

people and consider that they really need real relief and pass a Medicare prescription drug benefit and bring competition to the drug industry so that drug prices can be reduced for the seniors. This is really unconscionable. We are talking about people who have retired and who are on fixed incomes. We must give them relief. We cannot continue to just play.

LIES, LIES AND MORE LIES

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

Mr. FOLEY. Madam Speaker, I am delighted to speak before the Congress today and the American people, and I would like to obviously go back to a subject of importance, but before I do I think it was very important the comments of the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) about prescription drugs. It is timely. It is important. I would remind all those listening, though, that we have been here, at least with this administration, for almost 7 1/4 years and just in the last several months have we seen conversation relative to prescription drugs.

The gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) quoted some statistics showing the increase in inflation and cost of drugs year in and year out, and she is correct. They have been going up year in and year out, but only in an election year did they finally come forward with a plan that would provide some degree of prescription drug coverage, but one has to read the plan to see exactly what it entails and make certain they are not getting trapped in another big government program.

I would remind the listeners that the Vice President in Florida made some comparisons about his mother-in-law and his dog taking a certain drug. Obviously those statistics and facts are not true. They were not true. They did not apply, but that did not keep him from saying them.

So I, again, in day two of veracity watch, will call attention to another claim made by the Vice President regarding Mr. Bush's tax plan. However, as many know now, the information was misleading, incorrect or not even relative. In Washington, a tax research group questioned the manner in which Mr. GORE is using its numbers to attack Mr. Bush. The Vice President says the average working American would save just 62 cents a day under his opponent's tax plan but Bob McIntyre, director of Citizens for Tax Justice, said the Democratic Presidential candidate is not representing his information correctly. It is a stretch I would not make, and that is a labor-financed group that made the calculations.

Even that group suggests that the governor of Texas's plan would bring \$1.24 in savings to the average worker.

Now the other day, in fact in this morning's paper, the Vice President

says he will fix the oil crisis if elected. Well, as far as I could tell he is elected Vice President today and has been for the last 8 years and today we are experiencing the highest prices of fuel oil, home heating oil in 10 years. So I would ask all those soccer moms who participated in the last election to look at your gas statements, look at your credit card receipts and see how much they are paying for gas today as they did in 1996, and see if in fact the plan offered by the Vice President will be coming much too late for changing their family's budget.

He will make specific policy announcements to deal with the crisis, right here, right now, said his spokesperson. Well, the problem has been going on for some time, in fact a couple of years. We have had hearings, we have had testimony.

We brought Mr. Richardson before the Congress, but to no avail. We are still seeing high oil prices and no resolution to this crisis.

Now, Mr. Lehane, who is Mr. GORE's spokesman, boy, if you elect the other team they will transform the Oval Office into the big oil office. I do not think that is going to happen, but maybe if it does we will start seeing a reduction in prices for fuel oil and maybe the American consumers can see some relief.

The point is today, I want to make certain that people are at least using facts and statistics correctly, because I come from Florida where senior citizens do not need to be frightened and do not need to be scared. Back in 1992, then Governor Lawton Chiles, Democrat running for reelection, his campaign launched a series of telephone ads or at least telephone solicitations to voters urging them not to vote for then candidate Jeb Bush, because they said, in fact, if you elect Jeb Bush he is going to take away your Social Security. That is absolutely, patently false. The governor of the State of Florida does not have anything to do with Social Security, but the claim was made and it was done by the campaign. After the campaign, Governor Chiles apologized for the misinformation, dissemination of unfactual material but, once again, now we have the Vice President going to Florida, quoting statistics about a dog and his mother-in-law and I think it is reprehensible because it is all designed to scare seniors, make them nervous, make them feel like nobody is looking out for them.

My grandmother came from Poland. She died with \$10,000 in the bank. She desperately needed Medicare. She desperately needed Social Security. She went to her grave with a measly \$10,000 in life savings having worked as hard as she could as a maid in a Travel Lodge Motel. It is for people like my grandmother I am concerned about because I do not want them to die in poverty. I do not want them to have to be worried about prescription drugs. I do not want them to have to worry about Social Security. I did not get elected as

a Republican to come here and destroy those very important programs.

1400

But it is troubling to me that a person running for office can make up stories, create characters, fictitious ideas, fictitious people, using them as examples of the problems that are maybe facing America.

DEMOCRATS SHOULD STOP USING SCARE TACTICS TO TRY TO WIN ELECTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SCARBOROUGH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Madam Speaker, I would like to follow up on what the gentleman from Florida so ably started, that is, talking about misrepresentations, not only in this campaign, but on the House floor.

As a Member that arrived here in 1995, I was surprised that people would come to the floor and actually talk about how mean-spirited, right-wing fanatics wanted to destroy Medicare and accused Republicans of wanting Medicare to wither on the vine. It got so bad, in fact, after the President shut down the government by vetoing nine appropriation bills, that The Washington Post, never a friend of the Republican Party, but The Washington Post actually had an editorial talking about the real fault and saying the real fault was that the Democratic Party was resorting to scare tactics and they called it "Mediscare." Of course, that caught on; and we see this trend continuing over and over and over again.

As the gentleman from Florida talked about the 1994 gubernatorial race, we actually had Lawton Chiles and Buddy McKay calling senior citizens in South Florida saying, if you vote for Jeb Bush, a governor, a governor, he is going to cut Social Security. It is just lunacy. However, this has been the tact since we got here in 1994: try to scare senior citizens, try to scare grandmothers and grandfathers, those that are the most fragile in our society, into thinking that one party actually wants to take away Medicare and Social Security benefits.

I would like to say that it ended in this House back in 1996 or 1997 that, somehow, the far left was shamed into actually stopping the lies about Medicare. But I was sitting on the floor here just 2 weeks ago, and I heard a gentleman, I will not say his name, but I actually heard a gentleman once again say that Republicans came to Washington promising to have Medicare wither on the vine.

Now, there is no polite way to say it. That is a lie. That is just a bald-faced lie. Sadly, the gentleman that said it knew he was lying, knew he was talking about when Newt Gingrich talked about having HCFA wither on the vine because he wanted to privatize an

awful lot of things. But it just continues.

How sad is it that we have AL GORE saying that his mother-in-law takes dog pills that actually cost less for the dog and more for him; and then when he is pushed on it, his staff says yes, it is not true, it is not true. It is just unbelievable, and it continues over and over again.

Mr. Speaker, we hear that there is not a prescription drug plan on the table. There is. We actually passed one. But because it does not socialize the dispensing of drugs in the Department of HHS, somehow, it is a mean-spirited plan.

Madam Speaker, I just hope that the Vice President, and I hope that my friends on the left, can actually refrain from the type of scare tactics that they have been engaging in for over 6 years, because it does not work. We have got grandmoms too. We have parents who depend on Medicare, who depend on Social Security, who depend on the type of things like, for instance, a bill that I was just able to see enacted into law this past week where we passed long-term health care. But we did it in a way that did not socialize long-term health care in a bureaucracy in Washington, D.C.

We did it in a way where the decisions are made locally. The decisions are made by doctors, by patients, by health care providers, and that is where we need to go. I certainly hope again that especially the Vice President, who seeks to be the next President of these United States, can refrain from these types of exaggerations that are clearly intended to distort the truth, clearly intended to scare senior citizens into believing that one group of people are for seniors and one group are against them. It may make him feel morally superior, but it is a lie; and also it is very insulting to those of us who believe that one can care for senior citizens without centralizing and socializing every single function in the Department of HHS.

We believe, we believe that people in our communities, people in the free market, that doctors, physicians, and senior citizens, can make intelligent choices also, with the benefit of the type of plan that we passed here several months ago. So hopefully, the fear mongering can be left behind, not only on the campaign trail, but also in this House. It is too important for our seniors, and it is too important for us.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair must remind all Members that although remarks in debate may level criticism against the policies of the President and the Vice President or against the nominated candidates for those offices, still, remarks in debate must avoid personality and, therefore, may not include personal accusations or characterizations.

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

(Mr. PICKERING addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE HUNGER RELIEF ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Madam Speaker, as somebody who is on the left, on the other side of the aisle, I want to speak about an issue I think both sides can agree on.

Madam Speaker, in August, many of us in Congress were delighted by the catered cuisine served at various events during our party conventions. Yet, while we dined, 31 million Americans were either hungry or living under the specter of hunger. The economy is strong, unemployment is at a 30-year low, welfare rolls have been slashed. Still, every day in America, despite welfare reform or, perhaps, as some would say, because of it, there are families who need and use food stamps to eat. Every day in America, despite welfare reform or, perhaps, again, because of it, many go hungry, more have poor health, great numbers of our children, far too many, are unable to learn because they do not have enough to eat.

As we near the end of this Congress, we have a chance to change that shocking and scandalous situation.

I am so proud to have joined 181 of our colleagues in the House and 38 Senators, Democrats and Republicans, in support of legislation that focuses on food and takes notice of this Nation's nutritional needs. The Hunger Relief Act, H.R. 3192 in the House and S. 1805 in the Senate will help one in 10 families in our Nation who are affected by hunger.

There is evidence of hunger in 3.6 percent of all households in America. According to the report from Bread for the World, entitled "Domestic Hunger and Poverty Facts," 31 million people live in households that experience hunger or the risk of hunger. That number represents 1 in every 10 households in the United States. Close to 4 million children are hungry. Madam Speaker, 14 million children, 20 percent of the population of children, live in food-insecure homes. In food-insecure homes, meals are skipped, the size of meals are reduced; and again, according to the Bread of the World, sometimes the occupants of these homes go without food for a whole day.

More than 10 percent of all households in America are food insecure. Because there is such hunger and food insecurity, there is also infant mortality, growth stunting, iron deficiency, anemia, poor learning, and increased chances of disease. Because of such hunger and food insecurity, the poor are more likely to remain poor, the

hungry more likely to remain hungry, and the sick are less likely to get well soon. It seems strange that we must fight for food for those who cannot fight for themselves.

Madam Speaker, hunger is a condition of poverty. It is really time for us to stop picking on the poor. Less than 3 percent of the budget goes to feed the hungry, and it is well documented that when we use our resources for food and nutrition, the health needs of this Nation's poor, it does make a difference.

For more than 3 decades now, the Food Stamp program has been a cornerstone of America's fight against hunger, and the first line of defense. Over the years, the program has been steadily improving, with the elimination of the requirement that food stamps be purchased, being one of the most significant breakthroughs. While many, too many continue to confront food insecurity, the situation today is far better than it was in 1960 when the Federal Government first began to focus on food. Similarly, the health consequences of this Nation's programs have experienced marked improvement. The data on birth rate, physical growth, and anemia is striking.

For example, the data shows that over a 20-year period, the incidence of physical stunting among preschool children decreased by 6.5 percent; and the improvement in the Nation's nutritional status indicates that while we need to continue our work, we can change the course of malnutrition among the poor and the needy. Over a 10-year period, according to the data, the percent of low-income households that meet 100 percent of the recommended dietary allowance grew twice as much as the improvement in the general population.

We are making progress, but we still have a long ways to go. That is why, Madam Speaker, Congress should and Congress must pass the Hunger Relief legislation before we go home this year. It is the least we can do, indeed, while we have such great prosperity.

TRIBUTE TO CHRISTOPHER GALE

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

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding individual from my community. His name is Christopher Gale, he is 18 years old, and I have had the opportunity to spend some time with him over the last few days. Christopher was in Washington as part of the Boys and Girls Club National Youth of the Year competition. Christopher was the winner of the Midwest region. He is an outstanding young person from my hometown.

Mr. Speaker, he has been a member of the Boys and Girls Club of Holland, Michigan, for the last 9 years. Today,