

with individual neighborhood associations, with government at all levels to help make our families safe, healthy and economically secure. I found that one of the most powerful things that we can do in the Federal Government is to simply lead by example, for the Federal Government to model the type of behavior that we want the rest of America to abide by.

We have had great fun with a very simple concept that would require the post office to obey local land use laws, zoning codes and environmental regulations. This legislation has already commanded the cosponsorship of the majority of Members of this assembly and has excited people around the country who see the post office as potential building blocks to stabilize their small towns, to stabilize neighborhood installations in over 40,000 facilities around the country.

One of the best opportunities is to be found with the Department of Defense. Our Pentagon budget houses the largest inventory of infrastructure in the world. The value is placed at some \$550 billion. It is a huge land inventory. The Department of Defense is the third largest repository of Federal lands, but unlike BLM or the U.S. Forest Service land, this is oftentimes intensively managed. There are some 12,000 properties in the inventory of the Department of Defense right now that is eligible for historic building status. Over the course of the next 30 years, there will be 50,000 more. These facilities represent important aspects of military history and important elements that lead to actually building the components of communities. We have seen around the country base decommissioning arise as a larger and larger issue where they have to be closed and recycled, turned over to the private sector where there is an opportunity here to revitalize communities. Where at one point this was fought by local communities who felt that they would be losing an opportunity for economic development and security, we are finding as is the case in the transitioning of Fort Ord to private ownership that this can actually be a tremendous source of job generation, new housing and facilities that can make a difference for the community.

Camp Pendleton is the only significant open space between Los Angeles and San Diego. It is home to some 17 endangered species requiring special stewardship on the part of the military establishment. In the area of housing, here too is an opportunity. There is an interesting initiative taking place in the Department of the Army under the leadership of Under Secretary Apgar looking for ways to use the private sector to be able to finance and upgrade and design quality housing that our military employees deserve.

In my own district in Portland, Oregon, there is an opportunity to decom-

mission Navy ships that employs family wage jobs and modern environmental technology to make sure that these ships are dismantled in not only a cost effective but an environmentally sensitive way as opposed to what some would do, simply tow them overseas and allow them to be disposed of in Bangladesh under who knows what standards. It is simply not a responsible activity on our part.

And then there is the issue of unexploded ordnance. Throughout the United States, there are areas where we have used land for training purposes that are filled with bombs and shells that have not exploded. At the current rate, it is going to take us 100 years to be able to decontaminate, to be able to deal with this problem of unexploded ordnance.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that throughout the military establishment, there are challenges and opportunities for the Federal Government to promote more livable communities, a better environment for the men and women who serve in the military, and to protect our environment by providing leadership by example.

I invite my colleagues to join us the evening of July 20 at the National Building Museum for a discussion in greater detail dealing with how the military can promote livable communities.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY COMES UNDER SCRUTINY IN WAKE OF MISSING NUCLEAR SECRETS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the option to discuss with the House this morning an issue that does cause me quite a bit of concern. It really revolves around the missing nuclear secrets from the Los Alamos lab. We have spent about \$16 billion a year on the Department of Energy; 15,000 plus employees, 125,000 contract employees and over \$16 billion of spending of the taxpayers' money. On their own website, they have the following two mission statements: To provide affordable and available fuel now and in the future, and the security of our nuclear weapons stockpile.

It would seem to me based on those two statements, those two mission statements by the Department and the amount of money the American taxpayers have put into the fund in order to run the agency, you would have assumed with those types of numbers you would have gotten at least a modicum of success in protecting either the nuclear secrets or providing affordable energy for Americans now and in the future.

I am sure some of you recently have had the pleasure and joy of filling up

your car at the gas station and witnessed prices escalating almost at every week, an increase in prices of fuel. In some areas in my community, prices for regular unleaded are about \$1.65 and in some places in the country, including the Midwest, we see prices upwards of \$2.25. Is that affordable? Yes, it is available but is it affordable? And how much does that take out of the American family's budget weekly, money that they could spend on clothes for their kids, textbooks for school, health care or purchasing prescription drugs? It is a lot of money. Filling up a 20-gallon tank costs somewhere between 4 and 8 additional dollars a week now due to the price of energy. Now, that is the administration that is doing America a favor by spending \$16 billion on the Department of Energy.

We have heard recently that, of course, we do not think there was espionage involved. We do not know obviously because we are not certain where the disk drives were and who had them. But we are comforted by the fact that we are being told by the administration, at least by the Secretary of Energy, that we do not suspect espionage. Initially it was reported that there was a 4-week breach of time between the reporting of the missing hard drives and the notification to the FBI. Then we heard erroneous or maybe possibly accurate reports that it was upwards of 6 months when the hard drives were missing. Then on Meet the Press, Secretary Richardson said, "Oh, no, it wasn't that long, it was only possibly March 28." Talk about the gang that could not shoot straight, nobody can give us definitive answers where the hard drives were, how they were stored, how long they had been missing, and who checks in and out of this secret vault. Just last week testifying before the Senate, the Secretary said, we are going to institute technology like bar coding and putting bar codes onto the devices.

I mean, we bar code lettuce in the grocery store. You cannot leave a record store without paying for the CD. Otherwise, the security devices at the door will make an alarm so that the detectives or guards there can try and stop a shoplifter. But the nuclear secrets of America, the most sensitive of all data stored by our government, is wandering around with nobody watching, nobody monitoring, nobody taking the blame.

Mr. Speaker, we have got a serious issue on our hands. I think rather than politicize it, we need to get to the bottom of it. If this incident occurred to a corporation, the CEO's head would roll. If this announcement of this problem was a stock market activity, the stock would collapse. If this was a student in school, they would fail. Somebody has to take account for the pilferage or the potential misuse or even the missing hard drives.

General Gordon with this House attempted to set up a separate nuclear agency, if you will, to run the very sensitive lab. We were rebuffed oftentimes by both the administration, the Secretary of Energy and others. I think we need a full and fair explanation of what happened. America deserves it. Our security depends on it.

We urge the administration to come forward with an explanation reasonable to the taxpayers.

IN OPPOSITION TO H.R. 4680, REPUBLICAN PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, later this week, the Republican leadership will bring to the floor a bill purporting to be a new prescription drug benefit for America's senior citizens. Yesterday, I gave a number of reasons why the Republican prescription drug bill is fatally flawed and issued a challenge to the Republican majority to allow the Democrats to put forth our own prescription drug plan. Today, I want to stress the hypocrisy of the Republicans' procedure for considering this important issue.

Rather than allow an open and honest debate on how Congress would provide for a prescription drug benefit for America's senior citizens, the Republicans apparently will script a closed rule with limited debate predicated on an arbitrary budget resolution which they have shown a willingness time and again to violate when it suits their purposes. Unfortunately, both their flawed insurance subsidy plan and their desire to stifle debate in this the people's House on a question of vital importance to nearly 40 million American Medicare beneficiaries indicates once and for all that responding to the needs of America's senior citizens does not suit the political purposes of congressional Republicans.

The Republicans' claim that no Medicare prescription drug benefit can exceed the cost of \$40 billion over 5 years is false. As such, they have designed a flawed plan that fits neatly under this cap by delaying implementation and limiting catastrophic coverage only to those costs that exceed \$6,000. Under their plan, if the government pays an insurer enough to create a plan where the premiums are not set too high by the insurer that someone can afford it, you still only get a benefit of about \$1,000 less premiums and after that you are on your own until you reach \$6,000. The Republicans know full well that a real, affordable, workable prescription drug plan will cost more but they are opposed to investing in this coverage for America's senior citizens.

During the drafting of the fiscal year 2001 budget resolution, the Republican majority found room for nearly \$200 billion in tax cuts but said that if and when a Medicare prescription drug plan could be developed, it would be limited to \$40 billion. There was no study, no scientific basis, no analysis that resulted in this figure. Rather it was a back-of-the-envelope calculation to make room for the huge tax cut they wanted to fund. Furthermore, during the markup, I offered an amendment to restore funding for teaching hospitals, academic medical centers and other Medicare in-patient costs. My amendment was rejected and I was told that by the Republican majority that any changes to the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 could be addressed out of that \$40 billion set aside. I was also told that money could be used for Medicare reform. But of course that is the same money that was supposed to be set aside for prescription drug coverage.

Now we hear that the Republican leadership has promised to push legislation later this year to make those exact same fixes but they have said they are already spending that on prescription drugs. So clearly the Republicans have no intention of abiding by the fiscal year 2001 budget resolution as long as it does not serve their political purposes.

This is not a new phenomenon. Under the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, agriculture was to be funded at \$11.3 billion in 1999 and \$10.7 billion in 2000. But when it came time for Congress to live by these caps, the Republican majority, recognizing the harsh effects of these constraints, abandoned them. Agriculture was funded at \$23 billion in 1999 and \$35 billion in 2000. The same is true when it came to highways. When Congress set caps in 1997 and then passed a highway construction bill, the Republicans busted the caps. So far they have funded transportation and highway construction far above what was set in 1997. It is true again for defense. In 1997, we set caps for defense spending going out 5 years and we have busted those caps every year.

Mr. Speaker, do not get me wrong. I do not dispute the need at times to adjust balanced budget caps when the need is justified. What I challenge is whether the Republican leadership is really sincere about helping America's senior citizens. They found a way to finess budget limits for national defense, for highways and for our farmers. They are all worthy causes, but why will they not work around the budget resolution for America's senior citizens? Why will they not do this for the generation that fought "The Great War" and built the Nation? Why will they not do that for those we honored this past week who fought "The Forgotten War" in Korea?

If the Republicans were really sincere about helping our seniors, they would

not hide behind artificial budgets and stifle debate. They would allow the Democrats who started this debate in the first place to bring up our bill which provides for meaningful, voluntary, universal prescription drug coverage under Medicare. Let us have the debate on what is best for America's senior citizens even if it means debating a real drug benefit versus large tax cuts. But, Mr. Speaker, let us have this debate.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 22 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Reverence for You, O God, breathes forth a spirit of freedom within us. It is this spirit that gives us true self-esteem, a gracious attitude toward everyone else, and the power to live out our commitments to others with love.

It is this same spirit that urges us to seek out even greater freedom within ourselves and work for the good of our brothers and sisters wherever they may be in this country and beyond.

Thomas Jefferson taught us, O Lord, that "the very God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time." Help us never to separate these two great gifts. Make us instruments of life and liberty now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PASCRELL led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain 15 one-minutes on each side.