

power to overrule the decisions of State courts such as ones which decide custody measures?

In addition, Madam Speaker, why was the Justice Department not willing to await the outcome of Elian's claim for asylum before the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals? What does that say about how much weight the administration gives to our judicial branch of the government?

How will the Attorney General justify her actions if the 11th Circuit decides Elian's asylum claims are true in manners which contradict the Department's actions?

What constitutional authority does the Federal Government have in executing search warrants in cases that are not criminal? In how many other cases has the INS broken down doors and used armed agents in custody cases?

Additionally, why did the Attorney General feel compelled or pressured to use overwhelming armed force when Elian's life was not in danger?

The negotiations were still taking place at the time the INS broke down the door and trashed the Gonzalez house. Should it be the policy of the INS to present the possibilities of deadly force when confronting situations which are not criminal? Additionally, Gregory Craig, the attorney for Juan Miguel, also happened to be the attorney for the President during the impeachment trials.

Elian's Miami relatives and the American people have a right to know what role Gregory Craig played during the shaping of the Department's actions. Furthermore, what contact did the administration have with the Communist dictator Fidel Castro?

Was the President influenced by another Cuban boat lift? These are some of the questions I have, Madam Speaker. I call on Congress to hold hearings because the people across this Nation have a right to know. As Americans, we have inalienable rights to certain freedoms and protections. When government officials threaten or encroach on those rights, it is our duty to hold them responsible.

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, focusing on livable communities is an opportunity for the major Presidential candidates to give citizens relief from the standard political fare by embracing a positive message: how to make our families safe, healthy, and economically secure.

One of the reasons this message has such potential for elevating the political discussion is because this is truly a national movement that is being driven at the grassroots level.

Every year it seems more State and local ballot initiatives are passed pro-

tecting open space, giving more transportation choices to our communities and controlling unplanned growth. One grassroots effort was dealt with this morning in the Washington Post describing the efforts to protect the Chesapeake Bay, one of our Nation's most cherished waterway and, sadly, Governor Gilmore of Virginia's reluctance for Virginia to provide true leadership.

For 15 years, citizens and communities across a six-State area and Federal partners and private citizens are developing solutions not necessarily to eliminate sprawl in this Chesapeake Bay watershed, but to cut it by one-third by the year 2012. The political leadership in Virginia, however, has been slow to respond and only recently provided its support for a new agreement, assuming that Virginians care less about the environment and protecting the Bay than their neighbors in the surrounding States. I think that is a sad commentary and a misreading of the citizens of Virginia.

In sharp contrast, one of the most exciting stories of regional cooperation and addressing unplanned growth is unfolding now in the Speaker's home State of Illinois. Metropolitan Chicago has a long tradition of being a leader in the heartland; its importance as a national transportation hub with the transcontinental railroads, so it is today with O'Hare Airport, the busiest in the Nation; and the important role that Chicago has played in the City Beautiful Movement at the turn of the century with the magnificent Burnham plan, one of the most influential city plans in world history, illustrating the power of planning for growth in a fashion that balanced downtown interests with open space and access to that city's majestic waterfront.

Chicago was unfortunately a leader in the consequence of unplanned growth. From 1970 to 1990, when metropolitan Chicago increased only 4 percent in population, it increased 46 percent in the urbanized area, 10 times faster than the rate of population increase and, clearly, a development pattern that is not sustainable. It has resulted in Chicago having the second longest average commute in the country, with 11 percent of its commuters traveling an hour or more each way each day.

But in keeping with the tradition of leadership, Chicago is now providing important direction on livability. I have had a chance to review the Metropolitan 2020 plan, a visionary document preparing metropolitan Chicago for the 21st century. It recalls the history and provides a vision for the future. This fascinating study is one of the best that I have seen, providing a framework for developing a regional vision of growth over the next 20 years while it recognizes the realities and challenges facing the region. It addresses the reality of the present system's inability to pave its way out of traffic congestion; the importance of the pro-

ductivity of the region's growing minority population, which will supply the majority of its future work force; the need on focusing the entire region's pool of talent to meet the specialized needs of a growing economy; and, most important, the symbiotic relationship between the suburbanites, who actually earn twice as much from their income from downtown as Chicagoans earn from suburban areas, \$14 billion versus \$21 billion.

With over 1300 units of local government and almost 70 percent of the State's population living in the metropolitan Chicago area, the Metropolitan 2020 effort is a powerful example of the potential for business and civic leaders, community leadership, and the planning profession to come together to develop solutions to guide governmental investments. I strongly urge my colleagues to join me today at 2 p.m. in SC-10 of the Capitol for a joint briefing of the Senate's Smart Growth Task Force and the Livable Communities Task Force, hearing from a group from Chicago who will give a comprehensive overview of their initiatives. They will also focus on the important role of the Federal Government in assisting the regional effort to create more livable communities.

Chicago is as good a model as we will find in an area of the country that a lot of us spend a lot of time in. It is a solution to make our communities more livable and our families safe, healthy and more economically secure.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 43 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PEASE) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Blessed be the God and Father of us all, Who in great mercy has given us a new birth and made us a living hope for the world.

As a nation, we have inherited great natural resources and unending principles to guide our destiny. By Your power, O God, You have safeguarded faith in Your people. You have made us ready to reveal in our time Your creativity and goodness active in us, but for the common good of all.

We rejoice in Your blessings upon this Congress and the people they represent. Even during times of various trials and moments of suffering, our gaze is fixed on You, as the source of all goodness and foundation of peace.

May genuine faith which is more precious than gold tested by fire be proven in us. Then the great tasks we undertake in Your Name may truly give You praise, glory and honor now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GIBBONS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

PAST AND FUTURE SUCCESSES

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, last Friday marked the 39th anniversary of the first United States space exploration mission.

On May 5, 1961 Alan B. Shepard, Jr., became the first American space explorer when he was rocketed 115 miles above the Earth's surface into space.

This feat proved to the world that the United States had the potential to become the winner in this space race.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of us to take a moment to reflect on our past accomplishments and to celebrate how far we have come since that historic flight in 1961. There are enormous possibilities for future progress and for our progress still lying ahead of us.

The continued advancement of our space program, as well as the overall development of new and innovative technologies, demand and require our support.

With the assistance of this Congress, the United States can and will remain a world leader in technological development.

A NATION BANNING GOD

(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, the courts started their assault on God by banning school prayer. The courts then banned the public display of the Christmas nativity scene. The courts then banned students from writing papers about Jesus.

Now, if that is not enough to say the devil perhaps made them do it, check

this out, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled that Ohio's motto with God all things are possible is unconstitutional.

Unbelievable Congress, what is next? Will "In God We Trust" be taken from the House Chamber? "In God We Trust" be removed from our currency? Beam me up, I say these judges make decisions while sitting on their brains.

I yield back the fact that a nation that bans God I believe promotes the devil.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS FOR SENIORS

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, too many seniors and disabled people in this country cannot afford the prescription drugs their doctors say they need.

Seniors should never have to choose between food and medicine. This is an important issue that needs a meaningful solution, not the empty rhetoric that we are hearing from the other side.

House Republicans are proposing a plan to offer a fair and responsible drug plan that is affordable, available and voluntary to all seniors and disabled Americans.

Mr. Speaker, it will help folks to get prescription drug coverage at lower costs by creating group buying power without Washington interference or big government-style price controls.

We will reduce the runaway costs of medicine, but not with a Washington-based one-size-fits-all program that kills research and innovation of life-saving cures.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to modernize prescription drug coverage. We should all be working together on this important issue. Let us stop the partisan rhetoric and do the right thing for our seniors.

LET US WORK TO KEEP FRAUD OUT OF THE MEDICARE PROGRAM

(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, there are few things more important than taking care of our Nation's seniors. That means keeping the Medicare program healthy and solvent for the 39 million older Americans who depend on it.

Unfortunately, our efforts to improve Medicare will not work if we do not eliminate the waste and abuse that festers in the current programs. In FY 1998, Medicare's fee-for-service program made \$12.6 billion in improper payments. Part of the reason this waste, fraud, and abuse occurred was that the Clinton-Gore administration was careless in monitoring and oversight of Medicare payments. This neglect has created a troughful of Medicare money,

and crooks are glad to have it, to eat to their fill.

For example, a New York medical equipment company robbed Medicare of more than \$6 million. A Florida home health agency fraudulently billed Medicare for \$2.2 million.

Let us keep our seniors healthy. Let us work to keep fraud out of the Medicare program.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection and pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 89, 106th Congress, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies:

Mr. HASTERT of Illinois.

Mr. ARMEY of Texas.

Mr. GEPHARDT of Missouri.

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, May 4, 2000.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted to Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on May 5, 2000 at 11:15 a.m.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 2412.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

MARTHA C. MORRISON,
Deputy Clerk of the House.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that it will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

NORTH SIDE PUMPING DIVISION OF MINIDOKA RECLAMATION PROJECT, IDAHO, AUTHORIZATION INCREASE

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3577) to increase the amount authorized to be appropriated for the north side pumping division of the Minidoka reclamation project, Idaho.