

and our prospects, which this budget will lay out an economic vision, that still results in 2½ million Americans in the last 3 years who have lost their jobs, 43 million Americans without health care, nearly \$1 trillion worth of corporate and individual assets have been foreclosed on, and 2 more million Americans have walked out of the middle class into poverty. If we are going to do nation-building, we must do it here at home, not just overseas.

MEDICARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to speak on behalf of Ohio's seniors and America's seniors.

Mr. Speaker, about 14 million low-income seniors, 438,000 of them in Ohio alone, will now be receiving their medications for a mere \$2 to \$5. They understand that this new law, the new law about Medicare reform and prescription drugs, is a step in the right direction. The countless baby boomers who devote portions of their monthly paycheck to help buy grandma and grandpa's medicine, they understand that this expansion of Medicare is important. They know that when they are able to devote a little less money to prescription medicines for their parents, they might be able to devote a little more of that money to their kids' college tuition.

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The many older Americans who have experienced a tragic illness that requires a litany of medications, they understand the peace of mind that this law provides to the catastrophic coverage. Because of this law, the cost of their many, many medicines is kept at a minimum, instead of spiraling off into infinity.

The millions of seniors who live in rural areas across America and doctors who serve them, they understand the benefits of this new law, especially the increased financial assistance to rural providers.

The hundreds of patient organizations who endorsed and support this new law, groups like AARP, the American Medical Association and the Alzheimer's Association, they understand that the law represents a good first step in improving the lives of millions and millions of patients.

I could go on and on, showing the countless benefits of this new law. Instead, I will boil it down into the simplest of terms: while this plan may not provide the entire solution for every senior's particular medical and financial problem, it does provide some solutions to the substantial number of seniors who formerly were choosing between food and medicine, gasoline and medicine, heating fuel and medicine. Those choices were untenable.

The law is not 100 percent perfect, but it is 100 percent more than what seniors had before, which was nothing. Unfortunately, there are some who do not share the same mind set. Indeed, there are small group of obstructionists who seek to mislead seniors about this new law, instead of informing them about how to use it to their advantage. Their goal is to scare, instead of to educate; and their tactics aim to thwart instead of to improve. It is really sad.

A prime example is the left-leaning Families USA, who have taken their MediScare campaign across the country. In fact, they are scheduled to be in my home State of Ohio during the coming weeks.

To the seniors in my home State and to the seniors across the country who will be subject to the half-truths that Families USA and their allies will be pushing, I will say, beware of those who peddle fear and distrust. The flashy videos and the shiny brochures that these groups will provide will do nothing but tell you what is wrong with this new law. They will tear it down and trash the very thing that seniors have been pleading Congress to do for years, add prescription drug coverage to Medicare. They will not bat an eyelash nor turn the slightest shade of red while they claim there is absolutely nothing good about this new law.

Mr. Speaker, I have too much faith in Ohio's seniors. I know that they will not be used as pawns in the politicization of a new law of the land. I know that our seniors will take the time to learn more about this law, and they will like what they see. They will understand that Congress acted to improve the quality of their lives. This is a good first step. They will understand that groups who scare them about what a law does not do are not helpful nor productive, and that the people who instruct them about what a law does are actually trying to make a difference in their lives.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be to Ohio seniors one of those who helps them, helps them understand what this law does do for them. I want to be part of that productive group, that group that knows that progress comes in incremental steps and understands that obstructing and thwarting accomplishes nothing, that group that looks for solutions, not partisan points.

Passing a Medicare drug plan and getting it signed into law with President Bush's cooperation is finally a step forward for this Nation's seniors. Let us not ever step back.

ADDRESSING UNEMPLOYMENT IN AMERICA

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk for a moment about Vice

President CHENEY's trip to Dayton, Ohio. But before that, I just want to mention that the Medicare drug law that my friend from Ohio mentions just happened to be legislation written by the drug and the insurance industries. The drug industry will get \$140 billion additional profits under this law. The insurance industry gets a \$46 billion direct gift subsidy from taxpayers.

This bill was written for the drug industry, written for the insurance industry. In fact, the word in Washington is that President Bush will receive about \$100 million in contributions from the drug industry. I think that is probably all you need to know. And that is why seniors simply do not like this drug bill, do not like the new Medicare law; and that is why the Republican Party, the President, is spending upwards of \$80 million in taxpayer dollars to advertise to try to convince America's seniors that this is good legislation, that it is good law. It is clearly not.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, the Vice President came to Dayton, Ohio, last week to try to explain away what has happened to the Ohio economy. One out of six manufacturing jobs has disappeared since President Bush took office; 300,000 in Ohio have been lost. That is 2,000 jobs every single week of the Bush administration. That is 260 jobs have disappeared every single day in Ohio since George Bush took office.

In response to the bad economic news which cascades across my State, bad news almost every week on the economy, 600 people just laid off from a phone center in Trumbull County, near the district of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN).

In response to the bad news, the President has got two solutions every time: more tax breaks for the most privileged in our society, with the hope that some of these benefits trickle down to the rest of the people in this country. That has not worked. And the second response, the second solution is more NAFTA-like trade agreements that continue to ship jobs overseas, that continue to hemorrhage jobs. We have lost hundreds of thousands of jobs in this country, manufacturing jobs, because of these trade agreements. They simply are not working.

The question always is, How out of touch can our government's leaders be? The answer to that is I do not know. Something seems to be new every day. The economic report of the President, which came out a couple or 3 or 4 weeks ago, signed by George Bush, signed by the President, the economic report of the President talks about outsourcing jobs, one of the biggest problems in our economy; and the President's Chief Economic Adviser, Gregory Mankiw, said outsourcing jobs is a good thing because it makes the economy more efficient.

Well, let him look in the eye of a computer operator, let him look in the

eye of a clerk who has lost her job, let him look in the eye of a steel worker who has lost his job and tell him that outsourcing is a good thing because it makes us more efficient.

Then in the same report, Mr. Mankiw, the President's top economic guru, the top economic adviser, said that we will this year create 200,000 jobs a month. Well, after he said that, even the President's people, including the President, said we did not really mean 200,000 a month, because the first month they fell 199,000 jobs short, and every month they have fallen way, way short of this job creation they promised.

Then the President's economic adviser said, you know, maybe in response to this, and this really shows how out of touch they can get, maybe in response to this we need to reclassify what manufacturing is. Perhaps, because a bottling company is a manufacturing job, you take the syrup in a Pepsi or Coke bottling plant with 200 or 300 employees, and you take the carbonated water and put them together, that is a manufacturing process.

Maybe, they suggest, the President's top economic people, that we should reclassify fast food, I am not making this up, this is in this report, the fast-food restaurants, maybe they should be considered manufacturing. Because you have the hamburger and you chemically treat it, you cook it; you take the cheese and you chemically treat it, you melt it; then you put the bread on, and you create these manufacturing jobs. Then you take the syrup and you push the button so the syrup and the carbonated water mix. This administration actually is thinking about reclassifying those service jobs as manufacturing jobs.

Now, I am not making fun of people working in fast-food restaurants. In fact, if the Bush administration is going to reclassify those as manufacturing jobs, let them pay more than \$7 an hour; and let them give these young men and women, or older men and women in these fast-food restaurants, decent wages and decent benefits, if they are going to call them manufacturing jobs.

Then the last point I wanted to make is in terms of how out of touch this government can get. One of the leading Republicans in this institution, the chairman of the Committee on Rules, recently was complaining that Democrats and others are saying that we have lost manufacturing jobs.

He said, the fact is that you Democrats, you critics, you media people, you economists, you workers who are complaining about lost jobs are simply not looking at the economy right.

Here is what he said. He said there are 430,000 Americans who make their full-time living selling on ebay. This is not reflected in the economy.

So are we going to count garage sales as economic growth? Are they going to pay them health benefits? Is that where my friends want to take the U.S. economy?

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

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

FREEDING IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN IMPORTANT IN WAR ON TERRORISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, late last October I traveled to Iraq with several other Members of Congress, and what I saw was a country in tatters, a country that had experienced little or no infrastructure investment in decades.

But I also saw a people who, despite torture, government-sponsored slaughter and oppression on the scale of Lenin, a people who, despite all this, retained a glimmer of hope. And I thought, is it not amazing? Thirty years of torture, and Saddam and his henchmen could not break the spirit of the Iraqi people. They still had that thirst for freedom and that thirst for opportunity.

Today, watch the news that comes from Iraq. Occasionally look past the newscaster, actually take a look at the hustle and bustle behind the newscaster. You will see marketplaces, traffic jams, people on their way to and from work. That is the free market at work.

President Bush is the focus of an enormous amount of partisan political criticism. There are those, mostly on the other side of the aisle, who believe that simply getting bin Laden would end terrorism. They think we were wrong to go to Iraq, that Saddam could be contained. In short, those opposed to our work in Iraq believe Saddam's regime had no role in terrorism and that our effort will not bear any positive results for America and the world.

What a shortsighted, small view of the world and a basic misunderstanding of terrorism. Terrorism will not be stopped by removing a leader or a command structure. Terrorism is not going to be that easy to tackle.

What is going to make a difference could be this: Iraq has an interim Constitution on schedule and they are moving toward freedom. Iraq's electricity levels are exceeding pre-war capacity. They passed that benchmark last fall. The international community has pledged \$32 billion to improve schools, health care, roads, water and sanitation. The nation now has a stable currency. A free press is growing. Iraqis have access to more diverse, independent sources of news. Hundreds of democratic meetings are taking place all across Iraq. America has captured 45 of the 55 most-wanted members of Hussein's regime. There are

900,000 telephone subscribers and 225,000 wireless subscribers. All of Iraq's 22 universities and 43 technical institutions and colleges are open. And, this may not sound important, but its value is immeasurable, the Iraqi children no longer have to recite "long live leader Saddam Hussein" each morning.

Some still believe all of this is irrelevant to the war on terrorism. Do you think terrorists are worried about what we are doing in Iraq and Afghanistan? Absolutely. Do you think terrorists fear this President? Do they fear America? You bet they do. The terrorists fear America. I do not mean that figuratively. Those who would destroy America, they literally fear this President and the resolve of the American people and our military, because we have not been afraid to take swift, decisive action.

President Bush said America would not tolerate al Qaeda, that we would not tolerate a Middle East that pumped out hatred and vitriol. Our engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq speak volumes to the terror network.

Does our work in Iraq make hostile nations think twice about supporting terrorism? Yes, indeed, it does. Will our effort to bring the Iraqi people into the modern world, into the free marketplace, the community of free nations, make a difference in the long struggle to destroy what breeds terrorism? Absolutely it will.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

RECORD NUMBER OF AMERICANS EXHAUSTING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Well, congratulations to the Bush administration. They have set yet another record. This complements their previous record of the largest job loss and the worst job record since Herbert Hoover was President of the United States in the 1920s. But their latest is notable also: 1.1 million jobless workers by the end of this month will have exhausted their regular unemployment benefits without receiving an extension or additional aid. If we go all the way back, we have been keeping data on extended unemployment since 1971, 33 years ago, there have never been so many people who have exhausted unemployment benefits without successfully finding work.

Now the Bush administration and the Republican leaders in Congress are refusing to extend unemployment benefits. Is that because we are in such a