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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. LONGLEY].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 24, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable JAMES B. LONGLEY, Jr. to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of May 12, 1995, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leader limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] for 5 minutes.

BULK SALES OF SPEAKER GINGRICH'S BOOK

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, they say that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones. Well, it might also be advised that people who throw stones at glass houses should not move into glass houses.

In 1988, when then-Congressman NEWT GINGRICH led the call for an investigation into then-Speaker Jim Wright, GINGRICH claimed that Wright had violated House rules by arranging for bulk sales of a book he had authored.

At the time, GINGRICH alleged that the bulk sales were being used by Wright to get around limits on lecture fees. Now, according to a story that in yesterday's New York Daily News, Speaker GINGRICH is profiting from some bulk sales of his own.

The Daily News story reveals that Speaker GINGRICH is wracking up his own bulk sales of his book, "To Renew America." According to records, bulk sales of the Gingrich manifesto have been made to both political organizations which he has personal ties to and to organizations which have business before Congress. In one case, a company purchased 10,000 dollars' worth of Mr. GINGRICH's book. That is a lot of books.

What is wrong with that, you may ask? Plenty, according to experts on congressional ethics. In fact, Richard Phelan, the independent counsel who led the ethics investigation into the Wright book deal, said yesterday that Speaker GINGRICH's bulk sales raise a lot of questions. When asked to compare the charges against former Speaker Wright with the latest allegations against current Speaker GINGRICH, Phelan said: "There is a definite parallel."

Among the organizations that have purchased the Speaker's book in bulk, are the Rev. Jerry Falwell's Liberty University in Virginia and the Georgia Public Policy Center. Both organizations are run by Gingrich political allies and both purchases were made just prior to GINGRICH attending events sponsored by the groups.

When former prosecutor Phelan was told of one case where the bulk sales were made, just prior to a speech by GINGRICH, he said: "It could be a quid pro quo for the speech and this is precisely what we got Wright on. No, no, no, Mr. Speaker."

No, no, no, Mr. Speaker, indeed. The latest twist in the Speaker's troublesome book deal with Rupert Murdoch

only serves to underscore the need for an outside counsel to investigate the ethics charges against Mr. GINGRICH. As the Speaker himself said in 1988, when urging an outside counsel to investigate Mr. Wright:

The rules normally applied by the Ethics Committee to an investigation of a typical Member are insufficient in an investigation of the Speaker of the House, a position which is third in the line of succession to the Presidency and the second most powerful elected position in America. Clearly, this investigation has to meet a higher standard of public accountability and integrity.

The standard of public accountability and integrity cannot be expected to be upheld when the investigation into the highest ranking member of the U.S. House of Representatives is being conducted by people who are politically indebted to him.

It is hard to say "no" to the Speaker of the House. Republicans on the House Ethics Committee feel pressured to defend the Speaker's book deal, just as Republican organizations feel pressured to purchase the Speaker's book.

Without an independent, outside counsel to investigate the allegations against Speaker GINGRICH, we will never lift the ethical cloud that hangs over the House.

MEDICARE PRESERVATION ACT

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I have just concluded a number of town hall meetings in my district. I must say the response from my constituents was very favorable. My district is the sixth oldest district in America of Medicare recipients. Of the freshmen who came to the 104th Congress, I am No. 1 in seniors in my district.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Let me read to you an editorial from the Port Saint Lucie News, published by Scripps Howard, a prominent news gathering source around our Nation. The editorial says, "Slowing down not stopping." If a car was going down the highway at 70 miles per hour, and the driver let up enough on the accelerator for the speed to be reduced to 65 miles per hour, would you then say the car had stopped? Well, if you are a Democrat Member of Congress, you probably would.

Of course, if the Democrats conceded that this was just an instance of going slower, they may also have to concede that the Republicans are not planning to deprive the elderly whose savings have run out, and other poor people, of health care. The Democrats are making that case all over the land. It is preposterous and shameful.

The real issue is that the budget cannot be balanced without reducing the growth rate of entitlement programs or increasing taxes astronomically. If the budget is not balanced, interest payments on the debt will eventually consume all of the Federal budget and leave no room for anything else. What do the Democrats plan to do then?

I have received commentary from my districts through a newsletter we submitted to our constituents. Do you support the Medicare Preservation Act? They had four choices: strongly support, to strongly oppose. A gentleman, Oto Fredro, from West Palm Beach, FL, somewhat support. Would like to stay with the current Medicare plan. Oto, you can do that under the Republican's plan.

Doug Weaver, strongly support, would consider a new plan like an HMO. Also urges us to decrease funding for the B-2 bomber. Decrease money for food stamps. Increase money for Medicare. Decrease money for foreign aid. Decrease money for welfare.

Glenn Shaffer, Lake Placid, FL, strongly supports Medicare Preservation Act. But wants to stay in the current Medicare plan. Glenn, you get to stay in the current Medicare plan as you choose.

Leonard Keal from Palm City, FL, strongly support. Again, wants to stay in the Medicare plan.

Miriam Dunst, somewhat opposed, very skeptical about the plan, wants to stay with Medicare. She wants to have that choice. You can stay there and we appreciate your response.

Joseph Cerzosie from West Palm Beach, FL, strongly opposes our plan, but would like to consider an HMO. Under the current plan, he cannot select an HMO. Under our plan, you can.

Now, there has been a lot of talk about tax cuts. There has been a lot of talk about balancing Medicare in order to provide for the tax cuts. They are not related. The Post Times the other day did take on the President of the United States because, they said, he spent too much on the explanation of taxes, too little on principle. In one typically self-pitying moment, Bill

Clinton demonstrated again last week why he is a President with many enemies and also few friends. He spent Tuesday night explaining that he had raised taxes too much.

Folks in this Congress, the 104th Congress, the freshmen have come here to make a difference. We have problems in our system. Do I think the Republicans have solved all the problems in Medicare? Absolutely not. Do I think we have a silver bullet to erase years of wasteful spending in our system? Absolutely not.

I want to target fraud, waste, and abuse in our bill. I want to strengthen the provisions that we brought to this floor, strengthen the provisions for fraud and abuse. Anyone who rips off our taxpayers should do jail time. Anyone who rips off our taxpayers in Medicare should have their licenses removed, be it a hospital, be it an insurance company, be it a provider.

But, ladies and gentlemen, make no bones about it; when I come from the sixth oldest district in America and I had over 700 people attend my town hall meetings saying to me, help save Medicare, nobody is screaming at me. Nobody yelling at me. One of two people threatened to throw me out of office, which is the risk of this business. Nobody is saying that this was the horrible plan. They want explanations.

One person got up in one meeting and said I had done a terrible thing and I was voting against him. The New York Times was with us, following that meeting. One person gets up to speak negatively about our plan, their headlines, tough Medicaid meeting. It was not a tough meeting. The public supports us, and I am proud to represent the 16th District of Florida.

GINGRICH BOOK DEAL

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, once again we are confronted in the press with reports of violations of House rules with respect to our Speaker of the House, Speaker GINGRICH. That is the bulk sale of his books to organizations that have connections to the Speaker and have been supportive of the Speaker or in fact have contributed to the Speaker in the past.

We saw, unfortunately, in the past when the Speaker engaged in this same activity, he later had to resign from office for this transgression of House rules. The suggestion here is because the commission is somewhat smaller, therefore it is right. No, it is not. The house rules prevent that.

This is the second time in a matter of a week and a half where revelations have again appeared in the press suggesting that the Speaker's political action committee, GOPAC, was more deeply involved and involved earlier in Federal campaigns and campaigns for

Members of Congress and trying to change the majority in Congress before it was authorized to do so.

The New York article that was published a couple of weeks ago outlines exactly what took place in communications between GOPAC and members of the Republican Party. So where are we?

We are a year later. What is an ethics committee and a chairman of that ethics committee doing that continues to try to manage the investigation and to manage the spin and to manage the flow of information to Members of Congress, to the press, and to the public rather than engaging in an investigation. A year later, when witnesses still have not been called, when documents have still not been subpoenaed, and information has not been gone through that is relevant to this information, according to the popular press.

What we need, what this House needs and what this House deserves and what the American people deserve is a full-blown independent investigation, not an investigation managed by Members of the Speaker's party who are indebted to the Speaker politically in this House or for their daily activities in the House or to their districts. What we need is an investigation, as the Speaker called for for the previous Speaker, and that is an independent counsel. As the Speaker said of the previous Speaker, if you have done nothing wrong, you have nothing to fear.

What this House cannot tolerate and what Members of this House cannot tolerate and what the public should not tolerate is the continued efforts to try to manage this investigation, to get past the Contract With America. Then they wanted to manage it to get past the Medicare fight. Then they wanted to manage it to get past reconciliation. Then there is a question of whether the Speaker is going to run for President. Will the revolution continue?

Those are all interesting. Those all may be consequences of the Speaker's activities and the consequences of this investigation, but they are not reasons of which an independent investigation should be forgone.

We are talking about the most powerful Member of this House, obviously one of the most powerful politicians in the country, one of most powerful people in line of succession to the President of the United States. The suggestion is somehow that we are going to manage and we are going to change the nature of the investigations that this Congress is engaged in in the past when it has to unfortunately investigate one of its own. That is that you have to eventually get to an individual, an independent counsel.

Apparently the ethics committee has arrived at this conclusion after a year of seeing that they could not properly handle this investigation. So now what they are trying to do is to manage the charter of the independent counsel, to suggest that he can only go down road A, but he cannot go down road B, he