

have an obligation to build schools in this country and to make those facilities available for our children like our parents did for us, because, Mr. Speaker, nearly one in every three schools in America today was built before World War II.

□ 1515

That is just not right, and we can do better and we must do better for the children of this country.

Let us talk about safer classrooms. Drug use among our 12th graders, over half of whom have already tried drugs, is up. Only 30 percent of public elementary schools in this country have after-school programs and in rural areas, such as where I am from in Texas, the number drops to 12 percent. The Federal Government should continue to make grants available to work in partnership with local government and communities for prevention, for early intervention and enforcement efforts.

Further, we should authorize funding for school-based partnerships between local law enforcement agencies and school districts to combat crime, to combat drug activities and to make sure that our children have a safe place to learn.

Finally, better technology. Give our kids the skills they are going to need for the jobs that are coming up in the next century. We need to ensure that our children have the necessary technology in the classroom. That means modern computers, Internet connections, educational software, educated, well-paid, enthused, encouraged teachers that are ready, willing and able to teach our children.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRADY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SOLOMON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CHANGE IN ORDER OF TAKING SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BOB SCHAFFER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to substitute for the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BOB SCHAFFER).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

HMO REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Speaker, I want to comment on the tone that we heard from the gentleman from Connecticut.

I am a physician. I still practice. What we were supposed to have received from Mr. GEJDENSON was that the problems in the health care field today have come about because of this Congress. They have come about because of a law called ERISA that this Congress a number of years ago passed. And the thing that strikes me rather peculiarly is what we hear as HMO attacks instead of attacks on physicians who are not doing their job.

The number one job of a physician is to do no harm. I want to tell my colleagues, if I do an outpatient surgery, which I do almost every weekend, and my patient is not ready to go home, I fight and fight and fight, but I do not give up. My patient stays there until they are ready to go home. Do you know what? I win those battles with HMOs. I do not lose those battles. What we are really hearing is the inability of physicians to have backbone to stand up.

The law that created the situation that we have today was created several years ago, not by a conservative Republican Congress, but by a rather liberal Democrat Congress. I do not usually say anything partisan on this floor, but the tone of the speech is inappropriate for this august body. To not challenge that tone will do more to destroy this institution than anything I know. We passed a bill, it is called the Patient Protection Act. It is not designed to put more lawyers at work and increase health insurance costs by lining the pockets of people who are going to challenge HMOs through the court system. There is no question we have to make changes. Those changes are being made. They have been made with this Congress. But the very idea that this Congress, this Republican Congress, is responsible for the emotional diatribe that we just heard is anything but the truth.

The truth is, we have tremendous cost pressures on health care in this country. HMOs have done a lot to help us solve those problems. Are they perfect? No. Have they made mistakes? No. Is there any physician before HMOs were created that has not made a similar mistake of letting someone go home too soon? No. So we can emotionalize these issues. We can try to make them a campaign issue, but what we do is serious damage to the real problems that we have to solve in this country.

And my heart is broken that we have the kind of discourse that we have in this House that creates a false paper tiger and then sets it down. To the American public, I apologize for what we heard in the past 30 minutes from the gentleman from Connecticut. It is my hope that we can carry on conversations in this House that come up to the level of integrity, honesty and maturity that this House deserves.

CHANGE IN ORDER OF TAKING SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to substitute for the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Hawaii?

There was no objection.

ON THE EDUCATION AGENDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I think it is a very unusual occasion that we are experiencing today, that this House would be engaged in discussing important issues on a Sunday. It is even more unusual because we had expected to adjourn on October 9, Friday. We were given a calendar that so indicated.

The reason that we are all here on a Sunday and expect to even be meeting on a Federal holiday tomorrow is that the Republican-controlled Congress has not been able to work out its own differences with respect to very, very important bills, particularly those that the Constitution requires that we pass before we go home having to do the funding of government.

I rise today to pay special attention to the items that I am concerned with on the education agenda. I came to the Congress initially in 1965 because I was deeply concerned about the future of education at that point. Ever since then in the 20 years that I have served in Congress, I have spent almost the entire time by serving on the education committee. I also serve on budget. I asked to be assigned to budget because I felt that so many of the issues that related to education were dependent upon funding. So some years ago I sought a seat on the Committee on the Budget and I was so honored to serve. We worked very hard. We produced our budget resolution and for the first time since the budget process was enacted in the early 1970s, this is the first time that the Congress has not voted on a budget resolution.

So something is happening within the Republican majority that has caused us to be here today on a Sunday and not to be able to finish on time. One of the major bills that we have not been able to pass is the Labor, HHS, Education appropriations bill. It never came out of our House Committee on Appropriations and it is still locked in tremendous disagreement within the Republican conference, as well as with the Senate and with the administration and with House Democrats.

Earlier there were comments about the President's schedule and how he was not attending to the business at hand. I would like to say that this Congress has a record of only being in session 106 days this entire year up to Friday, October 9. This is a record of

sorts. I have not gone through all the history, but certainly this must be a record of inattention to the country's business and certainly by the number of bills enacted, this is one of the shabbiest of all records. We have only enacted 241 bills.

So getting back to the appropriations bills, I want to point out some of the real differences. The appropriations bill, as it came out of our House Committee on Appropriations, cut about \$2 billion from the administration's education budget initiatives. Goals 2000, for instance, the school reform bill, the appropriations bill cut funding for Goals 2000 by \$245 million or by 50 percent below fiscal year 1998 levels. It would have reduced the ability of 6,000 schools to serve 3 million students nationwide to implement the school reform efforts. Goals 2000 has been a primary target of the Republican majority. It was one of those programs that was included in the so-called Dollars to the Classroom effort which eliminated, consolidated 31 programs into one gigantic block grant authorizing the States to spend that money in any way they wished.

So here again Goals 2000 has been cut back. School to work cuts, the appropriations bill cuts funding for school to work by \$250 million, 63 percent below fiscal year 1998 levels, undermining the ability of over a million students in 3,000 high schools to experience this exemplary program. Here again, schools to work was one of the programs listed in the Dollars to the Classroom bill which consolidated 31 programs in a block grant. So again the appropriations bill kind of expresses the sentiment of the Republican majority that they want to wipe out this program.

CHANGE IN ORDER OF TAKING SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to substitute for the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

DEEP DISAGREEMENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, once again it is important to point out why we are here. We have a Democratic President and a Republican Congress with disagreements. We have disagreements that are deep and heartfelt. However, we have known these disagreements since at least January 1, probably for the last 4 years since. Every year at this time we come down

to the same disagreements. It is over protection of human life. It is over national testing, over the census. It is whether to and how to spend the budget surplus. It is over tax cuts, over IMF and U.N. funding. This list is no surprise. We have known it all year long. So where have the negotiators been? Why can we not sit down, or is there something else going on? Is there something that maybe perhaps the President of the United States would like to take attention away from and try to relive 1995, where we can try to say the Republicans are trying to do a shutdown.

It is pretty clear that we have surrendered almost everything in this appropriations bill and that there is an election going on and those of us who are in the House have to run this year. We are not the ones holding up the process right now. We have been trying to negotiate. We have been trying to work through. Later on today in a special order I want to point out something that I have been going through, this new book on the tapes of Richard Nixon, which were released for the first time. Thanks to the efforts of the author, Stanley Cutler, we can now read in actual words much of the abuse of power that goes through.

I am struck by the similarities that have occurred in this White House. I want to just kind of give you an overview of what I want to go into in more detail later.

One, limit the testimony. This is Haldeman talking to Nixon. So they have granted Sloan temporary immunity and he is going to cover what he knows about the Watergate stuff, which is nothing, and that gets him out of the thing. Two, limit the scope of the investigation, just as the FBI director and Mr. LaBella have alleged this Justice Department is doing. Peterson of the Justice Department is working with that knowledge directing the investigation along the channels that will not produce the kind of answers we don't want produced. Three, finish now, no fishing expedition. This is about a year and a half before the impeachment hearings. Nixon says it is over, otherwise it is a fishing expedition. We have had enough of this. Four, early on they were overstating the potential damage. They talk about trying to build up expectations of indictments and then pulling it back. Five, they complained about spending too much money on investigation. Dean tells the President the resources that have been put against this whole investigation to date are really incredible. It is larger than the JFK assassination. Six, build up expectations so the news is less damaging as it comes out. Seven, October 13, 1972 discussion, they complained about the press obsession. Eight, they took advantage of the public's belief that Presidents actually act logically.

I will go through the actual transcripts later. Nine, this is incredible, what is it, December 11, 1972, Nixon, Haldeman and Erlichman. Erlichman

says the Watergate thing, I don't think there is anything to add to what we have already said. Haldeman says, you might resay it. Erlichman, that nobody in the government did this thing. Haldeman says, do you White House. Nixon says, what do you mean Watergate White House. Nobody currently in the government. Haldeman says, currently employed in the government, say currently employed. Nixon says, ever involved in the government. Erlichman says, now you have Liddy and Hunt who were at one time employed.

□ 1530

Nixon says, but while they were doing it even, while they were doing it. Erlichman, that's right. Then employed I could say. Nixon says, no one who is an employee of the White House, who is an employee of the White House. And Erlichman says, either at the time of the incident or since? And Nixon says, or since, that's what I mean. Erlichman says, yes. 10, the everybody does it defense. Our Democratic friends said a lot of these things, too, and never got caught, Nixon says. 11, this is just partisan politics. Haldeman tells Nixon, because for the first time in our history we have one of the political parties using the machinery of government to investigate the other political party. Boy, I've been hearing that a lot. 12, coordinate the witnesses. 13, conspiracy to commit perjury. They discuss that. 14, Hidden clues in their testimony and how Sam Erwin was able to pick it out. 15, unapologizing. Nixon says in a conversation with Ray Price, the President, the only problem is that if you get sackclothed too much then you know you no longer can be President. If you go too far in terms of saying, well, I take all the blame and I don't blame these poor fellows and all that, then you think, well, this poor dumb President, why didn't he resign? 16, whining about the special prosecutor and the grand jury. 17, the country is fed up with all this. Haig tells the President, the country is just fed up with all this. It just wants to get on. That is all through the book, by the way. 18, is that all they're doing back there? Dole tells the President, May 23, 1973, Dole, my farmers have criticized, you know, is that all they're doing back there, all they're talking about is Watergate, what about the farm bill, the REA bill, they're sick of it. 19, rally the party's Members of Congress. This is coming towards the end. They say, why don't we go down to the Hill and talk to all the, Dole and Bush are meeting with the President and Dole says to talk just frankly about how important this is that the Republicans, not for Richard Nixon but for the presidency and the party that we do something, and Bush says, I like that, it's a great idea. Then there is even the loyal scheduler, Nixon and Rosemary Woods. He says to take something home. And she says she has it already home, at his request.