

what's right for the American people and to side with the overwhelming percentage of Americans suffering out there in this economy.

For an entire year, the majority in the House has not offered a single bill to create a single job. In fact, the only thing that the Congress has been doing is creating an environment where public sector jobs are cut, and where private sector jobs, though they have been growing, are offset by those public sector cuts, leaving us with an unemployment rate which we're happy to have at 8.6 percent, but within the historical context is still a national disgrace and an outrage to have unemployment at 8.6 percent for so very long. But we're happy to have it because it has been as high as 10.

And now we're threatening to leave more than 2 million Americans, including 13,000 in my home State of Minnesota, out in the cold during the holiday season by taking away their unemployment insurance.

Right now, 14 million people are unemployed, and companies really aren't hiring. For most of these people, unemployment insurance is the only thing that's keeping them in their homes and not out on the street.

According to the Census Bureau, unemployment insurance has pulled 3.2 million Americans out of poverty last year. And that's why Congress needs to make sure that all Americans, Mr. Speaker, continue to have this vital lifeline available.

Any credible economist will tell you that unemployment insurance creates jobs. Every dollar invested in unemployment insurance yields a return of \$1.52 in economic growth.

At least 200,000 jobs would be lost if Congress fails to pass the extension of unemployment insurance benefits. Congress must not leave Washington for the holidays without extending unemployment benefits that create jobs and put money into the pockets and on the tables of millions of Americans.

□ 1030

Both Democrat and Republican politicians, we together have not passed that jobs bill. While the Republicans are in the majority, and I believe bear the weight of the responsibility, it's a responsibility of every Member of Congress to call for the extension of unemployment insurance benefits and jobs at this critical time.

America can't wait. We shouldn't be leaving hardworking Americans high and dry this holiday season. This holiday season, we can spur economic growth, create jobs, and strengthen the middle class by doing the right thing of extending unemployment insurance benefits.

On behalf of the good people who play by the rules and lost their jobs because of Wall Street greed, and while this majority looked the other way, I urge all of my colleagues to support the extension of unemployment insurance benefits.

#### AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KINZINGER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. There has been a lot of talk lately about Afghanistan. You hear it every day. You heard it just a little bit ago about why are we in Afghanistan? What are we fighting for? Isn't it time to go home?

I've got to tell you the easy thing to do is to stand up and say let's just declare victory and let's leave, and then whatever happens after we're gone, that's not our fault anymore. It's not our problem. That's the easy thing to do.

You know, the America I grew up in and continue to grow in and live in is not the country that always picks the easy thing. The thing about the American DNA is, I believe we do typically the right thing.

Now, let me tell you, I'm still a pilot in the military. I still fly for the Air National Guard, and I've had the privilege and honor of serving overseas with my fellow men and women in uniform. Although most of my experience was in Iraq, I remember in Iraq a time when Members of this House stood up and said that the war in Iraq is lost, that there is no way to win, and it's time to just come home.

And we see today that now the American troops are coming home from Iraq but under a condition of victory. And while I have concerns about that timetable for withdrawal, I think anybody would agree that that's better than had we just in 2006 and 2007 folded up and taken the easy way.

So let me ask my fellow Members of Congress and let me ask the American people, what is it we're fighting for in Afghanistan?

I have here a very disturbing but a very appropriate picture of what it is that we're fighting for.

The young girl you see on the top, her name is BiBi. BiBi is 17 years old. When BiBi was 12 years old, she was sold to somebody basically as a slave as a result of a member of her family committing a crime and selling her as reparations for that crime. For 5 years she was beaten by her husband until one day she decided to run away to seek freedom.

Well, she was caught. Her husband caught her, drug her back to his house, and the Taliban, as a way to enact justice, forced him, with his brother holding her down, forced him to cut off her nose and to cut off her ears. She then proceeded to basically crawl to her uncle's house, and her uncle ignored her. And somebody finally called the hospital, and they said go to an American forward-operating base. They'll take care of you.

You hear the stories of the major who took care of her talking about how she showed up and talking about the fright that she had in her eyes.

I took a trip to Afghanistan recently and saw a village where I saw a man who was standing on a berm with an

AK-47. And I talked to him through a translator, and he informed me that not 2 days ago his daughter fell into a well and drowned. But yet he still believes that his village needs protecting. And he could be sitting at home mourning the loss of his daughter, and I'm sure he mourned the loss, but he was standing out defending his village because he wants what Americans want, what anybody around the world wants. They want security. They want to be able to raise their family. BiBi just wants to live her life without being beaten and sold into slavery.

Today, because of the American presence in Afghanistan and that of our coalition partners, you see the picture at the bottom of this, the best part of this picture, and that is girls in school learning to read and write, learning that there is a world out there, learning that despite where they were raised and born, they, too, can have some of the freedoms and some of the privileges that folks in the rest of the world and especially in the United States have.

So let me say this. It is so easy to stand up and say this is not worth it. But I'm going to tell you the second verse of the Star Spangled Banner has a line that says "Oh conquer we must, when our cause it is just."

Ladies and gentlemen, what we're doing in Afghanistan is not extending an empire. It's bringing freedom to millions of people, taking out jihadists that would kill people simply because you believe differently than them, and we are standing up for freedom around the globe. The greatest disinfectant to terrorism is freedom.

Ladies and gentlemen, the fight in Afghanistan, though difficult, is worth it, and I come in today and stand up and say "God bless you" to those that have gone over there and put on the uniform, and I say "thank you" for your service to your country. The fight is worth it.

#### TAKING CARE OF THOSE AT HOME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RANGEL. I have been so moved by the preceding gentleman's remarks about the good work that Americans can do, especially when the argument is which side are we on, terrorism or freedom.

I don't know how many cases in the world that the United States of America can intercede in, but I do know that, as we see these horrible examples of what people can do to their own people, that we have thousands of Americans who have volunteered to support our flag and the integrity of the United States who have been killed. And it just seemed to me that when we're talking about the protection of a human body, whether it's losing a limb or your sight or your face, no matter what it is—and especially your life—that if America is going to take this