Mr. Speaker, we absolutely cannot and should not tolerate any form of hate. I am glad that the good people of Jasper, who as well abhor this terrible crime, have asked for America's prayers. Violence motivated by a bias against a person's personal characteristic represents a serious threat to all communities. Experts estimate that a bias-related crime is committed every 14 minutes.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I call on the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Attorney General Janet Reno to conduct a full investigation into this heinous crime. Let us join together as Americans to say now is the time to cease and desist these horrible incidents across our country.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my disbelief over a horrendous crime that occurred in Jasper, Texas that is now being called one of the most vicious racial crimes in modern Texas history.

I would like to send my deepest condolences to the family of James Byrd, Jr. This family is now dealing with the harsh realities of Hate Crime in America.

Three men, who are alleged to be connected with white supremacy groups, have been charged with murdering a black man by chaining him to a pickup truck and dragging him almost three miles on a winding road through the woods of East Texas.

Along the way, the victims head and right arm were ripped from his mangled body.

This murder painfully illustrates the racial hatred that still exists in our society today. We absolutely can not and should not tolerate any form of hate.

Violence motivated by a bias against a victim's personal characteristic represents a serious threat to all communities.

Experts estimate that a bias-related crime is committed every 14 minutes, a statistic that highlights a pervasive problem warranting immediate action.

Last year in my home state of Texas, 72 percent of the hate crimes reported in the state were fueled by racial or ethnic hatred.

Today, I call on the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Attorney General Janet Reno to conduct a full investigation into this heinous crime.

And I hope the public outrage surrounding this murder will motivate the federal authorities to strengthen federal hate crime legislation to help bring about an end to these crimes in America.

Hate Crimes must be afforded special attention because we have a compelling interest in protecting our communities from bigotry and violence. Hate violence is not only a crime against an individual, but an assault against an entire group of people. It affects all of us.

The consequences of hate crimes reach far beyond the harm inflicted on an individual victim, they polarize citizens and exacerbate tension in a diverse community. Of the 7,947 hate crime incidents reported to the FBI in 1995, sixty percent—4,831—were motivated by race. Of these, 2,988 were anti-black.

The greatest number of hate crimes of any kind are perpetrated against African-Americans. Anti-black violence has been and still remains the prototypical hate crime.

Hate crimes against African-Americans have a profound impact on the entire society not only for the hurt they cause but for the history they recall.

It is my hope that the perpetrators of this crime receive a quick and speedy trial and that justice, in this case, is both swift and deliberate. These criminals should never walk the streets as free men again.

For the sake of the Byrd family and all Americans of all races, I urge Congress to act in a timely manner to address this issue to bring about racial harmony so every American can walk the streets without fear.

## 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.

## INDEPENDENT COUNSEL'S ''INTERIM'' REPORT WOULD BE A MISTAKE

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I take the floor today to join many of my Democratic and Republican colleagues in voicing concerns about reports that the Office of the Independent Counsel, headed by Mr. Starr, is considering sending an interim report to the House concerning his investigation.

□ 1745

Just this week, the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, as well as several other Republican Members, including the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. LIVINGSTON) and the distinguished Senator of the Senate Judiciary Committee, ORRIN HATCH, have addressed themselves to this topic and have expressed serious reservations about the wisdom and propriety of any referral to Congress that is incomplete or unfinished.

I agree with these Members of the majority as well as several of my Democratic colleagues on the Committee on the Judiciary, including the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT), the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) that if such a partial report were actually to be delivered prior to Mr. Starr's having completed his investigation, it could only be viewed as a partisan act intended to influence this fall's election. How else could it be viewed?

The independent counsel has already sacrificed some of his credibility through his insensitivity to the many conflicts of interest, some real, some apparent, under which he has labored. The referral to Congress of an incomplete report would likely exhaust whatever remaining patience the public has for Mr. Starr's activities.

Mr. Starr has previously acknowledged in one of his many interviews with the press that his duty is to uncover all the evidence, both the evidence that may tend to establish that crimes may have occurred and the evidence that would tend to suggest that allegations of wrongdoing are unfounded.

It is quite obvious that Mr. Starr has not yet completed his investigation. Until he does so, simple fairness dictates that any report to the House must not precede the long-awaited conclusion of the investigation.

When we passed the Independent Counsel Act, we gave the independent counsel a great deal of power to conduct investigations as he sees fit. Some think too much power. The very breadth of the investigative powers granted to Mr. Starr at the very least entitle a Congress to the fruits of a complete investigation. The statements issuing from the Office of Independent Counsel about the possibility of an interim report are simply irresponsible. After 4 years and $40 million, we are entitled to a complete report on the findings of Mr. Starr's investigation.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CONYERS. I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me briefly thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for his statement but as well he has raised some very important issues. I join with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the leaders of the Republican Party to acknowledge that an interim report would not do us justice in this House. We want to make sure that we have a full report.

With respect to the independent counsel statute, I think that we are now seeing how many issues it raises, how many questions the American people are even raising as I travel about who have asked me, ''Why is Mr. Starr continuing this type of investigation?'' I think it draws question to what we do in 1999 on the assessment of the independent counsel statute.

We want full and open investigations, we want a better government, a proper government, an appropriate government. But I think even a suggestion of an interim report will not do justice to the House Committee on the Judiciary in the need for a full review of any report that Mr. Starr may have. I hope he listens to our calling for a full report so that we can do the business of this House in the right and proper manner.

Mr. CONYERS. I thank the gentlewoman for her comments.

## TRIBUTE TO THE PEOPLE OF SPENCER, SOUTH DAKOTA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) is recognized for 5 minutes.