

so has been challenged by hospitals and doctors demanding higher payments. Companies managing Medicare benefits would face similar pressures from drugstores.

"The National Association of Chain Drugstores recently sent a bulletin to its members opposing the Republicans' Medicare drug proposal. Crystal S. Wright, vice president of the association, said, 'This could be an economic disaster for community pharmacies. Benefit managers are likely to get even more leverage than they currently have to reduce pharmacy reimbursement.'"

So the drugstores are saying, we are not going to be able to get adequate reimbursement, so we are going to go out of business. Where is it we expect this Republican plan to work?

The last thing the New York Times article says, "House Republicans said insurers could set different premiums and benefits, so long as the overall value of each drug plan was equivalent to that of the standard coverage suggested by the government. The Republican plan is part of a bill costing \$350 billion over 10 years."

Well, again, I do not understand what my Republican colleagues expect. Experience is that private insurance does not work to provide these kind of drug benefits. The insurance companies say they are not going to sell it. The pharmacies say it will not work. The only reason I can imagine that they are proposing it is they know this is a major issue that is going to face them in the election. They have promised the American public that they are going to provide a prescription drug plan, and so they come up with this sham which they hope to pass through the House, probably on a totally partisan vote, send to the other body, and never hear from it again, but they can say to the voters that they have tried. But they are not trying, they are just putting out something that is a sham. Hopefully as Democrats we will show the sham for what it is and to ask our colleagues to vote for the Democratic alternative which would provide a meaningful guaranteed benefit under Medicare for all seniors.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota).

Members are reminded to refrain from improper references to the Senate.

IMMIGRATION POLICY

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

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I have often come to the floor of the House to discuss the issue of immigration and

immigration reform. I have also had that opportunity to do so in a variety of different settings over the last several years. I have watched with interest in the way that this debate has evolved, or some may say degenerated.

The fact is that it does seem to me that the debate over immigration reform is entering a new phase, and unfortunately I think not a productive one. Nonetheless, it is a phase in which the opponents of immigration reform have moved from a thoughtful, sometimes thoughtful, I should say, analysis of a major public policy issue to a darker, more sinister and far less intellectually based discussion.

I say that because of an article that was run in the Dallas newspaper, the Dallas Morning News, and I will get to it because it describes an event and some of the activities surrounding an event that I attended in Guanajuato, Mexico, a few weeks ago. The event was an annual meeting of American Congressmen and Mexican parliamentarians and legislators. It is an annual event, and I think this is the 21st or 22nd year of its existence. I was asked to attend this year, I am not sure exactly why, but nonetheless I was asked to attend. I did so, and found it to be a very stimulating and rewarding experience, stimulating because the debate on immigration and immigration reform is one that raises a lot of concerns and a lot of emotions; productive because at the end of the 2 days, 2.5 that we were there, I walked away with a feeling that at least my colleagues from the Congress of the United States and our colleagues in the Mexican Congress were much more understanding of the position that I hold vis-a-vis immigration and immigration reform, and that which is held by a relatively large majority of the people in this country.

I made it a point to explain that my observations with regard to immigration are not borne out of any hostility towards Mexico, any feelings of ill will, and certainly not any feeling about Mexican immigrants themselves. In fact, my feelings about immigration are not in any way, shape or form the result of opinions I have about anyone's ethnicity or nationality. They are irrelevant. I view everyone who comes into this country the same way I view my grandfather and great-grandparents who came to this country at the turn of the century. They are people for the most part seeking a better life. They come to the United States for promises of economic prosperity and political freedom.

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These are, of course, laudable goals. And if I were in their position, I have no doubt I would be doing exactly the same thing. I would be looking for ways to come to the United States in order to better my life and the prospects of a good life for my children, grandchildren and future generations.

I blame no immigrant for the problems we have in the United States with

regard to immigration. They are two different things entirely. I am not anti-immigrant. I am certainly concerned about the effects of massive immigration into this country. And it really does not matter the country of origin from which the people coming here emanate. What matters to me most is the numbers. And the fact that massive immigration has an effect on many aspects of our society seems to me to make that particular subject worthy of civil debate.

I think it is hard to suggest that the growing numbers of Americans and/or people living in this country without benefit of citizenship, many of whom live here without benefit of legal status, it is hard to suggest that that growing number of people in this country does not represent some intriguing opportunities and/or problems. Economic problems certainly, in terms of the cost, the infrastructure that needs to be created to support the many millions coming into the United States, the schools, the hospitals, the social services.

The other economic issues deal with jobs. Some suggest that everyone coming to the United States is taking jobs that no one here will take. Others, and certainly I side with those who suggest that that needs far deeper review than what has been given it, and that there are many thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, even perhaps millions of Americans who are today looking for a job that someone else holds and that someone else may very well not even be a citizen of the United States, or even here legally for that matter.

Then, of course, there is the national security issue. It is undeniably true that the most recent terrorist activities that have plagued the United States have been perpetrated by people who have come into the country as visitors on visas. Some of them overstayed their visas. Some of them lied about what they were going to do here and could have been and should have been deported. Others, one in particular, actually violated the status of his visa by leaving the country, I believe that was Mohamed Atta, and could have been kept from returning to the United States, or he could have been deported once he came back after violating that visa status. Nonetheless, all were here and all did their deeds.

As we look at the future, there is a great possibility, even probability, that the United States will suffer other similar types of terrorist attacks. And there is a great possibility that these attacks will be perpetrated by people who come to this country from somewhere else, either by sneaking into the country or coming here on some sort of legal status but only for the purpose of doing us harm. And so our ability to control our own borders, limited as they may be because of the length of the borders, because of the fact that we have about 500 million visits a year into the United States, those complicating factors make it more difficult