

Perhaps the most egregious account that was cited involved the National Medical Enterprise, which was a \$3.9 billion New York Stock Exchange company that owned psychiatric hospitals, which operated 86 psychiatric hospitals nationwide. Sadly enough, witnesses testified before the State legislators that social workers, school counselors, probation officers, and even ministers served as, quote, "headhunters" and were paid bounties for referring individuals to some of these hospitals.

In Texas, a Texas State senator led the investigation of this in his State and stated, quote, "people were locked up against their will. Then they were miraculously cured when their insurance benefits ran out."

My own State of Florida also has its share of con artists. In fact, in March of this year, Florida Medicaid found that at least six taxicab companies and two individuals were ripping off the Medicaid Program designed to give needy patients free rides to the doctors. In the course of 317 days, one company received \$1,134,164 for driving patients over 1 million miles. As one investigator wryly noted, "That is enough to travel 41 times around the Earth at the equator."

My colleagues, the Republican plan includes ways to stop waste, fraud, and abuse and it is important we address this matter immediately. No matter which party you represent, which side of the aisle you are on, we can all agree that waste, fraud, and abuse is something that bothers most Americans and we need to stop it now.

DEMOCRACY IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, many are new to Congress this year and the Republican majority is altogether new in having the obligation to get 13 appropriations through the House of Representatives. The District of Columbia appropriation is the only one remaining.

The District of Columbia appropriation is a PILOT, a payment in lieu of taxes, like those in virtually every State in the Union. It is not a grant. We are paid because the Federal Government preempts much of the prime land in the District and we cannot develop on that land and because we cannot develop above a certain height.

Unlike last year, there is plenty of reason to vote for the District budget this year. We had a very severe struggle last year, but on the merits this year, the budget went through appropriation hearings without controversy. Why? Because there is a control board in place that keeps things in check, because employees have given a whopping 12-percent give-back, and because the

District has downsized 20 percent, twice as many positions as the Congress asked for.

Yet, there are propositions before the subcommittee mark this afternoon that no Republican and no Democrat can embrace. Some of these propositions would force law on people, even though the Congress is not accountable to those people, because it would force changes in local law.

It is surely a principle of this House that only through the ballot can basic law be changed. Only those who can reject or embrace what you do have a right to have law made for them. The governing theme of the 104th Congress, my colleagues, is devolving power back to the localities. You cannot have any credibility with that theme if you usurp local power here in the District of Columbia.

Mr. Speaker, many in the majority find much in this nine-to-one Democratic city with which to disagree. Yes, you are Republicans, you are in the majority. Most of us are Democrats. Surely you would not want to force Republican change in the manner of congressional dictators. That surely cannot be your desire.

To be sure, the Constitution gives you some powers over the District of Columbia, but James Madison did not mean for you to overturn local laws. He meant you to guard the Federal presence. This is a Democratic city, so who can be surprised that there is rent control? Some would take back, overturn rent control, and put their own version of decontrol place instead of our version of decontrol. Some would privatize our schools. The Mayor wants to privatize some of our schools. Many on the schoolboard want to do that. If we are not doing it fast enough for you, wait a while. This is a democracy. This is America.

Mr. Speaker, for 20 years there have been high-profile controversial restrictions put on our appropriation, but never has the Congress tried to change mainstream council legislation. I ask you in the name of democracy not to do it today.

What is being proposed is a radical departure from basic democracy, an invasion into the very body of home rule itself. I ask you not to do it. I ask you to be true to your own principles. Put yourself in my place. Put yourself in the place of the people whom I represent. They do not have full help-governing powers. Please leave them with what self-government powers they have. Please remember this afternoon in the subcommittee, in the full Committee on Appropriations, and when our budget comes to this House, that almost all of that budget is raised in the District of Columbia.

Above all, remember that this is America, that you are Americans, and that we are Americans. The Speaker himself came to a town meeting in my district. It was a gutsy and important and historic moment, and he said before all the people I represent, I do not

intend to micromanage the affairs of the District of Columbia, I do not intend that home rule be overturned. I believe the Speaker. I ask you to follow the Speaker. I ask you to respect the rights of the people I represent.

This is the first time that the District of Columbia budget will come before a Republican majority in 20 years of home rule. The country is watching; not just my constituents. The entire country is watching.

Will the Republican majority force its will on a Democratic city that is powerless to fight back, that has no voting representation on the floor of this House, that has no representation whatsoever in the Senate of the United States, though we are fourth per capita in income taxes paid in this country among the 50 States? Please respect our rights. Please treat the people I represent as you and your constituents would be treated.

PLAN FOR MEDICARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, I met in New Jersey again with a number of senior citizens as part of an outreach that myself and some of the other Democratic Congressmen in New Jersey have been doing on a regular basis. This time we were in Gloucester Township in Congressman ANDREWS' district and we had about 200 or 300 senior citizens who were very concerned about the Republican proposals to cut Medicare by \$270 billion.

Mr. Speaker, the problem that the seniors had is that they feel very strongly that they are not getting enough information about exactly what the Republican plan is, and the fact of the matter is, they are right. We are still not provided with the details about what Speaker GINGRICH and the Republican leadership intend to do with the Medicare Program.

Last Thursday, the Speaker and Senator DOLE released their so-called plan to reform Medicare, but unfortunately, once again, the plan falls far short in regards to any specific details, and the plain fact is that the Republicans have still not offered any substantive Medicare plan.

We do know certain things though. We do know that the cut, the \$270 billion, is the largest cut in the history of the Medicare Program, and we also know that there is no way to implement that level of cut, that magnitude of cuts in Medicare without at the same time charging seniors more for Medicare and providing them with less services.

My friend from Texas had the sign that he was using before and I will hold it up again. It says, the GOP Medicare plan, pay more, get less. The bottom line is that no matter how we cut it,