

NETHERCUTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, today the Sierra Club, a group called American Rivers, a group called Taxpayers for Common Sense, and the clothing company, Patagonia, paid thousands of dollars for a full-page ad in the New York Times promoting dam removal on the Snake River in my district, the eastern side of the State of Washington, the fifth congressional district. We in the State of Washington and in the Pacific Northwest have tried our best to face up to the issue of restoring fish runs on our river systems so that we could have a healthy fishery, but also have a healthy economy. The ad that appeared today is run by these same groups that earlier this summer asked the President to look at all options for salmon recovery and fish recovery in the Pacific Northwest.

Mr. Speaker, it is not even Halloween yet, and these groups have now taken off their masks of rational and reasonable parties to this debate by exposing their true intentions, which is dam removal on the lower Snake River.

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Mr. Speaker, we face a serious issue of fish recovery, and no one, including this Member of Congress, wants to see wild salmon go extinct.

So for those of us who represent the Pacific Northwest who are concerned about recovery of these runs, we are going to work very hard at looking at all options and all impacts on the decline of wild salmon. But I also believe, Mr. Speaker, that the regional interests have recognized that there is no magic solution to restoring these wild runs.

This is a big puzzle with lots of pieces, and we have to see how each one fits in, to be sure that the economy of our State and our region is not destroyed at the expense, or at the interest of trying to restore wild salmon. These groups, with all respect to these groups, are doing their very, very best to jam one piece into the puzzle to try to solve it and make it all fit together. It does not. The dam removal issue is wrong for salmon; it is wrong for the Pacific Northwest; it is wrong for eastern Washington, and I am one who intends to oppose it at every opportunity.

These groups will tell us that we have to keep all of our options open, but their one option for recovery of salmon is to tear out these hydroelectric dams that are the cleanest source of power generation in our region. The river system provides barging of young juvenile fish down the river system to go out into the Pacific Ocean and grow and then come back and spawn. There is an agriculture economy that would be destroyed by the destruction of the Lower Snake River dams. There is recreation that

would be destroyed. There is energy production that would be destroyed. There is flood control that would be destroyed. In other words, a lot of bad consequences to an idea that is simplistic in its nature, but ineffective in its imposition.

First of all, Congress has an obligation to decide whether this happens or not and allocate and provide the funding to do such an extreme action that these groups want to impose. So this is a fund-raising effort, I suspect, for these groups to try to raise money from people who could not care less about what happens in the Pacific Northwest, which really is a solution without a scientific basis.

We have to look at all the science in this situation, to look to see what works and what does not and what interests are injured and what interests are benefited by extreme actions that are seeking to be taken by these particular extremist groups.

Mr. Speaker, those of us who live in this region appreciate the need to have a healthy fishery. We also appreciate the need to have a healthy economy. We have to look at sensible science, not junk science that I think is being proposed by these groups of extremists, but by healthy science, by sensible science that takes into consideration all of the benefits and all of the detriments of a particular action. We have Indian treaties which allow the Indian tribes to take fish from our river systems. We have a Caspian tern problem that exists near the mouth of the Columbia where millions of smolts are eaten every year.

So I must say, Mr. Speaker, in closing that we have to be careful about the extremist actions that are being taken by these extremist groups and look for a sensible solution to this problem.

PUERTO RICAN TERRORISTS AN ONGOING THREAT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, for those Americans who have been following the debate the last several months over the release of the terrorists known as the FALN, a group that was probably the most efficient terrorist group to engage in a reign of terror across this country during the 1970s and 1980s and who were, rightfully, sentenced to long prison sentences and just recently were granted clemency by the White House, the other shoe dropped today.

The FALN participated in about 130 bombings, proudly proclaiming themselves to be freedom-fighters when, in reality, all they were were killers. Police officers who lost their sight or their legs, children who lost their fa-

thers who died as a result of FALN bombings. For months, we have been trying to understand exactly why the White House would grant clemency to these known terrorists, especially after they have failed to even acknowledge that they have done anything wrong, have demonstrated no remorse and offered no apologies.

The FBI testified recently that these groups still pose a threat to the national security. The Bureau of Prisons testified under oath that these people still are a threat and they should not have been released.

Now, in a report today, we learn that the Attorney General, Janet Reno, says that a nationalist group that had been aligned still poses an ongoing threat to national security. Quote: "Factors which increase the present threat from these groups include the impending release from prisons of members of these groups jailed for prior violence."

It is also reported today that the Justice Department formally urged President Clinton in December 1996 to deny clemency to imprisoned Puerto Rican nationalists, a recommendation that the White House never acknowledged in the furor over the President's decision last month to commute the sentences of the member militant group.

So there we have it. We have the Bureau of Prisons, the FBI, the Justice Department, including the Office of the Attorney General, all recommending against clemency, and it was offered. Perhaps in the understatement of the century we have Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder who, in a hearing today said, quote: "I think we could have done a better job getting in touch with the victims." Because in all of these years, the last several years, while the White House and the Attorney General's Office was meeting with advocates for terrorists and their spokespeople, the victims who suffered for so many years never even got a phone call, and they say they could have done a better job communicating with the victims.

There are two more terrorists still in prison, and why do we bring this up today? God forbid they are offered clemency by this President or any other, for that matter. I think the American people have to know still to this day why we have decided to let terrorists free, especially to those who fail to offer any remorse.

One of them, Mr. Adolfo Matos who was released was taped in April of 1999, just several months ago, and he said, "I do not have to ask for forgiveness from anybody. I have nothing to be ashamed of or feel that I need to ask for forgiveness. My desire has gotten stronger." This is a man who participated in a terrorist organization many years ago and his "desire has gotten stronger to the point where I want to continue, continue to fight and get involved with my people because I love them."

Mr. KING. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FOSSELLA. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. KING. Mr. Speaker, I just want to take this opportunity to commend the gentleman from New York for the outstanding job he has done in bringing this issue to the American people and continuing the fight and not backing down at all. The gentleman deserves the credit of all of us, and I just commend the gentleman for the great job he has done.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I just want to thank my good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING), because he has been right by my side in fighting for what I believe is justice here, especially for the victims.

The important point, Mr. Speaker, is that these people who still to this day offer no remorse, no apologies to the victims, not even a call; I doubt very much if the White House or the Attorney General's Office has even called Diana Berger who lost her husband, or Joseph and Thomas Connor who lost their father or the Richard Pastorell who lost his sight or Anthony Semft who lost his vision or Rocko Pasceralla, a police officer who lost his leg. I doubt very much if they have even gotten a phone call and, meanwhile, we have terrorists out on the street who feel committed to engage in a reign of terror against this Nation. It is ridiculous, and I think the American people deserve to know some answers.

THE INTERNET—AVOIDING MONOPOLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, at the very time that we need to increase competition in the delivery of Internet services, I am afraid that the unregulated nature of the Internet is in danger of being compromised.

We talk about a new digital revolution. We talk about all the fruits that the Internet is bringing to us. But I am afraid that we are on a collision course between reregulation and this unregulated revolution that is doing so much good for so many people.

The Internet is growing at a staggering pace, one that we could not have imagined when we passed the Telecommunications Act of 1996. This astonishing growth creates an urgent need for high-speed Internet capacity at both the regional and the local level so that all Americans can participate in this new digital economy. With each announcement of yet another telecommunications merger, or as we say telecom merger, I become increasingly concerned about the concentration in the Internet backbone market, a mo-

napoly, a cartel. Today, the four largest backbone network providers control more than 85 percent of the Internet data traffic in this country, 85 percent.

Mr. Speaker, probably as a result of this, we are already hearing calls for regulating the Internet. If we do not act now, an Internet cartel may emerge that can dictate price and availability to consumers. Mr. Speaker, this is a much more attractive and desirable alternative to reregulation. The rules should be changed to allow all telecommunications companies to compete in the market. It makes no sense to keep the five of the most capable competitors, the regional bell operating companies, from building regional backbone networks to deliver the fruits of the digital economy to many more Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues, all of my fellow Members to support competition in the Internet backbone market, and I encourage this body to act with the utmost speed. If we fail to act promptly, if we fail to assure competition, the alternative may sadly be the Internet regulation act of 2000.

THE ECONOMY, THE BUDGET, AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to kind of review the events of the last year in terms of the budget situation that we are in with the House. As my colleagues know, the House convened in January and at that time, the President of the United States stood in that well and proposed that we spend 40 percent of the Social Security surplus. He said, I think we should only reserve 60 percent and dedicate the rest to a number of programs that he had outlined in his presentation.

Well, we on the Republican side and many of the Democrats said, you know what, Mr. President, we want to preserve 100 percent of Social Security. Because after all, if one is an employee in a factory and one works and one puts money aside in a retirement plan, when one retires, by law, that plan has to be there; that money has to be there for you. Only in the United States of America can we mix a retirement plan with operating expenses, and we call that Social Security, and it is wrong.

This time, things have been different. For the first time in modern history, the U.S. Congress has not spent one dime of Social Security on anything else but Social Security. It is very significant.

So now we are in this budget negotiation. The genesis of the budget agreement was 1997 and there was a bipartisan budget agreement. Democrat

Members, Republican Members, the White House, the Senate, the House, everybody signed off on a bipartisan agreement to get spending under control. I think as a result of that, partly, but mostly because of the strong economy, the budget has now become balanced. That is to say, we do not have a deficit, yet we still have a debt. We have a debt of \$5.4 trillion.

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That money, Mr. Speaker, has to be paid by our children if we do not do anything about it. So I do not think it is just good enough for us to pat ourselves on the back that we have eliminated the deficit. We have to go back and pay off the debt.

So right now we have this budget agreement in place, and that has been the guide for 13 different appropriation bills. Most of these have passed the House and the Senate, and they are at the White House. A few of them are going to be done in the next, probably 5 legislative days. Yet the President has already vetoed the foreign aid bill. He wants us to spend more money on foreign aid. So we say to the President and AL GORE, because the vice president is very much involved in this process, we say, Mr. GORE, Mr. Clinton, where do you want the money to come from for more foreign aid?

We do not think the House has the will to raise taxes and, indeed, yesterday by a vote of 419 to 0, Democrats joined Republicans in rejecting the Clinton-Gore tax package, 419 to 0. To increase taxes, that is not an option.

Spending Social Security, I think now the President has backed off spending the 40 percent of the Social Security surplus; and he has joined Republicans saying, okay, let us do what businesses do. Let us preserve 100 percent of it.

So if we are not going to get money out of Social Security, and we agree on that and we are not going to get money out of raising taxes, then where are you going to get the money, Mr. GORE and Mr. Clinton, to spend more money on foreign aid?

Now, I do not think we should spend more money on foreign aid. I think the foreign aid bill this year is one of the lowest bills we have had in many years. The taxpayers of America are fed up with foreign aid. I supported the package because it was a good reduction in foreign aid, but now Mr. GORE and Mr. Clinton want to raise it. We are saying, it cannot be gotten out of Social Security. It cannot be gotten out of taxes. The only thing that can be done is hold the line on spending, and we hope that they will join us in that effort.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, when the gentleman was talking about foreign aid, it reminded me,