

TRIBUTE TO RIZAL AGBAYANI

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

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Mr. Rizal Agbayani, a veteran of World War II and a former member of the U.S. Armed Forces in the Far East. He died of a heart attack last week at the Fairfax Hospital in Virginia, near Washington, DC. He is survived by his wife, Criselda, and his eight children.

Mr. Agbayani came to Washington as part of the 37-veteran delegation from Hawaii attending the gathering of the National Advisory Council of Philippine-American Veteran Leaders. Almost 300 Filipino veterans were in our Nation's Capital last week, gathered together for the first time, working with a united front to achieve equity for all Filipino World War II veterans.

Mr. Agbayani actively took part in meetings with several Members of Congress. He was also one of the hundred demonstrators at a rally in front of the White House organized by National Advisory Council members and the 130-member Equity Caravan, a 6-city, 2-week march to Washington designed to call attention to the Filipino Veterans Equity Act (H.R. 836) and urging Congress to pass this bill.

Mr. Agbayani was named after Jose Rizal. A national hero of the Philippines, Rizal was executed for his fight to free the Philippines from colonial Spain, and this year marks the observance of the centennial anniversary of Rizal's death. Like his namesake, Mr. Agbayani died while fighting for justice, and today his body is being flown to the Philippines to his final resting place.

I want to take this opportunity to commemorate the life and struggle of Mr. Agbayani and the thousands of other Filipino World War II veterans whose participation was so crucial to the outcome of World War II. Too few Americans are familiar with this chapter in our Nation's history.

During this war, the military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines were drafted to serve in our Armed Forces by Executive order of the President of the United States. Filipino soldiers defended the American flag in the now famous battles of Bataan and Corregidor. Thousands of Filipino prisoners of war died during the 65-mile Bataan death march. Those who survived were imprisoned under inhuman conditions where they suffered casualties at the rate of 50 to 200 prisoners a day. They endured 4 long years of enemy occupation.

The soldiers who escaped capture, together with Filipino civilians, fought against the occupation forces. Their guerilla attacks foiled the plans of the Japanese for a quick takeover of the region and allowed the United States the time needed to prepare forces to defeat Japan. After the liberation of the

Philippine Islands, the United States was able to use the strategically located Commonwealth of the Philippines as a base from which to launch the final efforts to win the war.

One would assume that the United States would be grateful to their Filipino comrades, so it is hard to believe that soon after the war ended, the 79th Congress voted in a way that can only be considered to be blatant discrimination, as they took away the benefits and recognition that the Filipino World War II veterans were promised.

Mr. Agbayani and his comrades have been fighting over 50 years to regain this recognition that they so deserve. Their sons and daughters have joined in the fight, wishing desperately to restore the honor and dignity to their fathers while they are still alive. The urgency is real, Mr. Speaker. At least six Filipino World War II veterans are dying each day.

Mr. Agbayani's journey to Washington last week was his final journey in search of this recognition for his Filipino World War II comrades. As a tribute to Mr. Agbayani and the thousands of other veterans already gone before us in death, I urge my colleagues to take a serious inventory of this issue, to cosponsor 836, and to correct a monumental injustice by restoring the benefits that were promised to the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals.

GRAND STAIRCASE-ESCALANTE NATIONAL MONUMENT

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

(Mr. HANSEN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, on September 18, 1996, one year ago today, President Clinton, claiming authority under the Antiquities Act, stood on the south side of the Grand Canyon of Arizona and designated 1.7 million acres of southern Utah as a national monument.

Over at the Committee on Resources, we have met with administration officials, held hearings, and subpoenaed documents in an effort to sort this thing out. I thought it might be appropriate, since today is the anniversary of that unprecedented election year stunt, to say a few words about what we have been able to come up with.

The first time I or any other Utah official heard about the National Monument was on September 7, 1996, when the Washington Post published an article announcing that President Clinton was about to use the Antiquities Act of 1906 to create a 2-million-acre national monument in southern Utah.

Naturally, we are all somewhat concerned. In fact, I think most of us found it a little hard to believe. Surely the President would have the decency to at least let the citizens of Utah

know if he were considering a move that would affect them so greatly.

When we expressed our concern to the Clinton administration, they denied they had even heard about such a thing. They tried to make it look like the monument was some kind of nebulous idea that was being kicked around, but that we should not really take it too seriously or worry about it. As late as September 11, Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt wrote to Utah Senator BENNETT and pretty much told him that.

Within the confines of the administration, however, it was clear the monument was a go. The real issue was keeping it a secret from the rest of the world. By July 1996 the Department of Interior had already hired law professor Charles Wilkinson to draw up the President's National Monument proclamation. In a letter written to Professor Wilkinson asking him to draw up the Proclamation, DOI Solicitor John Leshy wrote: "I can't emphasize confidentiality too much. If word leaks out, it probably won't happen, so take care."

When I say that the Clinton administration went to great lengths to keep everyone in the dark, I should probably qualify that a little. On August 5, 1996, CEQ chair Katy McGinty wrote a memo to Marcia Hale telling her to call some key western Democrats to get their reactions to the monument idea. There was conspicuous absence on her list, however, of anyone from the State of Utah. Not the governor, not the senators, not the Congressmen, not the Speaker of the House, not the President, nobody. Even the Democratic Congressman, Bill Orton, was kept in the dark. Clinton did not want to take any chances.

In the memo, Ms. McGinty emphasized that it should be kept secret, saying that "Any public release of the information would probably make the President change his options."

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Why, you ask, did President Clinton want to keep this secret from the rest of the world? Because it would ruin their timing. This announcement was a political election year stunt and those type of things have to be planned and timed perfectly. If news of the monument were to break too early, it would be old news by the time Bill Clinton did his photo op on the site of the Grand Canyon.

Let us back up and ask ourselves why President Clinton wanted to create this new 1.7 million acre national monument. The administration claimed it was to protect the land. For example, at our hearing this year, Katy McGinty said, "By last year the lands were in real jeopardy."

That sounds great, but the truth is the land was not in any danger. Even if it were, national monument status would not do anything to protect it. If anything, it takes away protection. We have requested documents from the administration where they admit to both

of those points. Take for example a March 25, 1996 E-mail message about the proposed Utah national monument from Katy McGinty that said this:

"I do think there is a danger of abuse of the withdrawal, especially because these lands are not really endangered." There we have it, in Katy McGinty's own words. The administration did not think the land was in any real danger or in any jeopardy.

Okay, so the administration did not really think the lands involved were in any real danger. Let us just ignore that for a moment and pretend that the lands were in some sort of danger and ask ourselves if creating a monument out of these lands was a good idea.

Does it stop coal mining in the area? No. You can still mine. Does it stop mineral development? No. Conoco is drilling oil wells on the Grand Staircase-Escalante right now. Does it stop grazing on the land? No. Does it stop people from visiting the area? No. Quite to the contrary, people are coming by the millions now to see it. Roads are all over the place since Bill Clinton created this to protect the land. What a joke.

What is the administration talking about when they say they needed to create a national monument to protect these lands? The land was not in any danger, and even if it were, a national monument was the least effective tool.

All right, so we have seen the administration did not create the monument because they thought the land was in any danger. Why did they do it then? They thought it would help Bill Clinton with the upcoming presidential election. Katy McGinty wrote to Leon Panetta on September 9, 1996 and said: "The political purpose of the Utah event is to show the President's willingness to use his office to protect the environment."

Clinton figured he could get some extra votes from the environmentalists around the country at very little cost. He figured it might give him an edge in some of the close states. He picked Utah for his stunt because he knew he didn't have a snowball's chance in Hades of winning the state. He was probably still a little sore about the fact that during the 1992 election Utah was the only state where he came in third place. There you are. Free environmental votes in 49 states and the 50th state he didn't have a chance at winning anyway.

Why did he pick the National Monument idea when it actually protected the land less than the other options available to him? . . . Because it was more dramatic. Most armchair environmentalists don't understand the complexities of natural resource law. It just wouldn't have had the same effect if Clinton would have had the Secretary of Interior sit at his desk and say "pursuant to 43 U.S.C. 1701 §204(e), I hereby withdraw the Kaiparowits plateau from mineral entry under 30 U.S.C. 22." No, it wouldn't have been nearly as picturesque. The armchair environmentalist would have scratched his head and switched the channel to catch the second half of the Steelers-Broncos game. No, the Clinton administration needed to do something dramatic to get

their votes. Bill Clinton needed to stand there overlooking the Grand Canyon, with the wind blowing through his hair, telling everyone how he was following in Teddy Roosevelt's footsteps and saving the land by creating a new national monument. How profound. How courageous. It kind of brings a tear to the eye, doesn't it. Never mind the fact that creating this monument didn't really achieve any of the administration's stated objectives. Chances were that no one would figure that out until after the election anyway.

Well, people are starting to figure it out now. For instance, last week I read an article in the Salt Lake Tribune where a spokesman for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance called Clinton and Gore "election-year environmentalists" because CONOCO is being allowed to drill for oil in the monument. Remember, these are the same people that were cheering and crying and hugging each other at the Grand Canyon a year ago. Today they are beginning to realize that they were all duped—that this was nothing but an election year stunt and that national monument status doesn't do anything for their cause.

Many people have asked me why we passed the Antiquities Act in the first place if it allows this kind of abuse. Well, the answer is that the people that passed it didn't anticipate these kinds of problems. The Antiquities Act was passed back when we had very few environmental laws and few ways to preserve our lands.

The language of the Antiquities Act allows presidents to "declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest . . . to be national monuments". The size of such withdrawals would be in all cases "confined to the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected."

Notice two very important points here. First, the Antiquities Act was designed to preserve specific objects. Second, it mandated that the President use the smallest amount of land necessary to preserve those specific objects. Using this criteria, let's look at three national monuments that have been declared by presidents in the past.

How about Devils Tower National Monument, proclaimed by Theodore Roosevelt in 1906? What does it protect? . . . It protects a 865-foot tower of columnar rock in Wyoming. This basalt tower is the remains of an ancient volcanic intrusion. . . . O.K. we have a specific recognizable object that is being protected here. Sounds like it meets the criteria. How much land is included in the monument? 1,347 acres. Sounds pretty reasonable.

How about Statue of Liberty National Monument, proclaimed in 1924 by Calvin Coolidge? What does it protect? . . . Statue of Liberty National Monument protects the famous 152-foot copper statue bearing the torch of freedom. The statue was a gift from the French people in 1886 to commemorate the alliance between France and the United States during the American Revolution. Seen by millions of immigrants as they came to the new world, it has become famous as a symbol of freedom. How much land? . . . 59 acres. Wow. That sounds pretty good.

O.K. Just to be fair, let's look at the new Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, proclaimed in 1996 by William Jefferson Clinton. What objects does it protect? . . .

Hmmmm . . . Come to think of it, I have absolutely no idea . . . Do you? . . . Does anyone? . . . O.K. forget that question for a minute, and let's look at how much land we need to protect these "objects" that no one can name . . . 1.7 million acres . . . One Million Seven Hundred Thousand acres!!!! . . . Wouldn't you say that's maybe just a little bit excessive. That's about as much land as the states of Delaware and Rhode Island combined! There's no way anyone could possibly tell me this is the smallest amount of land necessary to protect whatever those "objects" are that no one can name.

I think that people intuitively know what national monuments are all about. During the past year I've spent quite a bit of time on that land. People kept coming up to me and asking where the monument was. I told them "you're standing on it". They looked at me incredulously and said "what am I supposed to look at?" You see, they know that national monuments are supposed to protect specific objects, and they want someone to show them those objects. I don't know what to tell them? The best I can do is say "Darned if I know. Let me know if you figure it out."

Well, this whole thing is now history. Bill Clinton had his photo-op at the Grand Canyon, bypassed Congressional power over the public lands, got the few extra votes he needed, and won the election. Meanwhile, the land isn't protected, hundreds of thousands of acres of private and state school trust land are hanging in limbo, and we are all wondering how we can stop this sort of thing from happening again.

O.K. . . . so, what can we do to stop this? . . . I have a bill, H.R. 1127, that will be coming to the floor in the coming weeks that I think will go a long way toward fixing the Antiquities Act to prevent Presidential abuse.

H.R. 1127 is a good piece of legislation. During the debate on the floor you are going to hear all kinds of rhetoric about how my bill is anti-environmental. As you can see, that's ridiculous. This debate isn't about the environment. This is about Presidential abuse of power. We shouldn't allow a President to use our public lands as political pawns.

Protect our public lands and protect the democratic process. Support H.R. 1127.

INTRODUCTION OF DEADBEAT PARENTS PUNISHMENT ACT

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the introduction by myself and the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HYDE] of the Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act.

The gentleman from Illinois and I are introducing this bill to send a clear and unmistakable message to deadbeat parents who attempt to use State borders as a shield against child support enforcement orders. It says essentially you can run, you can try to hide, but you cannot escape your moral and legal duty to pay child support you owe.

The Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act of 1997 will strengthen penalties for