

KIDNEY SCREENING

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, in January, a beautiful young staffer in my office by the name of Monique Bradley Brown died from a deadly form of kidney disease. Monique was my legislative correspondent.

Some of the symptoms from the disease appear as normal health anomalies, such as higher blood pressure and lower back pain. Often patients like Monique and their families are taken by surprise when discovery of the ailment is made. Regular screenings are necessary to detect the disease before it is too late.

In Monique's memory, we are having a kidney screening for all House Members and staff. The screening is free. It will take place on Tuesday, May 27, from 9 to 5, in H C-5. The National Kidney Foundation of the Capitol area will conduct the screening, and the various tests will take no longer than a half hour.

For more information, Members and staff may contact my office. Act now before it is too late.

□ 1015

MISUSE OF FEDERAL AGENCIES

(Mr. FROST asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, as I was saying at a press conference last week, not since Watergate and Richard Nixon 30 years ago have government agencies been used for domestic political purposes. And now, as in Watergate, we have the smoking gun.

Today's issue of the Fort Worth Star telegram, my hometown newspaper, reports that the Department of Public Service in Texas sent an e-mail to all its officers in the middle of last week ordering that all records of the contact with the State legislators and government agencies be destroyed.

I will read you what appeared in today's Star Telegram addressed to captains. The order said, "Any notes, correspondence, photos that were obtained pursuant to the absconded House of Representatives members shall be destroyed immediately. No copies are to be kept."

Now, we have asked for records on the Federal level. Since they have already been destroyed on the State level, we demand that those records on the Federal level be released now before they can be destroyed.

Remember Rosemary Woods and the 18 minute gap. Release the record today here in Washington so that we will not have what happened in Texas the last week.

RELEASE THE FCC ORDER

(Mr. LATHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that today marks the third anniversary of the FCC's now-infamous press release announcing its decision on the local competition issue. In spite of the FCC's announcement, we still have not seen the text of the FCC's decision. This is a thorny issue, Mr. Speaker, one involving heartfelt disagreement. The only thing that both the incumbent local exchange carriers and competitive local exchange carriers agree on is the need for regulatory certainty.

This uncertainty is precisely the wrong prescription for the ailing telecom sector of our economy. The telecommunications sector has been extremely hard-hit over the course of the last few years, laying off thousands of employees and shrinking construction budgets. The FCC's decision has the promise of bringing some regulatory certainty to the sector upon which it can base investment and hiring decisions.

Instead of promptly releasing the text of the order, thereby hastening new investment and additional hiring, the FCC has delayed for 90 days. This delay has the effect of preventing any economic benefits that could result from the Commission's decision. Having worked so hard to pass jobs and growth packages that will get our economy back on track, this delay is simply unacceptable.

I hope the FCC will not delay the release of its order any longer. We need those jobs and investments in the telecom sector, and we need them soon.

AUSTIN COVER-UP

(Mr. RODRIGUEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, all is not well in the Republic.

Yesterday the Department of Homeland Security raised the terrorist alert level to orange. The threat of another terrorist attack on the United States has grown. That is why so many of us are wondering why the Department of Homeland Security took a time-out from the war on terror to help the Texas Department of Public Safety track down the private plane of State Representative Pete Laney.

Today we discover the shocking news that the Texas Department of Public Safety has destroyed all the documents, all records, all photos relating to the hot pursuit of Texas Democrats.

Mr. Speaker, we need answers to the basic questions. Who ordered the use of Federal law enforcement resources to hunt down the lawmakers in Texas? Was it politically motivated? Have we returned to the Nixon area of Federal executive power for political ends?

And now we must know why the Department of Public Safety destroyed all records. It might help in answering a lot of these questions.

Today I rise to ask the district attorney of Austin to look and investigate why the Department of Public Safety decided to move and destroy these records. It is criminal, and we need to investigate.

HONORING MIKE JENDRZEJCZYK

(Mr. KIRK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of the great fighters for human rights and democracy in Asia, Mike Jendrzeczyk.

For 13 years as advocacy director, Mike, at the Asia Division of Human Rights Watch, fought for human rights in all corners of Asia, from China to Burma to Vietnam to Indonesia. His knowledge, insight, and information on these regions was invaluable to policymakers around the world and here in Washington.

Mike testified before the House Committee on International Relations and the Congressional Human Rights Caucus countless times, providing us with critical information on issues ranging from North Korean refugees to human rights abuses in Tibet to democracy in Hong Kong.

Mike's energy and enthusiasm were unwavering, and his ceaseless dedication was admired by all. Unfortunately, the human rights community lost this fighter too soon, and we need to continue his fight.

Mike, I will miss you. Mike, millions in Asia are now living in freedom from Taiwan to South Korea to the Philippines who owe you; and millions more depend on us to continue your work.

IS THERE A CONSPIRACY BETWEEN THE STATE OF TEXAS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY?

(Mr. GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Texans woke up to stories like this one in today's Houston Chronicle that reports on something that is just "unbelievable." On Wednesday, May 14, one day before the Texas legislative Democrats started returning to Austin, the Texas Department of Public Safety, DPS, ordered all records and photos gathered in the search for them to be destroyed.

The order addressed to "Captains" states, "Any notes, correspondence, photos, etc., that were obtained pursuant to the absconded House of Representatives members should be destroyed. No copies kept."

Who originated this order, this destruction?

Yesterday, Secretary Ridge again refused to release a full transcript and tape of the discussions between our

DPS and the Department of Homeland Security.

What are they hiding? Why is a law enforcement agency in Texas destroying records and a Federal agency refusing to release them? Were there political efforts to involve Federal law enforcement for purely political and partisan reasons? What are these agencies trying to cover up?

It does not pass the smell test.

While we have new international terrorist threats, a new high alert yesterday, we were looking for Texas Democrats last week. Secretary Ridge and the Department of Homeland Security are needlessly suffering a credibility gap.

Mr. Speaker, if there is nothing incriminating or embarrassing on the tapes, then there is nothing to cover up. Release the tapes and all the records. Do not destroy them.

VIETNAM VETERANS MOVING WALL

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to those who have paid the ultimate price for our freedom, our servicemen and women.

This Monday is Memorial Day, a day when America will recognize those who have served our country in war and peace. This weekend in our district I will visit the Moving Wall, a small replica of the sacred Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The Moving Wall is a half-sided replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial which is in Washington. It has been touring the country for nearly 20 years.

The Moving Wall allows people who cannot visit the breathtaking Vietnam Veterans Memorial a chance to experience this legendary landmark. The Moving Wall will be in Allen, Texas, open to the public 24 hours a day from May 24 to May 30 at Bethany Lakes Park. I encourage the people of north Texas to visit this excellent tribute to our veterans. God bless our servicemen and women. I salute you. May God bless America.

HONORING TAIWAN PRESIDENT CHEN

(Mr. SESSIONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to congratulate Taiwan President Chen on his third anniversary in office.

Taiwan and the United States have enjoyed a close relationship with each other for more than 50 years, both economically and politically. I hope that in the very near future we will increase trade opportunities with Taiwan by launching trade negotiations on a free

trade agreement with Taiwan. America must let all countries know that we firmly stand behind the Taiwan Relations Act and that we believe that a peaceful solution is the only answer to the so-called Taiwan issue.

I also strongly support Taiwan's democratization at home and its campaign to join international organizations abroad. Taiwan is a strong ally of ours which stood shoulder to shoulder with the United States after 9/11. To Taiwan and President Chen I say, America appreciates your friendship and partnership.

MILITARY WASTE, FRAUD AND ABUSE

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, next week the Nation will celebrate Memorial Day. A fitting celebration of Memorial Day in this House would be to crack down on the waste, fraud, and abuse at the Pentagon so that we can better equip our troops and we can meet our obligations to our veterans.

At the run-up to the last war, the Pentagon was scrambling to find chemical and biological suits. But it turned out that another part of the Pentagon had put them up for sale for surplus on the Internet, usable suits, and were selling them for pennies on the dollar at the same time that we did not have enough to go around in the field.

But that is nothing new at the Pentagon. They have misplaced \$1 trillion, T, trillion, not million, not billion, trillion dollars according to the GAO. They lost 56 airplanes, 32 tanks, 36 Javelin missile command launch units. They spent \$20 billion trying to overhaul their accounting system, and then abandoned that effort.

That did not help one soldier in the field, did not help one veteran, did not help the Nation. Waste, fraud, and abuse by contractors and bureaucrats is not patriotic. Let us clean up the Pentagon. Let us do something in the bill today to make certain this no longer occurs.

READINESS AND RANGE PRESERVATION INITIATIVE HURTS THE ENVIRONMENT

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against the Readiness and Range Prevention Initiative proposed by the Department of Defense. This initiative would provide exemptions to the United States military from enforcing and abiding by the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act, two very important pieces of legislation that have for decades provided safeguards and protections to our environment.

Many of our bases are home to critical habits and endangered species, especially, for example, Camp Pendleton, which is very near my district, where there are currently 17 endangered species.

Mr. Speaker, this initiative is harmful, it is unnecessary, and it is an attack on our environment. Laws already exist that provide exemptions for the military for purposes of national security. The military just has not bothered to enact those. There is absolutely no need for the type of broad-based policy such as the Readiness and Range Prevention Initiative.

We were able to defeat this measure last year, and I am confident that we will do it again this year. There is no evidence that suggests that our military should be exempted from these laws.

DAMAGING THE AMERICAN INSTITUTION OF JUSTICE

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this is a time that we desire to honor those who have served us by committing the ultimate sacrifice, and I look forward to joining my communities on Monday and being reminded of the great service of our valiant troops throughout the years and months and days, weeks and minutes, for they are ever with us.

I rise this morning because sadly I believe that all we stand for in this House and in this Congress and in this Nation, democracy, freedom and respect for law, has certainly been damaged by the reckless, foolish and irresponsible destruction of documents that the Department of Public Safety in Texas has engaged in after tracking innocent civilian Texas legislators who happen to be Democratic and who happen to be respecting their democratic process.

□ 1030

It is interesting that the order said, "Any notes, correspondence, photos, et cetera, that were obtained pursuant to the absconded House of Representatives members shall be destroyed immediately. No copies are to be kept. Any questions, please contact me," the message said. It is unusual for these matters to be destroyed. They cannot track down who gave the order. I would say track it to the Governor's house.

It is imperative the Congress begin an investigation immediately; that the Department of Justice investigate this and the U.S. Homeland Security Department. Our responsibilities are to the American people, to keep them safe, to provide them with a standard of law and order; and we are not to abuse our power. We must investigate now.