed \$15,500 for two scooters, a hospital bed, and a pressure mattress, none of which was needed. Another senior citizen testified in court that a claim had been submitted without her approval. She then demonstrated her lack of a need for a wheelchair by walking before the jurors. Mr. Speaker, \$52 million in fraud, yet Democrats want to raise our taxes to pay for even more of this.

The Drug Enforcement Agency contracts with the private sector to get translators and transcribers in many of its field divisions. However, the Inspector General's Office found such loose controls were in place that \$2.8 million of the \$9.4 million paid was going to unauthorized and unallowable expenses. Yet Democrats want to raise taxes to pay for more of this.

In the year 2000, an investigation discovered that the Department of Energy spent more than \$38 million developing information systems that it already had. They already had the systems in place. Yet Democrats want to raise taxes to pay for more of this.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few examples of the rampant waste in our Federal Government. After we begin to look closely, we see that so many Federal programs routinely lose 10, 20, even 30 percent of their taxpayer-funded budgets to waste, fraud, and abuse and have for years.

There are so many different ways that we can save money in Washington without cutting any needed services or without raising taxes as our Democrat colleagues seek to do. Because when it comes to Federal programs, it is not how much money we spend that counts, it is how Washington spends the money that counts.

SUPPORTING BLUE DOG BUDGET PHILOSOPHY IS RIGHT FOR AMERICA

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

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, it is amazing listening to my colleague from Texas. One would think that we Democrats are still in control and that his party has not been in control of this House for the last 8 years. It is amazing listening to these speeches. It is amazing to see the budget that came out of the committee which he serves on, that next will propose to borrow \$377.6 billion, including all of the Social Security trust funds, all of the Civil Service trust funds, all of the Federal military retiree trust funds. In this same budget he supported today, the debt limit will be increased to \$8.88 trillion, and yet the finger-pointing stills goes on.

He had a chance today to vote for a budget enforcement bill that the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON)

offered that would do something about the deficit. He voted "no," but he comes to the floor and makes a wonderful speech that sounds good, but does nothing to deal with our Nation's fiscal problems.

The Blue Dog philosophy and the budget we will offer next week begins with a simple wisdom: when you find yourselves in a hole, the first rule is to quit digging. Stop pointing the finger at the other side of the aisle and let us see how we might work together to deal with the most serious economic problems that have faced this country, perhaps in our history.

Strong budget enforcement rules are an important component of restoring fiscal discipline and making sure the budget remains in balance once we have done the hard work necessary to bring it back into balance. The budget enforcement rules Congress enacted in 1990 with bipartisan support, and that is when we Democrats were in control, and I worked with my friends on the other side of the aisle to do something about the deficit, and we did; it was an important part of getting a handle on deficits in the early 1990s and getting the budget back into balance with discretionary spending limits.

I want to make it very clear: the Blue Dog Democrats support President Bush's spending request to this body, not one penny more. So do not talk about spending when we talk about alternatives. If you do not have one that will work, do not come to the floor and speechify, unless you are just trying to make a good impression with the folks back home.

Unless we renew our budget discipline in this body, Congress will continue to find ways to pass more legislation that puts still more red ink on the national ledger. If we are truly serious about restoring fiscal discipline, budget enforcement rules must apply to all legislation that would increase the deficit. Through increases in spending or reductions in revenue, all parts of the budget must be on the table.

It is irresponsible and politically unrealistic to propose budget rules that apply to one part of the budget, but not the other. Borrowing for tax increases that do not contribute to growth in this country are just as irresponsible as the spending the gentleman was talking about a moment ago, if one is worried about the future of this country. Those of us who want to extend expiring tax cuts or make the tax cuts permanent should be willing to put forward the spending cuts or other offsets necessary to pay for them. Similarly, those who want to spend more in certain areas need to be willing to say where they would cut or how they would raise revenue to pay for their proposals.

Let me again repeat, I am part of the Blue Dog organization that will not vote to spend one dime more than President Bush asked us to spend this year, and let that be very clear. The Blue Dogs support spending caps, lim-

iting total discretionary spending to no more than the spending levels in the President's budget. If it is the will of the majority to pass legislation that will make the budget situation worse, we should be forced to step up and take the responsibility for doing so.

Under the Blue Dog plan, a separate vote would be required to waive the pay-go requirements or increase the discretionary spending limits. Congress could pass new spending or tax cuts without the offsets, but we will be held accountable for increasing the deficit by waiving budget rules.

The recognition that budget enforcement is an issue that needs to be addressed and the announcement that the Committee on the Budget will be considering budget enforcement legislation tomorrow is a positive step forward. But I am very, very disappointed that the Committee on the Budget in their wisdom chose to leave most of the issue off the table. If we really want to do something about deficits, we have to begin to address them, yes, on the spending side, no question about that. But we cannot continue to cut taxes with borrowed money unless we are willing to say to our grandchildren, I do not give a rip about your future.

Mr. Speaker, we can continue to vote for tax cuts and have the greatest tax increase, which is exactly what the majority is doing. You are voting to have the greatest tax increase in the history of this Nation by continuing to borrow as you are now borrowing, we are borrowing. I am part of it. I am part of the Members of Congress. But we will have a constructive alternative that we will be putting forth next week, and I hope sincerely that we can find some bipartisan support to put meaningful enforcement into place, so that we do something about the deficit other than come to this floor and speechify.

DEMOCRATS PROPOSE INCREASED TAXES AND MORE WASTEFUL SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to seeing the proposal that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) just mentioned because so far, the only proposals that have been put forward by the Democrats in committee have been billions and billions and billions of additional spending and billions of tax increases. So I am looking forward to seeing if, in fact, his proposal will be different.

Mr. Speaker, last week in the Committee on the Budget, by the way, the Democrats proposed raising taxes three times and increase spending by over \$13 billion in their first five amendments to the budget resolution. Mr. Speaker, they had only just begun.

Tonight, in the Committee on the Budget that we finished a little while

ago, they presented numerous more amendments increasing spending by billions more and increasing taxes on the hard-working American people by billions more. The final tally: stay tuned, because we will be bringing that to our colleagues in the next few days.

Now, why do Democrats want to raise, insist on raising, the American people's taxes to pay for more waste, fraud, and abuse in Washington? I say that because let me read my colleagues some examples. A recent GAO report found that bureaucrats at the Department of Agriculture were using taxpayer-funded purchase cards for premium satellite and cable TV packages, including charges for pornographic movies, thousands of dollars charged to the taxpayers. By the way, this one I could not understand: fish costumes, web of life costumes, and a hand-switched salmon tent, \$12,000 that the taxpayers paid for those. Very expensive, it must have been a really nice aquarium for \$3,000, a billiard table; and yet the Democrats insist on trying to raise the taxes of the hard-working American people in this country. And that is the difference. They insist on trying to raise taxes, and their proposals show that.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans are trying to solve this problem alone. During the last year's budget resolution, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Iowa (Chairman NUSSLE) tried to eliminate just 1 percent of waste, fraud, and abuse by cutting spending by 1 percent. The esteemed minority whip said of that proposal that that was senseless and irresponsible to try to cut just 1 percent of waste, fraud, and abuse. What they proposed was not agreed to, but they proposed billions of dollars of tax increases and billions of dollars of more government expenditures.

President Bush is working on implementing the President's management agenda, a performance-based system that seeks to reduce waste, fraud, and abuse and has got nothing, nothing but opposition from the members of the minority party. This year, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Iowa (Chairman NUSSLE) once again is providing an avenue in the budget to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse. Democrats will likely, unfortunately, oppose those efforts as well, and likely, once again, as they have done tonight and as they did last week, will propose billions of dollars in more spending and billions of dollars of tax increases on the hard-working Americans in this country.

While Republicans are making great strides in cleaning up wasteful spending, Mr. Speaker, Democrats continue aggressively with this love affair of trying to raise the taxes on the hard-working American taxpayer.

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