

seniors, raising the Medicare premium by 17.4 percent is a breach of that commitment, the largest increase in Medicare's 38 year history.

At the Republican convention on Thursday night, the President said, "I believe we have a moral responsibility to honor America's seniors." The next day, late in the afternoon, right before Labor Day, Friday afternoon, the Labor Day weekend, in spite of his comments the night before, the President quietly announced this 17.4 percent increase in premiums for senior citizens to have to pay into Medicare. Right before the Labor Day weekend. Is that what it means to honor seniors?

After President Bush signed the Medicare drug law a year ago, he launched a very expensive taxpayer-financed ad campaign featuring the slogan: "Same Medicare, better benefits." Those ads failed to mention the 17 percent premium increase even though the administration planned it as far back as March 2003. They failed to mention the 10 percent increase in the deductible for doctors' services which was written into the new law. It failed to mention the fact that both the premium and the deductible will continue to increase year after year after year without any corresponding increase in coverage.

Those ads, those taxpayer-financed ads, trying to sell the American people on the new Medicare bill failed to mention that while seniors will be paying more for the same Medicare, HMOs will be, "earning" might not be the right word, but earning more for the same Medicare. \$16 billion more, in fact.

This bill, this Medicare bill, clearly written for the drug industry and for the insurance industry, clearly has put seniors in the back seat. The drug industry, the insurance industries have contributed literally tens of millions of dollars to President Bush's campaign. The insurance industry gets a taxpayer subsidy of \$16 billion. And then seniors see their premiums go up and see their deductibles go up. They have got to find the money somewhere.

Under the Bush plan, in order to pay the insurance companies those subsidies, they need to raise the premiums for seniors more than \$100; they need to raise those premiums, a 17 percent increase. They need to raise those premiums for seniors to make up that money.

These benefits are being lavished on HMOs as a bonus and incentive for HMOs to accelerate their enrollment of Medicare enrollees. Now HMO profits last year without this increased by 50 percent, yet seniors are paying higher premiums so that HMO profits can soar even further. Senior and disabled Medicare enrollees on fixed incomes will pay more. HMOs will earn more and big drug companies will charge more.

The Bush administration in an amazing sleight of hand insisted on prohibiting Medicare from negotiating bulk discounts on behalf of 39 million Medicare beneficiaries on the prescription

drugs the same way that large insurance plans do, the same way that the VA does in our government.

As a result, the drug industry, because of this protection of the drug industry by the Bush administration, the drug industry stands to earn an additional \$160 billion in profits during the next 10 years. \$160 billion in profits in the next 10 years.

Again, more campaign contributions to President Bush from the insurance industry, more tens of millions of dollars in campaign contributions to the Republican leadership and to the President from the drug industry.

It is the same old story, the President says the right thing and then he does the wrong thing. It is the same old story, the President always responding to the best heeled, most organized, wealthiest corporate interests in this city.

Last week, the President again called himself a compassionate conservative, as if eroding senior's fixed incomes is compassionate, as if coercing them into fly-by-night HMOs, as the Medicare bill does, is compassionate, as if relegating seniors to a bargain-basement prescription drug plan is in any way compassionate.

After all, this President has proposed cutting \$60 billion from Medicaid; he had to because the tax cuts that went overwhelmingly to the wealthiest people in our society, he had to find the money someplace when it is the only source of nursing home care for 70 percent of people who need it. It is consistent, but it is not compassionate.

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

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order out of order.

HONORING THE MEN FROM WASHINGTON STATE WHO HAVE DIED IN IRAQ

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, young men and women are giving up their lives nearly every day to sustain the President's war in Iraq. They are not in Iraq toppling Saddam. That has been done. They are not in Iraq dismantling weapons of mass destruction. There never were any. They are in Iraq dying in George Bush's crusade.

I think it is only fitting that we should give each of the dead a minute of silence here on the floor. But we

cannot because we would have to stand here silent for 16½ hours. That is because today we lost the 1,000th American in Iraq. For what? For what?

The President says we took out Saddam Hussein because he was a bad guy. Well, that could apply to an awful lot of people all over the face of the Earth. They went in there with no plan for establishing the peace. And more people have died since the President made his fabled landing on the Abraham Lincoln saying "mission accomplished" than died before that. More people have died since they handed over control to the Iraqis than died before the mission was accomplished. This has been an unending disaster.

So since we cannot give a minute of silence for every member, let me tell you who has died from my State thus far in Iraq. And I hope every Member will come to the floor and do what I am doing tonight, speak the names of the dead. Think about the futures they have lost and the families they leave behind. And then I hope every American will ask the President why. Why?

From Washington State we have lost Lance Corporal Cedric E. Burns, age 22; Specialist Justin W. Hebert, age 20; Private Duane E. Longstreth, age 19; Private Kerry D. Scott, age 21; Second Lieutenant Benjamin L. Colgan, age 30, distinguished soldier who made his picture on to the front page of Time magazine, very courageous and very good soldier; Specialist Robert T. Benson, age 20; Specialist John R. Sullivan, age 26; Captain James A. Shull, age 32; Specialist Nathan W. Nakis, 19; Sergeant Curt E. Jordan, Jr., age 25; Staff Sergeant Christopher Bunda, age 29; First Lieutenant Michael R. Adams, age 24; Sergeant Jacob R. Herring, age 21; Sergeant Jeffery R. Shaver, age 26; Private Cody S. Calavan, age 19; Lance Corporal Dustin L. Sides, age 22; Staff Sergeant Marvin Best, age 33; Specialist Jeremiah W. Schmunk, age 21; Sergeant Yadir G. Reynoso, age 27; Lance Corporal Kane M. Funke, age 20; Lance Corporal Caleb J. Powers, age 21; Sergeant Jason Cook, age 25.

These men have died in this crusade in a war that was never understood by the people who started it. They had no reason to go to Iraq and they went anyway, and these people from my State paid the price.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. LEE addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.)

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

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

TWO UNFORTUNATE NATIONAL RECORDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I want this evening to talk about two national records. Unfortunately, they are records we wish had not happened. Mr. Speaker, at this point I will place in the RECORD a story from the New York Times today.

[From the New York Times, Sept. 7, 2004]

BUSH UNLIKELY TO FULFILL VOW ON DEFICIT, BUDGET OFFICE PROJECTS

(By Edmund L. Andrews)

Washington, Sept. 7—Almost regardless of what happens in Iraq and Afghanistan, President Bush is very unlikely to fulfill his promise of reducing the federal budget deficit by half within five years, the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office said today.

In the last independent assessment of Mr. Bush's fiscal legacy before the elections, the Congressional agency said that if there were no change to existing law, the federal deficit would decline only modestly from a record of \$422 billion in 2004 to about \$312 billion in 2009.

If Mr. Bush persuades Congress to make his tax cuts permanent, he will fall even farther short of his promise. The federal deficit could reach nearly \$500 billion in 2009 and the federal debt could swell by \$4.8 trillion over the next decade.

The new estimate is the first time that the Congressional agency has projected that President Bush will not be able to fulfill his promise, made last February, to cut the deficit by half.

Budget projections, by Congress as well as the administration, have been notoriously wrong in the past—failing to anticipate a flood of tax revenue during the last 1990's and then badly underestimating a plunge in revenue after the stock market collapsed in 2000.

But the new report is sobering because it arrives at similar conclusions even when analysts made extremely optimistic assumptions about war costs in Iraq and robust economic growth.

"The message is that you cannot grow your way out of this," said Douglas Holtz-Eakin, who is director of the Congressional Budget Office and a former chief economist on President Bush's Council of Economic Advisors.

If anything, Congressional analysts are more optimistic about economic growth, which usually leads to higher tax revenue, than Wall Street analysts or the White House. The Congressional report also estimated the budget outlook with three different assumptions about the course of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, including the unlikely possibility that no more money would be needed after next year.

Stripping out all war costs for the two countries after next year, the Congressional analysts said the federal government would save \$536 billion over the next five years. But making Mr. Bush's tax cuts permanent, one of the president's top priorities, would cost \$549 billion through 2009 and \$2.2 trillion through 2014.

Averting a massive increase in the alternative minimum tax, a parallel tax that was originally designed to keep people from taking too much advantage of loopholes, would cost another \$150 billion over the next five years and more than \$400 billion over ten years.

Democrats said the new report showed Mr. Bush's tax cuts and spending policies had been reckless in transforming a record budget surplus to a record budget deficit, just a few years before the nation's retiring baby boomers start to drive up Social Security and Medicare entitlement costs by tens of billions of dollars a year.

"When the Bush administration took office in 2001, C.B.O. projected a \$397 billion surplus for 2004," said Representative John W. Spratt of South Carolina, the senior Democrat on the House Budget Committee. "Under the fiscal policies of this administration, the bottom line of the budget has worsened by \$819 billion in 2004 alone."

Republicans quickly countered by saying that the federal deficit this year will be smaller, and tax revenue will be higher, than either the administration or the Congressional Budget Office predicted in January and February.

"This report underscores that our policies are working to create a stronger economy, more jobs and a lower deficit," said Representative Jim Nussle, Republican of Iowa, the chairman of the House Budget Committee.

Mr. Speaker, the headline reads: "Bush Unlikely to Fulfill Vow on Deficit, Budget Office Projects." The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office has said regardless of what happens in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, President Bush is very unlikely to fulfill his promise of reducing our Federal deficit by half within 5 years, which is what had been promised.

In fact, the fiscal legacy of this administration is simply horrendous. By the end of this decade it is anticipated that the Federal debt could swell by nearly an additional \$5 trillion.

President Bush will not keep his promise made last February right here to cut the deficit by half. In fact, Douglas Holtz-Eakin, who is director of the Congressional Budget Office and former chief economist on the President's Council of Economic Advisors, has said the message is you cannot grow your way out of this.

The policies of this administration, the fiscal policies, are truly reckless. And I think what is of deep concern to me and to our constituents in Ohio is that when you rack up a deficit of this proportion where you are borrowing against Social Security trust funds and borrowing from foreign countries to float this debt, you leave the trust fund in jeopardy and you end up giving your independence over to those who are financing you.

And who are those holders of U.S. dollar reserves? Who are the holders of 42 percent of the bonds and securities that we have to pay off? China, Saudi Arabia, Japan, many other Middle Eastern countries.

Our tax revenues then have to go to pay interest, 42 percent of this debt now being owned by foreign interests.

This is a story which is an unfortunate development that we need to reverse this year and next year and the following year by electing people to the Presidency and to this Congress who are responsible with the taxpayers' dollars.

The second record I wish to place in the RECORD this evening is the death

toll, just announced for U.S. troops in Iraq which passed 1,000 today, a milestone marking the continuing high cost of the war 18 months after President Bush declared an end to major combat and more than 2 months since the nominal return of sovereignty to Iraq.

□ 2045

This is truly a tragedy. The total today of those killed reached 1,001, including 756 combat deaths. According to casualties.org, a Web site that tallies U.S. military casualties in Iraq, mainly from U.S. military news releases, including combat and noncombat causes, 855 U.S. troops have died since May 1 of last year, and 140 have died since the return of sovereignty on June 28.

A total of 6,916 were wounded as of the end of August, and this past August was the most cruel of all months of this war. Our soldiers were being attacked about 2,000 times in the month of August, an average of 67 times daily, which is double the rate of attack in July when forces were attacked about 1,000 times or an average of 37 times daily.

I will place this article from Knight Ridder news in the RECORD at this point.

[From Knight Ridder, Sept. 7, 2004]

U.S. DEATH TOLL IN IRAQ PASSES 1,000

(By Dogen Hannah)

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—(KRT).—The death toll for U.S. troops in Iraq passed 1,000 on Tuesday, a milestone marking the continuing high cost of the war 16 months after President Bush declared an end to major combat and more than two months since the nominal return of sovereignty to Iraq.

The total, which reached 1,001, included 756 combat deaths, according to icasualties.org, a Web site that tallies U.S. military casualties in Iraq mainly from U.S. military news releases. Including combat and noncombat causes, 855 U.S. troops have died since May 1 last year, and 140 have died since the return of sovereignty on June 28.

The daily casualty toll has been slowly rising since major combat operations ended—it now averages more than two deaths each day. April was the deadliest month of the war, with 135 U.S. soldiers losing their lives during a broad uprising in central and southern Iraq. Fifty-four U.S. troops died in July, 66 in August, and 23 so far in September.

A total of 6,916 were wounded as of the end of August, of which 3,076 returned to duty within 72 hours.

Pitched battles such as last month's three-week showdown with a militia in Najaf, during which seven Marines and two soldiers died, have grabbed headlines. But months of attacks on or by U.S. forces elsewhere have added to the toll, even as fledgling Iraqi forces shoulder more of the burden of quelling the tenacious insurgency.

On Tuesday, White House press secretary Scott McClellan said of those who died in Iraq and Afghanistan: "We remember, honor and mourn the loss of all those who made the ultimate sacrifice for freedom."

Army Lt. Col. Steven Boylan, a U.S. military spokesman in Baghdad, said the rising death toll should be kept in perspective. Each death is regrettable, he said, but the overall toll is relatively small compared with how long U.S. forces have been in Iraq and how many service members have served in the country.