

hope my colleagues will also wonder why they do not have drug testing at the White House. If we are going to get into this, Mr. Speaker, this is a double-edged sword and I hope the House does not fall for this.

HOLDING THE LINE ON INTEREST RATES

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, it is not often that I have occasion to rise and commend the Federal Reserve Board, but the decision yesterday to hold the line on interest rates certainly merits commendation.

We all know the Federal Reserve Board is allergic to good economic news. If too many Americans find jobs, the Fed ominously warns of runaway inflation when there is no evidence of inflation, and cranks up interest rates to slow the economy down. The Fed has seemed determined to maintain an unemployment rate, to guarantee an unemployment rate of at least 5.6 percent or more. To keep this in perspective, every percentage point of unemployment represents 1.3 million Americans.

That should be a cause for concern to anyone in this Chamber who has been conscientiously cutting the deficit or scrapping the Nation's social safety net in the belief that their efforts will lower interest rates and put people to work.

So my congratulations to the Federal Reserve for enduring the economic good news with restraint. Hopefully this is a sign that in the future we may be able to begin to count on the Fed to help, not hinder, the effort to improve the lives of all Americans.

And as a consequence of this, Mr. Speaker, I again ask and I join my colleagues in asking that the Ethics Committee stop covering up and release the Gingrich report.

MAJORITY OF CONTRACT WITH AMERICA NOW LAW

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

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, our friends on the other side would like the American people to believe that this 104th Congress has been a failure and that Republicans are running from the Contract With America. Well, they are wrong, and here is why.

In this Congress, the Republican majority has given the American people tax cuts for small businesses, an adoption tax credit, the Congressional Accountability Act, the line-item veto, unfunded mandate reform, the Personal Responsibility Act, health insurance reform, lobbying reform, the gift ban, welfare-to-work tax credits, food safety reform, et cetera, et cetera, et

cetera, and they are now all law. In fact, fully 65 percent of the Contract With America has been signed into law, but some of the most popular measures, like tax cuts for working families, have been vetoed by Bill Clinton.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans are delivering on our promise to change the spending culture here in Washington DC. In fact, just yesterday when reporters pressed a Member of the Democrat leadership to name another Congress as productive, he could not name one, and he said "I know there have been several. I will get back to you."

CAN THE PEOPLE TRUST THIS CONGRESS?

(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, in these final days of the 104th Congress, the American people need to remember what this Congress has been all about.

Time and again Members of Congress who have tried to speak out on issues of concern to the American people in fact have been silenced. We have seen it today when Members of Congress attempted to discuss the very serious charges of Federal tax fraud documented in an independent counsel's report which the Ethics Committee refuses to release to the public.

A year ago, Republican zeal—

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. CHRYSLER. Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. CHRYSLER. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is violating House rules by referring to matters before the Ethics Committee which are specifically forbidden by House rules.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will sustain the point of order, and asks the gentleman to proceed in order.

Ms. DELAURO. A year ago, Republican zeal to silence debate in the people's House resulted in the arrest of senior citizens who came to speak out against Republican plans to cut \$270 billion from Medicare to pay for a \$245 billion tax cut for the privileged few. And with the Medicare bill still on the chopping block because the Dole plan would require even deeper cuts in Medicare than the \$270 billion in Medicare cuts proposed last year, the American people should ask themselves if they can trust this Republican Congress when it is so afraid of the truth, whether it be on Medicare or whether it be releasing the ethics report from the committee.

A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE

(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, last week President Clinton's Interior Secretary, Bruce Babbitt, endorsed a plan to tax anything having to do with the great outdoors. The plan he endorsed called for a 5-percent tax on everything from binoculars to canteens to sleeping bags to birdseed.

Birdseed, Mr. Speaker? What is next? The air we breathe? It is true that Bill Clinton, the great conservative Republican that he is, has backed away from the plan, but is this just a glimpse of the future if Bill Clinton were to stay in power? Higher taxes, bigger government and more regulation. Mr. Speaker, they say it is hard for a leopard to change its spots. It is also hard for liberals to change their tax-and-spend tendencies, as Interior Secretary Babbitt has so eloquently proved.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that if the Clinton administration wins reelection, tax and spend will be back again. Welcome to the future, Mr. and Mrs. America.

CALL FOR RELEASE OF ETHICS COMMITTEE REPORT

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, normally what goes around comes around. Normally people who abuse their positions of power to destroy political rivals in underhanded and dishonest ways ultimately become the victims of their own corruption. The snake that they unleash from their souls invariably comes around to bite them as well. But that natural law of justice has been thwarted in this body. It has been thwarted because Speaker GINGRICH has suppressed the release of an Ethics Committee report that details activities that makes Speaker Wright's improprieties pale in comparison.

Mr. Speaker, we have a number of quotes from Speaker GINGRICH that identify the reasons why Speaker Wright was charged. They are far more applicable to the charges that have been leveled against Speaker GINGRICH. If you take Speaker GINGRICH at his words, we would release this Ethics Committee report today.

TROUBLING STATISTICS RELEASED ON TEEN DRUG USE

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

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I am greatly troubled by the statistics recently released on teenage drug use. How can we feel good about ourselves as a society when teen drug use has increased 78 percent since 1992? By the time teenagers reach 17, 58 percent know someone personally who uses acid, cocaine or heroin, and 43 percent have a friend with a serious drug problem.

Mr. Speaker, these are daunting statistics. And what makes matters worse is that this administration has done little to combat this rising tide of drug use. The Clinton administration's 1995 budget proposed to cut 621 drug enforcement slots, and although Congress fought most of the cuts, 227 agents still lost their jobs with the Drug Enforcement Agency.

Mr. Speaker, this is a serious problem which demands serious answers. And the only answer we get from President Clinton when asked if he would inhale if he had it to do over again is, "Sure, if I could. I tried before."

THE SPEAKER AND ETHICS

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

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago, the Speaker of this House was unable to find a room anywhere in this Capitol Hill complex for the Democrats to have a hearing on Medicare cuts, and so we were outdoors—outdoors—for many long days talking about what they were trying to do behind closed doors. And when seniors came to the Hill a year ago to ask the questions of the committees who were in charge, Speaker GINGRICH had them arrested and we had to go get them out. And now when we have charges against the Speaker that have been analyzed by an outside independent counsel, we are not allowed to see them. What is going on here?

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. CHRYSLER. Mr. Speaker, I make a point of order.

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

Mr. CHRYSLER. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Colorado is violating House rules by referring to matters before the Ethics Committee which are specifically forbidden in House rules.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. May I be heard on the point of order, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may be heard.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. My question is, what does this House do when not only just a regular Member of the House but the chief officer of the House, the third in line for the presidency, has these serious charges and we cannot see them even though they were publicly funded? Why can we not discuss them on this House floor and why are we told we must go outside to discuss them as we had to do Medicare cuts?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. For reasons previously stated, the Chair sustains the point of order and asks the gentleman to proceed in order.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, I thought the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. LEWIS] made a very emotional and correct approach. There comes a time when we all must stand up and say, what are these rules for? Are they to keep the American people from learning the truth?

I am shocked that the United States of America that believes in free speech is gagging Members of Congress about the third most important elected official in America, and I am stunned the other side is insisting on that.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3259, INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1997

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 529 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 529

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 3259) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1997 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

□ 1045

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CAMP). The gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. BEILENSEN], pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, this rule is standard for a conference report, and is a fair product given our time constraints as we conclude this session of the Congress. The rule before us waives all points of order against the conference report accompanying the bill H.R. 3259, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1997 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the U.S. Government, the community management account, and the Central Intelligence Agency retirement and disability system and for other purposes. In addition the rule provides that the conference report shall be considered as read.

Mr. Speaker, I was honored to have participated in the tremendous effort that led to the completion of this bill. As a member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence—generally known as HPSCI—I was proud to serve under the tough and fair leadership of my chairman, Mr. COMBEST, in crafting this bill. It is a product I think we can all be proud of, born of bipartisan and bicameral cooperation and negotiation.

Mr. Speaker, I thought my colleague from California, Mr. BEILENSEN, put his finger on an important point yesterday in our Rules Committee meeting, as he often does, when he said that no one pays much attention to our Nation's

intelligence programs. The truth is that, given the very nature of the topic, intelligence matters do not have a natural public constituency and do not generally arise for discussion around America's dinner tables. But, as Mr. BEILENSEN also pointed out, perhaps that is as it should be—and I would argue that fact is a testament to the successes we have had with our intelligence operations, for the most part. Yes, there have been some high profile problems—and we have worked hard to be sure we deal with them expeditiously and effectively. But overall, the way you know that there is good news in the intelligence world is when you hear no news at all. That is how the intelligence business works—the success stories are those that never become stories at all, because good, accurate, and timely intelligence allowed us to prevent bad things from happening.

Mr. Speaker, it is my view that the changing world around us makes good intelligence more necessary than ever before. There are more varied threats and more dispersed targets and the need for us to have well-tuned and properly trained eyes and ears has never been greater. The Intelligence Oversight Committees of this Congress recognize that and have conducted our oversight in a thoughtful and comprehensive manner. In addition to the efforts of our House committee, known as IC 21, which made some very important recommendations for adapting our intelligence capabilities to be ready for the next century, there was also the so-called Aspin-Brown Commission Review, which I was privileged to serve on. These efforts have laid down the groundwork and we now must move ahead in developing consensus and implementing meaningful change. Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me say that everyone understands the intense competition that exists in our finite budget world when it comes to the expenditure of America's tax dollars.

We know that that intelligence is a necessary commodity that saves lives and allows for prudent decisionmaking by our leaders, decisions that are not just involved with the military, although we all know that is a major component, but decisions also in other vital areas, such as fighting terrorism and dealing with the international drug problems.

I think this bill addresses these needs, although I think we must guard against expanding international law enforcement activity at the expense of intelligence operations.

Mr. Speaker, this is a fair rule, and it is a good bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BEILENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS], for yielding the customary half hour of debate time to me.