

Fully 20,000 American soldiers were in the vicinity and potentially were exposed to the residue of those chemicals when this facility was destroyed.

Two days later, after the destruction of the facility, potentially after 20,000 American soldiers were exposed to these chemical weapons, the Central Intelligence Agency informed the Pentagon of this information and a possible exposure.

Mr. President, yesterday Dr. Robert Walpole, a CIA agency official investigating this incident on behalf of the Central Intelligence Agency, issued an apology to the Nation's veterans. It is not good enough. This Nation for several years has been agonizing about the cause of unknown illnesses among our soldiers. During all of that study, during all the long nights of wonder and doubt and pain, this information was not supplied to the President, the Congress, the commission studying this information or, most importantly, those veterans whose lives may have been permanently changed and damaged. And now we are given an apology.

Mr. President, this is more than a failure in a single instant. It is another example of the fact that the American people and this Government are not being adequately served by the American intelligence community.

Dr. Walpole stated the reasons, in his judgment, for this failure. He said, first, that there was tunnel vision in the American intelligence community; second, that there had been an incomplete search of the files; and, third and perhaps most chilling to all of us who share these concerns about the role of the American intelligence community in working with our military and civilian personnel, he said there was a reluctance by some CIA officials to share some of its most sensitive information with Government officials.

It appeared that some CIA officials knowingly and consciously weighed the sources of their information with the potential of sharing that information with the U.S. military and made the wrong judgment, making victims, potentially, out of our own soldiers.

Mr. President, this is not an isolated failure of intelligence policy. It is indicative of a continuing plague of bad judgment, and it is an indication of a need for large-scale institutional reform of how the intelligence community conducts its business, makes its judgments, and shares its information with elected officials and the U.S. military.

We are experiencing again not only a failure of leadership, but an inability to share at the proper time in the proper manner with the leadership of this Government sensitive intelligence information.

The intelligence community was created in this country to ensure that elected officials had the best information to make the right security judgments for this country, so that the U.S. military would have the best possible information to both prevail in conflicts

and minimize casualties. Neither can be accomplished if officials of the intelligence community do not feel a responsibility, indeed, are not driven by the need to share the best information with the leadership of the U.S. Government.

An apology has been issued to the Armed Forces of the United States and those who may have suffered as a result of this incident. It is not only inadequate, it is a disservice to every man and woman who wears the uniform of this country. The President of the United States and this Congress must respond to this latest incident by beginning institutional reform in the organization, the leadership and, indeed, the mission of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and thank you for your indulgence.

MISSISSIPPI'S ENVIRONMENTAL SCORE CARD: "LOUISIANA QUILLWORT 1 AND TIMBER INDUSTRY 1"

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, finding a new species of plant in America brings mixed reactions. From scientists, it brings the excitement of biodiversity and more opportunities for scientific investigation. But for many Americans, an endangered plant listing often places strict controls on the use and resources of the land where the plant is found. When an endangered plant is found in a national forest, it can curtail the multiple use mission of the U.S. Forest Service. Its mere occurrence can stop the timber harvesting, which is so important to the rejuvenation of the entire forest habitat. And when trees are not cut, there are dramatic economic consequences for the community that lives near the forest and depends on it for jobs.

You can be sure that enthusiasm was not over flowing when Mr. Steve Leonard, Camp Shelby's Heritage Inventory Botanist, announced that the Louisiana quillwort was found in the DeSoto ranger district in Perry County, MI on May 24, 1996.

Mr. President, let me tell you about Perry County. Perry County has only three towns and roughly 11,000 citizens. Perry County contains 410,000 acres, 162,000 of which—over 39 percent—are national forest lands. The employment opportunities are limited primarily to the timber industry. The harvesting and marketing of forest products in the county has created over 1,800 jobs, of which 330 are involved in timber sales in the national forest. Currently, the unemployment rate is 7 percent. This year, Perry County's payment from the U.S. Forest Service for timber sales was cut by \$1.5 million. This money would have been used by Perry County's schools to offset the loss of tax revenue received because of the large land ownership by the Federal Government.

Now along comes the quillwort. This county is already absorbing the eco-

nomics impacts of repeated and failed government attempts to establish habitats for the endangered red cockaded woodpeckers in the DeSoto National Forest. And let's not forget the restrictions for those gopher tortoise.

The residents of Perry County love the environment and many make their living from the environment, but the ever growing restriction on land use challenges their commitment.

The Louisiana quillwort is a very small grass-like plant with just a few strands—smaller than this ballpoint pen—whose scientific name is *Isoetes Louisianensis*. It was first discovered 5 years ago on private property in just two parishes of Louisiana. It was promptly listed as endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, but since then, there has been no monitoring of its population. To this day, there still remains huge scientific factual gaps on the known and potential threats to this plant.

There is one thing I know for sure. There is a lot of this quillwort growing on the edges of stream beds in Mississippi's DeSoto National Forest. It may be scarce in Louisiana, but Mississippi clearly has more than our fair share. This is not unlike many other aspects of the ever-continuing rivalry with our neighboring State. I say this with great respect for my friend and colleague Senator JOHN BREAU, but maybe the name of this species should be changed.

Mr. President, today I am here to honor the dedicated efforts of the U.S. Forest Service employees who walked over 200 miles of stream beds this past winter in order to locate quillwort populations and to ensure there would be no disruptions of timber sales. This was no easy task. The heavy winter rains left boot-sucking mud everywhere.

Mr. President, at the end of my remarks I would like to submit for the record the names of all 48 U.S. Forest Service personnel involved in this effort. I want to recognize them and to thank them. And I know the citizens of Perry County want to thank them.

This was more than an effort by the U.S. Forest Service. It is the story of the individual leadership and excellence of Mr. Don Neal and Ms. Kim Kennedy, two very able U.S. Forest Service employees. They did an outstanding job of determining the environmental consequences and developing a plan of action. Thanks to their efforts, the plan minimized economic impact without compromising the required protection necessary for the quillwort's habitat.

This is also the story of two Federal agencies—each with partially conflicting missions. It took 4 years following the quillwort's initial discovery for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to approve a recovery plan. Fortunately, it took the U.S. Forest Service only 2 months to issue implementing directives. This swift action occurred under the watchful eye of Mr. Robert Joslin,

the regional forester in Atlanta. He is to be commended not only for his actions when faced with the quillwort, but for his many years of dedicated leadership for balanced forest management throughout the Southeast. The forests have thrived. Thank you, Bob.

The quillwort protection plan established a 165 foot buffer zone on either side of a streambed. Limiting timber harvesting within this zone maintained a heavy overhead canopy and filtered the light reaching the stream's surface. The cutting restriction also curtailed sedimentation and changes to drainage patterns. The quillwort seems to like small intermittent streams.

This protection plan created a real challenge for Don and Kim because, at that time, there were 25 active timber sales in 51 compartments of the DeSoto ranger district. Four even had loggers on site.

Due to the lack of factual knowledge about the quillwort's habitat—especially since it was now newly discovered in Mississippi—determining which drainage to survey proved difficult. The U.S. Forest Service stepped up to the plate and made the decision to survey all drainage within or immediately adjacent to cutting units. And, to err on the side of caution, the survey was 20 percent wider than the 165 foot buffer suggested in the recovery plan.

The DeSoto district established an incident command system team to organize and survey 137 miles of streams on all active timber sales and 88 miles of streams in sales planned for next fiscal year. Timber sales were prioritized for survey in the following order: those with loggers on site; sales with open payment units; sales which had not been opened; and finally next year's planned sales.

It took 34 days of slow slogging up and down streambeds—both sides.

More quillwort was found. Louisiana quillwort was found on four active timber sales, three of which required modification before being released for cutting. It was also found on seven sales planned for next year, two of which were modified before the sales were finalized. The rest of the Louisiana quillwort was located in existing set aside buffer zones.

Throughout the survey process, Ms. Kennedy maintained constant contact with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service offices in Jackson and Vicksburg. Her persistence ensured that the appropriate NEPA documents were amended and the timber sales were modified. Without this level of attention, the sales could easily have experienced bureaucratic disruptions.

Mr. President, this is clearly an environmental success story for all. An endangered plant was found. The habitat around identified populations was protected. Trees were still cut.

I believe a mutually successful coexistence occurred. The quillwort won. Perry County won. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service won. The U.S. Forest Service won. I applaud the U.S. Forest

Service for protecting the quillwort's habitat with a flexible rapid response. They did not take the easy route and stop all contracts.

I'd also like to note that this process has allowed the Forest Service to significantly expand the scientific knowledge about this quillwort species. With all these new and frequently large finds, it makes me wonder just how endangered this plant really is? I hope the agency charged with monitoring the livelihood of the quillwort will not ignore this information.

Mr. President, there is another question that cannot be overlooked when talking about the DeSoto National Forest. Why has the annual forest regeneration program dwindled down to less than 1 percent of the total acreage while over 33 percent of the forest has pine trees well beyond rotation age? And why is only 35 percent of the annual growth being harvested? This only causes these pine forests to get older.

Mississippi's largest cash crop is timber. Every Mississippian has been behind a log truck on its way to a mill at some point, and every Mississippian knows a little about silviculture. We know that pine forests should be rotated and harvested to maintain their health. We also recognize that old trees are vulnerable to the pine beetle which jeopardizes healthy sections of the forest. Good silviculture prevents a pine forest from getting too old. Good silviculture encourages selective tree harvesting. Good silviculture creates healthy forests. Good silviculture creates an economically thriving community in all sectors.

I want to challenge the U.S. Forest Service to give me a credible response to this question: Why are we only harvesting a small percentage of the annual growth? I do not want my inquiry to be dismissed with the weak excuse that we just did not have enough people to prepare a sale. The quillwort drew 48 Forest Service employees. How many Forest Service employees worked on timber sales during this timeframe? Recent claims that budget reductions have curtailed the timber sale program only go so far. In Mississippi, mature pine trees are ready to be cut. And the school district, county government, and timber farmers of Perry County who depend on these revenues are anxiously awaiting that day. The citizens of Perry County deserve no less. I urge a full, honest, and equal commitment to all of the U.S. Forest Service's missions.

It is a sad fact that the U.S. Forest Service does not even live up to its existing and approved forest management plans nationwide. It repeatedly disregards programmed sales, making it impossible for counties like Perry County to plan its school budgets. I view forest plans as a contract between the Forest Service and each county. I do not expect these contracts to be broken. When these contracts are broken, the schoolchildren are the big losers.

I would like to personally invite the new head of the U.S. Forest Service to

visit Mississippi's national forests to discuss his plans to honor his agency's commitments to Perry County and Mississippi.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I want to reiterate my appreciation for the extraordinary efforts of the regional forester in Atlanta and the district ranger and his employees in the DeSoto district. They reflect great credit upon the proud tradition of the U.S. Forest Service. A proper balance was struck—a plant was protected and the interests of the citizens it affected were equally protected. This proves a mutually beneficial coexistence can occur.

Mr. President, I request unanimous consent to list the names of the 48 DeSoto National Forest employees who walked the streambeds in search of quillworts. I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing their extraordinary efforts:

Kent Ainsworth, Debbie Lindsay, Eddie Bagget, Gary Lott, Jim Barner, Ed Lumpkin, Anthony Bolton, Robert Lumpkin, Hildred Bolton, Dean McCardle, Anthony Bond, Richard McCardle, Charles Broome, Wayne McCardle, Ed Bratcher, Mike McGregor, Steve Cobb, Don Neal, Robert Cooper, Gordon Pearce, Keith Coursey, Lee Prine, Jefferson Davis, Robert Reams, Frank Grady, Tony Rivers, Charles Grice, Patricia Rogers, Alicia Gruver, Joe Schonewitz, Andy Hunter, Ray Shows, Harvest Jackson, Robert Smistik, Kim Kennedy, John Stewart, Rebecca Ladnier, Wayne Stone, Gail Lassalle, Diane Tyrone, Pete Lassalle, Larry Walters, Steve Lee, David Wallace, Lisa Lewis, Donald Williams, and Mike Lick. Bruce Wilson.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, April 9, 1997, the Federal debt stood at \$5,380,948,025,320.90.—Five trillion, three hundred eighty billion, nine hundred forty-eight million, twenty-five thousand, three hundred twenty and ninety cents.

One year ago, April 9, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,130,578,000,000.—Five trillion, one hundred thirty billion, five hundred seventy-eight million.

Five years ago, April 9, 1992, the Federal debt stood at \$3,894,405,000,000.—Three trillion, eight hundred ninety-four billion, four hundred five million.

Ten years ago, April 9, 1987, the Federal debt stood at \$2,283,040,000,000.—Two trillion, two hundred eighty-three billion, forty million.

Fifteen years ago, April 9, 1982, the Federal debt stood at \$1,061,116,000,000.—One trillion, sixty-one billion, one hundred sixteen million—which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion—\$4,319,832,025,320.90.—Four trillion, three hundred nineteen billion, eight hundred thirty-two million, twenty-five thousand, three hundred twenty dollars and ninety cents—during the past 15 years.