

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, let me tell you how Republicans write Medicare legislation.

When wealthy doctors are dissatisfied with how the Medicare bill will affect them—they negotiate a back door deal with Republicans and suddenly—they get a deal worth millions and do not have to share the burden of the \$270 billion cut with seniors.

When HMO's want to make more money—they make a back door deal with Republicans and suddenly Medicare legislation includes provisions that will force thousands of seniors into managed care plans.

Yet, when seniors wanted to come out in the open to discuss their concerns about Medicare—they got no back door deals, they got arrested.

Mr. Speaker, this is no way to write policies. Medicare reform should help people get better—not worse.

□ 1015

CONGRESS MUST TAKE ACTION TO PRESERVE MEDICARE

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

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, Medicare will be bankrupt by 2002. Faced with this crisis, of course, we will take action to protect and preserve Medicare. But keep in mind the far more serious problem. Unless we balance the budget, the United States will go bankrupt.

Look at the facts. We owe \$5 trillion in debt. Interest will soon pass defense as the largest expenditure. It does not count hundreds of billions of dollars borrowed from Social Security. It does not count a couple of trillion more in liability from pensions and retirements.

The overspending of previous Congresses has been destroying the American dream for our children. If we really care for the future of our children, we will balance the budget now.

GET TOUGH ON MEDICARE FRAUD

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, for those who would rip off the American taxpayer through Medicare fraud, the Republicans have an answer. The answer, through their pay more, get less plan, is an unusual solution: Let us get soft on fraud, unilaterally disarm law enforcement, and legalize conduct illegal today.

Mr. Speaker, Medicare fraud results not from old folks pretending to be sick, but from health care providers pretending to treat them. In this plan, instead of helping law enforcement, the Republicans actually change the law to make it more difficult to prove fraud. They not only cut Medicare by \$270 bil-

lion, they proceed to cut the moneys that are dedicated to law enforcement. But for those who rely on kickbacks from unnecessary care, they say, well, we will change the law to make it easier to take a kickback.

Today, in the Washington Times, under an article entitled "Republican Medicare bill seems to favor fraud," they point out that this change alone will cost the American taxpayers \$1.1 billion in this Republican profraud, antisenior Medicare bill.

THE ST. LUCIE RIVER INITIATIVE

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, today it is very prophetic that I rise to discuss the St. Lucie River Initiative that is occurring in one of our counties in Florida. We are being inundated by water due to many recent rainfalls. I would like Members, particularly those in the Florida delegation, to welcome the members of the St. Lucie River Initiative.

Mr. Speaker, we have one of the most beautiful, pristine waterways in Florida. The Army Corps of Engineers started in 1915, and completed in 1963, a series of canals that have changed the water flow patterns in our State. We have to save the Everglades and Florida Bay, but we must save the St. Lucie River and Indian River Lagoon for future generations.

There is a solution. It involves acquiring land, storing fresh valuable water on that land, and preventing the water from running to the tide and polluting these estuaries and the St. Lucie River. So I ask Members from Florida again to welcome the St. Lucie River Initiative group into their office. Listen to the facts they present, because I think we have a solution before us that can save our valuable resource, the Florida waterways.

DISCREPANCY IN MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCING

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

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, this chamber is accustomed to numbers. We are told the numbers do not lie. Statistics are nonpartisan. Percentages are unbiased. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to bring you numbers that are biased—100 to 1. That is the discrepancy in mandatory minimum sentencing for crack cocaine to powder cocaine offenses. One hundred to one is an immense disparity. Worse, 100 to 1 is an unjustified disparity. And still worse, Mr. Speaker, 100 to 1 is a disparity that disproportionately targets the urban African-American community. This 100-to-1 discrepancy is discriminatory on its face.

The U.S. Sentencing Commission, along with Federal judges and civil rights groups, has recommended an elimination of the 100-to-1 disparity, but today this Chamber may choose to reject that recommendation. Why? Is powder cocaine one-hundredth less deadly than crack? Does powder cocaine cause one-hundredth the violence that crack does? Or perhaps, have the misperceptions surrounding the communities in which one finds these drugs, affected the fairness of our laws?

Drug trafficking is an abhorrent crime, Mr. Speaker, and should be dealt with harshly. But the numbers do not lie. One hundred to one is discriminatory. If we choose to mete out justice as a nation, Mr. Speaker, we must first ensure our laws are just.

VOTE AGAINST CROATIAN-AMERICAN ENTERPRISE FUND APPROPRIATIONS

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, the conference on foreign operations appropriations is scheduled for next week. One of the areas of discussion between the two bills is a \$12 million appropriation for the Croatian-American Enterprise Fund.

Mr. Speaker, let me read you some excerpts from a recent human rights report by monitors from the European Union who investigated human rights atrocities in the Krajina region of Croatia, which was recently liberated from Serb occupation:

After Operation Storm * * * the area was largely devastated. Killings and harassments of civilians have been observed. Looting of virtually all houses took place and houses were burnt to the ground long after fighting had stopped.

On August 11, an ECMM team from Knin found the body of an old man, shot in the head and in the right side * * * as late as September 11, ECMM Knin found two elderly women recently shot through their head * * * Reports of killing are numerous * * * at some point newly killed Serbs were found at a rate of six per day. The most common murder method is shots in the back of the head or slit throat.

These reports came in weeks after the fighting has stopped. Many Serbs fled the Krajina but those that remained were for the most part elderly.

On September 30, the Washington Post reported:

That evening [August 25] human rights officials returned to Grubrori and found the bodies of two elderly men. One was on the floor of his bedroom in his pajamas with a bullet in the back of the head * * * the other was discovered in a field with his throat slashed. The next day, monitors found the body of a 90-year-old woman who had been burned alive in her house.

Mr. Speaker, these kinds of atrocities could not have occurred without some kind of tacit approval from some elements of the government of Zagreb. I am not saying the orders came from Zagreb, but the Croatian Government should have known these kinds of things

were going to take place and taken steps to prevent them.

As Congress is asked to make tough choices about development assistance and funding for the poorest of the poor, is it right for Congress to appropriate \$12 million for the Croatian-American Enterprise Fund in light of these recent atrocities.

The answer is no. Congress would not only be turning our backs on genocide, we would be approving it.

SENIORS SHOULD BE HEARD, NOT ARRESTED

(Ms. BROWN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, here I have hundreds of questionnaires that my constituents signed opposing drastic Medicare cuts. Oh, did I say cut? I meant gut. The Republican plan will actually gut the Medicare Program.

And now, to make matters worse, Republicans are trying to gag America's seniors. When a small group of senior citizens protested the Commerce Committee voting on a Medicare bill without having one hearing on it, they were arrested.

I do not believe that these seniors should be gagged. Shame on my Republican colleagues for shutting out seniors from Congress—the People's House. As a Democrat who believes in the Democratic process, I believe those seniors deserve to be heard from, and not arrested.

Thousands of my constituents have told me that they are outraged at the Republicans' reverse Robin Hood tactics, stealing from the working people and giving tax breaks to the wealthy.

WHITE HOUSE WEATHER VANE CHANGES DIRECTION

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, "Oh, ain't it funky now." Those immortal and prophetic words are written and sung by that Godfather of Soul, James Brown, from his classic hit, "Ain't It Funky, Part 2." Surely these words must have been the inspiration of the Clinton reelection theme when they came up with the motto "Get the Funk Out of America." And I never knew funk was a big problem out there. It has not shown up in any of my polling data.

But we always knew that the Clinton administration marches to the beat of a different drummer. And, as SONNY BONO might say, last night the beat goes on, because, in an apparent complete reversal, Mr. Clinton said at a Democrat fundraiser, of all places, that there are a lot of people still mad about his huge, largest tax increase in the history of America. He said, "It might surprise you to know that I think I raised taxes too much too."

So now, Mr. Speaker, we have the President once again noticing that the White House weather vane has changed directions, and he is going to get behind the middle class tax cut. Hallelujah, another campaign promise he is going to be forced to keep.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome the President in supporting the middle class tax cut.

MEDICARE POLITICS

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

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, 1 week has passed since 15 senior citizens were hauled out of the Committee on Commerce for daring to ask how the 30-year-old promise of Medicare was going to be kept. The reason for their question was in view of the Republican attempt to rape, ravage, and pillage that system to the tune of \$270 billion to offset tax cuts for the wealthy, and they were upset about the fact that the legislation before us had had no hearings.

Still, the image of those wheelchair-bound individuals being handcuffed and loaded into paddy wagons and police cars will long linger with those of us who were there. Some of them were veterans who had fought for our rights to be heard. They were being told "You are too old; get out of here." Others were mothers and grandmothers. They were being told "You are too old; get out of here. You are not important anymore."

Let us get the facts straight. In 1965, 93 percent of the Republicans voted against Medicare. In 1993, not one Republican put up a vote for COBRA 93 which propped up Medicare and cut the deficit by 40 percent. Now, in 1995, we are arresting our seniors for being concerned about that promise made 30 years ago.

REFORMING MEDICARE

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

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a comment about Medicare and the proposal that are going to be up this week for a vote on the House floor. After reading the material and understanding that the long-term sustainability of Medicare as it stands right now is not in good condition, what we need to do to protect seniors right now and protect those people that will move into that category in the very near future is to reform Medicare so it is sustainable over the long haul.

In order to do that, we have to reduce the amount of cost to each senior citizen. We have to slow down the rate of growth for Medicare from about 10 percent to about 5 percent. We have to protect Medicare part A. These reforms do that. We have to protect Medicare

part B. These reforms do that. We have to give seniors more options, more health care, and better quality health care. These reforms do that.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues, when the vote comes up on Thursday to vote for the reforms.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLEVELAND INDIANS, 1995 AMERICAN LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

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

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations to the greatest baseball team in America, the Cleveland Indians. Last night, the Indians captured the American League Pennant with a 4-to-0 victory over the Seattle Mariners. Armed with the best record in the major leagues, the Indians now march boldly forward to the World Series.

On behalf of the residents of the greatest city in America, I take pride in expressing our congratulations to the Cleveland Indians, including Mike Hargrove and his excellent coaching staff, the team's general manager, John Hart, and team owner, Dick Jacobs. We also extend congratulations to the Cleveland Indians spectacular pitching staff including Dennis Martinez, and the series most valuable player, pitcher Orel Hershiser. The Cleveland Indians have demonstrated an excellence in teamwork and determination to make the dream of a world championship a reality.

When the World Series opens in Atlanta on Saturday, the Cleveland Indians will be making their first appearance since 1954, a period of 41 years. Our hearts are with the team and we will be cheering them on to victory over another great team, the Atlanta Braves.

THE REAL DEAL ON MEDICARE

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

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, this week we will have on the floor of the House so-called Medicare reform. All the American people are basically asking for is straight talk, true numbers, and the real deal.

The real deal is this: According to the Medicare trustees, we do need to make some adjustments in Medicare. How much? We need to make about \$90 billion in adjustments so that we can ensure the solvency of the trust fund for about 10 years, for the next 10 years.

The Democrats say well, that will only cost \$90 billion. So why do the Republicans say that costs \$270 billion? Why are they taking \$270 billion out of the Medicare program? They do not get any greater solvency. According to the CBO, they will only assure solvency for