□ 1630

PASS H.R. 1343, THE HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT OF 2001

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PENCE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, as an original cosponsor of H.R. 1343, the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, I am committed to seeing this legislation enacted into law. It is really important. I also want to thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY), my friend and colleague, for her leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, last year hate crimes legislation passed the Senate in a bipartisan 57 to 42 vote on June 20. We had over 190 bipartisan cosponsors in the House, regrettably not enough to gain House passage. Many fear that this legislation would create a new area of law, and this is simply not true.

H.R. 1343, which currently has 199 bipartisan cosponsors, will enhance the ability of Federal law enforcement to provide assistance to State and local prosecution of hate crimes and, in certain limited cases, ease the ability of Federal law enforcement to prosecute racial, religious, ethnic and gender-based violence.

The FBI has reported approximately 50,000 hate crimes have been committed in the past 5 years, with nearly 8,000 reported last year alone. And although these statistics are alarming, even more disturbing is the fact that groups monitoring such crimes report that the FBI's data collection method has routinely missed tens of thousands of cases, and the number of hate crimes is probably closer to 50,000 a year.

Why the discrepancy? Because participation in the FBI's annual hate crimes statistics report is voluntary, and several States do not fully participate. The FBI collects the data from local jurisdictions under the 1990 Hate Crime Statistics Act; and, unfortunately, little money has been allocated to train police officers to determine whether a crime was fueled by hate.

Mr. Speaker, now more than ever we need to provide law enforcement the tools and the resources they need to both report and fight against these senseless acts of hate and violence. These crimes are uniquely destructive and divisive. Their perpetrators seek not only to harm the immediate victim but to make a statement to an entire community.

Hate crimes are a disturbing barometer of the state of a nation. Notably, antiblack hate crimes accounted for 35.6 percent of all racial bias; anti-semitism accounted for 75 percent of all religious incidents; and people with substantial disabilities, approximately 15 percent of the population, suffer from violent and other major crimes at rates many times higher than that for the general population. Research shows that this population is over four times as likely to be victims of crime than are people without disabilities.

Hate crimes based on sexual orientation also continue to rise and currently make up the third highest category after race and religion. Additionally, in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks, the Arab-American Anti-discrimination Committee has investigated, documented and referred to Federal authorities over 450 incidents of hate-related crime. Moreover, the Council on American-Islamic Relations has compiled over 1,200 complaints of hate attacks directed against American Muslims.

State and local authorities currently prosecute the overwhelming majority of hate crimes, and they will continue to do so with enhanced support of the Federal Government under the Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

Mr. Speaker, hate crimes represent an attack on the American ideal that we can forge one Nation out of many different people and requires a determined response from law enforcement. The Hate Crimes Prevention Act is a constructive and measured response to a problem that continues to plague our Nation: violence motivated by prejudice. Let us pass H.R. 1343. It is long overdue.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monohan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 10. An Act to provide for pension reform, and for other purposes.

PREVENTION OF TERRORISM ORDINANCE

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I am concerned about recent statements made by one of my colleagues, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON), with regard to India. We will soon be voting on the Foreign Operations appropriations bill which will be providing very limited aid to India, the world's largest democracy and our strong friend in the politically unstable Southeast Asia region.

The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) recently made critical statements to the press about India in an effort to persuade Members to not provide aid to India or to resume sanctions against India. He specifically referenced the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance, or POTO, and stated that it was the most repressive law that India has ever considered.

Mr. Speaker, for the past 50 years, India has been forced to deal with severe cross-border terrorism in Kashmir and an upsurge of terrorist attacks throughout their nation. Since the September 11 attacks here in the U.S., India has experienced heightened terrorism in Kashmir; and, quite frankly, I have been reading about murders of innocent Kashmiris by Islamic militants on nearly a daily basis.

Just this morning I read about two new incidents that occurred yesterday. Suspected terrorists shot and killed a judge in Kashmir, along with his friend and two guards. This is the first attack on the judiciary of Jammu and Kashmir State.

The other incident was a suicide squad of a Pakistani-based guerilla group that killed at least five people at an Indian Army camp in Kashmir. This latest suicide attack is to be added to a long series of suicide attacks that have killed many innocent Kashmiris.

Mr. Speaker, as a result of violent terrorist attacks against India, the Indian President has issued the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance, POTO. POTO would make provisions for Indian law enforcement officials to prevent and deal with terrorist activities. The current criminal justice system in India is not sufficient in prosecuting terrorists and, with passage of POTO, India will be provided the necessary law enforcement tools to prevent and effectively deal with terrorism.

I am not suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) or anyone else should not be able to speak out against POTO if they desire. We know that India is a vibrant democracy with an open political system. Its free press and democratic nature allows all voices and opinions to be heard. But I think the criticism is undeserved at this time.

I would like to draw an analogy between what is happening with POTO in India and what is happening with the Provide Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct a Terrorism Act, or PATRIOT Act, in the United States. This analogy was conveniently overlooked by the gentleman from Indiana.

In October of this year, the U.S. Congress passed the PATRIOT Act, which gave law enforcement officials more tools to detect, apprehend, and prosecute terrorists. In the aftermath of September 11, Congress was required to act quickly to pass measures to address the immediate and long-term security, recovery, and financial needs of the country.

There was controversy and there still remains criticism of the PATRIOT bill from both the right and the left. Members protested that it would grant the government too much power and endanger civil liberties. However, the administration called for immediate action and, while moving the bill through

Congress, several provisions were either dropped or modified and a bill did pass.

From what I understand, the Indian Parliament is planning on going through a similar process of modifying some provisions in their ordinance. It is likely that the bill will pass and be enacted into law, thereby affording Indian officials the authority to deal with the growing terrorist threat facing India that the normal criminal justice system could not address sufficiently.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that unusual circumstances in the U.S. call for these types of measures, and the same holds true for India. A true parallel can be drawn here for the two largest and most vibrant democracies in the world. Unfortunately, both of these countries are now combating terrorism.

The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) I think is incorrect in accusing India of being repressive by enacting this law. His strategy to bash India is clearly a pattern. It is no surprise that these types of statements come at a time when we are providing aid to India. There is no justification for ending the limited aid that we provide to India, and there is no rhyme or reason to cutting back or putting back in place the sanctions against India that should have been lifted a long time ago.

My point, Mr. Speaker, is that the gentleman from Indiana's efforts to implement such things are simply wrong. We do not need to go back to the sanctions, and we certainly should not punish India for essentially doing the same thing that the United States has done in the aftermath of September 11.

U.S. SHOULD PRIORITIZE SPENDING TO AVOID DEFICIT SPENDING

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

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, the question I would like to ask my colleagues is how much more, how much deeper should we go in debt in this country?

The current authorized debt that we passed several years ago is $5,950 billion, and we were actually projecting just a few months ago, last May, that we would not have to increase the debt limit. Our current debt, the debt limit as passed by law is $5,950 billion. The current debt is $5,860 billion. So if we implement what we are talking about for next year's budget, if all of the bills that have been passed in the House were implemented, then we are going back into deficit spending, which means we are going to have to increase the debt of this country.

It seems to me that we should be budgeting in a way that every family has to budget, that every business has to budget, and that if something comes up that is very important we look at other portions of that budget that we might reduce in order to accommodate the higher priority spending. In this case, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, to my colleagues that the higher priority spending is to assure security and to do what we can to make sure that the economy again comes back strong as quickly as possible.

But if we do that without going into debt like we were some years ago, driving the debt of this country up, if you will, driving the mortgage that our kids and our grandkids are going to have to pay off because of our excessive spending, if we are not to go back into that kind of deficit spending, then we are going to have to prioritize.

How do we prioritize? Is there some spending of this Congress, is there some pork spending, is there some spending that is less important than driving us deeper into debt? Let me just suggest, as we discuss economic stimulus packages, at what point of overspending that is going to result in higher interest rates. Overspending means the government has to borrow more money. We go into competition with business and individuals for that available money supply out there; and, in fact, Congress bids up interest rates to get what they want. So at what point do we decide that increased interest rates are as much of a downer for economic recovery as maybe some stimulus package or some spending that some Members say are important to their economy locally? At what point does it balance? How much should we go in debt in future spending?

I would suggest to my colleagues that the gimmick of the lockbox that we passed, Democrats and Republicans together, was a good effort, suggestion, indication, that we would not go back to spending the Social Security surplus. This year, Social Security is going to bring in a surplus of about $160 billion. But the way we are going, we are going to spend all of that Social Security surplus. I say this is not good. I say that belt-tightening is called for, and prioritization of spending is called for.

So I would not only suggest to this Chamber but certainly to the Senate, certainly to the President and the administration, to start prioritizing spending so that we minimize the amount that we are going to drive our kids and our grandkids into indebtedness that sometime, someplace, somehow, they are going to have to pay off.

Last May, let me just tell my colleagues how rapidly things have changed. Last May, the Congressional Budget Office, the CBO, estimated that our surplus for this 2002 fiscal year would be $304 billion. $304 billion surplus. Now, with the bills that have passed the House, with the bills that have passed the Senate, all of them have not passed the Senate, but with all of the appropriation bills and the stimulus package, we are actually now deficit spending, spending all of the Social Security surplus, spending all of the Medicare-Medicaid surplus and going back into debt, which means that sometime our kids are going to have to come up with either the increased taxes or the reduced living standards from government that we have provided to date.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, let me say that I think there are a lot of areas of spending that are of lesser importance, and simply because the lockbox has now been, if you will, broken open, is not the excuse to spend all kinds of money for all kinds of projects.

□ 1645

IN SUPPORT OF INCREASED FUNDING FOR HOMELAND SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PENCE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Senate Appropriations Committee passed the defense appropriations bill containing $35 billion in funding to enhance our Nation's efforts to combat terrorism.

Last week, the House missed an opportunity to do the same. The ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations had proposed an amendment to the defense appropriations act to add $7.2 billion for homeland security. Unfortunately, the rule failed to protect this amendment from a point of order, and the House was prevented from voting on one of the most important issues facing Americans today.

Considering the Bush administration issued a third terror alert on Monday, it is imperative that Congress act now to provide greater security for the American people. Since September 11, States and cities have been forced to dig deep into their coffers to pay for unexpected emergency programs. I have met with Rhode Island officials to learn how they have responded to this crisis and to gauge their need for additional counterterrorism and security improvements.

In the 6 weeks following the terrorist attacks, my State spent $18 million on homeland security and needs $56 million more to upgrade emergency response in public health systems. State and local governments have done an exceptional job at pinpointing and prioritizing areas in need of improvement to ensure the safety of their citizens, and Congress must act now to provide them with the resources that they require.