

us were a bit shocked at the frantic attempts to spin these tax cuts as harmful to low-income families.

Those across the aisle who oppose this tax relief should be nervous. They voted against the plan that exempts another 3 million-plus low-income workers from any Federal tax liability. They voted against a plan that expands the 10 percent income bracket so that more low-income working Americans get to keep a greater portion of their paychecks. And they voted "no" to giving small businesses the ability to expense investments, a provision that is a boon to mom-and-pop operations in virtually every single corner of this country.

In an article printed in the Wall Street Journal yesterday, it was pointed out that the Nation's bottom 50 percent of filers had very little income tax liability. And you know what? Republicans reduced the burden on these working families even further when we passed the jobs and growth act. So do not be fooled by the screeching coming from across the aisle. Democrats know that people are going to love this bill when they start reaping the benefits of lower taxes; when they take a long overdue vacation, buy a new car, and put a little bit more in retirement or college funds.

We were right to pass the tax relief bill. Today, the economy looks to be on the verge of a turnaround, and Chairman Greenspan has said that the jobs and growth plan will likely boost consumer spending and feed into the job market. This is great news for Americans and should be cause for reflection for those who voted against the tax and relief bill.

TAX RELIEF BILL

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I just want to say a word about what happened before we went into recess, the fact that we voted on a bill that provided hundreds of billions of dollars of tax relief, but not to the people who needed it the most.

In fact, we now see that about one-tenth of 1 percent of the very wealthiest Americans receive approximately as much tax benefit as the 90 percent of Americans with incomes of \$95,000 or less. But the most outrageous thing about this tax cut was something we did not know. It took the newspapers, and I saw it in *The New York Times* a week later, that revealed that we actually eliminated the child tax credit for families with incomes below \$26,000, the working poor, the families who needed tax cuts the most.

I mean, I cannot believe that this Congress did that to working-class families and did not even give us the opportunity to debate it. I hope that there is a groundswell of public opposition to what we do and we can reverse

this. The Democratic Party is determined to do so.

IN HONOR OF OUTGOING AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION CHAIRMAN MICHAEL WEISS

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate one of my constituents, Michael Weiss, for his work as national chairman of the Board of the American Diabetes Association. I am proud of his commitment to the local Pittsburgh community and his leadership at the national level. His efforts are helping to improve the lives of millions of Americans who are impacted by diabetes.

Michael Weiss is an attorney in Pittsburgh and has been an active volunteer for the American Diabetes Association at the local, State, and national level. He will be completing his term as the ADA's national Chair of the Board next week at the ADA's Annual Meeting and Scientific Sessions in New Orleans.

Michael's tireless efforts have earned him the distinguished Charles H. Best Medal of Service. Named for Dr. Best, the cofounder of insulin, this award recognizes meritorious service on behalf of the Association of Americans with Diabetes.

An active participant in many civic and community organizations, Michael Weiss lives in Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania, with his wife, Gerri. I am sure that Gerri and their two children, Melissa and Douglas, will join me in offering sincere congratulations to Michael for his great work as the national chairman of the ADA. He is a credit to our community, and we are proud of and thankful for all that he has done to improve the lives of those with diabetes.

CONCERNING THE STAGED RESCUE OF PRIVATE JESSICA LYNCH

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, was the dramatic rescue operation of Private Jessica Lynch staged for domestic propaganda purposes? The administration portrayed Private Lynch as receiving bullet and knife wounds, experiencing mistreatment by Iraqi officials, and being spirited away amid harsh enemy fire. But nothing the administration has said about Private Lynch and the circumstances of her rescue have been verified by independent news reports.

Specifically, Private Lynch sustained no bullet or knife injuries. U.S. forces knew in advance of the operation, that no Iraqi forces were guarding the hospital. Iraqi medical staff treated Private Lynch humanely, even donating

their own blood. Iraqi medical staff actually tried to deliver Private Lynch in an ambulance 2 days earlier, but they were fired upon by U.S. forces. U.S. forces participating in the rescue of Private Lynch were not fired upon by Iraqi forces.

Last week I sent a letter which requested that the administration order the public release of the unedited footage taken by the military cameraman, and a letter follows. It is time to find out the truth. Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the letter I referred to.

The letter referred to is as follows:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC, May 30, 2003.

Hon. DONALD H. RUMSFELD,
Secretary, Department of Defense,
The Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY RUMSFELD: I am writing to request your assistance in resolving the controversy surrounding the rescue of Private Jessica Lynch.

In the days following Private Lynch's rescue from an Iraqi hospital by U.S. Special Forces, numerous U.S. officials described to national media outlets the circumstances surrounding this event. They portrayed Private Lynch as receiving bullet and knife wounds, experiencing mistreatment by Iraqi officials, and being spirited away amid harsh enemy fire. Although U.S. officials requested anonymity, their stories were widely reported without correction or qualification by the Defense Department. Indeed, the Department appeared to confirm the veracity of these reports, releasing for reporters an edited section of videotape taken by a military cameraman using night vision equipment. Indeed, in introducing this clip, General Vincent Brooks, the U.S. spokesman in Doha, reportedly said: "Some brave souls put their lives on the line to make this happen."

More recently, however, contrary media accounts have emerged. At their core, these accounts argue that the rescue was essentially staged. Specifically, these accounts have reported that, in fact, Private Lynch sustained no bullet or knife injuries. They have also reported that U.S. forces knew in advance of the operation that no Iraqi forces were guarding the hospital. They have reported that Iraqi medical staff treated Private Lynch humanely, even donating their own blood. They have reported that Iraqi medical staff actually tried to deliver Private Lynch in an ambulance two days earlier, but they were fired upon by U.S. forces. And they have reported that U.S. forces participating in the rescue of Private Lynch were not fired upon by Iraqi forces. Perhaps the harshest account claimed that the Pentagon's staging of this event was "one of the most stunning pieces of news management yet conceived."

As you can see, there is a wide gap between the facts as reported initially and the manner in which they are being reported now. As I understand the Defense Department's position, these recent accounts are "outrageous, patently false and unsupported by the facts." At the same time, Defense Department officials now seem to be qualifying their earlier statements. For example, Bryan Whitman, a Department of Defense spokesman, reportedly said "the U.S. military never claimed that the troops came under fire when they burst into the hospital."

In this case, I believe the best course of action is not to rely solely on omissions and gaps in past statements by Department officials. Instead, I believe the better course is to provide as much information as possible.