

Mr. Speaker, has America lost its way?

And let's not forget Hugo Chavez, the tyrant of Venezuela who railed against the United States. He spoke also at the U.N. He is good buddies with the desert rat of Iran. And a New York district attorney recently said that there is evidence that Venezuela is setting up a Venezuelan missile crisis for the United States. Now isn't that lovely. Why do we send U.S. taxpayer money to the U.N. at all? Twenty percent of U.N. funds come from the United States, and the American public is asking: Why? Why do we finance the U.N. that embraces thugs, dictators, terrorists and everyone who hates America and Israel.

Mr. Speaker, since nobody else over at the U.N. has said it, I will, and I will say this without apology: The United States is the greatest country in the history of the world. We have more freedom and liberty than any people in the history of the planet. We have done more than any other nation to help some of the most ungrateful people around the planet in history.

We should not abandon our missile defense system in Poland. We should reevaluate our financial commitment to the United Nations, and we should never give American money to tyrants of nations in the hope of a blissful illusion of buying peace.

Mr. Speaker, has America lost its way? We shall see.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

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

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

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

#### MEDICARE AND GAG ORDERS

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, the Congressional Budget Office headed by Mr. Elmendorf, who is the director, told Senator BAUCUS that his plan to cut \$123 billion from Medicare Advantage, the program

that gives one-fourth of seniors private health insurance options, will result in lower benefits and some 2.7 million people losing their coverage.

Last week, Mr. BAUCUS ordered the Medicare regulators to investigate and likely punish Humana, Incorporated for trying to educate enrollees in its Advantage plans about precisely this fact.

Jonathan Blum, who is the acting director of a regulator office in the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, who used to work for Senator BAUCUS, said that a mailer Humana sent to its customers was "misleading and confusing to beneficiaries who may believe it represents official communication about the Medicare Advantage program."

Mr. Blum has also banned all Advantage contractors from telling their customers what Mr. Elmendorf has told Congress. Mr. Blum, as I said, happens to be a former senior aide to Mr. BAUCUS and a health adviser to the President Obama transition team. So for the record, CBO's Director Elmendorf says that cuts to Medicare Advantage "could lead many plans to limit the benefits they offer, raise their premiums, or withdraw from the program."

But they want to put a gag on the deliverers of this coverage because they are writing to their patients, to the people they are covering, and telling them that they are going to lose coverage if this bill passes, that Medicare Advantage is going to be gutted. Senator BAUCUS is now saying we want to put a gag in the mouths of people who are providing this coverage so they can't tell the senior citizens of this country that they are going to lose Medicare Advantage coverage.

That is a violation of the First Amendment. And, secondly, I don't know of any rule that would allow Senator BAUCUS to do this. This is absolutely a terrible thing. And Mr. Blum doesn't have the authority to do this. Mr. BAUCUS, Senator BAUCUS, does not have the authority to do this, and yet they are gagging the health care providers, the people who are insuring these people and providing coverage, by saying you can't tell them that they are going to lose Medicare Advantage.

The plan of Mr. BAUCUS and other plans here in the House and the Senate are going to cut \$500 billion out of Medicare, and most of it is coming out of Medicare Advantage and they are trying to keep the seniors in this country from knowing it until they get the job done. That is criminal.

First they violate the First Amendment rights of these companies. And, second, they gag them and threaten them with criminal prosecution or some kind of penalties if they don't adhere to what Senator BAUCUS or Mr. Blum says. And then they don't let the American people, the seniors who vote more than anybody else, know that they are going to lose Medicare Advantage and they are going to take \$500 billion out of Medicare coverage.

Seniors need to know this, and yet they are gagging the people who are trying to get the facts out. This is just dead wrong. It should not happen. This is government control in its worst form, and it is something that we should not tolerate.

In addition, I want to read into the RECORD a letter that I got from Dr. Ned Masbaum, who is a forensic psychiatrist in Indianapolis, and he wrote this about the American Medical Association:

"Dear Congressman Burton,

"Thank you for your very well-thought out letter. When I heard about the new AMA position supporting socialized medicine, I felt a sickening feeling in the pit of my stomach. I have been a member of the AMA for over 40 years. Unfortunately, it has gradually become a leftist political cheerleader with the usual pro-abortion and anti-Second Amendment drivel. However, this illiterate position for socialized medicine betrays its own members and the American citizenry. It is so blindsided that it also eliminates the need for the very existence of the American Medical Association. If we all become serfs for the government, we no longer need a formerly scientific professional organization.

"With the AMA headquarters in Chicago, the AMA president and his ilk must have been polluted with Chicago-style politics and their brains have turned to mush.

"This morning, I had a lengthy teleconference concerning the issue with the executive vice president of the Indiana State Medical Association, James G. McIntire, J.D. Apparently ISMA has not yet taken any position. I have also written a letter to the president of the AMA, a copy of which is enclosed, advising my opposition and the intent to resign as a member.

"Please keep up the good fight."

This is the kind of information that needs to get out to Americans. Seniors need to know they are going to lose coverage and \$500 billion is going to be cut out of Medicare.

CARMEL, IN,  
July 22, 2009.

Re your letter of 20 July concerning the AMA.

Hon. DAN BURTON,  
House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN BURTON: Thank you for your very well thought out letter. When I heard about the new AMA position supporting socialized medicine, I felt a sickening feeling in the pit of my stomach. I have been a member of the AMA for over 40 years. Unfortunately, it has gradually become a leftist political cheerleader with the usual pro-abortion & anti-second amendment dribble. However, this illiterate position for socialized medicine betrays its own members and the American Citizenry. It is so blindsided that it also eliminates the need for the very existence of the AMA. If we all become serfs for the government we no longer need a formerly scientific professional organization.

With the AMA headquarters in Chicago, the AMA President and his ilk must have