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House of Representatives

The House met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PETRI).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 23, 1999.

I hereby appoint the Honorable THOMAS E. PETRI to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 19, 1999, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) for 5 minutes.

CHIEF WASHINGTON LOBBYIST FOR THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT'S TRADE OFFICE, AN UNFORTUNATE CHOICE FOR A NATIONAL SECURITY POSITION

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to bring you news from home. In my case home is the Sixth Congressional District of Arizona, a district in square mileage almost the size of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and now with the explosive growth in the Grand Canyon State a district that is home to well nigh one million Americans.

From the pages of the Holbrook Tribune-News, indeed from the editorial page of March 19, the headline reads, "This Story Needs More Attention." Paul Barger, the publisher of the Holbrook Tribune-News, writes, and I quote, "For some time there have been reports circulating regarding the possible theft of highly classified missile secrets from Los Alamos since the 1980s. The thefts were apparently discovered in 1995, and the person allegedly involved was allowed to resign recently. The matter has been kept quiet for what seem to be political reasons."

Paul Barger concludes, "It is sad that so much attention is given to issues of no real import while serious matters of our national security and America's future are glossed over." Thus, the headline from the editorial, "This Story Needs More Attention."

Among those who curiously seem to want to adopt a public posture of glossing over or indeed gloating in a sophomoric way about this troublesome, threatening and dangerous story, among those sadly includes the person who is the President of the United States.

At a radio and TV correspondents' dinner the other night, our own President joked that one of his favorite movies this year was, quote, Leaving Los Alamos; humor as it is defined in the last days of the 20th century. It boggles the mind.

Other matters glossed over, the past associations of the President's national security advisor. From yesterday's Washington Times on the op-ed page, Edward Timperlake and William C. Triplett, II, who coauthored the book the "Year of the Rat," setting forth the ample evidence of Chinese involvement in the Clinton-Gore reelection campaign in 1996, I read from their op-ed piece, headlined "Leaks on Berger's Watch," quoting now: "We believe that, for the national interest, President Clinton's national security advi-

sor Samuel Sandy Berger should resign immediately.

"For the past 6 years, Mr. Berger has presided over a failed and ultimately corrupt policy toward the Chinese military that betrays both the democratic standards of the American people and the national security of the United States. He is the classic example of the wrong person in the wrong job at the wrong time.

"Right out of the starting gate, Mr. Berger was an unfortunate choice for a national security position with the government because of his prior role as the chief Washington lobbyist for the Chinese Government's trade office."

Let me repeat that. "Mr. Berger was an unfortunate choice for a national security position with the government because of his prior role as the chief Washington lobbyist for the Chinese Government's trade office.

"Having once had a personal financial stake in the promotion of pro-Beijing policies raises an immediate question of his present judgment and decision-making. If only for appearances, let alone personal ethics, he should have recused himself from anything connected to Beijing and its military ambitions.

"Instead, Mr. Berger seems to be around whenever, in our opinion, Clinton administration decisions are made that favor People's Republic of China trade ties over American national security interests."

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the most compelling indictment comes from one Dick Morris, the President's one-time top political advisor, and curiously a man whom the wire services often referred to as the disgraced Dick Morris back in the old days of 1996, when an illicit affair that violated one's marriage vows was something that brought disgrace on a person rather than added to their public opinion polls.

Here is what Dick Morris writes in his column last week in The Hill.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Quoting now, "Sandy Berger is about as qualified to be national security advisor as I am. He's a political operative who had virtually no foreign policy experience before he became Tony Lake's deputy."

Mr. Speaker, this story need not be glossed over. The first constructive step is that Sandy Berger must go, and we must release the Cox Select Committee Report.

STOP THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION FROM SENTENCING SOUTHWEST TO NEARLY 300 YEARS OF RADIOACTIVE DRINKING WATER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 4 minutes.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell you of the danger faced by 25 million people who get their water from the Colorado River because of radioactive waste leaching from an abandoned mine waste pile that is located only 750 feet away from the Colorado River.

This deadly waste pile, abandoned by the Atlas Corporation, sits in the Moab Valley of southeastern Utah. The Colorado River, flowing past this site just south, provides water for 7 percent of the United States population, including Las Vegas, Arizona and the southern California urban areas of Los Angeles and the city I represent, San Diego.

Legislation that the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) and I have introduced, H.R. 393, would move this contaminated pile away from the Colorado River. Yesterday, the Project on Government Oversight, known as POGO, released a report recommending moving the pile as the most reliable way to save the growing population of Nevada, Arizona and California from having the highly contaminated waste leak into their water supply for the next 270 years.

I pledge to continue to fight to move this pile, lest my constituents and most of the Southwest be forced to live under a sentence of radioactivity and contaminants in their drinking water for nearly 3 centuries. This is an unacceptable sentence and would likely be a death sentence for many. I cannot sit idly by while polluters and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission inflict this on innocent people.

Recently, this commission which, has jurisdiction over cleaning up the site, issued a Final Environmental Impact Statement stating that Atlas' plan to cap the radioactive pile is, quote, environmentally acceptable.

Is it environmentally acceptable to cover 10.5 million tons of uranium mill wastes with rock and sand where the river can reach it during the spring runoff and cause a public health crisis? With the pile only 10 to 20 feet above the underground water aquifer, highly

concentrated ammonia will continue to seep into the ground water. If the runoff is bad for three endangered species of fish, as the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Fish and Wildlife Service acknowledge, it surely is deadly, over time, for our children and our grandchildren.

This POGO report details a clear problem with the NRC's jurisdiction of this pile, and our bill, H.R. 393, addresses this by removing the responsibility for the pile to the Department of Energy, which has the technology and experience with cleaning up sites and protecting public health.

When the Department of Energy has been involved with contaminated sites along the Colorado River, it moved, and did not just cap, the sites with uranium concentration levels of less than 2 milligrams per liter.

The uranium concentration levels at Moab which I am talking about exceed 26 milligrams per liter, and yet the NRC pushes forward with its plan, forcing the Fish and Wildlife Service to sign off on the sand capping plan just because the NRC lacks the authority to move this pile.

As the report illustrates, it is past time to move this deadly pile, and to move jurisdiction for moving it to the Department of Energy, which will get this life-and-death job done.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for H.R. 393.

FOREIGN POLICY AMBIGUITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today out of great concern for the direction of our Nation's foreign policy, as President Clinton is on the brink of placing our Nation at war against the independent sovereign nation of Yugoslavia.

Mr. Speaker, let us not be mistaken. If the President issues orders to begin an air assault against Yugoslavia, the United States would, in effect, be at war with this country.

What will this war achieve? The President has yet to explain what our strategy is aimed to achieve. Will we bomb this country in order to force them to agree with a peace agreement that is not in effect?

What I fear is that this President has yet to think through the implications of an air attack and to think through a long-term strategy regarding this situation in Kosovo. Do Members of this body know what the administration plans to do if an air attack against Yugoslavia fails to force the Serbians to agree to a vague peace treaty?

Does the United States with NATO further escalate the bombing to attack fixed military targets around the Yugoslavian capital of Belgrade? Do we escalate our actions by placing ground troops in a hostile situation on the

ground in Kosovo? Do we try to seal off a largely landlocked nation? Do we try to use military troops in the non-NATO nations of Romania and Bulgaria to enforce an embargo?

Mr. President, what happens if the Serbs in Bosnia react against any bombing and start attacking U.S. and NATO forces there? What if Russia reacts in some form in defense of Yugoslavia?

Mr. President, what is the idea for success here? Not just an end game but how are we going to achieve success? What if an American flier is shot down and captured?

Mr. Speaker, we are headed down a very dangerous road without any type of compass to guide our policy. To me, the lack of comprehensive foreign policy by this administration has led us to this hazardous point.

The President must come before our Nation and tell our Nation three things: What is the long-term strategy of the United States in Yugoslavia? What is the end-game to achieve military success in this operation? What actions will the President take if military actions fail to achieve any stated goals or if military action devolves into the loss of American lives?

Mr. Speaker, until the President communicates this message to the American people, the mission's success in Yugoslavia will be limited. I call on the President to let the American people know today.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 11 a.m.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 44 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 11 a.m.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE) at 11 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

During this moment of prayer we remember those people who have dedicated their lives to doing the good works that help others in our communities. In the privacy of our own hearts we recall the names of those gracious and charitable people who strengthen the bonds of our common humanity and enhance and share the benefits and the glories of our world. O gracious God, as You inspire all people to use their abilities in ways that alleviate any pain or hurt and who help to make noble the lives of the needy, so inspire each of us to be Your messengers of reconciliation and Your heralds of kindness and of love. This is our earnest prayer. Amen.