

a letter from Mr. George Halvorson who heads up one of the largest health groups in the Twin Cities of the State of Minnesota. He took out an ad recently and the headline is, "Who buys prescription drugs at ten cents on the dollar?"

Let me read this, please, and this is a quote. "The cost of prescription drugs varies to an amazing degree between countries. If you have a stomach ulcer and your doctor says you need to be on prilosec, you would probably pay about \$99.95 for a 30-day supply in the Twin Cities. But if you were vacationing in Canada and decided to fill your prescription there, you would pay only \$50.88. Or even better, if you were looking for a little warmer weather south of the border in Mexico, that same day 30-day supply would cost you only \$17.50. That is for the same dose, made by the same manufacturer.

□ 1030

"When the North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA) was passed by Congress to allow free trade between us and our neighboring countries, HealthPartners decided to follow the lead of Minnesota Senior Federation and buy our drugs in Canada", but the FDA is standing between them. Today I am going to introduce legislation to respond to this problem.

THE BLUE DOG BUDGET FITS

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

Mr. JOHN. Mr. Speaker, today, 35 days into the fiscal year, we have not finished but only half of our appropriations bills up to this point.

The majority leadership up to this point has been fairly innovative and clever at trying to maneuver around the balanced budget agreement caps and making sure they are not spending Social Security surplus money. But I tell my colleagues today that they failed miserably. Even their own appointed CBO director says that they have broken the caps and spent \$17 billion of Social Security money.

Truly it is time that we be honest and straightforward with the people of America. The Blue Dogs in the spring of last year introduced a budget proposal that fit then, and it fits now. It says take 50 percent of the surplus over 5 years, pay down the debt, use those savings to shore up Social Security, take 25 percent in a targeted tax cut, whether it is a State, marriage penalty, or capital gains, take the other 25 percent for priority spending on veterans or education or defense.

Let us stop playing games with the American people. Follow the blueprint of the Blue Dogs. It saves Social Security; and most of all, it is responsible and honest.

ONLY HALF A NOTCH IN AMERICA'S BELT WILL SAVE SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, some time ago, the Democrats sent a letter to the Congressional Budget Office, the CBO, and it had some bogus ground rules; and what they got back said that we were spending Social Security under these bogus ground rules.

Their whole purpose for doing that is so that they can spend more money. They have shown the programs and they have talked about the programs that they want to spend the extra money on. Well, rest in peace, liberal big government. We are not going to do it.

In fact, we have got a letter from the Congressional Budget Officer that says, if we do not spend more than \$592.1 billion on domestic discretionary spending, we will not spend any Social Security surplus. Along with that, we have put in a 1 percent across-the-board cut, which is like taking a half a notch in this belt, just tightening up just a half a notch. That is all we would have to do, and we passed that; and, in fact, we are not going to spend the Social Security surplus. That is the fact of the matter. The Congressional Budget Office confirmed that in a letter.

Now, if we are going to do what they are recommending, we would have to take four notches up in this belt. Now, America knows we could do that four notches and protect Social Security, but yet the liberals have failed to offer any program reduction.

DO SOMETHING CONSTRUCTIVE; PASS THE BLUE DOG BUDGET

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

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I do not come down here and do 1-minute very often most of the time, I think most of the people that listen to these agree, that it is hurling insults back and forth across this table here, and that is not very constructive.

But what I did want to come down this morning to say is that the Blue Dogs offered a budget last April. We are in a mess. We are into November. There is still no agreements in sight. There is a blame game going on here about who wants to spend Social Security money. That is not very constructive.

We ought to stop that, stop the blame game, and get into the Blue Dog budget or something similar and do something constructive for the country for a change. That is what we were sent here for. That is what I hope we can do in the future for the people that we

represent and for our kids and grandkids.

BLUE DOGS SHOULD JOIN WITH CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICANS ON 1-CENT SAVINGS

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, let me follow, then, in the spirit of bipartisanship offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER), I welcome that candid exchange, and I think one way we can really get started is for the Blue Dogs to join with the conservative majority in a pledge to realize savings of 1 cent of every dollar spent.

The gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER), the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHN) says, let us save money. We agree. Join with us. But, see, the problem is within the minority caucus, sadly my friends in the Blue Dog Coalition are a minority within that minority.

So I would invite my friends, moderate conservatives on the other side of the aisle, to join with this working majority for a center right coalition to realize savings.

All we are talking about is 1 cent on every discretionary dollar. That is easily done. It saves the Social Security money for Social Security. Let us do that in the spirit of bipartisanship. To my friends in the Blue Dog Caucus, I extend my hand in that bipartisan fashion.

HONESTY IN BUDGET NUMBERS

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

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, it is time for responsible budgeting in this country. It is time to pay the country's debt. It is time to take Social Security completely off budget. Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot of bragging from the other side of the aisle about stopping the raid on Social Security. The only problem is that the facts just do not back up the bragging.

The Republicans would like us to believe that the Congressional Budget Office has said that their budget would protect the Social Security surplus. What they forget to mention is it is only true when the Republican leadership tells CBO to change their numbers. How convenient.

When the Republicans wave around the CBO certification that they are protecting Social Security, they conveniently forget to mention the footnote that says that the estimate includes, "reductions applied to CBO's estimates for congressional score-keeping purposes." In other words, the Republican leadership had to tell CBO