

PS: Maybe, maybe. And the American Medical Association is not exactly exempt from blame. The physicians are the most antigovernment group of all. They're the highest paid profession in America by far, and so they are protecting their economic interests. Though the government now looks a little better to them than the insurance industry because they have more control over government than over the insurance companies.

Look, the country was barely ready for Medicare when that went through. It just made it through Congress by a few votes. There are some of us who would have liked to see it include nursing home or long-term convalescent care. That can only be done through social insurance, but people won't admit it. They say, "There's got to be a better way." It's a mantra. On healthcare: "There's got to be a better way." Education: "There's got to be a better way."

They've yet to say it for defense though. I'm waiting for them to privatize the Defense Department and turn it over to Pinkerton. Although in a way they have. There's a bunch of retired generals right outside the Beltway making millions of dollars of government money training the armed forces in Bosnia. I was there and what a bunch of crackpots! They've got these former drill sergeants over there, including people out to try to start wars on our ticket.

World: A few more short questions. Have the culture and atmosphere of the House changed in the years since you arrived here?

PS: Yes, though I spent 22 years in the majority and now four in the minority, so I may just be remembering good old days that weren't so good. Back when I was trying to end the Vietnam War. I was in just as much of a minority as I am now, and I didn't have a subcommittee chair to give me any power or leverage.

On the other hand, look at the country now. Look at TV talk shows—they argue and shout and scream, and then they call it journalism. Maybe we're just following in their footsteps.

World: Is it a spiritual challenge for you to have to work with, or at least alongside, people with whom you disagree, sometimes violently?

PS: Yes, and I don't a very good job. My wife says, "When you retire, why don't you become an ambassador?" And I say, "Diplomacy doesn't run deep in these genes." But it's tough if you internalize your politics and believe in them.

Still, I like legislating—to make it all work, to take all the pieces that are pushing on you, to make the legislation fit, to accommodate and accomplish a goal. It really makes the job kind of fascinating. I once reformed the part of the income tax bill that applies to life insurance, and that's one of the most arcane and complex parts of the tax bill. It was fun—bringing people together and getting something like that. And actually writing that health bill was fun.

But not now. We don't have any committee hearings or meetings anymore. It's all done in back rooms. Under the Democratic leadership we used to go into the back room, but there were a lot of us in the room. Now they write bills in the speaker's office and avoid the committee system. I mean, it's done deals. We're not doing any legislating, or not very much.

World: Do you think about quitting?

PS: No, I don't think about quitting. I'd consider doing something else, but I don't know what that is. Secretary of health and human services? Sure, but don't hold your breath until I'm offered the job. Even in the minority, being in the Congress is fascinating, and as long as my health and faculties hold out. * * * I mean, I'm not much interested in shuffleboard or model airplanes.

MASS IMMIGRATION REDUCTION ACT

HON. BOB STUMP

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, on January 6, with the support of 48 original cosponsors, I introduced the Mass Immigration Reduction Act. My bill, formerly called the Immigration Moratorium Act, provides for a significant, but temporary, cut in legal immigration to the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that many Members of this body would be surprised to learn that the immigrant population is now growing faster than at any time in our nation's history. The number of immigrants living in the United States has almost tripled since 1970, from 9.6 million to 26.3 million. This profusion in immigrants has a profound and costly impact on our way of life. For example, the net annual current fiscal burden imposed on native households at all levels of government by immigrant households nationally is estimated to range from \$14.8 to \$20.2 billion. As troubling, the poverty rate for immigrants is nearly 50 percent higher than that of natives. This suggests that our immigration policies are not only unfair to citizens, but are a disservice to immigrants who come here looking for a better, more prosperous way of life. As federal legislators, we have an obligation to take a serious look at our immigration policies and the problems that stem from them. It is our duty to devise an immigration system that is in our nation's best interest.

Under my proposed legislation, immigration would be limited to the spouses and minor children of U.S. citizens, 25,000 refugees, 5,000 employment-based priority workers and a limited number of immigrants currently waiting in the immigration backlog. The changes would expire after five years, provided no adverse impact would result from an immigration increase. Total immigration under my bill would be around 300,000 per year, down from the current level of about one million annually. I should emphasize that my bill is not intended to serve as a permanent long-term immigration policy. It would provide a lull in legal immigration, during which time we would have an opportunity to reevaluate America's immigration needs and set up more appropriate conditions under which immigrants may become permanent residents of the United States.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, let me stress that we should continue to welcome immigrants to our great country. However, we should do so under a well-regulated policy that is based upon America's needs and interests. Currently, we lack such a policy. Our system allows for unmanageable levels of immigrants with little regard for the impact the levels have on our limited ability to absorb and assimilate newcomers. I strongly urge my colleagues to examine our immigration system and ask themselves whether it is in the best interests of their constituents to continue the unprecedented trend of mass immigration. I encourage Members to support my bill, and look forward to productive debate on this important issue.

LEGISLATION TO RAISE THE MANDATORY RETIREMENT AGE FOR U.S. CAPITOL POLICE OFFICERS FROM 57 TO 60

HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, on January 6, 1999 I introduced legislation to change the mandatory retirement age for U.S. Capitol Police Officers from 57 to 60. It is identical to legislation I introduced in the last Congress, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this important bill.

As every Member of Congress knows, the Capitol Police is one of the most professional and dedicated law enforcement agencies in the country. They perform a vital and important function. The force is blessed to have a large number of experienced and highly competent officers. Unfortunately, every year dozens of officers are forced to leave the force because of the mandatory retirement rule. Many of these officers are in excellent physical condition. Most important, they possess a wealth of experience and savvy that is difficult, if not impossible, to replace.

Raising the mandatory retirement age from 57 to 60 will provide the Capitol Police with the flexibility necessary to retain experienced, highly competent and dedicated officers. It will enhance and improve security by ensuring that the force experiences a slower rate of turnover.

I introduce this legislation at a time when the Capitol Police is struggling to increase the size of its force in the face of an increased workload. For example, I have spoken to a number of officers who are routinely working up to 56 hours of overtime a month. Plans by the Capitol Police Board to hire an additional 260 officers will not fully alleviate this serious problem. Raising the retirement age will certainly help to reduce the workload of the force.

Should this legislation become law, Capitol Police officers between the ages of 57 and 60 would still have to meet the standard requirements to remain on the force, including proficiency on the shooting range.

This legislation is a commonsense measure that will go a long way in improving and enhancing what is already one of the finest law enforcement agencies in the world. Once again, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

DISTINGUISHED INDIVIDUALS FROM INDIANA'S FIRST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and reflect on his life and work, we are reminded of the challenges that democracy poses to us and the delicacy of liberty. Dr. King's life and, unfortunately, his vicious murder, remind us that we must continually work and, if necessary, fight to secure and protect our freedoms. Dr. King, in his courage to act, his willingness to meet challenges, and his