

DEMOCRATS NOT INTERESTED IN DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

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

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I am holding in my hand four letters from the Clinton Justice Department.

Now these letters state that the Justice Department does not oppose granting of immunity to four key witnesses to the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight's investigation into illegal campaign contributions in the President's 1996 campaign.

Again, these letters are from the Justice Department, and they state that the Justice Department does not oppose the immunization of four witnesses so their testimony may be heard, and yet the Democrats on the committee refuse to grant immunity to these four witnesses in opposition to their own Justice Department.

Now we have the mother of all stone walls. Democrats on the committee are now stonewalling even the Clinton Justice Department. American fatigue over the endless scandals and investigations is exceeded only by the fatigue of the investigators who meet with stonewalling, delay tactics, evasion, convenient memory losses, document shredding and total noncooperation everywhere they turn.

Mr. Speaker, the truth is there for all to see. The Democrats are simply not interested in discovering the truth.

ONLY IN INVESTIGATIONS OF ORGANIZED CRIME HAVE SO MANY WITNESSES FLED THE COUNTRY

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, obeying the law should be the first tenet of campaign finance reform. The White House insists time and time again that they are cooperating fully with the various investigators charged with finding the truth about illegal campaign contributions in the 1996 elections. However, the facts show otherwise.

Ninety-two witnesses, that is 92 witnesses, either have fled the country or have taken the fifth amendment or refused to testify. If there is nothing to hide, why would 92 witnesses flee the country or refuse to testify?

Fifty-four House and Senate witnesses have asserted their fifth amendment rights, and 38 witnesses have fled the country. In fact, so many witnesses who have fled the country are taking the fifth that FBI Director Louis Freeh was asked last year if he had ever seen so many, and he said often he has seen this kind of activity only in investigations of organized crime.

Mr. Speaker, the White House says it is cooperating fully, but no one is co-

operating. And then the same White House turns around and asks why the investigators are taking so long. If the American citizens are becoming cynical about their government, House investigators are becoming even more cynical about this White House.

SUPPORT THE HIGHER EDUCATION AMENDMENTS

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

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, early this year several news organizations in the southern California area conducted a poll to identify issues of concern to the citizens of that region. Improving the education system was far and away the highest priority among those polled. A staggering 80 percent of respondents supported requiring that teachers take competency tests on a regular basis. The survey clearly illustrated that most Americans want training for teachers so they are better equipped for the classroom.

This week in the House we will be considering H.R. 6, the Higher Education Amendments, which establishes a competitive grant system designed to improve the quality of teacher training in colleges and universities. The bill would hold institutions of higher education accountable for preparing teachers in the subjects in which they plan to teach.

Mr. Speaker, today's youths are tomorrow's leaders. We must give them every opportunity to succeed. I urge all of my colleagues to support education reform and support H.R. 6.

TOBACCO COMPANIES ARE THE LARGEST CORPORATE CONTRIBUTORS TO THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, the Republican leadership is playing politics with their refusal to act on one of the most addictive drugs around: nicotine.

The truth is that, according to the Center for Disease Control, teens who smoke are three times more likely than nonsmokers to use alcohol, eight times more likely to use marijuana, and 22 times more likely to use cocaine. Yet the Republican leadership refuses to bring legislation to the floor of this House that could drastically reduce teen smoking, perhaps because the tobacco companies are the single largest corporate contributors to the Republican Party. Every day the Republican leadership fails to schedule debate on the tobacco issue, 3,000 more American kids will pick up this deadly habit, and 1,000 of them will eventually die of a tobacco-related illness.

Mr. Speaker, if the Republican leadership truly wants to save lives, they

should schedule a vote on comprehensive tobacco legislation today.

SCHOOL CHOICE IS ABOUT SAVING THE CHILDREN FIRST

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

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, how can Congress and the President stand by and consign yet another generation of poor children to failed schools and limited futures in our nation's capital, Washington, D.C.? What do the American people want Congress to do about education? Let me quote from a letter from Mrs. Jan Horan of Westminster, Maryland, and I quote:

Enough is enough, and the American people have had enough. When is the Congress of this country going to realize that the government is the problem and not the solution?

For years, the Congress has continued to throw money at what they perceive to be the problem. The government at all levels has thrown money at education, and our educational system continues to deteriorate.

And I continue to quote:

When are you, the elected officials, going to wake up and come out of your glass bubble and see what you are doing to this Nation?

Mrs. Horan, I could not agree more, and I hope everyone in Congress will listen and support the District of Columbia Student Opportunity Scholarship Act. Instead of throwing money at the education bureaucracy as liberals want, it will assure that families at all income levels have the opportunity to secure a quality education for their children. School choice will give all of our children the chance for a better future that a good education can provide. We must save the children first.

THE TRUTH ABOUT STOPPING TEENAGE SMOKING

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

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, some people say their primary reason for supporting new tobacco taxes is protecting children, but these same people have constantly dropped the ball when it comes to protecting children in other areas. So I get a little suspicious when I am asked to support a cigarette tax as a way to save the children.

Consider this. Many folks who say they support a cigarette tax as a way of protecting teenagers are all too happy to allow my 13-year-old daughter to go to a Title 10 clinic and be counseled on having an abortion without my or her mother's consent. So much for protecting children from dangerous influences. So much for saving children.

Furthermore, many people who support a cigarette tax as a way to stop teenage smoking will not lift a finger

to stop some public schools from giving my daughters free condoms without my permission. So much for protecting children from dangerous influences.

Also, Mr. Speaker, some people who say they are working to prevent teenagers from smoking will not lift a finger to prevent kids from getting access to free drug needles. So much for protecting children from dangerous influences.

Furthermore, some who say they are in favor of a cigarette tax as a means to protect children are not in favor of allowing kids to organize prayer in school. Thanks to these people, groups of kids cannot organize prayer and talk about protection today.

Think about it, America. Is a cigarette tax a plan to save our children from smoking cigarettes or is it really a plan about helping Washington, D.C., helping itself to more power and more money to fund more government bureaucracy?

ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO SHOULD DEMAND THE WHITE HOUSE STOP INTERFERING WITH JUDGE STARR'S INVESTIGATION

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

Mr. BRADY. Mr. Speaker, what is happening right now to Judge Kenneth Starr is just shameful. Attorney General Janet Reno, the President's own appointment, chose Judge Starr to investigate solid allegations of perjury and obstruction of justice. Judge Starr was appointed by the Attorney General because he has a track record of very distinguished and honorable service. In fact, many of those who attack him today on the Democratic side praised him for his honesty and his fairness and his balance.

Mr. Speaker, if Judge Starr has acted improperly in any manner, he should be removed immediately as independent counsel. If he has shown himself to be conducting in an unfair, partisan manner the investigation, he must be removed.

But if he is not acting, if he has not done anything wrong or improper, Attorney General Reno should make a statement now demanding that friends of the White House stop interfering with his investigation and stop the campaign to destroy him. Because how else will we ever get to the truth?

THOSE WHO BROKE THE LAW NEED TO BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the frustration level on my committee is very high. We know that millions of dollars in illegal campaign contributions have come in from foreign

sources from places like Communist China, Macao and Taiwan and South America. We do not know what these people who contributed this money got for their money. Did it affect our foreign policy? Did it alter our defense strategies? Did it endanger in some way the United States of America down the road?

Mr. Speaker, we need to know these things, and those who broke the law need to be brought to justice.

Now we have been trying to get people to testify. Ninety-two people have fled the country or taken the fifth amendment, 92. Can my colleagues imagine that many people, 92, fleeing the country or taking the fifth amendment, many very close friends of the President who worked in the administration? They would not talk.

Now we have four people who are willing to talk, and they want immunity in order to talk, and the Justice Department has said they have no objection to immunity, and yet 19 of the Democrats on my committee, every single Democrat, voted against immunity. They have erected a stone wall against the facts so the American people will not know what is going on.

The American people have a right to know whether our foreign policy was altered or sold by anybody in the administration.

REPUBLICANS EITHER DEFENDING THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY OR ATTACKING DEMOCRATS ON THE CAMPAIGN FINANCE INVESTIGATION

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

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, there is an interesting intersection today very visible in the comments on the Republican side of the aisle. They are talking about two issues. They are either defending the tobacco industry or they are trying to attack Democrats on the campaign finance investigation.

Mr. Speaker, they want to speak for the tobacco industry because they have received millions of dollars in campaign contributions from that industry and refuse to investigate the corrupting influence of that industry on some of the official actions of their own leadership.

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They are criticizing Democrats for not participating in what has clearly been a reckless, partisan investigation in which the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON), the chairman of the committee, has abused his powers. These are not just my words. These are the words of The Hill newspaper today which declares we have "A Chairman Out of Control."

I am pleased Speaker GINGRICH is now focusing attention on the Burton committee. He did not respond to our letters asking for a joint investigation.

He ought to now debate these issues, and I challenge him to come forward and debate whether this investigation and his role in tobacco deserves further scrutiny.

A QUESTION OF PRIORITY

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

Mr. DeLAY. Mr. Speaker, hypocrisy is a very tough word, so I will not use it in the context of the President's stance on tobacco. But let me just say that the President has his priorities wrong when it comes to his policies regarding children's health.

While he spends much of his time bashing tobacco, he has turned a blind eye to the skyrocketing problem of drug abuse in this country. Over 20,000 children a year die as a result of illegal drugs in this country, but the President's response has been to throw in the towel when it comes to the war on drugs. In fact, last week he not only condoned, but endorsed the free distribution of needles to heroin addicts. While the President is taking a cigarette from a teenager, he is giving them a condom and a needle to shoot up with heroin.

I think the President needs to get his priorities straight, Mr. Speaker. We should stop children from smoking, but first, we need to stop children from using illegal drugs.

GIVE CHOICE A CHANCE

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

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I just want to alert my colleagues that tomorrow the House will vote on a bill that represents the best chance that thousands of District of Columbia parents will have all year to see real hope in their lives.

The bill, which will be offered by majority leader DICK ARMEY is the D.C. Student Opportunity Scholarship Act, which the Senate has already passed. This is very modest legislation, but it would give low-income parents a scholarship up to \$3,200 so that they could select the school and the education that is most appropriate and best suited for their children. It would give D.C. parents an option of sending their children to a school where real learning takes place, where standards of discipline are enforced and their kids will be safe.

But the liberal Democrats who say they care passionately about public education are adamantly opposed to this bill and ironic it is that these liberals who would not accept for one second having their own children in these dangerous, dysfunctional schools stand in the way of District of Columbia parents having the choice to send their children to a school that performs and is safe.

This is hypocrisy at its worst, and the Washington, D.C. parents who desperately want to give their kids a real