

of her checkbook. So we have got to go through some shenanigans. We will slip the money to my mother and say, Mother, put this in your bank account and then you go pay for your medications instead of just our paying for it straight. We have to play games to protect our own parents. That is wrong.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN OUR CULTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KERNS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I am new to this environment, and it is truly amazing to me sometimes what we hear on this floor. I had not planned to talk on this issue tonight, but I thought I would say a couple words.

I have heard that the Republicans are out to destroy Medicare, been bought off by the drug companies, went to expensive banquets. I am a member of the majority. I have not heard from anyone in the drug companies. I have not taken a dime from anybody in drug companies, and I really wonder how many people on both sides of the aisle can say exactly the same thing.

This is something I would be very interested in hearing. I am really interested in basic fairness. That is something that I think in my former life usually we felt we saw.

There is a significant difference between the two plans. The main difference, which I did not hear discussed here this evening, is that one plan costs between \$800 billion and \$1 trillion, and no one knows exactly how much. The other plan spends \$350 billion. So the Democrat plan is three times, roughly, as expensive.

Now, if we spend three times as much money, we can probably just about provide anything that anybody wanted. But at some point, we have to pay for it; and \$350 billion was budgeted more than a year ago for Medicare and prescription drugs. The Republican bill fits within that \$350 billion frame. Therefore, it seems that, in fairness, that should be mentioned here after the debate that I heard tonight; not the debate, but the discussion.

But that is not why I am here this evening, Mr. Speaker. I came here to discuss something quite different. I used to be in the coaching profession for 36 years, and I worked extensively with young people during that period of time. I guess over that 36-year period I saw some significant changes in our culture. These changes disturbed me greatly.

I saw progressively more and more young men who were coming from dysfunctional situations, from broken homes, and particularly young men who had no father. I saw more drug abuse. Actually, when I started coaching in the early 1960s, drug abuse was relatively unknown. Of course, today

we have a major problem. I saw progressively more violence, more violent behavior. I saw more promiscuous behavior.

I would have to say that, in searching about for a reason, trying to determine where that came from, I would have to say that I think it was fueled to some degree by an ever-increasing amount of obscenity, violence, drug abuse, and promiscuity presented in our media. I do not mean to totally bash the media. I am sure there are other factors. But there is no question that there has been a significant increase in media violence, pornography, obscenity, and all these types of issues.

So it was very easy for me, when someone came to me several months ago and asked, would you sign on and cosponsor a bill called the Media Marketing Accountability Act, and since I was interested in this issue and I was interested in young people, I said, sure, I would be glad to. The reason this was a bill that I thought made sense was that the purpose of the bill was to stop the deceptive marketing of adult-rated, sexually explicit, graphically violent products to children.

The entertainment industry has their own rating system, and the movies are rated R, PG-13, or whatever; the video game system has their own rating system; and the music industry has their own rating system. What we are finding, according to the Federal Trade Commission, was that people were not beaming their advertising in accordance with their rating, so we would have an R-rated movie, an adult video game; we would have an adult recording that was advertised in magazines that preteen and early teen children read; or TV programs that were watched by young children.

So we thought there would be no problem. Certainly these people would agree. Yet, the day after this bill was introduced, I got a visit from one of the chief lobbyists with the entertainment industry. He began to tell me what a bad bill this was and how I should not be on the bill and on and on and on. I began to realize that they were serious, that they were going to market their products to children that were much younger than what the product would indicate by their own rating system.

So that was what piqued my interest in the subject. I think it is important that we think about this a little bit tonight.

I not long ago visited with one of the Congressmen who has been here a while who has been interested in this topic. He seemed a little discouraged. He seemed a little beat down. He said that he was not sure we were going to make any progress. That was concerning to me. I think the reason that he felt this way is that there had been a number of court decisions over recent years that have certainly led to the conclusion that it is going to be difficult to get anything done.

Let me just explain a few of these.

In 1997, the Supreme Court ruled that indecent speech is protected by the

first amendment and overturned the Communications Decency Act. That was in 1997.

In 1998, the Supreme Court refused to rule decisively on the Child On-line Protection Act, thereby allowing the legislation to remain law while preventing it from taking effect. Effectively, it killed the bill in 1998.

In 2002, the Supreme Court overturned the Child Pornography Prevention Act, ruling that child pornography must either involve minors engaged in sexual activity or meet the legal definition of obscenity to lose first amendment protection.

What this was about was there was a provision in there that would not allow adults who were dressed as or masquerading as children to participate in this type of pornography or to use some type of computer graphics that would simulate child pornography, which can be very realistic, and can be very difficult sometimes to tell between the real thing and the simulation. Again, the Supreme Court overturned this.

In 2002, a three-judge Federal court declared the Children's Internet Protection Act requirements that all schools and libraries receiving Federal funds use Internet filtering material to protect minors from harmful materials on the Internet; and, of course, what this means is you need a computer chip, you need some way to protect children from accidentally, in libraries and public spaces, from contacting pornography. Again, that was overturned.

So there have been a series of cases where the courts have simply overturned acts that seem to make sense and that are aimed at protecting our children.

Of course, one of the bills that really interested me was a few years ago the court ruled that a minute of silence at the beginning of a school day was unconstitutional. One minute of silence at the beginning of a school day was unconstitutional. So that minute was intended to focus kids to spend a little bit of time if they wanted to in prayer, or they could look out the window if they wanted to, or think about their history exam that was coming up, just one minute of silence. Yet it was deemed by the court that somehow this violated somebody's religious freedom.

So we have seen our culture shaped consistently by court decisions over the last 15, 20, 25 years; and sometimes the shift is so imperceptible we are not aware of it, but over time it has moved us from here to here in a very clear fashion.

The effects of pornography are sometimes difficult to even talk about, but I thought I would mention some of them tonight.

First of all, let us mention that pornography is not a victimless industry. Oftentimes, those who are interested in first amendment rights will indicate that what one sees and hears and reads really has no bearing on how one behaves. I guess to some people that makes sense.

But if we think about the advertising industry, which annually spends billions of dollars, it would not seem to me that the advertising industry would go along with that. Because, obviously, what we hear and what we see and what we read and what we listen to does have some impact on our behavior or we would not spend all that money in the advertising industry.

There are hundreds of thousands of dollars that are spent each year during the Super Bowl for a 30-second spot, prime time, hundreds of thousands of dollars maybe for a minute, 1½ minutes. If we think about it, an advertising company, if they can get their soft drink product out there, Coca-Cola, Pepsi, whatever, and they can get somebody to look at that product in a commercial or on a billboard, in a magazine, in a newspaper, and they can just see it five or six times a week, they realize that that is going to substantially increase the sales of that particular product.

□ 2045

And on the other hand if you think about it, if you see material that glorifies drug use, whether it be in a recording or on a television program or whatever and that is presented maybe 10, 15, 20 times a week, it certainly is going to move your behavior in that direction.

Last night I happened to be tuned into a television show very briefly and someone was interviewing a rock star, and the rock star apparently had received an award sometime previously, and the interviewer asked the rock star what he was doing when he heard about the award that he had gotten. And he said, well, he really could not remember because he was stoned at the time. And the interesting thing was the reaction of the audience. They seemed to enjoy that. They clapped and they applauded. And so there is no question that the entertainment industry is impacting our values and impacting the way that we would view drug abuse.

Another issue, if a young person views promiscuous behavior, 20, 25, 30 times a week, whether it be in movies, television, whether they hear it on a recording, again, that is certainly going to impact behavior and it certainly has. If we see very violent acts 50, 60 times a week, and it may be more than that for many young people, again, we are going to shift our behavior towards violence.

Pornography exploits and victimizes women and children, and it does so for money. Pornography is a \$15 billion-a-year industry. Just a few years ago, it was a matter of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Today it is a \$15 billion industry. In one study, nearly 80 percent of convicted molesters admitted to regular use of hard-core pornography. Roughly 80 percent. When you talk about people being sexually aggressive, attacking young women, the figure went up to 90 percent being regular users of hard-core pornography. So again we would have to say that there

does appear to be a link between what people hear and what they see and what they read and what they do. And so we are really flooding our society today with material that I believe is really dramatically affecting the lives of our children.

Currently, there are over one million pornographic Web sites on the Internet. Let me say that again. I did not say a hundred. I did not say a thousand. I did not say a hundred thousand. I said one million porn sites on the Internet.

I remember back in the eighties we had a Senator from Nebraska, Jim Exon was his name, and he tried to pass some legislation to regulate pornography on the Internet, and at that time people laughed at him and they said it will never happen, and it got nowhere. Today there are one million porn sites on the Internet. So if you put in a search word, girls dot-com, which some young person might do, you are going to get a host of porn sites.

I guess on a personal note, a few months ago I found that anyone who entered my name in a search engine would pull up a porn site. And so some young person out in the third district of Nebraska who was told to write a report on his Congressman very innocently would type in my name and there would be a porn site or someone who is trying to do a research project on old broken-down football coaches would put in my name and see the same thing. So it is virtually impossible today for a young person to be on the Internet very long, very often, very regularly and not run into this. And some of it is so graphic that it can actually sear a young mind in a way that that young mind never quite gets rid of that image. So the effects are really disastrous.

I would like to give you some examples of what this industry is doing to our culture. It was reported in a national review that a rural Canadian town began receiving television signals for the first time in 1973. Apparently, this Canadian town was somewhat far removed from metropolitan areas so they really did not get a television signal until 1973. They found over the next 2 years, by 1975, that violent and criminal behavior in that community had gone up 160 percent. Maybe that was just accidental, but I would have to believe that there may have been some cause-and-effect relationship.

In 1999 a survey found that two-thirds of American teens believed that violence in America's television and music "is partially responsible for crimes like the Littleton shootings at the Columbine High School," and this was put out by the Senate Judiciary Committee. So we find two out of three people living in the community in the environment where they are inundated by some of these messages say that they believe that there would be a link between that violence and that culture and what happened at Littleton. And I

guess they were pretty much on track because 5 days after the massacre, NBC reported that the Littleton killers idolized shock rocker Marilyn Manson. And Marilyn Manson was described by the music press as an "ultra-violent satanic rock monstrosity."

Kip Kinkel, who murdered his parents and two students in Springfield, Oregon, also was a great fan of Marilyn Manson, and that was reported in the Oregonian.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has said in 1999 in a formal report: "Children do not naturally kill. It is a learned skill, and they learn it most pervasively from violence as entertainment in television, movies and interactive video games."

A new national poll is out and it says this, that 76 percent of young people between 12 and 17 years of age say that pop culture encourages drug use. Of course, we have talked about that a little earlier, but particularly I think you will find in the recording industry that there is a great glamorization of the drug culture. So 75 percent of young people have drawn that conclusion as well.

The National Education Association estimates that many of the 5,000 teenage suicides each year are linked to depression that have been fueled by fatalistic music and lyrics. As you know, we lead the civilized world in teenage suicides. I believe the National Education Association is probably correct here, that some of the music that young people are absorbing is so fatalistic and glorify suicide to some degree to the point that some of these suicides obviously have to be linked.

The headline in the Wall Street Journal in May of 2000 says this: "AT&T To Offer Hard Core Adult Movies In Drive For Digital Subscribers." That was a headline in the Wall Street Journal. And AT&T, as most everyone listening would know, is one of the premiere industries in the United States. It is a so-called blue chip stock, and yet here we find a company with the stature of AT&T marketing hard-core pornography.

So what we have seen is that the bottom line has become more important than integrity. The bottom line is more important to industry than the welfare of our children. And this was, I guess, one of the most discouraging things I saw. Senator JOSEPH LIEBERMAN said this, he was referring to the traditionally family-friendly fare between eight and nine o'clock, the children's hour. He said, there is "material we never even imagined being on commercial television are now the nightly norm." He said, "Sex is being marketed to children not only as desirable but good, regular and normal."

Then there was an editorial by the New York Post. It said: "Increasingly, parents recognize the need to protect their children from popular culture. Indeed, it is scandalous that law-abiding, church-going citizens have come to see

themselves as strangers in their own land. Their values and aspirations are under constant assault from the violent and sexualized images the entertainment industry pumps in their lives."

I think most of us can relate to that. Many of us sit in our living rooms and wonder, What can we do to protect our children? What can we do to protect our grandchildren? Where are we headed as a Nation?

A 15-year-old raped an 8-year-old girl, and he said he got the idea from watching the Jerry Springer Show. Many of you may have heard of the movie "Natural Born Killers." I did not happen to see it, but I heard about it. I understand that there are multiple cases where young people have seen that movie and gone out and done copy-cat killings, and they ascribe "Natural Born Killers" as their primary motivation.

I knew a young man several years ago who was a good person, very gentle, very mild mannered; and for some reason he got addicted practically to a particularly violent recording. And he listened to it over and over and over again over roughly a 48-hour period. And some of his friends told him you have to quit this. It is not good. It is a very unhealthy practice, and not long after he went out and attacked a young woman and beat her severely, someone he did not know who was just walking down the sidewalk. Of course, there were probably some other factors going on here, but I certainly believe that that particular recording was part of the picture.

Obscenity has been given a free pass under the auspices of the first amendment. In assuring the rights to free speech, we may have destroyed other freedoms. And certainly I am in favor of free speech. I think everyone out there would say free speech is something we have to have, and I agree with that. But in the process of protecting free speech, I guess my question is, have we taken away some other freedoms from other people, particularly young people? And so if you are the victim of someone who has assaulted you, primarily inspired by some type of pornography, your freedoms have been taken away. There are hundreds, I think, in our country every year that are killed annually by those influenced by violence in the media. Tens of thousands are assaulted and raped by those addicted to pornography. What about their rights?

Pornography and pedophilia result in sexual assaults on our children; rape, assaults, and degradation of our women; and the break up of marriages. One half of our marriages currently end in divorce. There is no question that in some cases pornography is a major factor in the break up of a marriage.

This is something I have found very discouraging. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 3 million teens per year contract sexu-

ally transmitted diseases and many of those diseases are incurable. The important thing to remember is that we are talking about 3 million each year. And since many are incurable, we are developing a fairly large number of young people who are infected with diseases that they will never be able to overcome. Out-of-wedlock birth rate was 5 percent in 1960. Today it is 33 percent. So one out of every three children born in our culture today is born with two strikes against them. I have to believe that to some degree the degradation of our media has had a direct influence on that.

I might also mention that obscenity is not protected by the first amendment. This is something that runs contrary to the belief of most people as the only type of speech to which the Supreme Court has denied first amendment protection. When the founders drafted the Constitution, obscenity was "outside the protection intended for speech and the press." The recognition of this understanding contrasts sharply with recent decisions regarding pornography, obscenity, and indecency. It appears that the Court has drifted from that earlier concept and drifted rather severely.

To determine obscenity, the Court determined a three-part test, which is called the Miller Test which I will put up here and let you take a look at.

The Miller test says this: that something is obscene if "the average person applying contemporary community standards would find that the work taken as a whole appeals to prurient interests." Which means simply arousal and it has no redeeming factor. Secondly, whether the work depicts or describes in a patently offensive way sexual conduct specifically defined by applicable state law. And, third, whether the work taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

I would imagine most people would say that a great deal of what they are seeing, what is coming into the living room at the present time would certainly be declared obscene under the Miller Test.

So you say, well, why do not we have more prosecutions? Why is this continuing to go on? And the reason is essentially that we do not have very many people that are willing to take it to court, and we do not have very many courts that are willing to hear the case. And so we have sort of had an abrogation of responsibility in this case, and we certainly have the tools to attack the problem.

Child pornography is defined in material that visually depicts sexual conduct by children, is not protected by the first amendment, and is also not subject to the Miller Test. So child pornography, period, even the possessing of it is illegal. So as a people, I think we have not expressed outrage, we have not spoken out, we have not taken obscene material to court. We certainly have become desensitized, and we con-

tinue to support companies who support obscene material through advertising, such as AT&T.

□ 2100

Last, on this particular point, what I would like to mention is that the Department of Justice has not prosecuted an obscenity case in the United States in the last 1½ years. In 1½ years, no obscenity cases have been prosecuted by the Department of Justice, and I know that this was one of the President's priorities when he ran for office. I know this is important to the President; and so it seems to me that our courts and we as the public, we as the Congress certainly need to be more responsible, more active.

I would like to reflect in the remaining 5 minutes or 6 minutes that I have here this evening exactly where we are historically; and this may seem like sort of a stretch, but I think it is important that from time to time we stand back as a Nation and try to look at where we are and where we are headed. Sometimes one of the best ways to do that is to see where other nations have been in the past.

Certainly, today, the United States is the most powerful Nation in the world. Fifteen years ago, we could have said, well, the Soviet Union was certainly close. Maybe 100 years ago we would have said the British empire, but I would say that, more recently, that we are pretty much in a position of preeminence where we stand alone. We are the most powerful Nation in the world politically, economically, in terms of ability to act socially throughout the world; and so it may be that we would have to go back a ways in history before we found another culture, another civilization that was similar.

I guess where I would head would be to Rome, and that is a long ways back. That is 2,000 years ago, but the Roman empire was a similar phenomenon to what we see today. The Roman empire totally dominated the then civilized world in almost every facet of its being. So if my colleagues think about the Roman empire and if they ever studied Gibbons' Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire, they would realize there were a number of factors that led to the demise of the Roman empire.

One of the major reasons for the fall of Rome was a decaying of values and the decaying of unity within the nation. Roman citizens became self-absorbed. If my colleagues have thought about the Roman coliseum, I happened to be in Rome a couple of years ago and saw the coliseum, and I thought about the fact that there were literally thousands of people who met their death in that arena. So to entertain the Roman mob, through name popular, the Romans had increasingly violent displays of gladiatorial combat, chariot races, simulated boat races where people inevitably died.

So the violence escalated, corruption escalated; and, as a result, eventually Rome began to disassemble. It began to

collapse from within. So I think that we need to think about this and realize that there may be some lessons that we can learn here.

I think we can continue to be the predominant Nation in the world but only if our moral and spiritual underpinnings remain strong. I think if we look at our current crisis in the business community, we can see very clearly what a crisis of confidence in just three or four companies does to the overall economy; and, right now, it is not 9/11. It is what happened at Enron and Andersen and Global Crossing and companies like this, which is really holding our economy back more than anything.

The framers of the Constitution did not envision freedom of speech embracing obscene material. That simply was beyond their thinking. The framers of the Constitution did not envision that even a minute of silence at the beginning of a school day would be unconstitutional, would violate somebody's religious freedom.

The framers of the Constitution did not envision the rise of post-modernism. Post-modernism is basically the idea that there are no moral absolutes, that everything is relative. This has become a very pervasive thought pattern in our world today, in our country today.

So the idea would be that adultery is not absolutely wrong. It may depend on what part of the country someone is in, who is involved, but it really is relative to the circumstance.

Today, we would not say that stealing is absolutely wrong, according to post-modernism, because it depends on how much someone needs, what they are stealing, who they take it from, and certainly if someone steals from the government, it does not count.

Lying is not absolutely wrong, according to post-modernism. Everyone does it. Sometimes we need to protect our career, our reputation. It may even be possible to lie under oath and get by with it.

Then, of course, fourth, it is not absolutely wrong to take an innocent life, according to post-modernism, because maybe that life is not old enough to be viable; maybe that life is too old to be useful; maybe that life is terminally ill; maybe that life simply does not want to live anymore. So it is all relative.

This is a very prevalent philosophy, and I think it would be very foreign, be something unheard of to the founders and the framers of the Constitution. As great of a threat as terrorism is, I believe in the present time that the greatest threat to our Nation is a collapse of values.

That may sound like an extreme statement to say at this particular junction. I do not want anyone to believe that I am at all minimizing the importance of the war on terrorism. I believe that every dime that we have appropriated here to fight the war on terrorism, everything the President

has done to try to keep things on track has been very, very appropriate, but I would also say that what is happening internally, what is happening to our children, what is happening to our value system, long-term, long haul, may prove to be every bit as threatening, if not more, than the war on terrorism.

Someone once said America is great because America is good. I believe that is true, and I believe America is still good. There is no country in the world that is as generous, as philanthropic, is based on spiritual values as the United States.

I would also say that there are some storm clouds on the horizon. There are some things out there that concern me, and so those who do not like the shape of those clouds should do all that they can to elect people who will appoint people to the courts who reflect their values.

Currently, in the other body, we have failed to fill 100 vacant judgeships for various reasons. It has almost brought our judicial system to a halt. The question is, who in the next 2 or 3 years is going to be making those decisions over in the other body as to who will fill those judgeships? Within the next 2 to 3 years we will probably have two to three members of the Supreme Court who will resign or retire; and when that happens, who is going to shape those nominations and those decisions?

If people like the way we are headed right now, then they certainly are committed to one course of action. If, on the other hand, people think we are treading on dangerous ground, then I think we better think very carefully as to who we send to the other body, who represents the people in this area here. I think it is incumbent upon the American people to elect people who aggressively promote a moral society and will protect our young people from obscenity.

This has not been an easy thing to talk about. It has not been an easy thing to think about, but I do believe that we cannot put our head in the sand. I believe this is a real problem. I think it is something we are all involved in, we can certainly address. So I would encourage, Mr. Speaker, those who are listening tonight to become active, to become politically active, become involved. Because the only thing that is going to let this thing continue to succeed and continue to fester is if we stand by as a Nation and continue to let it happen.

THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KERNS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. TANCREDI. Mr. Speaker, as I sat here and listened to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE), I am made even more proud of the folks who

represent our side in this great deliberative body that we call the Congress of the United States; and the heartfelt plea that he makes to the Nation I think is, and the rhetoric, the chosen selective rhetoric that he used should certainly be an example for all of us to follow in terms of how to explain an issue and a position that stems solely out of true moral courage, and really no politics are involved at all.

I guess I would just like to say to I am proud that I know him, and I am proud to serve in the same assembly that he serves in today.

Also, I must add that waiting to address this body and to discuss the issues that I have on my agenda today, I have, of course, listened to my friends from the other side talk about another issue; and they did so at great length, talked about the upcoming debate on a proposal for Medicare, specifically for drug benefits, and how we will provide these drug benefits to senior citizens in this country. In a way, I think it was a great example. It was almost like a class discussion of cynical politics 101.

That is all I could think of while I listened to it. Because, as my colleagues know, Mr. Speaker, I have on several occasions sat here waiting for my turn to address the body and listened to my friends on the other side of the aisle talk about a variety of issues, but in the last several weeks, I have noticed that every single time I have been here, and to the best of my recollection almost every time that Members of the other side have taken the floor, they have done so to attack what they call the Republican raid on Social Security and suggests that the profligate spending of this Congress for a variety of programs and specifically the war on terror will cost us a lot of money, money that we do not have and money that we will, therefore, have to borrow from the American public. And that is absolutely true.

They have gone on and on and on and on. If anybody has observed the debate in this House over the last several weeks, they have turned every single issue that we are debating into a debate on this raid of the Social Security trust fund in the hope that they could scare the bulk of the voters in this country, especially the elderly voters, into siding with them come November.

Presenting a point of view, a reasoned, logical, truthful point of view is one thing, but this attack on the majority party for what is perceived to be our predilection to profligate spending, this is what I call I guess the cynical politics 101 that everyone should pay close attention to this evening and, as a matter of fact, on into the November elections.

For weeks, we have talked about and the folks on the other side have condemned this Congress for spending money in the areas I have described. Specifically, of course, it is the war on terror, combined with the downturn in the economy, that have caused us to go into deficit spending; and they have