

want to just correct the minority whip, the Democratic whip. He is a man with whom I have a great deal of agreement. But I think he was wrong when he said the rigid ideology of the people in power today leads them to the view, my way or the highway.

I wish that were the case. Mr. Speaker, as you well know from your own committee position, the right wing ideology are on the point of saying, my way instead of the highway. Because so rigid are they in their right-wing ideology that we cannot even get a highway bill passed this year, as we certainly should, in the interest of the transportation needs of this country and the economy.

But I want to talk beyond that about the work habits of the President. It is clear that in addition to an excessively rigid ideology we have an administration which is not very competent in a lot of things. I do not think we have seen a more incompetently executed national security policy of a major sort than Iraq in our history.

And I wonder why we get such poor execution, even given that I disagree with some of the things they are trying to execute. Now it does become clear one of the problems may be the President's work habits.

On December 16 in an interview on ABC News with Diane Sawyer, the President boasted about how he does not need to read the newspapers or, presumably, watch television. He gets his information, he says, from members of his administration. When Diane Sawyer said, "Is it just hard to read constant criticism?" He interjected, "Why even put up with it when you get the facts elsewhere? I am a lucky man," the President said. "I have got, it is not just Condi and Andy, it is all kinds of people in my administration who are charged with different responsibilities. And they come in and say this is what is happening, this is not what is happening."

Well, Mr. President, you are being ill served by this refusal to get independent sources of information. You got a lot of people who confuse what is happening with what is not happening and sometimes they do not tell you anything.

Most recently we have the Secretary of Defense who forgot to tell you that we had a major debilitating problem coming up with regard to the mistreatment of prisoners. And he did not tell you that.

Last year, in what I think you consider to be, Mr. President, the single most important domestic accomplishment in the administration, did someone forget to tell you that the bill you were telling us was going to cost \$400 billion over 10 years was, in fact, going to cost \$540 billion and that all of the additional billion would go to the providers and none of it to the recipients? Did someone forget to tell the President or did the President forget to tell us?

Then, of course, we have the comment by CIA Director George Tenet

who told the President apparently that it was a slam-dunk that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Well, once again, we have a case on a very important issue of the President and, to quote his words, all kinds of people in my administration were charged with different responsibilities and they would come in and say this is what is happening and this is not what is happening.

There is a serious problem, Mr. President. The time has come for the President of the United States to admit an error in this case, I know he does not like to do that, to admit that relying on Secretary Rumsfeld or CIA Director Tenet or Secretary Thompson or a whole range of other people to give him the information to brag about how he eschews independent, factual sources is a great mistake and may explain some of the serious mistakes this administration has made.

Old sayings sometimes can be overdone. Sometimes they have some truth. There is a saying that ignorance is bliss. Well, Mr. Speaker, there may be context in which ignorance is bliss, but the Presidency of the United States is not one of them.

The time has come for the President to acknowledge the fact that his method of getting information only from people within his own administration, who may have their own motives for misrepresenting or not giving him information that might be embarrassing to them, that that has broken down, and the time has come for the President to dip into the budget that he gets and buy a subscription to some newspapers and watch the TV news.

Mr. Speaker, I will insert into the RECORD at this point the excerpt from the interview with Diane Sawyer.

DIANE SAWYER. First of all, I just want to ask about reading. Mr. President, you know that there was a great deal of reporting about the fact that you said, first of all, that you let Condoleezza Rice and Andrew Card give you a flavor of what's in the news.

PRESIDENT BUSH. Yes.

DIANE SAWYER. That you don't read the stories yourself.

PRESIDENT BUSH. Yes. I get my news from people who don't editorialize. They give me the actual news, and it makes it easier to digest, on a daily basis, the facts.

DIANE SAWYER. Is it just harder to read constant criticism or to read—

PRESIDENT BUSH. Why even put up with it when you can get the facts elsewhere? I'm a lucky man. I've got, it's not just Condi and Andy, it's all kinds of people in my administration who are charged with different responsibilities, and they come in and say this is what's happening, this isn't what's happening.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members should bear in mind that remarks in debate should be addressed to the Chair and not to others as in the second person.

#### THE HOUSE SHOULD NOT PASS H.R. 3722, UNDOCUMENTED ALIEN EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSIST- ANCE AMENDMENTS OF 2004

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, we heard earlier from the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) his sentiments regarding H.R. 3722. This item is on suspension and will be coming up before us. It is known as the Undocumented Alien Emergency Medical Assistance Amendments. That title is somewhat misleading because, in fact, what it requires is that our local hospitals turn into what I see as law enforcement agencies and INS agents, INS Immigration Service agents that would soon be asking people who may look or appear as though they are undocumented to provide some proof or verification that they are, in fact, full citizens of the United States.

We do not do that in our schools. Why do we have to do that in our hospitals, especially when people are already fearful of coming forward to, say, a local hospital and having to fill out forms and then being told that, well, you do not qualify because you are not a U.S. citizen or you are undocumented therefore we are going to call the INS or Homeland Security and deport you?

What kind of fear does that place in a community?

Well, I can tell you in a community like mine in Los Angeles, California, where the make-up of my district is largely Hispanic or Latino, that is not to say that they are all undocumented and that is not to say that they do not work and pay taxes; in fact, on the average I would say that the local immigrants in our communities pay about \$1,300 in taxes. They do not get that money back in some cases because they may not be documented. We know that. That has been happening here in the U.S.

But they pay into our tax base system whether it is to go down and buy a gallon of gas at \$2.40 or \$2.50 a gallon now in Los Angeles, if they go down and buy goods at the market or Home Depot, they are paying sales tax. All that then goes into our piggy bank, so to speak, for the government. That money then is set aside for public health care institutions and private health care institutions.

I would like to tell you that in my district alone I received letters from some of our private-for-profit hospitals that were adamantly opposed to this piece of legislation because they see it again as something that is going to provide another layer of bureaucracy. It will make them become INS agents. They will have to fingerprint, photograph, take digital photos and keep files for 5 years on anyone that they believe may be undocumented.

And I have to tell you that the kind of feeling that I get when I hear about

this type of legislation is one that reminds me of what occurred in California back a few years ago. There was an initiative that was proposed by the governor then, Pete Wilson, Proposition 187, that would bar undocumented families and people, children, from going to school and also receiving health care assistance.

And what that means to many of us in our communities is if a child comes into a classroom and, say, may have an illness or disease, they are not going to be able to get treated. They are not going to be able to go down to the hospital and get immunized and they will not get the kind of treatment that right now they are able to get.

If they do not, what will happen is whatever contagious disease they might have is going to somehow not discriminate against the next student who sits next to him, whether you are a citizen or not, but, in fact, that disease will be spread.

Why is it that we want to move in a direction that would create more fear and anxiety in our communities when I think we have the current tools in place right now that were actually passed by this House that would provide sufficient services for people who need it?

And I just want to clarify one thing. There are many undocumented people in this country, they are not all Hispanic. Many come from Europe, many come from Canada, many come from Asian, Indonesian countries as well. And maybe we do not somehow feel that their presence is well known, but we know that they are there. They clean our houses, they sometimes even clean the hospitals that we go to, they pick our lettuce and our fruits that we eat on the table, they also serve as janitors in our office buildings. And some of them may even work here in Washington, D.C.

But they are people, and people have to be respected. And those people, like anyone else, come to this country believing that they have a dream that can be fulfilled here.

I do not think it is too much to ask for us to say that this law is a bad law, that it would, in fact, demoralize an entire community. I do not believe that the Bush administration is supportive of this piece of legislation because why would he at the beginning of the year say that he would want to open up discussions about immigration reform and allow for people who are currently here who are not documented to be given work permits. Why would he open up that discussion and yet the same members of his party are saying no, cast those people out. They cost too much money, and they are, in fact, a burden on our public and private hospitals.

Well, I am here to tell you that there are 43 million people in the U.S. that we can account for that have no health insurance. The problems that we have with health care delivery and service does not have to be blamed on one

group of people. And I am here to tell you that we need to oppose this piece of legislation, H.R. 3722, as it comes up today for a vote before the House.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON) at 2 p.m.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, Teacher of the ages and Eternal Guide to the leaders of nations, be ever present in the work of the House of Representatives this week. During this season of academic graduations across this country, we wish to express our gratitude to You for the academic freedom and educational resources that have been fostered by government, churches and local communities in the past. We pray that they continue to flourish and be supported to meet the needs of future generations and the demands of the times, especially in the fields of mathematics and the sciences.

Bless all the graduates of 2004. Grant them an atmosphere of security and peace so they may pursue careers that give you Glory. Provide them with opportunities for work and experiences which will draw upon their creativity and deepest commitments. Ground them in lasting values so they may stand the tests of life and one day graduate to Your eternal domain and give You glory forever. Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BURGESS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced

that the Senate has passed an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1350. An act to reauthorize the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and for other purposes.

#### HOUSE-PASSED MEDICAL LIABILITY REFORM EXPECTED TO STALL IN OTHER BODY

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, last week in this House, we passed yet another version of the medical liability reform act in this Congress. We passed similar legislation in March 2003. That bill that we passed last year and likely the bill that we pass this year is going to stop dead on the other side of the Capitol and will not be enacted.

It is a shame, Mr. Speaker. Right now we have a President in the White House who has said he will sign this bill into law if it is given to him. We have a candidate running for the office of President who has either voted "no" or been absent when that vote has come up across the rotunda on the other side of the Capitol.

Mr. Speaker, this is important. I met with a group of doctors back in my district this weekend. There is no greater peril to our profession of medicine than the current medical justice system. The reforms that we have passed in this House closely mirror the Medical Injury Compensation Reform Act of 1975 passed in the State of California that has brought some semblance of sanity back to the medical justice system in that State. Residents of the other States, physicians in the other States, and their patients deserve no less.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

#### BEND PINE NURSERY LAND CONVEYANCE ACT AMENDMENT

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3505) to amend the Bend Pine Nursery Land Conveyance Act to specify the recipients and consideration for conveyance of the Bend Pine Nursery, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3505

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*