million in dividend income; yet the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) say we cannot afford to provide modest tax help to brave service men and women, many of whom are serving in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Yesterday, the leadership said we had time to rename three post offices around the country; yet we have not had the time to consider the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act. Why? Because it is paid for by closing the Benedict Arnold loophole that lets American citizens renounce their citizenship to keep from paying taxes.

It is shameful the Republican leadership seems to be more interested in protecting Benedict Arnolds than in helping our service men and women.

ENERGY PLAN VITAL FOR AMERICA'S HOMELAND DEFENSE

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, with national security foremost on the minds of the American people, there is one thing we can do to simultaneously protect our shores and boost the economy: quickly approve a comprehensive energy plan.

With the President's support, the House passed a responsible energy plan last Congress that will free us from the undue burden of dependence on foreign oil and, of course, bring new jobs to parts of the country that sorely need them.

Ignoring this impending energy crisis will do nothing to solve it. ANWR exploration could free us from trading with leaders like Saddam Hussein, who used oil money to develop weapons of mass destruction. Increased domestic production is an indispensable component of any energy plan.

Mr. Speaker, during World War II, our great nations bonded together and made personal sacrifices to make this world a safer place to live.

□ 1015

Now, again, we are at war, a Nation at war, and just like in the past, we need to come together. We can take one giant step forward by implementing the House's energy plan.

EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

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

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a petition to force a vote on legislation to extend unemployment benefits as a triage effort to tide people over until we address the underlying problem behind high unemployment rates: the U.S. economy's job losses.

This country has lost 3.2 million private sector jobs in the last 3 years. It is not that Americans are not looking for work, it is that the jobs are just not there.

In addition to providing a safety net to individuals, we need to focus on creating an environment allowing the private sector to grow and create these desperately needed jobs. Not only do unemployment benefits provide a level of security to families, unemployment benefits also help stimulate our local economies. When people do not have spending power, businesses hurt.

Last week 11,000 Oregonians exhausted their benefits, and that number is going to continue to grow unless this Congress acts. This deprives our State's local economy of $3 million every week in stimulus. Unemployment benefits are intended as a safety net to bridge people from one job to the next. I urge my colleagues to join me in signing this discharge petition.

MEDIA NOT GIVING BALANCED ACCOUNTING

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, if Americans do not get the facts from the media objectively reported, they do not have a basis on which to make good decisions. For example, a few days ago The Washington Post ran a six-column page 2 story about the redistricting process that the Texas legislature completed earlier this month. The writer quoted eight Democratic Members of Congress but not one Republican official. This was obviously a one-sided report that did not give their readers a balanced accounting.

A recent Gallup Poll showed that 45 percent of Americans believe the news media in this country are too liberal, while only 14 percent say the news media are too conservative. Ultimately, it is a matter of trust, whether the media trusts the American people with the unvarnished facts. They should. Let the people make up their own minds, not be told what to think.

SUCH A DEAL

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, in the last 3 years, 3 million Americans have lost their jobs; 42 million Americans are without health insurance of which 22 million Americans work full time; a trillion dollars worth of corporate assets have been foreclosed on; and 3 million more Americans have walked out of the middle class to poverty.

In that same period of time, we have added $3 trillion to the Nation's debt.

Mr. Speaker, $3 trillion added to the Nation's debt; 3 million Americans have lost their jobs. As my great aunt would say, ''Such a deal.''

We need to do better for the American people. Just last week we passed an economic program for Iraq's future. I voted for it. It included investments in jobs, health care, education, housing, and infrastructure. The promise we make to Iraq and the values we hold for Iraq must be the promise we hold for the American people. We must now invest in our economic growth so we can stimulate our job market with the same kind of attitude and investment that we have had in the stock market. We have a health care crisis and a job crisis in this country. We must invest in America's economic future with the same commitment we have done for Iraq.

CALIFORNIA FIRES DEVASTATE LANDSCAPE

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

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, Governor-elect Schwarzenegger just addressed the Republican Conference, and he is meeting with leaders on both sides of the aisle. What he is asking for is help for the State of California. When I left San Diego, it literally looked like an atomic bomb went off. Going from Los Angeles to San Diego, it looks like a moonscape. Governor-elect Schwarzenegger is meeting with the leadership from the Democratic side and our side, and he said that we need to work together on this.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know if most people understand the devastation. I have seen what B–52 raids do to a city. It fails in comparison to what is happening in San Diego. We ask Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to work with us in California's desperate time.

RELIEF FOR UNEMPLOYED WORKERS

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

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I just signed a discharge petition to extend unemployment benefits for dislocated workers across our Nation, and I am here to urge my colleagues to do the same. Let me just share some of the numbers from the State of Maine. For the past 3 years, Maine has lost 22 percent of its manufacturing jobs, 15,500 jobs in total, the highest in the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, where is relief for these workers and their families? Too many Mainers are approaching today, tomorrow and the coming days without a job, without health care coverage, without adequate food and medicine, and without the ability to make ends meet. We cannot turn our backs on these workers and their families. We must extend unemployment insurance for the people who have exhausted their benefits. Our most important job is to help those who cannot find a job.