

bringing the standards of America, maintaining those standards and bringing other people up to our standards, that is a good thing. Instead, their form of harmonization, Mr. Bruce Lehman, head of our Patent Office, agreed to make our system like Japan's. This is enough to shake anybody up.

Our Patent Office agreed to change our strong patent system, the strongest in the world, to make it exactly like the Japanese system. This is horrendous. This is incredible. This is something most Americans cannot believe is happening. There will be a vote on this issue. All the things I described in H.R. 400 are part of this agreement to harmonize our law. It is bringing down the level of protection in America to the level they have had in Japan. This 18-month publication, this no guaranteed patent term, this uncertain patent term, that is part of their system. And in Japan they do not invent anything. Their people are under the domination of a group of economic shoguns who beat individuals and beat the average person into submission if that person threatens the power elite in any way.

If we change our laws to be like Japan's, those economic shoguns, those economic gangsters that run that economy will be right here in the United States of America doing to our people what they do to their own people.

This law will pass, this harmonization will happen next week in a vote unless the people of this country call their Representative and say: H.R. 400, the Steal American Technologies Act, is horrible, vote against it. If the American people do not contact their Representative, these huge corporate interests internationally have hired lobbyists to contact your Representative.

Mr. Lehman, by the way, not only agreed to harmonize our law, but he was the same guy, head of our Patent Office, who not too long ago wanted to send our entire data base for our Patent Office, the whole data base, the home computer database, every bit of information he wanted to send it in disk form to the Red Chinese. That was his plan. Some of us went crazy and we stopped him. But what he said was he wanted to do it so they will know what not to steal, they will know what not to steal.

Unbelievable. Incredible. It is sending the worst thieves in the world the combination to your safe and saying this is so you will know what safes not to try to crack. I mean, after all, they will not have to be thieves anymore, they can come in any time they want. This is what is going on. This is the threat to our way of life.

Basically we have had a group of patent examiners who are now facing a major change in their way of life. They are going to see it right away. They are all opposed to this bill. All the small inventors, people and researchers in our colleges and universities across America, Amgen, the biotech company

and Allergan, the pharmaceutical company. These are people who understand what is going on. The small inventors of course, they all oppose H.R. 400; but they cannot get the word out. They are looking for allies among the American people who understand the importance of the issue that we will be deciding.

There are an army of lobbyists and they are working this issue. But the American people can win. We have won these fights before. But it takes all of us to step forward and be active.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that next week we have got a good chance of winning but we also have a good chance of losing. It can go either way, but it will be a vote. It will be one of those crucial votes that go by that no one will ever understand exactly what happened to them 20 or 30 years down the road if we go the wrong way. This is Pearl Harbor in slow motion.

This is our Government giving away our seed corn to foreigners. This is a situation where, if the Wright Brothers would have had their discovery stolen from them by Mitsubishi Corp. because our Government publicized all of their secrets, the aerospace industry would have been developed in Japan and not the United States. And all of the Americans now who have quality high-paying jobs in that industry, they would be going, they would not have those jobs. They would say, gee, did not America used to be the No. 1 leader? The American people a generation from now will never know what hit them if we go the wrong way next Thursday.

So I would hope that my colleagues will join with me in defeating H.R. 400, the Steal American Technologies Act. Join with me in voting for the Rohrabacher substitute, which is H.R. 811 and 812.

THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Oklahoma [Mr. COBURN] is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Speaker, I do agree with the position of the gentleman from California [Mr. ROHRABACHER] and will be supporting his position on the House floor.

I wanted to take a minute to address those in our country who are interested in our budget. If in fact they do not believe that a balanced budget is important, then they should not pay attention to anything that I am about to say. But if in fact they think we ought to live within our means, then I think consideration of some of the information that I am about to relate to them they will find interesting.

In 1972, our entire budget was \$241 billion. This year we will spend \$17 billion more than that on interest on the national debt alone. So what we are really faced with in our country is a threat. The threat is not very popular

to talk about. The threat is not easy to focus on.

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But, nevertheless, the threat is great, and the threat is this: If the people who work and vote in this body fail to recognize the importance of not balancing the budget, what in fact they have done is ruined the future for our children and our grandchildren.

To the seniors who would be listening who suffered through the Great Depression, who were the valiant men and women who allowed us to win World War II, they are the ones who hold this debate in their hands, the fate of a balanced budget.

For what will really happen to our children as they pay out the \$200,000 each that they now owe, both in terms of debt and interest, which does not begin to recognize the internal debt that we owe the Social Security System, from which we borrowed, actually stole, \$69 billion last year to run the Government, their living standard will be nowhere close to what we experience today. Their opportunity to have an education, to own a home, will vanish in the midst of our irresponsibility.

How big is the threat? The threat is the largest threat we have faced since the end of World War II. It is a very subtle threat. It is one that is hard for people to get excited about, yet it will undermine the essence and the greatness of the American dream.

What do we have to do to win this battle? The first thing we have to do is recognize that career politicians from both parties are not necessarily interested in doing the right thing. Martin Luther King said in his last speech, his last major speech before he was assassinated, that cowardice asks the question: Is it expedient? And vanity asks the question: Is it popular? But conscience asks the question: Is it right? Washington has a way of avoiding the last question and running to the first two: Is it expedient? Is it popular?

It will not be popular to balance the budget. It will not be expedient to balance the budget. But it is right to balance the budget.

What is the psychology of the rationalization that we have in our country today that says we will balance the budget sometime in the future? How did we get to the psychology of saying we do not have enough money to pay our bills and it is fine to jeopardize and mortgage the future of our children because we do not have the courage to make the hard decisions that are required to eliminate that threat for our children?

What I would ask my fellow Americans to do is to think, as a grandparent or a parent, what are the most important things in their lives, and usually we will answer, our children or our grandchildren. I have an 18-month-old grandchild, and as I look at her, I look to see what possible future can she have if we fail to do the right thing, the thing that our conscience would

dictate, which is not taking away their future for us now.

We hear from organizations like AARP that we should dare not touch the cost of living index, the CPI, regardless of the fact that most economists would agree that it overstates the incremental increase in the cost of living. The idea of selfishness has now displaced the concern for our children and our grandchildren.

The same thing for special interests that get funded by the Federal Government every year. There is going to be a debate in not too long on the National Endowment for the Arts. Regardless of what our feeling is on that, how can we spend money in that area when we know that our children will pay back that \$90 million three or four times what it cost because we do not have the money to pay for it?

How in the world do we justify and rationalize our ability to not do what is right? We cannot. We cannot face our problem; we cannot stand up and do the hard thing. And, unfortunately, the reason that we will not is, many people in this body are more interested in getting reelected, and their careers and their decisions about coming back to a place of power have become more important than their children and their grandchildren. So we see greed and selfishness for ourselves is starting to displace the very unique qualities that made America great.

Alex de Tocqueville said of the American people that America is great because America is good. When America ceases to be good, America will cease to be great. I would put forth to the American public today that the way we measure our goodness, the way we measure our compassion, is by doing the right thing and doing the right thing now.

We will hear a lot of people scream and say we cannot cut certain programs, that we cannot balance the budget, that we cannot do it today. But I would put forward the belief that if we faced an external threat in this country, not an internal one but an external threat to this country, that we as Americans would rally around, we would come together and say: What do we have to do to defeat this threat? And if it required sacrifice of us all, we would make that sacrifice, we would pull together, we would demand that every aspect of our Government become much more efficient, that they would accomplish the same task with less cost and more efficiency.

The fact is, we have a subtle threat. We are not willing to address this threat, and so, consequently, we are not about to do that.

I do not hold much hope for a balanced budget because I do not hold much hope that people will make a decision based on the right things, their conscience. And I do, unfortunately, feel that too many of the Members of this body will make a decision based on cowardice and vanity, much as Martin Luther King talked about.

The only way we balance the budget is if the people of this country say we must balance the budget. So those that hear what I am saying today have to become an active part, a participant in this process. They have to demand that those that represent them make the hard choices, the difficult choices, the choices that are morally right.

It is immoral to steal from our grandchildren and our unborn grandchildren. The only way we solve this problem is for the American public, the citizens of this Nation, to demand the courage and the proper representation of their Members of Congress to accomplish this task.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 30 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the spirit of Hershey does live on, and I would say to the gentleman that I enjoyed the time that I spent at the conference on a bipartisan basis.

My concern today, however, and I suppose in a sense this is sort of a reaching out to the other side of the aisle, is that we need to address the issue of campaign finance reform. I say this not in the spirit of trying to attack anyone or to suggest that anyone has a solution to the problem or that the problem necessarily can be decided on either side of the aisle, but the bottom line is that the Republicans are in the majority in the House of Representatives, and the Democrats increasingly, including myself, have been frustrated by the fact that we have been unable to get the Republican majority to bring up the issue of campaign finance reform either in committee, with hearings or markups, or on the floor of this House.

Many of my colleagues know that in the President's State of the Union Address he called upon the House of Representatives, both Republicans and Democrats, on a bipartisan basis, to address the issue of campaign finance reform.

Democrats have increasingly, over the last few months, requested that the House Republican leadership address the issue, again have hearings on legislation, bring the legislation up in committee, and set a deadline on when campaign finance reform reaches the floor of the House of Representatives so we could have a debate and be able to vote on a bill that most of us could agree on.

Unfortunately, that has not happened, and, as a result, the Democrats have been forced to use procedural motions, as we did this afternoon on one of the suspension bills, to raise the debate and to allow us the opportunity to discuss campaign finance reform.

Mr. Speaker, on several occasions during special orders over the last cou-

ple of months, myself and other Democratic colleagues have come to the floor to both speak out on the issue and also to talk about some of the proposals that have been put forward, many of which have been introduced, many of the bills, on a bipartisan basis. But, unfortunately, we still see no action.

I think the issue is important for a number of reasons. First of all, as I mentioned earlier today, when I returned to my district for the 2-week break that we had, the 2-week district work period, it was repeatedly mentioned to me by my constituents at every location, a supermarket, a coffee shop, wherever I happened to be, many people came up to me and said: What is the Congress doing? It does not appear to be doing anything.

The term has already been coined by the Washington Post, which on this last Monday did an editorial, calling the Congress the do-nothing Congress. I think this editorial has already been read into the RECORD, and I will not repeat it again, but the bottom line is that we have taken up almost nothing of substance in the first 3 or 4 months of this Congress.

When I talk to my constituents, they say, well, it seems the only thing Congress does is to call upon investigations of the White House or investigations of campaign financing, but, at the same time that they are spending money on these investigations and doing subpoenas and calling for hearings about investigating finances or campaign finances out of the last November campaign, no one in the majority, no one on the Republican side in the leadership, is proposing that we move forward on campaign finance reform.

I would maintain, just based on talking with my own constituents in the last 2 weeks, that that is not acceptable. The public is really tired of hearing about all the investigations and all the problems with the campaign finance system. We all know there are problems. We know there is too much money in the system. We know that Representatives, Senators, the President and the Vice President, and everyone who is a Federal officeholder has to spend too much time raising money, which takes away from the time for them to do substantive business.

So the system cries out for change. It just cries out for change. Whether it is public financing or it is a cap on spending or it is the various proposals that have been put forward, the bottom line is that we have to address the issue. It is time for action. It is time to stop worrying about all the myriad of investigations and all the myriad charges and to simply do something legislatively to make the system work. That means campaign finance reform.

Just to throw out an example, in New Jersey we are now in the midst of a gubernatorial race, and for a number of years in my home State of New Jersey we have had a system in place where there is a cap on the amount of money