

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. OWENS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

WASTE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HOKE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

MEDICARE TRUST FUND SUMMARY

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I was not going to speak about Medicare tonight, but I will speak very briefly, and then there is something else that I really want to bring to your attention.

Mr. Speaker, the one thing that I would urge that Americans would do is to get a copy of the summary, the 14-page summary that has been prepared by the trustees of the Medicare trust fund, that is the Medicare and the Social Security and the disability trust funds, get a copy of that. It is a 14-page summary of the annual report of the trustees.

Now, there are a lot of people that do not want the American public to see that. Most of them happen to be on the other side of the aisle. Because frankly, when you read this 14-page summary, it takes about 15 minutes, very clearly written, very simply written, after you read this summary, then finally, it dawns on you and you say, my goodness gracious, we really have a problem here.

These trustees lay it out in black and white, it is very clear, it is not partisan. It is not political, it has not been politicized, it is not subjected to demagoguery, it is very straightforward, it is clear.

Mr. Speaker, you will see that this is a problem that every single responsible legislator in this country has got to address. We have to deal with it at this level. If we do not, the fund will be bankrupt and Medicare will be in complete chaos.

So I just urge you, Mr. Speaker, to let the American public know that if they call their representative at (202) 225-3121, (202) 225-3121, ask for this 14-page summary of the annual report of the trustees, you representative will send it to you and it will lay out in very clear language exactly what the challenges are to the Medicare trust fund. It gives some very specific recommendations with respect to the need for legislative intervention, so that this thing will get fixed.

That is not what I want to talk about this evening, but I did feel that it is just important to bring that to the Speaker's attention.

Mr. Speaker, what I want to talk about, I want to know, is anybody watching what is going on at the Department of Energy? The Secretary of Energy is sending 50 people to South

Africa next week, 3 weeks in advance of the Secretary going to South Africa. That is just the advance team. Fifty people are going to be there 3 weeks ahead of her, I guess to make sure that the beds are turned down properly, I do not know. But this is a tremendous embarrassment to this administration, it is a tremendous embarrassment to the President, and it is time that somebody started to blow the whistle.

The Secretary will herself then follow to go to South Africa with 70 people at extraordinary expense to the taxpayer, and not only that, but with a level and a degree of arrogance that we have not seen in this administration with respect to at least this kind of bizarre appetite for travel. In fact, I saw tonight, and I will bring it tomorrow night, because I think everybody would be interested to see this, the graphic of a T-shirt that the Secretary is having produced, and it says, Hazel O'Leary World Tour, 1994-95." It looks like it is a wonderful color graphic, all at taxpayer expense, thank you very much, of the places that the Secretary has gone around the globe: China, India, Sweden, Egypt, now South Africa, all at taxpayer expense.

Mr. Speaker, here is the real problem. What is the most important charge of the Department of Energy? It is to safeguard, to conserve, to maintain, and to make sure there will be no accidents with respect to our nuclear arsenal. That is the primary reason that the Department of Energy was created in the first place, because we did not want the Department of Defense to be in charge. That was probably bad policy then. But nonetheless, that was the *raison d'être* of the Department of Energy. This money is being taken out of those accounts and being put into the travel account.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is time that the President look at this very, very carefully. It is time that we blew the whistle on this profligate travel, and it is time that we simply ended it. Because not only is it a wasteful use of the taxpayers' money, but it is taking money away from the much more important responsibilities that the Department of Energy does have at this point.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the gentleman from New York is going to have a very special special order on the Korean war memorial.

SENIORS AT RISK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, this Sunday, we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the creation of Medicare. On this date in 1965, President Johnson, with former President Truman by his side, signed into law a historic piece of legislation that would dramatically improve the lives of America's seniors and their families.

Look how far America's seniors have come in the latter part of this century. In 1955, only 46 percent of our Nation's elderly had health insurance coverage. By 1994, 97 percent of our seniors were covered. Medicare has made the difference.

In 1965, one in three senior citizens lived in poverty, many having squandered their life savings on costly medical care. Today, only 1 in 10 senior citizens live in poverty. Medicare has made the difference.

For the last 30 years, Medicare has made a difference for millions. It is one Government program that has worked so well that people don't even think of it as a Government program at all. In fact, last year, when Democrats tried to pass health care reform, seniors called and wrote to say: "We don't care what you do, just don't get government involved with Medicare."

Yes, Social Security and Medicare are Government programs. They are Government programs that work. Social Security and Medicare are the twin pillars of Democratic reform—one from the New Deal and the other from the Great Society. For decades these two programs have worked in tandem to ensure that our seniors are secure in their retirement.

That's what this debate is all about: security. Making sure that our seniors are secure. But, Republican plans to privatize the Medicare system will remove the security we promised our seniors 30 years ago.

Just ask your self: will higher medical bills make seniors more secure? Will lower levels of benefits make seniors more secure? Will losing their choice of doctor make seniors more secure?

Will seniors be more secure when their copayments go from \$46 to more than \$100? Will seniors be more secure when they are asked to pay \$1,000 more?

The answer to all these questions is "no." But, GOP opposition to the Medicare program should come as no surprise. Just look at the record.

Thirty years ago, 93 percent of Republicans in this body voted against Medicare and instead supported a plan to privatize the system. Today, Republicans are closing in on a 30-year goal—to end the program they never wanted in the first place.

In 1995, Republicans say they are cutting Medicare in order to save Medicare. They would like America to believe that they are simply pruning the Medicare plant so that it may grow healthy again. But, in reality, they are pulling Medicare out by its roots and using it as fertilizer for their favorite crop: tax cuts for the wealthy.

This plan uses \$270 billion of cuts to finance a \$245 billion tax cut for the wealthy.

Now, I believe that the solvency of the Medicare trust fund needs to be dealt with, but it needs to be dealt with in the context of health care reform. Medicare is growing at the rate