

POSTPONING CALL OF PRIVATE CALENDAR

Mr. FUNDERBUNK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the call of the Private Calendar be in order later today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

REFORM WELFARE NOW

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

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, welfare should not be a way of life. Republicans are committed to replacing welfare with real work. However, President Clinton just wants to play politics with this issue, and there is no excuse that is too vague or too convoluted for President Clinton. As a candidate in 1992, the President promised to reform welfare as we know it, but he has vetoed welfare reform, not just once but twice. He has yet to keep his promise to the people of Wisconsin to sign their waiver to allow the Wisconsin works program to go into effect. He promised that he would have these waivers signed by last week, and now it is a week later.

If welfare reform was so important to President Clinton, why can he not sign a welfare reform plan working with this new Congress and approve the Wisconsin reform waiver?

Mr. Speaker, no more excuses, no more Washington political game. Let us reform welfare now.

REPORT ON H.R. 3814, DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE, JUSTICE, AND STATE, THE JUDICIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, FISCAL YEAR 1997

Mr. Rogers, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104-676) on the bill (H.R. 3814) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All points of order are reserved on the bill.

SUPPORT ROMANIA MFN

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

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, today we have a change in a bipartisan fashion to do something together on foreign policy. We should grant MFN to Romania. What we are doing is just extending parity. This is no special treatment. We did it under Ceausescu, the dictator. We should do it now under a

burgeoning democracy. Romania is a burgeoning democracy. It has made progress since the revolution of 1989 on human rights, the rule of law and a free market. Romania has been a loyal ally in recent foreign policy initiatives including sending troops to Bosnia, peacekeeping in Angola, large contingent in the U.S. training under the IMET program and an impressive record of support in the United Nations. Two out of our last three Ambassadors on a bipartisan basis have supported MFN to Romania.

Mr. Speaker, Romanians are looking to the United States as the primary source of business opportunities to foster the development of their economy. They have met the legal criteria for MFN, free immigration of its citizens.

Mr. Speaker, let us do something in a responsible bipartisan fashion.

MEDIA BIAS ON FILEGATE

(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, I could not disagree more with the previous speaker, but today I want to speak about the media bias on Filegate.

Mr. Speaker, where is the national media on filegate?

Where are the Woodward and Bernsteins?

Is the liberal left not shocked and outraged about the invasion of privacy of American citizens?

Are the liberals only outraged when it happens under a Republican President?

During Watergate, Chuck Colson went to prison for looking at one personnel file.

During Watergate, the Washington Post daily pounded the Nixon administration and tirelessly worked to find where the trail led.

Is the national press not interested because they overwhelmingly voted for Bill Clinton in 1992?

There are many unanswered questions.

Who in the White House hired Clinton's dirty tricksters and to whom did they report?

And finally in Clinton's inaugural address he said he would have the most ethical administration in history.

Since that is clearly not the case, when is the national press going to call Bill Clinton on the carpet?

BORIS HAS FALLEN AND HE CANNOT GET UP

(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, in August 1994, after a champagne lunch, Boris Yeltsin fell off a platform in Germany. In September 1994 Boris was too drunk to get off a plane in Ireland. In

February 1995, after an in-flight party, Boris had to be carried by aides off his plane. Just recently in July, Boris mysteriously disappeared for 7 days right before his election, and yesterday Boris Yeltsin missed a meeting with almost Santa Claus, Vice President AL GORE, but Vice President AL GORE came to his defense and said, "Boris looks good to me."

I ask, Mr. Speaker, compared to who? Jack Daniels? Foster Brooks?

The truth of the matter is while millions of Americans are worried sick about losing Medicare, Social Security, the White House is pouring billions of dollars into Russia, and Boris, who cannot walk a straight line while touching his nose.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker, and while we are at it, we better beam up Boris. Evidently, he has fallen and he cannot get up and he is getting drunk on Napa Valley champagne. Unbelievable.

THE REPUBLICAN COMMONSENSE WELFARE REFORM PLAN

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, just as President Wilson once claimed that World War I was going to be "the war to end all wars," President Clinton has promised to "end welfare as we know it."

Of course, unlike President Wilson, and despite two previous welfare vetoes, President Clinton still has a chance to renew his vow by supporting and signing the Republican commonsense welfare reform plan.

The Republican welfare reform plan is built upon five pillars which ensure that any assistance is temporary and not self-destructive.

It imposes a 5-year lifetime limit for collecting AFDC and vouchers. It requires able-bodied recipients to work for their benefits. It denies welfare benefits to noncitizens and felons. It restores power and flexibility to the States. And, it encourages personal responsibility to halt rising illegitimacy rates.

Mr. Speaker, redemption is at hand. President Clinton need not defend the status quo of a failed welfare system any longer. He needs only to support and sign the Republican commonsense welfare reform plan.

WELCOME TO REFORM "WEAK"

(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, the hard part is being to do this with a straight face because we are welcoming everyone to the Republicans' reform week. Yesterday in Roll Call, the majority leader said reform week was not meant to be "floorcentric." Now what does that mean to people beyond the Beltway?

Well, "floorcentric" means to really do something on the floor. Apparently, all along, reform week was supposed to be about rhetoric, about fast-breeder, press-release reactors cranking out things on how much we care about reform, and everybody is allowed to go up to the third floor in the Committee on Rules where there may be a whole of 10 public seats talking about how much they care about reform.

Mr. Speaker, I think the idea is, if they say the word "reform" long enough, people will forget that this Congress has set the record on being by the special interests, for the special interests and of the special interests. That is very sad. We are in desperate need of a reform week. Roll Call is right. They are spelling week W-E-A-K.

WE NEED WELFARE REFORM NOW

(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, in 1965, our country launched a war on poverty. The intentions were good, but 31 years and \$5.4 trillion later, we have nothing to show but poverty, despair, hopelessness, broken families, and a damaged work ethic.

Mr. Speaker, 18 months ago, this Congress set out to truly reform welfare. Twice our efforts were stopped by two Presidential vetoes. This week we're trying again.

Bill Clinton wants to keep business as usual, with bureaucrats in Washington running welfare by blindly handing out checks. But, in order for us to reform the welfare system and bring it into the 21st century we have no choice but to fix it.

Mr. Speaker, our plan not only changes the "business as usual" attitudes of the White House but will bring sweeping reforms. The Republican plan will keep welfare from becoming a way of life; restore power and flexibility to the States; keep noncitizens and felons from receiving these benefits; and encourage personal responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, we need welfare reform, and we need it now.

IT IS TIME TO FREE THE MINIMUM WAGE

(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, it is day 6, and Republicans in the Senate continue to hold the minimum wage hostage. Their unreasonable ransom demands include adding medical savings accounts to health care reform. While the Republicans in the Senate hold the minimum wage increase hostage, they also hold the wages of 12 million Americans hostage, all for the sake of special interests and big donor insurance companies.

The Consumers Union, the same group that publishes Consumers Report

and tells us what to buy and what is a real lemon, has called MSA's a "time bomb * * * that will make health insurance less accessible and less affordable for many Americans."

Over 80 percent of the American people support a minimum wage increase. It is time to free the minimum wage.

Let us give the 12 million hard-working Americans who depend on the minimum wage what they deserve; that is a raise. Stop holding them and their hard-earned paychecks hostage.

WELFARE SHOULD NOT BE A WAY OF LIFE

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, one of the most troubling legacies of the decades of liberal control of Congress is a failed welfare system that encourages complacency and punishes those who attempt to work.

Welfare was originally proposed as a temporary safety net for those who fell victim to unfortunate circumstances. It has evolved into a system that 5 million families depend upon for an average length of 13 years.

The Republican plan to reform welfare believes that this system has failed not just economically, but philosophically. A well-intentioned plan to help people get back onto their feet has turned into a system that penalizes people who try to work and traps them in a cycle of welfare dependency.

The Republican bill will restore welfare to a system that reflects the original intentions of its authors and reflects the philosophies that an overwhelming majority of Americans support: that welfare should not be a way of life and that the system should encourage work and personal responsibility.

KIRBY PUCKETT: AN AMERICAN ROLE MODEL

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

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise a very special person from the Third District of Minnesota, who exemplifies the unconquerable spirit of America, a man who overcame tremendous obstacles to become one of the greatest baseball players in major league history.

All Minnesotans and baseball fans across the Nation were stunned last Friday when Kirby Puckett announced his retirement from baseball because of irreversible damage to his right eye. But Kirby Puckett's place in the hearts of Minnesotans and baseball fans everywhere will live everywhere.

What a remarkable career: 2,304 hits. In 1989, he became the first right-handed hitter to win a batting title in two decades, played in 10 consecutive All-Star games and won the Most Valuable Player Award in 1993.

Kirby collected more hits in his first 10 seasons than any other major league player in this century.

Kirby Puckett's hall of fame career closely parallels his hall of fame performance as a role model for young people, his hall of fame work ethic, and his hall of fame public service in our community. From visiting kids in the hospital to raising badly needed funds for Children's Heartlink and inner city youth programs, Kirby Puckett has done so much for our community and State.

On behalf of all of the people of Minnesota, I want to thank Kirby Puckett for the joy he has brought to our lives. Kirby Puckett's greatness and impact on the lives of people, Mr. Speaker, cannot be measured by mere statistics. His power will forever be felt in one place, where numbers do not matter, in the heart.

Good luck, Kirby; we will be cheering for you for the rest of our lives. And we wish Kirby and Tonya and their two beautiful children the very best that life has to offer.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. YATES. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 316 on H.R. 3396, the Defense of Marriage Act, which the House passed on July 12, 1996, I had intended to vote "no" and thought that I had voted "no." I found out later that I am recorded as having voted "aye."

Mr. Speaker, I would like the RECORD to show that I had intended to vote "no" on the bill.

WE NEED COMMONSENSE REFORM OF THE FAILED WELFARE SYSTEM

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

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, according to the Department of Commerce, about 50 percent of all unwed teenage mothers go on welfare within 1 year after giving birth to their first child. More than 75 percent go on welfare within 5 years.

Mr. Speaker, it is almost impossible to disentangle illegitimacy from welfare. They are interrelated to a degree that is undeniable. Welfare, instead of helping people, encourages a value system that distorts the work ethic, destroys family, enables and encourages illegitimacy, and entraps people in a cycle of dependency. In fact, the qualifications for welfare in many instances are just that: One, do not get a job; and two, do not get married.

Since liberals started the war on poverty in the 1960's, the number and the percentage of out-of-wedlock births has skyrocketed. The rise of the welfare state has coincided with widespread family breakdown. Is it really just a coincidence?

Mr. Speaker, we need to restore the work ethic. We need to strengthen families and we need to instill the positive values of personal responsibility and