

Earlier this week Captain Pechacek was seriously injured as his car was crushed and knocked on to its side by a drunk driver. Within minutes, fire fighters from Pechacek's own station arrived on the scene to rescue the injured driver from the wreck, not even knowing at first that the injured driver was their own captain.

Now, Captain Pechacek's fellow fire-fighters are keeping a vigil at the hospital, during which they have organized a blood drive to help him and others and volunteered to help Captain Pechacek's son with his homework in his father's absence.

We all wish Captain Pechacek a full and speedy recovery and his family strength during this difficult time. And to all those Las Vegas firefighters, we commend you on your heroism and loyalty.

Finally, I would like to end with a comment made by Las Vegas Fire Chief Mario Trevino. He said that they "always treat an accident like it was our mother or father or sister or brother. This time it really was."

JOHN LENNON MURDERER WANTS FREEDOM

(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, John Lennon's murderer says he should be set free, and even John Lennon, who was a liberal, would agree he should be set free.

Think about it. Chapman said, "My mental illness is over. I am eating, I am breathing, I am even singing and playing the guitar."

Now, if that is not enough to throw up, let us remember Chapman's testimony. "I asked Lennon for his autograph. He gave it to me. It was a ploy. I killed him. It was not his signature I wanted, I wanted his life."

Beam me up. Mark Chapman deserves an electric chair, not an electric guitar.

I yield back the fact that America, that tolerates murderers like Mark Chapman, is an America that promotes and tolerates more murderers.

I yield back the life of John Lennon.

COMMENDING DR. CARLOTTA MORALES, PRINCIPAL OF SAINT AGATHA CATHOLIC SCHOOL, MIAMI, FLORIDA

(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 am honored to commend Dr. Carlotta Morales, the Principal of Saint Agatha Catholic School in my hometown of Miami.

Through her hard work and dedication, Dr. Morales has upgraded her school's facilities, advanced the education of her students, and improved

the relationship between students, faculty and parents.

Dr. Morales has shown us what can be achieved with a positive attitude and a firm belief in self-reliance.

For her wonderful leadership in both her school and our community, Dr. Morales has been honored by both the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the Department of Education by being named one of this year's national distinguished principals.

Through her work, Dr. Morales demonstrates that our children are our Nation's most important assets, and her fine work on behalf of South Florida's youngsters is a shining example to be followed by educators everywhere.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. Carlotta Morales as she continues her wonderful work at Saint Agatha Catholic school in Miami.

INTERNATIONAL CHILD 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 continue in my effort to bring to this House's attention my deepest concern for American families destroyed by cases of international child abduction. Since February I have been coming to the floor to tell the stories of the over 10,000 American children who have been abducted abroad.

Today I will tell the story of Ms. Ildiko Gerbatsch and her two daughters, Naomi, who is 13, and her younger sister, Isabelle, who is now 10.

In the summer of 1977, Naomi and Isabelle visited their father in Germany. The parents had divorced in 1994, and Ms. Gerbatsch had complied with the California Superior Court's decision allowing the father visitation rights. At the end of the children's visiting time, the father failed to return the children to their mother in the United States.

To this date and after 3 years of legal disputes costing close to \$100,000 in legal fees, the mother now has full custody of both children, but only on paper. Ms. Gerbatsch has only been allowed to visit with Naomi and Isabelle on three occasions. She has been mistreated by the German courts, who have failed to comply with the Hague Treaty.

Mr. Speaker, I come back to the floor for these daily one minutes because I care about families and reuniting children and parents. Let us make it our duty to place pressure on the countries that are the Hague signatories and who choose not to abide by the Hague Treaty.

I urge my colleagues to join me in spreading the message and taking a responsible role in bringing our children home.

VICE PRESIDENT AND MARRIAGE PENALTY TAX RELIEF

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

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, Vice President AL GORE, who once claimed he invented the Internet, now has an equally incredible claim, that he will get rid of the marriage penalty. The marriage penalty forces married couples to pay higher taxes than they would if they were single. Simply put, the marriage penalty is a tax on marriage.

The Vice President's proposal does not repeal the marriage penalty for all marriage penalty victims. The Vice President's plan only helps couples who take the standard deduction. That means that you would only get the marriage penalty reduction if you do not itemize your taxes.

In other words, under the Vice President's scheme, you will not get one penny of marriage penalty tax relief if you own a home and deduct your mortgage interest, if you donate to your church and other charities and deduct your contributions, if you own property and deduct your real estate or property taxes, if you deduct your State and local income taxes, if your spouse or child is ill and you deduct skyrocketing medical bills, or if you work at home and deduct the cost of your home office.

No one, Mr. Speaker, should be subjected to higher taxes simply because they are married. Taxing marriage is wrong. It is wrong whether a couple itemizes their taxes or not.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the American people, e-mail Vice President GORE, tell him to get it right. He did so well on the Internet, he should be able to do so well on the marriage penalty.

THE SURPLUS AND MEDICARE

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, this week we have had some interesting events. We were treated to a video coverage of Mr. Bush, Governor Bush, who is running for the Presidency, who was saying what a wonderful set of cuts were made in 1997 on Medicare, the Gingrich proposal to produce \$270 billion that could be used for \$270 billion worth of tax cuts.

Now we have the majority leader talking here about the marriage tax penalty. Why did they not do it in 1997? Well, they had some other rich folks they wanted to take care of before they got to the middle class folks in this country.

Tomorrow in the Committee on Ways and Means, for the third time, we are going to go back and shovel money back into the Medicare plan that was taken out in 1997. They are going to

throw \$40 billion in there tomorrow to fill the hole they dug for themselves in 1997. If you think that is silly, where is something on prescription drugs?

Who is driving this bus, Mr. Speaker?

DEBT PAY DOWN AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

(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 a lot of issues on our plate, but there are two in particular that the American people are demanding action on. The American people want us to take advantage of our current prosperity to pay off the multi-trillion dollar public debt that the Democrats racked up in their 30-year stranglehold on Congress, and they want to do something about prescription drugs. No senior should ever have to choose between putting food on the table and filling prescriptions when the doctor gives them.

Well, we are paying down the debt all right. By the end of the next year, we will have paid off a half a trillion dollars on the national debt, and done it while protecting 100 percent of Social Security and Medicare Trust Fund surpluses. But the Democrats and the President are blocking any progress on the prescription drug issue. You see, as long as they can keep us from implementing our plan, and it is a good one, they can keep accusing us of having done nothing.

Well, the American people need to know we have acted on the prescription drugs issue. We passed a plan that is effective, fair and comprehensive. We passed a plan that would give seniors solid coverage, even on catastrophic expenses, something AL GORE's plan would make them wait years for. But Democrats are blocking it because they do not want Republicans to get any credit for it.

HELPING SENIORS PAY FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

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

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, Republicans are working to pay down the debt and help seniors get the prescription drugs they need. Republicans believe that in this time of plenty, it is critical that Congress reduce the public debt and enact a prescription drug benefit for our elderly.

As government surpluses pile up, we have a moral obligation to wipe out the public debt to provide our children with a brighter future. Reducing the public debt will strengthen the economy and result in lower interest rates for consumers. Our budget plan will pay down \$240 billion of the public debt next year alone. America is the most prosperous nation on Earth, yet some

seniors here are forced to choose between putting food on the table and the prescription drugs they need to lead healthy and productive lives.

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That is just not right. Republicans have passed a plan to make voluntary prescription drug coverage available and affordable to all.

Mr. Speaker, as the 106th Congress enters the final stretch, Republicans are working to pay off the public debt and help seniors pay for their prescription drugs they need to live happy, productive lives.

SLEEPOVERS AT THE WHITE HOUSE

(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, last week, the White House grudgingly released information showing that 404 people have been invited to sleep overnight in the White House since Hillary began her Senate campaign. Today a columnist in the Washington Post reports that 146 of the guests have contributed funds in this election cycle, 98 percent of it to Democrats. About 100 committed to supporting Hillary's campaign; others gave to the Gore campaign; others to the DNC.

Sleepovers have risen to 29 per month. That is almost every night. Mr. Speaker, this practice of turning the White House into a Motel 6 for soliciting campaign funds is improper and demeaning to the White House and to the office of the presidency. It is another disgusting example of the Clinton-Gore campaign finance practices, all while they call for campaign finance reform. That is nothing more than an attempt to get public attention away from their blatant "no controlling legal authority" violations. The American people deserve better.

CLINTON-GORE ENERGY POLICY IS DANGEROUS

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

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to energy prices and energy policy, the Clinton-Gore administration has failed the American people.

National gas and crude oil prices are at record highs. It is the American people who bear the brunt of the administration's failures on their policies.

The administration has prevented exploration of our largest domestic reserves along the coasts and in Alaska. They have strangled the capacity of American refineries with needless regulations to satisfy the goals of their extreme left wing. They have totally ignored and stifled the significant contributions of clean coal, hydroelectric and nuclear power.

The Vice President even cast a deciding vote to increase gasoline taxes on consumers, directly in line with his outrageous book, *Earth in the Balance*.

Now just a few weeks before the election, the Clinton-Gore administration reverses itself and risks the national energy security by releasing oil from our strategic petroleum reserves. I urge the administration to stop the politics and provide a real and effective energy policy for the American people.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MARTY NOTHSTEIN, OLYMPIC GOLD MEDAL WINNER

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

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to offer hardy congratulations to Marty Nothstein. Last Wednesday, Marty won the gold medal in the cycling match sprint competition during the 2000 Summer Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia. I am proud to stand before all of my colleagues today to say "job well done" to this Trexlertown, Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania native.

During the 1996 Atlanta games, Marty narrowly missed his chance at gold by placing second in the match sprint competition in one of the closest races from Olympic history. But instead of giving up on his Olympic dream for gold, Marty rededicated himself to his sport. He devoted more time, more energy, more patience to his training than he had at any other time during his long cycling career.

Marty's win last Wednesday is the culmination of a career that includes seven World Championship medals, including three World Championship titles.

Mr. Speaker, before all of my colleagues today, I want to recognize the efforts of this outstanding young man. By winning this gold medal on the world's biggest stage, Marty has proven that, with unparalleled effort, determination, and dedication, everything is possible. Marty is a true Olympic hero.

MEDIA BIASED AGAINST CHENEY

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, here is a recent Washington Post article describing vice presidential candidate Dick Cheney's speeches: "Bash. Bash. Bash."

The reporter quotes Cheney as saying that the country was "weary of the Clinton-Gore routine," but then adds, "even if no one else is" but Cheney.

No, these sarcastic opinions are not from an editorial. They are from a news story that is supposed to be objective and impartial. What it reveals is the bias of a reporter who is trying to tell us what to think.

Why does the media display such a liberal bias? Simply because journalists are more liberal than the rest of us.