

Bush's Budget and "Wounded Travelers"

The Nation

February 12, 2005

The federal budget is not just an accounting tool--it's a statement about our nation's values and priorities. This week, Bush released a budget that Representative Jan Schakowsky calls a "weapon of mass destruction."

It would drastically underfund domestic initiatives, from education to children's healthcare to homeless shelters to support for small businesses. The vast majority of Americans will be asked to sacrifice, with one exception: the millionaires who can afford to give something up. Their tax cuts--the same tax cuts that brought us unprecedented deficits--would be protected and likely even extended under Bush's proposal.

Bush's reckless policies are mortgaging our country's future. When he took office, the budget had a projected 10-year surplus of \$5.6 trillion. We now have a more than \$3 trillion deficit. That \$9 trillion swing is the largest fiscal reversal in US history.

These are not the right priorities for our nation. It is not only fiscally irresponsible, it is morally wrong to cap spending for the most vulnerable and the weakest among us--children, seniors, veterans, the poor and the working class--while pursuing tax cuts for the wealthiest without limits or restraint.

As a new project of the invaluable Center for Community Change points out, Bush once promised that as a country, "When we see that wounded traveler on the road to Jericho, we will not pass to the other side." But his budgets have never matched that rhetoric,

as a new TV ad produced by the Center makes clear.

This week, the Center is launching an ad campaign to engage voters in the "red" states of Missouri and Tennessee; the spot will also run in Washington, DC so the nation's decision makers will see it. The ad, titled "Jericho," focuses on the biblical language that Bush has used repeatedly to depict himself as a compassionate conservative and questions whether Bush's budget reflects the moral values of a compassionate man.

It's time to hold Bush accountable for those "wounded travelers." As Deepak Bhargava, executive director of the Center writes, "We cannot allow this nation to cross to the other side." ([Click here](#) for more info about the CCC and [click here](#) to help support its ad campaign.)