

United States would come down at least 30 percent.

Now, I am not good in mathematics, but 30 percent of \$220 billion is over \$60 billion a year. That would be the largest tax cut we could ever give the American people. If the goal of the tax cut is to allow Americans to keep and spend more of their own money, then market access certainly should be part of that equation.

We also had Dr. Elizabeth Wenner, who has her own program going in the State of Vermont to encourage the patients there in her clinics to buy their drugs and make it easier for them to legally and safely buy those drugs from pharmacists across the border in Canada. She has numbers to demonstrate how much their patients have saved; and the average, believe it or not, is over 60 percent.

Then we had Mayor Albano, the mayor of Springfield, Massachusetts. He began his voluntary plan for city employees there and he has only been operating for a few months, and his estimates are that they have saved \$600,000. We are talking about real money, I say to my colleagues. It is not just about seniors; it is about everybody.

Victor Hugo said, more powerful than an invading army is an idea whose time has come. I do not know what is going to happen in the conference committee, but I know this: you cannot hold back an idea whose time has come.

---

#### PASS THE ARMED FORCES TAX FAIRNESS ACT

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

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, the House majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), said this, and I quote: "Nothing is more important in the face of war than cutting taxes."

As someone who represents Fort Hood in Texas where 17,000 soldiers have left, now fighting in Iraq, I find the gentleman's priorities to be somewhat bizarre. I think he is wrong, and I think the American people would agree that he is wrong. In a time of war, nothing is more important than supporting our troops and our military families.

I find it shameful that the same majority leader who said, "Nothing is more important than cutting taxes during a time of war," has actually, along with the Speaker of the House, kept bottled up right here in the well of the House for 7 months the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act, an act that would provide some meager tax benefits for brave servicemen and -women and their families, including our military personnel now in Iraq, in Afghanistan. The same House Republican leadership who earlier this year fought so hard to pass a \$230,000 tax break to

American citizens making \$1 million this year in dividend income cannot seem to say we can afford to pass a modest tax benefit bill for military servicemen and -women even though our Nation is at war.

I find it amazing that that same House leadership today thought that we had enough time in the Congress to rename three post offices this afternoon; but they have not had time in 7 months, in 7 months, to grab the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act and bring it to the floor of the House, which they could do tomorrow and we could pass by unanimous consent.

I think it sends a terrible message to our military families and to those in combat, in harm's way, that we can pass a \$230,000 tax break for people making \$1 million in dividend income this year sitting safely in their homes and offices in America, but we cannot afford or we cannot find time to help out a little bit with real estate tax benefits, with gratuity tax benefits, which we will partly deal with tomorrow with the Renzi-McGovern bill, but also with benefits to help Guardsmen and Reservists pay for the cost of their travel and overnight stay and meals when they are doing training for our country.

Mr. Speaker, I think the House Republican leadership should explain to the American people why they would hold up the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act simply because the Senate added an amendment, and then passed the bill unanimously, to pay for that military benefit by shutting the loophole on Benedict Arnolds who turn their backs on our country, renounce their citizenship, just to simply avoid paying American taxes. It seems to me that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) should explain why, at least in their actions, they are saying, in effect, that protecting Benedict Arnolds is more important than providing tax benefits for our brave servicemen and -women.

Now, I commend the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. RENZI) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN). I think the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) originally introduced this bill back in September, but I commend the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. RENZI) for his leadership tomorrow on the bill to provide increased death benefit gratuities, as someone who just received two death notices from Fort Hood soldiers in my district today. That is the right thing to do, although, frankly, I am not sure we should be too proud of the fact that we are increasing the military death combat benefit to surviving family members to \$12,000. Families whose loved ones lost their lives in the September 11 tragedy received on average over \$1 million from various sources, and yet we are increasing the death gratuity to \$12,000.

Now, even that death gratuity benefit, as important as it is, and I will

vote for it and we will probably pass it unanimously tomorrow; but let us keep it in perspective. If we assume approximately 300 deaths so far in the Iraqi war and in Afghanistan and in that whole combat arena, that is going to cost the American taxpayers about \$1.8 million, million. Yet the House Committee on Ways and Means today found time and the affordability to pass a \$40 billion tax cut to multinational corporations and, overall, a \$60 billion tax cut.

Mr. Speaker, we should pass the Armed Forces Tax Fairness Act. Our servicemen and women deserve no less.

---

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD addressed the House. Her 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.)

---

#### EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Florida.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

---

#### DEATH GRATUITY TAX

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

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate what the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) from the Democratic side and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. RENZI) from the Republican side are doing. I want to explain as to some of the speeches I have heard tonight. This is an effort; I go back myself. I hate to talk about myself, but for 2 years I have been trying to get this death gratuity tax removed. In fairness to the leadership, both Democrat and Republican, we have passed to the Senate, five times over 2 years, a bill, a larger bill than this bill, that would have removed the death gratuity and also some of the other issues that would have been fair to our military as it relates to tax fairness that the gentleman from Texas, my friend, mentioned. I do not know about the recent bill, but the bills that we passed in the