

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the letter from Governor George Pataki to Mr. Ireton-Hewitt.

STATE OF NEW YORK,
February 11, 1999.

Mr. JACK IRETON-HEWITT,
General Manager, Titan Homes Division,
Sangerfield, NY.

DEAR MR. IRETON-HEWITT: Like so many New Yorkers, I have followed the news accounts detailing the situation of the employees of your Sangerfield plant which was recently destroyed by a devastating fire.

Your admirable actions of the past few weeks not only define the true meaning of corporate citizenship; it refines it, deepens it and amplifies it. Titan Homes' loyalty to its employees in the face of the total destruction of this plant has transformed a tragedy into a reason for celebration.

We realize that your parent company, Champion Enterprises, could have moved this manufacturing operation to any number of its 66 North American plants. Titan Homes' swift action to rebuild and modernize an expanded Sangerfield facility is an encouraging vote of confidence in the Mohawk Valley economy, and will no doubt have positive ramifications on the Waterville-area economy in the coming months and years.

Titan Homes' actions reflect more than loyalty to its employees—it's a sound investment in the future and has already been returned in the enduring gratitude of the residents of the Mohawk Valley and the utmost respect from the national business community. We are proud that Titan Homes has been a member of New York's corporate family for more than 25 years.

I thank you for your outstanding commitment to your workforce and wish you every success in your future in the Empire State.

Sincerely,

GEORGE E. PATAKI,
Governor.

MEDIA MISREPRESENTATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SCARBOROUGH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, it might surprise a lot of my conservative friends, but one of my joys every day is reading The New York Times, and especially the editorial page of The New York Times. There are a lot of writers there that I do not particularly agree with, but I certainly appreciate their flair and their style and just how they are really some of the best and the brightest writers in the business.

One of the best writers stylistically is also one of the most liberal and somebody that I rarely agree with, and that is Anthony Lewis. A few days ago, on February the 9th, Mr. Lewis wrote an article entitled "Self-Inflicted Wound" regarding the impeachment process, and gave a searing critique of the House managers' performance in that. He talked about his greatest concern being the moral absolutism these House managers took over to the Senate trial. This is what he said:

"Representative LINDSEY GRAHAM's voice trembled as he ended the Repub-

lican prosecutors' presentation of evidence. 'For God's sake,' he told the Senate, 'figure out what kind of person we have here in the White House.'

"Why the trembling emotion? Frustration, I think. Mr. GRAHAM and the other Republican managers are true believers.

"If they could only see it, one reason" that Americans don't understand their argument is "their absolute conviction that they are right."

Mr. Lewis goes on to say: "Americans are wise to be uncomfortable with absolutism. Sir Isaiah Berlin, the great British historian-philosopher, showed us that certainty about everything has been the hallmark of totalitarian movements."

Mr. Lewis goes on to say: "The Republican managers did not understand how their zealotry troubled the audience. The Financial Times put it, they were 'blinded by their moral righteousness.'" And he goes on to discuss how such moral absolutism is dangerous for this Republic.

Well, I personally believe that the House managers have done a very good job and been pleased with their performance. But if Mr. Lewis believes that they have been blinded by moral absolutism, then I think that is certainly a message he needs to get out to the American people. But I wish while he was getting that message out to the American people, I wish he would also send a message to the most extreme elements of the left in this House, and in the media, and in Hollywood and across America that moral absolutism from the extreme left is dangerous, just as it would be from the extreme right.

For over a decade the extreme left has practiced the type of moral absolutism of the destructive nature that Mr. Lewis warned of. I remember back in 1987 at the beginning of the nomination of Robert Bork, who has been so villified over the past 11 years it is really hard to recognize that he was one of the most respected voices in the judiciary for years and years. But in 1987 the blind moral absolutism of the extreme left took a vicious, vicious turn during the nomination of Robert Bork.

As Charles Krauthammer wrote in The Washington Post on February the 9th, "The Democrats owe Robert Bork an apology. You remember Bork: the brilliant judge and legal scholar who was so savagely attacked when nominated in 1987 by President Reagan for the Supreme Court that his name became a verb. 'Bork: to attack viciously a candidate or appointee, especially by misrepresentation in the media.'" That is Saffire's political dictionary.

"Within hours of Bork's nomination," Krauthammer goes on to write, "Senator EDWARD KENNEDY was on the floor of the Senate charging that, 'Robert Bork's America is a land in which

women would be forced into back-alley abortions, among other travesties; blacks would sit at segregated lunch counters, rogue police could break down citizens' doors in midnight raids, schoolchildren could not be taught evolution, et cetera.'"

Now, these arguments were absolutely false. They were proven absolutely false and outrageous. But the extreme left took them and ran with them and savagely attacked Judge Bork simply because he did not agree with them and their view of the Constitution. He believed that the Constitution should be interpreted in much the same way that many today still believe it should be interpreted, and that is looking at the original intent.

□ 1030

But I do not recall in 1987 Mr. Lewis ever talking to the Senator or condemning anybody for this sort of moral absolutism that now supposedly is this great threat to western-style democracy. Sadly, I expect they did not. And sadly, I expect they never will so long as the moral absolutism and the extremism and the vicious attacks come from the left.

We do not hear about it in the media, either. Let me tell my colleagues, I was deeply, deeply offended, I was deeply saddened by a campaign commercial that ran in Missouri, the home State of the minority leader of this House. This is what this Democratic ad in Missouri said in 1998. I am not talking about 11 years ago. I am talking about in 1998. This is what the Democratic ad said right before this past election.

When you don't vote, you let another church explode. When you don't vote, you allow another cross to burn. When you don't vote, you let another assault wound a brother or a sister. When you don't vote, you let the Republicans continue to cut school lunches and Head Start. When you don't vote, you allow the Republicans to give tax breaks to the wealthy while threatening Social Security and Medicare, * * *

a false message that continues to be delivered today on the House floor.

Do vote, and you elect Democrats who want to strengthen Social Security and Medicare.

When you vote, you elect Democrats committed to a Patients Bill of Rights that lets us, not the insurance companies, make choices about our health care.

Voting will change things for the better. On November 3, vote. Vote smart. Vote Democratic for Congress and the U.S. Senate.

Paid for by the Democratic Missouri Party, Donna Knight, Treasurer.

That was an ad that aired on WGNU radio, St. Louis, Missouri, that was targeted toward an African-American audience.

Now, to me this is so shocking. It is demagoguery of the lowest order to suggest that if they vote for me, I am a Republican, then they support churches exploding; if they vote for me because I am a Republican, they are

voting to allow another cross to burn; if they vote for me, they let another assault wound a brother and a sister. Because after all, according to these Democratic ads, Republicans support church burnings. According to this Democratic ad, Republicans support crosses burning. According to this Democratic ad, Republicans also support brutalizing African-Americans.

Basically, this is an argument that the Democrats rolled out the last hour, an argument of the first order of closed-mindedness and moral absolutism and extremism. How in the world can somebody in a campaign stoop that low?

I suppose the Democrats can bring up the Willie Horton ad which attacked Michael Dukakis in the 1988 campaign. But did that ad say that every single Democrat was for letting murderers out of prison? Did that ad say that Democrats supported church burnings? Did that ad say they supported cross burnings?

These people do not know about my background. They do not know about every Republican's background. In fact, I would challenge them to find a single Republican that is elected in Congress that supports cross burnings, that supports church bombings, that supports the assault of African-Americans or any American.

This ad says here, "scandalous, insulting and patronizing." But I never, ever heard major media outlets take the Democrats down for engaging in this type of shameless, hateful, mean-spirited, extreme race baiting.

I have never once heard the minority leader, who is from Missouri, come to this floor and attack his State party for suggesting that Republicans support cross burnings. I have never heard the minority leader come to this floor and attack his State party for suggesting that the Republican Party supported cross burnings. I never once heard the minority leader come to this floor and attack his home State party for suggesting that the Republican Party supports the assault of African-Americans. Not once.

In fact, I have not heard any Democrat come forward and say that. And I certainly have not heard the major media types come forward and say that. No, the moral absolutism that they want to attack today is the one that suggests by our House managers that the President committed the crimes of perjury and obstruction of justice. And while they want to quote the polls about how all the people love the President, I have never heard them once quote the poll that 86 percent of Americans, according to a recent CBS/New York Times poll, believes that this President committed the crimes of perjury and obstruction of justice.

But to them, and certainly to Mr. Lewis with the New York Times, that is dangerous moral absolutism, that is

extremism. But I guess it is not extreme to suggest that if they are a Republican, if they believe in limited government, if they believe in lower taxes, if they were willing to fight to balance the budget in 1995 when the President said balancing the budget in seven years will destroy the economy, I suppose that that sort of extremism, that sort of race baiting, that sort of moral absolutism is okay. It is certainly the message that we have picked up from the media.

But it does not stop there. Also, our dear friends from Missouri had this to say in a January 26, 1999, Democratic senatorial campaign press release. The headline was, "White Supremacist's Presidential Choice: Senator JOHN ASHCROFT." That is shocking. That is absolutely shocking.

They go on and give a press release and say that the Council for Conservative Citizens had some member that said they would have chosen JOHN ASHCROFT as their presidential nominee if he had run, this one person. And so from that, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee from the home State of the minority leader gives us a headline that calls Senator JOHN ASHCROFT, a great Missouri governor, a great Missouri Senator, just a great man, calls him a white supremacist's presidential choice.

Now, I have got a question to ask, and I certainly hope in the coming days the minority leader of this Senate will step forward with an answer that I think Americans need to hear. Just how desperate is the extreme left to elect people in the State of Missouri and across America to public office? What will they do? What compromises will they make? What slanderous attacks will they participate in? What low grade race-baiting will they engage in? How low in the gutter will they go to win seats?

We certainly know that the minority leader wants to be the Speaker of the House. We know they are five or six seats away from doing that. And if they do that based on issues, then God bless them because that is what this great Republic is all about. It is about the power of ideas. And if the minority leader and the Democrats in Missouri and the Democrats across America have an agenda that Americans want, then I wish them all the luck in getting the six seats that they want and taking over this House. But one has to seriously question the strength of their ideas when we look at the gutter tactics that they engage in to win, saying that because I am a Republican I support cross burnings and because I am a Republican I support church burnings, or saying because I am a Republican I support the deliberate assault of African-Americans. That is shocking and moral absolutism of the first order.

Yet again, I hear absolutely nothing from Mr. Lewis. I hear nothing from

other people in the mainstream media. And maybe that is because a lot of the most scandalous attacks have actually come from the media.

I give my colleagues the tirade of Geraldo Rivera on February 2, 1999. Of course, Mr. Rivera has been unabashedly the President's cheerleader, and he followed the lead of many people on the left with their vicious attacks, vicious personal attacks on men and women who did not share their view of the President, who for their own reasons believed, like 86 percent of Americans, that the President committed perjury and obstruction of justice.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). If the Member will suspend, the Chair reminds all Members that they must refrain from discussing allegations and proceedings currently pending against the President.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, I certainly will not do that. I am simply reflecting the views of the polls.

But certainly Rivera and many other journalists did not for one second see how anybody could be troubled by certain allegations against the President of the United States.

So, on February 2, this is what Mr. Rivera on CNBC said: "I don't want to be a brown racist, substituting for white racism here. But don't you think 13 guys, all of whom, you know, are not noted for any contribution to civil rights, I'm talking about the House managers, all of whom are born-again, all of whom are right-to-lifers, all of whom are, you know, anti-immigration, pro-English only, etc., etc., don't you think that when that face is presented, isn't that one of the reasons the majority, the vast majority of the American people support the President? When they look at the people prosecuting, some say persecuting him, and say, wait a second, those people wouldn't even let me into their home or their neighborhood or to work alongside them?"

Now, this is a classic sort of diatribe, not only from Mr. Rivera but from the extreme left, that has so dominated the media in the past few months. First of all we have reverse race-baiting, and I read the Democratic ads from Missouri, Mr. Speaker, that engaged in extreme race baiting. We have religious intolerance.

If they cannot attack a conservative's position, then just say they are born-again, say they are right-wing extremists. Because make no mistake of it, in 1999, among with the elite in America, among educators, among media types, among Hollywood types, being a born-again Christian is seen as being closed-minded and extreme.

□ 1045

This sort of religious intolerance continues and continues. It is demagoguery of the first order. Now, I know

these guys, all 13 of them, and I know they do not share the same religious views or the same views on immigration.

But it is this sort of moral absolutism, "you either believe everything that I believe, or you are evil," that Mr. Lewis supposedly is concerned about when it comes from the right, but certainly not when it comes from the left. You know, it seems that the Christian right has been the favorite whipping boy of media elites and our own far left Democratic peers here who dominate their caucus for some time.

I wonder if Mr. Lewis in being concerned about moral absolutism has ever written about the vicious attacks that constantly take place and are launched against those Christians who are unfortunate enough to be conservative? Because certainly the conservative right, the Christian right, is constantly attacked and demonized in moral absolute terms, but we do not hear such persecution about the Christian left. In fact, Members of the Christian left are able to attack those that disagree with them with personal vicious attacks without any accountability.

Of course, we had a great example just this past week where the Reverend Jesse Jackson did not agree with everything that George Pataki agreed with, so, what does he do? He compares them to racist segregationists governors in the south from the 1960's.

The message is clear: "You either agree with me all the time, or you are evil."

I saw a member, a respected member from the extreme left a few years ago, compare our former Speaker with Bull Connor. Of course, many of you remember Bull Connor. He was the drill sergeant, the police chief, of Birmingham in the 1960's who took care of African Americans who actually wanted the same freedom we have all been able to enjoy for 200 years. He was the police chief that loosened the dogs on them, that allowed dogs to tear African-Americans to pieces just because they wanted to protest to gain the same rights and the same dignity that I have and that my children have and that white Americans have had for almost 200 years. His actions, and the actions of other segregationists, who were willing to attack African Americans for simply pursuing their rights, was evil of the first order.

Now, that is a moral absolutism that I feel comfortable saying and talking about. And yet today, if you disagree with somebody on welfare reform, just do what the Reverend Jesse Jackson did, and compare them to segregationists, racist governors in the 1960's.

I heard other people going throughout the 1998 campaign doing the same thing, calling the former Speaker, Newt Gingrich, and TRENT LOTT, the current majority leader, "the forces of evil."

Talk about dangerous moral absolutism. It does not matter whether you agree with everything that Speaker Gingrich and Majority Leader LOTT support legislatively.

I did not support everything that Speaker Gingrich stood for. I do not support everything minority leader DICK GEPHARDT stands for. I certainly would never say he is a racist or a bigot or hateful or a socialist or somebody who, like his party in Missouri says, supports cross burnings or supports church burnings or supports beating up African Americans.

It is extremism, it is moral absolutism of the first order, and it cannot be tolerated in American politics in 1999.

I look forward to a follow-up column by Mr. Lewis. It does not have to condemn all of these things. He does not have to condemn the Reverend Jesse Jackson saying Mr. Pataki is a bigot. He can choose the Missouri ad that said JOHN ASHCROFT is a white supremacist choice for President, or perhaps he can go ahead and attack the Missouri ad—

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The Chair would remind Members that they are to refrain to references to sitting members of the Senate.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. I thank the gentleman, and I certainly made only positive references to the Senator from Missouri. But in deference to the Speaker's statement, I will refrain from mentioning his name.

But the Senator, who was viciously attacked in these Missouri ads, did not deserve that. It is this moral absolutism that Mr. Lewis is concerned about from the right, but obviously turns a blind eye to when it comes from the left, that is dangerous to democracy in this country.

Other media types have thrown kerosene on the fire. Newsweek's Eleanor Clift said on January 9, "I think there are real questions about separation of powers, and I do not think that the President should go up there and appear before the Senate. Second of all, that herd of managers from the House, I mean, frankly, all they were missing was white sheets."

So here we have a columnist that Newsweek allows to write for them whenever she wishes saying that HENRY HYDE was leading a group of clansmen over to the United States Senate.

Then we have Time Magazine's Jack White on February 1 speaking of White House lawyer Cheryl Mills.

Her rhetoric wasn't fancy, but it was on target. The GOP is a party, all after, that owes its post-Barry Goldwater resurgence to opposition to civil rights, and while its leaders from time to time proclaim their belief in racial justice, their pledges have been mostly lip service. Oh, they are too genteel for a sheet-wearing bigot like David Duke, but all too willing to embrace bigotry if it is dressed in a suit and a tie.

That is shocking to me, and I guess I have to go back and look at my 1994 campaign literature, because I thought I got elected because I believed in balancing the budget. I thought I got elected because all I talked about was the need for tax relief. I thought I got elected because I talked about the need to have my two children being educated by their teachers and their parents and their local school board members, instead of by bureaucrats in Washington, D.C.

See, I thought I got elected in 1994 because I believed that a smaller, more efficient, more caring government was the wave of the future. But now I find from Time Magazine that actually I owe my seat to opposition of civil rights.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know how many Americans can even begin to understand how offensive such characterizations are, how absolutely offensive, in light of my life, in light of my personal beliefs about civil rights. It is just absolutely offensive.

So, if you are keeping a scorecard, Mr. Speaker, Republicans have a majority because they are bigots, they are afraid to embrace David Duke because he wears a white sheet, but not if a David Duke dresses in a coat and a tie. According to the extreme left, the Democrats in Missouri and across the country, Republicans are "the forces of evil." Republicans support cross burnings. Republicans support church burnings. Republicans support the brutalization of African Americans.

This is the voice of the Democratic Party. This is their explanation. This is their ally in the media's explanation on why we are here.

It is very interesting, we Republicans, at least for the next two years, are the majority party in the House and the Senate. It is very interesting that Geraldo Rivera and all these people that are castigating us and saying we are extremists and racists and bigots, it is amazing they constantly talk about how Americans have the good nature and the good sense not to expel this President from office.

But there seems to be an inconsistency, because those same Americans that supposedly had that good sense, according to these same Democrats, elected Republicans to Congress because we are bigots. It does not go together.

Of course it does not go together, because it is mean-spirited, moral absolutism that Mr. Lewis wrote about. But, again, I suppose again it is only dangerous when it comes from the right, and not from the left.

We had a New York Times article on January 25th talking to a Holocaust survivor. Of course, they found one that would say that Mr. HYDE's work reminded her of what the Nazis did under Hitler in the 1930's and the 1940's.

My gosh, this is the remarkable thing. I was a history major. I have

read so many books about World War II and the prewar period. I am just shocked by the cruelty.

There is a new documentary out on the Holocaust survivors in Hungary. I am just absolutely shocked that we have heard time and time again over the past four years the comparison of the Republican party to a movement that slaughtered 6 million human beings, 6 million Jews.

Talk about frightening moral absolutism. Every time they compare the Republican party to Nazis, because we want the school lunch program to grow by 6.4 percent instead of 6.6 percent, and because we want to allow states and localities to distribute these free school lunch programs instead of huge bureaucracies in Washington, D.C., they minimize the horrors and the impact of the Holocaust. They minimize the absolute evilness of Adolf Hitler and the Nazis that he ran.

It is just shocking. About as shocking as John Hockenberry, who has his own show on MSNBC, who refused to simply suggest that the Republican House managers were not "uniquely stupid," but he said instead, "uniquely stupid is not the word I would use to describe this process. The word I would use is Stalinist."

Now, of course, for those history students that know Russian history, it is estimated that Joseph Stalin while running the Soviet Union throughout the 1920's to the 1950's may have been responsible for as many as 40 million deaths in his own country. But according to a man who runs his own show on a major cable network, MSNBC, controlled by NBC and Microsoft, Mr. HYDE is running an operation that compares to the operation of perhaps the greatest murderer in the 20th Century, Joseph Stalin.

But, again, no outcries, no outbursts, no editorials, no op-eds from Anthony Lewis about moral absolutism from the extreme left or absolutism in the media, or absolutism from the extreme elements of the Democratic Party. No, it is just allowed to pass by without a single word of protest.

And who has heard protest about what the President's dear friend and fund-raiser and Hollywood star Alec Baldwin said on December 11, 1998? He shared his views with Connan O'Brien where he said regarding the House vote on possible impeachment of the President, "I come back from Africa, and I am thinking to myself that in other countries they are laughing at us 24 hours a day." And Baldwin goes on to say, "and I am thinking to myself, if we were in other countries, we would all right now, all of us go down together," and at this point he starts to get up and he starts to shout, he said, "we would all go together down to Washington and we would stone HENRY HYDE to death."

□ 1100

"We would stone him to death. Wait, shut up, shut up, no, shut up, I am not finished. We would stone HENRY HYDE to death and we would then go to their homes and we would kill their wives and we would kill their children, and we would kill their families. What is happening in this country? What is happening in this country?"

Mr. Speaker, what is happening in this country?

Now, I think that is a question that could be well posed of Mr. Baldwin. And that is a question that we could pose to NBC for airing that. It is a question we can pose to the mainstream media. My colleagues would be surprised how few Americans know that the President's friend and fund-raiser, Alec Baldwin, suggested that Americans come to Washington, stone HENRY HYDE to death and kill him.

Now, he says it was just a joke. Let me tell my colleagues, I have got the clip. It is on my web site. One can click it and download it, Mr. Speaker, and decide whether one thinks he was joking or not. It is absolutely shocking. I think the most shocking thing is not the stupidity of Mr. Baldwin, not the callousness of Mr. Baldwin. To suggest that HENRY HYDE and his wife, who is deceased, and his family be drug out of their homes and murdered.

Now, the biggest shock is that NBC, ABC, CBS, CNN, MSNBC, CNBC, The New York Times, The Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, and every other major media outlet has covered this up and not talked about it at length, simply because the extremism and the moral absolutism and the hate and the vile, mean-spirited, over-reaching came from the left, came from the President's supporters instead of the President's detractors.

What is doubly shocking for me on a personal note is having 2 children in Pensacola, Florida that I am always away from when I am up here in Washington, and putting myself in the position of Chairman HYDE, and I suppose since I am a Republican, he says all Republicans should be beaten and stoned, I am surprised that Mr. Baldwin, who has his own wife and his own family, who is very protective of that family, who in fact has gone after photographers for coming too close to his wife and his child when they were coming home, why he would say such a thing about HENRY HYDE, HENRY HYDE's family, about Republicans and Republicans' families.

When he got angry a few years back because his wife was coming home from the hospital with a child and photographers were pressing in and taking pictures and harassing him, I understood him getting upset. As a father, I understood. So do we not think as fathers, as husbands, he would understand? Apparently not. Apparently a lot of people do not.

Mr. Speaker, this process has been a brutal, brutal process over the past year, past year-and-a-half. And it has, since I suppose Mr. Lewis is correct, that moral absolutism in some cases is dangerous.

Now, of course, we can call right, right and wrong, wrong. We can say safely that segregationists that abused African-Americans in the 1950s and the 1960s who were simply trying to gain the same rights that all Americans enjoyed are evil; and that Adolf Hitler, responsible for the extermination of 6,000,000 Jewish human beings is evil; and Joseph Stalin, who killed 30 million people, at least, in this century is evil; and Mao Tse-tung, responsible for up to 60 million deaths in this century alone, is evil. There are moral absolutes. But suggesting that somebody like HENRY HYDE should be killed, or that HENRY HYDE and the House managers are evil; or to suggest that HENRY HYDE and the House managers are Stalinists, as Mr. Hockenberry on MSNBC did; or to suggest, as Geraldo Rivera on CNBC did, that these House managers are racists and bigots and anti-immigration; to suggest that all Republicans are evil; that as a member in this House suggested that Newt Gingrich and TRENT LOTT represent the forces of evil; or to suggest that I, simply because I switched from being a Democrat to being a Republican, because I believed that the Democratic party veered radically left and became the party of big government and high taxes; to suggest that because I did that that I am evil, that I am a racist, that I support church burnings, cross burnings, the brutalization of African-Americans; to suggest that is demagoguery of the first order and it is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that in the coming weeks and months this process can become more civil, and people can avoid such mean-spirited, hateful personal attacks from not only the extreme left and the Democratic party represented here in the House, but also the extreme left represented on television shows that Americans are exposed to every night.

I have quite a few, maybe less than I had an hour ago, but I have quite a few Democratic friends, in fact I know I have quite a few Democratic friends. It is my hope that they will come forward and condemn the minority leader's home State Democratic party for suggesting that all Republicans support cross burnings or support church burnings. I hope they will step forward and have the courage to say we can move forward, we can win on the issues, we can lose on the issues. We can win on whether we want a bigger government and higher taxes, or whether we want a smaller government and fewer taxes. We can win on the things and engage in the type of debates that Americans expect us to engage in.

I think if that happens, then this horrible exercise of personal destruction that started in 1987 with Judge Bork, continued with Justice Thomas, and continued through this decade with Republicans and Democrats alike, maybe, just maybe, we can go into the next millennium and really talk about the future. Maybe we can talk about the future of education, talk about the future of Social Security and how to save Social Security, how to make Medicare stronger, how to protect ourselves against the dangers that continue to explode across the world.

If we do that, and if Mr. Lewis will step forward and attack the moral absolutism and the extremism that has come from the extreme left over the past year, then I think maybe America has a chance to have a representative government in Washington over the next century that they can once again be proud of.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S COMMITMENT TO INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM: ALL TALK AND NO ACTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, recently, the Clinton administration submitted its budget proposals for the year 2000 to Congress. The President's budget included many important requests, but one thing it did not include was funding for the Commission on International Religious Freedom created by the International Religious Freedom Act passed overwhelmingly by the Congress last year. Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that the administration may be all talk and no action when it comes to promoting international religious freedom.

A brief lesson is in order. In the closing days of the 105th Congress, the Senate passed the International Religious Freedom Act by a unanimous vote of 98 to nothing. Several days later, the House endorsed the measure by a voice vote. It had already endorsed an earlier version of the bill several months before by a vote of 375-to-41. Republicans and Democrats alike endorsed the International Religious Freedom Act. So did a broad coalition of religious and civic groups representing millions of Americans of all faiths concerned with regard to human rights.

One important part of the act was the International Religious Freedom Commission, a 10-member, independent commission established to monitor persecution around the world and make policy recommendations to the President. The Speaker of the House, the majority leader of the U.S. Senate, and the President were each given 3 appointments to the Commission. To en-

sure that it remains independent, Congress authorized \$3 million for the Commission in fiscal year 1999 and the year 2000.

The bill was passed, thanks to the tireless efforts over a 2-year period by a broad coalition of religious and civic groups dedicated to this issue. The groups in support of the bill included, among many, the U.S. Catholic Bishops Conference, the Anti-Defamation League, the Christian Coalition, the National Association of Evangelicals, the International Campaign for Tibet, the Family Research Council, the Religious Action Center for a Reformed Judaism, the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations, B'nai B'rith, the Episcopal Church, the Southern Baptist Convention, Justice Fellowship, the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, and many, many others in support of this bill.

The coalition was diverse, but it was united in its commitment to abolishing the rampant and brutal religious persecution taking place in many countries around the world.

Just 2 weeks ago in China, the Public Security Bureau officials arrested 2 Roman Catholic priests from Hebei province. These are just the 2 latest priests to be arrested. Dozens, if not hundreds, more bishops and priests and lay people are already in prison for practicing their faith.

□ 1115

We know in the Chinese prisons torture is common. Last month the Vatican reported that authorities tortured one Catholic priest by subjecting him to sexual abuse by prostitutes. They tried videotaping the seduction to further humiliate and crush his spirits. That happened in China, and the Clinton administration knows about it. They quite frankly have not said very much about it. But we know persecution continues.

The Chinese government continues to arrest, harass, and torture leaders of China's Protestant church. Most of the key leaders are on the run for fear of their lives, and are moving from place to place to avoid being thrown into prison.

In Tibet, where I visited last year, the Chinese government has continued its brutal assault on Tibetan Buddhists. A 700-year-old monastery and an 800-year-old nunnery were closed down just 2 weeks ago. I think the administration has been silent on that issue, though. Hundreds have been destroyed since 1959, and those open are controlled by Communist party officials.

When we would go into the monasteries, we would hear from the monks that a Chinese cadre of six or seven Chinese police or military were running the Monasteries. Imagine, in our country, if in every one of our churches and synagogues and temples

we had government officials running them. We would know that that would be wrong.

Hundreds of monks and nuns are in jail. In 1998 alone 59 monks last year, 59 monks and nuns were arrested, and 13 died in prison from torture. This administration and this State Department have been silent. The Chinese have launched an official campaign to encourage atheism in Tibet, where loyalty to the Dalai Lama remains strong despite China's brutal attempts to force the Tibetan people to denounce their spiritual leader.

In Sudan, 2 million people have died, the majority of them Christians and animists from southern Sudan. The government of Sudan is seeking to annihilate the population of southern Sudan by engaging in brutal war tactics that include high altitude bombing of civilian targets. I have been in the villages where the bombs have dropped, and saw shrapnel in a woman's head. They just indiscriminately bombed these villages, where there are no military reasons to bomb them whatsoever; high altitude bombing of civilian targets, and the enslavement of Christian women and children.

We know today, and if we watched CBS news last week we saw Dan Rather's two-part reports that in Sudan today women and children are being sold into chattel slavery. Yes, there is slavery in Sudan today, women and children, yet this administration does absolutely nothing about it. They are absolutely silent.

The enslaved are forced to work as concubines and domestic servants and farm hands. Some, the boys, are sent to the front lines to fight for a government they do not support. Millions are starving in Sudan while the government uses food as a weapon, and denies aid flights to the neediest regions, regions inhabited mostly by Christians or Muslims who do not agree with the government. Millions are dying in the country of Sudan. This administration is silent.

In Egypt, the Coptic Christian Church continues to have a very, very difficult time. In Pakistan, the government is actively pushing for passage of a law that would discriminate against and potentially lead to violence against the Pakistan non-Muslim population. Ahmadi Muslims are being persecuted.

In Iran, the Baha'i faith is being persecuted. In India, some 48 incidents of violence against Christians have been reported since Christmas of 1998, and dozens of churches have been burned or destroyed. Nuns have been raped and Christians have been killed in a wave of violence.

Just after Christmas an Australian Christian missionary and his two sons were burned alive in their car by mobs. This missionary had been there for 30 years to minister to those who were impacted by leprosy.