BIG BROTHER IS BACK

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Speaker, they are at it again. We learned this morning from The Washington Post that those big government loving bureaucrats in the Clinton administration are up to their old tricks again. When we last heard from our friends in the Federal health care data collection business, they were attempting to carry out a little known provision in the law that would require every single American to have a special identification number so that their medical records could be tracked by the government.

Now we learn that the administration seeks to create a new database that would collect personal information about millions of Americans who receive in-home benefits under the Medicare program. Under the guise of improving service, the Clinton administration intends to conduct a 19-page assessment of each patient, including questions concerning the patient's sense of failure, or socially inappropriate behavior.

Enough already. Let us put a stop to this nonsense before it begins. Let us protect the privacy of millions of Americans. Let us once again say no to Big Brother.

MEDICARE

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

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I hold in my hand a letter to the Speaker of the House imploring him to devote 15 percent of the budget surplus to strengthen Medicare. This letter has been signed by 201 Democrats. We speak with a unified message: Do not jeopardize Medicare for political tax breaks.

In the most recent Republican budget, not one penny of the surplus is used to shore up Medicare. Medicare is projected to be bankrupt in the year 2008. That is only 9 years away. The Democratic plan to use 15 percent of the surplus would extend the life of Medicare by a decade, giving us time to reform the program so that it endures the coming strain of the retiring baby boom generation and allows us to put a prescription drug benefit together.

The Republican plan is irresponsible. It puts short-term political gain ahead of long-term fiscal responsibility and, in the process, jeopardizes seniors' health and their retirement security.

Today 99 percent of America's seniors are covered by Medicare. Social Security and Medicare have combined to give our seniors independence, dignity and security in their retirement. Let us strengthen them and not dismantle them.

THE FOREST SERVICE MORATORIUM IS AN ATTACK ON ACCESS TO OUR PUBLIC FORESTS

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

Mr. HILL of Montana. Madam Speaker, the Forest Service roads moratorium now in effect, defies the good common sense required to maintain our Nation's force.

In essence, the administration is saying that we are going to take a timeout in managing our forests. In the meantime, of course, the problems will not wait. They only become more serious.

This moratorium is also an attack on access to our public forests. It is nothing more than a sweeping mandate from Washington. This mandate is not designed to study our forests roads but, rather, to keep the American citizen out of their forests.

A representative from the most respected sportsmen's group in Washington, the Safari Club, called this decision bad for sportsmen and other recreational users, so bad that it must have the dedicated professionals in the Forest Service shaking their heads.

The Forest Service reports that 93 percent of forest road use is for recreational purposes, and now they are trying to lock up the very roads where we recreate.

It makes no sense. I cannot understand how an agency that is directed to manage our forests is walking away and washing its hands of such a serious issue.

This is a bad policy, Madam Speaker. It is bad for America. It is bad for the economy. It is bad for the forests and it is bad for the citizens.

The question is, who is it good for?

RAIDING THE SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUND TO SPEND MONEY ON 120 NEW GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

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

Mr. WELLER. Madam Speaker, back home, when I am back home in the south side of Chicago, in the south suburbs, I get asked some pretty basic questions by the folks back home. I had a really pretty good one asked to me just this past week.

They say, it is our understanding that there is this $2.6 trillion surplus of extra tax revenue. If we have all this extra money in Washington, why does President Clinton, the Clinton-Gore Democrats, propose a $176 billion tax increase, and why do the Clinton-Gore Democrats, why do they propose raiding the Social Security trust fund by $250 billion to spend money on 120 new government programs?

That is an important question because on the Republican side, we say we do not need $176 billion in tax increases. We say we do not want to raid the Social Security trust fund. In fact, this year we want to stop something that has been going on for 30 years. We believe it is time to wall off the Social Security trust fund and stop the raids that President Clinton wants to have on Social Security.

Let us stop the raids on Social Security. Let us wall off the Social Security trust fund.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON) laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 10, 1999.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House,
The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Having accepted an appointment to the Committee on the Judiciary, I must hereby regretfully resign from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Sincerely,

SPENCER BACHUS,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted.

There was no objection.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. GOODLING. Madam Speaker, I offer a resolution (H. Res. 108) and I ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 108

Resolved, That the following named Members be, and they are hereby, elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

Committee on the Judiciary: Mr. SCARBOROUGH of Florida.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Mr. BAKER of Louisiana.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EDUCATION FLEXIBILITY PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 1999

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 100 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 800.

□ 1022

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the