Mr. PALLONE. I thank the gentlewoman. The other thing she points out is, why are we here? Why do we come here on the floor of the House after the votes and bring this up?

I think there is a sort of dual fear on my part, and I am sure the gentlewoman's and the Democrats in general, that either the Republicans are not going to bring up anything, which is a possibility, because it keeps getting postponed, or, if they do bring something up, that the danger is it is just there for political purposes. In other words, it maybe passes this House, but never passes the Senate because there is no effort to bring up something that everyone can agree on, or it is something that sounds good, but does not really help the average person. Because, as the gentlewoman points out, who is it out there that is complaining to us? Not the very wealthy; not the poor who are on Medicaid and get prescription drugs under Medicaid; but the vast middle class. Your average person, who, right now, because their income is not low enough, they are not eligible for Medicaid and they cannot afford to pay the high prices. They are like 90 percent of the seniors who need this benefit.

I have been critical of the Republicans and I have been very partisan about it, because everything I hear is that their proposals they have been airing essentially do not cover prescription drugs for most of that middle income or middle class group. It seems like they are saying, okay, we will give some money, almost like a voucher, to insurance companies, and they will cover prescription drugs for people that are just above the poverty line, or they will see if an HMO will cover it.

But, as we know, in many parts of the country, HMOs simply are not available and they have cut back on the level of prescription drugs or how much you have to pay or what kind of benefit you get. So there is a real concern on my part that if we do get a bill, that it not be just a hoax, just a sham; that it be something that is really meaningful in terms of people's lives.

So I started this evening talking about two editorials. One was the Star Ledger. But I did not mention the one from The New York Times. I am not going to read the whole thing.

If I could just conclude, this was actually on May 28 in The New York Times during the break. The title is ''Paralysis in Health Care.'' It says, ''Early this year Congress and the White House entertained dreams of passing all kinds of health care legislation. President Bush and Senator KENNEDY were working on a Patients' Bill of Rights. There was even talk of enacting a prescription drug benefit for the elderly. But such talk has vanished. Lawmakers seem to be betting that voters will not punish them for inaction. But they cannot put off the issue forever.

''A decade ago, when the cost of health care was also soaring, many experts were sure they had a solution, managed care and competition. But HMOs turned out to be no magic.

''Elderly people who came out of the last election with the impression that they would inevitably get help with the cost of prescription drugs may be in for a disappointment. The Bush administration proposed spending less than $200 billion over the next 10 years, a ridiculously low sum given the public's expectations.

''Congress Members had better take the time to listen to voters. They are likely to discover their patience is diminishing. Sooner or later the demand for health care is going to be high on the agenda, and it could happen before the election in November.''

The New York Times is talking the political aspects of it because we know our constituents are demanding a prescription drug benefit. But it is, as I said, important for the Republicans, who are in charge here and have the obligation to, we as Democrats cannot, we do not have the majority, to not only bring up something, but bring up something that is going to be meaningful in terms of seniors' lives.

We will go at this every night until we see a proposal brought up and an opportunity to debate this on the House floor, which we have not had so far.

I yield to the gentlewoman from New York.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, again I would like to stress why it is so important. In my 30 years working as a nurse, I have seen so many different changes in our health care system. But one thing I do know is the same is that each and every person in our senior citizens, who certainly are some of our most vulnerable people, when it comes to their health care, we should make sure that they can get the best.

I have to say, I did not want to see this country go down the way where we have a two-class system. When the gentleman had mentioned the middle income, I would be considered middle income on Long Island, and yet I am certainly concerned, will I be able to afford the drugs that I might need to keep me healthy as I get older?

So that is why I am fighting. I am fighting as a health care provider, but I am also fighting because I am going to be a senior citizen one day.

I thank the gentleman again for his leadership.

BEING FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KIRK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, having heard the previous speakers, it is interesting that, time after time after time, we have my colleagues, like the gentlewoman from New York that stands up and talks about prescription care for all people, and I am quoting here, ''everyone should be able to have their prescription needs met.''

□ 2015

But what the gentlewoman fails to come up with, the question she fails to answer, is how are we going to pay for it? It was not 1½ weeks ago when we were talking about the supplemental appropriation bill here on this House floor, on which the Democrats were giving stalling motion after stalling motion, alleging that the Republicans were going to spend the United States Congress into oblivion.

On one hand they complain about the spending, and on the other hand they stand up in front of the cameras and promise all good things.

In my State, in the State of Colorado, I have recently seen promises from the Democratic side of the aisle that we are going to have mass transit and that we are going to have full prescription care for all people in the State of Colorado, for all people in this country.

Look, that sounds grand, but we ought to ask of every person, every Congressman or elected representative or anybody representing either of the parties that stands up in front of us and promises us the Moon, promises us the golden key: Who pays for it?

What the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) fails to bring up in her comments, and I say this with all due respect, but the fact is, business is business, and somebody has to pay for this. What she fails to bring up is right now in the United States, we are in a deficit situation. We are not creating new wealth. There is no new wealth that is being created in this country on the net bottom line for the Nation, which means that anytime we offer additional benefits to somebody, we have to transfer them from somebody else.

I would like to say to the gentlewoman that her salary as a Congresswoman does not put her in the middle class; it probably puts her in the upper middle class. The fact is that a lot of these transfer payments, and that is what has to happen, when we promise somebody that needs prescription care, and it sounds good, and I think there are cases where we have to provide prescription care, but to promise it en masse to the population, there is only one way we can pay for it: we have to take it from somebody and transfer it to somebody else.

So we cannot stand up here, and it just happened, I just saw it from the gentlewoman from New York, we cannot stand up here and on one hand promise people prescription care so that all their prescriptions are cared for, and on the other hand, talk about the middle-income taxpayer and about how the middle-income taxpayer is going to worry how they can pay for their prescription services.

Of course they are going to worry about it, because under these kinds of

programs that they are proposing, which really are a type of socialism, equal treatment across the board, what happens when we make those kinds of promises is there is only one place we are going to get the money. The bulk of the money is going to come from the very class of people that they stand up here and profess to protect. That is the middle class.

Prescription care is a high priority for all of us. I do not know any Democrat or any Republican that would not like everybody in this Nation to have their prescriptions paid for. The pharmaceutical industries in this country have really done a pretty remarkable job with the assistance of the people in this country who have provided those grants and have provided research.

So now, for example, I was at some town meetings in the last week. I mentioned about how just 10 or 12 years ago, when one had diarrhea, they had to drink that Kaopectate stuff, that gray liquid in the white plastic thing, or drank that Pepto Bismol or something, and hopefully after 2 or 3 or 4 hours the diarrhea would slow down. Today if one gets that, they pop a little tiny pill not much bigger than an eraser on a pencil and it is gone in 20 minutes, so we have made progress in that regard.

But we cannot get it for free. We cannot promise the American people that all their prescription needs are going to be for free. That is exactly what happened in the preceding statement.

Then, on top of that, it is easy when people are not the ones making budget decisions, so it is easy for the Democrats in the minority party to go out and make all of these promises because they know that it is the Republicans who have to provide it. And then it is the Republicans that get put on the defensive when they show up.

For example, after the gentlewoman from New York goes into a meeting and makes all these promises, and happens to walk out the door before telling how she is going to pay for it, then we walk in the door and we are the ones that have to come up with the funds. We are the ones that have to be the bearers of bad news.

If Members want to talk about fiscal responsibility, it requires that every one of us on this floor, including Republicans and Democrats, when we propose a benefit, we ought to be able to also tell the people we are promising how we are going to pay for it.

Nothing is free, and do not let the Democratic Party tell us up here from this House floor, do not let them tell us that prescription care can be given to everyone without a very, very significant cost.

I can tell the Members who is going to end up paying that cost. Anybody that is listening, anyone who is working, the working people of this country, regardless of what their job is, they are the ones who are going to pick up the costs of these promises being made by the Democratic Party.

Now, we hope, within the confines of our budget, that there are certain benefits that we can offer to the elderly. We think that is important. But what concerns me is this just opens the door for the promise to become broader and broader and broader.

Two weeks ago, the Democrats over here were talking about prescription care for seniors only. Tonight, we see what has happened, just in a 2-week period of progression: tonight we hear the gentlewoman from New York, and again I say this respectfully, but we hear the gentlewoman from New York promising prescription care services for everyone. We cannot afford to do that.

On a typical day in my office over in the Cannon Office Building, we will have people coming in all day long, people with special interests; all day long coming in, special interests, whether it is with seniors; special interests, whether it is with education; special interests, whether it is with highway construction, or military apparatus. All day long we have people who come into my office. All of them have ideas. All of their ideas, almost without exception, cost money.

These people are not proposing to pay for the project; they are proposing to use the money for their project. Their proposal is that we pay for the project.

The problem at the end of a day, in a typical day, we will get requests on an average day I would say of $6 billion in a day is what they have requested in assistance for their new programs, day after day after day after day. At the end of the day, the difficulty with these programs is that almost without exception, again, every program that is proposed to us is a good program. It makes sense. It has some benefits to it.

So our choices down here are not choices between good and bad programs, and they are generally not choices between Republican wishes and Democratic wishes; but our choices are between good and good programs.

The key and the bottom line comes down, okay, we have a good program here, we have a good program there; but we only have enough money for one, or we can do both of them halfway. What do we do? My preference is we do the one and do it right the first time, which means we also have to say no.

There are lots of programs that are being proposed by the Democrats this year. It is of interest, I know, that in the last several weeks, the Democrats, because we are in budget time back here, the more partisan Democrats continually hammer away at the Republicans on our budget. They hammer away on one hand about spending, and on the other hand, they show up here on the House floor and promise the country prescription services for everybody.

I should add that the gentlewoman from New York did not just stop at prescription services for everyone; she also talked about health care, that there should not be a two-tiered division in this country of those who have health care and those who do not have health care; that everybody should have, notice the word, I am quoting her, everybody should have equal health care.

First of all, that is a socialized system. That is government-provided health care. That is the only way you can do it and there is no other way around it; it is a socialized type of program. Our country has continuously, continuously, time after time after time, said they will not accept or they do not want socialized medicine. They do not want the government running everything for everybody on an equal basis. That is not the concept of a democratic government.

This is not a socialist government; it is a democratic government. Yet, some of my colleagues continue to stand up here and get away with this kind of rhetoric, because it is real easy to stand up here and promise the American people, tell them we want every one of them to have prescription care services. But where leadership comes in is to say to these same people that we have to figure out how to pay for it. If we cannot figure out how to pay for it, some of us have to have enough guts to say we cannot get something for nothing. We cannot do it. It does not mean we do not want to do it; it means we cannot do it because we cannot afford to do it.

Who do we owe that obligation to, the obligation of saying that we just do not have the money, we cannot give it to you for free? We owe that obligation not just to the taxpayers of this country, to whom we have a fiduciary responsibility to represent their interests, but we also owe that obligation to the next generations that are really going to have to foot the bill for this kind of thing.

Take a look at what has been promised in the past. Take a look at how our system has broken down. I can tell the Members that when I go to town meetings in my district, which is in Colorado, I hear at town meeting after town meeting after town meeting complaints about programs that happen to be run by the Federal Government: the veterans' associations talk about problems we have with the veterans administration and the health care they deliver; problems with Social Security; problems with SSI; problems, problems, problems. The government does not run an efficient system.

I think it is high time around here that my colleagues, and I will say for the last hour I have heard this from the Democratic side of the aisle, and it is not my intent here tonight to approach this in a partisan Democrat-Republican type of approach, but the fact is that the Democrats continually, continually profess all of these benefits that sound wonderful; and the fact is the reason they sound wonderful is because they are wonderful.

Who in America would not like full prescription services, and, by the way, somebody else to pay for it? What they fail to point out to us is that if you happen to be the person sick out there, you are going to get a lot of benefit out of these prescription services; but if you are the person that is not sick, you are the person that is working out there, watch what happens to your taxes to provide for this never-ending benefit.

Now, I think the American people as a whole are willing to provide prescription care services for certain classes, for example, the elderly people. There are ways, and we have to figure out, whether it is mass buying, whether it is pooling, there are ways we can figure out to assess or assist the American people with their prescription care costs. That includes cracking down on pharmaceutical companies that are involved in antitrust actions or pharmaceutical companies which get together and make sure the generic brands never come to the market.

As far as I am concerned, if we catch a pharmaceutical company attempting to keep a generic brand off the market, we ought to take the executives of that company and put them in jail. It is wrong. They are trying to take advantage of the American people, not in the capitalistic freedom-of-market type of approach, but in a very sinister type of approach.

But that is a far cry from standing up in front of the American people on this House floor, standing up in front of our colleagues, and saying that we need equal health care for everybody. There should not be two tiers, two tiers of health care in this country, those who get it and those who do not get it. Instead, everybody should have equal, again, equal health care, and everybody should have prescription care services, so whatever prescriptions they need, they get paid for.

I will just tell the Members today, I have kind of a cold, so I use a nose spray, which was a prescription nose spray, because I have allergies. I took folic acid this morning, which was prescription. I am trying to think what else. I took some vitamins. I took a pill for my knee this morning, which was prescription.

Why should the Members or anybody else in this room pay for my prescriptions? I am able-bodied. I am capable of working. I would like it very much if you would pay for my prescription services, but the fact is simple: there is not enough money to go around. That is the reality that we have to face here.

We have to be honest with the American public. We have to look them right in the eye and say, look, we would like to give everybody prescription care services, but somebody ought to answer the question: How do we pay for it? When we promise people a rose garden, we had better figure that out. We owe it to them to say, nothing is free. I can give this to you, but this is what it is going to cost you. I can do this, but in the future, this is what is going to happen to this program.

When we start a program with the Federal Government, it never stops, it just grows and grows. It does not grow proportionately, by the way, i.e., as the population grows by 10 percent and the program would grow 10 percent. Take a look at Social Security. The population grew probably like this, and Social Security grew like this. There is a huge gap in there that has to be paid for.

What happens is I have colleagues, like the one who just spoke in the last hour, the gentlewoman from New York, who stand at the podium and make very pleasant promises, very nice rose garden promises to the American people, and then we have to come in and be the bad guys by saying, look, you know, it is a nice promise, it is a great program, but we have to pay for it.

□ 2030

So I would challenge, and with all due respect, I would challenge my colleague from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) to tell us how we are going to pay for it; tell me exactly what constituents in your congressional district are going to pay for it; and tell me how often you have returned to your congressional district, which you say is a 90-minute ride back to your district so it is easy to get there, tell me when the last time it was when you stood up in front of your constituents back there and told them, you will pay for these services, across-the-board prescription care services, across-the-board medical care. My guess is that what is said here is often not what is said back in the district.

The fact is you ought to be honest with these people. And I am not implying that the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is not being honest, but I am saying directly to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY), how are we going to pay for it? I want prescription Medicare. I would like the prescription that I took today, I would love it if somebody else would have paid for it. How can I say no to that? Somebody comes up and says, here, we are going to pay for your prescriptions today for your nose spray and for your knee, to help rebuild your muscle in your knee. We will have somebody else pay for it.

It sounds great, but it does not happen that way. And we owe it to the American people to be straight with them, to say to them we do have a problem with prescription care. Prescriptions, while they have advanced tremendously, the pharmaceuticals, while they have advanced tremendously in the capability that they have, they have also advanced tremendously in cost. And I think, frankly, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) her energy would much better be exerted instead of standing on the House floor and promising the American people that we should provide prescription care for everybody across the board, that our energies would be much better expended going after the pharmaceutical companies that are trying to drive off generic drugs or trying to keep generic drugs off the drugstore market shelf. That is where we ought to focus. Promises to give everybody everything they want are empty promises. And too often, if this government has ever gotten into deficit problems, or if you can ever track how we get into budget problems, it is because not enough of us stand up here in front of the people we represent and say we cannot do it all for you. If we do do this for you, this is what it will cost you.

You cannot go down to the car dealership and get a free car with somebody else having to pay for it. The dealership does not give away free cars, and the government cannot continue to provide 300 million citizens with their prescription care costs. So I think we need to keep that in mind.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about another issue tonight. I just came off CNN and had a very interesting discussion about ''profiling,'' ''racial profiling.'' The American Civil Liberties Union apparently today filed a lawsuit on behalf of five or six plaintiffs who allege that they were racially profiled by airlines in the process of going through security to get onto these aircraft of these particular airlines. And we had a discussion and, of course, the plaintiffs in this case talk about the fact that they were asked to leave the plane or they were questioned, they are convinced, because of their race or their color. And one of them said, it broke my heart and I will never be the same.

You can see the kind of language in there. I mean, in my opinion, as I said on CNN tonight, the American Civil Liberties Union goes out there and hunts for these kinds of people and then races to the court and then runs to the national TV and has national press conferences about how horrible the security system is in this country, how racial profiling should never be allowed.

I can tell you that the American Civil Liberties Union racially profiles, schools racially profile, CNN racially profiles, the Democrat party racially profiles, political parties do that. Now, what do I mean? Back it up with a little substance. The Democratic party, take a look at the discussions about Florida. Take a look at what the Democratic party does, as do all political parties, as do insurance companies, as does CNN to figure out who their viewers are. They will go in, based strictly on a person's race or color, they will go in and say, how will this person vote. If they will vote Democratic, if this particular race tends to vote Democratic, let us spend more money here to get them to vote our way, Democratic.

It is the same thing if CNN goes into an area and says, who are our viewers? What age are they? What income

bracket are they? Do blacks watch more than whites? All of this is done. Now when it comes to security, I think we have to take a step back. I do not think we should have what is called and what is trying to be directed towards the ACLU or the ACLU is trying to say to society that we are trying to justify, I do not think a person should be pulled off an airplane or given any extra scrutiny for the sole reason of their race background.

I am Irish and I have got some Scottish. I do not think just because of the fact that I am Irish with no other risk factors in there, that is the key buzz word, risk factors, with no other risk factors in there, just because I am Irish, to pull me aside, to exclude me from an airplane.

Now, keep in mind that with the plaintiffs that the ACLU is representing, this happened one time. And the representative for the American Civil Liberties Union tonight on CNN said these people are not looking for money. Because I said, look, all you are trying to do is it is a rush for the courts, to take what you can get. It is like a slot machine, let us see if we can get some money out of this deal. The ACLU answers and says, we do not take any money. We are here to make these people whole.

Well, it happened one time to these people. Out of the thousands and thousands and thousands of times a day that people go through security, the ACLU goes out and somehow finds six of them that feel offended by the security and are now demanding that security not take into consideration at all a person's ethnic profile, even if it is in combination with other factors. I am here to say to you, look, we have a responsibility in this country to provide for security when you get on an airplane. I can assure you, in my opinion, that those six plaintiffs, had something gone wrong on that airplane and they had been the victim of it, they would probably have had a national news conference today, not with the American Civil Liberties Union but with a group of plaintiffs' attorneys, to sue the airline or to sue the government.

My point is this, we have to provide security on those airplanes. Our country is very dependent, our economy is very dependent on those aircraft flying. A lot of us use airplanes and we want to know when we get on that airplane that we are safe. That requires some inconvenience on our part. In my opinion, it does not violate the Constitution, but it does require you, for example, when your suitcase is going through security they may open your suitcase, they may go through your underwear, they may go through your shaving kit. That is an inconvenience. It is not an unconstitutional strike against your basic human rights. And based on a risk profile, take a look at what hit us on September 11. It was not 11 Irishmen between the age of 40 and 45 years old who had jobs and et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, of the Catholic religion. That is not what happened.

We had a profile, not just the ethnic background, but it had their ethnic background; it had their age; it had their religion; it had their past history or some of their past history. I can build what is called a risk profile. And for the ACLU or for any of the political left to advocate that we should compromise the security of our airplanes or compromise the security of the American people so that we are politically correct and we do not offend somebody, and I can tell you there are people that are offended that you lift their underwear out of a suitcase to look at things. But that does not mean that just because it is politically offensive to them that we should compromise security to make them happy, and it is the same thing here.

We do have constitutional protections that we have an obligation to recognize, that the airport people have an obligation to recognize. But the fact that they have used a person's ethnic background in combination with the other risk elements, it is not an evil attempt to be prejudiced towards a person. It is a very legitimate attempt to protect the security of the people, including that person who wants to get on that airplane.

Now, what happens if you are a police officer? I used to be a police officer. And I can tell you if they give me a call that says, hey, we just had a white man rob a bank, he just robbed a bank, this white man, I can tell you we did not go into the black neighborhood questioning black or African Americans. We did not question them whether they just robbed a bank. No. We used our profile. We knew the bank robber was white. We knew the bank robber was about 5′6″. We knew the bank robber was say between 19 and 27 years old, so there was no use going stopping Caucasian or white females that are 60 years old and questioning them to see whether they robbed a bank. We used a risk profile.

Now, I am the first one to stand up and say this has its boundaries and it can be abused. And when it is abused, we should stop the abuse. But that is not what the American Civil Liberties Union is doing. The American Civil Liberties Union is pressing so hard that what is happening at our airports, and at some time pull an airport security person aside and say, do you ever not search someone or do you ever not ask questions because you will be accused of being racially motivated. And I bet you the answer on a lot of them will be yes. That is what they said to me. I have asked one another day. I said, I do not get it. I got on an airplane. There was a lady. She was about 75 years old and her baggage was all laid out on the table and they are going through it item by item. Then there were some people ahead of me. They were of Arab descent, but the interesting thing was they had packages. I am surprised they could get them in the overhead. And the woman had a veil over her face. You could not see whether it was a female or a male. I am assuming that it was a female. And they were both, I could not tell with her because of the veil, and I guess it was a her. He was about 19 or 20 years old. They boarded the plane and that was fine.

Then they came to me and stopped me. I asked the person, I said, I do not mind being searched at all. I think it is good. I do not mind if you search everybody on this airplane, but why did you pick me out?

Well, because you are a Congressman, the person said, and people will think we have special treatment of Congressmen if we do not search you when you go through. So we picked you out just to show other people, look, just because the fact that he is a Congressman does not mean he gets searched. I said, how about that lady up there? Why would a lady like that be searched? Well, again, to show we are not focusing on a high risk group or a group of a particular ethnic background. I said, wait a minute. What if you have somebody that fits the risk profile? They are the right age, they are from a country that is questionable as far as the relationship with the United States, they meet other risk criteria in there, but they happen to be, say, Irish or they happen to be Arab; just based on the race thing does it cause you any reluctance to ask them any questions?

Absolutely, he says. I do not want to get in any trouble. This person told me that. The person told me they felt very intimidated to step forward and ask somebody, especially somebody of Arabic ethnic background or of ethnic color, to ask them any of those type of questions because they are afraid they would be accused of racial profiling or racism.

At that point I said to the person, you know the best way to trick the United States is look the part because you probably will not get stopped and questioned. In fact, what I said to the ACLU tonight, I think the opposite is happening. Some of these people that are so politically correct and putting security second and third and fourth seat back are in fact opening a big gap in our security blanket in this country by making our security checkers intimidated, concerned about, oh, my gosh, I better not ask that person because they are not white and Caucasian, or I better not ask that person because they are African American. I do not want to offend this person because they are Irish. That is one of the problems we have got.

So I do not know any of my colleagues on the House floor, I do not know any of them that would advocate profiling somebody based on race alone. I think that goes, I do not understand the boundaries and I think there is a constitutional argument there. But when you combine that with other risk factors or other factors known to you, I do not think that should be excluded from that list. I think it should be included in that list.

Let me tell you, in my opinion, I cannot think of a responsibility that the United States Congress or any elected official in the United States, I cannot not think of a responsibility we have that is more inherent to the obligation for us to the American people in our hearts and souls, it is more inherent to us than providing security for the American people. What we have seen in the last 10 years and what we have seen in the last 10 months and the further and further we get away from September 11, what we are beginning to see is the grip of political correctness has once again come into our cookie jar, frankly, and locked it up. That is what is happening. We are so concerned about political correctness that once again we are going to get hit hard.

Now there is a balance out there and it is called common sense, and I think political correctness has gone too far off the track. It is not on the common sense track. And I would venture to say that most Americans want you searched when you get on an airplane if you meet certain risk factors. Americans want security on those airplanes.

□ 2045

I did not complain about the fact that I was searched and this group ahead of me was not searched; but boy, if somebody fit what I would consider a profile, considering what we had on September 11, 19 people, all male, all within a certain range, all within a certain ethnic background, all with a particular religion, most with passports from a particular area of the country, I mean that is a profile, and if somebody fits that profile, we ought to go after it, regardless of their ethnic background. It does not benefit our country to put handcuffs on the very people that we are placing the responsibility to provide us security with.

Clearly we have to give them direction. We do have things like the Miranda rights when you arrest somebody. We have certain things that are observed but because a person, or because somebody at the airport says, ma'am, we are going to have to open a suitcase or someone says, Congressman, we are going to have to open your suitcase and look at your dock kit and your underwear and your jeans and your running shoes, that is not unconstitutional. Sure, it is an inconvenience, but it is what we have to have for security on our airlines.

So tonight on CNN, I found it very interesting, many in my opinion the American Civil Liberties Union could not wait to race to the courtroom, could not wait to file a lawsuit against all of these airlines, again using the age-old plaintiff's favorite statement racial preferences or racial prejudice against the airlines. Go for the deep pockets, accuse them of racism and see how many of them we will get to fold.

That is exactly what I perceive this lawsuit to be about, race to the courts by the American Civil Liberties Union, have a national press conference. They did not write the airlines and say maybe they had some misbehavior here, they would like to have an apology and we would like the airline to fix their ways. They should stop what they did to this particular plaintiff. They did not do that. They do not want to do that.

Their mission is not to correct a wrong. Their mission is, one, to get attention; two, to drive this political correctness so that it fits their agenda; and, three, to enrich the plaintiffs here.

Our country has become lawsuit happy. No matter how we cut it, no matter what angle we look at it, whether we want to talk about malpractice, whether we want to talk about asbestos, whether we want to talk about racism, they are not alleging, the American Civil Liberties Union, whatever it is they think they can get the slot machine to kick out some change, they are going to go to the court and do it.

In the long run it hurts those plaintiffs. In the long run it hurts our society as a whole. If someone has truly, truly been wronged, they ought to be made whole, no argument there; but I can tell my colleagues that a lot of people allege to have been wronged, exaggerate just how badly wronged they were, and being made whole is not their idea. Being made rich is their goal, and so we can see this cycle. It was a very interesting debate on CNN this evening.

I have covered a couple of areas tonight. One of them, of course, prescription care and the fact that we want to provide prescription care to the extent that we can afford it, and we want to do things that can help hold the costs down. For example, allow generic drugs, encourage generic drugs, encourage competition out there among the pharmaceuticals; but it is wrong for us to make a promise to the American people, which was made on this House floor tonight, and we should provide all Americans with prescription care service. We cannot pay for it. We do not have the money. Nice, the empty promise. It is an empty promise.

They have promised a rose garden. By the way, they did not tell my colleagues that they are not only going to have to plant their roses, they are going to have to plant everybody's roses, and the rose garden does not have any water and nothing in it when they get into it.

The second thing we talked about was whether or not a person's ethnic background, whether they are Irish, Arabic, whatever they are, is that an appropriate element to fit a risk profile. My belief is that it is, that when we combine it with other factors, we can build pretty good profiles, and profiles help us.

Keep in mind, these profiles are used by our local schools. For example, our local schools might say, hey, in this neighborhood, we have a particular minority and this minority is scoring lower, this minority has lower math grades than this group over here. So by doing that, by profiling, by going in there and determining what is affecting this group versus this group, we say, all right, we need to focus more money or more resources or more help to bring this minority's math grades up to par.

It is a tool. It is a legitimate tool. It is a tool that we use in our schools. As I said earlier, it is a tool that the media networks use to determine who reads their paper. It is a tool that the political parties use to determine who is going to vote for them. Why would we, on God's Earth, why would we eliminate it as a tool to provide ourselves with security against acts of terrorism or acts of our enemies that want to do us harm? Why would we say to somebody, oh, you are Irish, I cannot ask you if you are Irish; it is unconstitutional by meshing with these other factors. So you go ahead even though it may compromise our security? So that is a debate all on its own.

In the few remaining minutes that I have left I want to talk about something entirely different, and that is, first of all, the fire season that we have got out there. I want to commend our firefighters, our national firefighters, our Federal firefighters, our State firefighters, our volunteer firefighters, our district firefighters across the Nation.

In my particular district in the mountains of Colorado, and this district by the way is larger than the State of Florida, we have had fire after fire after fire. This is a drought the likes of which we have not seen in a hundred years. It is classified as an extreme drought. That is exactly what it is. The latest fire we had over the weekend took 83 or 85 homes, burned their homes, destroyed these people's possessions. Fortunately, we had no injuries in the fire.

I want to commend our firemen, and when I say firemen, I say that generically, plural, firemen and firewomen. Those firepeople out there are courageous people; and what is interesting is last year we put in a fire plan, and my colleagues can take credit for this because it was an act of Congress in coordination with our Federal agencies to really beef up our firefighting capabilities last year.

We hired thousands and thousands of new firepeople to fight these fires. We went out and purchased capital, purchases of thousands and thousands of pieces of new equipment. We really geared up for this year's fires, not knowing how serious the start it would get off to, and now our benefits are paying off.

This fire in Canyon City, while it was a horrible fire, we should have it 100 percent contained within the next 2 days. The many, many fires, and I probably had five or six major fires in the last 3 weeks in my district, major fires, type I fires, break out in my district, were all contained in a pretty quick period of time because of the investment that we and those Federal

agencies and most importantly those firemen on the scene on the line put into this effort.

So I want to publicly acknowledge from the House floor those firepeople from across the country and all those Federal agencies that are helping fight these horrible fires that we are seeing besiege us this year.

In the next couple of days or perhaps next week, I want to take an entire hour and speak about the water situation in the West. As many of my colleagues know, I have had a series of discussions here talking about the public lands and what impacts us that is different in the West than the East.

I am continuing to make a very conscious effort at trying to educate and work with my colleagues to tell them how the geographical difference, the public land location difference in our country has significant, significantly different needs, for example, in the western United States than we have in the eastern United States; and I want to spend a good hour talking about the issue of water, defining and making clear the difference between what is surface water, the water that originates on the surface or is accumulated on the surface, versus the water that is subsurface, that we dig a well down into.

Many in the East get their water from wells. Where I live most of our water is surface water. In fact, in Colorado 80 percent of our water that we use in Colorado is dependent upon the snow pack. Colorado happens to be the highest place on the continent, and our mountains reach high into the skies, and they gather that snow; but water storage is very critical for us, and just the same as I have seen an effort in health care towards a socialized type of system, i.e., the government takes care of all of it, the government pays for all of it, do not worry about the prescription costs, the government will pay for all of it, we are seeing the same kind of effort being made in the West in regards to water.

Right now water in the West is a private property. This country was built on the premise of private property. If we were to list some of the freedoms, say the top 10 freedoms that Americans feel so strongly about, that were the foundation of the founding of this country and the foundation of the greatness of this country, in those top 10 items we would find private property listed by almost everyone who listed those top 10, private property; and in the West water is a property issue.

Generally what we see is those who do not have it or did not buy it or did not think to get it make a very conscious effort of saying, wait a minute, those who have it ought to share it with us. That is exactly the premise upon which socialism was built, and we are seeing it in the West; and it is being seen in the West by something called the public interest doctrine, i.e., when it comes to water, we do not consider the individual's private property rights. We do not consider the individual's rights of usage. What we consider is what is good for the public as a whole.

So in other words, it might be that someone has owned these water rights out in the Colorado mountains for a long time, and it might be that that family is dependent upon ranching; but the fact is, since in Colorado agriculture is only a small percentage of the entire economy, but yet uses a larger percentage of the water in proportion to the size of its economy, public interest demands that we take water from them.

That is exactly the effort that is being made, and frankly, I think this year in Colorado under a populist type of banner, they are going to attempt to put a question on our ballot, should a person's water rights have to take backseat to the public interest doctrine. It is a very, very dangerous move towards a socialistic society. I can tell my colleagues that there are some people's water I would like to have, some people's property I would like to have, but it is not my private property. It is their private property. They earned it, they paid for it, they worked it or whatever; but it is their property.

For us to begin to move this country in a direction that because we as a public think we can put it to a better use, that the public interest doctrine should be introduced and the property should be taken from them is the wrong approach. So next week I fully intend to spend a full hour talking about the special needs of water, the special needs in the West.

In the West water is like blood. That is what they say. Water runs thicker than blood, in fact, they say in the West. We will talk about where it originates, the importance of storage in Colorado and the West. We will talk about the public lands that are primarily located in the West and not located in the East. We will talk about gravity, how gravity has a lot to do with the situation that we are in today.

We will talk about those who do not want water being utilized for their home or for no development, for example, and see it as a way to control or stop development. Frankly, in some regards, I think the abuse of water has been ignored. We will talk about that, too.

We will talk about the environmental issues of water. Water is a very boring subject by the way. It only becomes interesting to all of us when all of the sudden we are in a drought or when we turn on the faucet and the water does not come out; but in fact, when we look at the future generations, what issue is so, so important to sustain life, to sustain agriculture, to sustain recreation, to sustain the environment, we are almost always going to come back to water.

Colorado politicians and Colorado citizens throughout its hundred-plus years of being a State have recognized the importance of water. If we go in the State capital of Denver, we see in every painting in the rotunda somewhere depicts someone doing something with water. It is very, very important.

The Colorado River is called the mother of all rivers. Why? Is it a big river? No. It does not look like the Mississippi. In fact, I grew up understanding how important the Colorado River was, but I also thought it was the biggest river.

□ 2100

I about fainted when I saw the Mississippi River, the first time I saw a picture of it. It was huge.

The importance of the Colorado and what makes the Colorado the mother of all rivers is the fact that it is the only water available for many of the people out there. Whereas when you get into the Mississippi, in fact, in a lot of the East, the difficulty is getting rid of water. In the West, it is the capability of being able to store water.

So I look forward to visiting with my colleagues next week, Mr. Speaker.

CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES AND SPENDING HABITS OF THE CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLAKE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of issues, of course, that come to mind today for purposes of a discussion for a period of time here. Something brought to mind when I was listening to my colleague, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS), and he was talking about the propensity of this body especially to spend money in ways that I think we could call profligate.

It is true, unfortunately, whether one party is in charge or the other, it seems like it hardly matters, we do spend a great deal of money, sometimes without benefit, I think, of enough analysis and enough debate. And a constituent of mine e-mailed us a couple of days ago concerned about everything he had been hearing with regard to the proposals on both sides of the aisle for support of a new program for Medicare, a program that provides for insurance and/or some subsidy in some way or other for prescription drugs. As my colleague from Colorado said, it is a compelling argument.

We have all heard from constituents who over and over again explain to us the need for some help in procuring their prescription drugs, and our heart goes out to them because we recognize, just as I do with my own parents, and certainly I think everybody has someone who they can think of who is in desperate need for medication, the cost of which is skyrocketing. It seems like almost every week it goes up again and it becomes an incredible burden. And,