

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1062

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I be removed from cosponsorship of H.R. 1062.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

FREEDOM FROM RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION ACT

(Mr. WOLF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak on behalf of millions of people of faith around the world who are living in fear of religious persecution. In order to draw attention to this modern day tragedy, a number of Members, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. HALL] and others, have introduced the Freedom From Religious Persecution Act, which has over 40 cosponsors. I urge and beg my colleagues to cosponsor this bill and send a message around the world that America will not be silent on this issue.

The bill addresses the great untold human rights story of decades, persecution of peoples of faith around the world, Christians, Buddhists, Muslims, the Bahai faith. Slavery thrives in Sudan and this Congress does not a darned thing about it.

I hear Members talk about it, they give speeches about it, but, frankly, we do nothing about it. I urge my colleagues to do something about it. Cosponsor this bipartisan bill which has 40 cosponsors and let us pass it whereby we can help people of faith around the world.

The bill does a number of things. It focuses on persecution; abduction, enslavement, imprisonment, killing, forced mass resettlement, rape, or torture. It establishes an office in the White House to monitor religious persecution and requires the director to report to Congress whether foreign governments actively participate or fail to take steps to curtail religious persecution. It shuts off aid and requires U.S. executive directors to vote against multilateral development bank loans to persecuting countries. And it improves refugee and asylum procedures to ensure those seeking refuge from persecution are not turned away from a country which has historically welcomed religious victims.

The time has come for Congress to take a stand. Mr. Speaker, our bill would ensure that we take a new approach to this growing problem—an approach that says we will no longer be silent when regimes terrorize or allow terror against its religious believers. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this bill.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. JACKSON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. JACKSON of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. HULSHOF] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. HULSHOF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. FLAKE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. FLAKE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PAPPAS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. PAPPAS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. PITTS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. PITTS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. JONES] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kentucky [Mrs. NORTHUP] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. NORTHUP addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

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

Mr. DREIER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

THE AMERICAN HERITAGE RIVERS INITIATIVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Idaho [Mrs. CHENOWETH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons for America's strength

and her rise in economic ability is because of the wise use of her rivers and waterways for irrigation, travel, recreation, power, flood control, and all other uses.

Mr. Speaker, through the wise use and allocation of our Nation's waters we have literally turned our deserts into gardens, but tonight I rise to alert my colleagues and inform our constituents of the most recent assault by the Clinton administration on private property rights, States rights, and western values. That is the administration's American heritage rivers initiative, created and tendered solely by the White House, and executed without congressional approval.

Just before the Memorial Day work period the Council on Environmental Quality, an unauthorized agency existing on misappropriated funds, I might add, published this proposal in the Federal Register entitled "The American Heritage Rivers Initiative." It is in the Federal Register, May 19, 1997, page 27253. I urge my colleagues to read it.

Although law requires a 90-day public comment period, this comment period ends June 9, 1997, a mere 3 weeks after its date of publication; 3 weeks, not 3 months, as the law requires. This violates the Administrative Procedures Act and totally ignores the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act.

Fortunately, today, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Alaska, Mr. DON YOUNG, chairman of the Committee on Resources, and the gentleman from Oregon, Mr. BOB SMITH, chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, along with myself and other Committee on Resources chairmen, have sent a letter to Katy McGinty strongly advising CEQ to extend that comment period to make it legal at least another 90 days. I am sure that the gentlewoman would be wise to follow this advice, and I will enter this letter into the RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, I have grave concerns about this initiative. The American heritage rivers proposal is just one in a string of the Clinton administration's attacks on our Western public lands. This is a Nation of laws, but from the Utah Monument to ecosystem management projects to the BLM's law enforcement regulations, this administration has demonstrated an absolute lack of regard for our Nation's laws and regulations, including requirements of environmental law.

I ask, where is the documentation required under the National Environmental Policy Act? Where is the notification and full public comment required under the APA? By the way, who is paying for this?

Again, the President is attempting to foist a program upon us, without us. Mr. Speaker, the very nature of how this proposal was constructed raises many troubling questions. For instance, since the American heritage rivers initiative has never been authorized by Congress, exactly which land and water program funds were siphoned

to prepare this proposal? How does the administration intend to continue funding this unauthorized project if it is established? I suspect that the Committee on Resources will be holding hearings to get answers to these very troubling questions.

Quite simply, this initiative will simply replace the long established and Constitutionally protected policies that govern the use of our waterways—which are critical to our economic survival, not only to the west, but to the entire nation. That is why for the past century the Supreme Court has held in case after case that in the west it is the States who control the use of water.

Mr. Speaker, there is case after case in the Supreme Court that upholds the fact that the States own the water in the western States. Let me quote from one of the seminal Supreme Court cases on this very issue, the 1978 Supreme Court decision written by Justice Rehnquist entitled "California v. U.S."

□ 2230

It states: To take from the legislatures of the various States and territories the control of water at the present time would be something less than suicidal. If the appropriation and use were not under the provisions of State law, the utmost confusion would prevail.

Mr. Speaker, I agree. Idaho Code 42-101 states: All the waters of the State, when flowing in their natural channels, including the waters of all natural springs and lakes within the boundaries of the States, are declared to be the property of the State, whose duty it shall be to supervise appropriation and allotment to those diverting the same therefrom for any beneficial purposes.

Mr. Speaker, this proposal by the President will be redefining communities. It will redefine watersheds and jurisdictional boundaries. It creates a governing authority called a river community which will redefine what the river and the entire heritage area is, which extends beyond State boundaries and jurisdictional boundaries.

Mr. Speaker, this fictional entity, the river community, will then describe and define the designation which could be the length of the entire area, whether it be an entire watershed, the length of an entire river or a short stretch of river and, as I say, it may cross State boundaries.

Mr. Speaker, we are just beginning to address this issue. We need to take immediate action. I will be here Tuesday night doing a one hour special order speech with a number of my colleagues on this very subject.

We have a little thing in this country called the separation of powers. The legislative branch creates laws. The executive branch implements the laws, and the courts interpret the laws. I think the administration has forgotten about this in this particular move.

When it comes to western resources issues, the Clinton Administration has once again

usurped the Congress's lawmaking authority. Nowhere in law can one find the American Heritage Rivers program. This action is tantamount to tyranny, and must stop; or as the Supreme Court warns: "the utmost confusion will prevail."

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to leave the Members something to think about. Perry Pendley, in his book "War on the West," wrote:

For the environmental extremists' vision of the West is of a land nearly devoid of people and economic activity, a land devoted almost entirely to the preservation of scenery and wildlife habitat. In their vision, everything becomes a vast park through which they might drive, drink Perrier and munching on organic chips, staying occasionally in the bed-and-breakfast operations into which the homes of Westerners have been turned, with those Westerners who remain fluffing duvets and pouring cappuccino. They are well on the way to achieving their objective.

You'll be hearing more on Tuesday.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the following:

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, June 4, 1997.

Ms. KATHLEEN A. MCGINTY,
Chair, Council on Environment Quality, Executive Office of the President, Washington, DC.

DEAR MS. MCGINTY: This letter is in response to your May 19, 1997 letter to Chairman Don Young, House Committee on Resources, concerning the Clinton Administration's American Heritage Rivers Initiative. This Committee has strong reservations about this unauthorized initiative, and we are fully aware of the public outcry occurring over the Federal Register Notice on this issue.

We strongly advise that the comment period for the Council on Environment Quality (CEQ), American Heritage Rivers Initiative be extended for 90 days, until at least September 9, 1997, to provide sufficient time for the American public to express their concerns.

Furthermore, as the Committee with jurisdiction over the CEQ and the Department of the Interior (DOI), we request that you prepare a detailed briefing for this Committee, and other interested Members of Congress, to fully explain your undertaking of this initiative. The committee is especially interested in a full explanation of any reprogramming of authorized funds involved in conducting the public hearings throughout the United States in April and May, 1997; a full accounting of all personnel involved from the DOI; and, a comprehensive review of what budgetary reprogramming the planned Federal Interagency Team will require in Fiscal Year 1998. This briefing should be provided as soon as possible, but no later than June 27, 1997.

Finally, this Committee has serious concerns about this initiative to designate specific areas for special Federal assistance without any authorization from the Congress. Ironically, it would appear that CEQ has totally ignored the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 in undertaking this "major Federal action." We look forward to your immediate response to this letter and especially to our oversight responsibility concerning the short public comment period CEQ has provided the American people.

Please contact Mr. P. Dan Smith, Legislative Staff, Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands at (202) 226-7736, to coordinate the briefing requested by this Committee.

Sincerely,
DON YOUNG,

Chairman, Committee
on Resources.

JAMES V. HANSEN,
Chairman, Subcommittee
on National
Parks and Public
Lands.

JOHN T. DOOLITTLE,
Chairman, Subcommittee
on Water and
Power.

HELEN CHENOWETH,
Chairman, Subcommittee
on Forests and
Forest Health.

ROBERT F. SMITH,
Chairman, Committee
on Agriculture.

BARBARA CUBIN,
Chairman, Subcommittee
on Energy and
Mineral Resources.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CON- FERENCE REPORT ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 84, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEARS 1998-2002

Mr. SOLOMON, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-117) on the resolution (H. Res. 160) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 84) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 1998 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 4(b) OF RULE XI WITH RESPECT TO CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS RE- PORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON RULES

Mr. SOLOMON, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-118) on the resolution (H. Res. 160) waiving a requirement of clause 4(b) of rule XI with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

BALANCING THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COOKSEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, not long ago his excellency, President Eduardo Frei of Chile, spoke to a joint session of the Congress. He gave us some advice. He began by saying, I want to share with you why we Chileans are ever more satisfied with the dividends of freedom, why we do not want to look back, why we wish to