

Since our founding, the world has looked to the United States as a beacon of freedom, a Nation leading by example, a Nation governed by the rule of law. As we act on this legislation the world watches to see whether we as a Nation still have a commitment to the very principles we seek to spread around the world.

There are those who see this legislation primarily in the context of granting retroactive immunity to telecommunications companies, merely transactional legislation. But, in fact, this is about something far more important and fundamental.

Today, this House seeks to legislatively amend the fourth amendment. This bill retroactively denies to Americans the protections of the fourth amendment. It retroactively insulates Government from accountability for infringing upon one of the most basic rights of Americans.

This infringement is not theoretical. Today there are more than 40 pending lawsuits alleging that our Government illegally and unconstitutionally violated the privacy rights of citizens by conducting a warrantless spying program. Through this bill, Congress now seeks to deny these individuals a remedy. Moreover, if this legislation becomes law, Americans may never learn the full extent of the Bush administration's illegal wiretapping program.

Further, the bill establishes a permanent framework for the violation of the civil liberties of our citizens. This legislation permits the Government to conduct mass, untargeted surveillance of communications coming into and out of the United States, without any individualized review, and without any finding of wrongdoing. And it permits only minimal court oversight.

Some argue that this legislation is necessary to protect our Nation from terrorists. I reject this argument. The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (which this bill seeks to amend), has, since 1978, provided a legal framework for law enforcement to secure a secret warrant to intercept electronic communications related to national security. In emergencies, the Attorney General may authorize emergency employment of electronic surveillance as long as he or she makes the requisite application for approval from the FISA court as soon as practicable within 72 hours.

By authorizing a program to conduct illegal surveillance on Americans, the President and his Attorneys General have chosen to ignore the law and the Constitution. Today by passing this legislation, Congress chooses to stand with the President.

By voting no, today I will stand with the American people in the defense of their civil liberties and their Constitution.

NAACP PICKS YOUNGEST LEADER
EVER, JEALOUS AT THE HELM

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 23, 2008

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Ben Jealous, the new president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, and to

enter into the RECORD an article from the New York Carib News for the week ending June 3, 2008 titled "NAACP Picks Youngest Leader Ever."

The NAACP was founded in 1909 by an interracial coalition that battled segregation and lynching and helped win some of the Nation's biggest civil rights victories. The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination.

With a background in communication, community activism and extensive civil rights experience, Ben Jealous has strong credentials for leadership of the NAACP. Ben, who will start his position September 1, is a former managing editor of Mississippi's historic Jackson Advocate. In 2000, he became executive director of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, NNPA, the Black press of America. He left NNPA after three years to become director of Amnesty International's U.S. Human Rights Program. He comes to the NAACP from the San Francisco-based Rosenberg Foundation, where he has served as president since 2005.

Among his plans for the organization are strengthening online presence to connect with activists, mobilize public opinion, and build a database for tracking racial discrimination and hate crimes. His agenda includes ensuring a high voter turnout among the Black community in the November election, pushing an aggressive stance on civil rights, and retooling the national office to make it more effective at helping local branches effect change in their communities.

As a young Black activist, he is poised to attract young African Americans who have criticized the NAACP for being out of step with people who still face racial discrimination after the demise of legalized segregation. Ben Jealous has the smarts, talent, and leadership experience to modernize the organization and lead it into the 21st century better able to continue its historic record of achievement on behalf of the Black community.

[From the NY Carib News, June 3, 2008]

NAACP PICKS YOUNGEST LEADER EVER

The 64-member Board of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the nation's largest civil rights organization, decided that it was time to invest in the youth when it announced the decision that 35-year old Ben Jealous will become the organization's President making him the youngest leader in its 99-year history. He will take the helm of the NAACP this September.

"I'm excited. I think that it's a real affirmation that this organization is willing to invest in the future, to invest in the ideas and the leadership of the generation that is currently raising Black children in this country, Jealous said after his confirmation.

Jealous is not a politician, minister or civil rights icon. His background is in communications and community activism. It is hoped that Jealous will provide the NAACP with a new youthful face in order to attract more young people to the organization's ranks. He will bring another invaluable asset—a young but connected chief familiar with Black leadership and social justice issues. He takes the helm as the NAACP's 17th President just months before the orga-

nization's centennial anniversary and as the group looks to boost its coffers.

"There are a small number of groups to whom all Black people in this country owe a debt of gratitude, and the NAACP is one of them," Jealous said. "There is work that is undone. . . . The need continues and our children continue to be at great risk in this country."

He succeeds Bruce Gordon, who resigned abruptly in March 2007 after serving just 19 months. It has been public knowledge for some time that he has had a number of bruising clashes with board members over management style and the NAACP's mission. Dennis Courtland Hayes had been serving as interim president and chief executive officer since that time.

Jealous was born in Pacific Grove, Calif., and educated at Columbia University and Oxford University, where he was a Rhodes Scholar. He began his professional life in 1991 with the NAACP, where he worked as a community organizer with the Legal Defense Fund working on issues of health care access in Harlem. His family boasts five generations of NAACP membership.

During the mid 1990s, Jealous was managing editor of the Jackson Advocate, Mississippi's oldest black newspaper. From 1999 to 2002, Jealous led the country's largest group of Black community newspapers as executive director of the National Newspaper Publishers Association.

Jealous left the Publishers Association for Amnesty International to direct its U.S. Human Rights Program, for which he successfully lobbied for federal legislation against prison rape, public disapproval of racial profiling after Sept. 11, and exposure of widespread sentencing of children to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Since 2005, Jealous has served as president of the Rosenberg Foundation, a private institution that supports civil and human rights advocacy. His experiences caught the attention of the NAACP's search committee, and Jealous said mentors encouraged him to take the job.

"Like all black people in this country. I am deeply grateful for what the NAACP has accomplished in the 20th century, and I want to make sure it's as strong and as powerful in the 21st century," he said. "If I thought that I could help rebuild, if I thought that I could help bring in more funds and give direction to the national staff and increase morale, I needed to take it very seriously, and that's what I've done."

The NAACP was founded in 1909 by an interracial coalition that battled segregation and lynching and helped win some of the nation's biggest civil rights victories. But in the wake of racial advances, the organization has struggled financially.

Among his plans for the group are strengthening its online presence to connect with activists, mobilize public opinion and build a database for tracking racial discrimination and hate crimes; ensuring high voter turnout among Blacks in the November election; pushing an aggressive civil rights agenda, regardless of the makeup of the Congress or White House; and retooling the national office to make it more effective at helping local branches affect change in their communities.

What Jealous lacks in oratorical appeal, he makes up for as an administrator skills he honed during his tenure with the Publishers Association. And his foundation experience could help with fundraising especially as the NAACP looks to raise \$100 million in conjunction with its 100th anniversary in February.