

it turned out to be consistent with the prior statements made by Hillary Clinton.

D'Amato's discomfort was obvious during his appearance on ABC's "Nightline" that evening. Host Ted Koppel began by asking D'Amato about a new memo just made public concerning the Travel Office, and the first words out of the Senator's mouth were—"it's deeply troubling and disturbing."

Koppel pressed D'Amato, asking him: "So what if you can prove the worst of what you suspect? What's going to happen? You don't—you know, you don't impeach your First Lady. None of these things appears to be an indictable offense. Where will it all lead, other than to some kind of political effect in this upcoming election?" D'Amato could not answer, other than to try and make comparisons with Watergate; but Koppel pointed out that that involved the President, not the First Lady. D'Amato could not answer, but only sputtered about how the White House continues "to withhold vital and key information."

Perhaps as an indication of just how troubled D'Amato was, he kept referring to Ted Koppel as "David," even after Koppel reminded him that he was *not* David Brinkley.

The 'vacuum' notes

Things didn't go any better for D'Amato at the Jan. 16 session, in which seven hours of testimony by three White House lawyers failed to elicit any evidence damaging to the President or Mrs. Clinton.

A major focus of the Jan. 16 hearing was the cryptic notes made of a Nov. 5, 1993 White House lawyers meeting on Whitewater, which notes the Senate Whitewater Committee had originally sought by subpoena. Questioning of the author of the notes, former White House Associate Counsel William Kennedy, along with former Associate Counsel Neil Eggleston and current Deputy White House Counsel Bruce Lindsay, yielded little new information, other than a more thorough explanation of the use of the word "vacuum."

D'Amato and others had repeatedly made charges to the news media that the entry "Vacuum. Rose law files" referred to a plan to clean out the files of the Rose Law Firm in Little Rock where Hillary Rodham Clinton was formerly a partner. But Kennedy told the committee the word referred to an "information vacuum," because real estate files relating to the Clintons' investment in an Arkansas vacation development known as Whitewater "were in a shambles." Both Kennedy and Eggleston testified that there was absolutely no discussion at the meeting of destroying or hiding files.

As D'Amato's pet theories fell apart, one by one, he became more and more abusive and sarcastic toward the witnesses. The next day, the rabidly anti-Clinton *Washington Times* could only charge that "Clinton meeting raises new questions"—confirming what the White House has been saying: that when one allegation falls apart, something new is always found.

Interview: Edward P. Beard, Sr.

Pound Gingrich into the ground

Edward P. Beard, Sr. is Director of Senior Affairs for the city of Providence, Rhode Island. He served as U.S. Representative from Rhode Island's 2nd Congressional District from 1975 to 1981, and was chairman of the House Committee on Labor Standards. He was interviewed on Jan. 11 by Marianna Wertz.

EIR: What will be the effect on seniors if the Republican budget plan passes?

Beard: If, in fact, they got their way, I would see it as a detriment to the elderly. It's tough enough for the elderly people to sustain their lives on their Social Security (most of them are on Social Security) or SSI [Supplemental Security Income], which is even less. I think anything that would add to that cost factor to the elderly, in balancing the budget on the people that can least afford it—whether it's the elderly, veterans, average working people, poor people—is the wrong route.

Not only that, but it's not consistent with what they're trying to do. The Republicans are telling one group that we have to tighten the belt, and on the other hand, they seem to be working toward giving the upper economic [income] people that have money, the more wealthy of this country, to put them in a better position. It's not consistent.

Plus the fact that they themselves, as a group, the Congress, House and Senate, are doing little or nothing to cut back on their own benefits. So, at best, it's very hypocritical.

The best way to sum this thing up on that point, is that for the 96 years we've been around in this century, the Republicans have been around in the House for five years. For the vast majority of years in this century, the House has been Democrat, and I think that tells the story right there. They have a capacity for self-destruction. And I think they're heading in that direction.

EIR: President Clinton said today that the proposed cuts, which he opposes, in Medicare and Medicaid, will put seniors at the mercy of the present private insurance system, which discriminates against those who are old, lower income, and sick. Do you think that's true?

Beard: I think that has a lot of merit. I think that the goal of trying to balance the budget over the time [seven years]

is a commendable goal; there's no question about that. But it has to be done very fairly. And it has to be done with consideration of the human element. I think that that's always been missing in the Republicans' agenda.

For some reason or other, and especially if they're in Washington as members of Congress, members of the House and Senate, they're so isolated away from the public and insulated by the perks and benefits that they receive, they really have no idea in the world what it is to be elderly poor. There are elderly members of Congress who are rich, but they have no understanding of the other end.

EIR: Can you give me some example from your experience as Director of Senior Affairs for the City of Providence?

Beard: There's Meals on Wheels. The elderly are concerned about threats not only to Medicare, but there are the federal funds in the Older Americans Act, which provides Meals on Wheels and other services—Trans Van, transportation for medical runs, and so on. As the funds dry up from Washington to the states, so are the funds drying up to cities and towns that depend on it, and also from these various agencies.

I think the most vulnerable of the population, which is the seniors and the sick, and then the children, which is another issue—education—they feel threatened, and I think that's where the problem is. There's a sense that if, in fact, the Republicans get their way, and they balance the budget as they see it, there's going to be a lot of people in this nation, and I see it here in this state, and in the City of Providence, who will be hurt.

EIR: Our publication is conducting a study of prior attempts to balance the budget, starting with Jimmy Carter, and particularly in the Reagan and Bush administrations, which have actually ballooned the deficit, because they cut the tax base, by cutting back government expenditures in the economy. Should we really be trying to balance the budget in that kind of a drastic way?

Beard: Not in a drastic way, but I think the goals of trying to balance the budget in the long run, over time, heading in that direction, we should be doing. But it should be balanced with fairness.

For example, maybe Congress ought to take a look at themselves and realize that they have the ultimate medical benefits, they have tax breaks that others do not have, their salary is far above the average person's. . . .

It's going to be a gradual thing because there's no way you can balance the budget. It's taken years to get where we are at the present time, but it's also going to take years to bring it in line, where it would be balanced out. If possible, go toward that goal, but go toward that goal with understanding and mercy for the people that can least afford it. You cannot give a break to the extreme rich of this country and at the same time put a burden on the people that can't afford

it. That's not the way to go about it.

EIR: You were in Congress for three terms, from 1975 to 1981. Could you contrast Congress today, particularly the House, with the period when you were a congressman?

Beard: I like to believe that when I was there, first under [House Speakers] Carl Albert and then under Tip O'Neill, the House had a pulse and a heartbeat. I think under this administration, under Gingrich and the Republicans, it's very mechanical. I don't think they have any understanding of what it is to do without. That says it all. They're mechanical. There is no heartbeat in the House.

EIR: How do you see this country getting back to a Congress that has a heartbeat?

Beard: By dumping the Republicans in November! The election is the quickest way, the shortest route to get rid of them: Dump them at the polls. The elderly, the veterans, the working people should come out in droves, in every district throughout the United States, and especially in Gingrich's district. They should come out and pound him into the ground!

The current crop of Republicans in the Congress is consistent with the previous crop of Republicans that was kicked out so many times over the last 96 years. I have to say that they do have a consistency about themselves. They were no good back then and they're no good today.

EIR: Would you differentiate between Dole and Gingrich?

Beard: Dole is running for President. So whatever Dole says is under heavy suspicion. Dole will say whatever he has to say to become President of the United States. Gingrich: I think he *believes* what he's doing is correct, I wouldn't take that away from him, but the man doesn't have a clue on the average American.

EIR: He seems not to have a clue on Western civilization either. His mentor is Alvin Toffler, who does not believe in industrial civilization.

Beard: That part of it I don't know. But I do know one thing, that the country would be served well if this is his last term. Hopefully, he'll finish out—he's got about 11 months and a few weeks to go.

EIR: Would you like to add anything?

Beard: My most choice comment would be, for the elderly people: If you have arthritis, one way of exercising is reach up, pull the lever for Democrats; that's one way of getting exercise on election day. Whatever it takes, whether it's a paper ballot, or going out physically, or the shut-in ballot, whatever it takes, show them that you're the boss. Pull the lever and elect Clinton back again. Get rid of them, once again. Show them that they're not worthy of leading this country. Dump them!