

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO DESIGNATE THE UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE IN WASHINGTON, DC, AS THE "E. BARRETT PRETTYMAN UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE"

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 6, 1996

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce a bill to name the U.S. district courts and circuit court of appeals building for the District of Columbia Circuit after the late chief judge E. Barrett Prettyman. I am very pleased that the Chair of the District of Columbia Subcommittee is an original cosponsor. Senator JOHN WARNER has introduced an identical bill in the Senate.

Judge Prettyman was born in Virginia, where he graduated from Randolph-Macon College in Ashland. He then graduated from Georgetown University School of Law.

Judge Prettyman served on the Federal bench for 26 years. He was the chief judge of the U.S. Circuit Court from 1953 to 1960. He was widely regarded as one of America's leading legal scholars and a pioneer for judicial reform. He sought the advice of his colleagues to better understand the issues to help improve the efficiency of the judiciary. He also testified many times before Congress as a strong advocate for increasing the number of judges on the District's juvenile court.

As a jurist, Judge Prettyman was known for his centrist positions and his thorough opinions. His most notable opinion concluded that the State Department had the authority to bar U.S. citizens from entering certain areas of the world. He wrote: "While travel is a right, it can be restrained like any other right." The Supreme Court ultimately upheld the decision.

Judge Prettyman also championed the cause of the indigent. At Georgetown University, he established a program where lawyers were trained to better assist indigent defendants.

Naming the courts after Judge Prettyman would be a fitting tribute to an outstanding jurist and legal scholar. I strongly urge my colleagues to support this measure.

GIVING CREDIT FOR THE MISSING SERVICE PERSONNEL ACT OF 1995

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 6, 1996

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, February 10, in signing the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1996, the President signed into law the Missing Service Personnel Act of 1995, which had been incorporated into the authorization bill. The passage of the provisions of the Missing Service Personnel Act is a significant milestone for veterans and for the families of our MIA's, and I rise today to give credit to some of the people, including some of my fellow Vermonters, who worked hard for the passage of these provisions.

Their dedication, commitment, and persistence in the face of overwhelming odds has fi-

nally brought to fruition a matter that has been their primary concern for over 13 years. And I am very proud that my fellow Vermonters have played such a significant role in this effort.

I cosponsored the Missing Service Personnel Act of 1995 after being convinced by Patricia Sheerin, Don Amorosi, Sean McGuirl, Walt Handy, and Al Diacetis of the desperate need for this law. The act is the culmination of years of effort on the part of my fellow Vermonters—Tom Cook, Bob Jones, and Brian Lindner, the president, vice president, and chief of research, respectively, of the Northeast POW/MIA Network; and Jim Howley—and the veterans organizations who have supported it, including Vietnam Veterans of America, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Disabled American Veterans. Most notable were the contributions of the family members of the missing and prisoners: Tom Cook, Sharon Roraback, and Sarah Pendris.

Were it not for a special conference held in 1993 by the Northeast POW/MIA Network, we would not today have a law to protect missing service persons, to protect their families from exploitation, and to grant basic human rights to the missing as well as their families. Under the guidance of a former POW, Lt. Col. Orson Swindle, participants in that conference were able to clarify the goals of the proposed Missing Service Personnel Act as originally authored by John Holland. Mr. Swindle pointed a new direction: That while we cannot solve all the problems of the past, we can protect missing service persons in the future, based on what we have learned from past mistakes.

Through her courage and intuition, Vermonter Patricia Sheerin, policy analyst for the Northeast POW/MIA Network, convinced the National Vietnam Veterans Coalition to support the legislation and work for its passage. She also formed a plan and policy uniting veterans organizations and veterans advocates with the sole purpose of correcting and updating the outdated Missing Service Persons Act of 1942.

Crucial to passage of this new law was the support of citizens who were informed about its benefits. Joe and Paula Donaldson of Fair Haven, VT, deserve credit for organizing a weekly vigil as part of this educational effort. Nationwide distribution of information on the progress of the legislation, a responsibility of Bob Necci, helped pave the way to passage of this important act. Education is often the key to success, and such was the case with the Missing Service Personnel Act of 1995.

I commend the supporters of this bill for their loyalty and devotion to the men and women who wear the uniform of the U.S. Armed Forces. These Vietnam veterans and family members of those missing and captured in Vietnam have left a legacy of justice and fair treatment for future soldiers who become missing while fighting to defend our country and our freedom.

THE ABORTION PROVISION IN THE TELECOMMUNICATION BILL

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 6, 1996

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the telecommunications bill has been signed into

law. It is a bill that I supported and I am pleased to see this important legislation become law.

However, I am outraged at the way in which this extreme Republican leadership snuck a little-known provision into the conference report. In the attempt to eliminate "obscene" material from the Internet, this provision included an old, outdated definition of the word "obscene." Known as the Comstock Act, it included as part of the definition of obscene materials "any drug, medicine, article, or thing * * * intended for producing abortion." This obscure, never enforced law dates back to the early 1900's and is clearly an unconstitutional violation of free speech. If enforced, this outdated law would prohibit the discussion of abortion over the telephone, on the computer, or through the mail.

The new telecommunication law makes it a felony, punishable by 5 years for the first offense and 10 years for each subsequent offense, for anyone to discuss abortion on the Internet. I believe that it would be unconstitutional to ban citizens from speaking freely on the issue of abortion.

Women's rights have continually been challenged by this Congress. This is just the latest attempt to silence those who advocate a woman's right to choose. I believe that Congress should act immediately to ensure that free speech is not violated by this law.

I lived through the era before Roe versus Wade. I know what poor women went through in the back alleys when abortion was not legal. Any attempt to restrict this medical procedure is just one more way this Congress is throwing away a woman's right to choose.

Mr. Speaker, it is outrageous that this extreme anti-choice movement would use the new telecommunications law to threaten a person's rights to discuss abortion. Choosing abortion is the most heartwrenching and personal decision a woman may ever make. But it is a decision that should be made between a woman, her doctor, her family, and her spiritual conscience. This Congress should not be meddling with our ability to freely discuss a woman's most personal medical decision.

INTRODUCTION OF THE INFECTIOUS AGENTS CONTROL ACT OF 1996

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 6, 1996

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I am introducing today the Infectious Agents Control Act of 1996, which will address the need to keep infectious agents that could pose a serious threat to the public health and safety out of the hands of dangerous people while ensuring that these substances remain available to scientists with a legitimate research need for them.

By now, most of Members of this body have probably read news reports about Larry Wayne Harris, the Ohio white-supremacist who ordered bubonic plague through the mail last summer. It is frightening to think that just about anybody with a 32-cent stamp and a little chutzpah could get a hold of any number of potentially dangerous infectious substances. The Ohio case may be an isolated incident or

it may not be—we really don't know. Why? Because the Federal Government has no system in place today to regulate the transfer of these agents within the United States. I think that's a situation that needs to be corrected, and I am introducing legislation today to do so.

Why worry about the flow of potentially dangerous infectious agents within our borders? Let me read you a few lines from an article on the threat posed by these agents when they are converted into biological weapons, written by U.S. Navy Commander Stephen Rose for the Naval War College Review. Cmdr. Rose writes that:

Science can now reshuffle the genetic deck of micro-organisms to produce a theoretically unlimited number of combinations, each with its own unique blend of toxicity, hardness, incubation period, etc. In short, it is becoming possible to synthesize biological agents to military specifications. Thus, the world lies on the threshold of a dangerous era of designer bugs as well as designer drugs.

Biological weapons have been called the poor man's atomic bomb. They are relatively cheap to produce, and you get an appallingly big bang for your buck. In fact, experts report that some of the supertoxins that have been developed in recent years are ten thousand times more potent than the nerve gases we are more accustomed to, which have been described as mere perfume in comparison to some of their biological competitors. The Office of Technology Assessment reports that some 15 nations, including Libya, North Korea, and Iraq, are suspected of having biological weapons development programs.

Clearly, the potential of biological weapons to rain devastation down upon their victims should give those charged with preventing international terrorist attacks on our Nation cause for serious concern. However, the lesson we learned from the tragedy at Oklahoma City is that we cannot be satisfied to only look outward for terrorist threats. We must also be vigilant against home-grown threats from paramilitary groups within our borders, which could use biological or chemical weapons against their fellow Americans to further their radical anti-government agendas.

On the morning of March 20, 1995, the Japanese Government was faced with just such a situation. A home-grown Armageddon-group called Aum Shinrikyo released sarin gas—a deadly nerve agent that is 500 times more toxic than cyanide gas—in the Tokyo subway system, killing 12 people and injuring thousands more. According to a staff report on the incident prepared by the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, the Aum sect had its own chemical weapons manufacturing plant, for the production of sarin gas, and was trying to develop biological weapons, including botulism and anthrax. To get a sense of power of those weapons, consider this: 3 billionths of an ounce of botulism toxin would be enough to kill me.

Incidentally, the staff report concluded that the Aum sect was "a clear danger to not only the Japanese Government but also to the security interests of the United States," which was the target of much of the Aum leader's rhetoric.

In an effort to reduce the risk of a similar attack in the United States, I am introducing legislation directing the Centers for Disease Control to develop a regulatory regime to control

access to those infectious agents that could pose the greatest threat to public health if they fell into the wrong hands. It is my understanding that a working group including representatives of CDC, the Department of Justice, and other relevant Federal agencies already has begun to develop such a regime. My bill would ensure that that work is completed and the system is in place within 1 year of its enactment. I am pleased to be joined in this effort by Budget Chairman JOHN KASICH and Representative JOSEPH P. KENNEDY II.

I am hopeful that this legislation will be given the swift attention that the issue it addresses demands in the House, and that the Senate will take up similar legislation soon.

NATION'S TRUE ECONOMIC PICTURE

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 6, 1996

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, who said this? "Washington has abandoned working families. Millions of Americans are running harder and harder just to stay in place. Wages are flat * * *

On February 20, 1996 the Labor Department released its employment cost index, showing the smallest gain in wages and benefits since the Government began keeping statistics in 1982.

A far more disturbing figure was given about the median family income. Under Ronald Reagan's watch, 1982–89, real income increased an average of 2 percent annually. President Clinton declared in his 1996 State of the Union "Our economy is the healthiest it has been in three decades."

How does the current rate of recovery compare to other periods of recovery over the past 35 years? In 1961 through 1969 the increased real gross domestic product was 23.5 percent from the low point of the recession. The 1975–80 figure increased by 20 percent. The 1982–90 recovery saw an increase of 17.9 percent. I wonder how President Clinton could make such a claim about the state of our Nation's economy since the recovery from the recession in March 1991 has only been 13.1 percent so far.

A major factor in the 1992 Presidential election was the economy. "It's the economy, stupid" was the hue and cry of the Clinton campaign. Just as President Bush was reminded over and over again during the 1992 campaign about the promise he made: "Read my lips, no new taxes." President Clinton may also come to realize just how salty his words may become. No doubt he will be haunted by "it's the economy, stupid" during his campaign for reelection. President Bush took his licks about his tax promise; President Clinton will be subjected to the same standard of scrutiny and criticism. After all, he did run on improving the economy. He stated that he believed America should come first. That he would make the U.S. economy vibrant and he would be known for his domestic policy, not just his foreign policy. He said America will come first.

Well here we are 4 years later. Guess what? The economy does not seem to be improving, rather it is stagnating. Edward Yardeni, chief economist at Deutsche Morgan

Grenfell, has stated: "The U.S. is already in recession," "even though we haven't had two straight quarters of negative growth in gross domestic product." He believes that GDP will shrink at a 1.5 percent annual rate during the first half of 1996. How did he draw this conclusion? Since the Commodity Research Bureau's price index of raw industrial materials fell 6 percent for the 12 months in January, this was the signal that led him to make this conclusion.

Let's be clear about one very important fact. In the third quarter of 1992, the economy grew 5.8 percent—the Commerce Department announced this number after the 1992 election. President Bush tried in vain to get this message across but neither the press nor the media seemed the least bit interested. Why give the American public the facts? For the record, the growth rate for the fourth quarter was an outstanding 8.6 percent. So, President Clinton could claim that under his administration the average annual rate of growth was 2.5 percent since 1993.

Let's examine what happened in 1995, the first year President Clinton's economic policies were fully in effect. Growth that year was a dismal 1.4 percent. How does this compare to other administrations? From 1982 to 1989, the average rate of growth was 3.9 percent. During that same period the annual median family income rose about 2 percent yearly. How does the Clinton administration compare with the Reagan administration? Unfortunately, for all of us the family income has only risen 0.25 percent per annum.

You might say to yourself that all might be true but President Clinton fulfilled his promise and created almost 8 million new jobs. OK, let's take a look at his claim. The Bureau of Labor Statistics backs up the President's numbers. He has lived up to his promise and created 7.5 million new jobs since taking office in January 1993. What is deceptive about these numbers is that the Bureau of Labor Statistics counts people, not the number of hours they work. For instance, two 20 hour per week part-timers are counted as two jobs. If you look at the number of hours worked, then only 758,000 new jobs have been created annually since 1993.

The Wall Street Journal reported on January 24, 1996 that during a Democrat focus group, a pollster announced that thanks to Clinton 8 million new jobs had been created. At that point, one woman yelled out: "Yeah, I know, I have three of them." This response reinforces what the Bureau of Labor Statistics found during its review of the number and types of jobs that were actually created under the Clinton administration.

It has become very apparent, especially in the last few months, that people are feeling insecure and anxious. Many have expressed the fear that if they lose their job they will not be able to find a new job that will provide them with the salary that will allow them to have the same standard of living. What has caused American workers to think this way? There are several factors which account for this negative outlook. Corporate downsizing has had the greatest impact upon middle managers. The statistics bear out the fact that many of these people trying to reenter the market must accept lower pay. Between 1990 and 1992, on average, these workers were forced to take a pay cut of 20 percent. You might find it hard to believe but the median income is less now than it was in 1986.