

elected government and science recommends.

This Clinton-Gore administration has needlessly put our lives and property at risk in a selfish attempt to create an environmental legacy. The reality of our forest health crisis is that more, not less, of our forests must be available for pursuing forest management strategies.

We must begin to take proactive steps before catastrophic fires become more widespread. The forest service and this administration have refused to respond and have neglected congressional attempts to address the crisis. They appear ready to serve special interest environmental politics until well after the election.

Regrettably, forest fires are not that patient.

Mr. Speaker, our forests and our communities are at risk and we intend to do everything possible to hold this administration accountable for its negligence.

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**A LIVABLE COMMUNITY IS ONE WHERE FAMILIES ARE SAFE, HEALTHY AND ECONOMICALLY SECURE**

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, a livable community is one where families are safe, healthy and economically secure. While much attention is given to the damage that unplanned growth can have to the physical environment, the physical blight, traffic congestion, loss of open space, wildlife habitat, it is clear that a community that is not livable can also have direct impacts on the physical and psychological health of families as well.

Just this week, the South Coast Air Quality Management District in Southern California released a report documenting the danger to people breathing the toxic air that is concentrated near southern California's congested freeways. This danger has increased the risk of cancer. People today are increasingly concerned about the soaring rates of asthma among our children which clearly appears related to the toxins we are putting into the air.

Recently, there was an article that I found amusing in the Washington Post, about how some people really enjoy the real long commute. It helps them center themselves and prepare for a long day.

I suppose that may be true for some, but when the average American spends more than 50 work days a year trapped behind the wheel of a car, just getting to and from their occupation, and when we have lost 43 more hours in the last 5 years to commuting, there are direct

implications. I would venture that for a much larger number the commute to work is not the highlight of their day.

The National Sleep Foundation has reported that the 158 hours added to the yearly work commutes since 1969 have been subtracted from the time many Americans sleep. Carol Rodriguez, director of the Institute of Stress Medicine in Norwalk, Connecticut, observed that people with lengthy commutes often exhibit signs of stress in the workplace.

Marriage and family counselors in the Bay Area see patients struggling with the increased demands and stress placed upon them from their longer work commutes. This struggle is manifesting itself in family problems and even divorce. It has been noted that divorce itself is no longer a reliever to the stress of long commutes and separation because often, after a family breaks up, the difficulties of two households in coordinating the needs of children and employment are usually greater in terms of time and miles driven to hold things together.

The job-related problems where employers increasingly, in congested communities, never seem to know when their employees are going to show up, seems tame by comparison.

One of the most interesting developments may be found in a report from the Center for Disease Control and prevention on increasing obesity rates in the United States. Rates have been increasing since 1991 all across America, but there was particular concern about an increase of over 101 percent in Georgia.

In 1991, when the study began, metropolitan Atlanta had one of the lowest obesity rates. What is the reason for the increase? Some blame the traditional southern diet, which it is true is often high in fat, but the South's diet is not that much different than the rest of the country today. In any case, it certainly does not explain why Georgia has the worst problem than the rest of the South.

It is interesting that the researcher placed part of the blame on the problems that metropolitan Atlanta is facing as the community has become less and less livable. The skyrocketing obesity rates coincide exactly with the explosion of unplanned growth around metropolitan Atlanta which some claim is the highest growth rate in history.

Dr. William Deats, one of the study's co-authors, points out that the time in the car encourages not just more fast food, it eats into the time for exercise. Others have noticed that Atlanta's unplanned growth has shortchanged the opportunities for outdoor exercise. It is not a walkable community. Sidewalks do not lead anywhere and even if people had the time and a place to exercise, the increasingly bad air makes the benefits of exercise problematic.

It is important for us to reflect on why the political landscape is being influenced by the discussion of livable communities and why it is such a major issue. It seems at some level the American public understands that their health, both emotional and physical, of the family, the ability to be fit, reduce stress, adequate sleep and for the family to live together is one of the first casualties if a community is not livable.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join with me in making sure that this session of Congress does its job for the Federal Government to be a better partner in maintaining and enhancing the livability of American communities.

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**REPUBLICANS ARE NOT ISOLATIONISTS**

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I have not participated in morning hour before but sometimes we hear things in the news that just cause us to be so upset we come to the floor, and that is what I am doing here today.

President Clinton, Mr. Speaker, made an address to Georgetown University yesterday and some people say it was an extension of an olive branch to Republicans who he had labeled as isolationists and who he criticized for partisanship when the other body refused to approve a comprehensive test ban treaty.

I welcome his initiative but I would like to set the record straight here today and raise a few questions that relate to some of my Democratic colleagues, too.

I have tried to provide bipartisan leadership in the House Committee on International Relations. Indeed the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BARRETT) and I come from the only state legislative body that is nonpartisan, our State legislature of Nebraska, so I find the degree of partisanship here in the Congress to be very unusual and not productive. However, I would have to say this, Mr. Speaker, to the President, when national security advisors and secretaries of defense of both parties from past administrations are critical of the proposed treaty and suggest that it should not be ratified in its current form, then I think it is inappropriate for this administration and for this President to label any opponents of the treaty as isolationists.

This use of the isolationist label contributes further to something that the National Journal perpetrated a few weeks ago when their cover story suggested that Republicans, particularly those in the House of Representatives, were isolationists.

I have to say to my colleagues, that yes, there are people that I suppose could properly be labeled isolationists on the Republican side of the aisle and some whose actions I certainly do not approve of in terms of their impact on foreign policy, but I would have to say also, Mr. Speaker, to the President and to the Administration, that when it comes to isolationism, he may look to his own party, particularly in the House.

It is, after all, Democrats who were only willing to give 20 percent of their votes to fast track authority for trade agreements to their own President. This is the first President, since we began the process of fast-track, since President Ford, who has been denied fast track authority to negotiate bilateral and multilateral trade agreements. Only 20 percent of the members on the Democratic side of the aisle were willing to support that. At least 80 percent on the Republican side were willing to vote for fast-track authority for President Clinton by whip counts conducted by the two respective parties.

I would also say this goes on top of the fact that the major opposition to the Africa trade bill and to the Caribbean trade bill came from the Democratic side of the aisle; there were more votes on the Republican side of the aisle for fast-track in both Houses.

I also think it is important that we look at what happened last April, when Premier Zhu Rongji came here from the People's Republic of China with a commercially viable trade agreement for accession to the WTO. Everyone was shocked with the fact that this Administration rejected it. As I understand it, all of the President's primary substantive advisors suggested he should seize the moment and agree to what was a much more beneficial agreement from the United States point of view than we had expected. His political advisors said, no, do not do this, Mr. President.

Now, there are many suggestions that this is because of the relationship and controversy related to alleged Chinese campaign contributions to the Clinton-Gore campaign, and also to the then recently completed Cox Committee report on Chinese espionage at some of our national laboratories.

Whatever the case, the impediment was not there for the President to approve accession arrangements with the Chinese for the WTO was not a Republican one.

Just a few minutes ago, one of our colleagues from Oregon (Mr. DEFazio) suggesting his great concerns about the WTO and was very critical of his own Administration. I would say to the National Journal, when they do an article like that cover story on Republican isolationism perhaps they ought to be a little bit more careful that they are doing it competently and that they are not doing it with bias.

I was also very concerned, Mr. Speaker, when I saw some comments by National Security Advisor Sandy Berger when the conflict took place in East Timor. He suggested in a variety of ways, some things he has retracted, others he has not, that we, of course, could not be involved even in assisting the Australians in trying to keep peace in East Timor because, after all, it was not in the center of Europe.

Now, if that is not isolationism, at least it is Eurocentrism, and it is the kind of thing that bothers Asians and Pacific leaders and their citizens, and with good cause.

I urge my colleagues to take a look at the need to come back for bipartisanship in foreign policy and I urge the administration, Mr. Speaker, to be more careful that they do not alienate some of their best friends for a bipartisan foreign policy on the Republicans' side of the aisle in either House of Congress.

#### WTO IN SEATTLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 4 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, many of us have come to this floor of the House of Representatives today and on previous days for 5 minutes and 1 minutes in various speeches to talk about asking that the United States not support accession for China to the World Trade Organization. We are instead insisting that labor standards and environmental standards be applied to our trading partners, the same kind of environmental standards and labor standards that we follow in this country. If that makes us isolationists, as my friend, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) suggested earlier, then so be it. But the fact is that those of us that believe in the right kinds of labor standards and the right kinds of environmental standards around the world want to lift people up around the world, not continue this downward spiral on food safety and labor standard and environmental standards that our trading policy seems to move us towards.

Republican leadership last week wrote a letter to the administration demanding that our USTR, U.S. trade rep bureaucrats, do not include labor standards in any of the discussions at the World Trade Organization. The Republican leadership of the Committee on Ways and Means is insisting that the U.S. trade rep ensure that developing countries require that we protect property rights but not human rights, not labor standards, not environmental rights.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, Trade Ambassador Charlene Barshefsky, an unelected official who never

seems to miss an opportunity to publicly diminish the importance of labor rights, was supposed to meet with some of us here in the House last night and explain whether or not the administration really plans to push for stronger worker environmental rights in Seattle.

What happened? Did we have a chance to talk about how Huffy Bicycle has closed its last American plant because it cannot compete with cheap imports from China, a place where trying to form an independent trade union will get one thrown in prison or even killed?

Did we have a chance to talk about some of the maquiladora factories in Mexico which dump their pollution into the same water that their workers have to drink?

Did we get a chance to talk about why armed guards will not permit independent monitors into the garment factories in El Salvador which ship millions of dollars worth of merchandise here every year?

No, we did not, and that is because Ambassador Barshefsky and a score of other American trade bureaucrats were heading off to the People's Republic of China to try to secure a last minute deal to get China into the World Trade Organization.

As we speak, U.S. trade bureaucrats are busy coddling the same gang of dictators that are busy arresting, torturing and even killing Chinese people that practice Falun Gong, which as far as I can tell is the same thing as torturing and killing Christians and Muslims and any other group of people that have spiritual beliefs in that country.

So instead of having a real dialogue on whether the Seattle ministerial will have any discussion about human rights, worker rights, human rights, instead of having a chance to hear exactly what is going to happen in Seattle, the administration wants to commit this country to a policy that will continue to hurt workers, a policy that continues the human rights abuses, child labor, slave labor, forced abortions, persecution of Christians and Muslims and Falun Gong and all kinds of religious minorities in China that will continue to allow that kind of policy to happen in China.

We can bet the farm on it. If the People's Republic of China accedes to the World Trade Organization, if this country's government supports China accession to the World Trade Organization, that is the last we will ever hear about human rights.

Do we really think a totalitarian government that performs forced abortions is ever going to protect labor rights? Do we believe that a totalitarian government which kills thousands of its own people in slave labor camps and then sells their organs is ever going to let the WTO implement any sort of framework to protect the rights of workers?