

relatively quick when the 9/11 Commission recommended changes to the executive branch, in redesigning our national security review apparatus. We have the Director of National Intelligence now, Mr. Negroponte, and trying to change around the oversight within the administration, even though it is important to remember that the Bush administration originally resisted that reform and fought the reform.

They realized that when the 9/11 Commission on a bipartisan basis came out in favor of that recommendation that change would have to be made.

□ 2000

But here in the Republican-led Congress they have not done anything to address the 9/11 Commission's recommendations with respect to oversight. And I think everybody understands that at a time when we are trying to identify terrorists who are trying to do harm to our country and respond against them, it is absolutely essential that we get it right. It is important that we get it right for our military men and women. It is important that we get it right for the American people. It is important that we get it right for our own credibility.

In order for us to do that, we know we have to expand our abilities in human intelligence gathering overseas. You need to have people who know more foreign languages. It is a shift in paradigm somewhat. And what is absolutely clear is that this administration has not had that paradigm shift when it comes to intelligence. Certainly the leadership in this House of Representatives has not had a paradigm shift, because they have not supported the bipartisan recommendations of the 9/11 Commission with respect to the issue of oversight. And so unless we do something, we are going to be caught with our lenses looking one way when the danger to this country sneaks up from another direction.

We need to get it right. We need this oversight. It is like a board of directors that decides to go on vacation for four years and not pay any attention to the company. That board of directors would be sued for malpractice by the stockholders if something went wrong. We know some things are not going right and you have got to hold people accountable. And when you reward people who fail to punish or ignore people who get it right, you have got a recipe for failure. We need a recipe for success.

Mr. SCHIFF. That is very well put, and we have seen the consequences of our intelligence failures. They manifest. We have seen the consequences of our diplomatic failures as we are seeing in abundance now with Iran where we just had a terrible setback in our efforts to mobilize the international communities to deal with Iran's weapons program.

We have seen the consequences in our failure to stop North Korea from proliferating. But I am confident with our

Real Security plan we can reverse the decline in our own national security, and I want to thank the gentleman from Maryland again for all of his great work and for joining this Special Order hour.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I thank my colleague from California.

THE OFFICIAL TRUTH SQUAD

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REICHERT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, if all the American people listened to the Democrats and what they say here night after night, day after day on the floor, you would think that we lived in the worst country in the world.

It is just amazing to me that people are risking their lives every day to get into this country when you hear what they have to say, because from their perspective all Republicans are evil. All Republicans are liars. All Republicans are no good, and this is the worst place in the world to be living. And yet we have one of the best economies that the country has ever had, and as I said, people are risking their lives every day to get into this country. I think because it is the greatest country in the world. And frankly, I think that it is not good for this country, for our colleagues to constantly, constantly be saying negative things about it.

We are not perfect. Nobody is perfect. The President is not perfect. No Member of Congress is perfect. No elected official is perfect. But we certainly do work hard trying to have a good country where the basic instincts of the people are good and people are trying to do good for their neighbor as well as for their country. And frankly, I get a little tired of it and I know a lot of my constituents tell me that they are tired of it too.

I want to come here tonight and talk a little bit about positive things. I think that while we can all acknowledge that we are not perfect and the country is not perfect, we do not have to dwell on the negative all the time. And I want to talk a little bit about our economy tonight and some other things relating to the economy and the impact that actions of the President and the Republican Congress have had on the economy.

I am going to put up one chart to start with because I want to keep with our theme that a group of us have come up with so that we can present the truth. The Truth Squad is here tonight. Just part of the Truth Squad is here, but we are going to try to keep our record of getting out the truth to the American people.

The economy is strong and it is continuing to grow; 138,000 jobs were created last month alone. That is April 2006. In the past 12 months, 2 million new jobs have been created; and since

August of 2003, more than 5.2 million jobs have been created. Our unemployment rate is 4.7 percent, lower than the average of the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. The GDP grew at a strong 4.8 percent annual rate in the first quarter of this year. This follows economic growth of 3.5 percent in 2005, the fastest rate of any major industrialized nation.

Over the past 12 months, employment increased in 48 States and four States set record-low unemployment rates.

Now, our colleagues on the other side would say, well, you know, yeah, there are new jobs being created, but they are not good jobs. They are just service jobs; they are no good. So I thought I would share a little bit about where those jobs are.

Between May 2003 and March 2006, job growth in key sectors, the five key sectors, in transportation, 197,000 new jobs; in the financial area, 294,000 jobs; in construction, 808,000 jobs; in education and health services, 1,039,000 jobs; in professional and business services, 1,288,000 jobs.

Now, those do not sound like bad jobs to me. And they must not be real bad jobs since our unemployment rate is only 4.7 percent. It must mean that Americans like those jobs pretty well because they are taking them.

Now, our tax policies, Republican tax policies, have spurred this economic momentum. Republicans have reduced income taxes for every American who pays income taxes. Republicans doubled the child tax credit, reduced the marriage penalty, cut taxes on capital gains and dividend, created incentives for small businesses to purchase new equipment and hire new workers, and put the death tax on the path to extinction. Together this tax relief has left \$880 billion in the hands of American workers and businesses.

Now I have said this before, there is an easy explanation or easy definition for the difference between Democrats and Republicans. Democrats think that the government knows how to spend your money better than you know how to spend your money. Republicans believe that you know how to spend your money better than the government knows how to spend it. We do not want to take any more of your money than we absolutely have to to do the things that Americans cannot do for themselves. The Democrats want to take all of your money.

If you listened to their leader this weekend, she talked about no deficit, no deficit if Democrats were in charge. But when pressed to say how she would get rid of the deficit, she really could not quite bring herself to say raise taxes, but the commentators pointed out that is the only way you can keep spending and do away with the deficit, and especially spend more as they have said on this floor they want to do and in committees. They want to spend billions more dollars, and all that would do would be to add to the deficit.

Now, I want to share a chart that shows some information about what

Americans pay in taxes because, as I mentioned, the tax cuts benefit all Americans. Let me put this one up first. I will start at the lower-income levels. The top 20 percent of people in this country pay 87 percent of all Federal income taxes. And if you look at the chart, people who make between 10 and \$20,000 a year get a rebate of \$686. They do not pay anything in taxes. In fact, people earning more are actually giving some of their money to these people in the form of a rebate, mostly earned income tax credit.

People making between 20 and \$30,000 get a rebate of \$183. People earning between 30 and 40,000 pay approximately \$1,000 a year in taxes. People earning between 75 and 100,000 pay approximately \$7,500 in taxes.

Now let's look at the higher incomes. People making between 100 and \$200,000 pay almost \$16,000 in income taxes. People who make more than a million dollars pay \$609,670 in taxes. So as I said earlier, the top 20 percent pay 87 percent of all Federal income taxes.

This information is very widely understood and produced so it is not something Republicans are making up. These are the facts, again, coming from the Truth Squad. But if the Democrats in Congress had had their way, they would have let tax relief expire.

Earlier this week we were able to extend the tax relief that had been put in place 3 years ago because we know that cutting those taxes is what is going to keep our economy going forward. And we did not want to see a tax hike on all Americans. Middle Americans would have been hit with that tax hike as well as all other Americans. But the Democrats all voted against that bill, or most of them voted against the bill, I think we did pick up a few, but they understand what this is all about.

They understand that the economy depends on you having more of your money in your hands and not the government having that money. But they do not want to vote for tax cuts because they want to keep their mantra going that all we are doing is giving tax cuts to the rich. Well, it is the wealthier people that are paying the taxes and the people who are not paying any taxes are not going to get those tax cuts. They will wind up, probably many of them, getting more in rebates.

Well, early on Saturday morning, I got up and turned on the TV and I heard the last few minutes of the "Neil Cavuto Show" and it really struck a nerve with me, something that I had been thinking about that was going on in this country, and he presented some information that I want to share with you tonight as well as some information from a study being done, that has been done by a very well respected organization in this country.

Neil Cavuto called it "the greatest story never told." He talked about how this very, very positive economic news is not getting out and not being presented to the American public by and large by the news media.

Now, we know that some of our news media do give us fair and balanced reporting. However, some of our media has failed to share the good news with the American public. And so people depend, they are working hard. They are doing their jobs. They are depending on hearing what is going on in the country and forming their opinions from it. But our economy is humming along under this Republican Congress and the leadership of President Bush, but the American people are not hearing that. They are hearing a very slanted story that affects what they think about the economy.

So despite one of the strongest economies in recent history and last month we collected the largest amount of money in revenue, the second highest that has ever been reported and collected in this country, that did not get reported very well. Neil Cavuto said this weekend this quote: "I think it's the greatest story never told: an economy that is humming but most in the media insist we are bumming."

Many in the media would report that "only" 138,000 new jobs were created last month. Well, 138,000, that is a whole lot of jobs. I do not understand why some in the media continually put qualifiers like "only" in front of such an accomplishment.

You know, I have spoken before on the floor about the importance of language. Our language is very, very important. It governs our perception of things. When we have done our best to try to cut spending here, we have been merely trying to cut the rate of spending and the rate of increases, but the Democrats say we are engaging in massive budget cuts.

Another example I could use is just the words "unemployment rate" or "employment rate."

□ 2015

We talk all the time about the unemployment rate. Our unemployment rate right now is about 4.7 percent. So the employment rate is 95.3 percent. Again, you get the perception if you are always putting the emphasis on the negative, then that is what you are going to think about, but our employment rate is 95.3 percent.

I want to give you some other examples of the way some in the media try to influence the way we think about things through the use of their language.

When is the last time that you have heard the media follow the statistic about our unemployment rate with the phrase that I used earlier, lower than the unemployment rate of the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s? You almost never hear that in the media, and you will never hear again an employment rate of 95.3 percent because that sounds way too positive.

Now, I am not the only one who is concerned about this issue. As I listened to Mr. Cavuto this weekend, and it was very, very early in the morning when I heard it, but it really struck a

nerve for me. I was thinking back to the comparison of the way many in the media compared things that were happening in the Clinton presidency with what is being said now.

I do not have a whole lot of real positive things to say about the Clinton presidency, but during parts of his time in office, our economy was strong and, in many ways, similar to the economic surge we are experiencing today.

However, I seem to remember that during the Clinton presidency, the good news about the economy was everywhere, often shouted from the rooftops by the media to anyone who would listen.

Now, during the Bush presidency, the economy is just as strong and, in some cases, even stronger, but many in the media are nowhere to be seen.

I am not the only one, again, who has noticed the difference in coverage between the Clinton days and today.

The Media Research Center is the largest media watchdog organization in America. It was formed in 1987, and it has made media bias a household term, tracking it and printing the compiled evidence daily. The founder and president of the Media Research Center is Brent Bozell, a nationally syndicated writer whose work appears in publications such as the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, the Washington Times, the New York Post, the LA Times and the National Review.

So let me talk a little bit about one economy and two spins. In a recent report, the MRC compared economic conditions during the Clinton presidency and the Bush spit. Amazing: Economic conditions portrayed as positive during Clinton were presented as negative for Bush. For example, economic growth under President Clinton averaged 2.2 percent; under President Bush, 3.7 percent.

Many in the media have given President Bush consistently negative press about perceived poor job creation and unemployment, especially in the summer of 2004, but their reports were overwhelmingly positive when President Clinton ran for reelection in the summer of 1996 under similar circumstances.

Let me give you some highlights of the report. Clinton, good; Bush, bad. Stories about jobs during Bill Clinton's reelection campaign were positive 85 percent of the time, more than six times as often as they were for Bush, despite similar economic data. Reporters praised the Clinton unemployment rate of 5.6 percent as low, but they downplayed a 5.4 percent rate under Bush and called job growth anemic.

Now, let me repeat that. The unemployment rate in 2004, when President Bush was running for reelection, was 5.4 percent, lower than the unemployment rate was under President Clinton when he was running for reelection, but many in the media portrayed the unemployment rate under President Bush as something a lot worse than it was under President Clinton.

How do they make good news become bad news? Under Bush, reporters presented good economic data as bad news stories by minimizing positive achievements and emphasizing people who might be out of work or regions of the United States that were still "struggling." The opposite approach was taken under President Clinton. Then, reporters explained away a 2/10ths of 1 percent rise in unemployment as minor.

The media's slanted scorecard is presented in a chart in Brent Bozell's report on this. In 1996, they did a list of the stories for Mr. Clinton. Positive stories: On ABC, 4; CBS, 6; CNN, 3; NBC 4; New York Times, 12; Washington Post, 6. These are positive stories. Negative stories: ABC, 1; CBS, 0; CNN, 3; NBC 0; New York Times, 1; Washington Post, 1. A total of 35 positive stories, 6 negative ones.

Now, President Bush in 2004, positive stories: ABC, 1; CBS, 0; CNN, 1; NBC, 1; New York Times, 1; Washington Post, 2. Six positive stories. Negative stories about President Bush and the economy: ABC, 6; CBS, 7; CNN, 4; NBC, 4; New York Times, 10; Washington Post, 7. A total of 38, a flip-flop. Actually, more negative stories in 2004 when the economy is actually better off than it was in 1996. Thirty-eight negatives for President Bush, six positives. Thirty-five positives for President Clinton, six negatives.

I am a former college professor and president and sort of teacher all my life. So I always like to look for the data when you can get it. Again, my gut was telling me this, and I think the American people see this, but it is always great when you have got the data to back up what you are thinking about.

While the business press reflected the strong economy, much of mainstream media coverage of employment did not. The reporting under Clinton was overwhelmingly positive. For Bush, it was overwhelmingly negative. Eighty-five percent of the stories portrayed the economy under Clinton in a good light. Only 13 percent of the stories gave the employment situation under Bush the same treatment.

Many in the media commenting about employment and job growth during the Bush reelection campaign tell the whole story. They used terms like "poor," "stalled," "struggling," or "lackluster."

Comments during the similar time period during the Clinton presidency were the exact opposite. Many in the media instead used terms like "showing its muscle," "encouraging," "surprisingly strong" and "impressive, but not excessive."

I have come to the floor many times and talked about, again, the importance of language in our country. To everybody, actually, language is very important, and in many ways, we are not as precise with our language in this country as some other languages are, but I think it is important that we

point out the bias that occurs in much of our media about what is happening in the economy.

It is one of the reasons why the Truth Squad has been so concerned about getting out the truth. We realized that we have challenges presented to us. Not only do our colleagues misrepresent the facts, but we have many in the media where a lot of Americans get their information about the economy and form their opinions are being presented negative kind of information.

Now, I want to give a couple of more charts to show some other positive things that are occurring in the economy that have been put together by members of the Truth Squad.

Since the President signed the Jobs and Growth Act in May 2003, this is an example of how the GDP has gone up. Again, that is a result of our having cut taxes, letting people keep more of their money. It works to cut taxes. Again, if you listen to our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, you would think that cutting taxes is the beginning of Armageddon, but cutting taxes is what helps make this economy grow. If the government has your money to spend, it is not investing it. It is spending the money. It is not an investment. People do the investments in the private sector, not in the government.

Again, this chart shows when the President signed the Jobs and Growth Act and what happened with unemployment. We see unemployment going down. We see job growth going up and going up significantly. This is not a small little line going up here. This is major in terms of what we have seen, the job growth, in this country since we cut taxes, and I am really proud that Republicans have understood that and voted this week to extend many of those tax cuts.

What we need to do now is to work to get the death tax made permanent. We heard a lot from businesspeople this week about that. They can then plan their lives, plan for investments, plan to know what they are going to be able to do, so that businesses can stay in the families. That is one of the biggest challenges still facing us, and if we can get the Senate to understand more about economics and what that means to us, then hopefully we will make that permanent.

Now, let me give you a couple of other charts. Again, we can tie this very directly to the Jobs and Growth Act, and you can see how that spurred business investment and how that went up. This is before President Bush came into office. You can see that the economy was beginning to slow down, and then, of course, we had 9/11 and we saw investments go down. Once we got the tax cuts made, we see investment going up, and that is what we needed to do in this country to get the economy growing.

The last one shows revenue growth and what we project revenue growth to

be in the next 5 years. We expect it to grow at the rate of 5.3 percent in the next 5 years. The President has promised that he would cut the deficit in half by 2009, and we think we can do even better than that, especially with the revenue that came in last month, the second highest amount in the history of this country.

So cutting taxes spurs growth in the economy. That is the economic lesson here, and it is the facts. We can point to it. We can see it, and I think it is, again, very, very unfortunate that it is so difficult to get that message out to the American people, but I can promise you that there is a group of us that is going to continue to do that, despite the fact that our colleagues are always shouting gloom and doom and the fact that many in the media do not want you to know that there are a lot of positive things happening in this country and many of them are related to the tax cuts that the Republicans have put into place.

□ 2030

30 SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. INGLES of South Carolina). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor once again being before the House. We would like to thank the Democratic leader for allowing us to have the time on the floor here, NANCY PELOSI; and Mr. STENY HOYER, who is our Democratic whip; Mr. JAMES CLYBURN; Mr. JOHN LARSON, Mr. JAMES CLYBURN, the chairman of our caucus; Mr. LARSON, who is our vice chair. Once again to come to the floor to share not only Democratic ideas but American ideas, to help push this country forward. Also, to point out some of the issues that are being thrown upon the American people by the Republican majority and their lack of working with the Democratic side of the aisle to bring about good policies for our country.

Tonight I am joined by my good friend from Ohio, Mr. TIM RYAN, who is a great American. That is just not by my standards but by the people in his district and many people throughout the country.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to be able to identify or point out the fact that once again this week the Republican majority tried to pass an unjust budget on the backs of the American people. Well, due to the fact that we, those of us on this side of the aisle and hopefully a couple of the Republicans on the majority side is saying no, saying no to the fact that we are here every day at the highest level that we can be without Members being absent from the floor to make sure that we vote en bloc against this Republican budget, that we will set America back versus moving it forward.