

Mr. Speaker, has America lost its way?

And let's not forget Hugo Chavez, the tyrant of Venezuela who railed against the United States. He spoke also at the U.N. He is good buddies with the desert rat of Iran. And a New York district attorney recently said that there is evidence that Venezuela is setting up a Venezuelan missile crisis for the United States. Now isn't that lovely. Why do we send U.S. taxpayer money to the U.N. at all? Twenty percent of U.N. funds come from the United States, and the American public is asking: Why? Why do we finance the U.N. that embraces thugs, dictators, terrorists and everyone who hates America and Israel.

Mr. Speaker, since nobody else over at the U.N. has said it, I will, and I will say this without apology: The United States is the greatest country in the history of the world. We have more freedom and liberty than any people in the history of the planet. We have done more than any other nation to help some of the most ungrateful people around the planet in history.

We should not abandon our missile defense system in Poland. We should reevaluate our financial commitment to the United Nations, and we should never give American money to tyrants of nations in the hope of a blissful illusion of buying peace.

Mr. Speaker, has America lost its way? We shall see.

And that's just the way it is.

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

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

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

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

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

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

MEDICARE AND GAG ORDERS

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, the Congressional Budget Office headed by Mr. Elmendorf, who is the director, told Senator BAUCUS that his plan to cut \$123 billion from Medicare Advantage, the program

that gives one-fourth of seniors private health insurance options, will result in lower benefits and some 2.7 million people losing their coverage.

Last week, Mr. BAUCUS ordered the Medicare regulators to investigate and likely punish Humana, Incorporated for trying to educate enrollees in its Advantage plans about precisely this fact.

Jonathan Blum, who is the acting director of a regulator office in the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, who used to work for Senator BAUCUS, said that a mailer Humana sent to its customers was "misleading and confusing to beneficiaries who may believe it represents official communication about the Medicare Advantage program."

Mr. Blum has also banned all Advantage contractors from telling their customers what Mr. Elmendorf has told Congress. Mr. Blum, as I said, happens to be a former senior aide to Mr. BAUCUS and a health adviser to the President Obama transition team. So for the record, CBO's Director Elmendorf says that cuts to Medicare Advantage "could lead many plans to limit the benefits they offer, raise their premiums, or withdraw from the program."

But they want to put a gag on the deliverers of this coverage because they are writing to their patients, to the people they are covering, and telling them that they are going to lose coverage if this bill passes, that Medicare Advantage is going to be gutted. Senator BAUCUS is now saying we want to put a gag in the mouths of people who are providing this coverage so they can't tell the senior citizens of this country that they are going to lose Medicare Advantage coverage.

That is a violation of the First Amendment. And, secondly, I don't know of any rule that would allow Senator BAUCUS to do this. This is absolutely a terrible thing. And Mr. Blum doesn't have the authority to do this. Mr. BAUCUS, Senator BAUCUS, does not have the authority to do this, and yet they are gagging the health care providers, the people who are insuring these people and providing coverage, by saying you can't tell them that they are going to lose Medicare Advantage.

The plan of Mr. BAUCUS and other plans here in the House and the Senate are going to cut \$500 billion out of Medicare, and most of it is coming out of Medicare Advantage and they are trying to keep the seniors in this country from knowing it until they get the job done. That is criminal.

First they violate the First Amendment rights of these companies. And, second, they gag them and threaten them with criminal prosecution or some kind of penalties if they don't adhere to what Senator BAUCUS or Mr. Blum says. And then they don't let the American people, the seniors who vote more than anybody else, know that they are going to lose Medicare Advantage and they are going to take \$500 billion out of Medicare coverage.

Seniors need to know this, and yet they are gagging the people who are trying to get the facts out. This is just dead wrong. It should not happen. This is government control in its worst form, and it is something that we should not tolerate.

In addition, I want to read into the RECORD a letter that I got from Dr. Ned Masbaum, who is a forensic psychiatrist in Indianapolis, and he wrote this about the American Medical Association:

"Dear Congressman Burton,

"Thank you for your very well-thought out letter. When I heard about the new AMA position supporting socialized medicine, I felt a sickening feeling in the pit of my stomach. I have been a member of the AMA for over 40 years. Unfortunately, it has gradually become a leftist political cheerleader with the usual pro-abortion and anti-Second Amendment drivel. However, this illiterate position for socialized medicine betrays its own members and the American citizenry. It is so blindsided that it also eliminates the need for the very existence of the American Medical Association. If we all become serfs for the government, we no longer need a formerly scientific professional organization.

"With the AMA headquarters in Chicago, the AMA president and his ilk must have been polluted with Chicago-style politics and their brains have turned to mush.

"This morning, I had a lengthy teleconference concerning the issue with the executive vice president of the Indiana State Medical Association, James G. McIntire, J.D. Apparently ISMA has not yet taken any position. I have also written a letter to the president of the AMA, a copy of which is enclosed, advising my opposition and the intent to resign as a member.

"Please keep up the good fight."

This is the kind of information that needs to get out to Americans. Seniors need to know they are going to lose coverage and \$500 billion is going to be cut out of Medicare.

CARMEL, IN,
July 22, 2009.

Re your letter of 20 July concerning the AMA.

Hon. DAN BURTON,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN BURTON: Thank you for your very well thought out letter. When I heard about the new AMA position supporting socialized medicine, I felt a sickening feeling in the pit of my stomach. I have been a member of the AMA for over 40 years. Unfortunately, it has gradually become a leftist political cheerleader with the usual pro-abortion & anti-second amendment dribble. However, this illiterate position for socialized medicine betrays its own members and the American Citizenry. It is so blindsided that it also eliminates the need for the very existence of the AMA. If we all become serfs for the government we no longer need a formerly scientific professional organization.

With the AMA headquarters in Chicago, the AMA President and his ilk must have

been polluted with Chicago style politics and their brains have turned to mush.

This morning, I had a lengthy teleconference concerning this issue with the Executive Vice President of the Indiana State Medical Association, James G. McIntire, J.D. Apparently ISMA has not taken any position yet. I have also written a letter to the President of the AMA, a copy is enclosed, advising my opposition and intent to resign as a member.

Please keep up the good fight. Best personal regards to you.

Sincerely,

NED P. MASBAUM, M.D.

CARMEL, IN,
July 22, 2009.

J. JAMES ROHACK, M.D.
President, American Medical Association,
Chicago, IL.

DEAR DR. ROHACK: Your announcement of the AMA's backing of nationalizing health care was shocking to say the least. It was my mistaken belief that the AMA always opposed socialized medicine since it does not work anywhere in the world. It was also my belief that the organization backed Health Savings Accounts as a truly free enterprise American way to solve the economic problems of our current system. Why would the AMA sell out it's own members and the American public?

If you and the AMA do not reverse your current position immediately, you can say goodbye to me as a member of over 40 years.

Sincerely,

NED P. MASBAUM, M.D.

On Tuesday, the Congressional Budget Office director told Senator BAUCUS that his plan to cut \$123 billion from Medicare Advantage—the program that gives almost one-fourth of seniors private health-insurance options—will result in lower benefits and some 2.7 million people losing this coverage.

Last week Mr. BAUCUS ordered Medicare regulators to investigate and likely punish Humana Inc. for trying to educate enrollees in its Advantage plans about precisely this fact.

Jonathan Blum, acting director of a regulatory office in the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, said that a mailer Humana sent its customers was “misleading and confusing to beneficiaries, who may believe that it represents official communication about the Medicare Advantage program.”

Mr. Blum has also banned all Advantage contractors from telling their customers what Mr. Elmendorf has just told Congress. Mr. Blum happens to be a former senior aide to Mr. BAUCUS and a health adviser on the Obama transition team.

So, for the record, CBO's Director Elmendorf says that cuts to Medicare Advantage “could lead many plans to limit the benefits they offer, raise their premiums, or withdraw from the program.”

Providing of accurate information by Medicare Advantage plans to its enrollees is not prohibited by applicable Federal rules and regulations.

AFGHAN ASSESSMENT

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

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, in 2007, the Commander in Chief, President George W. Bush, relied on his military commander on the

ground to give him an assessment as to what it would take to turn around what was then a very bad situation in Iraq. General Petraeus made his case before the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, and he was given the resources that he requested. The surge in Iraq provided the necessary level of security that ultimately allowed the political process there to move forward.

Similarly, General Stanley McChrystal has been charged by the Commander in Chief, President Barack Obama, to give an assessment of what it will take to win in Afghanistan and achieve the objectives that the President had committed to earlier this year.

I believe General McChrystal's report was politically sanitized and General McChrystal needs to appear before the House and Senate Armed Services Committees to give an honest assessment of what is going on in Afghanistan.

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

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

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

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

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.)

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

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

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

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

AMERICAN POSITION AGAINST TERRORISM

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

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I stood on this floor about 3 years

ago and called upon the United States to clearly define its position toward what is now the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism, the Islamic Republic of Iran.

I then called upon the IAEA to refer Iran to the Security Council because I believed then that what Western intelligence has long suspected about Iran and what it seems that President Obama is now just beginning to realize, Iran is systematically and relentlessly pursuing the development of nuclear weapons.

Today's revelation that they have a second uranium facility at Qom should remove all doubt in any reasonable person's mind about their inevitable intentions. Yet today's announcement at the G-20 summit by the leaders of Britain, France and the United States reveal that Iran has been covertly operating and developing a new underground uranium enrichment facility at Qom.

It is disgracefully ironic that today's announcement comes only a week after announcing our abandonment of the European missile defense site which could have protected the homeland of the United States against Iranian long-range missiles, and only one day after President Obama chaired a United Nations Security Council specifically addressing the need to halt the spread of nuclear weapons throughout the world. Unbelievably, the resolution passed by the Security Council, under President Obama's leadership, omitted any mention whatsoever of either North Korea or Iran.

But regardless of the Security Council's failure to explicitly address the real and present danger that the peace-loving world faces because of Iran's nuclear ambitions, the fact is that Iran has already disregarded three previous rounds of Security Council sanctions and has continued to aggressively pursue a nuclear weapons capability, including building this underground facility and testing the long-range ballistic missiles that could be used to deliver a nuclear payload.

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We have reached a crossroads with Iran, Mr. Speaker, that will result in one of two outcomes: either Iran transforms the geopolitical landscape by becoming a nuclear power that proliferates nuclear and missile technology to terrorists throughout the world and then threatens the very existence of countries like Israel; or, by the world's inaction, we place the tiny country of Israel in the unavoidable position of having to act unilaterally with military force to protect themselves and humanity from the threat a nuclear Iran would represent to the entire civilized world. We must not place Israel in that position, Mr. Speaker.

President Obama's announcement today also offered no assurance and, in fact, was a weaker statement than the statement given by Prime Minister Brown and President Sarkozy, who