

communities as they forge ahead with a mission to be a community dedicated to preparing students for the opportunities to be successful in a world of unprecedented challenges and change.

IN MEMORY OF RONALD SCOTT  
OWENS

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to salute Petty Officer Third Class Ronald Scott Owens, one of the 17 crewmen who gave his life last week in the defense of our Nation. Petty officer Owens' life was lost when terrorists attacked the U.S.S. *Cole*. On August 8 of this year Petty Officer Owens left for a 6-month tour of duty aboard the U.S.S. *Cole*, serving on board as an electronics warfare technician.

We as a Nation honor the life of this young Vero Beach resident and all those who were lost.

Scott was born on October 31, 1975, and died serving and defending his fellow countrymen on October 11.

This tragic event makes this the worst terrorist attack on the American military since the terrorist attack on a U.S. Air Force housing complex near Dhahran, Saudi Arabia in 1996. That event killed 19 troops, including several airmen from Florida.

Scott is remembered by his crew mates as an inspiration and one that was always there to help support his fellow crewmen.

He was known as a happy-go-lucky guy who knew how to make everyone feel special. He is also remembered for his volunteer work with the fire and rescue squad. He served his community both in uniform and out of uniform.

I cannot begin to state how profoundly saddened I was to learn of Scott's untimely death. My prayers and condolences go out to his wife, Jaime, his 4-year-old daughter, Isabella, his entire family and the community of Vero Beach that is dealing with the shock of this tragic news.

FUTURE JUSTICES OF THE  
SUPREME COURT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, in just a few short weeks, we will be electing a new President of the United States on Tuesday, November 7. This is the centerpiece of our democracy, the election of a President.

The President has his own powers according to the Constitution, but also

the power of appointment of the third branch of government, the Supreme Court. So a great deal is at stake in this election: the presidency and the President's appointments to the court.

If the next President appoints just one or two more justices to the court, and they do not support some of our basic fundamental rights, fundamental rights could be abolished or curtailed. The Supreme Court's decisions affect all aspect of our lives including basic civil rights and day-to-day pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness.

□ 2045

It is significant to note, I think, that no Supreme Court justice has retired in 6 years, the longest interval without a new appointment in 177 years. In the last 50 years, every President except one has appointed at least one justice, and 8 of the last 10 Presidents have appointed 2 justices. Court watchers expect several justices to retire soon, and, thus, the next President is likely to appoint several justices to fill these vacancies.

I mention this, Mr. Speaker, because many have asked, well, how do these elections affect young people in our country? Well, the election of the President affects them very directly in the decisions that that President will make but also very directly in terms of his power of appointment of the court, the Supreme Court, and indeed many, many scores of Federal Court justices.

As I have said, the Supreme Court makes many decisions that fundamentally affect and change our lives, and so young people should be very interested in these judges, this President, and the decisions that this court will make because it will have an impact for generations to come.

Soon the court will be deciding cases governing civil rights, workers' rights, reproductive freedom, voting rights, and campaign finance reform. The court will decide Congress' authority to apply Federal laws protecting individuals and our environment to the States, including the Americans with Disabilities Act. The court will address electoral redistricting and minority voting rights, free speech, criminal cases involving unreasonable search and seizure, and the scope of Federal regulations, really protections and safeguards, for all Americans.

How do the courts' decisions on these issues affect our lives? For women, the court has an impact on reproductive freedom. For workers, the court affects the ability to sue employers who violate employees' civil rights. Again, for women, the court affects access to family planning clinics and access to safe and appropriate medical care. For gay and lesbian Americans, the court affects civil rights protections and equal opportunity. For people with disabilities, the court affects protections in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

I asked one volunteer in a political campaign why she was volunteering, and she said I have looked around, studied the issues, and I realize that people in politics make decisions about the air I breathe and the water I drink. The same applies to the Supreme Court, Mr. Speaker. The court affects the air we breathe and the water we drink by determining the legality of the Clean Air and Clean Water Act. This volunteer went on to say, so I guess I should be interested in politics, at least for as long as I drink water and I breathe air.

Young people should be, and we should all be interested in the court and the person who will name justices to that court for at least as long as we breathe air and drink water.

The two issues that I would like to just focus on, in the interest of time, because I know the hour is late, are a woman's right to choose and the issue of the protection of our environment and how those issues will be affected by the court. The next President will likely appoint two, perhaps three Supreme Court justices, enough to overturn *Roe v. Wade* and allow States to enact severe and sweeping restrictions on women's reproductive rights. If the anti-choice majority maintains its control over the Senate, the Supreme Court nominations of an anti-choice President are likely to be quickly confirmed.

Governor George Bush is an anti-choice governor with a record to prove it. In 1999 alone, Governor Bush, along with Michigan's Governor Engler signed more anti-choice provisions into law than any other governor in the U.S. Governor Bush has said he believes *Roe v. Wade* went too far and has characterized the 1973 ruling as a reach. Governor Bush has also said that Justice Antonin Scalia, arguably the most ardent opponent of abortion on the Supreme Court, would be his model justice.

Governor Bush wants to end legal reproductive freedom in the U.S. AL GORE would protect a woman's right to choose. The choice is clear: Pro-choice Americans must understand that Governor Bush will use the power of the Presidency to end legal reproductive choice and take away a woman's right to choose.

In terms of the environment, moving on to that because I know that is an issue that young people are interested in as well, I mentioned that Governor Bush has said that his model justice was Justice Scalia. Sadly, Justice Scalia's environmental philosophy is just as dismal as some of the other issues that I mentioned here. Legal scholars who have studied the Supreme Court have found that Justice Scalia sided against the environment more than any other person in the history of the court.

How bad is his record? Eighty-seven percent of the time an environmental

case came before the Supreme Court Justice Scalia decided against the environment. In Justice Scalia's world, citizens would not be allowed to stop pollution just because a company is poisoning their backyards. In a case decided earlier this year, a factory had dumped toxic mercury into a nearby river 489 times. How would you like that, Mr. Speaker, in your backyard? But even though the factory poisoned the river nearly 500 times, the Justice felt that the court was making it far too easy to halt an environmental crime.

So when we come to issues that young people are interested in, such as protecting the environment, this environment that we have only on loan because it belongs to them, it is their future, we must protect it in every way that we can. We can do that by our own personal behavior; through conservation; by the people we elect to office to make decisions about the environment; by the President of the United States, who leads the country in protecting our environment and the justices that he will appoint to the court who will make decisions about the air we breathe and the water we drink. For as long as we breathe air and drink water, Mr. Speaker, we should be very interested in those decisions.

Again, on the issue of a woman's right to choose, which I think is a matter that is at risk, we are at a crossroads and one that will be very much affected by the outcome of the election on November 7.

In the interest of time, I will not go into all the other issues, Mr. Speaker, except to say that November 7 is an important day, a day when we will be choosing not only a President but that President's appointees. There is a great deal at stake for young people. I hope they will pay attention to the election and its ramifications.

#### SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, we are having an election, and the election is important for many reasons. Regarding the discussion of appointing Supreme Court Justices, I would hope that whatever President we elect does not have a litmus test for those judges; that they should be some of the smartest, some of the most well-read literary law judges that we can find in the country. We have tried to help assure that by having the advice and consent of the Senate. What they do is interpret the Constitution, and I hope that is the kind of judges that we will have.

I rise tonight, Mr. Speaker, to talk about another issue that is sort of in

this campaign and is being talked about by the Vice President and Governor Bush, and that is Social Security. Social Security is an issue that I have been studying since I came to Congress in 1993.

I introduced my first bill in 1993 on Social Security and my second bill in 1995. It is a 2-year session, so every session I have introduced a bill. The last four bills have been scored by the Social Security Administration to keep Social Security solvent, and we have done that without any tax increases, without any reduction in benefits for retirees or near-term retirees.

I was appointed chairman of a bipartisan Social Security task force where we studied for many months and had witnesses, expert witnesses from all around this country and, in fact, all around the world, talking about this situation with Social Security. I suspect it is sort of like an automobile mechanic. The more he understands how an internal combustion engine works, for example, the more he is concerned about keeping it lubricated and reducing the friction. So probably mechanics are pretty diligent in terms of greasing and lubrication. So, too, I have become sort of a mechanic with Social Security, knowing its internal operations, how it works, and some of the friction points that can develop. So I guess my colleagues can consider my presentation tonight sort of like they might consider the mechanic: they should take out what they think is pertinent but get a second opinion.

Social Security is probably America's most important program. We have almost a third of our retirees that depend on the Social Security check for 90 percent or more of their total retirement income.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce Erika Ball. Erika is a page, and she is from Arizona. Sarah, come up in the limelight. You might as well, too, as long as you ladies are helping me. A little closer so we get you right in the picture. How many pages do we have?

Sarah Schleck is from the great State of Minnesota. Ladies, thank you for helping me with the charts tonight.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE  
The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. That is not proper; is that right?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are to address their remarks to the Chair and are reminded that only Members are allowed to address the Chamber.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I considered myself an interpreter. I apologize for any infraction.

Let me start out with these charts. Social Security Benefit Guaranty Act. When Franklin Delano Roosevelt created the Social Security program over 6 decades ago, he wanted it to feature a personal investment component to

build retirement income. Social Security was supposed to be one leg of a three-legged stool to support retirees. It was supposed to go hand-in-hand with personal savings and private pension plans.

In fact, researching the archives, it is interesting that in the debate in 1935 in the Senate, the Senate on two occasions voted to have it optional to have a personal retirement savings account. So individuals owned accounts. Even in that case they could only be used for retirement, but there would be some individual ownership. When they went to conference, the House and the Senate ended up having government do the whole thing.

It was made from the very beginning as a pay-as-you-go program, where existing workers paid in their Social Security tax and almost immediately those dollars were sent out to beneficiaries. So it was a pay-as-you-go program with existing workers paying in their taxes to pay for existing current retirees.

The system is really stretched to its limits, and the actuaries are concerned. They say that Social Security is insolvent. We just changed it in 1983, reduced benefits and increased taxes. Yet already they are predicting that it is going to run out of money if we continue the same structure. So we have to make changes. We have to do it without reducing any benefits to existing or near-term retirees. We have to do it by making sure that we do not increase taxes on workers, and that means we have to get a better return on some of those tax dollars coming in.

Seventy-eight million baby boomers begin retiring in 2008. That means these high-income workers go out of the paying-in mode. In a sense what they pay in is related to how much they are making. They are at the top of the scale in terms of how much they are paying in taxes. Then they retire, and because the benefits are directly related to what they paid in taxes, how much they were earning, so there is a relationship to benefits, they draw out more than maybe the average is drawing out. So a huge predicament, demographic problem.

Social Security trust funds go broke in 2037, although the crisis is going to arrive when there is less tax revenues coming in than for retirement purposes.

I will go through these slides rather quickly, but I just urge everybody, Mr. Speaker, to look and do a little studying and a little learning of the Social Security problem because it is probably one of the most significant financial challenges that Washington, that this House and the Senate and the President face.

Insolvency is certain. It is not some kind of a far-flung estimate. It is an absolute. We know how many people there are, and we know when they are