

a real plan providing real relief for our seniors who are paying the high cost of prescription drugs.

Looking out for the big drug manufacturers instead of our seniors led our Republican leadership to pass a plan that will funnel hundreds of millions of dollars into the hands of big insurance companies rather than help our seniors afford to pay their medicines.

Even the big insurance companies say it will not work. In fact, the President of Blue Cross/Blue Shield said, and I quote, "This idea of a private sector drug benefit provides false hope to America's seniors because it is neither workable nor affordable." We can do better. Let us work together to be sure we do better. Our seniors deserve no less.

CONGRESS ANSWERED PLEAS OF NEVADA'S SENIORS

(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, let us come back to reality for a minute. For months now, our seniors have been asking, even begging, for relief from the high cost of prescription drugs that they have to take.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand here in this well and announce that this Republican Congress heard and answered the calls of those senior citizens.

Yesterday, the Republicans passed the Bipartisan Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit plan that will benefit every Medicare senior. Our bipartisan plan provides for a voluntary, affordable, and available prescription drug benefit to all Medicare beneficiaries in need.

We have created a much-needed entitlement for every Medicare beneficiary, which, at the same time, allows seniors to choose the plan they want, and yet keeps Washington out of their medicine cabinets.

While the Democrats took a walk on our seniors yesterday, Republicans are lowering drug prices and providing real prescription drug relief and benefits and yet fighting for our seniors at the same time.

"ROGUE STATES" NOW CALLED "STATES OF CONCERN"

(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, I have heard it all. The State Department is doing away with the term "rogue states" for Libya and Iran. They are now called "states of concern".

Now if that is not enough to confuse Henny Youngman, a State Department spokesman said, and I quote, "If these states of concern continue to be of concern because they have no concern

about the concerns that concern America, then we are prepared to go beyond concern."

Beam me up. These double-speaking, bric-a-bracking, ratch-a-fratching, pantaloonicists need their brain examined by a concerned proctologist.

I yield back the concerns for any common sense left at the State Department.

JEWISH PRISONERS IN IRAN

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I condemn the government of Iran for its actions against 13 imprisoned Jews.

The official crime that these men have been charged with is espionage on behalf of the United States and Israel, but their real crime was being Jewish in a country that does not tolerate freedom of religion.

The Iranian mullahs have concocted a "show trial" that Joseph Stalin would be proud of, void of any evidence or legitimate legal proceedings.

During this scripted play, nine of the accused were coerced into a nationally televised confession. This staged trial has been running since April without any tangible evidence.

Kept out of the trial are the families of the accused, the press, human rights advocates, and the general public.

These brave and devout men have been in prison for over a year, almost entirely bereft of any kind of legal representation. While this masquerade of a trial will soon conclude, these 13 may soon be executed. The world will be watching and praying that these courageous men will be released.

SHIRAZ 13 VERDICT TO COME ANY DAY

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

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, on this Independence Day, Americans should keep the Shiraz 13 in our thoughts and prayers. Since March of 1999, the government of Iran has held these people simply because of their religion.

The trial is over, and it looked more like a kangaroo court. The investigator, the prosecutor, and the judge were the same person, someone who is affectionately known in Iran as the butcher.

The verdict will come any day now, and we are all watching. Will this new so-called moderate government of Iran free the Shiraz 13?

Until we know, we should not loosen our import restrictions on Iran on rugs, nuts and caviar which have been authorized to be imported here as of the end of 1999.

This 4th of July, we should send a strong message about where the U.S. Congress stands. Today in the Agri-

culture Appropriations bill, the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) and I will be offering an amendment to cut the funding from the Agriculture import budget that it takes to implement these loosening of these export quotas. Let us send a message this 4th of July.

TOP TEN REASONS TO VOTE FOR H.R. 1304, QUALITY HEALTH-CARE COALITION ACT OF 2000

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, when the doctor cartel bill comes up this afternoon, I will give my colleagues 10 reasons to vote for it.

First, they like what OPEC has done to oil prices.

Second, they think that too many low-income children have health insurance.

They think Americans pay too little for health insurance.

They would like to increase the number of uninsured Americans to a nice round number, say, like 50 million.

They would like to reduce prescription drug coverage among seniors.

They would like to increase out-of-pocket health care cost.

They think that the best way to spend the surplus is on doctors' fees.

They think that people's wages and fringe benefits are just too high and they would like to reduce them.

They think doctors should change patients' medications for political reasons and not for medication.

Finally, they think that the most pressing problem in our health care system today is that doctors make too little money.

I ask my colleagues to watch how they vote on this.

13 JEWISH CITIZENS ARRESTED SOLELY BECAUSE OF RELIGION

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, in March of 1999, Iran arrested 13 of its Jewish citizens solely because of their religion. The trial has just concluded, and it was a show trial worthy of Joseph Stalin: no evidence, but confessions, not showing the guilt of the accused, but showing their justified fear.

The prosecutor is also the judge, is also the jury. Of course no one is allowed to view the trial.

□ 1015

These men have been in prison, most of them, for a year and a half, and it is time for Iran to let them go. The charges against them are ridiculous, because in Iran's discriminatory society no one of the Jewish faith would be allowed near anything of national security significance. So certainly the CIA would not hire from this minority group in any search for spies.

The verdict will be issued on Saturday. We in this House must take a stand. The agricultural appropriations bill comes up, and I will have an amendment to deny the use of funds to allow the importation of agricultural products from Iran and, thus, reinstitute the policy of Ronald Reagan to prevent those goods from coming in at this time.

PORKER OF THE WEEK AWARD

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, imagine how many single family homes and apartment buildings could be built for \$1 billion. That is the amount the Inspector General at the Department of Housing and Urban Development reports has been wastefully spent.

In several different reports, the Inspector General details wasteful spending ranging from overpayments to pure abuse. One report identified \$935 million in Federal housing subsidy overpayments during 1998 in HUD's assisted living programs. The overpayments resulted from the HUD's inability to accurately know if recipients qualified based on income or housing benefits. It has been estimated that \$935 million could provide housing assistance to 150,000 needy families.

Another report on a Bronx, New York, housing project uncovered ineligible and unnecessary expenses totaling \$258,000. The audit uncovered expenses totaling \$26,000 that was either unnecessary for the project's operation or not supported by adequate documentation, including \$13,000 for unnecessary telephone charges and \$10,000 for unnecessary cab fares.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development gets my porker of the week award.

PLIGHT OF THE IRAN 13

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

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the plight of the 13 Iranian Jews that have been held for over a year on trumped-up charges of spying for Israel and the United States. After months of incarceration, coerced confessions and show trials, the fate of these 13 will be decided this weekend by a revolutionary court judge who alone will make a decision whether these 13 will live or die.

The arrest of these innocent people was in itself an outrage, but the Iranian government has doggedly pursued these false charges, denying the defendants representation and visitation from their families, and using them as a pawn in the ongoing ideological tug-of-war of Iran's future.

We have read and heard that the so-called moderates are slowly eroding

the power base of Iran's hard line clerical leadership, but I do not see the evidence. There is no religious freedom in Iran, there is no respect for human rights and due process in Iran, and anti-Semitic, anti-Western scapegoating persists in Iran.

A country like this has no place among the community of nations; and the United States, as the premiere defender of democracy around the world, should make no overtures to welcome Iran. I join my colleagues telling Iran that we are watching.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

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

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, as co-chairman of the Generic Drug Equity Caucus, I would like to talk about generic drugs and how they make prescription drugs more affordable.

Currently, generics fill over 40 percent of all prescriptions in the United States and are extremely affordable, at only 10 to 15 cents per dollar spent on brand names. The Congressional Budget Office reported in 1994 that generic drug competition results in a cost savings to consumers of \$8 to \$10 billion annually, while meeting the FDA's requirement on bioequivalence, meaning that generics have the exact same effect on the human body as brand names.

Too many of the brand name companies seek to extend their patents, thereby restricting prompt market access by generics and raising drug costs. Americans have a right to be concerned about the high cost of prescription drugs. The solution could be as simple as encouraging the use of generic substitutes and providing co-pay differentials between brand name and generic drugs, and preventing abusive marketing and regulatory practices.

INTERNATIONAL ABDUCTION

(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, today I want to talk about Marcus Farina, one of the 10,000 American children who have been abducted to foreign countries. Marcus was abducted when he was 5½ years old by his noncustodial father, Sergio Farina. It is believed he was taken to South America.

Mr. Farina picked up Marcus on December 6, 1991, for his first court-ordered unsupervised visit and never returned. Marcus's mother, Patricia Rose Diggs, has been working diligently on this case since his abduction. Evidence came to light that Mr. Farina went to Brazil before he went to Uruguay. It is believed Mr. Farina left Marcus in South America and has traveled without him. He still has family who live in Uruguay, and they have all been interviewed by law enforcement to no avail.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has created a poster on the child, and it now includes an age-progressed picture of Mr. Farina. Mr. Farina is fluent in English, Spanish, and Portuguese and has many friends and contacts throughout South America.

Mr. Speaker, Marcus's mother and others like her need our help. Children deserve and need to grow up with both parents in their lives. I hope that my colleagues will continue to work with me to bring our children home.

GAS CRISIS

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, the first summer of the new millennium is well under way. Americans have been looking forward to summer vacations with their families all year. Unfortunately, they are discovering that the temperature is not the only thing rising this summer. Across the Nation, gas prices are shooting through the roof; and American families are feeling the pinch in their wallets.

But since the beginning of the gas crisis, the Clinton-Gore administration has been missing in action. In fact, Energy Secretary Bill Richardson even admitted that "we were caught napping." The response of the President's spokesman, Joe Lockhart, to the high prices was, "Prices tend to go up a bit this time of year."

Well, Mr. Speaker, it is high time that Secretary Richardson and the rest of the administration woke up. The Vice President, AL GORE, has long tried to increase gas prices and taxes on gas as a way to get us out of our cars and supposedly to clean up the environment. Well, he is getting his way.

Let us face it, we are not being gouged at the gas pumps, we are being gored.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS NEEDED

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we witnessed one of the biggest legislative shams of the 106th Congress. This Congress did not pass a prescription drug benefit to help our seniors; we passed an insurance policy.

From the Patient's Bill of Rights to education funding, my colleagues have used Democratic rhetoric to masquerade their bad ideas. They are using the same old strategy, watered-down legislation to ultimately secure its failure.

We did not even get a vote on an alternative. The Republican bill costs seniors more each year, but it gives them less. It was either their way or the highway. Well, our seniors see through this sham, and maybe in November they will give them the highway.