

have a real national treasure, the Everglades; and one of the real contributing problems to the Everglades environmentally is the runoff from the sugar plantations in Florida.

Now, we have this high price of sugar. They are growing more sugar in Florida and causing more runoff, and now we are having to buy this sugar from the sugar programs. We are going to spend \$8 billion restoring the Everglades. We are encouraging even more production in the sugar. This is one program that is hard to comprehend how you justify it in our country.

Let us talk about trade issues. When we negotiate trade agreements, what we really want to do is encourage our products to be exported around the world, whether it is orange juice from Florida or airplanes from Boeing or computers or computer software. We want to open up markets so we can sell our products. The problem our negotiators have is that we will go around and say, country, you need to open up your markets for us, as we are talking about China, but do not sell us any sugar, we want to protect our sugar plantations, our sugar barrens in Florida and elsewhere around the country, because we have to protect them; but we want you to let us sell anything we want to your country.

Explain to a trade negotiator how you explain that one away. As Mr. MCCAIN has talked about in campaign finance, this is a poster child for campaign finance. Mr. MCCAIN actually led the effort over in the Senate side to get rid of this program. Mr. Gore came out with his plan.

Sugar is one of the biggest contributors, not only in Washington, it is in Tallahassee. They are claiming poverty, but they are the biggest donors of PAC contributions in the campaign. It is on both sides of the aisle, Republicans and Democrats.

Now, I used to study economics in graduate school. And I know some economics. There is zero way to explain the economics of this. You have let the marketplace happen. We are not a socialistic country. Socialism does not work where the government manages prices, tries to manage production. It does not work, so we have to get rid of a program like this.

I am encouraging my colleagues as this program starts costing us hundreds of millions of dollars, billions of dollars in the government, we cannot afford to continue to allow this. I urge my colleagues to join with me and the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) in a bipartisan effort to get rid of the sugar program.

MISTREATMENT OF GAY, LESBIAN, AND BISEXUAL PATRIOTIC AMERICANS

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

JOIN BIPARTISAN EFFORT TO ELIMINATE SUGAR PROGRAM

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I want to begin by expressing my agreement with the comments of the gentleman from Florida. One of the things he called attention to is a very curious publishing phenomenon. I have listened to many of my colleagues who are great supporters of free enterprise and who attribute the virtues of the market of free enterprise to all manner of people, mostly poor and working-class people who look for help. But apparently there is in every free market text ever written, Milton Friedman, Ludwig von Mises, et cetera, a secret footnote that can only be read by people who represent certain agricultural interests, which says to them, this free market stuff is great for poor people and for people who try to work in factories, but it does not apply to agriculture, because by some strange literary feat, the strongest supporters of an unrestrained free market system consistently make an exception for some protected and politically favored parts of agriculture.

I will be voting for the amendment that the gentleman mentioned.

Madam Speaker, I want to talk today about the recent report that was issued by the Inspector General documenting a fact that many of us already knew, and that is that the mistreatment of gay, lesbian, and bisexual patriotic Americans who have tried to serve their country has been one of the most discouraging aspects of this administration's record.

Ordinarily, being able to say "I told you so" makes one feel pretty good. People pretend they do not like to say "I told you so," but most people do. But in this case I say it sadly. I and others have been telling the President and the Secretary of Defense and others that for years now that they were allowing patriotic, honorable young men and women who happen to be gay, lesbian, or bisexual and who were motivated by a desire to serve their country to be mistreated.

I do not fault President Clinton for the adoption of the "don't ask, don't tell" policy; I think he tried very hard to get a better policy. But he is culpable for the fact that once the policy was implemented, he did not effectively compel the military to live up even to the slight improvement it represented. Neither he nor Secretaries of Defense under him, particularly Secretary Perry and Secretary Cohen, have taken it seriously. I must say that I am particularly disappointed in Secretary Cohen from whom I expected more.

For years, we have been telling the Secretary the facts that he now has to acknowledge, because a young man was tragically murdered, a young man who made the mistake of wanting to serve his country in the military, who had a flawless record, and who was tragically murdered by anti-gay bigotry, fostered by the policy of the administration.

Only after that murder could we get the Secretary to say, okay, I will look into this, and he now has to acknowledge what we have been telling him along. But he must understand that part of his own actions have been part of a pattern all along.

When the Navy outrageously violated the privacy of a young man named Timothy McVeigh, a patriotic member of the Navy, and a Federal judge ruled that they had violated his rights, the Defense Department resisted that ruling, sought to appeal it, and had to be overruled by the President, one of the few times that the President did get involved. Even now, in the aftermath of the murder of Mr. Winchell, we have the people at that base where absolute harassment was proven to have happened going unpunished. We had an officer at 29 Palms issue a viciously bigoted e-mail about gay people, and he goes unpunished.

The fact is that the administration cannot pretend that it did not know this was happening, and it certainly has to give a more effective response, even now, with the Inspector General documenting what the Secretary should have known because people have told him this for years, his response is well, I am now appointing a commission and in July, at the end of July, I will consider implementing some corrective steps.

There are things he can do right away, from his own personal involvement to some very specific policies. He has made a few steps. They have paled in insignificance to the kind of bigotry that is still there. Secretary Cohen has been there for over 3 years. Does he want to leave office with only the last couple of months of his stewardship of the Defense Department being a time when he paid serious attention to this?

Let us be clear what we are talking about. Young Americans who happen to be gay, lesbian or bisexual who, in accordance with the policy that is now the law, want to serve their country, and they are treated brutally, unfairly; they are ridiculed, they are threatened, they are physically assaulted, and until now, they have not been able to get protection from the military they have sought to serve.

Secretary Cohen has already waited too long. We cannot undo the terrible mistakes that were made by the Secretary that the President allowed to be made, and the President has an excellent record in confronting prejudice based on sexual orientation. He will get history's good judgment for having helped lead the fight against that prejudice. There is this one flaw.

Madam Speaker, it is not too late in these remaining months of the administration to undo it, and I hope that they will.