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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. FUNDERBURK].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 23, 1996.

I hereby designate the Honorable DAVID FUNDERBURK to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of May 12, 1995, 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 not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leader limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] for 5 minutes.

EARTH DAY

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today the Republican leadership of the House will bring forward several noncontroversial bills that are designed for one purpose only, to camouflage the Republican Party's dreadful and irresponsible record on the environment in the 104th Congress. We know that is the spin of the Republican leadership, thanks to a March 29 memo from Majority Leader ARMEY advising Republican Members how to drive our Republican themes home each week.

This week, following Earth Day, their theme is trying to make the Republican voter believe that antienvironment Republicans really care about protecting the environment and public health despite their horrible voting records. But these bills are not about making the environment green, they are about giving a faint green cover to the Republican Members who have voted time and again against clean water, against national parks, against endangered species, and against protecting Americans from pollution that threatens their health and safety. Four out of five Americans want the Environmental Protection Agency maintained or strengthened and they are shocked by the statements of Majority Whip TOM DELAY who declared the EPA the Gestapo of government. Eighty-five percent of Americans who say they are environmentalists are baffled when they hear Resources Chairman DON YOUNG denigrate them as a despicable group of individuals, a self-centered bunch of waffle-stomping, Harvard-graduating, intellectual bunch of idiots. They are outraged when they hear Congresswoman CHENOWETH say that environmentalism is repugnant to America's values.

The fact is that simply is not true, but the effort is underway to create some political coverage and as they bring these bills to the floor as a result of discussions, apparently within the environmental task force that the Speaker promoted to suggest that the Republicans care about the environment, we now see, we now see that the average voting record on environmental issues of that task force is only 18 percent and nearly half of the members of that task force have earned a zero on their record.

Later today as we watch a parade of Republicans come down here and tell us how they support the environment by supporting these noncontroversial bills, we will offer them a figleaf, a figleaf that shows that while the vote on the noncontroversial coastal zone management legislation to give them a better environmental record, what we really see is that they voted in the past of this session killing coastal zone nonpoint pollution control, the dirty water bill, more sewage in oceans, ocean dumping of sewage, keeping the antienvironmental riders on legislation to harm the ability of that agency to clean up the Superfund sites and our coastal zones and gutting the wetlands protection provisions of legislation, of which 70, 80, and 90 percent of the Republicans voted for that very harmful legislation. But today most of them will vote for this and try to tell the people back home that they are for the environment. This is a sham. It is a bluff. It is inconsistent with the record of the Republicans in this Congress to date because when they had the votes, when they had the momentum, when they had the initiative, what they chose to do was to do the work of those who have spent so long bashing the environmental laws of this country.

The fact is what they have now discovered is the clean environment, environmental protection is part of the ethic of the American value system. It is ingrained in us. It is ingrained in our children that we must preserve this environment. We must protect this environment to hand it on to future generations.

But unfortunately, the Republican leadership and a vast majority of their caucus has sought to do otherwise when they voted to gut the Clean Air Act, when they voted to gut the Clean Water Act, when they voted to hamper the Environmental Protection Agency from working, when they voted to repeal water reform in California, when they voted to clearcut the Tongass forests. These are provisions that are destroying and harming our environment for future generations. So the figleaf will provide a little cover but what it will not cover up is the massive

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antienvironmental voting record of the Republicans in this Congress.

HAITI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I am not going to address the subject of the environment today, but I happen to be a Republican. I believe that the environment knows no partisanship and it should know no extremism.

I think the environment is something we are all concerned about. I am proud as a Republican that under Republican leadership we have finally gotten some kind of relief for the Florida Everglades in my home State under Republican leadership, something we have been trying long to do. So there are indeed many sides of the story about who is doing what to help out the environment.

Mr. Speaker, I return to the floor to talk about Haiti today because I want to be certain that all of my colleagues are aware of the staff delegation report on Haiti that was issued last week. Although I hoped for good news for both the American taxpayers who footed the $2 billion plus bill for United States operations in Haiti and for the Haitian people, there doesn't seem to be much. In fact, more than anything, this report reinforces the idea that the White House has been glossing over the rough spots in Haiti—hailing it as a success—and hoping that no one would dig deep enough to know the difference. The staff delegation concluded that little progress, if any, is being made on compliance with the Dole amendment regarding political murders in Haiti. In fact, they see little chance of those conditions being met in the foreseeable future. These investigations may in fact be irreparably tainted because the Haitian special investigative unit has been colonized by three American lawyers working for the Government of Haiti.

Whether or not these individuals will be more interested in protecting their meal ticket or in getting to the bottom of the killing remains open for question, but it is a question that should be asked.

Beyond these specific investigations, the report also notes that the United States embassy in Haiti continues to have a passive policy on human rights violations. One might ask why the White House does not seem to understand the actions they decried during the coup are no less unacceptable in post-Cedras Haiti.

The report also finds that there are probably more rough spots than smooth ones with regard to law and order. The Haitian National Police are not always readily accepted by the Haitian people, but nothing can excuse the heavyhanded responses we have seen from them in places like Cite Soleil.

In addition, the staff delegation reports that there are at least four other armed governmental security units with unclear chains of command, but about whom there are credible reports of serious human rights abuses.

On the economic front, the news is little better. More than 60 percent of the Haitian national budget is still sustained by foreign dollars and Haitians still rely heavily on food aid and remittances from abroad. The lack of tangible progress on privatization and other reforms, added to the pervasive breakdown in law and order, continues to act as a damper on investment. Ultimately, the staff delegation concluded that private investment in Haiti is unlikely to even reach the low baseline level of 1985 before this century ends.

In terms of United States development projects in Haiti, the delegation found that the majority of the projects they reviewed failed to meet the one test that matters: Sustainability. In other words, we are feeding Haitians fish today but we are not teaching them to catch their own for tomorrow.

There are many more issues raised in the report, but I want to draw attention to the section entitled ''Clinton Administration Politicization of Haiti Policy.'' The Congress has long been frustrated by the lack of good information from the administration regarding United States operations in Haiti, but that is only half of the story.

The staff delegation found that the administration is going beyond mere stonewalling to scapegoating and what they called a sustained and coordinated interagency effort designed to blame the legislative branch for the shortcomings of its own policies in Haiti.

This finding is based on numerous instances when incomplete, inaccurate, and intentionally misleading information about the role that this Congress has played in Haiti was provided by the White House to staff, the AID mission, officials of the Government of Haiti, and to the Haitian business community.

This just adds to the evidence to suggest that of all of the items on the list of things the Clinton administration's policy in Haiti has lacked over the past 3 years, the most important item is candor. Whether we are fibbing to ourselves about what is happening in Haiti or to the Haitians about what is happening in Washington isn't the issue. Either way, the net effect has been to undercut genuine efforts to bring peace, prosperity, and democracy to that small Caribbean nation.

That, Mr. Speaker, is the real tragedy here and we should begin hearings based on the staff report.

REPUBLICANS AND EARTH DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, April 22, was Earth Day, the 26th anniversary of Earth Day. Because we were not in session yesterday, we had an opportunity to be in our districts and in my case in New Jersey and to celebrate the day by participating in various events and talking about some of the environmental issues that are important to America these days.

It is very unfortunate though that last year, in 1995, when Speaker GINGRICH and the Republican majority and the Republican leadership first took office and it was the 25th anniversary of Earth Day, we saw a systematic effort on the part of the Republican majority, the Republican leadership, to try to tear down 25 years of environmental progress that had been made on a bipartisan basis in this Congress and with the cooperation of Presidents, again both Democrat and Republican.

Today, because of the fact that many in the Republican leadership—specifically the Speaker—saw that the efforts, those efforts to tear down environmental protection, to weaken environmental laws, to not provide funding for enforcement and for investigation against polluters, because that effort did not meet a favorable response with the American public and because the polling the Republican leadership did showed very emphatically that the public did not like the antienvironmental tactics that the Republican majority here was taking, all of a sudden now we see Speaker GINGRICH and the Republican majority saying that, or trying to give the impression that, somehow they are pro-environment.

Today for the first time we have three or more environmentally friendly bills that are going to be brought to the floor of the House. It is no accident that it is the day after Earth Day. Just like planting trees and visiting zoos and other things that GINGRICH had suggested that Republican Members do, now he is proposing legislation on the day after Earth Day to try to basically give the impression that the GOP is environmental friendly. They are not. Like a wolf dressed in sheep's clothing, many of the Republicans in this body are trying to give off the false appearance of concern for the environment and the health and safety of the American people. But they have worked consistently in this Congress to gut successful environmental laws such as the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, Superfund, and the Safe Drinking Water Act. They have voted to substantially reduce funding for key environmental agencies such as the EPA and the Interior Department. They have tied the hands of these agencies by attaching antienvironmental riders onto their appropriation bills.

These bills that we will be voting on today are nothing more than a figleaf being used to hide the shameful voting record of many Republican Members on the environment. Unfortunately, the leaf they have chosen just is not big enough.