

The childish sarcasm is when a columnist or someone else says we would have to line up 200,000 buses to remove 12 million immigrants.

No one thinks you can enforce all our immigration laws overnight or instantly solve this problem, but just because we cannot solve this problem all at once does not mean we should just give up and open up our borders.

Our government estimated several years ago that half the people of the world would come here very quickly if allowed to do so. Our schools, hospitals, roads, jails, sewers, our entire infrastructure simply could not handle such a rapid, massive influx of people.

A couple of years ago, *Newsweek* magazine said half the people of the world have to get by on \$2 or less a day. Consistent with this was a column I read a few months later that said half the people in the world do not even have a second pair of shoes.

We are blessed beyond belief to live in this country. We all have great sympathy for those who have to live under difficult circumstances in other countries.

God has blessed every nation with natural beauty and/or natural sources that can make those countries rich. However, in most countries, people have fallen for the myth that government could solve all problems, and they have voted in liberal or left-wing governments or they have had dictators who forced big governments on them, and the economies have been ruined.

You cannot blame so many people for wanting to come here, and we all admire the work ethic of many who come here from other countries; but we cannot take in half the people of the world, especially in a short time. We have to have a legal, orderly system of immigration, and it has to be enforced.

Rush Limbaugh said a few months ago that if you do not have borders, you do not have a country.

Thomas Sowell, writing about this a few days ago, said, "We could solve the problem of all illegal activity anywhere by legalizing it. Why use this approach only with immigration? Why should any of us pay a speeding ticket if immigration scofflaws are legalized after the fact for committing a Federal crime?"

"Most of the arguments for not enforcing our immigration laws are exercises in frivolous rhetoric and slippery sophistry, rather than serious arguments that will stand up under scrutiny."

Mr. Sowell continues, "How often have we heard that illegal immigrants 'take jobs that Americans will not do'? What is missing in this argument is what is crucial in any economic argument: price.

"Americans will not take many jobs at their current pay levels, and those pay levels will not rise so long as poverty-stricken immigrants are willing to take those jobs."

And he went on in this column to say, "The old inevitability play is

often trotted out in immigration debates: it is not possible to either keep out illegal immigrants or to expel the ones already here.

"If you mean stopping every single illegal immigrant from getting in or expelling every single illegal immigrant who is already here, that may well be true."

Mr. Sowell said, "But does the fact that we cannot prevent every single murder cause us to stop enforcing the laws against murder?"

Mr. Speaker, with the Simpson-Mazoli Act 20 years ago, we tried the same type of law that some who want to be soft on immigration are advocating today, but that law led to a quadrupling of illegal immigrants. We simply cannot afford to let that happen again.

President Theodore Roosevelt said many years ago, in fact in 1919, "In the first place we should insist that if the immigrant who comes here in good faith becomes an American and assimilates himself to us, he shall be treated on an exact equality with everyone else, for it is an outrage to discriminate against any such man because of creed, or birthplace, or origin."

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But this is predicated upon the man's becoming in very fact an American and nothing but an American.

And Theodore Roosevelt continued. He said, "There can be no divided allegiance here. Any man who says he is an American but something else also isn't an American at all. We have room for but one flag, the American flag, and this excludes the red flag, which symbolizes all wars against liberty and civilization, just as much as it excludes any foreign flag of a nation to which we are hostile."

And Theodore Roosevelt concluded this statement by saying, "We have room for but one language here, and that is the English language. And we have room but for one sole loyalty, and that is the loyalty to the American people."

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would say that if people want the rights, privileges, and opportunities of American citizens, they should wave the American flag. If they want to be Mexicans and wave the Mexican flag, and there is nothing wrong with that, but they should go home to Mexico to do that.

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

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

LEGISLATION TO FIX THE MEDICARE MODERNIZATION ACT

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS).

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleague and friend, Representative MARCY KAPTUR, in talking about the trip to Ohio this week of Michael Leavitt, who oversees Medicare and Medicaid and our Nation's various health agencies as America's Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Michael Leavitt is a decent man, but he is manning a ship weighed down by wrongheaded laws and misplaced priorities. Take the so-called Medicare Modernization Act, the legislation written by the drug industry, written by the HMOs in this Congress, pushed through Congress in the middle of the night by literally one vote. The Federal Government, through that bill, the Federal Government is hand-feeding the prescription drug and HMO industries literally hundreds of billions of dollars of our tax dollars to manufacture or to make up and to build a new private insurance market for seniors' drug coverage, and not to provide the coverage directly through Medicare the way people choose their doctor in Medicare, the way people choose their hospital. This is done through 30, 40, or 50 different private insurance companies instead of being done the way that history shows works best.

Why? Because the drug and insurance industry want it that way. This new drug law, this new Medicare law, as I said, written by the drug industry and written by the HMOs, with seniors barely given a second thought, prohibits the Medicare program from negotiating bulk discounts on prescription drugs. And according to the Congressional Budget Office, it overpays insurers, the HMOs, by tens of billions of dollars. So much for fiscal responsibility.

The new drug law also undercuts the core Medicare program. If you want Medicare to wither on the vine, as former Speaker Gingrich said, wall it off and force seniors into the private market, force them out of Medicare, put them into the private market to give them additional benefits. It is ingenious. It is also underhanded and it is fiscal suicide.

Do my Republican colleagues really believe that when the private insurance market controls Medicare that they will give the government and they will give seniors a good deal on coverage? Do they really believe the drug industry will voluntarily charge lower prices for prescription drugs?

The new Medicare drug law isn't about seniors, it isn't about modernization, it isn't about fiscal responsibility. It is about a Republican-run Congress that is a little too cozy with the drug industry and the HMOs.

I am a cosponsor of legislation that would begin to fix this bill. It would enable seniors and disabled Medicare enrollees to bypass the private insurance market, to say, no, I don't want to compare 30 or 40 different insurance plans and 30 or 40 different insurance company brochures, and talk to 30 or 40 different insurance agents. I want to bypass the private insurance market, check a box, and simply add a prescription drug benefit to my Medicare. I get to choose my doctor as a Medicare beneficiary, I get to choose the hospital, I ought to be able to choose my drug formulary.

It would also authorize Medicare to negotiate bulk discounts on prescription drugs. That is the way the Veterans' Administration does it. That is the way most countries in the world do it. That is why drug prices are a third or a fourth or a fifth in every other country in the world, much, much lower prices than there are in the United States.

In other words, this legislation, this new law as we propose the changes, would give seniors and taxpayers a break. Perhaps Secretary Leavitt will make use of his Ohio trip to announce the administration's support for these bills. Perhaps.

May 15 is the cutoff for Medicare beneficiaries to enroll in the new prescription drug program. If they enroll after that date, believe it or not, they have to pay a penalty for late enrollment. Let's think about that. My Republican colleagues in Congress and the Bush administration have finally acknowledged that the drug program got off to a rocky start and is very confusing to seniors. Seniors have sat on the phone for up to 2 hours waiting for someone from the Medicare hotline to help with enrollment questions.

I talked to seniors in Vandalia, Ohio, in Cincinnati, in Norton, and in London, Ohio. All of them say this Medicare drug benefit is way too confusing. Not just prospective enrollees are confused, but State agencies, local service agencies, Federal bureaucrats, even the insurers who offer the new coverage. Finding the right answer to an enrollment question is almost as difficult as choosing which of the 30 or 40 plans to enroll in.

And when seniors did enroll in a plan, there were paperwork problems, there were systems problems, there were transition problems, there were formulary problems, and there were problems in the drugstores where one pharmacist at least, one pharmacy in London, Ohio, had to close because of the additional cost imposed on these small businesses by this bureaucracy created by a Congress that listened to the drug industry and the HMOs more than it listened to drugstores, to pharmacists or to seniors.

The various failings of this drug program made the news virtually every day for 4 months. Maybe Secretary Leavitt will make use of his trip to Ohio to announce the Republican lead-

ership is listening, they have changed their minds, and they want to see a better law. Maybe.

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

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

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a Joint Resolution and a Concurrent Resolution of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S.J. Res. 28. Joint resolution approving the location of the commemorative work in the District of Columbia honoring former President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

S. Con. Res. 60. Concurrent resolution designating the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, as America's National Negro Leagues Baseball Museum.

BLUE DOG COALITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, this evening, as every Tuesday evening, the members of the 37-Member strong fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition come to the floor of the United States House of Representatives, here at our Nation's Capitol, to address the debt, the deficit, and tonight also the budget.

And for those of you who have walked the halls of Congress, it is easy to spot when you are walking by a Member's office that is a member of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition because you will see one of these posters, one of these posters that displays the current national debt. And every American citizen shares the National debt.

As you can see, at the moment, the U.S. national debt is \$3,378,143,406,405 and some change. And for every man, woman, and child in America, including those being born this hour, your share of the national debt is \$28,000.

We raise these issues for a number of reasons, Mr. Speaker. It is hard now to remember, but from 1998 to 2001, our Nation enjoyed a balanced budget. We had a surplus. We could meet many of America's priorities. But today, for the sixth year in a row, we have the largest budget deficit ever in our Nation's history. Our Nation is borrowing a billion dollars a day. We are sending \$279 million a day to Iraq, \$57 million a day to Afghanistan, a billion a day we are borrowing, and on top of that we are spending half a billion dollars a day simply paying interest, not principal but just interest on the debt that we already have.

As members of the Blue Dog Coalition, we believe it is time to get our Nation's fiscal house in order. Now, the Republicans in this year's budget they will present this week on the floor of the United States House of Representatives indicates that their priorities do not reflect our priorities or our values. We are going to spend a lot of the time this evening talking about that.

They will say, well, we are trying to balance the budget, which they do not do. They will say that, well, we are cutting this program or that program to try and reduce the deficit. But what they do not tell you is that their budget includes \$1.7 trillion over the next 10 years in tax cuts that primarily benefit those earning over \$400,000 a year.

So when they talk about cutting programs, they will tell you that they are trying to cut programs to reduce these numbers. Not so. Because you don't cut taxes for folks earning over \$400,000 a year at a time when you are in a nation that is borrowing a billion dollars a day; at a time when you are in a nation that is spending half a billion a day simply paying interest on the debt you already have.

So it is about priorities. And the Republican priorities in this year's budget include cuts to the Dale Bumpers Small Farms Research Center in my Congressional District. In fact, there are 25 or 26 agricultural research centers all over America that are being cut. They create good paying jobs in these rural communities that invest in the kind of agricultural research that our farm families so desperately need.

The development of the Dale Bumpers Small Farms Research Center began back in 1977 with their initial work starting in 1980. It is a partnership among three agencies, Agricultural Research Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service.

Their mission, the mission at the Agricultural Research Service unit at the Dale Bumpers Small Farms Research Center, is to develop scientific principles and technologies to enhance the profitability and sustainability of small-scale farms, because they are threatened by a lack of profitability. Yet in this year's budget, in this year's budget that the President submitted to this Congress and that this Republican Congress may very well pass this week, it includes zeroing out, eliminating 25 or 26 of these agricultural research centers all across America.

Again, this budget is about priorities, and this budget that we are going to vote on this week does not reflect my priorities or my values. It certainly does not represent the kind of conservative small-town values that I was raised on, where I was raised to value our farm families who simply try to do their best to provide us with a safe and reliable source for food and fiber.

We can get into a debate about how we have become too dependent on foreign oil. If we are not too careful, we