

Nation and serves as a guide on where to spend our resources from the Government. The Speaker and the minority leader should be urging all Members to work with and encourage their constituents to participate in this important civic ceremony.

SMITH AND WESSON LATEST VICTIM OF WHITE HOUSE ASSAULT ON DEMOCRACY

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

Mr. LARGENT. Mr. Speaker, Smith and Wesson is but the latest victim of the administration's assault on democracy. The recent so-called voluntary agreement by the gun manufacturer follows a familiar script. First, the administration proposed mandatory trigger locks. Then, finding insufficient support among Congress, the people's representatives, the administration turned to ulterior, undemocratic means, to achieve its purpose. They threatened to unleash the full weight of the Federal Government upon the maker of a legal product by suing them into oblivion.

Guess what? The maker of the legal product decided to voluntarily do what the administration asked.

The administration makes no attempt to conceal the power grab. Last week's Wall Street Journal quoted White House domestic policy advisor, Bruce Reed, as stating the agreement shows that "the public good does not have to be held hostage to legislative stalemate." Legislative stalemate? Mr. Reed, it is called democracy.

Mr. Speaker, gun legislation has not moved because the majority of the people believe that those who pull the trigger are the ones actually responsible for the outcome, not gun manufacturers or law-abiding citizens who own firearms and use them responsibly.

The administration calls this voluntary; I call it extortion.

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LET US STAND AND BE COUNTED IN THE CENSUS

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

EXTENDING CONCERN TO FAMILIES AFFECTED BY TEXAS DISASTERS

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me offer my concern to our families and friends in the Fort Worth, Texas area with the terrible tornado that they experienced last evening, and to our families and friends in the Harris County area, with Phillips Petroleum, with the terrible tragedy of the explosion that happened at that plant.

Mr. Speaker, however, this morning, I want to talk about the importance and crucialness of the Census, not only

in this Nation but particularly in the State of Texas, where, from the 1990 Census, the State of Texas lost \$1 billion by undercounting 400,000 people.

Unfortunately, the State of Texas has a 33 percent return, but the fourth largest city in the Nation only has a 26 percent return. That is the city of Houston. Why? Because frivolous lawsuits are being filed alleging an invasion of privacy, not recognizing that this responsibility is a constitutional responsibility and that in fact these questions have not ever been proven to have been used or misused by the Census Bureau.

We need to have the information on the homeless, and I applaud the efforts being made by them. I ask of the INS not to do unnecessary and provocative raids of immigrants to discourage them from being counted. We must count every single person in the United States. We all must count. This is a constitutional right and responsibility and duty. Let us stand up and be counted.

THE EDUCATION SAVINGS AND SCHOOL EXCELLENCE ACT

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

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the House will consider the Education Savings and School Excellence Act. The proposal allows parents to invest more in their child's education. It allows other relatives, such as grandparents, aunts, and uncles, to invest in a child's education. A parent's employer may contribute, too.

These vital education resources will be made available to cover education expenses that best meet the child's need, be it a tutor, books, tuition, or even a computer.

H.R. 7 would help the families of at least 52 million children. Seventy percent of the tax savings under our Education Savings and School Excellence Act will go to children in public schools whose parents make less than \$75,000 a year, and 76 percent of the children who will benefit from ESA's attend public schools.

Promoting greater investment in learning is not an issue of rich versus poor or Democrat versus Republican, it is about fairness. It is about doing what is right.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues, let us pass H.R. 7, the Education Savings and School Excellence Act. Let us make sure no child is left behind.

GUN SAFETY

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, every day the Republican leadership wastes by not convening the Juvenile Justice Conference Committee, 13 children are

wasted as a result of gun violence. That is 13 children gone forever. This is not a game, this is about children's lives.

Our children need safety locks, they need effective background checks, and they need the NRA to loosen its grip on the Republican leadership. They need these things now. Guns kill. It is that simple.

According to the Justice Department, Federal gun prosecutions are up 16 percent, State and local gun prosecutions have risen 22 percent, but our children are still dying. The Republican leadership must convene a meeting of the Juvenile Justice Conference Committee to expand gun safety measures and protect our children.

I urge my Republican colleagues to stop playing politics with children's lives and start working on meaningful gun safety legislation. Our children's lives depend on it.

SUPPORT THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET AND ELIMINATE THE PUBLIC DEBT

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, Republicans have a plan to pay Uncle Sam's credit card bills. For over 30 years, tax and spend liberals have racked up an enormous debt. It is just now beginning to be paid down, thanks to the GOP majority in the House and Senate.

In our budget, we will pay down \$3.6 trillion, yes, that is \$3.6 trillion, in public debt by the year 2013.

Why does this matter? If we ask a family in my district if they live better without debt, or if they would rather be sitting on massive credit card bills with high interest rates, it is pretty easy to guess the answer will be the former. They will have a hard time understanding the fact that a sizable chunk of our annual budget goes to pay creditors because government spending cannot be kept under control.

Mr. Speaker, paying the public debt will benefit everyone. Seniors will not have their social security funds raided, homebuyers will have lower mortgage rates, car buyers will have lower interest rates. This country will function better with a zero balance and maybe even a surplus to be given back to the taxpayer.

It is time to lift the burden of debt off our children. It is time to support the Republican budget and eliminate the public debt.

URGING HOUSE MEMBERS TO ENCOURAGE CONSTITUENTS TO RETURN CENSUS FORMS

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, Census forms are due. The Census form, the

short form, is impressively short. It takes less than 10 minutes to fill out. I urge Members to help raise consciousness and raise the heat to get these forms back.

I am having a job fair in my district today at the Convention Center from 4 to 10 p.m. to recruit Census enumerators at a rate of \$15 to \$17 per hour. It may sound like a lot, but actually, the cost to send live bodies out to count live bodies is about twice that.

To save the government money, Members need to be visible in urging constituents to return their forms, and at least have a job fair for good jobs for people to help us correct the undercount.

URGING CAUTION ON FURTHER AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN COLOMBIA

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

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, this is the day! March 29, 2000, is the day that, unless something changes, this House of Representatives will decide to become involved in a lengthy and expensive military action in the country of Colombia.

There are a lot of questions that we do not know about plan Colombia, but we do know this, that at best it will take us 6 years to do the job, and probably twice that length. It will involve us in supporting a military action against guerillas on the left and narco terrorists on the right. Also, it will cost billions and billions of dollars, all without a full hearing and all without a full national debate.

This should not be a partisan issue, Mr. Speaker. Today I will vote for the Obey amendment which will say, at least let's put the brakes on \$500 million of this appropriation until we know what we are doing. We ought to be fully informed, and the American people ought to be fully informed, before we embark on a course of action which will last for decades and cost billions of American dollars with doubtful results.

CONGRESS MUST PASS SENSIBLE GUN SAFETY LEGISLATION

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the passage of sensible gun safety legislation. These laws would help bring an end to the many unnecessary deaths occurring at the hands of our children and upon our children.

We promised the American people commonsense gun control. We have not delivered on that promise. In fact, we have gone in the other direction, engaging in a war of words only. Now the Congress must act responsibly and at least insist that the conferees to the juvenile justice bill meet immediately.

In my district in Northern California, the Oakland City Council has taken a strong stance on gun safety. They are putting human lives first by prohibiting the sale of compact handguns, penalizing firearms straw sales, and prohibiting people under the age of 18 from entering establishments that display firearms.

Yet here in Congress we will not even take the minimum steps, such as child safety trigger locks, to ensure the safety of our children. We can no longer afford to play partisan politics while so many children's lives remain at stake. We must pass gun safety legislation, and demand that the conferees to the juvenile justice bill meet immediately.

LET US PASS H.R. 7 AND PROVIDE AMERICAN CHILDREN A GOOD BASIC EDUCATION

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

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, the airplane, the theory of relativity, the polio vaccine, Mr. Speaker, all of these discoveries occurred during the 20th century, and they have changed our society. None of these extraordinary accomplishments would have been possible without a basic education.

Yet, as we begin a new century, American children striving to achieve great things already start at a disadvantage. Our Nation's education system ranks well below other industrialized nations. In fact, in math and science, our 12th graders rank among the lowest in the world.

In a nation as great as America, there is no excuse for this. American children deserve more. That is why I support H.R. 7, legislation that allows family to set aside money tax-free for proven education improvements such as tutors, computers, and books. Fifty-two million families of school-age children, 76 percent of whom attend public schools, would benefit from this bill. It is time we prepared our children to succeed in the 21st century. Let us pass H.R. 7.

MEMBERS SHOULD SUPPORT AMENDMENT TO SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL TO ADDRESS GROUND FISHING DISASTER FOR WEST COAST FAMILIES

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

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, the House today will take up a supplemental appropriations bill which shows tremendous disrespect for hard-working rural coastal community families on the West Coast of the United States. There is a groundfish disaster occurring on the West Coast because a Federal agency has basically shut down groundfishing on the West Coast, causing several thousand families hardship.

There were funds in this bill which have been removed, and despite a bipartisan amendment proposed to restore those funds sponsored by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) and I, by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPP) and the gentleman from California (Mr. KUYKENDALL), this amendment was not made in order.

I intend to bring this amendment to the floor of the House today. I ask the support of my fellow Members to address this groundfish disaster that is drastically affecting West Coast hard-working rural community families. It is a commonsense bipartisan proposal to address a true emergency that is occurring today.

UNNECESSARY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS AND UNWISE MILITARY ADVENTURISM IN COLOMBIA

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

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, the current budget this year authorizes an expenditure of \$1.789 trillion. We would think that would be enough. The President has asked for an additional \$4 billion. After the House leadership thought about this, they decided to give him \$9 billion.

Quite frankly, I think there is enough waste and fraud in the current budget that we could find the \$4 billion if this expenditure were necessary. If we ever considered cutting back on some unconstitutional spending, we would have plenty of funds to take care of additional expenditures and have a lot left over.

But we should be very cautious about what we are doing today by expanding our involvement in Colombia. We are now moving into Colombia and spending a lot of money and expanding our war in this area. We should not be spending our money on military adventurism. We should be taking this money and spending it to build up our military defenses. We should be using this money to pay our military personnel more money, give them better housing and better education and better medical care.

What we are doing today, if we pass this bill, is we are going to move into another area of the world where we have no constitutional interest.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NUSSLE). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the pending business is the question of agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal of the last day's proceedings.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum