

There are more benefits to publication at 18 months. It would finally treat our patent applicants more fairly relative to foreign entities which apply for protection in the United States. Under current conditions, a United States inventor filing abroad has his or her application published after 18 months in the language of the host country; this means that foreign competitors may review (but not steal) the U.S. application. Since our system lacks this feature, however, a foreign entity never reveals the subject of its application until the patent issues. Publication after 18 months in the United States will allow an American company to review foreign applications here in English. Under no circumstances does 18-month publication create newfound opportunity for an American or foreign competitor to steal the contents of a published application. Just as is the case when a patent is granted, any competitor who appropriates an invention after publication but before grant must pay damages to the patent applicant.

H.R. 400 provides for 18-month publication, but allows an inventor to avoid publication if it is unlikely he will receive a patent. Under the provisions of H.R. 400, any inventor who is applying for a patent exclusively in the United States has up to three months after an initial determination by the Patent and Trademark Office to decide whether or not he wishes to proceed. If the PTO determines that the applicant will not likely receive a patent, the applicant may withdraw his application and seek protection under trade secret and unfair competition laws. If the patent is likely to be issued and the applicant proceeds, it will be published and protected after 18 months.

H.R. 400 carries out Congress' special obligation under the Constitution to provide protection in exchange for disclosure and will serve to benefit America's inventors. H.R. 400 is necessary for the Progress of Science and the Useful Arts.

#### KASHMIRI PANDITS STRIVE TO RESUME PEACEFUL LIVES

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 rise to bring to the attention of this body and the American people a terrible tragedy that recently occurred in India's State of Jammu and Kashmir. On March 21, in the village of Sangrampora, 15 unidentified terrorists rounded up eight members of the Kashmiri Pandit community and shot them outside their homes. Seven of the victims died. While the cold-blooded murder of innocent people is always shocking and horrifying, what makes this incident even more appalling is the indication that the victims were singled out simply because they were Hindus.

Mr. Speaker, for thousands of years Kashmir has been inhabited by Hindus known as Kashmiri Pandits. These original inhabitants of the Valley of Kashmir have lived peaceful lives in one of the most beautiful areas of the world. Sadly, the efforts of the Kashmiri Pandits to live their lives peacefully and constructively has been disrupted by militants armed and trained by outside forces intent on changing Kashmir from a secular, multireligious land into a fundamentalist state.

The effects of this proxy war, which the evidence strongly indicates is supported by Pakistan, have been the death of thousands of people, the devastation of the economy, and the creation of a huge refugee population. Virtually the entire population of 300,000 Kashmiri Pandits has been forced to leave their ancestral homes and property, living in refugee camps in various cities in India in subhuman conditions. Only 2,000 Kashmiri Pandits still remain in the Kashmir Valley, and they have been turned into refugees in their own country.

The current round of violence is not the first example of the victimization of the Kashmiri Pandits. For centuries, they have been subjected to the atrocities and subjugation committed by invading peoples. On October 22, 1947, 2 months after India became independent, Pakistan attacked Kashmir to annex it by force. Four days later, Maharajah Hari Singh, the ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, requested India's military assistance to save Kashmir from the Pakistani invaders and took the case to the United Nations, which called for a cease-fire, followed by complete withdrawal of Pakistani forces from the occupied area, as a precondition to a plebiscite under U.N. supervision. Sensing the anti-Pakistani mood of the Kashmiri people, Pakistan did not comply with the U.N. withdrawal condition. Instead, Pakistan made two more futile attempts in 1965 and 1971 to annex Kashmir by force.

Although Pakistan maintains that they are only providing moral and political support for the insurgency, evidence shows that Pakistan has been playing a direct role in arming and training the militants.

I have met with members of the Kashmiri-American community who have told me that Hindus and Muslims can and have lived in peace in Kashmir. The real tragedy is that outside influences are fueling religious rivalries and foreign policy agendas that pit Indian against Indian.

Mr. Speaker, as the cochairman of the Congressional Caucus on India, I believe that the United States and the international community must not allow the practice of ethnic or religious cleansing to continue. India has tried hard to help the Kashmiri Pandits. India deserves our support, both in assisting the refugees and in ending the proxy war being waged in Jammu and Kashmir.

Programs such as USAID, the Agency for International Development, could be one vehicle for the United States to provide more direct aid, humanitarian aid, I should say, for these displaced people. We should also use our considerable influence with Pakistan to urge that nation to cease support for the militants and to crack down on terrorists harbored within their borders.

I want to applaud India and Pakistan for trying to break decades of tension by having their foreign ministers meet in New Delhi recently. It has been the

highest level meeting between these south Asian neighbors in 7 years. The foreign minister's meeting, Mr. Speaker, actually took place yesterday. I hope this will be a sign of the relaxation of tensions that will benefit all the people of India and Pakistan. Especially with this new climate of cooperation, I think ultimately it will help the Kashmiri Pandits go back to their ancestral homeland and resume their peaceful lives, which is really all they want to do.

#### SPENT NUCLEAR FUEL POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEARNS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. GUTKNECHT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a serious environmental issue that has been developing in communities all across America. This pressing environmental issue is the Federal Government's lack of responsible spent nuclear fuel policy. Despite past promises and contracts, the administration is ignoring their responsibility to ensure the safe and timely disposal of spent nuclear fuel.

Let us talk a little bit about the background of this issue. Riding the crest of a new technology back in the 1950's, the Federal Government encouraged the Nation's utilities to use nuclear power as a generation source through the "Atoms for Peace Initiative." In return, the Federal Government promised to make use of utility spent nuclear fuel by reprocessing it for other uses.

In 1978, President Carter outlined the reprocessing of commercial spent nuclear fuel by the Federal Government due to concerns about proliferation.

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In 1982, Congress came up with a solution for the management of commercial spent fuel by enacting the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. Utilities operating nuclear power plants entered into contracts with the Department of Energy in which the agency promised to begin accepting spent fuel by January 31, 1998. In return, the Nation's customers for nuclear power would contribute to a trust fund to contribute to the disposal of that spent nuclear fuel.

To finance this project, the Federal Government has collected over \$11 billion in fees from nuclear power customers and has spent over \$5 billion. Rate-paying customers from my State of Minnesota have paid more than \$250 million to the Federal Government for the disposal of spent fuel. In 1987, Congress recognized that the Department of Energy was making slow progress toward a permanent repository, and amended the Nuclear Waste Policy Act to focus on studies for a single potential site.

Here we are, 15 years from the enactment of the 1982 Nuclear Waste Policy Act and 10 years after the act was