

CONGRESS IS MOVING FORWARD WITH ITS AGENDA WHILE THE WHITE HOUSE DEALS WITH SCANDALS

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

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, while the White House is fully occupied with an army of lawyers dealing with all the campaign scandals, we here in Congress are moving forward with our agenda.

Our agenda is nothing more than the agenda the American people who elected us asked us to implement. That agenda includes balancing the budget for the first time since 1969. That agenda includes cutting the tax on capital gains so that the economy will produce more jobs and more opportunities, cutting taxes for working families, giving them relief at home.

That agenda includes fundamental Medicare reform so seniors are protected from a system in danger of bankruptcy. That agenda includes smaller government, less bureaucracy, and more control in local communities. That agenda includes a recognition that the fraying of America can only be addressed with a greater respect for traditional American values, and by strengthening the family, not weakening it.

□ 1030

That is our agenda and that is the agenda of the majority of the American people. I ask my colleagues to join me in implementing that agenda.

HANDGUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Speaker, years ago parents lived in fear that their children might one day catch polio. Many of our best doctors and scientists put all their energies into finding a cure. Years ago things like measles, tuberculosis and tetanus posed serious threats to the health of our children. These diseases were aggressively researched and solutions were found.

Today there is a new epidemic threatening our children: handgun violence. We know that handgun violence affects more than 10 times as many children as polio ever did. In fact in many States, handgun violence is the leading cause of death among children. But we are fighting handgun violence with only 1 percent of the resources we used to fight polio.

We should confront handgun violence with the same urgency that previous generations brought to the leading health epidemics of their time. Their example should serve as an inspiration. If we could find a vaccine for polio, we can find a solution to handgun violence. A sure way to show our commitment to that effort, I urge my colleagues, is to vote for my bill that

would ban handgun possession by anyone under 21.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

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

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on this National Day of Prayer, I think it is important for all of us and for the American people to realize that we do, as did our Founding Fathers, derive our powers, derive our sense of what is right and wrong, derive our very sense of the moral fiber of our country not from ourselves, not from within ourselves, but from the hand of God.

I believe that as we move forward and debate the important issues, many of which are very contentious, of a political nature in our country in these days and months ahead, that even if we do disagree and there will be disagreements, at least we assure the American people very honestly that our sense of what we are doing, that the positions that we are reflecting, the position that we state on behalf of our citizens are those that are born of reflective prayer and belief, that these do indeed represent the will of our founder, our true founder, our Lord. I think it is very important to recognize that and to assure Americans that that is indeed the basis on which we act here in this House of Representatives.

CITIZENSHIP USA

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, the Immigration and Naturalization Service admits that up to 180,000 criminals were improperly granted citizenship. The INS now says we made a mistake and allowed applicants to submit copies of their own fingerprints, and the criminals submitted phony prints. Beam me up.

I say it is time to wage a real war on illegal immigration and drugs. Let us transfer some of our military troops falling out of chairs on arm rests, cashing their American paycheck in Tokyo and Frankfurt and put them on our border and stop this business. This is a joke. This program called Citizenship USA has turned into Criminal USA. It does not take Karnak the Magnificent to figure it out.

Congress should fire those incompetent, stumbling, bumbling nincompoops at the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Print this.

I yield back the balance of all illegal immigrants.

VETERANS' CEMETERY PROTECTION ACT OF 1997

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

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague, the gentleman from Hawaii [Mr. ABERCROMBIE], in reintroducing the Veterans' Cemetery Protection Act. Whenever a young man or woman decides to enter the military, they do so voluntarily in order to protect our country and guard against the uncertainties of the world. Sometimes they make the ultimate sacrifice. Over 1 million Americans have died fighting in our country's wars. That is why it sickens me when I hear of hooligans desecrating our national cemeteries.

In 1996, Riverside National Cemetery, the second largest cemetery in this country, next only to Arlington, fell prey to vandals who stole bronze markers from 128 graves. On April 19, vandals spray-painted racist and profane words on the cemetery walls of the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii. Enough is enough. The Veterans' Cemetery Protection Act would stiffen criminal penalties for theft and malicious vandalism at national cemeteries. I wish to thank the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. STUMP] of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, the gentleman from California [Mr. BONO], the gentleman from California [Mr. ROYCE], and many others who have come forward to support this bill.

Being so close to Memorial Day, I invite my colleagues to become original cosponsors of this measure as a small gift to our Nation's veterans.

IN SUPPORT OF THE VETERAN'S CEMETERY PROTECTION ACT

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

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise as the cosponsor with the gentleman from California [Mr. CALVERT] today of the bill which he just enumerated. I think many people in the United States and even around the world according to the administrators at Punch Bowl Cemetery have recognized what has taken place. This is beyond vandalism. That is why this bill is coming forward.

I am also grateful to the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. STUMP] and everyone else who has helped us to recognize what needs to be done here. The present legal situation in the United States does not cover this kind of desecration. This is beyond vandalism. I think there is perhaps a demented mentality at work here.

We cannot reward it by reacting in a way that is beyond what the bill calls for. We will look into matters of security. We will look into other legal matters associated with it. But this action must be taken in order to protect monuments, memorials, cemeteries all across the Nation and in fact probably all across the world. I thank the gentleman from California [Mr. CALVERT]. I thank the gentleman from Arizona