

Twenty-five percent of my students have lost a parent to unnatural causes. Twelve percent have been homeless. Most have survived on rice or beans or cereal for extended periods. All have lost friends to violence, and all have been outcasts most of their lives.

Do they understand the politics of this (or any) war? No. But they understand what it means to be orphaned, to be vagrant, to be hungry, to mourn, and to be hated. They fully understand what it means to be a refugee.

So they collect clothes to help others—and end up helping themselves in the process. In the process, they are working cooperatively with adults (employees in the building, their parents, community members) they normally consider adversaries. They are earning respect for a job well-planned and efficiently executed: In just two weeks a mere dozen students have collected enough clothing, shoes, socks, and undergarments for about 3600 refugees. Remarkably, these students who anticipate failure and disapproval at every turn are succeeding at something meaningful.

While they may never compose a thesis comparing and contrasting the present conflict with events in the Balkans leading up to WWII, they have learned to advertise a campaign, schedule and share tasks, meet deadlines, calculate weight and cubic yard measurements, arrange transportation and more.

I'm glad you inquired about the project. We appreciate your knowledge and support as you debate the merit of alternative education programs. We need critical resources to raise citizens as well as test scores.

Sincerely,

REBECCA R. ROADY,
Teacher.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. BERRY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the special order time of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

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

There was no objection.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG FAIRNESS ACT FOR SENIORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BERRY. Madam Speaker, I would like to speak this evening about the Prescription Drug Fairness Act for Seniors. This legislation will help the problem that our Nation's seniors have had to deal with for years, and that is the outrageous prices of prescription drugs in this country.

The district that I represent has the highest number of senior citizens that live only on Social Security of any district in the country. When I hold meet-

ings in the First Congressional District of Arkansas, I hear about two issues, and that is the agriculture crisis and the high cost of prescription drugs, especially for seniors.

I also get letters from Arkansas seniors who tell me every day that they cannot afford to pay for all their needs; specifically, all their medicine and all their food.

I also get letters from Arkansas seniors who tell me that their drug bills are massive. Seniors are not following their doctors' orders. Some of them have been given prescriptions which they cannot afford to fill. Others have filled prescriptions which they cannot afford to take as directed.

Because they cannot pay the rent, pay the electrical bills, buy food and take very expensive prescription drugs, they either stop taking them or they take less than is prescribed by their doctor. They are doing things that in the long run are harmful to their health. I find it amazing that we tell our seniors that they can live longer if they take this pill or that pill but then if they cannot afford the medication that keeps them alive we do not do anything about it.

The Prescription Drug Fairness for Seniors Act of 1999 is a chance for us to do something about it. It is a chance to step forward and show our seniors that we care about their well-being.

Madam Speaker, this legislation allows seniors, Medicare beneficiaries, to purchase prescription drugs at reduced prices. It allows pharmacies to purchase prescription drugs at the best price available to the Federal Government. It is estimated to reduce prescription drug prices for seniors by over 40 percent.

The average American over 65 takes only four prescriptions a year. The average senior citizen over 65 takes an average of 14 prescriptions a year. Our seniors suffer from more than one chronic condition: hypertension, diabetes, arthritis, glaucoma, circulatory problems, and many others. Medicare beneficiaries spend over \$700 per year on average for prescription drugs and many seniors spend much more than that, some as much as \$700 a month.

Are the pharmaceutical companies hurting for profits? Certainly not. They are the most profitable businesses in existence. Last year they had a net profit of \$24.5 billion, or 17 percent of their revenues.

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Certainly we have no objection to the drug companies being profitable, and hope they continue doing so. Here is a letter that a senior in my district sent to me about this very problem.

She said, "I want to thank you for introducing a bill to investigate the extreme cost of prescription drugs. As I attempt to control blood pressure, cholesterol, treat a thyroid deficiency, and restless leg syndrome, it costs me over \$100 a month. I have had to cut out my arthritis medicine that costs \$125 a

month that the doctor prescribed, and I have had to return to aspirin, which my doctor insists I should not take with these other medications.

"Please do what you can to get the cost of prescriptions back down to a reasonable level. I have had numerous people tell me that they cannot afford the medicines that are prescribed for them."

Madam Speaker, sadly enough, this letter is not something that should surprise anyone here, because I am sure that if we talk to most of the constituents in Members' districts, they will tell us they have received similar letters and they have talked to many seniors that have the same problem.

What do we do? Do we continue to stand by and allow our seniors to be taken advantage of, robbed, by the pharmaceutical manufacturing companies? Fortunately, we have a bill that has 108 cosponsors that will help those seniors who find themselves choosing between food and medicine.

I call on all my colleagues to stand up for our seniors and sign on to this bill. It is a good bill. It is a step in the right direction. It does the right thing as it concerns the senior citizens of this country.

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. HAYWORTH. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to use the special order time of the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. NORTHUP). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

TRUE BIPARTISANSHIP NEEDED TO SAVE MEDICARE AND HELP AMERICA'S NEEDIEST SENIORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Madam Speaker, I listened with great interest to my friend, the gentleman from Arkansas, detail a genuine problem. And as the citizen honored to represent the Sixth Congressional District of Arizona, home to many of America's seniors who endured a Great Depression, who took part in World War II, who built our American economy into the envy of the world, and who now, in their golden years, have time to enjoy a quality of life unparalleled, I still understand that for many there are genuine problems.

How unfortunate it is, then, Madam Speaker, that when those of us in our commonsense, conservative majority move in a bipartisan manner to offer real choices to help the neediest seniors in our society, to offer alternative plans out from the auspices and away from the auspices of big government and bureaucratic solutions, how unfortunate it is that those who claim to

want a bipartisan remedy turn a deaf ear, Madam Speaker, I think particularly to the latest effort to help us save and strengthen Medicare: to a bipartisan Commission, with noteworthy Americans from coast-to-coast, and in particular representatives of both parties, the Senator from Louisiana, Mr. BREAU, and my colleague on the Committee on Ways and Means, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS), who took a long, hard look at Medicare, especially in the wake of the courageous steps this Congress took in the face of withering propaganda which the press accurately described as Medicare, intent on scaring our seniors and obscuring the choices, and yet, despite that, we came back, we saved Medicare, and yet we want to strengthen it in additional ways.

How interesting it was, Madam Speaker, to observe the labors of that bipartisan commission, and how wonderful it was to see Senator BREAU and the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) truly fashion a bipartisan solution. How sad it is to report, Madam Speaker, the unfortunate efforts of some to avoid a solution, to avoid helping the neediest seniors, and instead, attempt to invent an issue.

Madam Speaker, in a few short days a Star Wars prequel will be released, it may already have been in the theaters, with wonderful flights of fantasy and fiction, but Madam Speaker, we have not a prequel but a sequel about to be unfurled, Medicare II.

Because in the wake of the bipartisan solution that Senator BREAU, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS), and others from both sides of the aisle fashioned, the word went out from the White House: A supermajority of 11 members of this Commission had to vote to approve the Commission's recommendations to take those good ideas and move them into the realm of sound public policy.

Sadly, Madam Speaker, the word went out from the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, from our president, that by actually embracing the bipartisan solution, some in this Chamber of the liberal persuasion would be deprived of an issue, an issue to drive a wedge among Americans, an issue to again scare seniors.

Thus, Medicare II took flight, because 10 members of the Commission voted for this commonsense solution to help the neediest seniors, but the presidential appointees from this body refused to vote for the program.

How ironic it was, Madam Speaker, that our president, one who has come to this Chamber again and again and offered words of reconciliation and the term "bipartisanship," how sad it is that he sent those instructions, and how unfortunate it is that our president, the afternoon the Medicare Commission's recommendations were voted down, had the audacity to appear on television and say again, we have to solve the Medicare question in a bipartisan way.

Madam Speaker, we spoke yesterday of teachers, and our first teachers are our parents. A fundamental lesson most Americans learn is that we should do what we say, live up to our words, and mean what we say.

How unfortunate it is that our president continues to be engulfed not in a credibility gap, but sadly, in a credibility canyon, where his words and his deeds, whether personal, political, or in terms of policy, fail to reconcile with his actions; the latest example, of course, being this Medicare II.

And I appreciate the words of my friend, the gentleman from Arkansas. But let me also say that we should really work in a bipartisan fashion. I would welcome my friends on the left to truly embrace a bipartisan solution.

But as we have heard from pundits in this town and nationwide, some folks here are not interested in solving problems. Some folks here do not want to embrace a solution that would strengthen Medicare and save social security. Some folks would rather have an issue that they believe can hang like a sword of Damocles over the commonsense, conservative majority.

Madam Speaker, we all confront many challenges in Washington, and we are thankful for the give and take on this floor. But Madam Speaker, to those who would embrace the cynical politics of overpromising and failing to truly live up to their mission, I believe history will render a harsh verdict.

I believe the very people they claim to want to help are the people who will suffer the most. We will hear more Orwellian speeches from the left in the days to come. How mindful it is of George Orwell's novel 1984, and the phrase, "Ignorance is strength."

I do not believe that is true. I believe the facts will reign, and I look forward to working in a truly bipartisan fashion to save Medicare and help our neediest seniors.

PROCEED WITH CAUTION BEFORE BANNING SCIENTIFIC TIES WITH INDIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to draw my colleagues' attention to legislation that has been introduced in the other body that could have the potentially destructive effects of cutting off important exchanges between American scientists and their counterparts from other countries.

The legislation in question, offered by Senator SHELBY, would impose a moratorium on visiting scientists from so-called sensitive countries in American nuclear labs. The Senator's proposal comes on the heels of recent reports of compromises to our national security with regard to the Peoples' Republic of China.

While I agree that Chinese espionage activities should cause us to be more

vigilant with regard to that country, I am concerned that this proposed legislation casts a wide net and would give too much discretion to officials at the Department of Energy. The result could be a cutting off of positive scientific exchanges that do not affect our national security, depriving all of us of valuable knowledge and disrupting the types of scientific contacts that actually promote security and cooperation.

One country, Madam Speaker, that could be affected by this legislation is India. While the Senate legislation does not mention any countries by name, a recent report in the newspaper India Abroad quotes an Energy Department official that the list of seven sensitive countries includes, in addition to China and Russia, India and Pakistan.

The official indicated that different criteria were used for putting countries on the list, and that India and Pakistan were included because they are not signatories to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.

Madam Speaker, I, too, am deeply concerned about the persistent pattern of China's theft of our nuclear secrets. I have come to this floor on several occasions to call for more safeguards against Chinese espionage, as well as to focus more attention on China's documented actions with regard to nuclear proliferation, which include providing nuclear and missile technology to unstable countries like Pakistan.

But in the case of India, we clearly do not have the facts to support the conclusion that India is involved in the same types of activities as China. Thus, I would urge Members of the Senate and the House, as well as the administration, not to jump to any conclusions about India without the facts.

What we know, Madam Speaker, is that U.S.-India relations have suffered in the past year because of the nuclear tests conducted by India last May. But one key fact that is often overlooked is that India's nuclear program is essentially indigenous, developed by India's own scientists.

Export controls on supercomputers and other dual use technology have been in effect against India for years, forcing India to develop its own highly advanced R&D infrastructure.

Another very important point, Madam Speaker, is that India has kept its nuclear technology to itself, out of the hands of rogue regimes and international sponsors of terrorism. This is in marked contrast to China, which has not only stolen our technology, but has shared very sensitive information with unstable countries in Asia and the Middle East.

Madam Speaker, I fully agree that we need to be more wary of China. This is an authoritarian country, a one-party state, the Communist party, with a terrible record on human rights and a record of intimidation and aggression against its neighbors.

Indeed, Madam Speaker, some of India's recent actions, including the nuclear tests and the test-firing of the