

THE TIME IS NOW FOR CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, in today's New York Times the Speaker attacked Democratic fund-raising and compares it to the Watergate scandal. Specifically, the Speaker is quoted in today's New York Times saying, "The Democratic fund-raising machine was the most systematic, large-scale effort to get around the law that I have seen since Watergate."

This comment is especially strange coming from someone who has admitted to abuses of the campaign finance system. The abuses were on such a scale that the Speaker has been fined \$300,000.

There is an old saying about people in glass houses not throwing stones, and I think it especially applies to the Speaker of this House. If the Speaker really cares about campaign finance reform, he should bring legislation to the floor immediately to correct the system. So far all we have seen is inaction by the Republicans on campaign finance reform.

KID TAX MUST GO

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, on the subject of campaign finance reform, I think there is a difference between enacting the laws that are in place and passing new laws to make it appear that there is a problem. There may be changes that are needed in our campaign finance laws, but clearly there are laws on the books that address the very things that the Clinton administration has apparently engaged in. And if they are guilty on that, the laws will respond accordingly, and I think that the Speaker is speaking to that, and I certainly believe that the Speaker was right in speaking out on this.

The thing I want to mention, with the Democratic defeat of the Balanced Budget Amendment, the children of today are in a very bleak situation as respects the future. I am a father of 4 kids and I am sick and tired of the kid tax. The kid tax is when liberal politicians pass new entitlement programs so that they can get reelected today so that your children and my children can pay for it tomorrow. I believe that the kids in America are sick and tired of the kid tax and we need to balance the budget and quit spending their money.

TIME FOR CONGRESS TO GET TO WORK

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, as I awoke this morning I asked myself a

question: Why are we all here? Why is the House of Representatives in session today and why should I be in Washington rather than in Massachusetts with my constituents?

Mr. Speaker, please indulge me while I review the House schedule for today: One, a resolution congratulating the people of Guatemala; two, a resolution congratulating the people of Nicaragua; and three, a resolution commending former Secretary Warren Christopher.

Now I salute the people of Guatemala and Nicaragua for their democratization, and I think Warren Christopher is a wonderful leader and a really great guy, but should this be the agenda for the week?

I was sent here to debate and legislate on issues of concern to Massachusetts, issues like expanding educational opportunity, guaranteeing that all of our children have health care, and comprehensively reforming our ugly system of campaign finance. I call upon Speaker GINGRICH to schedule votes on issues that affect the lives of working families, issues that really mean something. It is time for this Congress to get to work.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NICARAGUA

(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, today the House considers legislation to applaud our neighbors in Nicaragua. Seven years ago, as an elections observer, I was sent there to see the Nicaraguan people draw the physical fight for freedom to a close successfully. That day they used the ballot box to officially cast off the Marxist government of Daniel Ortega, which once inexplicably found so many friends in Washington.

In 1990, instead of the chaos and violence of the Ortega regime, the Nicaraguans demanded peace, prosperity, justice and democracy. That historic year, the Chamorro government took the reins in difficult times, dealing admirably with the fallout of 5 years of Sandinista misrule.

With difficult issues like confiscated properties lingering, last month's peaceful transition to the Aleman administration is a significant achievement and a testament to the commitment and advancement of democracy in that country. It is only proper that today Congress pause for a minute to congratulate the Nicaraguans, to encourage them and to reiterate our support for democracy in that country.

BRING OUR JOBS HOME

(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, jobs keep leaving America on the fast

track. Wrangler Jeans is laying off 3,000 workers and moving 12 factories overseas. Apple Computer, they cut 1,500 jobs last year; they are cutting another 3,000 jobs this year. Shoemaker West is cutting 1,000 jobs, moving 3 factories overseas, and now, under WTO, Costa Rica is challenging Uncle Sam over underwear. Unbelievable.

American workers are not only losing their jobs, now they are about to lose their BVD's. It is getting so bad that in Longview, WA, a robber entered a grocery store wearing a pair of pink panties over his head. The police said they never saw anything like it.

What is the surprise, Mr. Speaker? Jobs are getting so scarce in America today robbers cannot even buy pantyhose. I yield back the balance of all the lingerie and all the other problems. Beam me up, Mr. Speaker.

CERTIFICATION OF MEXICO SENDS WRONG MESSAGE TO DRUG KINGPINS

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

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, on a subject of seriousness, what I want to talk about today, I find it a little difficult following the gentleman from Ohio.

It is shocking, Mr. Speaker, indeed shocking, that with all of the evidence before the President regarding the complicity of the Mexican Government and the \$30 billion a year drug trade, that he has decided to certify Mexico as a reliable partner in the war on drugs. The President's certification of Mexico makes a mockery out of the certification process.

Ironically, within mere hours after the President announced that Mexico was certified as cooperating, Mexican authorities admitted that a suspected top drug money launderer had inexplicably escaped from police custody and that they knew this days before the certification decision was made.

Is this what the President calls cooperation? Was it not enough that Mexico's own drug czar was caught accepting bribes from the drug kingpins just last week? The President was duped.

I realize that Mexico is a friend and the United States-Mexican economics are intertwined, but certifying Mexico as cooperating sent the wrong message to the Mexican Government and to the drug kingpins.

HIGHER EDUCATION ACCUMULATION PROGRAM

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

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, during the past 15 years, tuition at 4-year public universities has increased more than 4 times the increase in median household income. If we fail to act

now, college will be affordable only for the rich in America.

I have cosponsored a bill with the gentlewoman from California [Ms. ESHOO] called the Higher Education Accumulation Program. The bill will help make college affordable for middle and working class families by allowing parents to set up IRA's for their children's higher education. Parents will be able to make tax deductible \$5,000 contributions for each of their children for higher education. To deny a child an opportunity for an education is to deny that child a lifetime of opportunities.

The President and the Senate majority leader have endorsed this concept, and they have slightly different plans of their own. I ask that Members of the House, on a bipartisan basis, support the Higher Education Accumulation Program, H.R. 53, the HEAP Act, to help make college affordable for working and middle class families in America.

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THE DRUG-FREE COMMUNITIES ACT OF 1997

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

URGING ASSISTANCE FOR FLOOD VICTIMS IN 10TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT AND OTHER AREAS

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I just arrived back in Washington from my district, which was hit very hard by the recent flooding. I want to commend the Clinton administration for agreeing to provide disaster aid, and urge this body to help those of us in my district and around the country that have been so devastated by these high waters.

I am also here this morning, Mr. Speaker, to introduce new legislation, with the gentleman from New York [Mr. RANGEL], the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HASTERT], and the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. LEVIN], called the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997. This legislation recognizes that the very serious and growing drug problem in this country is not going to be solved here in Washington, but is going to be solved at the local level, in our communities and neighborhoods.

The Federal Government has a role to play, of course, but even that role needs to be more focused on our communities. In order to receive Federal support under this new approach in our bill, a community must first show its commitment to reducing drug abuse in a comprehensive and long-term fashion.

There has to be substantial volunteer participation from kids, parents, businesses, schools, law enforcement, the media, and so on. A community must also show that the local effort can be sustained without Federal support. We do not want them to be dependent on the Federal Government. There is accountability in this bill. A community must evaluate whether it is actually

having an impact in reducing drug abuse.

Importantly, this is not a matter of new money, but rechanneling existing monies will be used. We are rechanneling the existing \$16 billion we spend every year in fighting the drug war. This bill, Mr. Speaker, has grassroots support from around the country, from hundreds of communities.

I hope Members will join us in this bipartisan effort to create a drug-free America, neighborhood by neighborhood.

REPUBLICAN LACK OF A BUDGET PLAN WILL HURT EDUCATION

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

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Speaker, we are over 2 months into the 105th Congress, and yet the House has not taken any effort on a serious budget. We hear the complaints as a result of the President's plan on moving our country forward on education, and yet the Senate voted on a balanced budget amendment but we have not voted here in the House. We can hear the complaints about the President's budget, but where is the Republican plan; or where is our plan, as a House Member?

The expression is, people in glass houses should not throw stones. This comes to mind in response to complaints about the President. I may not agree with his budget, but we do not have one either. Republicans cannot criticize the President's plan when they do not even have an alternative suggestion.

The Democrats have set up some priorities in the new budget. One of them is education. That effort is shared by over 80 percent of Americans. The President's 10-point plan on education is adequate. His proposals would boost funding for elementary and secondary education, for school construction, and improved classroom techniques. His proposals would help boost post-secondary education with \$1,500 HOPE scholarships for the first 2 years of college. We have illustrated what we want to do in the future for America. Let us get the budget to reflect those priorities, including education.

THE BLOOD OF THE PEOPLE WILL BE ON THE HANDS OF THE BUDGET CUTTERS

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, every day we hear more and more about what is wrong with the President's budget, yet his critics have not put on the table one plan, one proposal, one budget, or even one idea, except to talk about cutting and balancing, cutting the heart out of the neediest people in our country: children, senior

citizens, the mentally ill, disabled, and the poor.

Balancing with the idea that we can get blood out of a turnip, that we can provide services and provide opportunities with very little or no money.

There are a lot of things that I do not know, but I do know one thing. I know that as Frederick Douglass taught, in this world we may not get all that we pay for, but we most certainly must pay for all that we get. We cannot have a great, civilized, and humane nation without paying the cost; if all we can do is cut, cut, cut, all that we will get is blood, blood, blood.

I tell you, the blood of the people will be on the hands of those who did the cutting.

URGING MAJORITY TO JOIN IN BUDGET PROCESS BY PRESENTING THEIR PLAN

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

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, as a freshman Member of this House, I have heard a lot of stories about the frenetic pace of the opening of the previous Congress. I heard of votes being taken late at night and working weekends. Now that I am here, elected by the people of the Ninth District of Texas, I cannot help but wonder what happened.

Is this what the majority means when they talk about wanting less Government?

Mr. Speaker, if this is the session when we are going to agree to do a balanced budget plan, we need to see activity from the other side of the aisle. They have criticized the President's plan. They have even called on the President to submit a second budget plan before submitting their own first budget on the most important issue this Congress will debate. I and many of my freshman colleagues are still waiting to see the evidence of the bipartisanship that we have heard so much about.

I join the Democratic leadership today in asking the majority party to join the budget process by presenting their plan. There are only 13 legislative days left until the April 15 budget deadline.

WE MUST MAKE CHILDREN'S HEALTH CARE OUR TOP PRIOR- ITY IN THIS SESSION OF CON- GRESS

(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, we are voting today on a resolution regarding the display of the Ten Commandments. Whatever Members vote on this resolution, I think we can all agree: This is not the most pressing issue that is facing our Nation today.

Today the American people are much more concerned about the 10 million