

label anything that Republicans attempt to do as extreme or radical.

Mr. Speaker, truth always has a way of rearing its ugly head, and while the liberal Democrats were misleading Americans about the environment and while they were out demagoging about the balanced budget, the Medicare Program has incurred the largest losses in its history.

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In the first half of this fiscal year Medicare has lost \$4.2 billion, and I would just say it has got to be true because I am holding the Santa Barbara News-Press, owned by the New York Times, and here is the front page article from the April 22 issue: "Medicare Trust Fund Loses \$4 Billion. Clinton Administration Downplays Apparent Miscalculations." So as I said, even the liberal press is exposing that, and I would just say the President vetoed it and now we see his party's inaction on solving and preserving Medicare.

REPUBLICANS FIX MEDICARE BY CUTTING BENEFITS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, here they go again. My colleagues on the other side, the Republicans, are now talking about how they want to fix Medicare essentially by cutting Medicare and using the money to pay for tax breaks for the wealthy. We had this all through 1995. Now they are trying to distort the information that came out in the New York Times about the Medicare trust fund, to go ahead with their radical plan to cut Medicare in order to pay for these tax breaks for wealthy Americans.

Well, let me tell the Members that this trust fund is not broke. We know now that it has \$126.1 billion in surplus. This small deficit that was incurred in the first 6 months of this year does not justify going ahead with this radical plan to cut Medicare and give back these tax breaks to wealthy Americans.

The Republican leadership has refused to sit down with President Clinton and try to work on a bipartisan basis to come up with an answer for Medicare to make sure it is solvent. We are not talking about today. We are not even talking about the next few years. This insolvency, if it occurs, is I think 2001 or 2002. Do not let it be an excuse on the part of the Republicans to give these tax breaks to wealthy Americans.

INTRODUCING THE REGULATORY FAIR WARNING ACT

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

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, too often we hear stories about the small busi-

nessman who hires and employs three or four people, and then gets slapped with a legal action by a Federal agency on a matter on which the small businessman knows very little about its background or its effect. So what does a small businessman have as an option? One, he can hire a lawyer to try to defend against a wrong about which he did not know; or, in the second place, just pay the fine or other sanction that the agency requires because that is the easiest way to go.

I am today introducing the Regulatory Fair Warning Act, which would require the agencies to provide reasonable notice ahead of time of the change of a regulation or how it is to be enforced so that the small businessman, the employer, can try to comply with that without having been hit with a legal action, not knowing what he was supposed to do. This is a fair warning whose time has come.

REPUBLICAN MEDICARE CURE IS WORSE THAN THE AILMENT

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

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, my Republican colleagues who come here to sound an alarm on Medicare, even though this alleged shortfall has already been known by CBO and they have taken it into account, although almost every year we have been responding within Ways and Means to make sure the Medicare fund stays solvent.

The trouble with the Republican approach is that their cure has been far worse than the ailment, a heavy hit on seniors and providers to fund a tax cut for a very wealthy few. Their proposal gambles with the health of older Americans by excessive expenditure cuts and risky proposals.

In contrast, the President has proposed a plan that would extend the solvency of the part A hospital insurance trust fund through the next decade without hurting seniors.

What the Republicans are doing, sounding an alarm to put out a fire, they want to tear down the Medicare house. The public rejected it last year. They will reject it again this year.

THE PRESIDENT'S SOFT AND LIBERAL JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS

(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, what the President does and what he says about judicial appointments are the mental equivalent of the great Joe Montana's play action, fake to the right and run to the left—and in this case, it is talking tough and acting soft. The President constantly talks about putting 100,000 cops on the beat but his judicial appointments are re-

leasing felons back on the streets where they can again prey on the unsuspecting American public. We need more than just laws against felons if the soft and liberal judges appointed by the President simply ignore the law and free them. What we really need are judges that will adhere to the spirit and letter of the law and punish violent criminals to the full extent of the law. We must not punish the American public again by allowing this disgraceful revolving door of justice.

If we want judges who are as concerned about the rights of law-abiding citizens and victims as they are about those of violent criminals, then we need a new President in the White House.

SUPPORT A CLEAN MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

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

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I sent this letter to my colleague from Georgia, Speaker GINGRICH, urging him to hold a vote on a clean minimum wage increase before the Memorial Day district work period.

And today, Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate on the floor of the House what I stated to Speaker GINGRICH in this letter.

In the letter I said:

The false link you are creating between a minimum wage increase and a reduction in worker protections, is little more than a cynical ploy to convince people earning \$8,400 a year that less safe working conditions are the price they must pay for a living wage. This Machiavellian approach is insensitive to the needs of thousands of working Georgians who struggle just to put food on the table. As of 1994, 11.9% of Georgia's workforce was earning between \$4.25 and \$5.14 an hour. A 90-cent increase would help these nearly 362,000 people make ends meet.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleague from the Sixth District of Georgia to permit a vote on a clean minimum wage increase.

CAMPAIGN REFORM

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

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, during the 104th Congress, we have made some very positive changes in how we do business around here. We have legislated more stringent lobbyist registration requirements, disclosure requirements of their activities. We have passed a new House rule that prohibits Members and staffs from accepting any gifts, including meals or event tickets, from lobbyists or any other individuals other than family and close friends.

This is a good start, but it has not changed the persistent perception across our country that special interest groups have an edge over individual contributors when it comes to election time.

Our next step is to change how we run our campaigns. I have introduced H.R. 3274 to do just that. My bill does limit PAC contributions, and it requires that contributions come from within the candidate's State and that 50 percent of contributions come from within the candidate's district. If we are here to represent the people from our district, then they are the ones that should help us get here. They are the Americans we work for and are accountable to.

It is time for meaningful campaign reform. We can pass some. We should do it. It makes sense.

AMERICA'S WORKING FAMILIES NEED AN INCREASED WORKING WAGE

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

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, when Franklin D. Roosevelt first proposed a national minimum wage, he described it as a "fair day's pay for a fair day's work." Now, 50 years later, the minimum wage has plummeted to its lowest value ever and its purchasing power has fallen to a 40-year low. On an annual income of \$8,400 a year, paying the bills and keeping food on the table is a daily challenge for minimum wage workers.

The 90-cent increase proposed by the President and Democrats in Congress would make the minimum wage a living wage. An extra 90 cents an hour would pay for 7 months of groceries, a year of health care costs, 9 months of utility bills, or 4 months of housing.

Contrary to Republican rhetoric, the average minimum wage worker is not a teenager looking for a little extra cash. She is a working mother, often the only wage earner in her family.

Let us not load up a minimum wage increase with all sorts of special breaks and goodies that would cause the President to veto the bill.

America's working families need an increased working wage, protections for their pensions, an effective education for their children, and affordable health care. Is that too much to ask?

Let us start by raising the minimum wage.

WAKEUP CALL

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

Mr. BAKER of California. Mr. Speaker, politicians excoriate liberal judges for releasing dangerous criminals and the Clinton appointees are among the worst. But defense and plaintiff attorneys have found an even greater ally, the bleeding-heart juries.

Half of the jury in the first case hung up the jury saying the Menendez brothers who murdered their parents for insurance money were afraid of their parents and should be released. It reminds me of the case in Richmond, CA, where

the burglar fell through the roof and sued the property owner for having a faulty roof and won. Yesterday's decision that Bernhard Goetz who defended himself from subway muggers should pay \$43 million because he injured one of the muggers was among the worst cases.

The real problem is not just liberal judges or bleeding-heart juries but a lack of absolute values. Our Nation's switch to situational ethics does not allow us to hold people responsible for their own misdeeds.

Should people who murder their parents prosper? Should burglars sue innocent property owners? Should thugs and muggers enrich themselves through court action when their victims rise up and defend themselves.

Wake up, America, before your ability to move safely in urban areas joins the 40 percent of your income taken by a loving and caring government.

PERMISSION FOR SUNDRY COM- MITTEES AND THEIR SUB- COMMITTEES TO SIT TODAY DURING THE 5-MINUTE RULE

Mr. GOSS. 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 under the 5-minute rule:

Committee on Agriculture; Committee on Banking and Financial Services; Committee on Commerce; Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities; Committee on Government Reform and Oversight; Committee on International Relations; Committee on the Judiciary; committee on National Security; Committee on Resources; Committee on Science; Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; and Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the minority has been consulted and that there is no objection to these requests.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RADANOVICH). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 175, FURTHER CONTINUING AP- PROPRIATIONS, FISCAL YEAR 1996

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 411 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 411

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 175) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 1996, and for other purposes, modified by striking title II of the joint resolution. The joint resolution as modified shall be debatable for one hour

equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution as modified to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit. The motion to recommit may include instructions only if offered by the minority leader or his designee.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California [Mr. DREIER] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from South Boston, MA [Mr. MOAKLEY], 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. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, this rule provides for the consideration in the House of House Joint Resolution 175, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 1996. It provides for 1 hour of debate equally divided between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Appropriations Committee.

It orders the previous question to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit which, if containing instructions, may only be offered by the minority leader or his designee.

Mr. Speaker, the rule also modifies House Joint Resolution 175 by striking out title II, which contained language to recapitalize the Savings Association insurance fund, better known as SAIF, and avoid another taxpayer bailout of yet another deposit insurance fund. Let me underscore that again. The plan was designed to avoid a taxpayer bailout and look for a private sector solution. This is an unfortunate but necessary step that was taken by the Rules Committee because passage of this 1-day continuing resolution is needed to forestall a disruption in Government services while congressional leaders and the administration work out the details of a permanent continuing resolution. As my colleagues know, the funding authority that much of the Government is currently now operating under expires in about 12 hours and 16 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to explain why I believe that the SAIF recapitalization legislation is needed, and why I hope that the majority and minority leadership in both the House and the Senate will work with the administration to bring this legislation before the House just as expeditiously as possible.

Mr. Speaker, because the bank insurance fund became fully capitalized last year, deposit insurance premiums to that fund fell from 23 cents per \$100 to 4 cents. Consequently, there is a premium disparity that exists now between the bank insurance fund and the Savings Association insurance fund.