

day that many Members of this body will be at the funeral of a distinguished statesman, a Republican colleague, the late Honorable Steve Schiff in Albuquerque.

Unfortunately, on Monday, it will not only be Mr. Schiff who is buried, but campaign finance, an incredible action in which Members are denied any opportunity to offer an amendment, any opportunity to debate beyond 20 minutes per side, and in which, if after all those contortions to defeat campaign finance, if that is not enough, if only a simple majority of this body should vote for campaign finance reform, it would be defeated because they demand a two-thirds vote. A disgrace has occurred here today.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I was going to take a 5-minute special order, but because of all the tactics that have been employed today, I will not have that time to get into the details.

I would just like to say that the outrage that has been expressed regarding the campaign finance reform bill should also include the dilatory tactics employed by the White House in keeping the Independent Counsel from getting information that is necessary to conclude his investigation into illegal campaign finances and into the allegations that took place down at the White House regarding Ms. Lewinsky.

Now the White House is claiming executive privilege to drag this investigation out and drag it out and drag it out and keep Mr. Starr from getting to the bottom of it. They have done this on four separate occasions here in the House of Representatives by claiming executive privilege. It did not work. They have done it three times in the courts, and it did not work. It will not work this time.

But the White House continues to drag it out and drag it out. And the President continues to take these trips abroad to try to take attention away from this scandal that is taking place. It will not work.

But the President should make a clean breast of this and stop this from going on and on and on as he has over the past several months. He should not claim executive privilege. It has not worked in the past, and it will not work now.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, as the newest Member of Congress, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

I am very interested in campaign finance reform, and I wish to know how to sign the discharge petition which will bring this discussion to the floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The petition resides with the Journal Clerk at the desk.

Mrs. CAPPS. I thank the Speaker. May I sign it now?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Yes.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

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

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe what we have just heard from the other side of the aisle here, the substance of which was pathetic. Can you imagine trying some way, somehow to excuse the outrageous behavior of the Republican leadership on the floor of House of Representatives right now?

Every major newspaper in the country was outraged at the fact that they had a rigged rule. If that was not bad enough to have a rigged rule, they took that off, because the McCain-Feingold-Shays-Meehan bill was about to pass this House. Now they are going to bring up the campaign financial reform suspension, unprecedented, that requires a two-thirds vote before anything could pass.

The leaders of campaign finance reform in this institution are outraged. The American people get what is going on. It is an outrage that this leadership is going to, after promising campaign finance reform, is going to bring this up when one of our Members is being buried and other Members want to be out at the service.

I cannot believe the total disregard to the public interest that we have seen here this afternoon, an absolute outrage. I have never seen it this bad before. The American people see what is going on here, and it is a disgrace.

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SHAMEFUL LEADERSHIP PLAGUES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Speaker, I am a member of the freshman class, a freshman class that came in here on the role of amending our campaign finance laws to make it better for all citizens to participate in this Congress. It was a bipartisan commission of freshmen, freshmen Republicans and Democrats, who crafted a bill, who worked hard all last year and this year.

So what does the Republican leadership do here today? It says, to heck with all that you have done, to heck with the people of America, do not consider what is a bipartisan, good-faith effort to revise our laws with regard to an open government. We are going to close it down. We are going to take what we have done in a smoke-filled back room and put it before you and try to jam it down the throats of America. That is what the Republican leadership has said here today.

We should be ashamed of what they have done, we should be ashamed of the

leadership that they have shown America, and we should vote down anything they present to us next week; and I ask my fellow colleagues, particularly the freshmen, to oppose what they are doing to us next week and oppose what they are doing to America.

REPUBLICANS CANNOT STAND OPEN DEBATE ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, after 15 months, after 15 months and campaign scandals across this country, the best the Republican leadership can come up with is to give Members in the House of Representatives 20 minutes of debate on hand-picked, hand-selected pieces of the campaign finance reform issue.

It is an insult to the American people, it is an insult to the membership of this House, it is an insult to the constituents that we represent, because we tell them that we can come here and debate the great issues that confront this country, but NEWT GINGRICH and the Republicans have decided they cannot stand an open debate on campaign finance reform. They cannot stand a little bit of sunshine on an issue that plagues our democratic institutions, scandals that are across this country, scandals that beset every officeholder in this country, but we cannot debate it in front of the American people.

While Members are away at a funeral, they are going to debate it and then vote later that night. It is an insult. It is no wonder, 20 minutes after 15 months, 20 minutes. That is the best that Speaker GINGRICH can come up with. What a fraud, what a deception. No wonder we are adjourning on April Fools Day.

No wonder we are adjourning, because the fools are going home without doing campaign finance reform.

REPUBLICANS SHOULD RECONSIDER SHAMEFUL TACTICS

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I serve on the Committee on House Oversight. It was said that this legislation was brought to the committee. Let me disabuse any of my colleagues on the theory that this got any kind of thoughtful consideration in committee. It certainly will not receive any thoughtful consideration on the floor under the procedures that have been devised by the majority.

A bill was noticed to the members of the committee less than 24 hours before we marked it up in committee. We met, we offered some substantive amendments; they were rejected on a straight party line vote, and without