don't destroy it.'' The Roosevelt theory. It is a lot different than the other theories that have come out. When we talk about this, when we talk about where we are going with the future, I have got to tell you, as long as I am in this elected office, I am going to stand as strongly as I can for Colorado and for water rights in the West. I am not just saying that. Because never in my entire career have I felt more of a challenge to the taking of Colorado water than I do today. And never in my career have I felt more of a challenge to those 35,000 jobs on the White River National Forest. Those are not indirect jobs, those are direct jobs. That is not 35,000. In fact, it is 35,000 families live off that forest.

I have never felt a larger threat in my political career to those jobs than the vision coming out of Washington, D.C., the vision that we cannot manage it, the vision that they need to protect us, to protect us from ourselves. How many of you have ever mountain biked out in Colorado? That is a relatively new sport. But if you have, you have really gotten into some of that terrain and you have been able to access it, you did not have to hike for miles, you have been able to ride in there on your bike. Minimal damage to the environment. We managed it well, despite the fact that Washington thinks they need to protect us from ourselves. We followed the Roosevelt theory: ''Use it but don't abuse it.''

It is the same thing with any other type of activity you can imagine, whether it is kayaking, whether it is hiking, and so on. You get my message, my drift, what I am saying here.

Now, what about some of the other issues? What about some of the other jobs? I do not think it is shameful to have a sporting goods store and sell sporting goods in Colorado. I do not think it is wrong for a small family to try and go out and harvest some timber. By the way, if you harvest timber with correct management, it is healthy for the forest, it is a renewable resource and, by the way, every one of you in this room tonight, every one of your constituents uses wood that is taken out of some forest somewhere at some time. Every chair in here. You look around. You know what I mean. Wood is everywhere. It is a renewable resource. But you have to follow the Roosevelt theory. The Roosevelt theory is: ''Use it but don't abuse it.''

It saddens me to think that here in Washington, D.C., frankly a lot of the national press is buying this hook, line and sinker, they are biting at it just like that, it troubles me that back here in the East, that even the administration in the West Wing, they do not go to the western United States, they make this decision in the West Wing. They have got some confusion there. It bothers me that they are using a deception upon the American people that this land out there, that we are not taking care of that land. It is public land. It is all of our land. I am telling you, we have been on it for a long time. We have lived on it for a long time. We have worked it for a long time. We have used it for a long time. And we have not abused it for a long time.

Folks, do not be sold on this. Do not automatically assume that the West is being destroyed because of the fact that we have ski areas. Do not automatically assume that the West is being destroyed because we have mountain bikes. Do not automatically assume that the West is being destroyed because we allow people to river raft and hike and hunt. Do not automatically assume because it is not true. We do follow the Roosevelt theory: ''Use it but don't abuse it.''

I know that tonight my time is rapidly expiring, but I just want to reiterate a couple of things. Number one, do not forget that the pioneer spirit still exists for a lot of us. We are very proud of our heritage. We are Americans. But we also come from the West. I feel very respectful of the people of the East. But I am not an Easterner. I am a Westerner. I am not out here to destroy the life-style of the East, and I ask you people in the East, do not go out of your way to destroy our life-style in the West. We do not need the eastern United States, the bureaucracies in Washington, D.C. to protect us from ourselves. I think we, much, much better than some of my colleagues and some of the people in the East, understand that land much, much better than you ever will. We have got our hands in the soil. All of us can agree that a common-sense approach is what is reasonable. But that means that these people out here who want to clear-cut every forest, who want to put a ski area on every mountain, who want to build a house on every ridge, who want to put a highway wherever they want to, who want to build townhouses wherever they want, that means these people are going to have to be moved to the middle, and the people out here like Earth First and other hard-core groups out there who think they only have the title to the environment, who think they only have the knowledge to protect that land, who think only they have the historical background to manage that ranch for all of us, that group has also got to be brought to the middle. And here in the middle is not the leader of the United States today, the President of the United States, Bill Clinton. That is not who is here in the middle today. He is over here. What is in the middle today was what was in the middle at the turn of the century and many years ago, and, that is, Teddy Roosevelt. Teddy Roosevelt is who is in the middle.

And remember, and I will conclude with Teddy Roosevelt's comments, and I will paraphrase him: ''You have the right to use it but you don't have the right to abuse it or destroy it.'' Teddy Roosevelt had it right. It should be Teddy Roosevelt's path that we follow. Do not be misguided down the path of President Clinton. Follow the path of Teddy Roosevelt: ''Use it and enjoy it, but don't abuse it and destroy it.''

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TOOMEY). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 27 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 2307

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DREIER) at 11 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2684, DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

Mr. WALSH submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 2684) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes:

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 106–379)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2684) ''making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes'', having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate, and agree to the same with an amendment, as follows:

In lieu of the matter stricken and inserted by said amendment, insert:

That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I—DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

COMPENSATION AND PENSIONS

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For the payment of compensation benefits to or on behalf of veterans and a pilot program for disability examinations as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. 107, chapters 11, 13, 18, 51, 53, 55, and 61); pension benefits to or on behalf of veterans as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. chapters 15, 51, 53, 55, and 61; 92 Stat. 2508); and burial benefits,