

they are going to get 80 billion dollars' worth of cuts.

So what do they want to do? They want to put the Medicare system on an automatic cut provision that in 3 years, if we are not advancing toward the balanced budget, if the cuts have not been realized in Medicare, then they would have an automatic \$80 billion in Medicare, again, coming out of hospitals, coming out of doctors who pretty soon are going to decide, like they have with the Medicaid patients, that they do not want any, that they do not want any Medicare patients.

Mr. Speaker that simply is an intolerable situation for the elderly in this country and for their families.

Let us understand what Medicare and Medicaid have done. They have allowed families to stay together, to stay intact with confronting what, in some cases, are catastrophic medical costs for our elderly population. As generations mature and they look to their children to help out, there are very few children that can help out with hundreds of thousands of dollars in health care costs as their parents reach 70, 80, 90 years of age.

That is what is happening to the baby boomers. As the baby boomers try to figure out how to buy their homes for their families, how to educate their children, how to preserve a standard of living in this country, they are now confronted with their aging parents. I would look very carefully at this program to slash Medicare and Medicaid by almost \$450 billion.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. There being no further requests for morning business, pursuant to clause 12, rule I, the House will stand in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 43 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. FOLEY] at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We pray, O gracious God, for those things most immediate to us—for food and shelter, for friends and families, for honorable causes and noble deeds. We offer these petitions to You because You are our creator and You know each of us by name. Yet, above all else, and as our first act of faith, we speak our thanksgivings to You with gratitude in our hearts for Your loving gifts to each person. Teach us, O God, that before we ask, we ought to give thanks and praise and before we receive, we ought

to open our lives to Your gracious presence. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. NEAL] will come forward and lead the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain fifteen 1-minutes on each side.

REPUBLICAN MEDICARE PLAN IS CREDIBLE

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

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, for the past several months we have had considerable discussion and debate on the floor of the House regarding Medicare, an extremely important program, particularly to the senior citizens of this Nation. I have been very disappointed in the debate that we have had.

I come from an academic background where you concentrate on the facts and you discuss and debate based on those facts.

One fact is uncontrovertible: The trustees of the Medicare Program have said it will be bankrupt in 7 years if the Congress does not do something about it, and the debate should focus on that. But it has been a very partisan debate. My disappointment is the other side of the aisle has not engaged in a serious debate on the facts.

I turn to the Washington Post, scarcely a conservative paper, but they have written an objective editorial about what has happened in this debate in the past few months. This is what the Post has to say about the Democrats' Medi-scare campaign. These are actual quotes from the editorial, labeled Medigogues: "Crummy stuff; demagoguery big-time; scare talk; expostulation; it is irresponsible." On the Republican side, the Post has this to say: "Congressional Republicans have confounded skeptics. It is credible. It is gutsy."

I think we should all listen to the Washington Post.

SAVING MEDICARE

(Mr. PACKARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, Medicare is going broke. The Medicare trustees recently reported that the money dries up in only a few short years. Seniors need to understand that once this happens the program they depend on to pay for doctors, hospitals and vital medications will cease to exist.

My Republican colleagues and I recognize that the time to defuse this ticking time bomb is now. This week, we plan to introduce our proposal to save and strengthen Medicare.

We plan to overhaul this 30-year-old program to root out waste and inefficiency. Furthermore, our plan offer's today's seniors the flexibility they need to navigate a fast changing modern medical landscape.

Mr. Speaker, our plan is about choices and freedom and the right to have the same types of health care plans as found in the private sector. Our bill expands options for seniors, combats fraud and abuse, and ensures that the program will be there when seniors need it.

CALL FOR INVESTIGATION OF ACTS OF AGGRESSION BY BELARUSAN MILITARY

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

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, September 12, 1995, my office was advised that Mr. Michael Wallace, a participant in the Gordon Bennett balloon race, had been forced to land his balloon in Belarus, part of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

I later learned that a second balloon, flying under the flag of the Virgin Islands, had been shot down and its occupants had been killed.

After numerous contacts with officials of the American Embassy in Minsk, I was advised that Mr. Wallace had been reunited with his chase crew and that he had been accompanied by diplomatic officials to the Poland-Belarus border where he was released to begin his return to the United States.

I met personally with Mr. Wallace yesterday morning and he has been able to provide me with information which confirms my earlier appraisal that these incidents should never have occurred.

Mr. Wallace has provided my office with the formal approval which had been given by Belarus for contestants of this balloon race to fly over their country. Furthermore, Mr. Wallace is convinced that Alan Fraenckel and John Stuart-Jervis, the operators of the Virgin Islands balloon, would most certainly have landed their craft had they been given an opportunity to do so.