GOP AGENDA HOSTILE TO MIDDLE AMERICA

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, it is no wonder that the Republican program for the last 14 months is so far away from the needs and the hopes and the aspirations of America's working families. When you consider at the end of last year when the Republicans came together to discuss how they were doing and what they were going to do this year, one of their honored speakers was Al Dunlop, a man who went to Scott Paper Co. and 2 years later fired thousands of workers with little or no notice and walked away with $100 million in his pocket. He advised the Republican caucus to forget the working-class issues, they did not matter.

Well, they matter to millions of Americans, to millions of Americans who are worried about losing their job, and with that losing their health care; about losing their job, and with that the ability to pay for their children's education. And what do we see cuts in education for their children. We see cuts in student loans for their children. We see them trying to keep the health care bill that would make health care portable from one employer to another from coming to the floor. What we see is an agenda that is outright hostile to middle America and to the working families of this country.

□ 1115

SALUTE TO ENGINEERS

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

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my fellow Members of Congress to join me in saluting the contributions of engineers to America.

Last week was National Engineers Week celebrated annually since 1951. The timing recognizes the role played by our first President, George Washington. Washington's education and experience as a land surveyor and promoter of invention, education, and the construction of roads, canals, docks, and ports earned him the recognition as our Nation's first engineer.

February is also Black History Month and African-American engineers invented some of our most important and best-known inventions including: blood banks, the four-way traffic signal, and potato chips.

Engineering is our Nation's second largest profession with more than 1.8 million working engineers according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Every day, engineers are creating new ways to use technology to improve our quality of life. The contributions of engineers surround us and are so pervasive that we sometimes take them for granted.

National Engineers Week offers us the opportunity to stop, take notice, give thanks for the work of engineers, and encourage our young people to study science and math and consider engineering as a career.

Engineers build a better future every day.

DISCOVER WORKING AMERICA

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I have always been a little skeptical about death bed conversions, and as the bells toll for the demise of the Gingrich Republican revolution, we are witnessing an epidemic of conversions among my Republican colleagues.

Suddenly the Republican Party has discovered working America. They are desperately trying to convince the hard-working families of this country who are struggling to get ahead that the Republican Party is their friend. But, in fact, since taking control of this Congress, they advanced an extreme agenda that would hurt working men and women of this country. Their budget would let companies raid pension funds. They would deny the children of working families college loans. Their budget would cut Medicare and long-term care, denying families a dignified retirement. And they would deny a raise in wages so that, in fact, people could pay their bills every week.

But they, in fact, would provide to the wealthiest in this Nation a tax break, and tax breaks that would allow them to continue to reap the benefits.

Mr. Speaker, what the Republican Party really does not understand is that the American people are too smart to fall for this. They did not buy NEWT GINGRICH's extreme agenda, and they will not buy this election-year gimmick either.

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT BOLIN

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

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, too many Americans take freedom for granted, expecting it as constant a force of nature as the daily rising of the Sun.

Fortunately for all of us, there are men like Special Forces S.Sgt. Neal Bolin, who stand watch at freedom's door; protecting us from the demons of totalitarianism; ready to sacrifice their own personal comfort and safety for ours. For them, liberty is not a given, but the goal of a very real and dangerous struggle.

This past February 12, Staff Sergeant Bolin lost his life, while seeking to preserve the life and safety of others, on a rescue mission for a plane missing in the jungles of Panama.

I was honored to attend services for Sergeant Bolin, and to pay respects to his life and family. The people of Georgia and the Nation are grateful to Neal Bolin for the sacrifice he made. We are also grateful to his parents, and to his widow, for this American hero. While Sergeant Bolin's young daughter has lost a father, our country benefits from the new chapter in the annals of military service and dedication written by her father.

DO NOT DESTROY AMERICAN WORKING FAMILIES

(Mrs. MINK of Hawaii asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, the House is about to debate the farm bill, and it will be a contest of the wills of both sides of this Chamber in its dedication to the concept of jobs.

One of the most interesting developments in the Republican Presidential race is that they have discovered that jobs are uppermost in people's minds. In debating the farm bill, I hope that this House will keep in mind the fact that we are talking about jobs, not about commodities.

There is this wholesale effort to try to destroy the farm community. I come from a farming district. Sugar is an important commodity. If they do away with the sugar program, it will mean 6,000 jobs in my district alone.

And so when we come to this floor to talk about the farm bill, it is not commodities. It is not some abstract notion about something that we put on the table to consume. It is thousands of jobs in the sugar industry alone. It is 420,000 jobs that are about to be eliminated.

So, focus on what the American people are concerned about. It is jobs in America. Let us not destroy our American working families.

AMERICA NEEDS A SOUND ENERGY POLICY

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

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, today marks the fifth anniversary of the end of the Persian Gulf war. We can all remember the great pride we felt on that day 5 years ago.

During the gulf war, our strong defense came through—just the way it is supposed to—and now it is time for Congress to come through—just the way it is supposed to—with a sound energy policy.

Since the gulf war, oil imports have reached an all-time high and domestic oil production has reached an all-time low.

Twenty years ago we imported 35 percent of our oil. Today we import over 50 percent. Clearly we are overly dependent on foreign sources of oil to