

things with people, participating in events, thinking about policy issues to get involved with those details of how he pays his own bills.

So I hope that everybody looks at this minority report and we get the facts out. We have paid a lot of money for this. Let us not do spin. Let us do facts. Let us try and look at this thing objectively and not politically.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEARNS). According to Jefferson's Rules of the House, on page 176, even when Members characterize a report from the Senate—this is on page 176: Except as permitted in clause 1 of rule XIV, it is out of order to characterize the position of the Senate, or of Senators designated by name or position, on legislative issues.

FILEGATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MICA] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, Shakespeare said, "Something is rotten in Denmark."

Mr. Speaker, I say something is rotten in the White House. I am talking today about the case of Filegate, which has raised so many eyebrows, which has raised so many concerns. Each day a new revelation comes out on this matter. Each day I continue to be shocked and the American people become more concerned about what they learned. First we heard that the FBI had turned over to the White House had obtained 330 names to peruse. We understand the list went from "A" to "G." Then we heard the number raised to 341 names. Recently we heard the FBI state that requests were made for more than 400 files. I learned today that one file was returned on June 10. I learned also today that 71 files were turned over on June 17. What is shocking is I learned today, too, that the White House still has 17 of these files.

Mr. Speaker, the more we learn about this situation, the more I become concerned. Mr. Freeh, the Director of the FBI, said that the FBI was victimized. I think the FBI was victimized. Even the Washington Post, one of the administration's most ardent supporters, now feel in their editorials yesterday and today that they were victimized.

Mr. Speaker, this all came about because the committee on which I served, Government Reform and Oversight, requested files. We requested files for almost 2 years, and what did we get? We got stonewalled. It got so bad that we had to issue this contempt report to John Quinn, counsel to the President, requesting this information after our preliminary investigation saw the mis-

use and abuse of the FBI and the IRS in the Travelgate fiasco. That is how this came about.

The more questions that we see being raised, the more questions we have. We do not know how many files were obtained. We do not know how many files were copied. We do not know how the files were used. We do not know whose civil rights or privacy rights were abused. Filegate came to light because of our investigation.

Most disturbing to me as a member of the committee that was investigating this, Government Reform and Oversight, is that the FBI files of three of our subcommittee staff directors were obtained by the White House. To me, this is a clear and direct violation of the firewall which has always existed between the legislative branch, the executive branch, and the chief Federal law enforcement agency of our Nation.

The Committee on Government Reform and Oversight is charged with investigations and audits of the executive branch of Government. Our committee has been stonewalled in repeated requests for documents relating to travelgate during the past 2 years. Only after we took this drastic step of threatening to issue a contempt citation of Congress did we receive one-third of the documents requested. It was through these documents that we discovered the unbelievable tale of the misuse of FBI files in the manner we have heard described, the manner we see here.

Mr. Speaker, in light of what has been revealed, I believe it is incumbent upon this Congress to move forward immediately and issue this contempt citation to Mr. Quinn and the others. It is not sufficient for the White House and Mr. Quinn to suspend Mr. Livingstone. It is now absolutely critical that the Congress obtain all of the 2,000 missing documents, the documents that have been withheld from this Congress, withheld from our subcommittee, and that we conduct a thorough and complete investigation and review of this matter and this entire sorry chapter in this administration.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Will the gentleman yield for a question?

Mr. MICA. Yes, I would be glad to.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, does the gentleman believe that it is possible that the White House received all of these files from the FBI and that perhaps they were just trying to look into one or two people in those files that they really wanted to get, and that the rest of those files were just a cover against, a vendetta against individuals that they do not want to admit who they are?

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I do not know. We do not have the 2,000 documents we requested, and I call on the Congress to issue the contempt citation.

CHURCH ARSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May

12, 1995, the gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. SPRATT] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, in the last 18 months, 40 churches have been burned to the ground, 5 of them in my State. And despite mounting concern, eight churches have burned in the last 2 weeks, four within the last 2 days.

It is time, past time, for Congress to say, "In America, we don't burn churches, synagogues, or mosques, or let anyone who does, escape with impunity."

Today, we have such a chance, because today, we take up a bill called the Church Arson Prevention Act.

We all know that this law will not bring these heinous crimes to a sudden halt. But this law will put the authority of Federal Government, the BATF and the FBI, into the investigation, prosecution, and punishment of every church that's burned.

This bill attempts to justify its purpose under the Interstate Commerce Clause, which I think is unnecessary. I think that under the 1st and 14th amendment, Congress not only has the power but the duty to prohibit any restraint on the free exercise of religion, and we not only have the power but a special duty to see that crimes of hate, aimed at African-Americans because of their race, are prosecuted and punished. And that is critically true when the hatred is visited on churches, the vital beating heart of African-American communities.

I feel certain that the Church Arson Prevention Act will pass this House overwhelmingly. But that is not enough. It must be backed by the unstinting authority of the Federal Government until every miscreant who would commit such a crime knows that he will be pursued relentlessly, prosecuted swiftly, and punished severely.

OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about some good news today. Over the last 20 years, we in this country have made measurable good progress in protecting our natural resources. Our air and our water are cleaner than they were in the 1970's, and we have reversed the decline of several of the endangered species. This is a good record. It is an admirable record. We all know there are still many areas where Federal attention is required today, but we also know that you cannot write thousands and thousands of pages of Federal regulations without some problems developing along the way. It is just common sense to take a look at current regulations and decide what works and what does not and look for ways to make a cleaner, safer, healthier environment for everyone and at the same time, of course, excise those unworkable and

unfair regulations we have come to identify.

This 104th Congress has been perceived by some as being antiregulation. Perhaps the truth is that the 104th has opposed overregulation. I think to his very great credit, the Speaker has taken the lead and formed a task force on the environment. I am pleased with the Speaker's determination to pass responsible environmental legislation. I am, frankly, personally happy to be part of his effort. Although it is often lost in the rhetoric surrounding today's environmental debates, the Republican Party has a long tradition of conservation from Teddy Roosevelt, who created the first national wildlife refuge, to Richard Nixon, who created the Environmental Protection Agency. Many people have forgotten that.

Unfortunately, what often passes for debate on environmental issues in Congress and around the country is little more than a shouting match full of symbolism but actually lacking any real substance; sort of litmus test wars, as it were. If we are to make any real progress in resolving some of the difficulties associated with environmental protection, we need to set politics aside and have a reasoned discussion on the real issues. The Speaker's environmental task force has successfully identified several principles for such a debate in my view, principles that I think make good sense, we will all agree.

The first of these is that environmental decisions should be consensus based, made in consultation with the people whose homes, businesses, communities are directly affected. Bringing the opposing interests to the table early in the process provides us the opportunity to find a solution before the two sides become deadlocked in a meaningless fight. Environmental disputes routinely focus on health, public safety, and environmental protection against the question of jobs, economy, and private property rights. Obviously all of those things are important. If we get the parties talking to each other early, I believe we can make substantial progress in removing some of the conflict we see today.

Mr. Speaker, the second principle is greater. It is greater in a way that it involves State and local, our sister branches of government in the lower tiers. Having served as a mayor and a county commissioner before coming to Congress a few years ago, I know that the lower tiers mean the front lines where the people are, where what matters in our daily lives goes on. I know the importance of giving States and localities a real role in setting and enforcing environmental standards in their communities. The perspectives of local and State officials who are the people who make everyday land use decision, who deal with problems every day are invaluable in crafting environmental policies that actually work on the ground.

The time has come to end sort of the one-size-fits-all directives from Wash-

ington that really fail to recognize the obvious often overlooked fact that different communities have different needs. Alaska is different than Florida.

The last principle I will mention is providing positive incentives to encourage responsible stewardship of our natural resources. Whether we provide rewards such as tax credits, grant flexibility, and complying with regulations or offer marketing incentives, we should move away from the idea that environmental legislation always creates winners and losers. The simple fact is that we can achieve a balance that allows all sides to come away with something positive. All America and all Americans benefit when we do that.

I will end on what I hope is a high note and that is this. These principles are not just talk but are geared toward providing results, results that will help Florida, for instance, restore our Everglades, restore our beaches. Under the Interior appropriations bill, which just happens to be coming to the floor this week, Congress in fact is going to be taking responsible steps in both of these critical areas.

I believe in the end all parties to the environmental debate agree on the importance of safeguarding our natural resources. Hopefully we will see reasonable people from all sides embrace the principles we have laid out and help us in a bipartisan way achieve our goals.

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AMERICAN PATENT PROTECTION BEING JEOPARDIZED

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEARNS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. ROHRBACHER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to warn my colleagues that powerful interest groups are involved in one of the most insidious attacks on the well-being of the American people that I have seen in my 8 years in Congress. It is an insidious attack because a decade from now, if these powerful interests succeed, America will have lost its competitive edge, the standard of living of our people will be in decline, and they will never know what hit them.

What is happening is an attack on America's ability to remain the number one technological power in the world. America has had the strongest patent system in the world. Our citizens have enjoyed patent protection that other citizens in other countries have not enjoyed. Thus, our inventors and investors in new innovation have given us technology that has provided the American people with a standard of living far beyond those overseas, and has permitted our people, even though they receive more money for their work, to outcompete people who receive less pay overseas.

The American people have enjoyed the technological lead that has given us the light bulb, the telegraph, the

telephone, the reaper, the steamboat, and, yes, the airplane.

Today our standard of living is tied to technology and in the future will be tied even more to technology, but today we see our patent system, which has done so much for our people, under attack and targeted by powerful foreign interests and multinational corporations.

These powerful interests have already eliminated the guaranteed patent term of 17 years, which was the right of Americans for 130 years, and it was eliminated in an underhanded fashion by slipping it into the GATT implementation legislation, even though that change was not mandated by GATT itself.

Now for the knockout punch. We will soon have a bill come to the floor which will end patent protection in America as we know it. The bill, H.R. 3460, which I have labeled the Steal American Technologies Act, is really named the Moorhead-Schroeder Patent Act. This piece of legislation will demand, mandate, that every American inventor, when he applies for a patent, after 18 months, whether or not that patent has been issued or not, it will be published for the world to see. Every single detail of new American technology will be available to the world to steal. Every pirate in the world and the Asian market will be producing our technology before our patents are even issued.

It also eliminates the Patent Office itself, something that has been part of our Government since the Constitution, and replaces it with a corporatized Patent Office, meaning a semi-Government, semiprivate corporation, like the Post Office, which has very little of the congressional oversight that the current Patent Office has.

By the way, that same move strips patent examiners. These men and women who have dedicated their lives to making the judicial decisions as to who owns what technology, they will be stripped of their civil service protection, inviting corruption: First, publication of every last secret we have to the pirates of the world; second, stripping our patent examiners, our line of defense, against corruption, of their civil service protection.

Finally, this bill will offer rights to foreign corporations, as well as huge American multinational corporations, to challenge existing patents. Our technology even today will be under attack when the people from all over the world will be able to come in with huge finances and force our people to defend the patents that have already been granted them.

America's corporate giants, strangely enough, have signed on to this technological rip-off. First, they would like to rip off the little guy themselves without having pay royalties, and many of these giant corporations in our country have interlocking directorates and investors from all over the