

program for current and future retirees. Unfortunately, many of our political opponents are trying to turn Medicare, the Medicare crisis, into a political issue. They continue to distort the idea of protecting Medicare by scaring seniors with imagined Medicare cuts, even though, as everybody knows, the benefits go per beneficiary from \$4,800 to \$6,700.

I would just ask the Democratic leadership and the Democrats on the other side, please help us. Join up with us, roll up your sleeves, let us achieve both better care with more choices. Let us protect and strengthen Medicare.

DO NOT REPEAL MEDICARE, THE ORIGINAL CONTRACT WITH SENIORS

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, elected officials should listen more and talk less. I listened today while my Republican colleagues talked about how they intend to save Medicare. What they did not say is how they reduce expected needs of Medicare \$270 billion over 7 years and still cut taxes \$245 billion. Cut taxes, cut Medicare. Does that balance out?

Medicare. There is an estimated \$44 billion in fraud and abuse in the Medicare system. Maybe we do have some agreement on both sides, and we can cut fraud and abuse and still provide for senior health care. However, it also appears that the new Republican majority is cutting personnel in the Health Care Financing Administration, the GAO, who investigate the fraud in Medicare. Furthermore, the account in the Labor-HHS appropriation bill is \$2 million below last year for finding fraud, waste, and abuse. We need to save Medicare by cutting the fraud, but only in Washington can a \$270 billion cut be said it is to save the program. We do not need to repeal the original contract with American seniors in 1965. Happy birthday—Medicare.

PRESIDENT CLINTON MUST REALIZE THERE IS NO PEACE IN BOSNIA TO KEEP

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, how many times will we have to watch President Clinton flip-flop on his Bosnian policy before we lift the arms embargo?

How many lives are we going to have to lose before common sense wins out?

The President is upholding an embargo on a country that no longer exists that will further involve the United

States and possibly our troops in a war that is not ours to fight. We do not need U.N. control, we need U.S. control.

We keep hearing that we cannot lift the embargo because President Clinton wants to do whatever he can to keep the peace. Mr. Speaker, when is he going to realize that there is no peace to keep?

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO MEDICARE

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

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Medicare's 30th birthday, let us remember its genesis.

It was the people of this country who asked their government to enter into a partnership with them to provide security in their later years.

It was an idea supported by Presidents Truman, Kennedy, Johnson, and even Nixon.

It was an idea that worked and continues to work.

Not one of my constituents has ever written, called, or met with me asking me to gut Medicare, eliminate it, or slash its funding.

The Republicans seem to think that they can fool the citizens of this country into thinking that their massive cuts will somehow reform the system. Cuts, I might add, that are suspiciously similar to the amount of money needed for their tax break package.

Mr. Speaker, Medicare is a trust fund, not a slush fund. It is a program whose inception began with the American people and is still overwhelmingly supported by them.

Let us celebrate Medicare's 30th birthday, Mr. Speaker, not prepare for its funeral.

REPUBLICANS' PROPOSAL CONTAINS MORE, NOT LESS, SPENDING FOR MEDICARE

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

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, this truly is an amazing 20 minutes, and surely must be very confusing to those people who are listening. Perhaps if we simplify this a little and do a little of the things that we might have done in the fourth grade, and use some repetition.

The average spending per Medicare beneficiary today is \$4,800. Under the Republican plan, Medicare spending per beneficiary in the year 2002 will be \$6,700. Under this plan, Medicare spending increases by \$1,900 per beneficiary. That is a 40-percent increase. Let us try again, Mr. Speaker.

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Mr. Speaker, that is a 40-percent increase.

THE WACO TRAGEDY: THE TRUTH VERSUS DAVID KORESH'S DREAM TEAM

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

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, I have been very concerned that the actions of the ATF and the FBI were inappropriate, to say the least, in that tragedy that occurred for everyone in Waco. Therefore, as one who is concerned about the ATF and the FBI action, I observed with great interest the congressional hearings that were held in the last Congress, and I have been an equally observant watcher of the congressional hearings about Waco in this Congress. I must say, the hearings this time have been politicized, and in my judgment, worse, are really an embarrassment to this House, and to the American people who seek to find out the truth.

The Republican majority on the committee are tragically acting like the defense for the Branch Davidians. They are appearing to be David Koresh's dream team. That is embarrassing. We need to get at the truth.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2099, DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

Mr. QUILLEN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 201 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 201

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2099) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule, and the amendment printed in part 1 of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as pending. That amendment shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for thirty minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. If that amendment is adopted,