

Seniors would have been outraged had they known that this bloated bill that the President signed would have increased their Medicare premiums 17 percent. Imagine that, the Medicare premiums that seniors have paid, they have fluctuated a little over the years, but imagine a 17 percent increase, the largest increase in Medicare premiums in Medicare history. Thirty-eight years of Medicare, never an increase like this. But seniors would obviously have been outraged to know that Republicans in Congress and the Administrator not only made this happen by passing that bill, but that the President and the administration and the Republican leadership knew that this increase was going to happen because of this bill.

But, of course, this increase happened. Of course, George Bush had to push forward and announce a 17 percent increase. Why? Because of the increased subsidies in the Medicare bill for the insurance industry, for the HMOs. The health maintenance organizations had a 50 percent profit increase last year, yet we are subsidizing them additionally under this bill to the tune of billions of dollars. So, of course, we have to take money out of seniors' pockets in increased Medicare premiums and then turn that money over to Medicare HMOs.

Here is how it works. In this Medicare bill that Congress passed last year, a year ago, starting in March 2004, Medicare HMOs got from taxpayers \$229 million. In April they got \$229 million. Still no Medicare drug benefit, which does not go into effect until 2006, but the HMOs were getting subsidized by the Federal Government.

In June, \$229 million. In July \$229 million from seniors and taxpayers to the Medicare HMOs, to the health maintenance organizations, yet still no Medicare drug benefit. July \$229 million. August \$229 million. This month, \$229 million more, and still no prescription drug benefit for seniors. September, October, November, December and all of next year Medicare HMOs, private insurance companies, will continue to get a subsidy from the Federal Government of \$229 million extra that they were not getting before this Medicare bill took effect.

Of course, the President had to increase premiums 17 percent to pay these insurance companies subsidies. Why would the President raise Medicare premiums to give money to insurance companies? Well, it might be the fact that insurance companies have given tens of millions of dollars to the President's reelection, tens of millions of dollars to my friends on the other side of the aisle. It might have something to do, too, with the fact that this Medicare bill was written by the drug companies, written by the insurance companies.

Drug company profits will go up \$180 billion over the next 10 years because of this prescription drug bill. Insurance companies subsidies, subsidies directly

from seniors through higher premiums and taxpayers will go up literally tens of billions of dollars to those insurance companies, to those HMOs.

The whole Medicare bill, middle of the night debate, vote at 6 o'clock in the morning after the rolls were kept open for 3 hours. One Republican Member accused his own leadership of trying to bribe him on the House floor; arm twisting in the middle of the night; and then the secrecy of trying to foist this 17 percent Medicare increase by announcing it sort of under the cover of darkness, late in the afternoon, right before Labor Day weekend; the secrecy of this whole administration, and ultimately the payoff that this Medicare bill has done, the payoff to the drug and insurance industries because of political contributions.

Remember, a 17 percent increase; a record in the history of Medicare; never an increase this big; 17 percent, the largest premium increase in Medicare history in order to subsidize the insurance companies, in order to give even bigger profits to this country's drug companies.

Mr. Speaker, it is shameful.

□ 1400

HONORING THE LIFE OF FLOYD ALEXANDER PINYAN

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Floyd Alexander Pinyan, a good and honorable American, Georgian, family man and Marine. He passed away on August 27, 2004. He was my constituent in the 11th District of Georgia.

His family has described him as a kind Christian man who raised his children to know the difference between right and wrong. By the family's accounts, it is clear that they were the most important thing in his life. Mrs. Pinyan said she could not have asked for a more wonderful, caring, loving husband than Floyd. She has always admired the respect and love her husband had for others; and if someone asked him for help, he was going to "move mountains" to assist them.

The day after Pearl Harbor, Mr. Pinyan and his brothers enlisted in the armed services. Initially, Floyd tried to enlist in the Navy, but he was turned down because of problems with his feet. Undeterred, he then went to the Marines; and when he asked the recruiter, What are the Marines, the recruiter replied, Sign here and you'll find out.

Mr. Pinyan served honorably with the United States Marines in the Pacific Theatre during World War II, specifically in Guam, Iwo Jima, and China. He also served in Korea and Vietnam and retired after 41 years of distinguished service. Upon retirement, he held the rank of gunnery sergeant.

Floyd Pinyan remained active after his retirement from the Marines, working for the city of Atlanta as a business license inspector for some 15 years.

Mr. Pinyan is survived by his wife of 53 years, Christine; sons, Charles and Carl; daughter, Sharon; eight grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. His children have continued his honorable service to our country by joining the Army, the Navy and the Marines.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all of my colleagues join me in honoring the life of Floyd Pinyan of Cobb County, Mableton, Georgia, and in sending our thoughts and prayers to his family.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 4885

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 4885.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

THE ESSENCE OF SCIENCE

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

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about a matter that should be important to us all, regardless of political persuasion, and that is, the matter of scientific integrity, which I believe is under profound and dangerous attack under this administration and unfortunately under this Congress.

The great Nobel Prize winning physicist Richard Feynman once observed that as scientists we have "a lot of experience with ignorance, doubt and uncertainty. We have found it of paramount importance" he wrote "that in order to progress we must recognize our ignorance and leave room for doubt. Scientific knowledge is a body of statements of varying degrees of certainty, some most unsure, some nearly sure, but none absolutely certain."

Feynman saw this familiarity with uncertainty, with doubt as an important strength, indeed a responsibility that scientists can offer to the society as a whole. He went on to say, "If we suppress all discussion, all criticism, proclaiming 'This is the answer, my friends; man is saved!' we will" in the process "doom humanity for a long time to the chains of authority, confined to the limits of our present imagination." Feynman asserted, "It has been done so many times before."

Feynman was right. It has been done so many times before; and I believe if he were with us today, he would say it is being done yet again. In countless subtle and not-so-subtle ways, this administration and the majorities in the House and the Senate are deliberately and systematically suppressing discussion and criticism and distorting the scientific process. The modalities of

these discussions, or distortions, are manifold; and collectively, they constitute nothing less than a coordinated attack on virtually every stage and every aspect of the science/policy interaction.

Evidence of this attack comes from many sources, including a GAO study which I am holding up here, which I requested along with my ranking member on the Committee on Science, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON). Interestingly and perhaps tellingly, we had asked that a full committee hearing be conducted to study this matter; but we were denied that privilege, leaving us to hold a somewhat symbolic hearing of our own.

Nevertheless, based on testimony from that hearing and numerous other sources, it is apparent to me and others that the assaults on scientific independence and integrity includes all of the following: limitations of the questions that are allowed to be asked; constraints on the methods that are used to seek answers to questions; limits or elimination of funding and resources to pursue certain questions that are not politically correct; biased selections of people who will be allowed to ask questions or serve on scientific panels; active and intentional suppression of findings that are not to official liking; unjustified claims and inflation of studies or results that are approved of by the administration; punishment or ridicule of scientists who disagree with official administration dogma; retribution for political involvement on the part of scientists; disregard of discomfiting scientific evidence; placement of nongovernmental ideologues in charge of international missions to supervise U.S. positions, vis-a-vis, scientific discussion; and creation of a climate in which scientists and policymakers have begun actually to self-censor or self-select and actually leave government service.

Thomas Jefferson wrote in a letter to his nephew: "Question with boldness even the existence of a God because, if there be one, He must more approve the homage of reason, than that of blindfolded fear." Clearly, at least in his private letters, Jefferson was not one to believe in limiting questions, and indeed, if one visits Monticello and sees his love for science, one realizes how important that was to him.

When one considers that Benjamin Franklin was considered one of the greatest scientists of his age and that Madison, Jefferson, and Washington and many of the Founders had a profound interest in science, we realize the importance of that principle to the founding principles of this Nation.

But we must contrast that attitude of the Framers with an administration that removes from a National Cancer Institute Web site fact sheets showing there is no empirical evidence linking abortion to breast cancer. Contrast that attitude of scientific inquiry with suppressing analyses of clean air legislation that will save lives and cut pol-

lution at negligible cost. Contrast the Framers' attitude with initiatives in Congress to cut funding for research relating to sexually transmitted disease prevention. Contrast that attitude with limits to stem cell research. Contrast that attitude of the Framers with the selective appointment or withdrawal of experts on scientific advisory panels. Contrast that attitude with the willful stacking of advisory committees and removal of any voices deemed unfriendly to a predetermined outcome.

Within the scientific community, the effect of the administration's and congressional actions have been chilling and demoralizing. Researchers are practicing self-censorship or leaving government careers entirely.

Let me conclude, if I may, with one final comment of Richard Feynman. He said, "It is our responsibility as scientists, knowing the great process which comes from a satisfactory philosophy of ignorance, knowing of the great progress which is the fruit of freedom of thought, to proclaim the value of this freedom; to teach how doubt is not to be feared but welcomed and discussed; and to demand this freedom as our duty to all coming generations."

We must do that not only as scientists but as Representatives.

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

(Ms. HARRIS addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

TORT REFORM

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

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak about tort reform, but before I do that I would like to use some of the comments of my colleague and friend who has just spoken about scientific integrity and maybe the creation of a climate that self-selects facts but disregards the scientific evidence, the active suppression of that evidence and questioning and removal of voices that are contrary to predetermined outcomes.

I was certain that he was going to bring in CBS news and Dan Rather into the thing, but he stopped one step short. So I would like to add CBS news and Dan Rather to the list of people who preselect their facts, who preselect and predetermine the outcomes, and then compliment CBS news and Dan Rather for their pursuit of truth in front of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that we continue to talk about on this House floor is the way that businesses are driven off the shores of America into other countries. Very often we

seem to simply omit the discussion of tort reform and the need for tort reform and the cost to not only businesses but to individuals in this country for lawsuits, for frivolous lawsuits, litigation.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. Chamber ran an ad 2 years ago which described the cost of every car to include \$500 for the cost of legal protection. That means that every consumer who buys a new car contributes \$500 to the trial lawyers in this Nation. Is it any surprise then, Mr. Speaker, that this year the trial lawyers have contributed hundreds of millions of dollars into the 527s in order to buy influence and to influence the outcome of the elections?

It is no surprise to me, Mr. Speaker, because we find that the trial lawyers right now are pulling somewhere between 2.5 to 3 percent of the Nation's economy. Keep in mind that we are trying at this moment to get a 4 percent rate of growth year after year, and we are doing that; but at the same time, the trial lawyers are pulling 2.5 to 3 percent of the economy out the bottom.

Now, if that money were going to productivity and the hiring of people, that would be one thing; but what we find is that trial lawyers are escalating into the category of the world's richest people, not based on productivity, not based on what they add to the economy, but based on what they take out of the economy.

This affects every single one of us when they go to get a job. We find that the companies pay less because of the threat of lawsuits.

American Express told us in New York last year, a group of business leaders who were in the Congress, at that point that if we do not limit the frivolous lawsuits, if we do not limit class action lawsuits in this Nation, that we are going to drive out every single major corporation; that, in fact, within 20 years there would not be a single major corporation left in America.

We have to wonder then where are we going to get our pension plans funded. Where are we going to have the taxes that are paid to the Federal Government to support our retirees? It is a huge problem, and yet the trial lawyers continue to buy influence at an amazing rate, and they buy influence in this institution.

Here in the House, we have passed multiple forms of lawsuit abuse protection; but somehow, once they leave the doors of this institution, they simply are bottled up and kept dormant.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the partisan politics that limit the debate and that limit the actions to stop the frivolous lawsuits. It is time for the partisan politics to stop and for us to protect the American consumer, for us to protect American businesses.

At one point last year, the insurance agents' representative for the Nation came into my office and gave me a list of maybe 30 or 40 new businesses, new