

trillion dollars. Imagine if we could invest that here at home. The Federal deficit, as a result, is also at record highs.

And what is the President's plan to secure Social Security and Medicare for our generations and beyond? More budget-busting tax breaks for the super rich, while wages for ordinary people are stalled or declining or they are thrown on to unemployment lines.

Again, I really do have to ask, what is the White House thinking? I have repeatedly called for a new Declaration of Independence for our country, a declaration of economic independence for our families, for our workers. We must ensure first the economic security of our Nation. It must be one of our Nation's number one priorities. Instead, leading Republicans think it is a great idea to send more of our jobs overseas.

It makes me wonder what kind of future is in store for our future generations. This Congress must draw the line in the sand here. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to stand up for working families immediately for the extension of unemployment benefits and no more stealing from the Social Security Trust Fund to pay off the White House's pet projects; no more tax breaks for the super rich; no more unfair trade deals like NAFTA; and no Chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisors that had the idea of sending more of our jobs overseas is the answer to these problems.

□ 1900

#### TOBACCO BUYOUT LEGISLATION

(Mr. GOODE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOODE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of tobacco buyout legislation. The consensus measure is H.R. 3160. We need to eliminate the Federal quota program. If we do such, American tobacco will be more competitive with foreign tobacco. A buyout would end the tobacco quota system; and a number of tobacco farmers, particularly the older ones, will cease to grow tobacco.

Many quota holders and growers have invested a considerable amount of money in the current tobacco program over the years. They deserve compensation for their loss, and that compensation can come from tobacco.

If we adopt legislation for a tobacco buyout, it will greatly benefit south Virginia, southwest Virginia, much of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Kentucky, and several other States.

I hope we can see positive action on tobacco buyout legislation soon.

#### THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GINGREY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE)

is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to join my colleagues from the Congressional Black Caucus to discuss the President's reckless, very reckless budget for fiscal year 2005 and to really examine the terrible toll that it will take on our country as a whole and specifically African Americans. And, Mr. Speaker, I would now like to yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), our distinguished chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to raise serious concerns about the Bush administration's fiscal year 2005 budget proposal, along with my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus.

This budget contains misplaced priorities that leaves all Americans behind. In the first place, this budget adds \$521 billion to our national debt for the next fiscal year. This is on top of \$7 trillion national debt that our Nation has already incurred. That is roughly \$2,000 for every woman, man, and child in America today.

This is extremely disappointing. Mr. Speaker, given that at the beginning of the Bush administration we had a \$280 billion surplus, and we were expecting record surpluses for years yet to come.

Many economists say that increased deficits signal danger for our economy because increased deficits cause or result in higher interest rates, slow economic growth, lower national savings, and reduce economic productivity. Given this, I am appalled that the Bush administration's budget fails to account for spending in Iraq and Afghanistan in its proposal and also plans to implement further tax cuts.

In fact, just today, it was reported that the military chiefs are saying that the \$87 billion we have just appropriated for the war will run out by September 30.

Moreover, the Congressional Budget Office has said that if the \$1.7 billion tax cut were allowed to expire in 2011, the budget would be balanced by 2014. However, it is my understanding that the administration still plans to introduce its permanent tax cut proposal and press for continued defense spending while cutting or eliminating Federal programs that will also strengthen our Nation.

Again, this budget has misplaced priorities that leave all Americans behind.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues may be aware, the White House released its annual economic report of the President this week, which stated that 2.6 million jobs would be created by the end of 2004. It seems as though the President is promising that he will spin straw into gold, which is an impossible task. It is impossible because every year since President Bush took office this report has been completely wrong.

In 2002, the administration estimated that 800,000 new jobs would be added to

the economy; but, instead, the United States economy lost a net total of 1.9 million jobs just in 2002. In 2003, the administration projected that the tax breaks would add 510,000 additional jobs by the end of 2003. Instead, 53,000 jobs were lost. All together, since President Bush took office, 3 million jobs have been lost; and the last President to have a net job loss during his administration was President Herbert Hoover.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot grow as a Nation with 9 million Americans out of work, 43 million without health insurance, and a future generation that lacks the educational resources to compete in the 21st century global economy; yet this budget proposes to cut more than 60 programs that would uplift this Nation. But tonight I would like to specifically highlight one Federal program that has made a tremendous impact in my district. Although the program is fully funded in my district, the President's current budget will keep this program from starting in new communities.

Mr. Speaker, I am specifically referring to the Empowerment Zone Program administered by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Created under the Clinton administration, this Empowerment Zone Program creates economic development in the Nation's most distressed urban communities through public-private partnerships.

In my district, this program has created 12,000 jobs in neighborhoods that were previously deteriorating, abandoned, and had high crime rates. With the \$100 million Federal grant, the Baltimore Empowerment Zone provided customized job training to thousands of residents and helped them obtain jobs in health care, biotechnology, manufacturing, retail, and hospitality. Many of these jobs provided higher pay, benefits, and career growth that were not previously available to these residents.

In one particular instance, a former Army veteran who could not find a civilian job received training through the Empowerment Zone. Today, he works in an operating room at the world-renowned Johns Hopkins University hospital.

The Empowerment Zone also helped thousands of families to buy their first home, as well as provide small business loans. This is a classic example of how the Bush administration should be stimulating the economy. However, instead of expanding this program to other cities, the administration has decided to completely cut all funds to this program by fiscal year 2005. This would essentially dissolve the program.

Like the Empowerment Zone, 65 other programs are being abandoned through the President's fiscal year 2005 budget. While looking at the list of 65, I notice that all Americans in some way or another would be affected by these cuts.

Programs for homeland security, the environment, women, people of color,

children, the disabled, microloans for small business, the HOPE VI housing program, and health care are all being targeted for cuts in this budget. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, this budget should be called the Leave All Americans Behind budget.

Before I conclude, Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to think about how these cuts will have an impact on their constituents. While I strongly support giving our troops the funding and the resources they need to do their jobs and while I support increasing homeland security, I strongly urge that we maintain a balance and continue giving America all it needs to remain a superpower.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her leadership and for conducting this hour for the Congressional Black Caucus.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the chairman again for his diligence, vigilance, and really helping the Congressional Black Caucus educate the public and hopefully many of our colleagues on the other side about the most pressing issues confronting our constituents and our country. I want to thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) for his leadership and for, once again, I will say helping us to wake up America.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say a few things about this budget tonight. First of all, no documents are more important to the health and the welfare of American people than our Nation's budget. It can give the 44 million Americans without health insurance access to affordable health care, including the 7.4 million African Americans without health insurance. It can put the millions of unemployed people back to work, including the 1.7 million African Americans and the 1.4 million Hispanics seeking work. It can honor our commitment to veterans instead of raising their health care costs, including over 2.6 million African American veterans, and the list goes on and on.

Instead of sending us a budget for the American people, this President has sent us a budget that turns its back on people and on our future. It sacrifices our children, our senior citizens, our security, our veterans, our environment, our economy in order to advance special interests and to promote tax breaks for the wealthy.

Incredibly, the budget does all of this damage to Americans at home and does not even include the cost of our operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, a clear failure, a very clear failure to come clean with the American people about the staggering costs of the war.

I think we all know, and we heard that today, that we can expect another very large supplemental appropriations request for the war after the November election. The President, I believe, needs to really stop playing politics and to start paying attention to our needs right here at home.

To merely call this budget a reflection of misplaced priorities really does

not go far enough in describing the injustices that it promotes. It represents nothing less than an assault on the American people. The Bush administration is at war with the working poor, the middle class, working families and, yes, people of color. This budget, I tell my colleagues, is proof of that.

The repercussions of this budget will be felt in cities and towns and rural communities across America. They will certainly be felt in my district in northern California where the high-tech economy has struggled and where housing costs are sky high, where seniors and veterans are struggling each and every day just to pay medical costs and grocery bills, where crime is taking the lives of our young people and threatening our communities, where infrastructure is crumbling, where our first responders and our ports are still not receiving the Federal funds that they need to keep our homeland safe and prepared, and where the State budget is being squeezed and slashed, and the repercussions of this budget will be felt for decades to come due to the record deficits that it creates.

It is truly mind-boggling to think how the administration turned a \$5.6 trillion surplus, projected just 3 years ago, into record deficits as far as the eye can see. Our children and our grandchildren will be paying off the reckless tax cuts for the rich, the lavish breaks for offshore corporations, and the huge overpayments to HMOs that are in this budget. They will be paying for this for the rest of their lives. This \$4 trillion deficit will haunt our children for years to come.

These outrageous and very reckless breaks for special interests and the wealthy help explain why this budget leaves so many behind. It explains why this President decimates housing programs in his 2005 budget. It represents a \$350 million cut compared to last year's funding level.

The budget cuts are again focused on section 8 and public housing, the program that serves the Nation's poorest families, seniors and the disabled. The budget is \$1.6 billion below the level needed to renew all section 8 vouchers; and it proposes to block grant the voucher program, dismantling low-income tenant protections.

It eliminates funding for HOPE VI programs, a program that Congress reauthorized last year on a bipartisan basis; and it cuts the McKinney-Vento homeless prevention grants by \$2 million.

Mr. Speaker, instead of spending billions on missile defense and other Cold War inventions, we could put more resources into housing, which is a national emergency and a national disgrace; and instead of spending \$1 trillion in tax breaks, we could put more resources into our communities by providing the tools that they desperately need to combat crime and to deter crime.

Let me just tell my colleagues for a minute a little bit about violent crime

in my own district. Last year, in Oakland, 114 lives were ended in senseless killings, and 17 people have already been killed in the first 6 weeks of this year.

□ 1915

It is not unlike any other urban area where opportunities just do not exist. It is a vicious and deadly cycle, and it must end.

But to end the bloodshed and the pain, not only in Oakland but throughout our country, we must have a comprehensive approach and put the resources to address the root problem that fuel the cycle. We know many of the factors that contribute to violence among young people: drugs, the lack of job training, employment opportunities, and a lack of options. The hard truth of the matter is that young people have no hope, and homelessness breeds anger, despair and crime, so we need to offer hope.

By sending jobs offshore, outsourcing, moving manufacturing, technology and service jobs offshore, today I asked Mr. Greenspan in our Committee on Financial Services, what do we tell our young people? What do they go to school for and for what jobs? These jobs are nonexistent, so what are our options for our young people?

What does the President offer to our law enforcement agencies to help them combat and to deter crime? The administration has offered cuts, cuts and more cuts. The budget cuts juvenile justice and delinquency prevention grants by 43.9 percent, and it eliminates the Edward Byrne formula and discretionary grants, the State criminal alien assistance program, and local law enforcement block grants. The budget cuts \$655 million from the COPS program which provides grants and other assistance to help communities hire and train and retain police officers and improve law enforcement technologies.

I can say that this directly harms our community where every night 9 out of the 35 beats in Oakland are not covered because they simply cannot afford the staff.

In addition to community policing, we need to make a local and a national investment in violence prevention. We need a real plan, a real plan for the reentry of ex-offenders. There are 1.4 million inmates in America's State and Federal prisons, and more than 600,000 will be released to return to their communities this year. These inmates are parents to 1.5 million children. If adults recently released from prisons and jails and those on parole are included, the number of affected children more than doubled to an estimated 3.2 million.

Clearly, the President's meager offering of a \$300 million 4-year program, or \$75 million a year for reentry, is a drop in the bucket. We could use that just in my congressional district. This program amounts to about \$125 per inmate leaving prison this year. What in the world is that about?

Mr. Speaker, the Bush budget underfunds our communities and our country. We need a jobs program. The unemployment rate among African Americans rose to 10.5 percent last year, significantly higher than the unemployment rate at the beginning of the Bush administration. The unemployment rate for Hispanics rose from 6.6 percent to 7.3 percent in 1 month. This rate is 24 percent higher than when Bush took office. Despite these realities, the Bush budget squanders an additional \$1 trillion over the next 10 years on additional tax cuts for the wealthy. The President's budget does nothing to create jobs, to create good-paying jobs here at home.

We also need job training, yet the President's budget contains \$286 million in cuts for job training and employment services. These cuts come on top of \$1.5 billion in cuts to job training and related services already enacted that President Bush has proposed since he took office.

We need to invest in education and after-school programs. But, instead, this President's budget underfunds Leave No Child Behind by about \$9.4 billion.

It leaves 40 percent of children eligible for Head Start out in the cold, and it provides only half of the funding promised to after-school programs, meaning the 1.3 million children who were promised after-school services just will not get them.

We need to invest in basic health and mental health services, but, instead, this budget freezes funding for the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant title 10 family planning program and also the Healthy Start program. It freezes all of this funding.

It also proposes an additional \$25 billion in tax breaks for health savings accounts, a proposal which benefits the healthy and the wealthy and will raise premiums for most Americans. The President's association health plans will raise premiums for about 20 million Americans and reduce benefits for millions more.

Mr. Speaker, this President is really more interested in the future of the bank accounts of the rich in this country than he is about the future of our communities. It is really about choices. We could choose to invest in the future, grow our economy, enhance our security, look out for our children and our seniors and those who are struggling economically, the poor. Or we could provide tax cuts for multimillionaires and special interests. That is the choice the Bush budget offers; and, unfortunately, the choice is very grim in terms of this budget, which is a road map, which is a budget that speaks to, really, the values of this administration which I believe are very unAmerican values.

I urge my colleagues to continue to spread the word about this dangerous Bush budget and to let them know in November what we think about his budget priorities.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BALLANCE).

Mr. BALLANCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), my leader, before I got to Washington; and I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK), who will speak later on.

I am proud to stand here tonight as an American, indeed, an African American. I am proud to live in America, the land of the free and the home of the brave, the land of opportunity. But there is a problem. There are some for whom the promise of America is not being realized. They are the unemployed, the laid off, the jobless, those whose unemployment has run out, and those who have been looking for a job so long that they have given up.

America can do better. Why are we not doing better? I submit it is because we have the wrong priorities, and I submit that the budget that our President presented to us last week has the wrong priorities.

I want to talk just briefly about a section of the country, North Carolina, a section of North Carolina, rural, poor, eastern, that I represent. It is called the First Congressional District. It is largely rural, largely African Americans, Native Americans, facing devastating job losses and obviously sweeping economic concerns. I am deeply concerned about the well-being of thousands of families, thousands of unemployed, thousands of laid off who live in my district.

During the President's State of the Union address in January, I listened carefully and I heard nothing that would tend to address the needs, the hopes and desires of those of whom I speak. Yes, after reviewing the proposed budget, my concerns continue to grow. With a staggering 31,767 people unemployed in the First District as of December 1, 2003, additional plant closings and layoffs threaten to raise that number even higher and to stress and distress an already unstable economy.

In fact, just last week Rubbermaid of Greenville, North Carolina, announced plans to lay off another 315 workers this coming month. They join the ranks of other plant closings, dozens in my area, since the summer of 2003.

During his State of the Union address, the President promised more tax cuts, more permanent tax cuts. He had already promised that those would generate jobs. We have heard that pitch before. It has not materialized, and we do not believe it is going to materialize this time around, so that is why we are here tonight. We have to continue to speak out and cry out and make a plea that we will change our policies and provide opportunities for families, for jobless, for people who are hurting, people who are losing hope.

Since 2001, this Nation has lost 2.9 million jobs. Locally, in Vance County, one of the counties I represent, they

suffer an unemployment rate of 12.5 percent, more than double the national unemployment rate. The President's priorities do not appear to match those of working families in eastern North Carolina. We have a few millionaires in eastern North Carolina, but they are very few.

With jobs continuing to disappear, despite 3 years of promises through tax cuts, our families want to enjoy the same quality of life afforded every other family throughout the Nation. They want to live in a sound economy, free of the fear of losing their jobs. They want to raise their families, have good health care, and to continue to express their patriotic values as Americans.

This budget relies on tax cuts which sacrifice priorities for funding at home for those items that I just mentioned. On last year's tax cuts, the poorest 20 percent of North Carolinians received a mere \$69. We know about the theory, if you give it to the rich, it will trickle down, but it is not working. We are losing jobs.

I sent the President a letter last week inviting him as he travels to please come to northeastern North Carolina, please visit Roanoke Rapids, Henderson, and Rutherford, North Carolina, to see what is happening when people lose their jobs, lose their hope, are standing in the unemployment line, and finding that their unemployment has run out.

□ 1930

As I said earlier, America can do better. We have the ability. We have the technology. We simply have to get our priorities straight in order to help those who are most in need. I thank the gentlewoman from California so very much for this opportunity.

Ms. LEE. I want to thank the gentleman from North Carolina for his very eloquent and very clear statement. One thing that the gentleman from North Carolina pointed out was that this unemployment and the fact that poverty is rampant now speaks to rural, as well as to urban, communities. This is something that I do not think the President has recognized in this budget. I do hope he accepts the gentleman's invitation to come to his district because maybe then we will see a revision of this budget to speak to some of those issues.

Mr. BALLANCE. I thank the gentlewoman. I look forward to that.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my good friend from Florida (Mr. MEEK), a leader in the Committee on Armed Services, who has truly and is truly making his mark here in the House of Representatives.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I want to thank the gentlewoman from California for her comments earlier about what this budget is doing to America versus for America. I think it is important in our democracy to be able to outline not only the pitfalls but where we can play offense, moving forward, moving this country forward.

As I speak about moving our country forward, it is important that we have a budget that is going to reflect our qualities and our values here in the United States. When I see a budget such as the President has sent here to the Hill, I cannot help but question the priorities of the administration versus the priorities of families that are living here in the United States, those that are working and those that are looking for work.

I must say that being a past creature of State government, I think it is important that we understand when the Federal commitment is cut, then the State commitment has to be cut. And when the State commitment is cut, then the local government commitment to communities and families is cut also. When I am talking about local government, I am not just talking about your counties or your parishes or just a city, I am talking about school boards. We call it devolution of taxation here in Washington, D.C. We cut it here, and they raise it there. Property taxes have gone up throughout this country, in all communities, not because local governments are saying that we like to raise revenue locally; they are doing it because the Federal Government is no longer supporting and helping and assisting local communities in vital programs that put forth the quality of life in America that we enjoy.

I just want to share a few figures. I am going to speak briefly tonight. States are currently facing their worst fiscal crisis in decades, with 41 States facing a cumulative budget gap of \$48 billion for 2004 alone. States are facing budget deficits of approximately \$40 billion for States in fiscal year 2005 and nearly \$200 billion. How are they going to make up that gap? They are going to make up that gap by raising tuition on students and working families, individuals that are going to community colleges trying to better themselves, prepare themselves as it relates to having an educated and prepared workforce which makes this country strong; also as it relates to making sure that we do not spend billions and millions of dollars in incarcerating individuals since we cut the COPS program.

I was so glad to hear my colleague speak of the cuts that are in the COPS program. Not only am I a member of the Committee on Armed Services, as was mentioned earlier, but also the Select Committee on Homeland Security. I think it is very, very important that we protect the homeland, and I know it is important that we defend our country. But at the same time I must say that we are going to fall short in having young people who may make youthful indiscretions due to the fact that its government and its local community failed them by making sure that we have vital direction programs to be able to build the kind of integrity and the kind of culture that we would like to build here and continue to maintain here in the United States.

Let us talk just for a moment about local governments. Being a past State trooper, I have a great appreciation for what police chiefs are trying to do in this country, and sheriffs, all of them. I believe that all sheriffs and all police chiefs genuinely would like to see a community that works towards harmony and also works towards making sure that they do not have to carry out the act of having to arrest individuals in a given community. If we continue to follow the track of this budget that has been sent by this administration to the Congress, and I am speaking to my colleagues here because we have to really man up and woman up and go see the wizard not only to get courage but also to get heart and making sure that we stand up on behalf of those individuals who cannot stand for themselves. We see a rural housing and economic development program that is cut by \$25 million, and we also at the same time see dropout programs that are also cut. We also have a HOPE VI revitalization for severely stressed public housing that is cut by \$149 million. Someone may say, well, we have to cut spending; but, ladies and gentlemen, we are not cutting spending. We are going further into spending, away from what we may say are mom and apple-pie issues here in the United States.

As we start looking at our democracy and as we start looking at what we must do as Americans, and all of us have been elected to lead, doing common things uncommonly well in this country, of making sure that we do not hand a mandate to local governments to where they have to fulfill that mandate by raising taxes on everyday working Americans. Yes, we may receive a \$400 check or a \$300 check in the mail; but also on the other hand, out of our left pocket money is being pulled out, through property taxes, money is being pulled out on local referendums and bond referendums because the Federal commitment has been cut.

I just want to say, ladies and gentlemen, as we look at this deficit that has grown under this administration, as we look at our commitment as Americans of making sure that we stand up for our children's future, as we make sure that children that are born, newly born in a hospital as I speak now already owe the Federal Government \$24,500, and dollars that are not in a deficit, and paying on a deficit that we are creating, that this administration is creating, then we are going to find ourselves in a very sad situation looking at the abuses of contracting and all of these things that are going on as relates to the war in Iraq.

I just want to say that it is important that we continue to share these bread-and-butter, literally, bread-and-butter issues with Americans about where this administration is falling short as it relates to providing the kind of leadership. It is just something fundamentally wrong, if you are a Democrat, Republican, independent, socialist, whatever you want to be a

member of, the Green Party, you name it, for a President to speak passionately on making sure that we make tax cuts permanent on behalf of the wealthiest Americans and not speak passionately about making sure that we provide the necessary, not the funding that it deserves but the necessary funding to educate our children, to be able to provide a health care system that is going to make our country healthy and to be able to help local governments as it relates to their commitment of protecting the home front and our local communities. Because with the defensive budget that the President has sent to the Hill, it leaves very little room for us to play offense in solving and hopefully stopping some of the issues that are going to be far more expensive than it would be if we were able to prevent them.

I thank the gentlewoman so very much, and I want to commend my colleagues for coming to the floor and sharing with America about what is going on and what we are going to fight against to make sure that we maintain the America that we celebrate today.

Ms. LEE. I want to thank the gentleman from Florida for really laying it out in terms of his very clear presentation. As I was listening to him explain the relationship between the Federal budget, local budgets and State budgets, he was really talking about the dismantling of America as we know it. I think that his voice and his breaking it down like that helps the public understand that what this budget does is not what America is, is not what we stand for. I just want to thank the gentleman for coming this evening and for being a part of this.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I am so glad once again that the Congressional Black Caucus saw fit to share with all Americans what is happening to them versus for them, because we are here to make sure that good things happen in America and that we push programs that are putting people to work and that are making sure that our children are not left with a bill, that we are willing to eat steak and have a good time right now, so that we dismantle our future in America. We want to have it better for them than it was for us.

Ms. LEE. Let me now yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), a member of the Committee on the Judiciary, someone who is a strong fighter in terms of protecting our Constitution, who works tirelessly not only for her constituents but for children and families throughout our country and throughout the world.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I want to thank the distinguished gentlewoman from California. First of all, I want to thank her for her determinedness. Some would wonder why we would spend time on the floor late into the evening trying to dissect, whether it is HIV/AIDS and the funding that she worked so hard for and we are

finding now that the funding is falling short, working on questions of war and peace, and they would simply wonder why we are here at this time of night speaking to our colleagues and debating an issue. I want to thank her for always being ready to educate not only Americans but our colleagues on these issues that are so particularly sensitive and important to many people who cannot speak for themselves. I thank her for allowing me to join in this evening with my colleagues from Florida and North Carolina and Maryland. I want to read the roll tonight, because this is, I think, the way to shock a lot of us into realizing what has happened when you begin to spend moneys that do not have priority, are not prioritized.

I know that the gentlewoman did not call me to the floor, and I did not come to the floor, to begin a debate on the question of Iraq and the expenditure of \$87 billion and the mounting billions. I guess we are up to \$175 billion, going up to 200 at this point because we are spending, as I understand it, I know we are spending a billion a month in Afghanistan. I know we need more troops in Afghanistan; and I think none of us, if I can just repeat the statement that I make all the time, are divided amongst our support to the troops, and we respect the young men and women that are on the front lines in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Germany and Iraq. But I think many of us made the point that we questioned the value of going to war in the first place, and now where we find ourselves as we look toward the future, one, in an unsolved resolution of the conflict in Iraq. It is unsolved, there is no resolution to it, there is no plan; and so we continue to spend money in Iraq, and we have many ills and problems with it which really has created, where I am going, the \$551 billion deficit that we now face and that is because we have not made priorities, we have not had an administration that has been willing to make the hard choices.

I heard a discussion of the President and I always tell my constituents, I respect the office, I respect the person, but I heard a discussion, I think, this past Sunday where there was no reason given for going to war and there was no reason to give response to the state of this economy. It was that we will get jobs, or they are coming; and it does not really address the fact that as the Commander in Chief and the CEO of this Nation, you have to sit down and make hard decisions. Are you going to put together a domestic spending budget that addresses the needs of our people, all of our people, the hurt, the pain of the people? Or are you going to say, it is going to fix itself? And I think what I heard in the President's presentation is, it will fix itself. We'll go ahead and put \$1.1 trillion in permanent tax cuts, mostly to both the richest of Americans and also to corporations. In doing that, we will then put ourselves in a position to see the \$551

billion deficit continue to grow, and as well we will see it grow into 4 to \$5 trillion.

The gentlewoman and I were together over the weekend in a very important meeting, and we heard the point being made that what that symbolizes, what that means is that the President and the Vice President are sitting late at night and, like me, have their glasses on, I imagine, and looking over Social Security checks that need to be going out to our constituents and literally endorsing them to pay our bills and to pay the permanent tax cuts, taking your Social Security fund, if we do not put a stop to it, and literally endorsing them for this increasing deficit and the tax cuts that are now being made permanent, or at least proposed to be permanent. That is what I say when I am talking about priorities.

We are now facing a 10-year deficit of at least \$4 trillion. We have about \$551 billion in deficit right now, \$146 billion more than we projected in 2003. So what has happened is, let me just begin to read the roll. In the budget proposals, here is what is happening to programs that Americans have become used to depending on. I am not even listing the crisis that we have with the Medicare prescription drug question where we started out saying it was \$400 billion, now it has risen to \$534 billion, and we have got a lot of complaining in the United States Congress. I think we have said that when we debated on the floor of the House, we needed a precise, narrow bill that dealt with giving a guaranteed prescription drug benefit to seniors.

□ 1945

We did not need an investment in our good friends in the pharmaceutical industry. We did not need an investment in the HMOs. We did not need to tell this government that it could not even negotiate a cheaper price, but that is a whole other story.

But listen to this: No moneys for the advanced technology program. That is a program that typically, \$171 billion, used to help, if one will, put together programs and technology programs for the benefit of small companies. That is gone.

Technology opportunities programs. We have talked a long time about digital divide. That is now gone. We will not get that.

Programs dealing with alcohol abuse reduction. We used to have a program that would help deal with alcohol abuse in our systems. Let me tell my colleagues that is important. More teenagers are drinking now. That is gone.

Arts in Education. That helps to, if one will, expose our children to art of many kinds. That is gone.

Community Technology Centers. Gone, no money for it.

Dropout prevention programs. Texas has one of the highest dropout rates among Hispanics and African Ameri-

cans. I was just at a school this past week, and they said one of their major issues was dropout among middle school students. That is gone.

Elementary and secondary school counseling. I recall when we were all concerned about the number of shootings in our schools, and what did we do? Pass a lot of bills dealing with enhancing school counseling opportunities so we would have more school counselors. Gone.

Literacy programs for prisoners. Many of our incarcerated persons from our neighborhoods are illiterate. That is gone.

State grants for incarcerated youth offenders. Gone.

Women's educational equity. Gone.

National youth sports. Gone.

Empowerment zones. Funding not needed.

As I recall, I think I heard even the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus get up and speak about the value of empowerment zones and what lives have been changed, how lives have been changed and how neighbors have been changed and how valuable they were.

Brownfields redevelopment. In my community alone we are still fighting to clean up brownfields, and I see that we have zeroed that out with an explanation, accomplishments not reported. What do they mean, "not reported?" We are still working to clean up brownfields, and I can assure the Members what that means to inner-city communities.

Let me cite Acres Home in my congressional district that has been working and working, the community has been working to get their brownfields cleaned up, and we are still going back in there with the EPA to see what has been done. That is gone.

COPS hiring grants, \$119 million, gone. They say that it has merged with other programs. I do not know how one can do that. If it is merged, it is gone, and it means there is no money.

For those who come from areas where there are migrant and seasonal workers, there were moneys in order to enhance their quality of life. This is our farming industry that needs migrant and seasonal workers. We have eliminated resources that can help them with their better quality of life.

Let me conclude with the Microloan program from the Small Business Administration. Gone. Microloan program. Gone.

As I show this picture to our friends and colleagues, it seems to me that we have got a Swiss cheese here, a budget with a lot of holes. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that what happened is that the priorities were disproportionately weighted toward those who already have, and if they can come up with a budget to the floor of the House or to the Congress and tell us that they have cut arts education and so many other things that impact people's lives, then I think that it is now time for us to rally and to be able to address needs of the American people.

I thank the gentlewoman for allowing me to come. I am going to keep this somewhere visible in my office to know how many people have been hurt by this budget and to suggest that this Congress is obligated to fix the problem on behalf of the American people.

I thank the gentlewoman for allowing me to share this list of the have-nots, because I think the only way the have-nots will gain their rightful place is for us to begin the fight and to be able to write a budget that makes sense on behalf of the American people.

I rise today once again being disappointed with this Administration's efforts to truly represent the values of average Americans and of the African American community. President Bush's latest efforts in the form of his 2005 national budget continues his irresponsible economic policies that have resulted in so many Americans suffering. This Administration has a credibility crisis. President Bush has said his tax cuts would act as a stimulus for our flagging economy and create jobs, this clearly has not happened. Instead of adopting more inclusive policies this President has decided to give even more tax cuts to benefit the wealthy. This Administration has misplaced priorities that are leaving average working Americans and our community in a bind.

#### EDUCATION

We all know that education is one of the most important priorities for our African American community. Our children's success or failure will be the true indicator of our effectiveness in this body. The generation of African American leaders who preceded us spent their lives making sure that we were able to get educated and have the ability to succeed that every American was entitled to. This President's budget threatens that very core principle. This is more than rhetoric; this idea is based on staggering facts. Of the 65 programs cut completely from the Bush budget, 39 of them were education programs. This President believes America will be better off if the richest Americans get \$66,000 tax cuts, but he doesn't believe our children will be better with programs like Dropout Prevention, Even Start and School Leadership, all of which are now obsolete. This President has a different set of priorities when he believes that hundreds of millions of dollars in cuts for our children's education will be better for America. We as a united community and an integral part of this Nation can not allow this flawed budget proposal to stand. Our children's future and in turn the future of the African American community is at stake.

#### DEFICIT

The most disturbing aspect of President Bush's flawed budget proposal is the soaring deficits that will result from his policies. This administration has tried to say that deficits don't matter; we know that this is simply not true. History has proven that chronic deficits threaten our economic strength by crowding out private investment, driving up interest rates, and slowing economic growth. Indeed foreign investment in the United States has dried up because foreign investors have no confidence in the Bush economic agenda. This Administration's irresponsible budget policies have turned a surplus into a large deficit that is choking off growth in the American economy.

President Bush likes to say his budget is geared towards tax cuts for all Americans.

When in fact the average American won't receive a substantial tax cut, but will instead be hit with a tax hike in the form of an ever-growing deficit. A large deficit means taxpayers have to shoulder the costs of paying the interest on this new national debt. The end result will be a debt tax on the great majority of Americans. This will be a tax on lower and middle class Americans; it will be a tax on our heroic war veterans; it will be a tax on the elderly and most unfortunately it will be a tax on our children. The truly sad part of the President's budget is that while it is bad for America today it is even worse for future generations of American taxpayers.

#### TAX CUTS

I want to highlight some of the most egregious examples of this Administration's misplaced priorities. President Bush believes we can spend tens of billions of dollars a year to provide \$66,000 tax cuts to the top 1% of tax payers, but he does not feel we can afford many vital programs many of which are tied to our national security.

Perhaps the most blatant example of this Administration's irresponsibility is the fact that the FAA budget was actually cut. At a time when our national security is under such great scrutiny I can not think of too many agencies that face greater pressure than the FAA to keep our nation safe. How can this President spend so much time and effort stressing the importance of homeland security and then cut the budget of the agency on the front line of stopping terrorists from attacking our nation? The irresponsibility does not stop there; the President's budget fails to provide the U.S. Postal Office with \$779 million needed for bioterrorism technology that guards against anthrax-like attacks. After the Ricin incident in the Senate Office Buildings a few days ago, how can anyone in this body in good conscious approve a budget that does not address our vulnerability for bioterrorism attacks through the mail? This is where President Bush lacks credibility, he has taken drastic and some would say unconstitutional measures in the name of national security, but now when it comes to fully funding our most sensitive security concerns he decides it is more important to appease the richest 1% of Americans with irresponsible tax cuts.

Unfortunately the misplaced priorities do not stop with our national security. The "No Child Left Behind" initiative is left under funded by \$9.4 billion a full 27% less than Congress authorized. Funding for America's veterans will be cut by \$13.5 billion over the next five years. Its truly sad how this President not only doesn't fully fund sensitive security issues, but he is also cutting funding to two of our most sensitive constituencies; our children who are our future and our veterans who in the past have sacrificed so much so that we may live freely. Instead of supporting those constituencies this President believes that the richest 1% of Americans deserve yet another tax cut. These misplaced priorities are evident throughout the President's budget and demonstrate a fundamental lack of understanding about the needs of the average American.

#### JOB LOSS

President Bush has been one of the worst Presidents ever to take office when it comes to job creation. Simply put, our economy can never truly be considered successful until Americans who want jobs can find jobs. This is simply not the situation that the average

American faces today. Under the Clinton Administration job growth continually improved. In contrast, under the Bush Administration the rate of unemployment has soared. In his State of the Union Address the President stated that jobs are on the rise, unfortunately the rise in employment he spoke of amounted to 1,000 jobs created over the last month. At that rate of job growth, it will take 192 years and eight months for the economy to return to the number of jobs at the beginning of President Bush's term of office. We are 8.4 million jobs behind where we are supposed to be at this point. That is a staggering number and it should be unacceptable to every member of this body. The Bush Administration assured the American people that tax cuts would result in job growth. The American people are still waiting to see this growth, too many of them are waiting unemployed and fearing for their prosperity. This Administration has argued that deficits do not matter and that job growth is not an economic priority. I can't think of too many Americans who would agree with that assessment. This President is not in touch with the needs and aspirations of the American people. This budget continues to reflect his irresponsible agenda based on a few special interests.

#### IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

It's unfortunate that this Administration does not understand the necessity of proper planning and vision. It has become painfully obvious to many of us in this body that this President did not have a plan to deal with post-war Iraq and Afghanistan. That point is once again made obvious by the fact that in this entire budget there is no funding included for the 2005 costs of ongoing military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. This is truly irresponsible, our brave fighting men and women are risking their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan and this President can not even provide figures for the costs that these military operations will incur. Does this President want us to believe that the costs for this War on Terror have disappeared? Or is he telling us that he plans to pull our troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan? Once again, this President's irresponsible agenda is being exposed; he does not have the credibility to allow yet another flawed budget to pass this body.

#### NASA

I was there a few weeks ago at the White House when President Bush announced his new NASA initiative to return America to the moon and eventually man missions to Mars. The funding for NASA has been increased in this budget, but it only begins to pay for future exploration efforts, a detailed plan on how the President plans to achieve his NASA initiatives is still needed. I believe the President when he says he has the aspiration to get America back to the moon, its just unfortunate that he does not have the proper planning to do so. His actions in Iraq and Afghanistan leave him no credibility in this body to believe that he can achieve his ambitious agenda. This entire budget in fact is riddled with false promises and under funded ambitions.

#### CONCLUSION

This President has spent a great deal of time while in office talking about patriotism. He has stood in full gear on board an aircraft carrier in an effort to show the American people how patriotic he is. However, in my mind a patriot is a person who stands with their nation.

In submitting this flawed budget this President has shown that he does not stand with real average Americans. It is not patriotic when you bring your nation from a point of success to the point of failure in the form of an enormous federal deficit. It is not patriotic when you side with the interests of the richest one percent of Americans and then cut or eliminate the programs that serve the great majority of Americans. It is not patriotic when our children are left behind without the proper resources to truly succeed. It is not patriotic when you ignore the wishes of an entire community in order to push through your own ideological agenda. This President talks about patriotism but when it comes to standing with average Americans and standing with the African American community to serve the interests of the entire nation this President has consistently failed.

This President has time and again asked for patience from this body and from the American people to allow time for his policies to start showing progress, unfortunately time has run out. Too many Americans are suffering and it is clear that President Bush's vision for America is not one that coincides with that of the average American or with the African American community. I hope we will continue to stress the danger of this budget, together we will be the ones to push the true interests of our constituents, to push for a real vision of America.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for really calling the roll and for putting it out there and for reminding the country that, yes, the President did indicate that, for the most part, that the economy and our job crisis would just about fix itself. How do we tell young people that as we encourage them to go to school to develop skills and knowledge to get a job when, in fact, the economy does not allow for that?

Again, I must repeat that today we talked with Chairman Greenspan, and his response in essence was the same thing. It will just have to fix itself.

How do we allow a government as great as ours to just give those kinds of responses when we know that tax cuts for the wealthy are there, we know that the war, as the gentlewoman indicated earlier, is being funded to the tune of billions and billions and billions of dollars?

I think that what the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) talked about tonight shows us that it cannot just fix itself. It is a matter of misplaced priorities, and we have got to demand that our priorities be reordered.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, if the gentlewoman would yield, I see the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN), and I know she is going to pick up on this because I know anything that helps her district she has already gotten. So I know she is an empowerment lady, she is a Hope VI lady, and I just want her to know that we are struggling.

I see this, and I did not mention it because I am a little bit confused. I was trying to be factual before I said it, but I am going to read this. Hope VI revi-

talization of severely distressed public housing, I know, in fact, my community is saying they are getting ready to send an application for Hope VI monies, and I see that that has been deleted \$149 million, and it says "goals achieved." I did not want to call it because I thought maybe I had missed something, but it just came to me that my community was doing that.

I guess one other point I want to bring in about what the gentlewoman said about Mr. Greenspan is that there are some people who have been unemployed so long that they are not even in the system. They are not even getting unemployment. They are not even in line to get it. So we are looking at a budget that has to address those needs and to address this big whopper of a number, and it tells me that goals are achieved when I just left home and I have a community that is applying for a Hope VI grant.

Ms. LEE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, and Hope VI is being dismantled based on the President's budget.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN), member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, a member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, who fights each and every day for the protection of our democracy, for our veterans, for jobs, for the economy, for children and families throughout, again, our country and throughout the world.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me commend both the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and, of course, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) and the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus and other Members for forging these kinds of debates and discussions on the floor of the House of Representatives, the people's House.

I have got to just take a moment to remind everyone that I am the congresswoman from Florida, the Third Congressional District of Florida. I, along with the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) and Carrie Meek, was the first Member of African American descent that was elected to Congress in 129 years. So we have a tremendous amount of responsibility.

I have to mention just for a moment the 2000 election. I do not think I can ever come to this floor and not mention the 2000 election, because I want the American people to know that it matters who is in charge. I want everyone to know that not just 500,000 people nationally voted for Gore, over 50,000 people in Florida voted for Gore. And if we are not careful, and if we look at the reports, the same thing will happen again. We can have another election stolen from the people, and the people will not have a voice in this House.

We have three separate branches of government. We have the administrative branch. We have the House and the Senate. It is a real honor to serve in the people's House, but the people do

not have a voice in the people's House. The House voted against privatizing FAA. The House voted, the Senate voted, and it came back in the appropriations bill. The House voted against doing away with overtime pay. The Senate voted against it. It came back in the appropriations bill. We can only vote up or down.

So we do not have a dictatorship in this country, but we have a void, and that void needs to be taken care of in November.

One can tell something about a country, something about an organization, something about a church by their budget, the priorities of that budget. Just think about it. If one is in a church and they are concentrating on building and if they are in an organization that is just building and building, that tells one something about the organization. But if the organization is interested in the children, the senior citizens, the elderly, that tells one something about that group.

I can tell the Members that this budget is what I call "reverse Robin Hood," robbing from the poor and working people to give tax breaks to the rich.

I want to extend that a little further because it is more than tax breaks to the rich. It is the rich that contributes to the Bush campaign re-election fund. All one has to do is follow the money. I say follow the money.

If we look at the budget, what has been cut? Veterans' programs, homeless, public education. And that is the real joke. They stole this, just like the election, "Leave No Child Behind," but this administration are not only leaving the children behind, they are leaving their grandmothers and everybody else.

Public transportation, seven out of the 15 Cabinet-level agencies cut; EPA cut; HUD cut; Department of Agriculture cut; Commerce cut; Health and Human Services cut; Justice, Transportation, and Treasury, to give huge tax breaks to those who have contributed to the President's reelection campaign. And I stand by that. All one has to do is follow the money.

What is most disturbing to me, and there are many things that are disturbing, but how the veterans' budget is being cut. When the President made this great discovery that he wanted to go to Mars, and I guess he is going, it comes out of the VA HUD budget. They are already cutting up HUD, and now they are going to squeeze the veterans' budget even more. So that additional money for NASA is going to be taken right out of the hides of the veterans in this country. Misplaced priorities.

There is one area that I want to ask questions in before we end, and I will turn my statement in. Under the area of homeland security, in Florida I guess we have got some kind of a scheme. I have talked to mayors on both sides of the aisle, first responders. They have not received a dime under homeland security. I have talked to other Members



of Congress. They have received the moneys in the area, but they have taken off a portion for administrative. But in Florida they come up with this list and in Tallahassee they can decide whether or not to send any of that money to the community. They are not sending them money, but they may send them flight suits or something. But the community is using COPS programs and they are using additional police or fire as first responders because that is where the money is needed.

We are not checking the ports. We are not checking the containers that are coming in. So homeland security is a failure under this administration, just like so many other areas.

But would the gentlewoman respond to what is happening in her area under homeland security?

This budget is another clear example of reverse robin hood: robbing from the veterans, the homeless, public education, public transportation, and 7 of the 15 Cabinet level agencies (the EPA, HUD, The Departments of: Agriculture, Commerce, Health and Human Services, Justice, Transportation, and the Treasury), to give away huge tax breaks to those who contribute to President Bush's re-election campaign.

Once again President Bush came out with a budget that is too little, too late. It is a budget that short changes the middle class, a budget that does nothing for minorities. And it is mind blowing that the Administration is going ahead to make the trillion dollar deficit they created even worse by building another budget around more tax cuts, and making them permanent! As is obvious from the budget introduced today, President Bush is the president of special interest groups.

Time and time again our veterans get the shaft. The fiscal year 2005 budget is a perfect example of how the Bush administration is failing to treat our veterans with the respect that they have earned. We show potential and current members of the armed forces how America honors their sacrifice by how well we treat our veterans. We owe it to the soldiers, airmen, sailors and marines, who have served as a source of pride in our Nation, to begin enrolling Priority 8 veterans into the VA healthcare system; increase the VA home loan guaranty to 90 percent of Fannie Mae-Freddie Mac's conforming limit so that the guaranty keeps pace with the rising cost of housing; maintain VA staff at an adequate level so that already backlogged claims can be processed; and fully fund concurrent receipt for every eligible veteran. This budget is not adequate to meet the needs of 25 million of our nation's finest individuals.

Ironically, the President's budget plan, which rhetorically proposes to strengthen our economy and our national defense, will only weaken them. Economically, the huge budget deficits are more than just an accounting problem, they will be injurious to our children, and our children's children, who will be forced to repay the record amounts of debt we are borrowing today. And it is not necessary to be an economist to know that chronic deficits threaten our economic strength because they crowd out private investment, drive up interest rates, and slow economic growth.

The budget proposed today makes it quite evident that the Bush Administration does not

have any plan to eliminate the budget deficits, and in fact, is pushing headlong toward expanding the size of the deficits. The \$5.6 trillion ten-year surplus projected when the President took office has been replaced by deficits year after year. For 2004, the budget proposes a record deficit of \$21 billion—\$146 billion more than the 2003 deficit, which was also a historic record. Deficits for every year are worse than projected a year ago.

Moreover, it is mind blowing that the Administration, in the face of these deficits is only making them worse by building its budget around yet another set of tax cuts! These tax cuts will reduce revenues by \$1 trillion, and driving the budget further into the red. And what's more, the President is doing everything he can to make them permanent!

This budget is completely unrealistic because it leaves out countless items. Once Administration initiatives like additional costs for military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, Medicaid giveaway and space travel to Mars are included, the Nation's deficit will spiral even higher. This is an administration that is not only without a plan to erase the deficit, but by proposing to make their tax cuts permanent, they will push the current deficit to sky high levels."

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman, first of all, for a very powerful statement.

Secondly, just to paint a picture very quickly, my area is an area that is a very vulnerable area. We have a great port. We have a major transit system. We have laboratories, universities, a very high-risk area.

□ 2000

We are severely underfunded. Our first responders do not have the resources, our schools do not have the resources, our ports still do not have the resources. We need to be able to check containers before they are put on the ships and brought over to our country. Our police officers are getting cut. We do not have the funding for police officers. Our county submitted an excellent application 2 years ago. It is still not fully funded. I believe for the most part the majority of California has not been funded in terms of homeland security.

This budget I do not think steps up to the plate. Domestic security should be our first priority in terms of the fight against terrorism. Again, I do not believe that our budget and this budget reflects that.

So I say to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN), we are going to have an uphill battle this year. But I think the American people are waking up and understanding that we do have some issues with regard to national security. But those issues should be prioritized in terms of our domestic security, and this budget and last year's budget did not fund our first responders, our firefighters, police officers and homeland security efforts in my arena.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. As the gentlewoman said, as far as HUD is concerned, with the cutting out of the programs, prevention programs that

were supported, and in addition we are cutting the COPS program that helped the community.

Ms. LEE. That means that crime will increase.

I thank my colleagues for joining me tonight.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, as we honor Black History Month fifty years after the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, one would think that we would be able to celebrate the end of the "separate but equal" doctrine and laud the accomplishments of America's black community.

There is no doubt that we have come a long way from the days of Jim Crow and segregated schools, but the "separate but equal" doctrine did not disappear with the waving of a magic wand by the courts fifty years ago.

Today, in some instances, it seems to be one accepted by the current White House. The President's Fiscal Year 2005 Budget released earlier this month is a potent example of this Administration's willingness to tolerate two Americas. But now, like then, the doctrine is better characterized as "separate and not equal."

Instead of celebrating the achievements of black entrepreneurs like Madame C.J. Walker, Earl Graves and Bob Johnson, I am obligated by the economic plight of many black Americans to discuss how the President's economic policies are failing minority communities.

Under the President's budget the White House seems to believe that "separate but equal" is acceptable in our nation's economy.

The President did not make job creation a priority in his budget. While he increased funding for some job programs as a campaign ploy, he cut funding for other programs. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate among African Americans increased last month to 10.5 percent, more than double that of white Americans. When the President assures Americans that the economy is getting better and that jobs are being created, he certainly can't be addressing black America.

In addition, the Bush budget cuts nearly \$80 million in funding for the Small Business Administration, which plays a key role in helping minority owned small businesses grow.

Finally, the SBA programs targeted at low-income and minority communities—the Microloan Program, the New Markets Venture Capital Program, the Business Information Centers, and others—received no funding.

This month should also be a time for celebrating the black Americans who have contributed to education. Carter G. Woodson was a visionary who established Black History Month. Woodson realized that white and black America knew little of African Americans' accomplishments and he was determined to educate America on those achievements.

Instead, I am forced to talk today about the fight against a budget that will shortchange America's children, including African American children who disproportionately attend poorly performing schools. The President's budget would fail to provide \$9.4 million in promised education funding, eliminate the Even Start program and freeze funding for Pell grants and cut the funding of Perkins loans by nearly \$100 million, shutting the door on college for many minority students.

We should also laud this month the pioneering efforts of Dr. Charles Drew, whose groundbreaking medical work with blood and



transfusions have saved lives around the world. Instead, we must focus our hearts and minds on the 7.4 million African Americans without healthcare insurance and the millions more who can barely afford to pay their premiums. The President makes no serious attempt to address these issues in his budget.

In addition, the President's budget cuts by 15 percent funding for the Office of Minority Health. This office supports disease prevention, health promotion, and educational efforts in minority communities. Black Americans suffer proportionally higher rates of heart disease, obesity and diabetes and are in need of such services.

The disparities between the lives of many African Americans and the rest of our country are unconscionable. Whether one looks to jobs, education and healthcare the President's budget fails to address problems facing the African American community at virtually every turn.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to be here today speaking of African American contributions and achievements. Instead, I am compelled to talk about the persistence of "separate but equal" in our society, and the sad fact that the President's budget does little to confront this entrenched separation in our country.

#### A WISE CONSISTENCY

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

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, a wise consistency is the foundation of a free society, yet everyone knows or thinks they know that consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.

How many times has Ralph Waldo Emerson been quoted to belittle a consistent philosophy defending freedom? Even on this floor I have been rebuked by a colleague with this quote for pointing out the shortcomings of Congress in not consistently and precisely following the oath to uphold the Constitution.

The need to discredit consistency is endemic. It is considered beneficial to be flexible and pragmatic while rejecting consistency. Otherwise, the self-criticism would be more than most Members could take.

The comfort level of most politicians in D.C. requires an attitude that consistency not only is unnecessary, but detrimental. For this reason, Emerson's views are conveniently cited to justify pragmatism and arbitrary intervention in all our legislative endeavors.

Communism was dependent on firm, consistent, and evil beliefs. Authoritarian rule was required to enforce these rules, however. Allowing alternative views to exist, as they always do, guarantees philosophic competition.

For instance, the views in Hong Kong eventually won out over the old communism of the Chinese mainland, but it can work in the other direction. If the ideas of socialism within the context of our free society are permitted

to raise their ugly head, it may well replace what we have if we do not consistently and forcefully defend the free market and personal liberty.

It is quite a distortion of Emerson's views to use them as justification for the incoherent and nonsensical policies coming out of Washington today. But the political benefits of not needing to be consistent are so overwhelming that there is no interest in being philosophically consistent in one's votes.

It is a welcome convenience to be able to support whatever seems best for the moment, the congressional district or one's political party. Therefore, it is quite advantageous to cling to the notion that consistency is a hobgoblin. For this reason, statesmanship in D.C. has come to mean one's willingness to give up one's own personal beliefs in order to serve "the greater good," whatever that is.

But it is not possible to preserve the rule of law or individual liberty if our convictions are no stronger than this. Otherwise, something will replace our Republic that was so carefully designed by the founders. That something is not known, but we can be certain it will be less desirable than what we have.

As for Emerson, he was not even talking about consistency in defending political views that were deemed worthy and correct. Emerson clearly explained the consistency he was criticizing. He was most annoyed by a foolish consistency. He attacked bullheadedness, believing that intellectuals should be more open-minded and tolerant of new ideas and discoveries.

His attack targeted the Flat Earth Society types in the world of ideas. New information, he claimed, should always lead to reassessment of our previous conclusions. To Emerson, being unwilling to admit an error and consistently defending a mistaken idea, regardless of facts, was indeed a foolish consistency. His reference was to a character trait, not sound, logical thinking.

Since it is proven that centralized control over education and medicine has done nothing to improve them, and instead of reassessing these programs, more money is thrown into the same centralized planning, this is much closer to Emerson's foolish consistency than defending liberty and private property in a consistent and forceful manner while strictly obeying the Constitution.

Emerson's greatest concern was the consistency of conformity. Nonconformity and tolerance of others obviously are much more respected in a free society than in a rigidly planned authoritarian society. The truth is that Emerson must be misquoted in order to use him against those who rigidly and consistently defend a free society, cherish and promote diverse opinions, and encourage nonconformity.

A wise and consistent defense of liberty is more desperately needed today than at any time in our history. Our foolish and inconsistent policies of the

last 100 years have brought us to a critical juncture, with the American way of life at stake. It is the foolish inconsistencies that we must condemn and abandon. Let me mention a few.

One: conservatives who spend. Conservatives for years have preached fiscal restraint and balanced budgets. Once in charge, they have rationalized huge spending increases and gigantic growth in the size of government, while supporting a new-found religion that preaches deficits do not matter. According to Paul O'Neill, the Vice President lectured him that Reagan proved deficits do not matter.

Conservatives who no longer support balanced budgets and less government should not be called conservatives. Some now are called neo-conservatives. The conservative label merely deceives the many Americans who continuously hope the day of fiscal restraint will come. Yet if this deception is not pointed out, success in curtailing government growth is impossible.

Is it any wonder the national debt is \$7 trillion and growing by over \$600 billion per year? Even today, the only expression of concern for the deficit seems to come from liberals. That ought to tell us something about how far astray we have gone.

Number two: free trade fraud, neomercantilism. Virtually all economists are for free trade. Even politicians express such support. However, many quickly add, yes, but it should be fair. That is, free trade is fine unless it appears to hurt someone. Then a little protectionism is warranted, for fairness' sake. Others who claim allegiance to free trade are only too eager to devalue their own currencies, which harms a different group of citizens, like importers and savers in competitive devaluations in hopes of gaining a competitive edge.

Many so-called free trade proponents are champions of international agreements that undermine national sovereignty and do little more than create an international bureaucracy to manage tariffs and sanctions. Organizations like NAFTA and WTO and the coming FTAA are more likely to benefit the powerful special interests than to enhance true free trade.

Nothing is said, however, about how a universal commodity monetary standard would facilitate trade, nor is it mentioned how unilaterally lowering tariffs can benefit a nation. Even bilateral agreements are ignored when our trade problems are used as an excuse to promote dangerous internationalism.

Trade as an issue of personal liberty is totally ignored; but simply put, one ought to have the right to spend one's own money any way one wants. Buying cheap foreign products can have a great economic benefit for our citizens and serve as an incentive to improve production here at home. It also puts pressure on us to reassess the onerous regulations and tax burdens placed on our business community.