

Any flag that can survive the contamination of being draped around the shoulders of Spiro Agnew is surely impervious to mere flame.

Is the flag damaged when it is burned by political protesters? No, but the reputation of the protesters is, by virtue of the fact that they have revealed themselves to ignorantly hold in contempt the nation which has been and continues to be the last, best hope for human liberty.

Nor is flag burning a protest which leaves the frustrated patriot without an answer. If a flag is burned, the proper and effective response is to fly your own.

A symbol is just that, a symbol, and not the thing itself. To presume that one can do damage to what is symbolized by damaging the symbol is to engage literally in voodoo thinking, and one might as well start sticking pins in dolls.

So the purpose of banning flag burning is not to protect the United States of America. It is to protect the feelings of those who are offended when they see a flag burned in political protest. But the protection of free expression is precisely what the First Amendment to the Bill of Rights, and therefore the flag itself, is all about. Inoffensive speech is never in danger of being banned, because no one has a reason to ban it. And anything actually worth saying is sure to offend someone, somewhere. Therefore, if free speech has any meaning, it means the protection of offensive expression. The distance between banning the burning of flags and requiring the burning of books may be much shorter than we think.

We do the United States no favors when we undermine the reality of its achievements—among which is free expression—in an effort to protect the symbol of its achievements, the flag.

"But is nothing sacred?" amendment proponents ask. Well, the flag certainly isn't. It is a secular symbol deliberately lacking religious weight, and therefore can't be "sacred," in the strict sense. But if a supernatural analogy is needed, we would be seeing the situation more clearly if we viewed the flag in terms of the mythological phoenix, which always files—whole and renewed—out of its own ashes.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR,
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 2, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2127) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purpose:

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in complete opposition to the cuts in this years Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill (H.R. 2127), a bill that funds programs that are in many cases the foundation of our future and the hope for tomorrow. I am staunchly opposed to any proposal that would make drastic cutbacks in programs for women and children, students, seniors disabled Americans, and individuals living in rural communities.

For example, I remain appalled that included in this bill is the absolute elimination of

the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program [LIHEAP].

Five million Americans, including the disabled, the working poor, and low-income senior citizens are in desperate need of funding for LIHEAP. Without these funds vulnerable Americans will be forced to chose between heating their homes or feeding their families. For Vermont, this means a cut of \$5,753,000 in low-income heating assistance.

Beyond the cuts in LIHEAP, the package cuts federal education funding by \$3.7 billion in fiscal year 1996. Education for disadvantaged children—formally known as chapter 1 funding—is cut by more than \$1 billion, which will result in cuts to Vermont of close to \$2.5 million in fiscal year 1996. Vermont education improvement funds will be cut by over \$1 million, and Vermont will lose more than \$1 million in safe and drug free school funds. Vocational education will be cut by 27 percent nationally, resulting in a loss to Vermont of over \$1 million.

At a time when we need to devote more resources for education it will be an absolute disaster for Vermont to lose tens of million dollars in Federal education and training funding. These cuts will mean higher property taxes for Vermont communities and fewer students receiving Head Start, student loans, and grants, assistance for the disadvantaged, and summer job opportunities.

By the year 2002, Republican-approved cuts would deny: 309 Vermont children a chance to participate in Head Start; 60 out of 60 Vermont school districts funding used to keep crime, violence, and drugs away from students and out of schools; 21,200 Vermont college students would be denied \$2,111 in loans, and as many as 3,000 graduate students would be denied \$9,424 in loans to help pay college costs; 9,492 Vermont low-income youths would be denied a first opportunity to get work experience in summer jobs.

In 1996 alone, Republican-approved cuts would deny: 2,100 disadvantaged Vermont children crucial reading, writing, and mathematic assistance in school; 700 Vermont students funding for Pell Grants to help afford a college education; 227 young people in Vermont a chance to participate in national service programs; 563 dislocated Vermonters training opportunities.

Seniors programs are also severely damaged by this bill. The Community Service Employment for Older Americans is cut by \$46 million dollars. The National Senior Volunteers Corp., which includes the Senior Companion Program, the Foster Grandparent Program and the Retired Seniors Volunteers Program, is cut by more than \$20 million. Congregate and home delivered meals for seniors are cut by more than \$20 million. This will mean that 114,637 fewer seniors will be able to get hot meals at senior centers under the Congregate Meals Program and 43,867 frail older persons will be cut off from Meals on Wheels.

Working Americans will suffer as a result of this bill. At a time when Americans are working longer hours for less pay and the gap between the rich and the poor is wider than at any time in the history of this Nation, this bill is an assault on working people. This bill is going to make it far more difficult for working people to keep their place among the middle class as workplace safety, health, protection, and bargaining laws are taken off the books. The bill literally guts the Occupational Safety

and Health Administration which protects our workers from unsafe conditions in the workplace. Corporations will find it easier to violate wage hour laws, set up bogus pension systems and take advantage of workers who try to organize.

Disabled Americans are not spared the cuts in this bill. The Developmental Disabilities Councils, which provide some of the only services to meet the needs of the people with severest disabilities, have been cut by \$30 million, or nearly 40-percent reduction. The Councils have been instrumental in supporting a voice for this highly vulnerable population and their families. Nationwide, the Councils have been a voice to foster deinstitutionalization of people with mental retardation; to work for employment and economic independence of people with developmental disabilities, and to encourage the development of long-term care in community-based settings.

In Vermont the Developmental Disabilities Council supports the Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights, an organization which provides advocacy on disability issues; supports a statewide newsletter, The Independent, focusing on issues affecting the elderly and people with disabilities; supports the disability law project to provide advocacy on individual cases and systematic issues; supports a highly successful project to make recreation sites accessible to people with disabilities; and, among other things, supports statewide training for people with disabilities on the Americans with Disabilities Act.

And finally, Mr. Chairman, health care for rural communities has been put at great risk by this bill. This bill eliminates State Offices of Rural Health, the Federal Office of Rural Health, rural health telemedicine grants, the essential access to community hospitals programs, new rural health grants, and the bill cut by 43 percent, the rural health transition grants. This bill turns its back on small rural communities that are struggling to recruit doctors, maintain hospitals, and reach out to isolated rural settings that have difficulty accessing health care.

In closing, let me say that this bill could not be more clear about the misplaced priorities of the Republican majority in Congress. While Republicans set out gutting programs for women, children, students, seniors, people with disabilities and working Americans, they launch production of the F-22 airplane in the Speaker's district and increase spending billions more on the creation of more B-2 bombers—a weapon the Pentagon has said it doesn't want or need.

CONGRATULATIONS TOMMY
CUTRER ON HIS MANY YEARS OF
SERVICE IN TENNESSEE

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 4, 1995

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, we all aspire to make a difference in the lives of those around us. I rise today to thank my good friend and constituent, T. Tommy Cutrer, for making a difference in so many people's lives and to congratulate him for his many years of service to the working men and women of Tennessee and America.

T. Tommy was born in Tangipahoa Parish, LA. In 1949, he met and married his partner for life, Miss Vicky Martin. T. Tommy declares finding Miss Vicky to be the highlight of his life.

T. Tommy had the opportunity to enjoy several different careers. In 1954, he joined the Grand Ole Opry as a staff announcer and entertainer. His talents allowed him to become widely recognized by all Tennesseans for his Martha White Flour commercials.

In 1978, T. Tommy was elected to the Tennessee State Senate. He represented his district until 1982. Later in 1982 he joined the International Brotherhood of Teamsters as an international representative of drive. T. Tommy retired from this position on June 30, 1995.

During his tenure at the Teamsters, T. Tommy provided me with sound counsel and good advice. I can assure you that the betterment of the hard working men and women was always at the front of his mind.

T. Tommy plans on spending his retirement traveling with Miss Vicky and visiting their 5 children, 11 grandchildren, and 1 great grandchild and another on the way. I want to wish them both the best of luck and prosperity in retirement.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR,
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HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 4, 1995

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, early this morning, this House voted to approve one of the saddest pieces of legislation it has ever sent forward. We heard the astounding arguments that this Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and related agencies appropriations bill will maintain, or even increase, funding for health and education programs that are vital to the well-being of our most vulnerable citizens. But these arguments, like the funding decisions themselves, are a sham and a coverup. They coverup the fact that in its allocation of funds to the Labor-HHS Subcommittee, this Republican-led Congress chose to ignore the needs of those citizens to save money for tax cuts for the wealthy, and for spending in the Department of Defense to purchase equipment that even the leaders of that Department stated they do not want or need. For years, that subcommittee has nurtured and supported programs that constitute the discretionary safety net for our children, our seniors living on fixed incomes, and our workers. The grossly insufficient allocation of funds to the Labor-HHS Subcommittee forced Chairman PORTER to snip the threads of that net as if with a chain saw.

But this bill does some very, very bad things as well. It terminates hundreds of programs, including over 60 programs of the Department of Health and Human Services—such as black lung clinics, State trauma care, substance abuse training and treatment, programs that counsel the elderly about their health insurance, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, programs that provide services to the homeless, nutrition programs for the el-

derly, and programs designed to reduce the rampant problem of drug abuse among young people. There are many reasons for us to be sad about what this Congress did by passing this bill.

I applaud the dedicated work of Chairman PORTER and Mr. OBEY, for they have done yeoman work under excruciatingly difficult circumstances. I applaud them for increasing funds for the important research activities of NIH. I am pleased that the subcommittee recognized the importance of increased funding for breast and cervical cancer prevention activities at CDC, for childhood immunization, and for other prevention activities.

But I am very concerned that this bill achieved those increases through a very short-sighted approach, and through robbing Peter to pay Paul. I want to focus on just two examples of this.

The bill increases funding for infectious disease programs at CDC, but decreases CDC administrative costs by \$31 million. This decrease takes funds not only from such things as office supplies and taxicab rides, but also for salaries and expenses for the researchers, doctors, and laboratory technicians, who are essential to CDC's activities in preventing and controlling infectious diseases and carrying out other critical activities. It also takes money from the budget that provides for CDC epidemiologists and doctors to travel to other parts of the country and the world, where they are often the only source of expertise related to a new, devastating epidemic.

It is already extremely difficult for CDC to recruit and retain qualified scientists and physicians with expertise in infectious diseases. In this era of downsizing Government, the CDC infectious diseases program is losing people faster than it can replace them, and has increasingly limited ability to replace scientists with invaluable and unique expertise. In a March U.S. News and World Report article about CDC, entitled "Tales from the Hot Zone," the deputy director of the infectious disease program stated the problem quite clearly: "We are losing our expertise."

In infectious diseases, as in the other areas where CDC on paper receives increased funding, I fear the increase will be seriously undermined by virtue of the fact that this bill limits the agency's wherewithal to maintain the scientific expertise needed to do the job.

Another short-sighted approach to this disastrous budget-slashing exercise is the reduction of funding for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health—a reduction that was then applied to allow the supporters of the bill to argue that they had increased funding for CDC. I fear that perhaps NIOSH is being punished because some may believe it is a regulatory, rather than a research agency. NIOSH is not a regulatory agency.

The NIOSH funding cut eliminates the NIOSH training grants program and reduces research activities by over 15 percent. It would eliminate 57 training grants, including 14 university-based educational resource centers which serve as regional resources on occupational safety and health for industry, labor, Government, academia, and the general public.

NIOSH training grants have trained more than 2,700 professionals in occupational medicine and nursing, industrial hygiene, safety engineering, et cetera. These people have been trained to prevent and treat occupational dis-

eases and injuries. There is a severe shortage of certified occupational health nurses and physicians, amounting to only about one physician and five nurses to every 80,000 active workers and 20,000 retired or disabled workers.

NIOSH is the only Federal agency conducting biomedical research on the causes of occupational illness and the only agency conducting applied research to identify, evaluate, and prevent work-related injuries and illness.

At a time when Congress seems so intent that in-depth risk analysis must be associated with regulations, it is absurd to reduce the ability of this agency to ensure that there is sound science and risk assessment to underpin regulatory actions relating to worker health and safety.

NIOSH works closely with management and labor in its research activities, and currently is engaged in a tripartite agreement with General Motors and the UAW to conduct health and safety research. In a recent letter to the Director of NIOSH concerning this program, the GM vice president for R&D stated: "we recognize NIOSH's distinct role as a R&D entity which has been very effective in injury prevention research over the last 25 years. This effort has ultimately saved the nation billions of dollars annually in medical costs, and also improved the health and welfare of every American worker and their families."

These are just two small but significant examples of the many ways in which this funding bill hurts the public health and hurts the people of this country. The House wants to balance the budget—we all agree on that goal. Many agree that all federal programs need to tighten their belts and contribute their "fair share" to important budget-reduction efforts. But the budget cutting in this Congress has not been honest, and it has not been fair. The money being saved is much greater than what is needed to balance the budget; it is being saved for tax breaks and unnecessary defense spending. The cuts have targeted the most unfortunate, the oldest and the youngest, and the most needy in our country. Nowhere is that more evident than in this appropriations bill. The ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations said it best in his dissenting views: this legislation "will make it harder for ordinary people to hold on to a middle class life . . . more difficult for the disadvantaged to get the education and training which they need to work their way into the middle class . . . workers more vulnerable. . . . this bill marks a retreat from our efforts to be one people with common causes and common interests. Surely this Congress in a bi-partisan way can do better."

MEDICARE AND POINT-OF-SERVICE

HON. BILL K. BREWSTER

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 4, 1995

Mr. BREWSTER. Mr. Speaker, as we move toward consideration of Medicare reform proposals, I would like to draw my colleagues' attention to a national survey released Wednesday, July 26, 1995. This survey revealed that four out of five Americans age 50 and over said they would not join a Medicare managed