

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, there is great economic news for American workers. The reason this economy is growing is because of small business. That is why we are celebrating Small Business Week. We found out from the Bureau of Labor Statistics last week, 25 months of consecutive economic growth, 146,000 jobs in June. We have unemployment at near historic lows. We are going to see the deficit \$100 billion less than projected. The reason that is happening, the reason we have steady economic growth, is because the tax reductions are working. The tax reductions are working, and we are seeing higher Federal revenues.

We are going to continue with this. It shows that the agenda laid forth by the majority leadership has worked for all Americans, and we are going to continue to work to reduce Federal regulations like the bills we did in dealing with OSHA to make the environment more friendly for small business to do what they do best, create those jobs. We look forward to continuing to create the environment for a great competitive American workplace.

WHITE HOUSE STONEWALLING ON ROVE

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, it has now been 2 days since we discovered Karl Rove told a Time magazine reporter that Ambassador Joe Wilson's wife was a CIA agent, and what is the response from the White House? Silence.

White House press secretary Scott McClellan has refused to take questions from reporters for the last 2 days on Karl Rove, citing an ongoing Federal investigation. However, McClellan had no trouble spreading erroneous information about Rove's supposed innocence.

On October 1, 2003, McClellan was asked about Rove's involvement; and after first stating that there was an ongoing investigation taking place, McClellan continued by stating, "It's simply not true that he was involved in leaking classified information."

Nine days later in reference to another question about Rove, McClellan began by reminding reporters of an ongoing investigation, but then continued by stating that Rove had assured him he was not involved.

It now turns out that everything the White House was saying was false. Mr. Speaker, the ongoing investigation is not what is keeping the Bush White House from commenting. They are stonewalling because they cannot explain these falsehoods away. It is time for the stonewalling to end.

THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. CHOCOLA. As we have heard, Mr. Speaker, last week our country did receive more good economic news. The jobless rate fell to 5 percent in June, the lowest rate since September of 2001. Economic growth has continued to average a strong and steady 4 percent. The deficit is down by over \$100 billion to its lowest point in 3 years. And tax receipts have skyrocketed this year.

That news should send a clear signal to Members of this body, it is time to give the tax cuts of 2003 the credit that they deserve. Time and again we have learned that the best way to achieve growth and create jobs is for hard-working people to keep more of their own money in their own pockets.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to help sustain this growth and help eliminate the deficit by controlling spending and making the 2003 tax cuts permanent.

VA BUDGET SHORTFALL

(Ms. BERKLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, once again the administration is forced to admit that it failed to acknowledge the full extent of the VA's budget shortfall. In June, the administration submitted a request for \$975 million to keep the VA ship afloat. This number was a joke. Democrats, myself included, protested that at least \$1.3 billion would be required to meet the VA's obligation to our Nation's veterans.

Former VA Secretary Anthony Principi, then Chairman Chris Smith and Ranking Member EVANS, the Independent Budget, the American Legion, and countless veterans wrote Members of Congress and warned us that the VA could not operate with the budget request submitted by the administration. As usual, the administration stubbornly clung to its ridiculously low figure. Once again, the administration was wrong.

Now that the administration acknowledges its billion-dollar shortfall, let us make sure our veterans are provided for and that no veteran in this country goes without the best health care we can provide to these great Americans.

NEED TO MONITOR FEMA

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my condolences to Floridians in the wake of Hurricane Dennis. Hurricane Dennis blasted into Florida as a category 3 storm and is estimated to have caused about \$1 billion worth of damage and the loss of seven lives. I share my fellow Floridians' anguish over their losses. This hurricane unfortunately is just the first of many that will assail Florida's coasts.

Last year, FEMA bungled cleanup efforts in the aftermath of four terrifying hurricanes by refusing to pay for debris removal on private roads, slow reimbursement, and exorbitant overpayments in the Miami-Dade area.

I urge FEMA to respond quickly to this latest hurricane so that the 2004 debacle is not repeated.

ROVE NEEDS TO BE STRAIGHTFORWARD ABOUT HIS INVOLVEMENT IN VALERIE PLAME SCANDAL

(Ms. WATSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, Karl Rove needs to stop hiding behind his attorney and be straightforward with the American people about his involvement in the Valerie Plame scandal. Whether or not Karl Rove is the only administration official who leaked information to reporters remains to be seen. What is clear today is that Karl Rove has not been up-front with the American people. He has consistently denied any involvement in the case despite the revelation on Monday through his attorney that he did indeed tell a Time magazine reporter that Joseph Wilson's wife was a CIA agent. This is a serious breach of trust on Karl Rove's part. Truth and trust are devalued when this happens.

Larry Johnson, a former CIA operative who worked with Plame, explained how serious Rove's actions were, and I am quoting: "The fact that she's been undercover for 3 decades and has been divulged is outrageous because she was put undercover for certain reasons. One, she works in an area where people she meets with overseas could be compromised."

He needs to step down.

LONDON BOMBING

(Mr. GINGREY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my deepest condolences to our friends in London who suffered a heinous attack of terrorism last week when several bombs tore through their public transit system. Events like the London bombing remind us how absolutely important it is to stand firm against terrorism wherever it rears its hideous head. We must never let down our guard.

Next week, the House is slated to take up legislation to reauthorize 16 provisions in the PATRIOT Act. Those in Congress acted quickly in the wake of September 11 to get this strong legislation passed to help safeguard our Nation from the agony of another terrorist attack.

So far, we have been successful. The PATRIOT Act has helped our intelligence and law enforcement officials

prevent another attack from occurring on American soil. But last week's London bombings remind us that we are still in the middle of a fierce battle. Our safety depends on our intelligence and law enforcement officials having the tools they need to track terrorists and to prevent terrorism, at home and abroad. Indeed, this is not the time to let down our guard.

□ 1030

SUPPORT THE FLAKE-BLUMENAUER AMENDMENT TO ENSURE THAT THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER LOCK AND DAM EXPANSION IS JUSTIFIED

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we heard earlier today that there is a need to have a massive investment in the lock system in the Mississippi River to avoid having product move up and down in trucks. That is not the issue.

The problem that we are facing now is that more and more of the grain and other agricultural product are being shipped by truck and rail because it needs to get to locations not served by the Mississippi River system. This has been shown by the Congressional Research Service and the National Academy of Science.

The bill that is coming before us for a vote next week would be the Nation's most expensive waterway project and would siphon off 10 to 15 percent of all core construction funding for years, perhaps decades, to come, for an area where the barge traffic is actually going down.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support the amendment that the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) and I are offering that would allow the project to go forward only if the minimum standards that make it economically viable are, in fact, met over the next 3 years.

TAXES AND BUDGET

(Mr. MCHENRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, since President Bush took office in January 2001, America has seen a recession that began before the administration was really up and running, the worst terror attacks in the history of the world, scandals that rocked the Fortune 500 companies and our financial markets, a war in Afghanistan, a war in Iraq, and the highest energy prices in recent memory.

We have faced enormous economic challenges that should have devastated the United States; but, instead, we have seen 4 years of economic growth, the best housing market in American history, all more evidence that tax re-

lief benefits the economy. And getting the government off the backs of the taxpayers actually helps our economic engine.

The 2001 tax cuts and the 2003 cuts on capital gains and dividends have been the linchpin to our economic rebound. Federal tax receipts are up this year. State tax receipts are up this year. The economy is turning around, and we have reduced the deficit by \$100 billion this year alone, all the work of tax relief and tight budgets, what we as Republicans believe, what we are fighting for, and they work.

TRUTH, TRUST, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, truth, trust, and accountability should be the defining characteristics of the American Presidency.

President Bush's press secretary, in October of 2003, Scott McClellan, told the White House press corps and, through them, the world at large that Karl Rove and two other high-level administration officials had assured him that they were not involved in outing CIA covert agent Valeria Plame. He said that unequivocally.

Now we find that Karl Rove has sat back in timid silence while he has watched two reporters go through the costly, torturous experience of legal prosecution, all to protect his identity.

Mr. Speaker, the 41st President of the United States, George Bush, for whom the CIA headquarters is named, said that what Karl Rove did was an act of treason. Mr. Speaker, it is time to hear from the President of the United States.

STOPPING THE SPREAD OF TERROR

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the pledge made by Prime Minister Tony Blair. He said that we must "defeat terror and emerge from this horror with our values, our way of life, our tolerance and respect for others undiminished." I support that pledge.

The attacks on London show that the war on terror is not over, nor is it confined to a specific geographical domain. Securing our homeland is only one facet of the war. Spreading democracy in the savage lands where terrorism is allowed to propagate is another.

In the face of terrorism, a united front is one of the strongest weapons. A terrorist network that believes a nation so tested will fold under pressure of a few horrific acts may capture its attention, but will not achieve its submission. The terrorists who attacked Great Britain have underestimated the

resolve of an alliance that shares the ideals of freedom and democracy.

Those of us who thought the threat of terrorism receded with time now look no further than the horror visited on our closest allies. Complacency only allows the waves of terror crashing over the Western World to cause erosion. None of us in either country should be content to live under this constant threat. We must instead insure ourselves against such terror by allowing democracy to spread and flourish.

VETERANS HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, talk is cheap, but health care is very expensive; and for the last 5 years, the Bush administration has offered our veterans empty rhetoric while denying them access to needed health care.

As veterans groups and Democrats fought to increase the veterans budget for the last 3 years, the Republican majority and the White House have been in deep denial. But I get weekly reports, and I bet you do too, from my veterans rep who tells me that people's treatment has been delayed, denied, people who cannot even get in the door for 6 months.

Now, 2 weeks ago, the administration admitted, well, I guess we need another \$1 billion for health care for veterans this year. Today they said it is \$3 billion more; but they say, oh, you know, we just could not have known, we could not have anticipated there would be veterans coming home from Iraq or Afghanistan who are wounded and injured and need services. They did not know there was a war going on. And they also said they could not anticipate the aging of the World War II and Korean veterans. They did not build that into the budget. They just did not know.

But they had a chairman on that side for a couple of years who told us he did know. He told us we needed more money, and they fired him from that job. At least a few Republicans are standing up for what is right.

TIME FOR KARL ROVE TO COME CLEAN

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I guess the Republican leadership is now condoning Karl Rove's behavior, but think about what the previous President Bush said about this.

On September 30, 2003, and I am quoting President Bush, this is the current President Bush, "If there is a leak out of my administration, I want to know who it is, and if the person violated the law, the person will be taken care of."

Well, that was nice talk then, but now it appears that it was all talk. The