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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 Re-

publican 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

□ 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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