seems that in our darkest hours, Americans always rise to a new level of decency and honor.

During the American Civil War, it was Abraham Lincoln who gave voice to the truth that America cannot truly be free as long as we excluded men and women based on the color of their skin. As the civil rights movement in the 1960s grew, a new voice was heard, the voice of a preacher who reminded all Americans that only God could determine what was in a person's heart and a colorblind system of justice could establish equality in America.

Now at the dawn of the 21st century, Mr. Speaker, only a free and equal society can shape the future of this great Nation. Only by working together as a unified nation can we truly realize the potential of all of our citizens and the beauty of our more perfect union. Even today we have not reached a place where all minorities share equally in the American dream. President Clinton in his inaugural address issued a challenge to the Nation to reshape our society by creating a new government for a new century, a government humble enough not to try to solve all our problems for us, but strong enough to give us the tools to solve our problems for ourselves.

I agree with his challenge, but I add that all Americans must have access to the tools necessary to solve those problems. And so here in Black History Month, Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues from the House on both sides of the aisle and the Senate as well and join with the executive branch and all Americans across the United States to make sure that we rededicate ourselves to the principles of Abraham Lincoln, the principles of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and to make sure that we correct the inequities and to make sure that opportunity for all, whether it be in education, housing, jobs, in training, access to public accommodation, is equal to all, and we will rededicate ourselves to that purpose and to those goals.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

AMERICAN PATENT SYSTEM UNDER THREAT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from California [Mr. ROHRABACHER] is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I am asking my colleagues today to join me in cosponsoring the Patent Term Restoration Act. This piece of legislation is basically the same bill that I offered last year as H.R. 359. H.R. 359 had over 200 cosponsors; 81 of them were Democrats. H.R. 359 had the support of major universities, pharmaceutical companies, energy companies, energy innovators, biotech companies, venture capitalists, and, most importantly, it had the support of every small inventors organization in the country.

Last year H.R. 359, my piece of legislation, never made it to the floor of the House of Representatives for a vote. This year, we have every indication that it should get to the floor and have a vote here on the floor of the House of Representatives by the August break.

Last year there was another patent bill, as well as my own, that was introduced. This was a far different bill. It was introduced by Congressman Carlos Moorhead and Congresswoman Pat Schroeder, who are now, of course, retired from this institution. This bill had a dozen or so cosponsors, but it had the tremendous support, the enormous support, of multinational corporations and those people in the political and economic establishment that are struggling to create what they are calling a global economy.

You see, the Patent Term Restoration Act, H.R. 359, which I will be submitting and asking Members to join me in cosponsoring, takes a totally different approach than what last year's bill by Mr. Moorhead and Mrs. Schroeder was taking. In fact, their bill now, H.R. 3460, has been reintroduced as H.R. 400, which will also come to the floor by the August break.

So we have two different approaches, and I thought that today I would discuss this major decision that Congress will make that seems like it is such an obscure issue and a complicated issue that many Americans will probably not even understand that there is an important decision about to be made that will impact so directly on their lives and the lives of their children.

First of all, let us note that patent protection in the United States of America is something that has reaped tremendous rewards for our people. We have had, in the United States of America, the strongest patent protection of any country in the world.

In fact, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and others of our Founding Fathers insisted that the concept of patent protection be written into the Constitution of the United States. We in fact had the strongest patent protection because our Founding Fathers believed it, it was written into our Constitution, and throughout our history the idea of the ownership of one's creative genius was always supported by the American Government.

Thus, over the years, as people came here from every part of the world, people who wanted to work hard and people who had the creative spirit and a revolutionary spirit about them, these people brought with them new ideas, and they were confronted with a society that protected their ideas and gave them the right to own those ideas, just as we gave people the right to own property.

Many of the countries from which our Founding Fathers and Mothers came from, the right of property ownership for the average person did not exist. In fact, people were repressed, and the right of ownership, just like other rights, the right of religion and speech, were not things that were granted to the common man. These were things that were meant for the aristocracy. That is why people came to the United States of America, because they read Thomas Jefferson and they read Benjamin Franklin and they read Thomas Paine and Patrick Henry and John Adams and George Washington, and they read our Declaration of Independence and they knew something was going on in the United States of America. It was a place where the common man could come, he could raise his family, and a family could expect that their children would have opportunities beyond anything that was accessible anywhere else in the world. Part of this opportunity came from the fact that we recognized property rights. The property rights to own land, as I say, was also protected by the Constitution. The right of contract, and other economic liberties that were only thought of as rights for the elite in these other countries, were turned over to every person who was an American, and every person who came here who wished to become a citizen was given freedom. They were not given any subsidies or any type of welfare, but they were given freedom, and they were given the promise that their rights would be protected. As I say, interestingly enough, one of these rights that is so often ignored and often overlooked was the right to own one's own creative genius, the product of one's own creative genius, the patent right.

Traditionally, this is how the patent system worked in America. As I say, it was the strongest of any place in the world. Someone who had a new idea, whether it was Eli Whitney with the cotton gin or whether it was Samuel Morse with the telegraph or Alexander Graham Bell with his many inventions, the light bulb and others, these people would work on their idea and they would then develop their idea into a patent and take it in the proper form and would submit this idea, submit it to the Patent Office and the Patent Office would consider their idea.

Traditionally, no matter how long it took our Government to act in granting the right of ownership to that piece of property, that intellectual property, the applicant always knew that after the patent was granted that he would have a guaranteed patent term. Well, that was part of the guaranteed rights that we had.

You have a right to freedom of speech, you have a right of freedom of religion, you have a right of freedom of assembly. You have a right to own your property. Well, you also had a

right to a guaranteed patent term. In the early part of our country's history, the patent term was, no matter how long it took you to get it issued by the Government, if it took 10 years, you would still have 14 years of patent protection. They would give you a guaranteed patent term of 14 years once it was issued.

Later on, as America began to realize how important the development of technology was to our well-being, our Government wisely extended the patent term to be 17 years. So for the last 150 years, American inventors would work on their patent and develop new systems and new ideas and concepts and technologies. They would go to the Patent Office knowing, and their investors would see them through, knowing that no matter how long it took for that patent to be issued, they would have 17 years to recoup and benefit from that. From that time that they had put in personally or the venture capitalist who put in the investment, they knew they would have a chance to get a return.

This has served America so well. Technology and the fact that we have been on the cutting edge of technology has made all the difference in our country. It did not make just all the difference for the aristocracy. The fact is they did not have this freedom in other countries. They did not have the freedom of speech, the freedom to own property, the economic freedoms we have, and they also did not have the patent freedom that we had in America in these other lands, but the aristocracy did not care because they had the rights. The aristocracy kept the power and the rights to themselves in other societies.

That is why in the United States of America that we made the blessings of liberty to every person here, was available to every person here. That is the reason why we became a beacon of hope to the world, but also we became a leader in the world in the standard of living of our people, of the average person. Our people were able to outcompete every potential competitor in the world because Americans had, yes, low taxes, which was important, and yes, we had people who were willing to work. But there are other countries with low taxes and other countries that basically had many people willing to work. But what we did was we put our working people in the position of being able to outcompete anyone in the world because they were using superior technology, cutting-edge technology, and it was the American people that were coming up with the ideas to lift the burden of labor from their fellow Americans in a way that would increase the production of their fellow Americans, making us more productive but making us a wealthier society.

This was the vision that Thomas Jefferson had. This was the vision when he retired to Monticello and he was tinkering with his various devices, and if you visit that place today, you will see that Thomas Jefferson believed in that. If you visit Philadelphia and visit the home of Benjamin Franklin and the places where he lived, you will see that Benjamin Franklin was the inventor of the potbellied stove. Now that does not mean much to us today, but it certainly meant an incredible amount to people who lived in cold homes and all they had were fireplaces before this. It permitted the average person to be warm in the wintertime. It was a piece of technology. Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin. Benjamin Franklin invented the bifocal. He experimented with electricity, and how many of us read about that in our childhood when we went to school about Benjamin Franklin flying the kite and experimenting with electricity?

□ 1745

Thomas Jefferson experimenting with balloons in Paris when he represented the United States there, as well as Benjamin Franklin experimenting with flight; they had vision. In fact, when Benjamin Franklin in his waning years thought about the future—there is a famous quote from Benjamin Franklin saying that he is sorry that he is going to die, not because he is sorry for leaving the planet, just for not being alive, but he is sorry to die because he knows that the American people will be inventing so many new things and there will be so many changes in the human condition brought on by devices and technologies that are undreamed of in that day when he was alive, and that he just yearned to be able to see those inventions. Well, he had faith in the American people, and he ensured that the American people's rights were protected. And during the century after his death, the American people did not let him down. We were the center not only of freedom but of innovation.

The Fulton steam engine on the steamboats; we all think of Robert Fulton as being the inventor of the steam engine. He was not the inventor of the steam engine. The steam engine was built many, many years before, but it was the American genius that put that steam engine onto a boat in order to use it rather than having people having to paddle or use the sail in order to propel a boat.

We had inventions, whether it was the initial inventions that permitted us to have mass manufacturing, or whether it was the initial inventions of the telegraph or these other things that help us with communication, or whether it was the great surge of inventions that happened after we actually increased the length of the patent term.

Alexander Graham Bell and others came forth with these new types of processes that propelled mankind into an era when the common man was not just trying to keep warm in the winter, but where average families lived decent lives.

A black American who invented a process of how to bring down the cost of building shoes was issued a patent back in the, I think it was 1870, and this patent man, here he was in a country that basically discriminated against black American citizens, but they so believed in the patent right that they protected his right to that patent, and in doing so that black American was able to contribute knowledge and technology that within a few years reduced the price of shoes for the average American by 50 percent. And what that meant: that Americans were able to have shoes. Americans had clothing, they had shoes, they had full stomachs. They in fact were not slaves to their labor because there were labor-saving devices that were being developed every day by other Americans.

This is what made us. This freedom and this technology is what made us the most prosperous country in the world. It also protected us during those times of conflict when America's safety was in the balance during World War II and during the cold war. It was American technology, not raw manpower that saved America.

You know, if we tried to match, if Americans tried to match the world man for man, economically, we never would have succeeded; we will not succeed in that today. There are many people who think that just, oh, basically we cannot compete against cheap labor around the world. Well, there was always cheap labor around the world, and our people always outcompeted them; and in terms of warfare, we could not have competed against adversaries man to man, we could not put raw muscle power or the numbers of people in the field that adversaries, tyrannical adversaries, could.

What saved us economically and saved us militarily was the fact that our people were superior in the equipment that they had to use to produce goods and services, but they were also superior in the technology that was in the weapon systems they used to protect our country.

Our adversaries understand this. During the cold war, more than anything else it was the concept that the United States of America had technology that was well beyond anything that could have been produced in Communist countries. That unnerved the Communist bosses and led to a disintegration, a disintegration of the Communist empire that threatened us for four decades after World War II.

We can thank our rocket scientists, we can thank our people who went forth to develop a missile defense system, but we could also thank the aerospace engineers who over those 40 years built airplanes that would take our people out to battle and make sure that they were superior to any aircraft in the world. We can also thank our scientists and our other technologists who produced the radar, produced the

electronics, produced the other equipment that enabled us to with confidence tell the Soviet Union, as Ronald Reagan did, that it would be left in the dust bin of history unless it joined the free nations of the world and put away its aggressive aims on the West and its aims at destroying democracy.

So instead, we have ended the cold war without firing a shot at the Soviet Union. Instead of massive destruction, we ended the cold war by insuring that we were ahead technologically and by being strong advocates of human freedom.

Unfortunately, what helped us end the cold war, what has preserved the American way of life and given us a standard of living, given a standard of living to the American people as no one has ever dreamed before, is under attack. It is under attack because a global economic war has replaced a cold war. That is something we cannot get rid of. We cannot escape that. We cannot escape the fact that now we will have global competition because technology has improved communication and transportation beyond anything that could have been believed only 100 years ago.

So we have a global economy, we have a global war economically going on, but our adversaries have launched a sneak attack on the United States of America.

This will surprise many of the American people, but there has in the last 4 years been a concerted effort to diminish the patent protections that we have considered to be a right of Americans over the history of our country. There has been an underhanded effort to change patent law and to undo this great economic prosperity that we have for the common man by coupling, decoupling that is, America from its greatest asset, and that is our technological superiority over our competitors and our adversaries.

Let me say this so that it will be very plain for everyone to understand. The fundamental patent law of our country, which is the reason why Americans from all parts of the world were able to come here and produce these great new technologies, it did not just happen on its own, it did not happen because of our race or religion or anything else, it happened because we were a people that had a Government that was set up to protect intellectual property rights, especially patent rights, and those laws protecting patent rights have been fundamentally changed and there is a move in this country to basically greatly diminish the patent protection enjoyed by our people.

In order to what? Why would someone do that? Why would any American do that? It is being done by many people with a straight face, who come forward thinking they are trying to create a better world in the name of creating a global market. Lord save us from benevolent souls who would restructure our lives and remake the entire world in order to make it a better place by their understanding of what a better place means. Lord help us from people who think that they are going to make a perfect world because what we are facing when you face someone who is going to make a perfect world, you are facing an individual who has all the good intentions in his heart but is willing to destroy your rights in order to achieve his or her objectives. That is what we saw with all the past reformers who were going to make this a global world which was a perfect world.

Well, that is what we are facing here. We have groups of people, powerful individuals who think they are going to build a perfect world, and they are going to guide us into this new era of a global economy, and they are going to regulate the global economy. Well, they cannot even regulate the American economy. Even that does not work. And now they are going to try to create the global economy.

Now I happen to believe in free trade. I am a free trader. I believe commerce between people is a good thing. But I would tell you one thing: I do not believe in free trade with dictatorships because it is only free on one end. What I believe in is free trade between free people, and between free people we will prevail. But one of the things that will make us prevail is the fact that we will continue to protect our own citizens.

We live in a world where there are many countries that are not free, and if in order to create a global marketplace that includes these unfree societies, these dictatorial societies like Communist China, and like I would say probably a quarter of the other countries across this planet where people live in despotism, where they live in deprivation, where they have no rights, where the working people are basically slaves that have no right to organize unions, they have no right to have contracts enforced; they are the pawns of vicious and ugly rulers who side with the elites in their society. If we tried to basically lower the standards of the American protection, our protections that we have had, the protection of our rights as U.S. citizens, in order to create a global economy in which we will be dealing on an equal basis with those kinds of societies, the American people are bound to lose.

And what is happening, and the patent fight is just the first step in this global economy battle that we will see popping up here in Congress over and over again, what we will see, more and more, is that in order to be in a global economy we have to eliminate this, we have to eliminate that, we have to change this, our law, and we have to diminish the rights of Americans.

What we are talking about is that there is an elite at work in the world and in the United States that in order to create a global economy are willing to cast away and diminish the rights that have been protected by the American people, rights of the American people. They are willing to diminish those rights in order to achieve their objective because, once they achieve a global marketplace, their theory is, oh, the dictatorships like that in China and elsewhere, they will disappear because if they just have more contact with the West, well, those dictatorships, those ruthless regimes, will liberalize, they will become more benevolent, and they can become part, in fact, of the benevolent new global order. I guess George Bush called it the New World Order.

Well, this type of nonsense is going to lead to nothing but misery for the American people. This type of logic will lead the American people with the same status as the multitude of people who live in countries throughout the world that were the homelands of our forefathers and mothers. We left those societies to come and live in America to be free. We came here because we knew our rights as human beings would be protected and that America was a special place.

□ 1800

But now we see that those protections are going to be diminished.

In the beginning, they hoped to diminish these rights. Just basically, they do not want to talk about it, and in this first battle, I might say, of the global economy, they tried to do this in a very underhanded way. Let me describe how the patent rights of the American people have already been diminished.

What was our basic right to begin with? Our basic right was, the American inventor could apply for a patent and no matter how long it took the bureaucracy to prove that patent, he or she would still own that patent and have a right to benefit from it for 17 years. That was called the right of a guaranteed patent term.

Well, in order to harmonize our law and to have a global economy, it was determined that the United States should end the guaranteed patent term, that that should no longer be a guaranteed right for the American people. As I say, in a very underhanded fashion the change in the patent law was snuck in, and I say snuck in because I asked repeatedly for any language that would be in the GATT implementation legislation about patents, and was denied the right to know what was in there until the very last minute. I am a Member of Congress asking what language will be in a piece of legislation, and the administration was denying me that right to know what was in it. They put this change in patent law into the GATT implementation legislation.

Let me explain what GATT implementation legislation means. The GATT implementation legislation is the legislation that we passed in Congress in order to fulfill our obligations by agreements that we reached with other countries to establish the general policies on trade and tariffs for around the world. Basically, GATT means General Agreement on Trades and Tariffs.

When this administration and other administrations were negotiating GATT, they were given the right to negotiate GATT by the Members of Congress, and I voted for this, by the way. They were given what they called fast track authority, because there is nobody to negotiate an agreement like this if you are going to have every little thing that is agreed upon have to be voted up and down by Congress.

Fast track simply means that the Congress will be kept informed of what is involved in the GATT agreement, and then the Congress would be given 50 days to examine the agreement and everything that is in the legislation that implements the agreement, and then we would only have an up or down vote on the GATT implementation legislation.

So we gave up our rights here; to look at every little section of the GATT implementation legislation, we gave up that right with the promise that we would have 50 days to examine it and know everything that was in it; and that there would be nothing, and here is the catch, there would be nothing in that legislation that was not required by the GATT agreement itself, and the agreement that we made with all of these other countries.

Well, there was no agreement made as part of GATT that required us to cast aside and to eliminate this traditional guarantee that we had of patent protection important to the American people. There was nothing in there that mandated we had to do that. Yet, the administration snuck this into the GATT implementation legislation, would not even tell me as a Member of Congress until the last minute that it was in there, and then gave us just a few days to pass GATT. Luckily, we beat them back and we were able to postpone that vote on the GATT implementation legislation.

That is really when I became active on this issue of the GATT implementation legislation. What it was was an amendment, a small amendment, obscure, hard to see the importance of it; and in fact, if you read the language it looked like they were actually increasing the time of patent protection for the American people.

The change is, and traditionally, remember, if you applied for a patent, no matter how long it took you to get it, once you got it, it was yours for 17 years, 17 years of a guaranteed patent protection. Now, under the new law which is now in law, they totally betrayed us, they put it in there without it being required by GATT, I was not able to defeat it, now what does the law say?

The law says that someone who comes up with a new idea, new invention, can submit that, but the clock starts ticking immediately. And the clock is ticking not against the government, not against the bureaucracy, not against those people on the outside who would try to interfere, try to interfere with a man's right to have his patent issued as soon as possible; no, the clock is ticking against the inventor. If it takes him 15 or 20 years to get his patent, his or her patent issued, that inventor will have seen three-quarters of his or her patent term eliminated, because the time is ticking, the clock is ticking against the inventor, and he or she only has 20 years.

And if it takes 15 years, and many of the breakthrough technologies that we have had, especially in this last two and three decades, many of them take 5 and 10 years for a patent owner to get the patent issued, because if it is a breakthrough technology—by the way, most of the patents, 90 percent of all patents are very simple, just readjustments of new technology. The breakthrough technologies take a very long time to get through the patent system. Many of them have taken 10 and 20 years themselves.

That means that we are dramatically reducing the amount of time that our inventors have to reap the rewards of their own innovation, and in fact we have eliminated the guaranteed patent term. There is no guaranteed patent term. That was done. That was done basically in a very surreptitious way, and I have been fighting that battle. That is what the Patent Restoration Act is going to be all about, is restoring the guaranteed patent term.

But those people who eliminated that guaranteed patent term, why did they do that? They did it, as I say, as part of this harmonization effort. But who really started the ball rolling? The American people will be surprised to hear, the real reason we have been trying to eliminate the guaranteed patent term by some people here in this body who have been trying to eliminate the guaranteed patent term is because it will harmonize our law with Japan.

Bruce Lehman, the head of our patent office, went to Japan, had a meeting with his counterpart in which he signed an agreement to basically harmonize our law, not to bring up the level of protection in Japan to that of the United States, but to bring down the level of protection in the United States to that of the level of Japan.

That system, where there is no guaranteed term and the clock is ticking against the inventor, has been the Japanese system. That is why they never invented anything. That is why they use our technology, because they have a system where the inventor, once he applies, the clock is ticking against the inventor. The huge corporations come in and they beat down the inventors and they force them to give up their rights, and the creative people in that society are steamrollered by powerful interests who want to have control of the wealth-producing ideas and technology that will determine who has the power in the future.

That is the system they are imposing on us, ladies and gentlemen. That is the system that these planners want to put on the United States.

There is, by the way, another bill, as I say, that is being introduced by the same people who snuck this into the GATT implementation legislation. It is H.R. 400. It is the second shoe that is falling. The first shoe was eliminating the guaranteed patent term for the American people. That helped harmonize law with Japan, except in Japan they also have something else. H.R. 400, and I call this the Steal American Technologies Act, H.R. 400, the main purpose of that bill is to do what?

The bill, by the way, when it was first introduced was called the Patent Publication Act. That is what it was originally titled when they first introduced it in the last session of Congress. But they changed that right away, because they figured out, oh, my gosh, everybody realizes what it is all about. No; H.R. 400 is almost the same piece of legislation, it has the same purpose. It is to harmonize our law with Japan on the last element that we are not the same with Japan on.

In Japan it has been far different than the United States. In the United States, someone comes up with a new piece of technology, patents it, goes to the patent office and applies for a patent. That man is not only guaranteed, no matter how long that man or woman, no matter how long it took them to get their patent through the process, they would have that 17 guaranteed years of protection, but they were also guaranteed that during the time before that patent was issued, that information, all of the creative genius, all of the investigatory work, all of the materials and details about the new technology would be kept secret and confidential. No one would know about it, and in fact, it was a felony for Members of the Government to disclose that information because we protected the rights of that inventor.

Well, guess what H.R. 400 does? It says that after 18 months, whether or not the patent has been issued to the American patent applicant, it will be published for the entire world to see. Do you get what I am saying here? Understand the magnitude of this. Every new idea that Americans come up with technologically will be published for every copycat brigand and everyone who would set up factories in order to destroy us economically. They will have every piece of information about America's new innovative ideas, even before the patents are issued. And do you know why? Because that is the way it is in Japan. That is also Japanese law.

It is Japanese law that you do not have a guaranteed patent term, the clock is ticking against the inventor, and as soon as the inventor puts this patent in, after 18 months it is published so everybody in Japan can see it. That is why no one invents anything in Japan, and that is why the special interests, the powerful lords of Japan, the great shoguns of their economy beat the life out of their own people in order to steal the new technological ideas, and why people just do not invent anything.

But here is the problem: If we change our laws so that we do not have a guaranteed patent term, and that after 18 months these very same shoguns in Japan, and monsters in China who murder their own people, who do not care one bit about human rights, these people in different parts of the world who wish to steal everything that is America's, copycats, these people will now know all of our secrets. They will be able to come here and do to the American people, through people that they have hired, lawyers and lobbyists who they have hired here in Washington, DC, to do to our people what they have been doing to their own people.

We are making the American people vulnerable to the same sort of corrupt power plays that have been going on for centuries in these other societies. We are making our own people vulnerable to it here, and we are doing it in an area that makes America the most vulnerable of all. It is our future ability to compete with the world technologically. It is our achilles' heel. It did not take our economic adversaries too long to realize, ''How do we bring America down? These guys are always one step ahead of us. They are one step ahead of us because they have a system that protects these new inventors, these individuals who come up with all of the ideas.''

The major force behind this move for harmonization is coming from multinational corporations. It is coming from some people who are very well-intended, who have become convinced that there is a problem in our current system. They call it a submarine patent problem. Submarine patents, by the way, are a minor problem that have affected certain industries in a very bad way. The electronics industry, there are some problems in which submarine patents have played a part and have hurt some people. Some people have been unfairly treated economically and businesswise because of submarine patents.

To let my colleagues know what a submarine patent is, it is when it is alleged that inventors try to stall the issuance of their own patent. They manipulate the system at the patent office so that their patent will not be issued until 5 years later or 10 years later, because they want it to be issued later, so then they will be able to have more money coming in because their technology will be a little bit better used in the long term rather than short term.

□ 1815

Of course, this happens maybe in one-tenth of 1 percent, perhaps, at most, of all patents, and it has minimal impact on the overall economy. Minimal impact. What they are telling us is this problem, they believe it will be solved. And how will it be solved? It will be solved by publishing all the information on every patent in America so everybody will know what that inventor is hiding, and to eliminate the guaranteed patent term so that the inventor, all the time will be put against the inventor.

Yes, there is a small problem called the submarine patent problem. By the way, in the piece of legislation I am proposing, the Patent Term Restoration Act, we deal with that. The only thing to solve this problem, it only takes some remedial discipline or basically some remedial reforms within the Patent Office structure itself. We do not even need legislation on that.

The Patent Office, because if you have someone manipulating the process at the Patent Office, the Patent Office can simply change their procedures to prevent manipulation. It is the Patent Office that has to make the decision to grant someone a continuance in their application or whatever. The Patent Office can change this.

But no, no, we cannot do that. We have been told instead, in order to solve this problem we have to destroy the whole patent system. We have to take the system that has served America so well and eliminate the basics of that system in order to get to the submarine patent problem.

I used this example before and I will use it tonight, as well. This is very similar to someone who has a hangnail problem and his doctor says, you have a hangnail; in fact, your hangnail is infected. Every time you go to the doctor, the doctor is saying, oh my gosh, this hangnail; in fact, you are even beginning to limp a little bit because your hangnail is bothering your foot. The doctor says, look at the hangnail; and all the doctor ever talks to you about is how bad the hangnail is.

That is what is happening with the submarine patent. Any time you talk about patent law, the people who are trying to destroy the patent system talk about the submarine patents. It is like that hangnail. They have huge pictures of the hangnail, how ugly it looks; please focus on the hangnail. Then you find out what the doctor really wants to do is amputate your leg. And you say, amputate my leg for a hangnail? You are out of your mind. No, look how bad hangnails are.

I would say that if someone's doctor is suggesting that they amputate the leg because you have a hangnail, that you had better question either the sanity or the motives of your doctor. Something is wrong there. And the doctor says, we have to get the hangnail corrected; otherwise you are going to limp for the rest of your life or as long as that hangnail is there. But you say, wait a minute; if I cut my leg off, I will not even be able to walk. Forget it, hangnails are terrible.

That is what is happening with the submarine patent issue. There is a problem. It can be corrected easily. But it is being used as an excuse to destroy the patent rights that have been part of the American system since the founding of our country.

We had a right to a guaranteed patent term. They are using the submarine patent issue, which I think is a bogus issue, or in fact, a minuscule part of our system, they are using that as an excuse to publish every secret that we have developed technologically to people all over the world who will steal that technology and will use it against us. This is how terrible it is.

Our genius will be used to destroy our standard of living. Our genius will be used not to make the lives of the American people better, not to enable us to compete with the rest of the world, against people with low-priced labor. Our genius will not be used to secure us from foreign adversaries. Our genius will be exposed to the rest of the world, giving it to them on a platter, and they will use it against us. This is a sin against the American people.

People say, how can this possibly happen? How can it happen? We are dealing with powerful interest groups. These multinational corporations, many of them who control American corporations now, these people are the ones who hire lobbyists. They determine the policy of these big companies.

Is it any wonder that these big companies perhaps do not have the best interests of the American people at heart, when they are owned and controlled by groups of who knows who; somewhere, people who perhaps have absolutely no, they have absolutely no commitment to the ideals that we think of as Americans?

I have been told over and over again in the debate, Most Favored Nation debate about China, that if we just deal with China for so long that this rotten Communist regime is going to liberalize and it is going to become more mellow, and actually we are teaching the Chinese how to respect human rights.

That is not what it is all about. We know that. These businessmen are out to make money and they do not care if it is blood money or not, and they do not care if they have to put out of work all their American workers; they are going to go over there and make a 10-percent or 15-percent profit, rather than a profit here with 5 or 6 percent, in which the American people would be able to have jobs, to have decent families.

These same people get involved in economic relationships. They have no ideals. They never go to the Communist bosses in China and say, by the way, now that I am here doing business, I would like to tell you that, you know, you should respect people's right to have their own religion. You should not be enclosing those Christians in jail or those Buddhists over here in prison camps, or you should not be wiping out villages in Tibet. We should live with respect towards human rights. They do not do that in China. These very same people now are trying to change our law so that the inventions we come up with as American people, within 18 months they will have every detail, and it will be faxed to their companies in China, and they will be producing it over there.

I was in the office here in the Rayburn Building when last year's bill, which I call the Steal American Technologies Act, H.R. 400, the equivalent of that was going through committee last year. There was a man from a solar energy company. He said, Mr. Congressman, if this passes and they publish all the information about my patent applications after 18 months, I will tell you what will happen. The Japanese will have all that information, and they will have it in production, with my new technology, before I am even issued my patent. They will take that profit that they have used from my technology and they will use it to destroy me. They will hire lawyers in the United States and elsewhere to destroy me and take away my rights to what I have developed with millions of dollars. That is what will happen. This will be a catastrophe for my company.

It is not hard to understand. They are going to publish everything for every brigand in the world to see. Yet they say it with a straight face; we have to do that because you have a hangnail. There is a little submarine patent problem here. We can solve the submarine patent problem. Do not let anybody talk about amputating your leg for a hangnail. Do not let anybody talk about destroying your rights as Americans because there are some problems in our country.

We have had problems with people who abuse their free speech. We have had problems with people who abuse the freedom of religion. We have had problems with our freedom in this country because some people misuse it. But that is no excuse to diminish the protection of these freedoms that are enjoyed by the American people. That is what we are being told we have to accept now, economically. They will win, unless the American people rise up and talk to their Members of Congress.

This is what will surprise everyone. Most Members of Congress have no idea this is going on. I would say 75 percent of the Members of Congress have no idea about this battle. If they do, they just heard a little bit about it, and it is only one thing they have heard in passing, and they have no idea of the magnitude of the decision that is going to be made. But they are being visited by lobbyists, and they are being visited and pressured by huge corporations that have connections to this international, global dream of a global marketplace, by multinational corporations who they emulate or are in economic relationships with.

These Members of Congress might go along with the pressure. But one thing I can tell you, in America, when the American people talk to their Members of Congress, when the American people watch how their Congressmen vote and let their Congressmen know that, let their Members of Congress know how important it is to you and to the future of our country about certain issues, this Congress responds.

Lobbyists and paid adversaries can be overcome when people who live throughout our country contact their Congressman and say, you have to defeat H.R. 400, the Steal American Technologies Act; you have to defeat that. It is going to hurt our country, it is going to hurt the standard of living of normal people. You have to support this restoration of America's patent rights. You have to restore the patent term to the American people, as we have had in our country's past, because this will give us what we need to maintain the standard of living of regular people, not just the elite.

The elite has lost touch. I will tell Members something. If we had to depend on the elite of the business community to save American freedom, we would all be in chains right now. Most of the business elite of this country are looking for that extra 5-percent profit at the expense of every value and expense of the freedom of other people in the world. They do not care, because they want that extra 10-percent profit. We are not talking about the entrepreneurs who built American industry 100 years ago, people who knew what it was like to come from humble beginnings.

We are talking about people who have been educated at Harvard and educated at all these elitist schools who really do not identify with the American people. They identify more with the elite of other societies. They would rather hobnob with these people in other societies in their guarded, gated communities.

The American people need to express themselves, that they will not see their rights diminished in order to establish a global marketplace, or anything else. Yes, we will correct any abuses that exist. We are not a perfect country. But we will not see our freedoms diminished because some people abuse them.

We will enter this global marketplace with the protections we have had. We will win the competition, just the way we have beaten the competition before. We have beaten them because we had freedom and we had technology on our side. That is what our Founding Fathers saw so long ago, that people would come to this country, and that is why our country would prosper, that is why our people would be safe. Here we are, with a little obscure issue like patent law, a little issue like that, that has been discovered as very pivotal to the well-being of our country in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will pay attention, and I know they will, pay attention to calls from home when people call to say, for goodness sakes, do not support this H.R. 400, the Steal American Technologies Act, and please, cosponsor DANA ROHRABACHER's bill that will restore patent protection for the American people, and protect us.

By the way, one other part of H.R. 400 I need to tell you about. That is something that is going to shock you more than anything I have said. It eliminates the Patent Office from the U.S. Government. It takes our patent examiners and turns it into a quasi-private corporation. It is like they are proposing in the Steal American Technologies Act to basically make the judges who determine who owns the technology, take them away from their civil service status and Government status now, which means they have to answer to us, and they are going to make it a quasi-independent organization.

They are going to publish all our secrets to the world. They are going to take away the guaranteed patent term. Now they are just going to obliterate the Patent Office as part of the U.S. Government. Does that not tell us something? We have to act. We would not let our courts be privatized by somebody who we did not know, who was going to run the show. We would not let that happen.

These hardworking patent examiners, these people are making decisions that affect not only the course of our country's future, but affect billions of dollars of wealth. They should be part of the Government. I believe in privatization, but you do not privatize something like that.

I would hope that people gather together and say we will not stand for this diminishing of our rights. I know we will come through, and America will not only survive, but America will prevail and America will be free, because that is the way God intended America to be.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Member (at her own request) to revise and extend her remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. PELOSI, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at the request of Mr. HOEKSTRA) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. LATOURETTE, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) and to include extraneous matter:)

Mr. ANDREWS.
Ms. WOOLSEY.
Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut.
Mr. FAZIO of California.
Mr. TRAFICANT.
Mr. LANTOS.
Mr. VISCLOSKY.
Mr. MURTHA.
Ms. SLAUGHTER.