

for tour to resume each season, but quickly grow disgusted. They boast of making enough money from the present tour to buy that land in Oregon and settle down. But more typically their money is blown on lavish hotel rooms, expensive meals, beer and drugs. Strung out and broke, they're left scrambling for someone to support them until tour begins again.

And so a cycle evolves: Many may want to try a new life but have become ensnared in the tour culture. Financially, they know no other way to make money other than selling wares on tour. Socially, whether they truly like them or not, the people on tour are the only friends they have. Alienated and fearful of what the real world is about, they settle into what they know best: The Dead.

Every time there is a scare that the Dead may stop touring, I find myself worrying about the lost souls who know nothing else but the parallel world of the Grateful Dead. Many are talented and have skills adaptable to the mainstream. It's those who use the Dead simply as an escape who will have difficulty adjusting to life without tour. Sadly, I cannot picture their future.

They will surely endure the loss of the Dead's live performances, but can they handle the end of tour? That possibility seems ever more zeal with the current malaise surrounding the band. As the amount of violence and police confrontation has grown, so have concerns about how to curtail it. A group calling itself Save Our Scene has formed in an attempt to quash disruptive behavior. And through newsletters and the Internet, band members have practically begged their fans to clean up their act. If they don't, the Dead will stop touring' or so they threaten.

In an open letter passed out to Deadheads at a recent St. Louis show and later posted on the Internet, the Dead told fans that "over the past 30 years we've come up with the fewest possible rules to make the difficult act of bringing tons of people together work well—and a few thousand so-called Dead Heads ignore these simple rules and screw it up for you, us and everybody."

Arguably, it is not the Tourheads who are responsible for the bad behavior, but local kids who view the parking lot at a Dead show as an invitation to party with complete abandon. Tourheads can blame the less devoted concert-goers, but it is these "outsiders" who buy the goods that sustain the Tourheads lifestyle. And it is the Tourheads who have created the atmosphere that is so appealing to revelers in the first place.

The Dead went on to say, "If you don't have a ticket, don't come. This is real. This is a music concert, not a free-for-all party."

To me, the issue of blame isn't really relevant. The real question is: How long did anyone think the party could last?

IN OPPOSITION TO THE LABOR-HHS-EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS BILL

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I want to speak about the proposed cuts in the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill because in the 7 years I have been fortunate enough to serve in Congress, this bill is truly the worst bill I have ever seen. This bill is nothing less than a frontal assault on the working men and women of this country. The cuts will only serve to decrease productivity, increase costs and cost lives.

I am a member of what used to be called the Education and Labor Committee, which is now called the Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee. And the minute the new Republican majority took control, they changed the name of the Committee. They purged the word labor out of the Committee and purged the word labor out of all the subcommittees. That, to me, sums it all up. They want to just purge labor, purge labor unions and purge the working men and women of this country.

The cuts in OSHA in this bill, and OSHA takes care of the health and safety of American workers, they slash OSHA enforcement programs by 33 percent, a third. This would decimate the agency's enforcement program, leaving millions of working Americans with no where to turn for safety and health protections. With 17 workers dying on the job each day, these shortsighted cuts will increase this carnage sharply.

OSHA laws did not just happen overnight. They came in gradually. And we have now had OSHA protection for 50 or 60 years. And we have seen that as long as we have had the OSHA protection, American workers, less and less American workers have been injured, maimed or killed on the job so the OSHA laws are working. Why would we want to turn the clock back to before the time there were these protections? Why would we want to endanger the health and safety and welfare of America's workers?

In this bill, the National Labor Relations Board is also cut by 30 percent. Currently the National Labor Relations Board has the power to prevent and fix unfair labor practices committed by employers and safeguard employees' rights to organize. The cuts will result in severely weakened workers' rights to fair and decent conditions on the job.

Now, as rationale in all the hearings we have held in the committee, people who want to eliminate OSHA and want to eliminate the NLRB say, you know, these impose very big hardships on employees and most employers are good. I agree, most employers are good and they are responsible. Those are not the employers that we are worried about. To those employers who do what is right and do what they are supposed to be doing and protect the health and safety of their workers, OSHA ought not to affect them. It is those few employers who do not care about the health and safety of their workers which is the reason why OSHA laws were put into effect in the first place.

So now we are going to throw the baby out with the bathwater. Instead of trying to fix what is broken, we want to gut the whole program and throw the baby out with the bathwater and leave American workers exposed.

To me worker safety is not a Democratic issue or a Republican issue. It is an American issue. I do not know why my Republican friends want to gut the program.

Now, in this bill, also there is a 34-percent cut planned for the dislocated workers program. That means that 140,000 fewer workers will be helped finding new jobs, workers who need help in getting the skills for jobs in our changing economy due to increased corporate and defense downsizing. We talk about welfare reform. We want to keep people off the welfare rolls. We want to get people off the welfare rolls. How do you do that, by cutting the dislocated workers program which helps people get jobs, train jobs and find jobs?

It makes no sense whatsoever. So we must stop punishing the workers of this country in order to fund initiatives like tax cuts for the wealthy. The American workers deserve better from us.

My father was an iron worker. I remember walking the picket lines with him during a strike when I was a boy. Workers do not want to strike. They do not want to lose pay. They do a strike only as a last resort. The attitude that we see in some quarters in this new Congress, making workers a pariah, is just unbelievable. Davis-Bacon reform, Davis-Bacon protects prevailing wages so people in my area of the country, New York City, where there is a very, very high cost of living can get a decent wage. We do not want to depress people's wages and have cheap labor coming in from elsewhere, but that is exactly what happens if Davis-Bacon is repealed, and the Republicans are again assaulting Davis-Bacon. Some of us believe that \$4.25 is not enough for anybody to live. That is the minimum wage. We think it should be raised. Our Republican friends do not want to raise the minimum wage; they want to eliminate the minimum wage.

This is backsliding. This is not what ought to be done. That is only the labor part of this bill. What we see later on in education is even worse.

I urge my colleagues to look at this legislation, to vote against it. We hear the votes still are not there. We ought to defeat this bill, if it comes up this week, and hopefully reason will prevail.

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WE MUST KEEP MEDICARE AFLOAT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. METCALF). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. GUTKNECHT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, author Stephen Covey likes to tell a story about the Navy captain of a ship who is adrift in a rather stormy sea one night and he saw a light coming at him. He orders his signalman to contact the oncoming vessel and ask him to change course 20 degrees. So the message is sent out, and very quickly a message comes back, "You change course 20 degrees." The captain is a little upset by this message coming back,

so he sends back and says, "This is a U.S. naval battleship. We demand that you change course 20 degrees." The message comes back, "We are the lighthouse."

Mr. Speaker, I think the story is analogous to the problem we have with Medicare. Right now the message is coming back that we are on a collision course with disaster. We are headed for the rocks, and unfortunately, the Medicare system is picking up speed.

In the private sector, we are seeing in the general economy inflation rates of about 3 percent. What we are seeing with Medicare is about 10½ percent. We all know, at least I think we all know, if we do not know, in fact it is available in a little yellow booklet that is being distributed, the board of trustees of the Medicare trust fund came out several months ago with a report, and in it they said many things. I think it is important that Members of this body and Members of the general public be as informed as possible about what they in fact said.

Let me read some of the quotes. For example, they said, "The Medicare program is clearly unsustainable in its present form." They went on to say, "It is now clear that Medicare reform needs to be addressed urgently as a distinct legislative initiative." They said, "We feel strongly that a comprehensive Medicare reform should be undertaken to make this program financially sound now and in the long term."

The message is coming out loudly and clearly from our own lighthouse that Medicare is on a collision course with disaster. Yet some folks tend to pretend that nothing is wrong and that we do not have to change course. In fact, the board's report stated: "Under a range of plausible and demographic assumptions, the HI Medicare program is severely out of financial balance in the short range, adding that the HI fund fails the solvency test by a wide margin."

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage anyone who is watching on television at home or other Members who are watching in their offices, if they do want a copy they can call 202-225-3121 and get the number of their Member. I know that the Government Printing Office is running a bit behind in terms of keeping up with the demand for these reports, but I think it is important that if people would like to get a copy for themselves, they can read for themselves about what the Medicare trustees have said about the future of Medicare.

Mr. Speaker, that is the bad news, but unfortunately, it gets worse. Not only does the fund begin to spend more money than it takes in just next year, and not only does the fund go bankrupt in just 7 years, the really bad news is that people my age, I happen to be the peak of the baby boomers. As a matter of fact, when I graduated from college, I remember the speaker at our commencement address was director of the U.S. Census. He told us that there were

more kids born in 1951 than any other year. The bad news is the baby boomers will start to retire in about 15 years. That is going to have a disastrous impact on the Medicare fund as we go forward.

That is why the trustees, Mr. Speaker, have made it so clear that we need to change course. Like that battleship, we are getting the clear signal that we are headed for the rocks, we are picking up speed, things need to change. What we are proposing, really, are modest changes in the Medicare system.

What we are trying to do is work with all of the providers, with seniors, with other groups, to try and come up with solutions. The good news is if we look at the private sector and what has happened in the private sector over just the last 18 months, we see some good examples of how costs can be contained. As a matter of fact, before I came to this Congress I was a Member of the Minnesota State Legislature. I was on the Health and Human Services Committee.

I remember just a few years ago being told that we were going to see double-digit inflation rates in the health care system for as far as the eye could see. In the private sector, private insurance carriers, private employers, literally sat down and said, "This simply cannot be allowed to continue at this rate," so they employed a number of different methods to try and control those costs. The good news is we have seen virtually zero inflation in the private sector over the last 18 months in Minnesota, so it can be done.

We have examples in the private sector with just a little bit of working together. I think if the House and Senate can work together, if Republicans and Democrats can work together, I am confident that we can use some of the same things that have worked so effectively in the private sector to control costs here in the public sector, and particularly as it relates to Medicare.

It is an undeniable fact, Mr. Speaker, you cannot sink half of a boat. We are all in the same boat together. I think we owe it to ourselves, to the taxpayers, to the 36 million current beneficiaries to keep this ship afloat.

THE LABOR-HHS APPROPRIATIONS BILL

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, this week the House will consider the Labor-HHS appropriations bill. I think Americans need to be aware of provisions that were inserted into the bill that would severely curtail advocacy by organizations that receive Federal grants.

The bill currently sharply limits the amount of private money a Federal grantee may use to lobby elected officials, the reason being, ostensibly, that

money is fungible. In other words, the award of Federal dollars makes it possible for an organization which gets a grant to use more of its own money for advocacy, instead of having to use it to provide services.

However, Mr. Speaker, that argument is not enough to warrant placing unprecedented restrictions on what Americans may do with their own money, and certainly not enough to warrant fiddling with first amendment rights. Who would be subject to these limitations? Church groups that receive Federal funds through their city to run a homeless shelter, small businesses that receive loans from the SBA, low-income nursing mothers and infant children who use the WIC Program to supplement their diets, farmers who utilize federally funded irrigation projects, children who receive subsidized school lunches, students who receive a college loan. The list is endless, and the answers to the questions are unclear, because the bill is so ambiguous as to what qualifies a grant.

In fact, the bill says that the term "grant" includes the provision of any Federal funds or other thing of value, something of value. Are not WIC benefits or food stamps things of value? Is not an irrigation system a thing of value? Is not a school lunch a thing of value? The sponsors of this language believe they are not, but the bill makes absolutely no distinction. It would be up to the courts to decide whether a thing of value is a grant or not under this confusing and wide-open definition. A person may be getting a so-called grant and not even know it, and if so, he will soon have to file reports to the IRS telling them now much he got and detailing how much money he spends writing to his Congressman to express his opinions. It is his right as an American, but he had better be prepared to report it to the Government.

How ironic. How ironic it is, in an age when we are supposed to be shrinking the Federal bureaucracy, that the solution to the imaginary problem of federally subsidized advocacy is to require thousands and perhaps millions of people to file new forms with the IRS, reporting what they said to their elected representatives, and how frequently they said it.

Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting an amendment to remove these provisions, because I do not believe they have been well thought out, and they certainly have not been examined thoroughly enough, given the sweeping changes the bill would make to the rights of Americans to petition their elected officials on issues of concern to them.

Remember, we are not talking about using Federal money to lobby. That is already prohibited under the law. We are talking about the use of private money. We are talking about stopping advocacy by groups on behalf of, for example, the mentally or physically handicapped, if they receive a grant in