

LOBBYING DISCLOSURE ACT OF
1995

SPEECH OF

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 16, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2564) to provide for the disclosure of lobbying activities to influence the Federal Government, and for other purposes:

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of House Resolution 250 and H.R. 2564, legislation to strictly limit gifts to Members of Congress and to strengthen the disclosure requirements for professional lobbyists. The positive action before us will incorporate this change into the House rules.

This reform legislation is long overdue. In fact, if not for the Republican parliamentary maneuvering last year, these proposals would already be the law of the land. Unfortunately, in 1994 when the Democratic Congress tried to pass these important congressional reforms, the Senate Republicans blocked our efforts. That is the recent history of this debate. Today, I want to recognize my Republican colleagues' belated conversion and welcome them as they join the Democratic Party's effort to reform how Congress operates and public accountability.

As we consider these proposals today, I would urge my colleagues to resist the temptations to weaken or side track these needed reforms. As we are serious about reforms, we should oppose the Burton amendment to House Resolution 250. That policy path is business as usual wrapped in new disclosure reports and does not merit support.

For too long this year, meaningful congressional reforms have been postponed. A separate important initiative, the Lobbying Disclosure Act, attempts to modernize our Federal lobby registration requirements and is intended to effectively cover all professional lobbyists. This too is similar to a measure that passed the House in the past Congress but again was held up in the Senate and did not become law. While this bill does cover professional lobbyists, grassroots lobbying would not be covered.

Mr. Chairman, it is unfortunate that under the cover of reforming professional lobbying, some Members are seeking to silence legitimate lobbying efforts by nonprofit grassroots organizations. I urge my colleagues to oppose the Istook amendment, it is wrong and its objective is not lobby reform but silencing those with whom some extreme Members of Congress disagree.

I urge my colleagues to join me to defeat this new gag rule. The new Republican majority in Congress may not want to hear from nonprofit and charitable organizations, who so often serve and advocate for people in need, but I want to hear from such groups. These groups surely act as the conscience of those without power. Further, I believe that this is a fight of free expression and such involvement is essential in a free society. The Republicans have been making public policy based on anecdotes and radio talk sound bites. Congress must make public policy on the facts and on information from those individuals on

the front lines. We need the input from the Red Cross, the Children's Defense Fund, and the Catholic Conference of Bishops as we develop policies on welfare, housing, and health care—issues to which these organizations have committed their time and limited funds. I want to hear from the American Lung Association, the Alzheimer's Association, and the American Cancer Society about health research.

The Istook proposal attempts to characterize such groups as publically funded lobbyists and pretends to address a misuse of Federal funds. But Federal law already bans the use of public funds for political advocacy, and the advocates of the new restrictions certainly have not been able to demonstrate that the current law has been violated. The Istook amendment goes far beyond the current law and restricts the recipients' ability to use their own funds for political advocacy. This is purely an attempt to kill the messenger because some Republican Members do not want to hear the message.

I believe that all Americans have the right of free speech. In developing national policy, Congress benefits from the input and experience of all citizens. Whether it be a multibillion dollar corporation, an advocacy group for the homeless, or the individual citizen, their voices should be heard. The Istook amendment sets a dangerous precedent in trying to silence the voice of a key segment of American society—those serving the Americans in need without a voice or means.

In conclusion, I would point out to my colleagues that the most crucial component of congressional reform is left undone. Unless and until we have meaningful political campaign funding reform in place, the special interests will continue to control the agenda.

As with lobbying and gift reform, meaningful campaign reforms have been postponed, blocked by today's majority party and filibustered as a minority in the Senate during the past congressional session. The Congressional Campaign Spending Limit and Election Reform Act, which I supported, represented the most sweeping campaign reform since Congress enacted the Campaign Reform Act in 1974. Since the 1976 Supreme Court decision in Buckley versus Valeo, Congress has had much less ability to control many important aspects of campaign finance reform. This bill would have established a voluntary spending limit for congressional races. In addition, the bill limited the total political action committee [PAC] and wealthy individual contributions each House and Senate candidate could accept and closed other campaign loopholes dealing with independent expenditures, bundling of contributions, disclosure requirements for negative advertising, and soft money. In spite of assurances to address the issue, the Speaker has frustrated action by illogical and partisan delay. Any attempt to implement these reforms for 1996 now appears moot, ironically, in spite of the Speaker's public agreement to set up a commission 6 months ago, which he completely reneged upon.

I urge my colleagues to support the pending reforms and to work for the timely enactment of comprehensive campaign reforms.

IT'S ELEMENTARY, DEAR HOLMES

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 20, 1995

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, there are people that we meet during our lives that leave an indelible mark. I have had the good fortune to have been acquainted with one such individual who leaves an indelible mark of accomplishment, amazement, and style. On November 29, many of us in the Saginaw community will be joining with his colleagues at General Motors' Delphi Saginaw Steering Systems to honor Mr. Gerald E. Holmes, who will be leaving Saginaw to be his new position as Director of North America Operations Issues Management and Media Relations.

Gerry Holmes has worked for General Motors since February 1964, and in public relations since 1968. He became the public relations/advertising supervisor at the former Saginaw Steering Gear Division in 1975. He then held various positions within GM, including with Detroit Diesel Allison, GM Truck and Bus Group, and then returned to the Saginaw area when he became Director of Public Relations at the Central Foundry Division in 1985. He served as Director of Public Affairs for both the Central Foundry Division and Saginaw Division from 1988 until 1992, when the foundries became part of the GM Powertrain Group.

Success is elementary to Gerry Holmes, as elementary as it was to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's legendary sleuth, Sherlock Holmes. Some of us may remember the passage from *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, A Case of Identity*, when Doyle's Holmes observed "It has long been an axiom of mine that the little things are infinitely the most important." It has long been my experience that Gerry Holmes definitely knows how to take care of the "little things"—the need for information, the explanation of a particular activity at any of the facilities with which he has been affiliated.

His devotion to public service, for example his time with the Saginaw Community Foundation, the Saginaw Community Affairs Committee, his board membership with a host of organizations ranging from the Saginaw Art Museum to St. Mary's Medical Center, to the Boys and Girls Club of America, show his devotion to the "little things" that so many of us fail to recognize as infinitely the most important.

And as Doyle also noted in the *Sign of Four*, "Some facts should be suppressed, or at least, a just sense of proportion should be observed in treating them." Gerry Holmes has always had a marvelous sense of proportion. He has worked to be appropriately promotional with his portrayal of General Motors. The fact that he has throughout his career been given greater responsibility is evidence of this point. And the fact that so many of us haven't been fully aware of Gerry's other community service is a demonstration of his humility in doing what is right without having to seek praise—praise which he does deserve.

Mr. Speaker, with the support of his wife Joy and his family over the years, with the support of his colleagues throughout General Motors, and with his many friends in Saginaw, Gerry Holmes has become a vital member of the community. He may want to deny it, but he will be sorely missed here. I remind our

colleagues and him of another Holmes' observation in *The Sign of Four*: "When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth." The truth is that Gerry Holmes will be missed. We want him to do well at all that he does, but his absence will leave a hole that will be hard to fill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge you and all of our colleagues to join me in wishing Gerald E. Holmes every success in the days to come.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF U.S.
BATTLESHIPS

HON. BRIAN P. BILBRAY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 20, 1995

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to honor and commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the U.S. battleship, and the men who served on-board.

The battleship has played a vital role as a symbol of U.S. power. President Theodore Roosevelt sent 16 battleships, known as the "Great White Fleet," to sail around the world from 1906-1909 to demonstrate to European powers American strength and a willingness to use it to support our national interests. The U.S.S. *Missouri* (BB-63) epitomized the symbolism of the battleship by serving as the platform for Japanese surrender at the conclusion of World War II. The battleship has served in every major conflict this century, including our most recent in the Persian Gulf.

The first battleship, the U.S.S. *Indiana* (BB-1), was commissioned on November 20, 1895 and set sail under the command of Captain Robley D. Evans. At the beginning of the Spanish-American War, the *Indiana* helped define the United States as a great power, when she formed up with Admiral Sampson to intercept Spanish Admiral Cervera's squadron, which was positioning itself to defend Spain's colony on Cuba. The two forces clashed outside of Santiago, Cuba where the *Indiana* quickly sunk two Spanish destroyers, leading to the freedom of Cuba from Spain's domination, and ushering in an era of the supremacy of the battleship.

During World War II, the battleship played an important role in the defeat of the Axis powers. The *South Dakota* (BB-57), the *North Carolina* (BB-55) and the *Washington* (BB-56) helped to protect the first U.S. ground offensive of the Pacific at Guadalcanal. When General MacArthur made good his promise to return to the Philippines at Leyte Island in 1944, he came with battleships. The *Maryland* (BB-46), *Pennsylvania* (BB-38), *Tennessee* (BB-43), *West Virginia* (BB-48) and the *California* (BB-44), all resurrected from the disaster at Pearl Harbor, participated in the liberation of the Philippine Islands, seeing their most important action at the battle of Surigao Strait. In that battle, the battleships were tantamount in the effort to repulse the Japanese Navy, and saved the very vital supply ships. At Okinawa, one of the war's most difficult engagements, the battleships were able to repel Japanese kamikaze attacks while protecting the landing of the Marines.

In the European theater, battleships played an important support role during the D-Day landing of allied forces at Omaha and Utah

beaches. The U.S.S. *Nevada* (BB-36), *Texas* (BB-35), and the *Arkansas* (BB-33) were primary in this effort.

Throughout the cold war, the Pentagon saw fit to recommission battleships for a variety of important roles. During the Korean War, the *Iowa* (BB-61), *New Jersey* (BB-62), *Missouri* (BB-63), and *Wisconsin* (BB-64) were dusted off and called on to support U.N. troops. They also served important missions to destroy enemy railroads and coastal artillery batteries. In Vietnam, the battleship returned to service to provide long range artillery support to ground troops. The *New Jersey* (BB-62) was praised for its ability to create a 200 yard wide helicopter landing zone out of a triple canopy jungle in record time. The battleship also saw active duty during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Outfitted with sophisticated Tomahawk cruise missiles, Harpoon surface-to-surface missiles, and the Phalanx close-in weapons system, American battleships participated in the initial missile strikes against Baghdad, and in gunfire support of U.S. Marines during the ground offensive.

Today, the battleships again lay idle, and their names have been stricken from the Naval register. Thankfully, they will be preserved as a symbol of U.S. strength, and in memorial to those who served and died in the service of their country.

Mr. Chairman, the battleship is a proud testament to American Maritime power. I would like to submit for the record a list of names of the surviving battleship commanders. These men should be respected for the service they have provided to their country, and envied for their place in history. Congratulations to these survivors and to all who serve on this occasion, the hundredth anniversary of the American Battleship.

ROSTER OF SURVIVING FORMER COMMANDING
OFFICERS WHO COMMANDED A UNITED
STATES BATTLESHIP

USS IOWA (BB-61)

RADM. Fred J. Becton, USN (ret)
RADM. J.W. Cooper, USN (ret)
RADM. G.E. Gneckow, USN (ret)
Capt. Fred P. Moosally, USN (ret)
Capt. John P. Morse, U.S. Navy
Capt. Larry P. Seaquist, USN (ret)

USS NEW JERSEY (BB-62)

RADM. W.M. Fogarty, USN (ret)
RADM. W. Lewis Glenn, USN (ret)
VADM. Douglas Katz, U.S. Navy
RADM. Richard D. Milligan, USN (ret)
Capt. Robert C. Peniston, USN (ret)
RADM. J. Edward Synder, USN (ret)
RADM. Ronald D. Tucker, U.S. Navy

USS MISSOURI (BB-63)

Capt. James A. Carney, USN (ret)
Capt. John Chernesky, USN (ret)
Capt. A.L. Kaiss, USN (ret)

USS WISCONSIN (BB-64)

RADM. David S. Bill, U.S. Navy
Capt. Jerry M. Blesch, USN (ret)
RADM. G. Serpell Patrick, USN (ret)
Capt. Coenraad van der Schroeff, USN (ret)

MOTION TO DISPOSE OF SENATE
AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 2586, TEM-
PORARY INCREASE IN THE
STATUTORY DEBT LIMIT

SPEECH OF

HON. L.F. PAYNE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 10, 1995

Mr. PAYNE of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, in urging my colleagues to vote in favor of the motion to recommit, let me take a moment to address potential arguments that those on the other side of the aisle may raise against the motion.

Congressman SAM GIBBONS and I are offering a motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Ways and Means with instruction. As I have explained, the motion's instruction to the Ways and Means Committee is to amend the bill to provide a clean, temporary increase in the debt ceiling until either December 12—the same date as in the Republican bill—or the 30th day after a budget reconciliation bill is presented to the President for his signature, whichever is later.

First, our Republican colleagues may argue that the amendment would provide an unlimited period of time for the President to delay. That is incorrect. The amendment would raise the debt limit for a finite period of 30 days beginning as soon as a budget reconciliation bill is sent to the President for his signature. If a bill were ready today and sent to the President, the clock would start ticking today and stop ticking 30 days from now. The President's response to the bill would not affect the 30-day limit in any way. That 30-day period would allow us to put forth our best efforts to come together on the shared goal of a balanced budget. Our amendment is not indefinite and open ended. What seems to be indefinite and open ended is the ability of the Republican majority that controls this House to produce either a clean interest in the debt ceiling without partisan add ons or a budget bill.

Second, our Republican colleagues may argue that the amendment would give the Treasury Department a blank check to increase the debt limit to whatever level it wishes. That is incorrect. The amendment would raise the debt ceiling to exactly the same level as that in the Republican debt bill. If a budget is not presented to the President in a timely way, then a higher amount would be allowed and in that case the higher amount would be limited to only what is necessary to pay our bills in the intervening days. The amendment in the motion to recommit would raise the debt limit cleanly, that is, without extraneous provisions of any kind. This suggested amendment is the businesslike approach that the American people deserve to the current regrettable, and avoidable, impasse.

Third, our Republican colleagues may argue that the amendment would grant permission to the Treasury to raid retirement trust funds. That is incorrect. In fact, in the case of the civil service retirement fund this amendment would restore the current-law protections for Federal retirees and workers that the Republican bill would destroy. Current law requires that any funds used from civil service pension funds and retirement savings accounts to see ourselves through a debt limit crisis, such as the one we now face, must be reimbursed