

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague from Texas on waste, fraud, and abuse in Medicare. Today my committee is holding hearings on waste, fraud, and abuse, a necessary part of the solution. But the Saint Paul pioneer press on June 27 had it right on Medicare. The headline blared, "Elderly win if budget is balanced: Despite cuts in Medicare growths, benefits would increase overall."

Under the GOP budget, Medicare will be one of the fastest growing programs in the Federal Government. In fact, comparing Medicare in the GOP budget with President Clinton's budget, one will find that the President calls for total Medicare spending of \$1.679 trillion between 1996 and 2002, while the GOP budget calls for \$1.601 trillion, and in 2002, the Republican balance the budget. We will be spending \$274 billion on Medicare. The President, under his proposal, will be spending \$289 billion. So what is the beef? Republicans plan to save Medicare period, and do not let anyone tell you differently.

□ 1020

EXPOSING THE EMPIRE OF THE GENTLEMAN FROM GEORGIA

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

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, earlier this year while my colleague from Georgia was leading the Republicans in cutting school lunches, he managed to deflect some criticism by making a big deal out of a pet project, "Earning by Learning."

In Monday's Wall Street Journal, however, we learned exactly who was doing all the earning: it was none other than Mel Steely, a close friend of the Speaker and head of this program. According to the Wall Street Journal, 90 percent of the money that comes into "Earning by Learning" goes to Mr. Steely who is also authorized to write the official biography of Mr. GINGRICH.

Is this a new kind of child labor, by exploiting children's education as a way to take care of the Speaker's official biographer.

Mr. Speaker, it is time the empire supporting my Georgia colleague's cult of personality be exposed for what it really is—a scam.

SAVING MEDICARE WITHOUT MUCH HELP

(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 a choice in this House.

We can preserve, protect, and improve Medicare—or we can watch it go bankrupt—as President Clinton's Cabinet has warned will happen—in less than 7 years.

These are facts. Doesn't sound like much of a choice, does it?

But liberal Democrats are going to try anything possible to frighten our senior citizens into believing Republicans want to cut Medicare.

Meanwhile, the G-O-P plan calls for increasing each Medicare patient's annual spending from \$4,800 to \$6,700 per year by 2002.

I'm a graduate of the Kentucky public school system—and back home that's not a cut, that's an increase.

I encourage our friends on the left to offer more ideas and fewer scare tactics.

We can preserve, protect and improve Medicare. The people in the real world, the private sector, have improved their health care system these past few years.

I'd say we ought to try and do the same.

SAVING MEDICARE

(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, the pollsters have told the Republicans they need to start telling the American people they are saving the Medicare system. But do you save it by cutting it by \$270 billion? The American people are not stupid. The American people can clearly see that a \$270 billion cut to their senior citizen health care system to finance a tax break is *not* saving the system.

Only in "Washington speak" could the Republicans say this: We are cutting \$270 billion from the Medicare system in order to save it from bankruptcy. And by the way, we are giving a \$245 billion tax cut. But we are really saving Medicare by cutting it. How can the Republican majority make this palatable? They say, "Tell the American people this is a steep cut to 'save' the system." Great idea, but the people in my district are much smarter than that. You do not save Medicare by cutting \$270 billion from it. The Republicans are not trying to save the Medicare system any more than Hugh Grant was asking for directions.

AUDIT RESULTS

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

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday marked another important step in our efforts to reform the internal operations of the House of Representatives. As a member of the Committee on House Oversight, I heard the testimony offered by the outside auditors retained to evaluate the books of the House, the first outside audit of House finances in over half a century.

The auditors state that they had "No opinion." That is a CPA's term for saying they could not express an opinion

because they could not even figure out the books in order to know whether or not they were in order.

Things are in such disarray in terms of the House finances and the House books that the auditors said we have to revamp the entire system.

I believe it is very important that we brought this situation to light. It is extremely important that we address the situation. As the Committee on House Oversight, we are pledged to bring this to the attention of the House of Representatives, to put the books in order, and to make sure that all the money spent by the House of Representatives is fully accounted for and properly expended.

REPUBLICAN SECRETS CONCERNING MEDICARE

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

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, it is becoming clear that the details of how the Republicans will cut Medicare are being held secret for as long as possible. At a time when millions of seniors are beginning to wonder, will my costs really go up more than \$1,000 a year out of my pocket, will my choice of physicians really be restricted, no hearings are being held and no details are being discussed.

We all know that the Republican budget, with its tax cuts for America's most privileged, means the cuts are just around the corner. There will be higher out-of-pocket costs for seniors, very considerable higher out-of-pocket costs. There will be restrictions on physician choice. But exactly how, the Republicans are not saying, because they are going to try and sucker punch the American people by floating the details of the plan only days before the vote, notwithstanding the fact that our seniors deserve the chance to see, to evaluate and to let their Members of Congress know what they feel about these plans.

The us how you will cut Medicare, Mr. Speaker.

The American people deserve to know.

PRESERVE AND PROTECT MEDICARE

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

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, liberal Democrats would like nothing more than to frame the debate over Medicare in terms of generational conflict, where senior citizens are pitted against young people. This line of reasoning is beyond ludicrous.

The crisis that faces Medicare is something that affects everyone. Medicare must be protected and must be preserved for everyone. It must not be used to drive a wedge between people.

Since the beginning of this Congress, Republicans have been committed to ending business as usual here in Washington. That means not ignoring bad news—not even about Medicare. This spring, the Medicare trustees board reported that Medicare will go bankrupt in 7 years. Democrats, have completely ignored this news. They offer no ideas on how to save Medicare.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans will not let Medicare go bankrupt, and we will not allow Medicare to become a political football in a cheap game of generational warfare.

CONTINUE AMERICORPS

(Mr. BAESLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BAESLER. Mr. Speaker, I have been a consistent supporter of AmeriCorps. I have seen the difference it has meant for my State of Kentucky and charities all over the country.

AmeriCorps is lean and nonbureaucratic, has moved much of the decisionmaking out to the States, and is accountable.

When I see an organization that can take tough actions, it impresses me. The Corporation for National Service just made a very tough decision: it cut off a grant in midstream to the ACORN Housing Corporation.

After a demonstration by a different ACORN in March stopped a speech by the Speaker, some asked whether AmeriCorps had been involved. AmeriCorps acted immediately. They got a signed statement that no AmeriCorps member was involved, and that the two ACORN's were entirely separate.

AmeriCorps could have stopped there. But it didn't. The CEO of the Corporation asked the IG to investigate, and to find out if any of the AmeriCorps money was being used to benefit ACORN.

The IG didn't find any AmeriCorps members involved in the demonstration, but did find that there was a close relationship between the two ACORN's. AmeriCorps has always said it wouldn't permit advocacy, directly or indirectly, so it stopped the grant in its tracks.

Now, it's a better news story when an AmeriCorps program does something great, as they do every day in Kentucky. But it's also important when AmeriCorps does something that won't make the news, but shows the ability to do the right thing just as clearly. I just hope that this Congress also does the right thing, and continues AmeriCorps.

MEDICARE BASHING

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

Mr. KIM. Mr. Speaker, I am tired of listening to this Medicare bashing. I

want to point out exactly what we are proposing on Medicare on this chart. I want Members to pay attention to this.

This black line is trust fund balance. Right now we have a \$150 billion balance, but it is rapidly depleting. At the year 2002, the money will disappear. This blue line is spent. By the time we hit 2002, there will not be any money to spend. There will be a stop payment to all the elderly people.

We recognize this problem because the trust fund commissioned their report back in April. They are the ones that said that, not we; we did not say it. They are the ones, all the members are Clinton appointees. So we come up with this idea. All we try to do is slow down the increase, rate of increase a little bit.

The red one is Mr. Clinton's plan; as we can see, not much difference. All we are trying to do is lower a little bit. We are still spending more money. Mr. Clinton recognized we have to see this problem on this Medicare plan. I do not know why they keep calling this a cut. Is it a cut to the Members?

THE GINGRICH CORPORATE WELFARE MODEL

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

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, this morning Speaker GINGRICH will present a check to students who participate in the Earning by Learning Program which pays schoolchildren \$2 for every book they read.

Speaker GINGRICH has touted this program for years, stressing the low overhead as a major selling point. In a speech this January the Speaker declared:

The money only goes to the kids * * * So if you have \$1,000 you can pay for 500 books, whereas in the welfare state model, if you have \$1,000, you pay \$850 of it for the bureaucracy.

But, lo and behold, according to the Wall Street Journal this week, Mr. GINGRICH's official biographer, Mel Steely, also happens to run this program. And according to this report Mr. Steely and two friends were paid 90 percent, yes 90 percent, of the money raised in the past year for the program.

Ninety percent for the Speaker's friends and 10 percent for the children; this is the way, this is the way things work in the Gingrich corporate welfare model.

THE AUDIT WILL CONTINUE

(Mr. HOKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, we had the accounting firm of Price Waterhouse do an audit of the House books. When I say we, I mean House Republicans. We had promised as a matter of the Contract With America that the first thing that we would vote on on the first day

was to have an audit of the House books that have not been audited as far as I know of in history on an exterior basis. We have never had an external audit of the House books. We did that.

They published their audit just yesterday. I want to read three lines from it. First of all, they say: The House lacks the organization and structure to periodically prepare financial statements. The methods of accounting was simplistic and ill-suited for an organization the size of the House. And in conclusion, because the House's accounting and reporting methods were outdated and of limited utility, we do not express, we cannot express an opinion on the accompanying consolidated financial statements.

What they are saying is our books are such a mess that they cannot even render a financial opinion. We promised that we could fix this. We did the audit. We will continue to do the audit. We will bring the reforms and make good on the promises that we made.

EARNING BY LEARNING CRONYISM

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

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address a new program initiated by Speaker GINGRICH called Earning by Learning, a reading program which purports to pay schoolchildren \$2 for every book they read. However, according to a story in Monday's Wall Street Journal, last year 90 percent of the money went to an old friend of the Speaker, who is working on the Speaker's biography and was, in fact, on his congressional payroll. That left only 10 cents on the dollar for the kids.

This stands in marked contrast to what the Speaker has said a million times, including a televised lecture on January 21, 1995, that "The only money goes to the kids." He elaborated and said, "So if you have \$1,000, you can pay for 500 books." But what we see is typical cronyism.

Mr. Speaker, use all of the money for books, don't mislead the American people, especially when you are using our Nation's children as your stage props.

PERMISSION FOR SUNDRY COMMITTEES AND THEIR SUBCOMMITTEES TO SIT TODAY DURING THE 5-MINUTE RULE

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the following committees and their subcommittees be permitted to sit today while the House is meeting in the Committee of the Whole House under the 5-minute rule: The Committee on Banking and Financial Services, the Committee on Commerce, the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities, the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, the Committee