

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise this evening and discuss a topic that is important to all of us, which is our Nation's children.

Two months ago, I was in a truck stop and I saw a young man playing a video game. I did not think much about it, but I went up behind him and watched what he was doing. He was shooting a laser gun, but he was not shooting at targets. He was not shooting ducks. He was shooting people. Every time he hit one, an arm flew off and the blood spurted, or a head flew off and the blood spurted. I was really impressed by the violence of the game. This young man was about 10 years old. Nowhere on that game was any type of rating indicating that this was inappropriate for a young person.

As I saw that, I began to have a flashback to some of the school shootings we have had, and I realized that the United States currently is the most violent nation in the world for young people, with the highest homicide rate and the highest suicide rate of any nation in the civilized world. Our out-of-wedlock birthrate has risen from 5 percent in 1960 to 33 percent today. And so you say, what has happened here? Why has our culture unraveled in the way that it has?

I am sure we can point the finger at a great many different reasons and causes, but I would say one of the chief causes is the influence of violent, explicit material in the entertainment industry. Because, you see, the average child spends 25 hours a week watching movies, playing video games and listening to recorded music and probably spends about an hour or less talking to his or her parents. That 25 hours has a huge impact. Some of it is benign, but much of it is really pernicious and very harmful.

In September of 2000, the Federal Trade Commission prepared a report entitled Marketing Violent Entertainment to Children. This is what they found, and I quote:

"The pervasive and aggressive marketing of violent movies, music and electronic games to children undermines the credibility of the entertainment media industries' parental advisory ratings and labels."

In other words, they were doing this in violation of their own ratings. The entertainment industry at that time was warned to quit marketing adult material to children in violation of their own rating system. This was done in September of 2000.

Then a follow-up study was done of the entertainment industry's progress in January of 2001. It was found that a year later some progress had been made but not very much. Whatever progress had been made was in ratings of movies, video games and their advertising, but practically no change at all had occurred in the ratings and in the advertising of the recording industry.

So much of the rap music, much of the music that young people listen to, is relatively targeted to kids; and

much of it is violent and very explicit. Since there has been relatively little progress in this area, H.R. 2246, the Media Marketing Accountability Act of 2001, has been introduced in the House. This is a companion to Senate bill 792. This bill simply requires the entertainment industry to advertise adult-rated material to adult audiences.

Some people bring up the issue of the first amendment. They say, well, this is obviously a violation of free speech principles. Yet I think it is important that we think about this a little bit, because this bill does not in any way tell the entertainment industry what they write or what they produce. It does not edit content. It simply says this: If you are going to have a rating system, PG, R, adult, whatever it may be, then let us make that, if it is adult rated, that you do not advertise in preteen and teenage magazines and on movies that are G rated and do not market it on TV programs that are primarily aimed at children.

It is very simple. It is not a violation of free speech.

I think that we have really let our standards slip abysmally in this country. All of us who are adults have stood by and we have let it happen. We have watched it happen. I think that it is time that Congress steps up to the plate. I think Congress can do something about this. I think we can send a message to the entertainment industry. I hope that Congress will do the right thing and will support H.R. 2246, the Media Marketing Accountability Act.

SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, there was an extraordinary report published the end of last week which should be required reading for every American. It is a staff draft of the Bush Social Security privatization commission. Now they want to call it the bipartisan commission on the future of Social Security or something, but let us make no bones about it. It is a privatization commission. The basic assumptions under which they are operating and the orders they have from the President are they must privatize at least a portion of Social Security.

But that is no surprise. President Bush has taken that position for many years, as have many on the other side of the aisle who have never liked the idea of Social Security. But what is shocking about this report is that on page 14 they say, we have become used to the idea that Social Security is going to have a financing problem beginning in 2038. Beginning in the year 2038, Social Security under current assumptions, without a single change, can pay 73 percent of benefits from that date forward but 100 percent of all

promised benefits up to 2038. That is a fact.

The Bush commission, the privatization commission, says they question whether Social Security can or will pay any benefits beginning in 2016, which means they are raising the specter first raised by Treasury Secretary O'Neill that they may not honor the debt of Social Security. That is, the fact that we have all paid taxes in excess of that necessary to pay current benefits with the idea we are accumulating a trust fund, the trust funds are held in Federal Treasury securities, and Federal Treasury securities are supposed to be the safest security in the world.

Now, Secretary O'Neill and, by implication, President Bush, are raising the question whether the Federal Government will honor those securities. That is unbelievable. That is extraordinary. It is frightening. It could bring about an economic collapse worldwide.

Beyond that, they are doing it for one petty reason, because they hate Social Security, they want to attack it, and they want to privatize it. Because the people on Wall Street say, "Hey, if we could have 250 million separate accounts to manage, we would charge all of them a little bit of money every month, we would make tens of billions of dollars."

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Disregard the fact that those management fees over a person's lifetime would reduce their retirement by 40 percent in that little fund, and, for most lower income workers and others who this report feigns to really care about, they are shocked, shocked, shocked, that the widows and poor people and minorities do not have large retirement plans. They are not offering anything new for them, they are just saying Social Security has not been providing them with a high standard of living. Yes, that is true. But at least it has been there, it has been predictable.

This year, Americans will pay \$93 billion, "B," billion more in Social Security taxes than are necessary to meet current benefits. We thought that \$93 billion was then being deposited with the Federal Treasury with notes and it would be paid back, but Secretary O'Neill and this Commission and President Bush are saying no, we might not pay that back.

Well, if that is the case, then let us lower the tax now. You rushed out here to lower taxes for people who earn over \$273,000 a year, yet more working Americans pay more in FICA taxes to Social Security than they do income taxes. If you are saying you are not going to honor those debts, then lower that tax today. Give us back that \$93 billion extra we are going to pay this year, if you are questioning whether you are going to honor that debt.

It is absolutely extraordinary and irresponsible and unbelievable that this group, the Privatization Commission, is going down this path. The trust

funds hold not accumulated reserves of wealth, but only promises that future taxpayers will be asked to redeem. That is the same as any other Federal Treasury security. So they are raising a question about whether the full faith and credit of the Federal Government lies behind not only the Social Security trust funds, but the \$6 trillion of debt the United States of America has accumulated over the years.

If that filters through to the world financial markets, there will be a catastrophic collapse of the dollar, a run on the dollar; U.S. securities will be dumped in the market, and it will bring about economic catastrophe.

So I recognize they are trying to do a job here. The President ordered them to come up with the rationale for privatization. But do not do it in this extraordinarily irresponsible way. Just say, look, we want to cut people's benefits so that we can then transition to a privatized plan, and, of course, the models in Great Britain, Argentina and Chile did not work out so well, but we think they will work out better here.

Be honest. Do not lie and do not threaten the security of the world by threatening the sanctity of U.S. Treasury bills.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE EUDORA WELTY

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

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, many of my colleagues may not yet be aware of the death earlier today of one of America's giants. Eudora Welty died this afternoon in Jackson, Mississippi, at the age of 92. Her literary career spanned portions of 7 decades, and her awards and decorations place her among the superstars of American literature.

Her novel, *The Optimist's Daughter*, earned her the 1973 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. In addition, her honors included four O. Henry prizes, the National Book Foundation Medal, the American Academy of Arts and Letters William Dean Howells Medal, the National Institute of Arts and Letters Gold Medal for the Novel, the American Book Award for Literature, the American Book Award for Paperback Fiction, the Phi Beta Kappa Association Award, and many more.

It is a point of personal pride for me that Miss Welty was a native Mississippian, having been born in Jackson in 1909 and educated in the public schools of our State, as well as at Mississippi University for Women in Columbus. For years, we Mississippians have considered Eudora Welty our State's pre-eminent citizen. May 2 is annually celebrated in Mississippi as Eudora Welty Day.

Mississippians are also proud of the fact that she has been increasingly recognized throughout America as a na-

tional treasure. She was appointed to the National Council on the Arts by President Nixon in 1972, and she twice received the Freedom Medal of Honor from Presidents Carter and Reagan.

Beyond her acclaim in her native America, Miss Welty's works have been translated into virtually every European language, as well as Russian and Japanese. She has been recognized by many heads of state. In 1987, Eudora Welty was knighted, knighted, by the Nation of France; and in January 1996, Miss Welty was presented with the French Legion of Honor.

Eudora Welty understood not only the South, but the complex family relationships and individual struggles against adversity which have combined to give our country its rich texture. Her works of fantasy and tall tale narration included two of my favorites, *The Robber Bridegroom* and *The Ponder Heart*, which have been adapted for the Broadway stage, but which are still read aloud in the Wicker household.

Mr. Speaker, over the next few days and weeks the publicity concerning the life of Eudora Welty will perhaps assist a new generation of students and young people in appreciating the extraordinary life and accomplishments of this remarkable American. Perhaps I will be able to express in a more adequate way the admiration and kinship that I feel for her as a fellow Mississippian.

Suffice it for now to say that her work sparked the imagination of countless readers around the globe, that she universalized the Southern experience and made it relevant to people beyond the region's boundaries, and that her life and her life's work are worthy of our heartfelt praise and gratitude.

Now, with the indulgence of the Chair and my other colleagues in the Chamber, I am pleased to yield to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. SHOWS).

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

Mr. Speaker, today I stand before you, my colleagues, and the American people with sad news. One of our Nation's greatest writers has passed away. Earlier today Eudora Welty died. Miss Eudora lived in my district down in Jackson.

Miss Eudora will always live, Mr. Speaker, in the hearts of thousands around our planet who have read her words discovering a world of penetrating thought, stark memories and prose that can bring the angels to Earth and soothe our longings to connect with our broader world.

Eudora Welty grew up in Jackson, Mississippi. She spent her entire life living and writing in Jackson. But her words were and are universal. Miss Eudora knew her home, and she could pen her thoughts in a way that made the South and Mississippi a place in all our hearts. One cannot begin to adequately address how she could make us feel, euphoric at once and then again nostalgic and magic.

Ms. Eudora wrote about a "sense of place," who we are and how our world, the dirt, people around us, the humidity and the community made us unique. She made us remember home, and she led us to realize the good and the bad in our society. And for this, we could read and learn and strive to be better.

Eudora Welty won a Pulitzer Prize in 1973 for *The Optimist's Daughter*. She was also the recipient of the National Medal for Literature in 1980 and a National Medal of Arts in 1987. Her work is recognizable by nearly everyone: *A Curtain of Green*, *The Wide Net*, *The Robber Bridegroom*, *Ponder Heart*, and *Delta Wedding*, to name only a few. Her work to this day is widely published in French and other languages, as well as in English.

Miss Eudora experienced and saw her world, the American South of the 20th century, with a keen eye and ready pen. She put her feelings and observations on paper in what can only be described as brilliance. A reader of a Welty piece is forever changed, forever touched by the human experience.

Eudora Welty took on a life with a zeal for truth, and she took the truth and made it real on paper. Ms. Eudora was born in 1909 and was educated at Mississippi State College for Women, now the Mississippi University for Women, and also at the University of Wisconsin. She lived through the Great Depression, snapping black and white photographs of Mississippi scenes for President Roosevelt's WPA Program. She experienced World War II, the economic expansion of the fifties, the change of the sixties, and continued through the seventies, eighties and nineties, until she passed away today, July 23, 2001.

So much history and change occurred during this remarkable life. But Ms. Eudora, through it all, realized that the human experience remained. She saw the pain and the triumph, the celebration and the agony, and Ms. Eudora has given us the great gift of place, memory, and humanity.

Ms. Eudora was an icon. She, through her grace, gentleness and greatness, has given so many Mississippians a role model. Ms. Eudora, through her life and writings, has given thousands a kind of permission to strive for their dreams.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think her curtain of green has closed with her passing, but rather has opened; has opened wide, so that all of us can continue to embrace the characters, places, and events she told us about. The curtain of green is open wide for us today, as it will be for all countless generations to come.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I will simply close by saying our colleagues, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) and the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. Pickering), were on the floor earlier and expressed their regret at not being able to stay for this presentation and this