

Mr. Speaker, these events which took place in Belarus last week cannot go unchallenged. I am calling today for a complete investigation by the State Department of these unwarranted acts of aggression by the Belarusian military. I hope that this investigation will force the country of Belarus to hold the parties who participated in these senseless acts responsible for their actions.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO REFORM MEDICAID

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

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, this morning I would like to talk about Government program "A." Can you guess what Government program "A" is? Here are some hints: First and foremost, it is a bureaucratic nightmare.

Second, it is riddled with fraud. In fact, the U.S. Justice Department estimates that nearly 10 percent of its money is lost to fraud every year.

Third, its rate of growth is both astronomical and unsustainable.

What is Government program "A"? Well, given my clues I know there are a lot of candidates, but today I am speaking about Medicaid.

And today, Republicans will introduce legislation to reform Medicaid. We will save costs by eliminating needless bureaucracy, cutting fraud and abuse, and allowing State and local officials to run the program in the most efficient manner possible. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this important reform effort.

A SAD DAY IN AMERICA

(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, sometimes writers labor for years to get their manuscripts published and never get a chance. But in America, if you blow up a few people and terrorize a nation, you become Ernest Hemingway overnight.

That is right. Just ask the Unabomber. The Unabomber, who killed at least 3 people, injured at least 23 others over a period of 18 years, demanded that his manuscript be published, and major newspapers around the country, fearing more violence, obliged.

What is next Mr. Speaker? Will the Unabomber demand time on Larry King? I say it is a sad day in America when our newspapers have to protect the public. The truth is, while the FBI is hiding behind the fifth amendment, the Unabomber is qualifying for Social Security as a terrorist.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker.

AMERICAN PEOPLE REAFFIRMING IDEAS THAT MAKE AMERICA GREAT

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

Mr. HILLEARY. Mr. Speaker, last November when the American people went to the polls, they began the process to totally change their Government. They were not consumed by some vicious desire to destroy Government. Quite the opposite. Last November the American people reaffirmed the ideas that make America a great country: freedom from oppressive Government and a strong commitment to family and personal responsibility.

The American people have come to identify the Democrat Party as being opposed to those ideas. Liberal Democrats clamor for more Government. But they fail to recognize that more Government means less freedom. Fortunately, there are Democrats that are beginning to see the light of day.

Since the November election, 132 elected Democrats have become Republicans. The latest to join the Republican ranks are Tennessee State Senators Milton Hamilton and Rusty Crowe. This gives Republicans control of the Tennessee Senate for the first time since reconstruction.

We heartily welcome the senators. They have joined a party that believes in traditional American values, one that does not see a Government program behind every problem.

MEDICARE: BULLDOZING, NOT LEGISLATING

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

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, as we heard this morning, Republicans are calling on us to consider changing Medicare and Medicaid, and yet they really do not want a debate or they would schedule hearings to consider these very fundamental issues. One day of hearings on Medicare, none in the Committee on Commerce, on Medicaid. I had to go to the Webster's Dictionary to find a term that seems to fit the circumstance. "Audacity: bold or arrogant disregard of normal restraints." Maybe the better term would be gall, gall that creates rancor and bitterness; boldness coupled with impudent assurance and insolence.

The American people, 37 million of them on Medicare, ought to be reacting with rancor because they are not being allowed to participate in this very fundamental debate about how a program that is essential to this country and to all of our senior citizens will be adjusted.

Certainly it is appropriate to have it on our agenda. But are we just going to take bills introduced today on Medicare and pass them in a week? That is not legislating, that is bulldozing.

REPUBLICANS ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES

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

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, liberal Democrats are content to let Medicare go bankrupt. Some even deny the importance of the report by the Medicare trustees that show that Medicare will be bankrupt by the year 2002.

This is unacceptable. This is a total denial of reality. Liberal Democrats would rather sit back and watch Medicare go bankrupt than gather up the courage to save this program. They would rather demagogue than lead.

There is no excuse for this inaction. Medicare must be saved and strengthened for current and future seniors. Over 35 million Americans depend on Medicare right now. If we do nothing, as the liberals suggest, those 35 million Americans will have no Medicare in 7 years. It will be bankrupt. What will liberals tell our grandparents then?

Mr. Speaker, since the beginning of this Congress Republicans have tried to reestablish priorities. Surely our parents and grandparents come before petty politics and demagoguery, and that is why we will save and strengthen Medicare.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION PROTECTING THE RIGHT OF PA- TIENT CHOICE

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, hold on to your wallets, middle America.

The Republican proposal to cut billions of dollars in Medicare and Medicaid is Robin Hood in reverse.

It takes from the poor and the middle class to give tax breaks to the richest people in America.

Senior citizens will pay higher premiums and higher deductibles if the Republicans get their way with Medicare.

The Senate Republicans, meanwhile, would force America's senior citizens into managed care plans.

I have introduced a bill that would protect the right of patient choice so you can choose your own doctor instead of being forced into managed care.

Everybody agrees that we need to put the Medicare Program on a strong actuarial basis.

But the Republican proposal just does not get the job done.

The Republican plan deserves to go down to defeat.

THE CAREERS BILL

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

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, since we have so little time today to discuss

the CAREERS bill, which may be one of the most important pieces of legislation that comes before the House in this session, I would like to just call your attention to one area.

There are those who are working diligently to keep the monopoly that the State voc rehab people now have and enjoy that is totally opposite of what the disability community wants.

So I would hope, when you listen today, you will think about what we have received in a letter from ARC, which is formally known as the Association for Retarded Citizens of the United States. This is what they say:

To delink the vocational rehabilitation system from this new system in careers will only serve to isolate the VR system and people with mental retardation from employers. No one would gain except those professionals in the voc rehab system whose agenda is to protect turf. We do not think that is what reform is all about.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DESERVE AN INVESTIGATION, NOT A WHITEWASH

(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, after months of stonewalling, Republicans on the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct have reportedly agreed to appoint an outside counsel to investigate the allegations against Speaker NEWT GINGRICH. That is the good news. The bad news is Republicans on the committee now want to limit the scope of that investigation. In other words, they want to hire an outside counsel, but then they want to tie his or her hands.

In 1988, when another Ethics Committee investigation into another Speaker, considered doing the same thing, here is what NEWT GINGRICH had to say:

The American public, deserve an investigation which will uncover the truth. At this moment, I am afraid that the apparent restrictions placed on this special counsel will not allow the truth to be uncovered.

Let us hold the investigation of Speaker GINGRICH to the standards he himself set. Appoint an independent outside counsel. The American people deserve an investigation, not a white-wash.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). The gentleman will state his point of order.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, my point of order is that the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is speaking out of order and discussing a matter that is currently before the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan [Mr. EHLERS] is

correct. Members should not refer to issues pending before the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.

FOLLOW THE SAME RULES MR. GINGRICH ASKED FOR BACK IN 1988

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

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, today's New York Times reports that the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct has finally decided to appoint an outside counsel to investigate Speaker GINGRICH. In 1988, Mr. GINGRICH himself offered some advice on how much authority outside counsel should have.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his point of order.

Mr. EHLERS. My point of order is that the Member is proceeding to discuss a matter pending before the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct and that is out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members shall refrain from discussing issues pending before the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I wish to be heard on a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] will state her point of order.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, on March 8, 1995, Speaker GINGRICH announced a new policy concerning speech on the House floor. Let me quote directly from his announcement:

The fact is, Members of the House are allowed to say virtually anything on the House floor . . . It is protected and has been for 200 years . . . It is written into the Constitution.

My point of order is: Does this new policy apply in this case?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair informs the gentlewoman from Connecticut that the Chair has properly related the rules of the House as interpreted from the Chair.

Ms. DELAURO. So that the rules of the House have changed since 1988 when the Speaker at that time was able to make his comments?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The rules of the House have not changed. The rules of the House are being enforced.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, the rules of the House in 1988 allowed the then Mr. GINGRICH to make his comment about an investigation before the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. Have the rules of the House now changed?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair is not aware of any point of order at that time. The rule is currently being enforced in response to a point of order.

The gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR] may proceed in order.

Mr. BONIOR. Let me then, Mr. Speaker, refer, if I might, to the his-

tory going back to 1988 and the then-Member from the State of Georgia, Mr. GINGRICH, offering advice on how much authority an outside counsel should have.

He wrote,

The outside counsel should have full authority to investigate and present evidence and arguments before the ethics committee concerning the question arising out of the activities of (at that time) Speaker Wright. It should have full authority to organize and hire staff. It should have full authority to review all documentary evidence available from any source and have full cooperation from the committee. The committee shall give the outside counsel full cooperation in the issuance of subpoenas.

Mr. Speaker, I call upon my colleagues and this Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to follow the same rules that the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. GINGRICH] has asked back in 1988.

IT IS ABOUT TIME

(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, news reports today suggest that the House Ethics Committee, composed of five Republicans and five Democrats, has concluded they must hire an outside counsel to investigate Speaker GINGRICH. All I can say is, it's about time.

Now, however, there are those who would limit the scope of the outside counsel's investigation, tying his or her hands.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan [Mr. EHLERS] will state his point of order.

Mr. EHLERS. Once again, Mr. Speaker, I rise to make the point of order that the gentleman has mentioned a case pending before the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct and it is not in order to make those comments.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, tell me why I am being muzzled. Tell me why there is a conspiracy to silence me.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will ask the gentleman to refrain from references to issues pending before the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. That is the precedent and the rule of the House.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. BONIOR. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, the question I pose to the Chair to help clarify this so we can have a legitimate and coherent debate on this issue, if in fact it is relevant; the question I pose to the distinguished Speaker this morning is: Is it in fact all right for Members to