

VICE PRESIDENT SHOULD STICK TO FACTS WHEN CAMPAIGNING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, the Vice President last week in my home State in Tallahassee decided that he needed to make an example of the high cost of prescription drugs. The Vice President used statistics compiled by the Democratic National Committee relative to cost for either human consumption or animal consumption. But the Vice President did not just stop there. He decided to embellish the story. It has been in all the major papers. He decided to create a story about his mother-in-law and his pet. He went on to describe how they are taking arthritis medication for their conditions and how the disparity of price between what the dog takes and what the mother-in-law takes was so startling and so outrageous.

Now, of course, in Florida we have a lot of seniors. In fact, I am probably the seventh oldest Medicare district in America. So when it comes to prescription drugs, a subject I know something about that we have been working on in the Committee on Ways and Means, I take strong offense to the fact that he would not only create false statements and mislead the public, not only embellish the story, but create it out of sheer nonsense. And so my seniors, who are waiting for some relief from the high cost of prescription drugs, scratched their heads and wondered why somebody who has been in office so long would not just stick to the facts. Why would they have to create stories involving their own family?

During the same week, the Vice President was saying that we need medical privacy; that the United States Congress should strive to make certain that every person's medical record is protected; that they cannot be exposed to public scrutiny; that they cannot be used against them. But we might want to ask him a little more about that privacy issue before we release any of our details to the government, because he seems to relate a lot of private medical information for the sheer sake of politics. His mother-in-law now has all her neighbors knowing what medications she takes. She may or may not have agreed to that release; we just do not know. We do not even know if she takes the medication to this date. They have not been forthcoming with the facts.

I think the Vice President owes the American public an explanation. Does his dog take the medication? Do the Federal taxpayers pay for his dog's medication? Does Mrs. Gore or the Vice President drive to the veterinarian and get the prescription or is it supplied by somebody there at the Naval Observatory?

We have also heard over the recent weeks about his condemnation of Hollywood and the movie industry. Yet

just last night he is there saying to everybody, "Don't worry, I am only making statements. I don't want to alarm you. I still want your campaign contributions. I still want to be your friend, but I am going to blast you in public and make sinners of all of you." He takes the money; throws darts. Takes the money; makes accusations.

"I created the Internet." That was a statement he made a few weeks ago, or a few months ago. He discovered Love Canal; he was the subject of Love Story. Yet today he is virtually absent when we are talking about high energy prices.

We talked about the soccer moms in the 1996 election and how important they are. And I hope they will all reflect when they fill up their Chrysler minivans or SUVs that the cost of fuel is now about \$1.75, the highest it has been in 10 years, and certainly the highest it has been during this administration. So filling up the minivan is now a costly chore for mothers and fathers as they proceed to work and take their kids to soccer practice. But there is no one there taking credit for the oil policy of this administration.

Today, the stock market is down 200 points, largely because of energy prices; and I do not hear anybody taking credit for that. The administration has the Energy Department. One would think they would figure out a response. Yet they can only accuse the other side of the aisle and our presidential nominee, that they are tied to big oil. Maybe they should stand up and say at least we can figure out an energy policy that will be good for America; that may bring down the cost of fuel for the consumers of America.

This robust economy that we understand that they have taken full credit for for the last 8 years may in fact be in a decline because of energy prices. It is insidious. It affects transportation; it affects heating bills. Wait until this winter, when we talk about the political dynamics of choosing food and medicine. We now have to choose between food, medicine and fuel, heating oil for our homes.

So I would just like it, if we are going to start embellishing rhetoric, creating facts, making up names, inserting foot in mouth, that at least somebody come to this floor and address the voters and taxpayers of this Nation as to where we are going with our energy policy. It is getting very difficult because those who are making the energy policy do not fill up their own tanks, so they do not feel the pain. They do not feel the pain when we reach into our wallets each week and pull out those precious dollars in order to keep our lives going forward and filling our vehicles with gasoline.

So, today, as we proceed to continue discussing appropriations items and the future of this Congress and the direction of our Nation, I do again urge the Vice President to please at least stick to the script and stick to the straight facts. I would hope he would

not create and embellish names and drugs that are being taken by his family, which may or may not be true.

The American public deserves the truth. They deserve to know the facts. They need to know exactly where we are going on a prescription drug policy. We do not need to bring in Fido and the rest of the family to make a point. It was fraudulent, it was false, it was demeaning, it was misleading, and it was done in Florida, in a State where seniors are looking for honesty and decisions rather than fraudulent statements.

BORN ALIVE INFANTS PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, it was not long ago we were all scratching our heads wondering how anyone could ask what the meaning of "is" is.

Words have plain meanings, or at least they used to. And while many of us laughed about the President's confusion, this kind of semantic game has become a matter of life and death for many newborns because many in the abortion industry are trying to convince us that even after a child is born, even if he or she is born healthy, the child is not really a person. They claim the baby has no rights or legal protections, or even the right to live. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third District has gone so far as to rule in favor of this outrageous position.

This is yet another example of a group of radical judges turning kooky ideas into law through a fiat that the Constitution does not entitle them to.

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In the case of Planned Parenthood of Central New Jersey v. Farmer, the court ruled that it was "nonsensical for a State legislature to conclude that an infant's location in or outside the mother's womb has any relevance in deciding if the child may be killed. The Court decided that all that matters is whether or not the mother intended to have an abortion, even if it was a partial-birth abortion, which most Americans think is murder."

In other words, if a child is born alive because a doctor has induced labor as part of an abortion procedure, regardless of how late in the pregnancy, the child still may be killed. It does not matter how healthy the baby is or how loudly it cries. Once the mother decides to abort her child, it makes no difference how the baby exits the womb, we may still kill the child with impunity.

Mr. Speaker, how on Earth can we claim to be a civilized nation when we are killing living, breathing children and calling it legal?

I would like to read a portion of the testimony Jill Stanek gave back in July during the hearings on the Born

Alive Infants Protection Act. Jill is a nurse that worked in a hospital in Oak Lawn, Illinois. Her hospital, which, I am embarrassed to say, is called Christ Hospital, performs abortions for women even in their second and third trimester.

Jill says that babies at that hospital sometimes survive the abortion procedure. These babies want to live, but the hospital lets them die anyway. Here is a little bit of her story.

"In the event that a baby is aborted alive, he or she receives no medical assessments or care but is only given what my hospital calls 'comfort care.' 'Comfort care' is defined as keeping the baby warm in a blanket until he or she dies, although even this minimal compassion is not always provided. It is not required that these babies be held during their short lives.

"One night, a nursing coworker was taking an aborted Down's syndrome baby who was born alive to our Soiled Utility Room because his parents did not want to hold him, and she did not have time to hold him. I could not bear the thought of this suffering child dying alone in a Soiled Utility Room, so I cradled and rocked him for the 45 minutes that he lived. He was 21 to 22 weeks old, weighed a half pound, and was about 10 inches long. He was too weak to move very much, expending any energy he had trying to breathe. Toward the end he was so quiet that I could not tell if he was still alive unless I held him up to the light to see if his heart was still beating through his chest wall. After he was pronounced dead, we folded his little arms across his chest, wrapped him in a tiny shroud, carried him to the hospital morgue where all of our dead patients are taken.

"Other co-workers have told me many upsetting stories about live aborted babies whom they have cared for."

And there is much more.

Jill's story should horrify every American. We must decide are we a civilized nation or will barbaric practices like this continue.

I urge my colleagues to support the Born Alive Victims Protection Act. Let the American people know that we still know what decency means.

CARIBBEAN AMNESTY AND RELIEF ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I want to announce that I have introduced H.R. 5032, which is the Caribbean Amnesty and Relief Act.

The act originally applied to people from the English-speaking Caribbean nations, but we have now expanded it to apply to people from all nations in the Caribbean.

Because of the close proximity of the Caribbean to the United States, there

really is indeed a special relationship between our country and the Caribbean. And we have many, many people who have come to our shores and who want to come to our shores who immigrate to this country for the same reasons that my grandparents immigrated at the turn of the last century many, many years ago, wanting a better life for themselves and wanting a better life for their families; and, in doing so, they create a better life for all Americans.

Let us look at the kind of American who immigrates to this country. It is not a lazy person. It is not someone who wants something for nothing. It is an industrious person, someone who leaves behind the old country, family, friends, culture, and comes to this country. It is a special person. Indeed we are by and large a nation of immigrants, and the reason why our country has grown and flourished and prospered is because of the industriousness of our immigrants.

And so, I believe that immigration is a good thing for this country. Some may disagree. I think they are wrong. I think immigration is good for this country and it is certainly the right thing to do in terms of helping industrious people become new Americans.

We have a problem, however. It is a problem in my district. It is a problem in other districts in that we have families who are stuck. Some of the families are stuck in the old country. Some of the families are in this country.

What my bill, H.R. 5032, attempts to do is to have family reunification as its core. Mothers and fathers and sons and daughters and sisters and brothers ought to be able to live together.

I can tell my colleagues that in my district I have heard horror stories where families are stuck in the Caribbean, some are in this country, and it is impossible to get them over here.

Now, some may use the term "illegal." And we have to have a cohesive policy with immigration. But I use the term "undocumented" because sometimes the difference between people who are undocumented and documented in this country is very capricious and arbitrary. And I can tell my colleagues stories of suffering of families again who only want the best.

So my bill would help families. What my bill would do is it would be an adjustment to permanent resident alien status, in other words, allow people to get green cards if they have been in this country since 1996 and ultimately, after a certain amount of years, allow them to become citizens of this country.

It would also allow them to have work authorization while their application is pending and would also create a visa fairness commission to collect data on economic and racial profiling. Because, again, I have heard many, many horror stories of arbitrary decisions involving immigration.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues to support this bill. I think

that this bill ought to be a crusade, and it will be a crusade of mine. I think people of all goodwill want to do what is best for this country and what is best for people. We are not talking about names that have no significance. We are talking about people's lives. And this affects people's lives. There is no reason again why if people want to come to this country why we should not have a cohesive policy of immigration in this country, one that would help families and not divide them.

So, again, the people of the Caribbean Basin have always been loyal friends of the United States. At the height of the Cold War, the United States looked to the Caribbean nations. And, as a result, a lot of the Caribbean countries have suffered political upheaval.

So let us talk about family reunification. Let us talk about doing what is right. Let us talk about a cohesive immigration policy that does not penalize people. Let us upgrade the very special relationship that this country ought to have with the nations of the Caribbean. But most importantly, let us have family reunification. Let us do what is right for those families. And let us do what is right for America.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to spend a little time this afternoon on a subject that we hear across all the airways and we read in all the newspapers and it is what all the politicians in the country are running around talking about. It is called prescription drug plans.

It is amazing how interested we are in this now that we have gotten into an election year. But the problem has been occurring for the last 3 years essentially.

There is no question in this country that, as the percentage of health care costs rise, an increasing proportion of that is prescription drugs. And there is no question that in our country, all of us, seniors, people in insured plans, people with no insurance, people on Medicaid, are having a more and more difficult time accessing the pharmaceuticals that we need to both succeed in treating the illnesses that we face and prevent illnesses that we could face.

My experience is I have been a physician for almost 20 years. I continue to practice on the weekends and on Fridays when we are not in session and on Monday mornings.

What I want to spend time today talking about is the direction of the Congress with this issue. I want to compare what we have heard President Clinton say and Vice President GORE say about their solution for this problem.