

Before Medicare, many of us can remember relatives, friends and neighbors that struggled to pay medical bills in our retirement. I remember a family down the street that was a mother and father and a very young boy, and there was a grandmother and aunt that lived in the same house. The grandmother got sick. I well remember it, because it was the talk of the neighborhood. What were they going to do. They only had limited savings. Eventually what happened was they lost their home.

So it is fitting that our Nation should remember and honor Medicare's past as we in Congress prepare to determine Medicare's future. It is important that we remember what Medicare means to every American as we bring changes to the program.

The budget recently passed by Congress calls for cutting Medicare \$270 billion. This reduction will be three times larger than any other cut or any other change in the Medicare system. Thus far my concerns are twofold: First, how much of the \$270 billion in Medicare cuts could be averted if Congress was not going to do the change of \$245 billion in tax changes in the IRS Code? Second, are advocates being less than forthright when they say the plan will save Medicare?

Everything I have heard to date suggests that we are talking about pushing the solvency date back a couple of years. This is very, very important. But I think we should look at the whole situation. We know that there are Medicare changes that have to be made. Let us make sure we do not have Medicare changes that do not have to be made because the money is going to be used in another way.

Of course, we are still waiting for specific legislation that will implement these massive changes. Unfortunately, it is becoming increasingly clear that we will not see a real proposal until well into September, leaving us little chance to truly consider the large overhaul we should do in Medicare to make sure it is protected into the future.

While it took years to enact the Medicare system, and that history has been written and rewritten, some now seem to want to radically change the program in a matter of weeks. It seems unwise at best to consider fundamental changes in a program that provides health care for 37 million people, with little real opportunity to study and look at what the changes that are being advanced will do. If proposed changes to Medicare make sense, then they can stand the scrutiny of Congress and the American public. But the American people do not want to have a stealth system come in and not know what is going to happen until it has happened.

In keeping with the 30th anniversary of Medicare, let us remember President Johnson's words 30 years ago when he signed that Medicare bill and declared no longer will older Americans be denied the healing miracle of modern medicine, and no longer will this Na-

tion refuse the hand of justice to those who have given a lifetime of service, wisdom and labor to the progress of this progressive country.

We have to remember those words because what all of us want to be sure of is that the Medicare system is there for those people over 65. It has been there, it has been a good program, it should remain there. Let us be very careful what we do.

HONORING ATOMIC VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. ROTH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, this past Sunday we commemorated the distinguished service of an elite group of Americans, very brave Americans. They were not the Green Berets or the Navy Seals. They are not remembered for their service on the battlefield. Yet they served in some of the most extreme of wartime conditions.

I am talking about our atomic veterans, those soldiers who were exposed to radiation during Government experiments after World War II, before the full effects of the exposure of radiation were known.

The Second World War has ended a long 50 years ago. For many of the other veterans, they were spared the fatal shrapnel or the bayonet or the rifle fire. But for the soldiers who were exposed to atomic weapons experiments, the battle continues. Today, they fight against cancer and other diseases that resulted from the nuclear exposure.

As we remember those who died 50 years ago when the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we also must take a moment to remember the veterans who were involved in these nuclear testings of weapons. It is clear as a bell that we have a special obligation to these fearless men.

The VA has cared for these veterans, but their authority to do so expired on June 30. The VA continues to treat our atomic veterans, with the understanding that Congress will come through with legislation to extend their treatment authority. The House has passed the bill, H.R. 1565, to extend VA's obligation to treat atomic veterans through 1997. On behalf of the atomic veterans, I now urge the other body, the Senate, to vote to extend the VA's obligation to treat these brave men who need and deserve the best possible care available.

This past Sunday we recognized atomic veterans on Atomic Veterans Day. Veterans of northeast Wisconsin, including people like Jack DeMoulin of De Pere, WI, who has worked so hard and selflessly on behalf of the atomic veterans, they are the real heroes of the cold war.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot forget our atomic veterans. They were the ultimate guinea pigs in a new technology

whose power of destruction was well-known, but whose long-range health consequences was not. We must lift the burden from the shoulders of dedicated soldiers like Jack DeMoulin and the other atomic veterans.

The war has ended, but the atomic veterans, for them the battle rages on. Let us give them the help and support they so desperately need. I ask the Senate to join the House in this legislation and ask the President to sign it so that we can duly fulfill our obligation to the atomic veterans.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 49 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

Our hearts are thrilled, O gracious God, by the gift of renewal and refreshment in our lives, by a spirit that allows us to put aside any tired ways to find new energy, that permits a new attitude to correct habits and develop meaningful and profound ways of service. While we admit it is easier to follow old ways, we pray, O God, we will be open to Your guidance and be honest with ourselves and in harmony with You, our creator and redeemer.

This is our earnest prayer. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. LAHOOD] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LAHOOD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed bills and a concurrent resolution of the

following titles, in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 457. An act to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to update references in the classification of children for purposes of United States immigration laws;

S. 790. An act to provide for the modification or elimination of Federal reporting requirements; and

S. Con. Res. 21. Concurrent resolution directing that the "Portrait Monument" carved in the likeness of Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, now in the Crypt of the Capitol, be restored to its original state and be placed in the Capitol Rotunda.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will recognize 10 Members on each side for 1-minute speeches.

MEDICARE

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

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot of hot air from the liberal Democrats about Medicare. But when they talk about Medicare what they really mean is medi-scare. They don't really want to save Medicare from bankruptcy. All they want to do is scare people into voting for their party. For Democrats it is perfectly acceptable to let Medicare go bankrupt—just as long as they have a political issue it doesn't matter what the truth is.

And the truth is that Medicare will be broke in 7 years if we don't take serious action right now. Republicans have not walked away from this issue.

Unfortunately for the American people, liberal Democrats have used Medicare for their twisted scare tactics. You see, liberals can not win elections with the force of their superior ideas. The only strategy that works for liberals is fear and disinformation.

But the American people are smarter than liberals would believe. They will not buy the scare tactics and they will not allow Medicare to go bankrupt. Mr. Speaker, later this month Medicare will turn 30 years old. The Medicare Trustees Board reports that unless something is done quickly, Medicare will not survive another 7 years. Republicans have responded to this warning. We are committed to protecting and preserving Medicare so that it can observe many more anniversaries.

It would be wrong to just ignore the warnings of those in charge of Medicare. But, that is exactly what the Democrats are doing. They ignore the advice of leaders in their own party.

Three of Bill Clinton's cabinet secretaries are on the Medicare Trustees Board, and yet the liberal Democrats here in the House act as if they do not exist. By their silence, liberal Democrats are admitting they would rather see Medicare go bankrupt.

The difference here, Mr. Speaker, is that Republicans want to save Medi-

care, Democrats do not want to do anything.

REPUBLICAN ABUSE OF POWER

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

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to point out another outrage among the many insults that the Republicans continue to inflict upon this Congress and this country. Since they gained a majority in Congress, the onslaught of injustice has been tremendous.

They have stacked the top committees with the Johnny-come-lately party switchers. They have disenfranchised several Democrats, blocking us from voting, both in committee meetings and on this very House floor.

Legislatively, their crimes against the public have been horrendous. They do not even blush as they cut Medicare, Medicaid, student loans and other educational programs to fund tax cuts for their rich supporters.

The Republicans are drunk with their new found power, and their abuse of this power is rampant and excessive. But America is watching.

TOBACCO FARMERS

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

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Mr. Speaker, today and tomorrow thousands of farmers are making their way across my State for the opening of the annual North Carolina tobacco markets; 85,000 North Carolinians grow or manufacture tobacco. Another 154,000 depend on tobacco related spending. It pumps more than \$1 billion per year into our economy.

Mr. Speaker, if you have been on a tobacco farm you know it is the most grueling and back-breaking work in agriculture. Most tobacco farmers struggle to survive. Unfortunately, this year they have been hit by twin disasters; bad weather and President Clinton. Too much rain weakened the crop. Too much Clinton and Kessler threaten the industry's survival. Mr. Speaker, the President has let the FDA wage war on thousands of North Carolinians. He talks about jobs, but his politically correct posturing has put over 200,000 jobs on the line in my State. The FDA's charge that the tobacco family is out to addict children is ludicrous on its face.

Mr. Speaker, as tobacco farmers go to market, I want to assure them that the radical left wing of the other party will not get away with its selective persecution of their historic and legal American industry. To the farmers in eastern North Carolina keep up the good work, help is on the way.

TRADE POLICY

(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, 20 years ago Gold Star South Korea built radios for Zenith. Then Zenith started to build picture tubes for Gold Star. Yesterday Gold Star South Korea bought out Zenith.

Ladies and gentlemen, Philo T. Fransworth of Utah, father of American television, is rolling over in his grave. This country, the great America, invented television, telephones, typewriters. We do not build one anymore. But do not worry, American workers, you are going to get the high-technology jobs.

Tell me what is more high-technology than a sophisticated electronic device. Beam me up, ladies and gentlemen. Forty-eight billion dollar record quarter trade deficit; \$11.5 billion trade deficit for May. Truth is, Democrats are out because they had no trade program. Republicans have no trade program. White House has no trade program.

America is losing our jobs and people are talking about the Mideast. We better start talking about the Midwest.

ANOTHER PROMISE KEPT

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, last year Republicans stood before the American people and made a promise that if we took the majority, we would conduct an audit of the operations of the House of Representatives. Today the findings of this audit are presented.

The audit had to be conducted. For years the American people were inundated by countless stories of misuse and abuse of congressional privilege. The light of truth and accountability had to be shown on the institution that is responsible for spending the American tax dollars.

I would just point out that this would never have happened had the other party remained in the majority. It would never have occurred to the other party to put themselves on the same level of accountability that they hold every other financial institution and every business in America under.

Mr. Speaker, today is a good day on the Potomac and a good day for the institution of Congress. By keeping promises and holding ourselves accountable, we have taken steps toward restoring trust with the American people.

HEAD START

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