

United States and Alan Greenspan, his man at the Federal Reserve, are saying to the American people, you have either got the tax cuts for the most privileged and if you take those tax cuts, then it means we have to cut Social Security.

That is really what we are going to talk about in the next 8 months, that if we are going to make these tax cuts, if we are going to continue these tax cuts for the wealthy that the President wants, it means fewer dollars for education, less money for prescription drugs and other health care, and ultimately it means cutting Social Security. That is the choice. That is what the election will be about this year.

That is what this Congress is going to be about in the next 6 months. That is what we are going to hear JOHN KERRY and George Bush debate. If we do the tax cuts and cut the taxes of the wealthiest Americans, it means less money for Social Security beneficiaries. It means less money for environmental enforcement. It means less money for the middle class. It means a stagnation of wages, and it takes this country in the wrong direction.

It is bad economic policy. It is bad for our country. It is bad for our communities. It is bad for our schools. It is bad for the middle class.

THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, as we have listened to debates over the last several days, actually last several weeks, there has been a lot of rhetoric about how poorly things are going in Afghanistan and Iraq, the administration has no plan, et cetera, and along with many other Members of Congress, I visited both countries within about the last 5 or 6 weeks, and it did not seem to me that the information I was getting and seeing squared with what we have been hearing.

In Afghanistan, for instance, the Taliban is out. They were a tremendously oppressive regime. Terrorist training camps, and of course, Afghanistan was the hotbed of terrorist activity, have been shut down. Most of the funding has been dried up. Al Qaeda is on the defense, and of course, the democratic loyal jurga formed a constitution which I think was a tremendous step toward democracy. Women have been given a significant role. Elections have been scheduled this summer, and they have a great leader in Karzai, and I think there is a great chance he will be elected President.

All of this has been accomplished with 13,000 coalition troops controlling this country, very little loss of life. It has been a tremendous military victory and a great victory for those who are opponents of terrorism.

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Iraq, of course, is a little behind the time line of Afghanistan, because it came several months later; but the infrastructure has been restored.

The water is running, the electricity is on, and 17,000 reconstruction projects have been completed; 17,000 projects have been completed. The schools are open. They have been given significant aid; 33,000 teachers have received training in just the last few weeks. The hospitals and clinics are open. There is much better health care. There has been a 6,000 percent increase in health care service expenditures in the last few months. The economy is expanding. Shops and businesses are springing up. Consumer demand is good. Wages are between 25 and 30 times higher than they were under Saddam Hussein. So the economy is showing real signs of life. One million more cars in this country than a year ago. Newspaper and television stations are springing up as well.

Insurgent attacks on our troops have decreased dramatically. About all the attacks we are hearing about lately are on Iraqi citizens, mainly because they are the only soft targets that they have left. Weapons and ammunition supplies have been destroyed, and an Iraqi army of 133,000 is being trained and should be in place by next fall. An Iraqi police force is assembled. And all but a handful of Saddam's lieutenants have been captured. I think 45 out of 50 have been captured and, of course, Saddam Hussein himself.

A provisional constitution has been drafted and ratified, just today, I believe, by the Kurds, the Shiites, and the Sunis. This is a tremendous step toward democracy and a tremendous accomplishment. So we are on track to see a viable democracy in a country that has been a major destabilizing influence in the Middle East for the last number of years. We have had no attacks in the U.S. since 9-11.

So again, Mr. Speaker, I would just reiterate the fact that what I and many of my colleagues have witnessed in Afghanistan and Iraq does not seem to square with some of the conversation we have been hearing on the political scene in recent months and recent weeks. So we think that we have been doing a good job over there.

The soldiers, the troops that I met, have a tremendous sense of mission, a great sense of accomplishment; and I think it is important that they get the message that we are solidly behind them and solidly behind this effort that is going on.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEARCE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE PRESIDENT'S CREDIBILITY DEFICIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, President Bush has announced that his campaign strategy will be to make credibility an issue. Just last night, the Vice President said that if the Democrats had been in charge for the last 2 or 3 years we would have endangered the job creation of the economy.

Really? What a fascinating take, that Democrats would have endangered the job creation and the economy. Under this administration, \$3 trillion has been added to the Nation's debt, and nearly 3 million American jobs have disappeared. And they want to make credibility an election year issue?

In the "Meet the Press" interview, the President could have talked about his foreign policy accomplishments and his record, but what does he have to offer but an endless occupation. He could have chosen to talk about the economy and the jobs he created, but then he would have to point to the jobless economy and the wage recession Americans face. And this is a President and an administration that wants to make credibility an issue in this campaign?

The administration announced 5 months ago, on Labor Day, that they were appointing a manufacturing czar. That position remains empty. There is not even a nominee. And they want to make credibility an issue? Interesting.

Since that date, 250,000 Americans have lost their manufacturing jobs. And they want to make credibility an issue? After 5 months, there is not a single person to fill that job.

Now, the President does not take advice from me, but as far as I can see David Kay is available. He did the weapons of mass destruction research. Maybe we can help him find where the 2.7 million American jobs have gone. And they had the gall to announce it under a banner of American jobs and American values. And they want to make credibility an issue?

Every year the President submits a budget, and he has submitted time and again the elimination of the Manufacturing Extension Program, which helps small businesses, small manufacturers in this country. And he wants to make credibility an issue?

Not only is the President not interested in the issue of jobs and job creation in the United States, his own economic report that he submitted the other day to Congress say that

“outsourcing of jobs is good for the American economy and good for the middle class,” especially the middle class in India, not Indiana. And they want to make credibility an issue?

In that report, they envisioned 2.7 million jobs being created in the United States. Then they had to walk away from it. And they want to make credibility an issue?

They also in that report cited manufacturing would now be defined as flipping hamburgers. And, again, they would like to make credibility an issue.

Since we have decided to make credibility an issue, I would like to say that not only does this administration have a big fiscal deficit; it has a huge credibility deficit.

Let me give some other highlights of the issue of credibility.

One month steel tariffs are on; the next month steel tariffs are off. There was \$3.5 billion in new police funding, and yet the President's budget cuts \$1 billion from the police funding. Prescription drugs one month cost \$400 billion, the next month, with nothing changed, not a single benefit, we send a bill to the taxpayers for \$550 billion. And they want to make credibility an issue.

Now, I am not the one to give advice to this administration, or unsolicited advice; but if the President or this administration thinks we are going to cut Social Security to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy, I got a bridge over the Tigris they can buy. Let me say this: the only people that think that is a good economic plan are pioneers and rangers who think cuts in Social Security is what this economy needs so we can pay for tax cuts for the well-off.

What we need is a President who wakes up every day and who rolls up his sleeves as he goes into the Oval Office and thinks about the American workers, their families, and their values, not somebody who, for a press headline, announces a manufacturing czar and 5 months later, 250,000 jobs later that have disappeared, has that position remaining unfilled. That is not an administration that every day sees the American family and its values at the center of what it does in the Oval Office.

I only wish that they would spend as much time thinking about the American family, their values, their children, their jobs, their health care, their security, and their retirement security as the focus they give to those on K Street and the lobbyists in this town.

On policy after policy this administration says one thing and they do another, and yet they have the gall to say credibility will be an issue.

So to quote one Senator: If they would like credibility to be an issue this election year, Democrats say, bring it on.

GREAT WORK BEING DONE BY THE 10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION OF FORT DRUM, NEW YORK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, we hear so much information here in this House, and this evening is no exception. I wanted to pick up a little bit on the point that the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) made in his remarks here a few moments ago.

Mr. Speaker, of course both sides of the House have not only the right but they have the obligation to speak up when they believe things are not right. And it is an election season, so we are hearing a lot of political discourse and rhetoric. The gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) got up and spoke very eloquently to that fact, that perhaps what we hear is not always aligned with what in fact is happening on the ground.

The gentleman from Nebraska spoke about his travels to Iraq and Afghanistan. And, indeed, just 2 weeks ago I took a trip to Iraq and Afghanistan. It was my second trip into the country of Iraq, but my first to the country of Afghanistan. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that as far as the talk we hear going on here on the floor of the House, yes, it is our right and indeed our obligation to speak out, but we know or at least we should know that words have consequences. And the words spoken here in this House do resonate around the country; and in fact they resonate around the world, and they are picked up frequently by our troops fighting for our freedom overseas.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would never question anyone's motives or question anyone's patriotism, but at the same time I just cannot help to point out how a few weeks going to Iraq and Afghanistan I did have the chance to see what was happening there on the ground. The 4th Infantry Division captured Saddam Hussein in December, and in an effort to minimize the importance of that singularly important feat, we will hear people say, well, it is not that important; it, in fact, does not make us any safer here at home. Mr. Speaker, let me say tonight that I firmly believe that that event was important and indeed we are safer here at home because that man is in custody. But, again, in an effort to minimize the importance of that event, we will hear the talk over and over again that it does not really matter.

The other thing we will hear is that we have not finished the job in Afghanistan. Well, Mr. Speaker, just like the gentleman from Nebraska, I want to take a minute tonight and talk about what I saw going on in the country of Afghanistan and the great work that is being done by the 10th Mountain Division out of Fort Drum, New York.

Mr. Speaker, General Austin in Afghanistan, the commander of the 10th

Mountain Division, spoke to us there as part of our briefing, and he shared a picture with us. He shared a picture with us that was so dramatic and so impressive that I asked their permission to bring it back and show it on the floor of the House, and we can see it here beside me.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I was anxious to share this picture with the whole country. This is a picture of what our guys in Afghanistan are doing to end the war on terror in that country, to reclaim that country for its people, and, in the end, make us safer here at home.

Here we see some of our young soldiers and a man that is being escorted into a helicopter. This man, I do not remember whether he was a Taliban or al Qaeda or just a member of one of the warlord tribes there, but he thought he was relatively safe on that house on a steep mountainside. He could see anybody coming up after him, and he was pretty comfortable there in his belief that there was no way he could be apprehended.

So sitting by his campfire one morning and taking his morning meal, he was visited by our troops from the 10th Mountain Division. They were able to encircle him and surprise him. And then to get him back to where he needed to be, they landed half a helicopter on his house. And we see him there being helped into the back of the helicopter to be brought back to face whatever charges awaited him.

Mr. Speaker, this is a dramatic photo, and it shows what lengths our fighting men and women will go to in order to end the conflict in Afghanistan. And I believe they are well on the way to ending that conflict. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I would go so far as to say as soon as the snow melts out of the passes in the mountains on the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, we are very likely to see the beginning of the end for those groups who mean to harm our troops and harm innocent Afghan citizens and those individuals who want to prevent the return of civil society to Afghanistan.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know it is a little off the point from what we hear here on the floor of the House night after night after night, but in fact there are some good things going on in the world. Our troops are doing a masterful job on the ground both in Iraq and Afghanistan. I am proud of them. I am proud of our country.

Once again, I want to point out the dramatic aspect of this photo. Think of the risk that that pilot is taking to apprehend that individual and bring him to justice, the loadmaster in the back of the aircraft that essentially landed that half a helicopter on that man's roof. I can imagine the surprise of this individual as he was brought into United States custody.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.