

all of us have with active and retired members of the Armed Forces. I invite and urge my colleagues to cosponsor this important resolution and to join me in support of our men and women in uniform.

Mr. VOLKMER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. UNDERWOOD. I yield to the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. VOLKMER. I would be glad to join with the gentleman in his resolution. I know that probably one of the reasons that we see this type of resolution coming forward is concern with what is going on as far as budgetary cuts that are occurring here in the Congress at this time by the majority party; is that correct?

Mr. UNDERWOOD. That is correct.

Mr. VOLKMER. We have seen a proposal that we saw in the defense rescissions bill that will cut back severely on veterans who have served this country in the past, to cut back medical care facilities for veterans that was proposed by the majority party; correct?

Mr. UNDERWOOD. That was correct, in last week's rescission bill. I urge all Members to cosponsor this resolution.

AMENDMENT PROHIBITING DESECRATION OF OLD GLORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. SOLOMON. I would love to respond to the last statement, but I will wait.

Mr. Speaker, today I will be introducing a resolution calling for a constitutional amendment prohibiting the physical desecration of the American flag. I am happy to say that this effort has received wide support from my friends and colleagues on both sides of the aisle in both Houses of Congress, including my good friend SONNY MONTGOMERY standing over here, Senator ORRIN HATCH over in the Senate, as well as Senator HOWELL HEFLIN on a bipartisan basis. In fact, over 240 Representatives and 40 Senators have already answered the call to protect this our greatest national symbol, Old Glory.

I would like to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, the surge of support to extend this needed protection for the flag comes not in response to changes which have occurred inside the beltway but in response to a massive grassroots movement from across this Nation, all as well it should have been. In fact, 46 State legislatures have already passed resolutions asking Congress to allow them the chance to ratify this amendment.

Mr. Speaker, at 3 o'clock this afternoon, I will drop that constitutional amendment in the hopper over here and there will be a press conference out in the grassy triangle on the Senate side of the Capitol, where those of us who support this badly needed con-

stitutional amendment will answer questions from the press.

At this time, I would like to yield to a truly great American. He is a Democrat on that side of the aisle, but he stands up for America's veterans and for the armed services.

Mr. MONTGOMERY. I thank very much the gentleman yielding to me. I certainly support very much the American flag amendment that the gentleman from New York will drop in the hopper at 3 o'clock. As the chairman of the Committee on Rules mentioned, we have 242 members who have signed up on the House side to sponsor this. We need 48 more Members to get the 290 when we do get the opportunity to bring this constitutional amendment resolution up that it will have a chance to pass.

I would like to thank the gentleman from Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN, a Member of Congress, who has been getting Democrats on this side of the aisle to sign that resolution. As the gentleman from New York said, it is nonpartisan. It comes about that we did pass a simple law in the Congress and signed by President Bush that said you cannot hurt this great American flag. This was turned down by the U.S. Supreme Court who said Congress does not have that authority.

So it becomes now to protect the flag. We have all the veterans organizations totally supporting this amendment. I stand right with the gentleman, side by side. We need to get this constitutional amendment. We need to get more signees on this side of the Capitol to be darned sure. We lost some of them last time as the gentleman remembers. We had over 290 signatures on the House side. When we brought the amendment up, we lost some and we did not pass it. We do not want that to happen this time.

Mr. SOLOMON. The gentleman is so right. He always does stand up for America. It is a crime today to destroy this dollar bill, it is a crime today to desecrate the Washington Monument. It is not a crime to desecrate Old Glory. That is a crime in itself. We are going to change that. I thank the gentleman and urge everyone to sponsor this constitutional amendment. We will have 290 votes in the very near future and Members ought to be an original cosponsor of the legislation.

You can be so if you sign on before 3 o'clock this afternoon.

WELFARE REFORM IS ASSAULT ON POOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. FRANK] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Speaker, I too hope that the Members today and this week will stand up for America, that they will stand up for an America that has a sense of respon-

sibility and compassion and the wisdom not to panic.

We have got some economic problems brought about by the changing nature of work which puts people without technological skills at something of a disadvantage, exacerbated by the increasing integration of the international economy. Those are things that we ought to be addressing.

But what the public is being offered by the Republican Party is an alternative explanation for that. It is a form of scapegoating. Working Americans who have found their economic futures insecure are being told it is the fault of those poor people and those immigrants and those women who keep having children so they can make the few bucks you get on AFDC.

In pursuit of that, what we will have this week brought forward by the Republican Party is an assault on people who are poor, who lack education, who lack skills, and most of all we will have an assault on children.

What we get in American politics today is a very selective quoting of the Bible. The part that says you shall not visit the sins of the parents on the children apparently has been written out of the editions of many people, because we are being told that children who make the terrible mistake of being born in the wrong circumstance, children who make the bad judgment to have a mother who was not married, will pay for that. Those children will see basic sustenance denied to them. The answer of our Republican friends is, "Oh, no, no, we're not going to cut that," although in fact they are cutting it "What we are doing is returning it to the States."

Well, understand one very important point. When there is a program which is important to the Republican Party, they federalize it. When we are talking about issues that the Republican Party or its major constituencies in the corporate community feel strongly about, they bring them to the Federal level. Where we have an issue which is not one that they favor, it gets sent back to the States with less money and in circumstances that invite the States to reduce things further. There will be no safeguards, there will be no requirements.

Today if you are a child born in those kind of circumstances, your lot is not going to be a happy one. The young child born to a single mother is those kind of circumstances will live a life that no child in America ought to live. And what is the response of the people on the other side? Let's make it worse. Let's penalize that family in the hopes that there will not be so many families like that in the future.

That is why a very wide range of organizations, religious groups, advocacy groups of various sorts are so unhappy with this.

Let's again be clear. The Republican Party says "Oh, no, we're just returning it to the States." When it came to prisons and how to sentence criminals,

matters that have been State law since the beginning of this Constitution, they took it away from the States and gave them orders. When it came to lawsuits of any kind, not just manufactured products but automobile accidents, people slipping and falling on the stairs, the Republican Party put through an amendment that makes those matters of national concern. We are going to be debating term limits. I said to a couple of the Republicans, well, are we going to have uniform national standards?

They said, "Of course," some of the Republicans have said, "We can't leave that up to the States. That's too important." The fate of poor children, that is not too important. And we know that the States are subjected to a competition among themselves for industry, industry which can decide whether it is from overseas or here where to move. They will tell a State, "We don't think your taxes are low enough. We think your benefits are too high." So what we have is a deliberate dismantling of this safety net, sketchy as it now is, sent back to the States, and the absolute predictable conclusion is that poor 2- and 3- and 4-year-olds will be poorer and worse off in the future.

The same is true with the school lunch program and with other programs. The military budget will go up. The space budget will be protected. The House gym will stay open. We will be OK, but poor children will be the victims of an assault unlike any we have seen in a long time.

I hope that the House will indeed stand up for America by saying that is not the kind of country we want to live in.

A DISTURBING DECISION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I am tempted to try and respond to the previous speaker, the gentleman from Massachusetts, and I will just simply say we will be debating welfare this week and if the gentleman represented a welfare program that was working, I do not think there would be the need for change and change is what we are trying to do to make it work better. I want to talk about a niche of the welfare problem.

In the 1980's, approximately one-half of the hemophilia community in the United States, that is between 8,000 and 10,000 people, became infected with the virus that causes AIDS through the use of contaminated blood clotting products, products which U.S. Government agencies have direct regulation and oversight over. More than 30 of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle have joined me already in offering H.R. 1023. It is a bill to establish a government compensation program for the victims of this tragedy. This bill is

known as the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act, named for the 15-year-old Florida boy who died of hemophilia-associated AIDS in 1992, that I knew.

Its premise is that the Federal Government which has taken on the unique obligation to safeguard the blood supply and regulate the sale of blood products failed to respond to clear warning signs in time to prevent the tragedy. Records indicate that there were serious red flags about the dangers of blood-borne diseases even in the early 1980's although our understanding of course of the implications of AIDS has evolved in the years somewhat after that.

Hemophilia sufferers are often described as the canaries in the coal mine because when something goes wrong with the blood supply they usually succumb first because they use a blood clotting factors known as Factor. A single dose of Factor is often manufactured from the pooled blood of thousands of people, placing hemophiliacs at an extraordinary risk for blood-borne diseases.

According to industry estimates from the early 1980's, the blood of one infected donor could end up contaminating between half a million to 5 million units of Factor, potentially infecting as many as 125 hemophiliacs in a given year. The risks for hemophiliacs were enormous during that crucial period of time and we are seeing the results today. Nearly 2,000 hemophiliacs died of AIDS between 1981 and 1993 from contaminated blood and many more including members of their families are now suffering from its debilitating effects. My view has been that the Federal Government must share their part of the responsibility for what happened with the industry that manufacturers blood products because we have responsibility for oversight.

The hemophilia community is currently seeking redress from four major pharmaceutical companies through the courts. They have always known that this would be an uphill fight. Manufacturers of blood products have special protection from liability under most State laws which grant them status as providers of services, not products, when they make blood products. As a result, seeking judicial redress for harm caused by these products is a very difficult undertaking. Still, hemophiliacs believed in their case and have pursued their legal options as is their right in a free society. However, over this weekend, something very disturbing happened. The Seventh U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Illinois issued an unsettling ruling in a pending negligence class action lawsuit.

Writing for the court in overturning an earlier ruling regarding certification of the class, Judge Richard Posner appears to have concluded that this group of victims may not constitute a class because doing so could "hurl the industry into bankruptcy."

The judge seemed highly concerned that despite the protections that al-

ready exist for blood product manufacturers under State law, a jury in a class action case could provide awards that would ruin the industry.

I am troubled by what appears to be a greater concern on the part of the judge for the solvency of a multibillion-dollar industry than the rights of victims to join together in seeking justice here in America.

As a member of this House, I have no intention of becoming involved in a pending matter before the judiciary obviously, especially since reports suggest that the claimants will appeal the ruling. Still as we seek to do our part in meeting Government's obligation to victims of hemophilia-associated AIDS, we have got to recognize that the judicial option may be closing for these victims, perhaps providing even greater impetus for relief coming from the U.S. Congress.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to look closely at H.R. 1023, the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act. It is the right thing to do and may be the only way out for these folks. It is the right thing to do now, this week especially, because this is the week we are discussing meaningful ways to deliver relief to truly needy Americans. Believe me, these 8,000 to 10,000 victims are people who are in desperate need.

WELFARE REFORM OR CUTS?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. VOLKMER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a little of my time at first to talk about what I call the very mean-spirited, very radical welfare reform proposal that is being proposed by the majority Republican Party that would take money away from school lunches, from school breakfast programs, and take it away from needy kids.

I have spent some time in the last couple of weeks visiting with some of those programs. It is not just me saying this, but the State of Missouri, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, has analyzed their proposal and points out that there will be about 10 percent reduction in some of the programs for our school lunch kids. Then I look at the part that has to do with the food stamps and AFDC and I see further just cuts, not reform.

I thought we were here for welfare reform. This is not reform, these are just cuts. How do I say that? Not just me again, but again the State of Missouri saying the same thing, not HAROLD VOLKMER saying that. We know that they are cutting a total of well over 30, \$40 billion from these programs, just cuts, to take things away, along with, just like last Thursday, we did the cuts from the elderly for the heating assistance in the winter, we cut back on the