

guarantee health care for those low-income citizens. The Republicans' plan to eliminate that guarantee, and send money to the States in a block grant and give them the discretion to decide who will be eligible for Medicaid, and whether anyone, or what categories of people would be eligible for Medicaid is certainly the wrong way to go, and I want to commend the President and ask him to stand strong on the notion that we must guarantee Medicaid coverage for those who are entitled to it today.

STILL NO EXIT STRATEGY

(Ms. DUNN of Washington asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DUNN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I returned from Bosnia. Even a short visit left me with two powerful reactions. Seeing Sarajevo evoked a strong emotional response. The devastation is indescribable; it is surreal. Anyone seeing that firsthand would want to help end the suffering. The people want peace.

My second reaction was analytical. As a Member of Congress, my job is to try to strip away the emotion and ask legitimate questions so I can analyze the President's decision to deploy ground troops.

Here is what I found: First, we have no clear mission; second, the expectations of our troops are all over the map, some even expect our troops to be assigned the deadly task of finding 6 million land mines; and third, we still have no exit strategy at all.

Mr. Speaker, this is troubling beyond words. Our troops are being placed between warring factions on the unrealistic assumption that peace will suddenly break out in the next 12 months after centuries of fighting.

I implore the President, before signing an agreement in Paris, please define the mission, clarify the expectations, and develop a credible exit strategy. It is the least that should be done for the troops we are committing to this impossible task.

WHY WE NEED TO GET INVOLVED IN BOSNIA

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

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, why get involved in Bosnia? The answer is that America's interests, values, and leadership are at stake. But we should ask the question, "What if we don't?" Then we surrender our leadership role. And we must ask the question, "Are we still prepared to lead?"

Mr. Speaker, our troops are going to enforce a peace, not start a war. There are risks, but manageable risks.

What if we do not? NATO will be destroyed. Is it worth preserving? Yes. Balkan stability is important for

Greece and Turkey. And what about Eastern Europe? What if Russia gets strong again and poses threats to Eastern Europe? How are they going to feel if we vote no today?

What happens if we do not vote with the President? War will break out again. There will be genocide, rapes, Srebrenicas.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a popular issue, and the President should not be accused of politics. This is a risk. This is America's moral leadership, and we should do the right thing and support our troops and support the President.

GINGRICH'S WAY IS NOT THE AMERICAN WAY

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, we all remember last month when Speaker GINGRICH closed down the Government because he did not like his seats on Air Force One. Well, here we go again.

Yesterday, an aide to Speaker GINGRICH says that Mr. GINGRICH is prepared to shut down the Government again, if he does not get his way on the budget. The problem is that GINGRICH's way is not the American way.

America does not support the Gingrich budget priorities. The American people do not want a balanced budget which devastates Medicare, education, and the environment, in order to finance a massive tax break to the wealthy.

So, Mr. Speaker, spare us the theatrics and give the American people an early Christmas present: a balanced budget which reflects our priorities, not yours.

CBO'S NEW PLOY: RABBITS POPPING OUT OF A HAT

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the budget, Congress has seen it all: smoke, mirrors. We have read lips. We have even dated Rosy Scenario around here.

But now there is a new ploy. Rabbits, Mr. Speaker. The Congressional Budget Office just announced that they have found \$130 billion, \$130 billion that just popped up like a rabbit out of the hat.

Now let us see if this adds up. We have a \$5 trillion national debt, \$300 billion annual budget deficits, and a Congressional Budget Office that at the very last minute just happens to find \$130 billion that has been overlooked.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. Someone is inhaling around here all right. Someone is definitely inhaling. I say if they are going to find \$130 billion and pull it out of a hat like a rabbit, why do we not just hire David Copperfield, Congress, and furlough all these workers at the Congressional Budget Office?

I yield back the balance of these ploys.

GET YOUR HANDS OUT OF OUR POCKETS

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

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2539, the ICC Termination Act of 1995, which passed the House and Senate and is now in conference committee, has as its noble purpose the deregulation of the trucking and rail industries. The shipping industry remains regulated, and for offshore areas like Guam, our consumers remain a captive market for the shipping lines.

Buried deep in the details of H.R. 2539, in the Senate version, is a provision that would raid the wallets of consumers in Guam and other offshore areas. The shipping companies cut some sort of deal to allow, by statute, rates to increase by 7.5 percent every year for these port to port movements. They created a loophole to allow the rates to be increased in a zone of reasonableness, which is so wide you can drive a ship through it.

The shipping companies are not hurting for profits in the captive domestic offshore markets. They are literally rolling in dough. They charge four times more for a shipment to Guam than they do to Japan.

Shame on the American President Lines, Sealand, and Matson. They should get their hands out of our pockets.

KEEP THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OPEN THROUGH THE HOLIDAY SEASON

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, chestnuts roasting on an open fire, "Silent Night" humming in the background, and families embracing and loving during this holiday season. However, the Republican majority says no to all of that because they want to force another Government shutdown on the backs of working Americans. This will happen because of the Republicans' harsh refusal to stop the cuts of \$270 billion in Medicare and the \$182 billion cut of Medicaid. It is the American safety net for our children and seniors, and yet the Republicans want to force 9 million children and seniors off of a good health care. The Democratic budget plan, however, does continue to guarantee health care for our children, the elderly, and the disabled.

I would say to my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, that that is truly the spirit of this approaching season, and I would say to my colleagues again, Mr. Speaker, that we need to understand that the American people want to have the spirit of this holiday season to reflect on the least of those.

Might I add as well, Mr. Speaker, that the election held in California yesterday did not show that the Democrats lost. It is just that the Republican candidate that ran was prochoice and progun control—Democratic issues—and I would imagine he would also vote for the American children to have good health care.

Let us stop the cuts in Medicare and Medicaid. Let us make this season what it is. It is the season of giving and sharing, it is the season for all Americans. It is not what the Republican majority wants to do—cutting good health care for the elderly, the disabled, and our poor children.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues across the aisle to do the right and responsible thing and keep the Federal Government open. This is no time to let working people pay the price for petty partisan politics.

Let's pass another clean continuing resolution, if necessary, and work toward a balanced budget that is not built on the backs of the average, hard working Americans. A budget that protects the things we value: Medicare, Medicaid, education, and our environment.

Leaders in the other body have already agreed that there should not be another Government shutdown. We in the House need to join them in that agreement.

Mr. Speaker, don't be responsible for forcing thousands of decent, hard working people to wallow in doubt and uncertainty during what should be a joyous season. Don't make the American people pay because the Republican majority has not finished the budget work that should have been completed by them in October.

THE CRUEL REPUBLICAN AGENDA

(Ms. BROWN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans are now threatening to shut down the Government unless President Clinton signs on to the Republican plan to abandon our Nation's poorest, sickest, and most disabled citizens by repealing Medicaid.

This cruel Republican agenda will hurt children, veterans, pregnant women, and seniors. Two-thirds of Florida's nursing home residents get help from Medicaid. Almost a million children in Florida get emergency health care from Medicaid every year. These seniors, these children, and many of Florida's 2 million veterans may look to Medicaid in the next few years and find that they are out of luck.

When it comes to family values, the Republican Party talks the talk but they certainly do not walk the walk. And this budget proves it.

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REPUBLICANS SHOULD SUPPORT A BALANCED BUDGET THAT PROTECTS THE ENVIRONMENT

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

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, in the continuing budget resolution agreement last month, the Republicans and the President committed to a balanced budget that "must protect the environment," but the current Republican budget plan declares war on the environment. It gives away millions to mining companies in the West. It allows massive timber harvesting in the Tongass National Forest and oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The Republican plan guts the EPA's budget for enforcing our clean air and clean water laws and for continuing the cleanup of the Housatonic and Connecticut Rivers in my district, all this to give billions in tax breaks to the already wealthy who do not need them. Not a very good trade, Mr. Speaker.

Republicans should live up to their agreement and support a balanced budget that protects the environment, rather than sacrificing it.

EXTREME REPUBLICAN AGENDA

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, legislation temporarily funding the Government expires, and hundreds of thousands of Government workers may be given another paid vacation. Last month this cost us \$800 million. Speaker GINGRICH and House Republicans have decided they want to use the threat of a Government shutdown as a leverage in the ongoing budget battle, flatly dismissing the importance of keeping many of our crucial programs up and running.

Let us make it absolutely clear the Republicans cannot force these mean-spirited cuts on the American people by holding the Government shutdown over our heads. They have targeted such programs as education cuts that help children, the COPS Program to help my Houston community hire over 375 new police officers, and veterans programs, which will result in 600 fewer VA medical center beds, 203,000 fewer inpatient visits, and 430,000 fewer outpatient visits at VA medical centers.

The American people do not want a Government shutdown. Let us extend this continuing resolution and finish the job we should have completed 2 months ago. Let us not hold another shutdown over our citizens' heads to try to pass these bills.

CALIFORNIANS AGREE WITH REPUBLICAN REFORMS

(Mr. WELDON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to talk about the results of an election in California that was held yesterday in a Democrat district where a Republican won by almost a 2 to 1 margin. Clearly, the people in that district, a Democrat district, understand that we are not cutting Medicare, we are slowing the rate of growth of Medicare, and they clearly understand that it is extremely important that the situation here in Washington has to change. We cannot continue to have runaway spending, runaway growth of programs. We have to balance our budget, and we have to balance our budget now.

In sending Tom Campbell to the U.S. Congress, the people of that Democrat district are saying the Democrats are not going to get the job done, they are going to continue to spend, we are going to continue to have deficits, and that we really do need to continue this change, this revolution that began in November 1994.

There will be one more voting with us beginning in a few days, and the people in California say they agree with what we are doing.

TRIAL AND SENTENCING OF WEI JINGSHENG IS GROSS VIOLATION OF IDEALS OF DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM

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

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, it took a Chinese court less than 6 hours on Wednesday to convict 1995 Nobel Peace Prize nominee Wei Jingsheng of conspiring to subvert the Government. He was sentenced to 14 years in the gulag, following Henry Wu.

The trial and sentencing of Wei Jingsheng is a gross violation of the core ideals of democracy and freedom. In April 1994 Wei disappeared in the Beijing bureaucracy. For 19 months he was not allowed to communicate with his family, with legal counsel, or with his colleagues. In December 1995 Wei had only a few days to prepare a trial and obtain a lawyer.

The only crime that Wei had committed was calling for democracy and human rights in China. Despite international pressure and opposition, people in China continue to be detained and sentenced for standing up for their fundamental rights.

I applaud Wei's courage and strength to speak out in opposition to the tyranny of his government. I appeal to the Government of China to release this man, guilty only of believing in freedom and democracy. And I call on the President of the United States to continue to press for the release of Wei Jingsheng, and not to relent until he is freed.