Some people say, well, the FBI filed 59 cases against him or 59 charges against him. Why did the FBI drop 58 of the 59 charges against him? Well, it is pretty simple. We had a Federal judge and the Federal judge said, Okay, we are going to allow you to go ahead with these 59 charges against him. But in order to do it, we are going to have to require you to release some of your secrets. We are going to make this public information.

So the FBI did not drop these charges because they could not prove them. The U.S. Attorney General, Janet Reno, did not instruct the FBI to drop these charges because they could not prove them. The reason they dropped those charges is because they did not want to release further U.S. secrets on thermonuclear weapons.

It is interesting what happens in an election year. As soon as the newspapers start editorializing about old poor Wen Ho Lee and how he has been victimized, and it sounds just like a defense attorney, guess who jumps in? The President of the United States, he makes a comment. He said he is discouraged by this prosecution. That is his policy. He cannot understand this.

What happens this quickly, we can lose control of this quickly. The fact is Wen Ho Lee still has or has the knowledge of where the many, many secrets of the United States of America on our thermonuclear weapons are, and we have every right to go after this guy. He has jeopardized every living citizen in America. In fact he has jeopardized the entire world by accessing and taking out of that laboratory some of the highest level secrets every known to mankind.

He has, in my opinion, put at risk every future generation of every country in this world. And yet he refuses to cooperate up until the time, and we hope we get a little cooperation now, using as his front these defense attorneys.

Then they go out and put together this massive public relations effort. To me it is almost like having a cheer leading conference on the day of impeachment. They have a pep rally when this guy gets out of prison when the judge orders that he be released, and then the people cannot wait to stomp on the FBI or criticize Attorney General Janet Reno. Why did they prosecute this poor guy? Why are they picking on Wen Ho Lee? He is an innocent guy. He has been victimized. Maybe by accident he copied some files. It was inadvertent. He did not know what he was doing.

Of course some of the other groups are playing the race card, saying the only reason he was arrested is because of his ethnic background, whatever that background was.

We ought to take a look at what has happened to this Nation. Take a look at what our losses are. By the way, we cannot really calculate what our losses are because we do not know who has that material.

We do know this: we do know that some of the countries in this world have information that was provided for them from the laboratories out of the United States. We know this: we know that somehow there has been a leak somewhere down in that laboratory.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying to all of my colleagues tonight, I know that my speech has been somewhat impassioned; but I cannot imagine that any one of us who has a fiduciary duty to the people of this country that we would simply nod and turn our face the other way. Or that we would stand here and criticize the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Not that they are above criticism, as I said earlier. That Ruby Ridge was a disaster. Waco, Texas, was a disaster. The FBI deserves plenty of criticism.

But on this case, we too will be contributing, in my opinion, to this huge massive misjustice to all future generations of this world by turning eyes the other way and thinking that this Wen Ho Lee was some innocent guy that we decided to victimize or pick on him to find a spy for the FBI Chronicles.

Let me wrap this portion of my comments up by saying, I cannot think of anything in my entire political career, I cannot think of anything in my adult life that I consider of more serious consequence from a national security interest point of view than the compromise of these thermonuclear secrets. These secrets were compromised by one individual. We know who he is. We have got the facts. We have just heard the other side of the story.

Now, what I would say is all my colleagues should go home tonight, have discussions with their families and let me know tomorrow who is the victim. Is the victim Wen Ho Lee, or is the victim the United States of America?

Mr. Speaker, I really should have made this chart a little different. I should have put United States of America, the rest of the world, and all future generations.

Mr. Speaker, at this point in time I would like to yield to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. EHRLICH).

A TRIBUTE TO DR. NANCY S. GRASMICK

Mr. EHRLICH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) for yielding me this time, and I thank the gentleman for his leadership on such an important issue, nuclear security. He is a good friend and a great colleague and a fine Member of this House.

I intend to yield back, but what I would like to do, Mr. Speaker, for a few minutes is truly switch gears.

We talk about education, education policy in this country an awful lot. It is an important debate. It is a debate in the presidential campaigns and a debate on this floor almost every day. And there are special people who stand for educational excellence in this country, and one happens to be a friend of mine, and she happens to be from Maryland.

So for a few minutes I would like to pay tribute to a lady by the name of Nancy S. Grasmick.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in proud recognition of Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick, superintendent of Maryland State Schools, for having been recently named recipient of this year's Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education.

Dr. Grasmick is one of only three individuals nationwide to receive this distinguished award, which annually recognizes outstanding commitment to education in our country.

Dr. Nancy Grasmick defines education reform and excellence in America today. Dr. Grasmick has devoted her entire life to helping young people achieve the American dream. Her beginnings as a special education teacher in Baltimore County Maryland only hinted at what lay ahead for Maryland schools and indeed the entire State.

She advanced through the county school system and constructed a legacy that can be felt in every classroom in Maryland today. Thanks to her leadership and participation in countless school reform efforts in other States, that legacy is also felt across the Nation.

Dr. Grasmick's reform efforts were well under way when she was named Maryland Superintendent for Schools in 1991. At that time I was in the Maryland General Assembly. Her immediate goal was to establish accountability standards for teachers, administrators, and individual schools.

She challenged the status quo by proposing and successfully establishing teacher standards, students standards, and annual school-by-school evaluations.

She fought for unprecedented increases in State funding for education and school construction. At times, and I know this for a fact, Mr. Speaker, her plans met resistance and criticism. But she backed up her reform efforts with real progress in student performance. And is that not what really counts? She exhibited courage by forcing State takeovers of underperforming schools and has used her pulpit to bring every county school system into her reform initiatives.

Nancy Grasmick has simultaneously served as the Maryland Special Secretary for Children, Youth and Families also since 1991. At her urging, the position was established to bring together the myriad components of what she knew then was required to educate our young people: quality schools, stable family lives, and responsible health care.

I am proud to have known and worked with Dr. Nancy Grasmick for more than 10 years. Receiving the McGraw Prize in Education is simply the latest in a series of her professional achievements. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, she is the leading educator and reformer in America today.

By every measure—student performance, school achievement, and teacher certification—she deserves this great

recognition; and we in Maryland are quite proud of her. And, I should add, we in the Ehrlich family are equally quite proud of her.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend who I know also has very serious views on education, education reform and probably enjoyed hearing about this great lady in Maryland, who has brought standards and true reform to Maryland schools, and I yield back.

1845

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's comments. Not that this is jumping on media day, we have heard my previous comments about the fellow out of Los Alamos labs, it is interesting in our society today, we can go back to the Roman Empire where the Gladiators get all the attention, and a woman who is outstanding as this woman is, who has devoted her entire life to education, whose entire hope was not for her but for the next generation and the following generation, would probably capture maybe one column in a local newspaper, while the sports section, it is amazing to me, we can pull out a newspaper and take the middle 20 pages or 30 pages or 40 pages out on the sports section, and yet a little paragraph about someone who is as outstanding as your friend.

Mr. EHRLICH. If the gentleman would continue to yield for one second, it will not surprise the gentleman to learn, because she is a true reformer and has demanded accountability, she has taken quite a few hits in Maryland, and she has survived, because she has the factual and the moral high ground on this issue. That is why I wanted to come to this floor and congratulate her in front of the entire country.

Mr. MCINNIS. Of course, as the gentleman knows, the person that has enough guts to get out of the fox hole usually draws the fire but somebody has to get out of it and somebody has to lead the charge. I commend the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. Speaker, I want to continue, I have about 16 minutes left. I am just going to comment for a few minutes about a speech that I want to make next week in regards to Social Security. It is unfortunate. It is reality, I face it, and it is just natural. It is inherent with the system that we have, but we have a general election coming up here in about 5 weeks or 6 weeks, and unfortunately, a lot of the good ideas, ideas that require bipartisan support, bipartisan coalition building get drowned out by some of the impacts of an election and by the advertising.

I want to tell my colleagues that several months ago, I had the opportunity to go down to Texas. I went to law school in Texas. I have a great fondness for that state, and I was able to sit down with their governor, George W. Bush, and we talked a little about Social Security.

We talked about the threat to future generations. And next week, I intend to expound on what I think is a solution, a solution that has been drowned out in this election process, a solution that George W. Bush parallels, a commitment that he feels very importantly about, because of the fact he is running for President, because he has proposed it as a part of this program instead of a methodological analysis and thoughtful analysis of what he is saying, people say it is a risky scheme. We hear people that say stay with the status quo.

Mr. Speaker, I am here to tell my colleagues that tonight we cannot stay with the status quo of Social Security. Social Security is in trouble. It is not in trouble today. It is not going to be in trouble for my generation, my generation and the generations ahead of me, they are okay. We are going to get our benefits.

Mr. Speaker, where it is going to be in trouble is the generations we ought to be worrying about, the generation behind me, my children. And at some point in time, my children's children. And we have a fiduciary responsibility to make Social Security a system that is sound from a fiscal point of view.

Today Social Security has more cash coming in than it has going out; that is called a cash basis. It has a positive cash flow. But if we take a look at the actuarial numbers, actuarial meaning that while the cash is coming in today, that cash is earmarked for future obligations. So we get the cash today, but we do not have to spend it for a while.

It is coming in today, our younger generations are contributing. My son and my two daughters are contributing to this Social Security system, with the expectation that they will have some return on their money, but without really the knowledge of that on an actuarial basis. Social Security is going to be bankrupt; we have that obligation to go forward.

It got there for several reasons, and I thought this evening I would just go over, with the time I have remaining, how Social Security got in trouble and why some of it frankly is good news. You know, when Social Security first came into place in 1935, we had 42 workers, 42 workers for every person that was retired.

Forty-two workers here working and generating and putting cash into the Social Security system up here, which was distributing to one worker; 42 to 1 was the ratio. Today we have three workers over here contributing to the cash system up here distributing to one retired person here, so ratio is from 42 to 1 down to 3 to 1. And in the next 10 to 15 years it is going to be 2 to 1, and if we are not careful, in about 25 years, it is going to be 1 to 1.

How does a system sustain itself? Well, first of all, the first thing if we look at a system and we are trying to figure out how do we address future obligations, the first thing we need to do is figure out is this system working today? Do we have a sound, economic, smooth-running machine in that Social Security system? If we do not, do we have to oil it? Do we have to replace some parts? What do we have to do?

The facts are clear. The facts are clear. The Social Security machine is broken. Now, it is still not working, but it is not working at the kind of capacity that will be needed to supply what is necessary for those future generations.

Now, there are some of the reasons Social Security got in trouble; one I just went over with you, the retirement ratio; the second one is good news for all of us. When Social Security was first put into place, women could expect to live to be an average of 65 years old and the man could expect to live to probably an age of 61. Today that is well into the 70s for both sexes. So we have had an extended life span, a lot in regards to improvement in our life-styles, like trying to get rid of smoking, a lot of it in regards to our health care system and the new products and the new medicines and the new machines, premature babies used to die in the past, today we can save them.

There is lots of medical technology that has extended the life span, but, unfortunately, in the Social Security system, this machine that we have did not have a part in it that worked faster when people live longer. In fact, it worked at the same speed and enabled us to produce more, because we had more people living to a longer age to an older age. This part of the machine had to generate.

It had to work faster. It is not working faster. In fact, it is working and producing at the same rate that it did 35 years ago, when people would live to 61 in the case of a male or 65 in the case of a female. Mr. Speaker, we have to do something about that.

And the other thing is that the Social Security system, and this is politics, it happens everywhere in the world, it happened in the history of the world, political bodies have a difficult time saying no to consumers that want something for nothing. As time goes on, we have some good sound programs.

By the way, when they want something for nothing, it is not that the program sounds bad, you know, the survivor's benefits or some of these other benefit programs that we have had, Social Security, SSI, things like this, they come to this body with a good sounding program and, in fact, sometimes they are great programs, but nobody really stood up and had the guts to say but can we afford it? I know I am going to be the most unpopular person up here. But slow it down, can we afford it?

And over a period of time, we have indebted this country to further obligations through Social Security. Some of those additional liabilities that we picked up were justified. But if we are going to pick up an additional liability, we have to go to the other side of the ledger. Any of us that have basic accounting, and almost all of us have,

we know any time we have a debit, we have a credit; any time we have a credit, we have to have a debit, except when it gets to the politics.

The politics just continues to put on and put on one side of the ledger, and it continues to put obligations on one side of the ledger without figuring out on the other side of the ledger how we are going to pay for it. So we have got to figure out a program.

When I had my discussions with George W. Bush, and why I am excited about that conversation and why I think it is imperative to bring it up, is because I think the merits of this program are being drowned out by the rhetoric that we have heard out there on the election trail. What is important about the program is, first of all, for our future generation, we have to have a program that is voluntary, not being in Social Security, we have to be in Social Security, but it is your choice. We want to offer people some choice.

I happen to think, and most of us happen to think, the generations behind us, they are very capable, they are the brightest generations this world has ever known, my kids, that generation, they can make good decisions on personal choice. They ought to have some more choice on how their investment or a portion of their investment in Social Security, where they put it. It should be voluntary for them.

And you know what? They should pick up some property rights with their Social Security investment. What I mean by that is, if they die, they ought to be able to pass on to their family the benefits that over their working career they had accumulated. This is the kind of program we need to have. Guess what?

As you will find out from my comments next week, this is not a new program. It is not a new invention. We are not plowing new ground. In fact, there is a program that is almost as identical and we have test marketed it, we have. We have actually gone out and test marketed an alternative to Social Security, an addition to Social Security that gives people choice, that is voluntary, allows people to take a higher risk or lower risk, higher return or lower return.

Do you know what happened in our test market survey? Eighty-five percent of the people that we put into the test market are in it. They like it. They voluntarily signed up and they are staying in the program. In fact, we are growing our numbers in this test market.

Now, where is this, you say. Wait a minute, Scott, what are you talking about? Where is this test you are talking about? What kind of retirement system are you talking about as an alternative or as a way to improve Social Security? It is our retirement. It is our retirement, the U.S. Congress. It is the retirement of every Federal employee, 3 million people are in this test market. It is a program called the Thrift Savings Program.

Every Federal Government employee on a voluntary basis can take a percentage of their salary every month and have it matched by the Federal Government to the extent of 5 percent, and they then exercise the choice of where they want that money to go, whether they want to put it into high risk stock market, which usually brings a higher return, or whether they want to put it into a lower risk bond market or they want to put it into a guaranteed no loss savings account.

And you know what happens if they die, if a Federal employee dies? They get to pass it on to the next family member. So the answer is, wow, it is working. The participants in the program are satisfied with the program. The program allows benefits to continue beyond their death to their family. The program funds itself.

You know what the returns are, take a look at the returns that Social Security has today. Here is the returns from my generation on Social Security, less than 1 percent, and what if we do not change this system, this system is going to produce a return of less than 1 percent. Your certificate of deposit was 0 risk, returns, almost a little over 5 percent, and your government bonds return 7 percent.

Social Security takes your dollars and gives you less than a 1 percent return. And by the way, there is no guarantee of safety. So what I am saying here is, next week I intend to go into much more detail, but I think the American people deserve to know that their government employees have an alternative system.

Now we still participate in Social Security. Do not believe that stuff you see on the Internet that we are exempt, we do not have to; we participate in Social Security, but we have this additional benefit, and it works. It is good. It provides a return.

So next week, I am going to go into a little more detail on that and why I think that George W. Bush's approach is look, stand up. I think it is a bold approach, and any time you make a bold approach, you are going to get criticized because a lot of people are comfortable with the status quo, but the status quo ain't going to hunt, it is a dog that is not going to hunt.

So we need to have change, and we need to have a plan that is going to work. So what we ask the American people and in this discussion I had with George W. Bush several months ago, when we go to the American people, look, they are relying on this, we have to give them a product that has been test marketed. We have the product that has been test marketed. We know it works.

1900

So why resist it.

Well, right now the resistance comes in because of politics. We have an election. So they do not dare. One side does not dare say to the other side, well, that is a good program; that might work.

We have got a good program here, and I look forward in the next week to go into much greater detail on this alternative that I think the Federal Government uses for its own. What is good for the goose is good for the gander. So I think that is exactly what we ought to take a look at.

In conclusion, I look forward to seeing my colleagues next week on this. Let me say, going to the first part of my speech, please take the time to look at the other side of the story on this Wen Ho Lee guy out at Los Alamos. Do not think he is a victim. Do not think he is being picked upon. In my opinion, he has probably committed one of the most egregious transfers of thermonuclear material in the last 100 years.

I do not have much sympathy for him, and I intend to pursue that side of the story. I have heard both sides, and I have made my decision. The victim here in that case is the United States of America; it is not Mr. Lee.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARR of Georgia). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 7 p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DREIER) at 10 o'clock and 47 minutes p.m.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4733, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

Mr. PACKARD submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 4733) making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes:

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 106–907)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 4733) ''making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes'', having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate, and agree to the same with an amendment, as follows:

In lieu of the matter stricken and inserted by said amendment, insert:

That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the fiscal year ending September