

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOEHNER). Pursuant to the previous order of the House, the resolution is considered as adopted.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. JONES] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

#### CONGRESSWOMAN SHEILA JACKSON-LEE SALUTES THE ENSEMBLE THEATRE WHICH CELEBRATES ITS NEW FACILITY WITH GRAND OPENING GALAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize and salute the grand opening of the Ensemble Theatre in Houston, TX. Today, Friday, September 12, kicks-off The Grand Opening Galas, a weekend of performances, receptions, and entertainment that will be inspiring and fun for the entire community. As a long-standing supporter of the Ensemble Theatre, it brings me great pleasure to honor the theatre today.

The Ensemble Theatre is the oldest and most distinguished professional theatre in the Southwest devoted to the African-American experience. Founded in 1976 by the late George Hawkins, this nonprofit organization was established to preserve African-American artistic expression. Out of a sense of frustration with the limited number of theatre opportunities for blacks, Hawkins used his own financial resources to found the theatre. He assembled a group of black artists dedicated to producing and presenting theatre to Houston's black community. Today, I rise to share and build upon his important legacy.

In the grandest of styles and with pomp and pageantry that will include Houston's community and civic leaders, the Theatre opens the doors today to its new facility. Indeed, I am pleased to be associated with a campaign that began in 1993 to raise funds for the new facility. Nearly \$4 million has been generously donated by 20 foundations, 35 corporations, and 150 individuals, as well as the great city of Houston and the National Endowment for the Arts, headed by Jane Alexander.

As the U.S. Representative of the 18th Congressional District in which the Ensemble sits, I am proud to commend this artistic jewel reflecting African-American lifestyles on good theatre for all of Houston. I look forward to bringing Jane Alexander to Houston to showcase this great House of theatre so that all the world will know of one of our prized possessions in the midst of Houston's great art institutions. Congratulation to all the Ensemble Family.

#### THE NEW WORLD MINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Montana [Mr. HILL] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I want to visit for a few minutes with my colleagues, about a matter that is referred to as the New World Mine. Members may be aware of or have heard about this.

The President asked for \$65 million to be inserted in the Interior budget under the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the purposes of executing an agreement that he entered into on August 12, 1996. This was an agreement that was negotiated in secret. It was negotiated behind closed doors with representatives of the White House, representatives of an environmental group, and representatives of a mining company.

What it basically called for is the exchange of 65 million dollars worth of public land in Montana in exchange for the rights to mine a project called the New World Mine, which is located about 3 miles northeast of Yellowstone Park.

This caused quite an uproar, Mr. Speaker, in Montana, because the people of Montana did not take kindly that the President of the United States would be giving away 65 million dollars worth of the public land in Montana. Sportsmen's groups, environmental groups, and just ordinary citizens who are very used, to and accustomed to, using the public lands became very disturbed.

So the President then decided that he had to come up with another alternative, so he proposed taking \$65 million out of the Conservation Reserve Program. I would remind my colleagues that the Conservation Reserve Program is a program that takes environmentally sensitive lands out of production and puts them into grasses, and is very popular among the environmental community and the sportsmen's community, and has helped the farm communities in many parts of the drier parts of the West. Again, this group expressed outrage, because those are very valuable programs.

So finally the President came to the Congress and said, give me a blank check. Let me execute this arrangement. The House of Representatives, Mr. Speaker, said no. It said no because the President's plan is fatally flawed. I would like to explain to my colleagues why that is. It is fatally flawed for two primary reasons.

First, the President decided to ignore two very important parties. One of those parties is the State of Montana. The other party is a woman and her name is Margaret Reeb. Who is Margaret Reeb? It turns out that Margaret Reeb is the individual who owns the mineral interests that this group of people met together and decided to sell out.

Mr. Speaker, if I could liken this to an example, it would be like having

your neighbor come to you and say, you know, someone came to me and offered me a lot of money to buy my house, but they said, I will not buy your house unless I can get your neighbor's house, too, so your neighbor sold your house from underneath you. That is basically what happened, because Margaret Reeb was never contacted, she was never consulted, and she never made any agreements.

I will to enter into the RECORD, Mr. Speaker, a copy of an article, a story in Time, May 12, 1997. In it Margaret Reeb says she is not going to play ball with the President. She says, "I knew nothing about" the negotiations. "When I finally got a copy of the agreement, I practically went into shock." Had any of the parties approached her, she said, she would have informed them, well, I am not interested in selling my property.

At the end of the day, she says, she does not give a damn whether or not the thing gets mined, she just wants to keep her property. There is a concern with that, because according to this article, Kathy McGinty, the chairwoman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, says ominously, "There are other ways for us to arrange this agreement," suggesting they could leave Margaret Reeb's real estate an island in a sea of Government property that would have no value.

So the secret deal, made behind closed doors, left out the public. There were no hearings. The President had no authority and, certainly, no appropriation. Even more important, Mr. Speaker, is, it interrupted what we call the NEPA process, the National Environmental Policy Act process.

There was an environmental impact statement that was in the process. The White House says the environmental impact statement was not near completion, but I want my colleagues to look here, because I have a copy of the draft, copy of the environmental impact statement, which I will not ask to be put in the RECORD, but it was near completion. That environmental impact statement addressed the environmental concerns this mine might have represented.

Why did the President announce on August 12, 1996, this deal, when he did not have the property owner even on board? It turns out, Mr. Speaker, that August 12, 1996, was the first day of the Republican National Convention. The President used this opportunity to upstage the convention.

I am not opposed to it because of that; I am opposed to it because it is a wrong deal. The deal is wrong. The deal seeks to steal Margaret Reeb's property, and it seeks to hurt the State of Montana. GAO says the impacts would be that Montana would lose 321 direct jobs, 145 indirect jobs, and about 100 million dollars worth of tax revenues, should this mine go forward.

Mr. Speaker, I have offered an alternative plan, a plan that will protect Margaret Reeb's property rights and