

I have seen recent testimony by Amy Dean, Executive Officer of the South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council given at one of the Labor Department's ergonomic standard hearings. I believe this testimony illustrates the real life consequences of not protecting workers in this nation from ergonomic hazards and so I include it in the Congressional Record for the information of my colleagues.

TESTIMONY OF AMY B. DEAN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER SOUTH BAY AFL-CIO LABOR COUNCIL, JULY 24, 2001

My name is Amy Beth Dean and I am the Executive Officer of the South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council. The Labor Council represents more than 100,000 working families throughout Silicon Valley.

In this community, there are union members in every occupation. We work in manufacturing. We work in construction. We work in health care. We look after young children. We're even the people who keep this building clean.

But far more important than any of those differences in the work we do, are the values we all share—values that begin with the belief that each of us has the right to a safe and healthy workplace. That's why I'm here today.

A number of years ago a British journalist once wrote that, "in politics, being ridiculous is more damaging than being extreme." By destroying OSHA's ergonomics standard—and then stacking these forums in favor of big business—the Bush Administration has demonstrated itself to be both. And American workers are paying for George Bush's extremism every single day.

Since George Bush and the Republicans in Congress killed this safety standard, more than 500,000 workers have suffered carpal tunnel syndrome and other injuries. That's one more worker every 18 seconds.

What kinds of workers are we talking about? Some of them are people who work in poultry processing plants. Some work with heavy equipment. Others work in places like nursing homes and warehouses. But many of these women and men work in high technology. They're clerical and technical workers. And many are professionals.

They're people like Patricia Clay. She works at the Referral Center at the Valley Medical Center. She worked for five years at a desk that was too high. She raised the issue with her supervisor, but her employer was indifferent. Eventually, she began noticing that something was wrong with her right hand. She found out it was carpal tunnel syndrome. Eventually, she lost so much strength that, after a while, she couldn't hold anything over two pounds. That meant she couldn't even pick up the baby grandson she was helping her daughter to look after. A week ago, Patricia Clark had surgery, but her doctor tells her she'll never be the same that she was before.

We know from experience that, with the right equipment and practices, injuries like those suffered by Patricia can be avoided. Just ask anyone who was on the staff at the San Jose Mercury News back in the mid-90s. As a result of using outdated computer keyboards and poorly designed workstations, there were 70 repetitive stress injuries reported back in 1993.

I'm not talking about workers suffering an ache every now and then, but sometimes excruciating pain. I'm talking about the kind of pain that keeps you from leading a normal life. Well, those workers at the Mercury News were lucky. At that time, thanks to the effort of the San Jose Newspaper Guild—

and the cooperation of the Mercury News—changes were made. The paper began investing in the kind of equipment computer users need. And guess what? By 1998 repetitive strain injuries declined by 49%!

But, the fact is, not every worker has an employer who wants to do the right thing. The fact is that far too many employers still believe they don't have an obligation to provide safe and healthy working conditions. Employers who would rather see workers wear wrist splints or undergo physical therapy, or even suffer through surgery than invest in computer keyboards that are safe to use.

It's the women and men working for those kinds of employers who need this ergonomic standard most of all. And those are the very people George Bush chose to betray.

I know that three questions are being asked of those participating in these forums. You've asked what is an ergonomics injury. You've asked how OSHA can determine whether an ergonomics injury was caused by work.

And you've asked what the most useful and cost effective government measures are to address ergonomic injuries. It seems to me that if the Department of Labor reviewed the 10 years of research and expert testimony it compiled to draft the ergonomics standard it could find the answer to those and many other questions.

Instead, I have a fourth question I would like to ask this Administration. When a young newspaper reporter's hands are numb after hours of typing at an obsolete keyboard, who is going to help her to drive her car?

When a baby cries out in the middle of the night and the pain in her mother's arms and hands is so severe from working at an obsolete keyboard that she can't reach down to lift that child from her crib and that young mother is left standing there with her heart breaking, who will be there to comfort her baby?

Will it be the company she works for? Will it be Secretary Chao? Or will it be George W. Bush?

I have no further comments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2001

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote 227 which occurred yesterday, July 26, I was present on the floor and I voted "aye" in support of H. Res. 209.

Unfortunately, the House voting machine did not record my vote.

TREASURY AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday July 25, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under

consideration the bill (H.R. 2590) making appropriations for the Treasury Department, the United States Postal Service, the Executive Office of the President, and certain Independent Agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes:

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to support the amendment sponsored by Representative KUCINICH which would create a commission to oppose the privatization of Social Security.

Individuals may question why we would create a commission whose outcome is already known. Well, I would pose that question to the President.

On May second, when the White House Commission on Social Security was announced, the President said that when reforms are made, benefits must be maintained at their current level, payroll taxes cannot be raised, reforms must restore Social Security to "sound financial footing," and young workers must be allowed to invest part of their earnings in private accounts. So we knew what the Commission was going to recommend privatization.

But if we do privatize there is no way that we can satisfy the other requirements of President Bush. Privatizing will result in reduction of benefits and it will surely wreck the financial stability of the program.

First, advocates of privatization suggest diverting part of the payroll tax, which funds Social Security, into the private accounts. However, by doing this we actually put the program in greater jeopardy. Studies have shown that by diverting just 2 percent of the payroll tax to private accounts, we bring the solvency rate closer. The President's very plan to restore stability to the program actually bankrupts Social Security sooner than if we do nothing at all.

In addition, privatization does not guarantee financial security. As an Economic Policy Institute study shows, "a bursting of the stock market bubble has meant the largest absolute decline in household wealth since World War II, even after adjusting for inflation. In relative terms, the market's drop represents the sharpest decline in household wealth in 25 years." So it is very possible that this kind of market volatility could happen throughout a worker's lifetime, jeopardizing his or her retirement savings.

From the end of 1999 to the end of 2000, the total financial assets of American households declined 5% or \$1.7 trillion. Therefore, the money some were planning on retiring with is not there any longer. Those who wanted to retire have to stretch their savings even further or continue working. That is a scary and unfair proposition for our seniors.

But what really concerns me is the idea of individuals putting their money in the stock market without sound financial advice. Many working families do not have the time or the extra money to hire financial advisors to make recommendations on where to put their money. The President's plan, indirectly, favors wealthy individuals and families because they are the only ones who have disposable income to invest, hire professionals and the time to meet with them.

Social Security is the most successful social policy to keep individuals out of poverty in the history of the United States. To privatize Social Security, especially without any type of

professional advice, means to put individuals, mostly women and minorities, into poverty.

In 1997, 9 percent of all Social Security beneficiaries aged 65 or older were in poverty. Without Social Security, that number would have risen to 49 percent. In addition, without Social Security, nearly 60 percent of blacks, native Americans and Hispanics would have been in poverty. Privatization is not the solution to provide financial security for retirees.

What my colleagues and the public should be concerned about, though, is that the members of the commission had no alternative but to support privatization. In fact, as a condition of being named to the group, you had to support the idea of privatization.

It has been said many times that this is another way for President Bush to pay back his supporters who helped him into office. By supporting privatization, President Bush will put millions, probably billions, of dollars in the pockets of Wall Street firms and their CEOs. In fact, Wall Street firms are starting a multi-million dollar advertising campaign to win public support of the plan.

As the Wall Street Journal reported:

“. . . a range of financial-service firms are pooling their efforts, and millions of dollars for advertising, to assist him in raising public concern about the retirement program's woes. But the ad dollars are a pittance compared with the billions at stake for Wall Street should Mr. Bush achieve his goal of carving private accounts out of Social Security.”

The group's name? It is ironically called “Coalition for American Financial Security.” The only financial security they ensure is their own.

So by adopting this amendment, sponsored by Mr. Kucinich, we will be able to provide a report to the President and to the public to show why privatization is a bad choice. Only then, when we can see both sides of the story, can we make an informed and sound decision.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF MILITARY SERVICE OF PHILIPPINE COMMONWEALTH ARMY

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2001

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to my colleagues' attention the fact that yesterday was the 60th anniversary of President Franklin Roosevelt's Executive Order calling into military service the Commonwealth Army of the Philippines.

In accordance with this the White House released a statement yesterday commemorating this important anniversary. It is long overdue that we resolve the inequity in our Nation's failure to provide veterans benefits to these Philippine veterans.

I request that the full text of this statement be included in the RECORD.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, July 26, 2001.

I am pleased to send greetings to the 4,000 members of the American Coalition for Filipino Veterans as you celebrate “Filipino Veterans of World War II Day.”

On July 26, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued an executive order calling the organized forces of the Commonwealth Army of the Philippines to join the United States armed forces in preparing for the possible outbreak of war with Japan. Tens of thousands of Filipino soldiers bravely answered the President's call.

When war finally came, more than 120,000 Filipinos fought with unwavering loyalty and great gallantry under the command of General Douglas MacArthur. The combined U.S.-Philippine forces distinguished themselves by their valor and heroism in defense of freedom and democracy. Thousands of Filipino soldiers gave their lives in the battles of Bataan and Corregidor. These soldiers won for the United States the precious time needed to disrupt the enemy's plans for conquest in the Pacific. During the three long years following those battles, the Filipino people valiantly resisted a brutal Japanese occupation with an indomitable spirit and steadfast loyalty to America.

This month, as we commemorate the 60th anniversary of President Roosevelt's military order, we recognize the important service and contributions of Filipino soldiers in turning back aggression and preserving democracy. America extends to you heartfelt and abiding thanks for the sacrifices made by Filipino soldiers during World War II.

Laura joins me in sending best wishes for a successful celebration here in Washington, D.C.

MARKING THE 27TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TURKISH INVASION AND OCCUPATION OF NORTHERN CYPRUS

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2001

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, Homer's Iliad reads on the birth of Venus: “The breath of the west wind bore her Over the sounding sea, Up from the delicate foam, To wave-ringed Cyprus, her isle . . . [which] Welcomed her joyously.”

This describes how after her birth, Cyprus, a place of tranquility, beauty, and peace—worthy of gods—served as the home of Venus herself. However, if other stories could still be added to the volumes of Greek mythology, we would read of the Trojan invasion and terror seized upon the goddess of love's paradise island.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the persistent efforts of my colleagues CAROLYN MALONEY and MICHAEL BILIRAKIS for calling this special order and arduously maintaining the plight of the Greek Cypriots in the minds of their fellow Members of Congress.

On July 20, 1974, the island nation of Cyprus fell victim to 35,000 Turkish armed forces who invaded this land and tore it apart along a “Green Line.” Remaining one of the most militarized areas of the world, Northern Cyprus has suffered a vast and continued deterioration of human rights protection throughout the last 27 years, despite an international agreement signed in 1975, known as the Vienna III agreement, which was originally drafted in order to guarantee the most basic human rights and freedoms to 20,000 Greek Cypriots

and Maronites enclaved in the Karpass Peninsula, which feel under Turkish rule. Today, after systematic intolerable harassment, intimidation, and inhuman treatment, only 400 Greek Cypriots and 160 Maronites remain.

From the onset of the invasion in 1974, Turkish leaders initiated a campaign intent on the permanent displacement—or rather extinction—of the Greek Cypriots. Upon Turkey's invasion of Cyprus, 200,000 Greek Cypriots—victims of a policy of ethnic cleansing—were forced from their homes and became a population of internally displaced people, refugees, within their own country. These communities, these families were evicted from the towns and homes they have lived in for centuries, in order to accommodate over 80,000 settlers from mainland Turkey. The U.S. committee for Refugees calls the internal displacement of people in Cyprus the “longest standing in the [European] region.” Cyprus' total population is 750,000. Currently throughout the whole of the island, 265,000 people have been displaced because of the violent break up of one nation.

Furthermore, the Turkish led occupation of Northern Cyprus has created a labyrinth from which Greek Cypriots can *not* escape. The man-made “green line” imposed upon this ancient bicultural culture is the embodiment of heinous practices of human rights violations employed by Turkish forces to divide this community. Freedom of movement and association are nonexistent. A Greek Cypriot press is prohibited. Even Turkish Cypriots are banned from engaging in bicultural contact at the grassroots level with Greek Cypriots.

In addition, is the impunity allotted to Turkish armed forces responsible for the disappearances of 1,463 Greek Cypriots, including four Cypriot-Americans, despite Turkey's obligation under the UN Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances. The regime in place in Northern Cyprus is guilty of taking an island nation community and turning neighbor against neighbor. Thus, the 27th anniversary of Cyprus' occupation comes at the heels of the European Court of Human Rights decision made on May 10th of this year, finding Turkey guilty of violating 14 articles of the European Convention on Human rights, and of being an illegal and illegitimate occupying force in Cyprus.

In December 1999, under the good auspices of the United Nations, proximity talks began, bringing both sides closer to possible negotiations. After 5 rounds of talks, and seemingly successful strides, the Turkish Cypriot leader has *STALLED HOPE*. His attempt for international recognition, despite the UN Security Council's call for non-recognition of Northern Cyprus in 1983, and demand for the withdrawal of the *sovereign* Republic of Cyprus' application for EU membership, are both ironic and foolish.

Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress with a long history of support of due justice and freedom of the enclave in Cyprus, I speak out today to convey to this Congress and the Administration the crucial necessity to maintain pressure on the Turkish government so as to ensure the continuation of the proximity talks, and hopefully soon, negotiations leading to the return, once again of a single sovereign and peaceful Cyprus as Venus knew it to be.