

No. 4, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Resources now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

No. 5, no amendments shall be in order except the amendments printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and numbered 2, 27, 5, and 51 pursuant to clause 6 of rule XXIII; one amendment in the form that I have placed at the desk by the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] or his designee regarding striking section 4(b); and one amendment in the form that I have placed at the desk by the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] or his designee regarding specific biosphere reserves.

No. 6, each amendment may be offered only in the order specified in paragraph 5 of this order and may be offered only by the Member who caused the amendment specified in paragraph 5 to be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, or their designees, or a member otherwise designated in paragraph 5.

No. 7, each amendment shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 30 agreed-to minutes, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against the amendments specified in this order are waived.

No. 8, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may: No. 1, postpone until a time during further consideration in the Committee of the Whole a demand for a recorded vote on any amendment; and, No. 2, reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for electronic voting on any postponed question that follows another electronic vote without intervening business, provided that the minimum time for electronic voting on the first in any series of questions shall be 15 minutes.

No. 9, at the conclusion of the consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute.

No. 10, the previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

No. 11, House Resolutions 243 and 257, two rules that we reported earlier but were not acted on, are laid on the table.

Mr. Chairman, No. 12, pending the unanimous consent request, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with

the reading at this point of the two amendments by the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] that I have placed at the desk.

The text of The Miller amendments are as follows:

On page 9 of the bill, beginning at line 1, strike all through the end of line 16, and renumber subsequent subsections accordingly.

On page 10 of the bill, after line 8, insert the following:

“(d) Subsection (b) shall not apply to the following—

“(1) California Coast Ranges Biosphere Reserve;

“(2) Channel Islands Biosphere Reserve;

“(3) Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve;

“(4) Everglades National Park and Dry Tortugas National Park Biosphere Reserve;

“(5) Isle Royale National Park Biosphere Reserve;

“(6) New Jersey Pinelands Biosphere Reserve;

“(7) Olympic National Park Biosphere Reserve;

“(8) Virgin Islands National Park Biosphere Reserve; and

“(9) Hawaiian Islands Biosphere Reserve.”

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

Mr. MILLER of California. Reserving the right to object, I do so for point of clarification. At the outset, I am not quite clear. Are we operating under the 5-minute rule or will the amendments operate under the 15 minutes each side?

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MILLER of California. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, we are operating 15 minutes each side at the request of the gentleman. We do have the ability to roll the votes. If this unanimous consent request is granted, it will save this body about 2 hours of time tonight.

Mr. MILLER of California. Anything I can do to help, I am delighted to do so.

Mr. SOLOMON. I thought the gentleman would. The gentleman is a great help.

Mr. MILLER of California. I thank the gentleman for his cooperation on this.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

AUTHORIZING THE SPEAKER TO DESIGNATE A TIME NOT LATER THAN OCTOBER 31, 1997, TO RESUME PROCEEDINGS ON REMAINING MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES ORIGINALLY DEBATED ON SEPTEMBER 29, 1997

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Speaker be authorized to designate a time not later than October 31, 1997, for resumption of proceedings on the seven remaining motions to suspend the rules

originally debated on September 29, 1997.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTION TO OFFER MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 1757, FOREIGN RELATIONS AUTHORIZATION ACT, FISCAL YEARS 1998 AND 1999

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to rule XXVIII, I rise to inform the House that tomorrow I will offer a motion to instruct conferees on H.R. 1757, which would instruct and insist upon the provisions contained in title XXI of the House bill relating to United States policy with respect to forced abortion and foreign organizations that perform or promote abortion.

The text of the motion is as follows:

Mr. CALLAHAN moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 1757 be instructed to insist upon the provisions contained in title XXI of the House bill (relating to United States policy with respect to forced abortion and foreign organizations that perform or promote abortion).

AMERICAN LAND SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOBSON). Pursuant to the order of the House of today and rule XXIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 901.

□ 1739

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 901) to preserve the sovereignty of the United States over public lands and acquired lands owned by the United States, and to preserve State sovereignty and private property rights in non-Federal lands surrounding those public lands and acquired lands, with Mr. SUNUNU in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

The gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] and the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG].

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I agreed to the amendments that

were being offered by the gentleman from California, including the gentleman from California [Mr. FARR], a time limitation of 15 minutes on each side, in the sense of cooperation, but I do not believe there is much need to debate this legislation any further than it has been debated.

It has been debated by thousands of Americans because the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act asserts the power of this Congress that is under the Constitution over all the lands that belong to America. So that everyone understands, the concern here is the Congress, therefore the people, are left out of the domestic process to designate World Heritage sites and Biosphere reserves.

I want to stress that again. We are left out. They have never been consulted. They were never worked with. This was a U.N. effort on behalf of the State Department to make these grand decisions without even considering the local input.

All this bill requires is the participation of Congress, which really is the branch of the American people, in the designation process of Heritage sites and Biosphere reserves.

□ 1745

Many, many Americans, from all sections of our country, have called my office to say they are concerned about the lack of congressional oversight over UNESCO international land reserves in the U.S. and to express support for this bill.

Within the last 25 years, 67 sites in the United States have been designated as Biosphere Reserves or World Heritage sites, all with no congressional oversight and no congressional input or input from individual citizens. The public and local governments were not consulted.

The World Heritage Site Program is based on a treaty. H.R. 901 does not end U.S. participation in the World Heritage Site Program. We have a domestic law implementing this program, and H.R. 901 proposes to change that domestic law so that Congress must approve the sites.

The Biosphere Reserve Program is not authorized by even a single U.S. law or any international treaty. May I remind my colleagues when they raise their hand up here and say, "I swear to uphold the Constitution," if they do not support this bill, they are against the Constitution of America.

This is an extended effort by the executive branch appointees, whatever their political party, cannot and should not do things the law does not authorize. What is unreasonable about Congress insisting that no land be designated for inclusion in these international land use programs without clear and direct approval of Congress? What is unreasonable about having local citizens and public officials participate in decisions on designating land near their homes for inclusion in an international zone?

We need to reemphasize our congressional duty to keep international commitments from abridging traditional constitutional constraints. Otherwise, the boundaries between one owner's land and another or even between the Government's land and private land are too easily ignored.

H.R. 901 will also prevent attempts by the executive branch to use international land designations to bypass the Congress to make land use decisions and protect our domestic land use decision-making process from unnecessary international interference.

We are going to hear a lot today that this is a fear tactic to worry about black helicopters, this is just what we call a good thing to do, this makes us all feel so well and good. But, for the life of me, what is wrong with this body, this Congress, from making these decisions is some U.N. body making decisions that affect everybody's lives, especially the local people; it decreases the value of their land.

By the way, most of the areas that did have proper notice rejected these definitions. But in my State, we were never notified, the Governor was never notified, legislative body was never notified, my villages were never notified. Yet, we have these Biosphere areas in my State. And that is wrong. Of the 67, we found out there was no input at all in those areas with the local people.

The amendments that are going to be offered today, the amendments I suggested and I agreed to be let offered, I am going to oppose all of them, and I hope we can defeat all of them, because they are not warranted. There is no necessity for them. This is a simple, clean bill that says, yes, we are still part of the program, but when you designate this, you are going to have to get the go-ahead from the Congress.

I urge a strong vote on H.R. 901 and urge its passage.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of America's role as a global environmental leader and in opposition to this bill, H.R. 901.

I say to my colleagues that at this crucial time, when nations around the world are making decisions that would impact upon the future of our planet, we must set an example, we must encourage nations to participate in cooperative efforts to improve and learn more about our global environment. We must not succumb to the isolated and misinformed fears of the very few and demolish years of progress in the right direction, progress towards better science, and better understanding and more cooperation internationally.

The only trespass that most of these treaties and conventions are guilty of is that they are loosely associated with the United Nations; not bad in my view but in the view of some today. We need to be part of the debate on a global basis in terms of these issues and solutions to such problems.

The bill we have before us today appears harmless. In a sense, it is not all that different from much of the other legislation considered by the House which has sought to rollback critical, substantive, and symbolic environmental protections, but, like these other bills, a seemingly benign idea has potentially devastating results.

I am fairly certain that there is not a Member of this body who would put the sovereignty of the United States at risk, not a single Member, Mr. Speaker. Yet the proponents of this legislation will come to this floor today and tell us that if we care about American sovereignty, we must pass this bill. That is misleading and a transparent distraction from the main issues.

I disagree with that statement categorically. This bill is not about sovereignty. This is about sacrificing three important international programs: The World Heritage Convention, the Ramsar Accord, and the Man and Biosphere Program, sacrificing them upon the altar of special interests multinational mining and timber companies and others that choose to exploit these resources and want to alleviate international recognition.

Indeed, we need to look at what got us into this entire mess. The proponents of this legislation claim that a proposed mine next to Yellowstone National Park, Teddy Roosevelt's Yellowstone, I might add, was halted by environmental forces in black helicopters.

Mr. Chairman, the criticisms expressed by members of the World Heritage Convention were just a few in number but a resounding chorus of thousands who did not wish to see the coal slurry of a Canadian mining company degrading the Yellowstone River spoke up. To say that this project was stopped by the World Heritage Convention is factually incorrect. It establishes a casual relationship that does not exist. This project was stopped because the company that wanted to carry it out decided that it was not a good idea after all. And they were correct in such decision the existing U.S. environmental law that raised the questions concerning this proposed mine.

Mr. Chairman, each one of these conventions and treaties, two treaties and a convention, have explicit provisions in their preamble and in their statement which point out that the sovereignty of the individual States that participate in the World Heritage Convention, there are 150 countries that participate in that, and we are going to opt out of that. And with regards to the biosphere, 125 countries participate in this agreement. And this proposed legislation seeks to rescind the 47 Biosphere designations, a recognition that they now enjoy. Furthermore, with regards to the Ramsar convention, there are 92 countries that participate; and we are going to get out of treaty which recognizes 15 sites in the USA and 760 more globally. This proposal advocates a view of "Stop the world, I want to get

off," that the understanding and science and insights and the fact that we live in a global community, a world that is knit together environmentally and knit together with regards to air quality, water quality, and important landscapes that support an intricate biodiversity upon which we are all dependent, this particular legislation basically says that the United States is no longer going to be a participant in the natural and cultural preservation of wetlands in these special areas. We are not even going to do it in a symbolic sense. And that is really what this does.

It is this symbolic sense in which we are able to enlist other nations to, in fact, participate in terms of trying to reach and to put in place good science, to put in place a better understanding and better knowledge. And, after all, of course, I guess that is ultimately what the proponents of this really fear. It is that knowledge that we have that translates into new policy that they really want to stop.

There really is an effort here to try and renege, to go back, to be in a state of denial with regards to issues that are presented by the formation of this new knowledge, whether it is wetlands that are recognized, whether it is parks and other public areas, whether it is the Biosphere and ecosystems.

I cannot tell my colleagues how disappointed I am so often when I go into the committee and I have to try to explain what an ecosystem is and I find that there is so much denial with regard to these obvious issues.

You will hear many criticisms of the Man and Biosphere Program. But the fact remains that these programs work. They have been operating without controversy and with the solid support of both Democratic and Republican administrations for more than two decades. The World Heritage Convention was first ratified by the United States in 1973 and now has nearly 150 nations as signatories. The Convention's purpose is to identify and list significant natural and cultural sites around the world. This provides visibility—tourist dollars—and encouragement for such resources' protection. Such a voluntary convention identification is required to operate consistently with U.S. laws. The International Man and Biosphere Program [MAB] was established in 1970 and now has 125 nations as signatories. It seeks to encourage a healthy relationship between humans and the environment by promoting international cooperation in research and education. MAB imposes no management restrictions and is a voluntary program for all nations that participate. The U.S. Man and Biosphere Program is a domestic, Federal program and the sole authority for its implementation and regulation resides with the Government of the United States of America.

Let me be clear: the United Nations has absolutely no authority whatsoever to dictate Federal land management decisions within or for the United States. If any such program did exist, I would join with all who oppose it and end U.S. participation.

What is most ironic about this debate is the fact the United States has been the leader in establishing these programs to provide a vol-

untary, positive means of recognition, education and encouragement for the care of internationally significant cultural and natural resources. Our own environmental laws are effective and strong, protecting the health of all Americans and preserving, conserving, and rehabilitating our natural resources, while ensuring that our Nation's economy remains vibrant. Environmental science and policy is one of the most important ways in which the United States leads the world today and will continue to do so in the future.

Independent from the World Heritage Convention and the Man in the Biosphere Agreement is another key program, the Ramsar Convention, which was adopted in 1971 in Ramsar, Iran. Ninety-two nations participate; the United States is but one, and we have 15 identified wetland sites being promoted within the United States of the 775 worldwide wetlands promoted by Ramsar.

But if we pass this bill, we can kiss all of that goodbye. Stop the world, we'll be saying. The United States wants to get off.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose H.R. 901. We must not turn our backs on the important international voluntary initiatives that are working successfully to safeguard our planet for future generations. At a time when we understand that pervasive pollution respects no borders, nations must work together to hold up the voluntary efforts that point to cooperation and hope for tomorrow of the natural, cultural, scientific wetlands and ecosystem landscapes embraced by the various conventions that the United States has led to shape. The U.S. Congress should not renege on our Nation's environmental global stewardship role. This measure is diametrically opposed to common-sense collaboration and should be rejected.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I would just remind my colleagues that this Nation of ours is based on the constitutional right of private land. We must keep that. We are not a one-world group. We are the sovereign Nation of the United States of America.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 4¼ minutes to the gentlewoman from Idaho [Mrs. CHENOWETH], a great chairman.

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Chairman, my colleagues are going to hear a lot of distracting arguments today. But I simply want to tell my colleagues that H.R. 901 simply enacts three very basic requirements.

No. 1 is, it requires the Secretary of Interior to get the approval of Congress for any nomination of property located in the United States for inclusion in the World Heritage list.

No. 2, very simply, the bill would prohibit the Federal officials from nominating any land in the United States as a biosphere reserve unless Congress ratifies and enacts the biosphere reserve treaties.

The gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO] had just mentioned that this does violence to three particular international programs. But I want to remind the gentleman, these international programs have never been ratified by the Senate and yet they have been enacted by this White House. What are we to do? Just sit here and let it happen?

Finally, H.R. 901 simply prohibits any Federal official from designating any land in the United States for a special or restricted use under any international agreement unless such designation is specifically approved by law.

Let me remind my colleagues, Mr. Chairman, there is not one word in this simple little piece of legislation that talks about black helicopters. And I do not want my colleagues or anyone who is listening to be diverted in their attention from this. This is a simple bill on American sovereignty.

These provisions do not represent a massive change in our policy, nor are they born out of paranoia. Actually, what this bill comes out as is to restate again what article IV, section 3, of the U.S. Constitution has said and still says. This section succinctly states that, and I quote, "The Congress shall have the power"—"The Congress shall have the power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other properties belonging to the United States." That is very simple.

Mr. Chairman, I am fully aware that there are two very distinct spectrums of opinions as to just how World Heritage sites and Biosphere Diversity Reserves and other land designations made under the auspices of the U.N. impact land policy.

There are some who suggest that these designations, which encompass 6 percent of our national parks, the land mass in our national parks and preserves and monuments, they make up enough land that has already been set aside under this unauthorized joint jurisdiction to fill up the entire State of Colorado. That is not benign, Mr. Chairman.

Let me also remind my colleagues, on the other hand, that the Committee on Resources, my chairman here held a hearing and we heard testimony from citizens living in Alaska, Arkansas, Missouri, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, and Wyoming that suggests that this is not benign; local units of government, county commissioners who said they did not even know these land designations were occurring within their counties, that rules against everything that our Government stands for, openness in government.

Mr. Chairman, the only relevant argument that the Clinton administration has made against this bill, I mean, normally they just talk about black helicopters, but the only relevant argument that they have made against this bill is that it would add unnecessary bureaucracy to the designation process.

Let me ask my colleagues, having the Congress act on the desires of an international body is unnecessary bureaucracy? I do not think so.

□ 1800

I do not think that is what the Framers of the Constitution had in mind.

Let me tell my colleagues what this international body has in mind, because they say very clearly in their

operational guidelines as to how these designations will be brought in. In the guidelines it states, in all cases as to maintain objectivity in the evaluation process, that the entire process is to be made secret. These designations have been made in secret. We are just saying, let us let the sun shine on this, let us let the people have their say, and let us let the Congress act.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. FARR].

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I am really surprised that this bill is on the floor. I think what we are seeing here is that we have nothing to fear but fear itself, and this bill is a good example of it.

We have had the biosphere program around since 1974, through 4 Republican administrations, 2 Democratic administrations. We just heard that people never heard about it. It has been in their backyard for 25 years and they have not heard about it because it has not done any harm.

Do we know what the biosphere program does? It designates, and do we know who asks for the designation? Local communities. And all it does, there is no budget given to them, there is no regulatory authority given to them; it has no effect. What the biosphere program does, it has a common set of processes for measuring environmental conditions, not only in the United States but around the world.

Yesterday, the President of the United States gathered leaders of industry and Members of this House and the Senate to talk about global warming. There was a unanimous consensus that global warming is a problem, and that America must play a leadership role, and at the same time that we need to have more knowledge about this earth and what is happening to it. Yet, at the same time we discussed that, here is one program that has been around for 25 years where they have been measuring impacts on the earth and been able to find out what the effects of global warming and other global environmental issues are.

Frankly, environmental issues are part of our national security. The problem here is nothing has been broken. There is not anything here. All of a sudden, after 25 years, somebody comes in here and says, oh, we have to have congressional approval of this. Well, it sounds good but it is a very dangerous precedent, because what we are saying now is the private land that is petitioned to be in these biospheres and has been so designated, they cannot do that without congressional approval.

It says that State parks, local water districts now have to come to Congress. My God, if we have ever felt that there is something that is a usurpation of local control, of State sovereignty, local government control, of private property rights, this is it. This takes them all away. It takes them all away

and says, "By the way, you have to now go through a process."

In fact, the process that they have outlined in the bill requires that there is more information necessary. They have to measure the impacts within a 10-mile radius. We do not even require that for nuclear power plants, and yet we are going to require it to be designated as the biosphere, and it wipes out all of those designations that we have petitioned for and received.

I think this bill would be setting a very dangerous precedent by Congress overreaching, by fearing fear itself. Where there is nothing broken, they want to break something, and my colleagues, that is the wrong approach. The next thing we know, if one of our communities wants to have a U.N. store in it, we are going to have to ask for congressional approval, and after that, I would not be surprised if merit badges have to be approved by Congress.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume to say that for the record, this program costs the taxpayers of America over \$1 million, just for the record. I want to make that perfectly clear.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. WELDON].

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Chairman, when I was sworn into office in January, I took an oath to uphold the U.S. Constitution. Each of us has taken that same oath, and I rise to remind us of our oath of office and reflect on the words of the Constitution. Article IV, section 2 of the U.S. Constitution states, "The Congress shall have the power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States."

Clearly, the U.S. Constitution gives the U.S. Congress and only the U.S. Congress the authority to make all rules and regulations over Federal lands.

This authority is not given to the President, it is not given to the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. No one in the State Department or the Department of the Interior is given this authority. The Constitution does not give this authority to the United Nations, UNESCO or any other body. The authority to establish rules and regulations over Federal lands is reserved to the U.S. Congress and only the U.S. Congress.

What does H.R. 901, this bill, require the Government to follow? The U.S. Constitution. The bill requires the specific approval of Congress before any area within the United States is subject to an international land use nomination, classification, or designation. Is this so offensive?

H.R. 901 requires the consent of Congress before the Secretary of the Interior may nominate any property in the United States for inclusion in the World Heritage list. I believe this is

certainly consistent with Article IV, section 2.

H.R. 901 specifically prohibits the Federal officials from nominating any land in the United States for designation as a biosphere reserve. Such designations are left to Congress to determine.

The bill requires the Congress to reconsider for designation as a biosphere reserve those sites that have already been designated as biosphere reserves by administrations. It restores to Congress the authority to choose to redesignate or not redesignate these sites. This is a process that should have been in place all along.

H.R. 901 prohibits Federal officials from designating any land in the United States for a special or restricted use under any international agreement unless such designation is specifically approved by law.

I call on all of my colleagues to uphold the U.S. Constitution and the constitutional authority of this body. A vote for H.R. 901 is a vote to preserve the authority of this body. A vote against H.R. 901 is a vote that quite frankly, in my opinion, is inconsistent with Article IV, section 2, and the oath that we have taken.

The Congress shall have the power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO].

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to ask the gentleman a question.

There are about 85 different designations under the Ramsar, under the World Heritage Convention, and under the Man and Biosphere Program. Can the gentleman cite one example of any action taken that limits the use of any land in those, that is inconsistent with the Federal or State law or private property rights?

I yield to the gentleman for that purpose.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Chairman, as the gentleman is aware, the committee has received testimony.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, I have looked through that testimony and I have not found any.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. VENTO. I yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Can the gentleman cite that example?

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Chairman, as a matter of fact, it comes from the gentleman's own State. I have a letter here from Bob Lessard, a State senator, and he states in this letter to me that he is the chairman of the Minnesota Senate Committee on Natural Resources.

He says, "During the mid-1980's the National Park Service proposed a massive Northwoods International Biosphere Reserve."

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, I am asking not what is

proposed. I am asking whether or not there is an example where it has exceeded State, Federal, or local law or private property rights.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York [Mr. HINCHEY].

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Chairman, I just want to say a couple of words in opposition to this legislation, because it has the potential to do so much damage. What this legislation would accomplish if it were signed into law is simply this: It would make it increasingly difficult for our Government to administer cooperative arrangements with other countries to protect the environment here in this country and elsewhere around the world.

We have been a leader in the world in advancing the idea that environmental protection has to be global in order to be effective. We are deeply concerned with such things as weather patterns and climate change and forces that are at play around the world that indicate to us quite clearly that there is nothing that one country or even one continent can do independently of the rest of the world if we are going to be effective in protecting the world's environment. This legislation would make that problem much more difficult and our ability to effect it almost impossible.

Furthermore, the legislation seems to suggest that people's private property is somehow jeopardized and the ability of individual States to regulate either biospheres or heritage sites is in jeopardy, when in fact that is not the case, because the legislation, the program as it exists currently stipulates quite clearly that no activity is possible within any State without the State's consent and full cooperation. Nothing can be done on any public or private property without the cooperation and consent of the public or private property owners.

There is nothing in any of these programs which impedes upon the ability of either a single State or a private property landowner within a State to regulate their private property or public property in whatever way they see fit.

This legislation is the product of an overactive imagination, one which has the ability to see a problem where none exists. It would not be so bad if that were all it was, but it is much more than that. It would destroy our ability to effectuate international cooperation with regard to the environment, and that would be a serious mistake indeed. This legislation should be defeated.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume to remind those listening, though, that there is no law the gentleman just spoke about having to require the cooperation that says they may, that there is no law, because there is no law on the books. That is what I am trying to do, put a law on the books that gives the constitutional duty to the Congress, as it is the Congress's responsibility.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma [Mr. COBURN].

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Chairman, I will read comments and portions of the letter from Senator Bob Lessard of Minnesota.

He says,

As Chairman of the Minnesota Senate Committee on Natural Resources, I commend you for your efforts to defund the Man and Biosphere Program. Since one of the major opponents of your amendment is Minnesota Congressman Bruce Vento, who represents a compact urban district with little undeveloped land, I would like to tell you about the painful experience northern Minnesota had with the Man and Biosphere Program in the past.

During the mid-1980s, the National Park Service proposed a massive Northwoods International Biosphere Reserve that included lands in my Senate district which were included without notifying me or any other local elected officials. In 1984, the state-sponsored Citizens Committee on Voyageurs National Park took up this issue after a casual comment from the then Voyageurs National Park Superintendent Russell Berry that our area had been nominated as a biosphere reserve.

Now, note, they had not been notified; they accidentally found out about it.

At a public meeting of that committee on December 21, 1984 in Minneapolis after the nomination was made, Mr. Berry partially explained one reason for the biosphere reserve by stating, "I'd like to be in as strong a position as possible to influence activities outside the boundaries that would adversely affect the Park in the context of things that would be detrimental to the ecosystem within the Park."

Because the park is surrounded by thousands of acres of private property, Mr. Berry intended to use the biosphere as a means to implement Federal land use controls on private property.

He intended to implement Federal land use controls on private property. "Since my constituents did not want their constitutionally-guaranteed private property rights further threatened, they strongly opposed this proposal. Consequently," 3 years later, "the Northwoods International Biosphere Reserve nomination was withdrawn."

"Until the Man and Biosphere Program is authorized by Congress and statutory protections for private property are guaranteed, I will support all efforts to defund this program. Without these protections," and I would remind our fellow representatives that these are the protections that the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] has in his bill, "unelected Federal bureaucrats will again use biosphere reserves as a means of implementing Federal land use controls on private property."

This is exactly the point. Here is the biosphere reserve, here is the area around it, here is the greater area, intending to impact all private property with a small ownership in this area.

Mr. Chairman, I support this bill, and I include for the RECORD the letter from Senator Lessard which I quoted from in my statement.

ST. PAUL, MN,
July 21, 1997.

Representative TOM COBURN,
429 Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN COBURN: As Chairman of the Minnesota Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Environment, I commend you for your efforts to defund the Man and Biosphere Program (MAB). Since one of the major opponents of your amendment is Minnesota Congressman BRUCE VENTO, who represents a compact urban district with little undeveloped land, I would like to tell you about the painful experience northern Minnesota had with the MAB program in the past.

During the mid-1980's the National Park Service proposed a massive Northwoods International Biosphere Reserve that included lands in my Senate district which were included without notifying me or any other local elected officials. In 1984, the state-sponsored Citizen's Committee on Voyageurs National Park took up this issue after a casual comment from the then Voyageurs National Park Superintendent Russell Berry that our area had been nominated as a biosphere reserve. At a public meeting of that committee on December 1, 1984 in Minneapolis after the nomination was made, Mr. Berry partially explained one reason for the biosphere reserve by stating "I'd like to be in as strong a position as possible to influence activities outside the boundaries that would adversely affect the Park in the context of things that would be detrimental to the ecosystem within the Park."

Because the park is surrounded by thousands of acres of private property, Mr. Berry intended to use the biosphere as a means to implement federal land use controls on private property. Since my constituents did not want their constitutionally-guaranteed private property rights further threatened, they strongly opposed this proposal. Consequently, in 1987 the Northwoods International Biosphere Reserve nomination was withdrawn by National Park Service Director William Penn Mott.

Until the MAB program is authorized by Congress and statutory protections for private property are guaranteed, I will support all efforts to defund this program. Without these protections, unelected federal bureaucrats will again use biosphere reserves as a means of implementing federal land use controls on private property.

Since Mr. VENTO's district is 300 miles away from the ill-fated Northwoods International Biosphere Reserve proposal, I would encourage you to listen to those who represent people who live and work in the affected area rather than those who recreate in the area on weekends.

Thanks again for your efforts in defense of local control and private property.

Sincerely,

BOB LESSARD,
State Senator.

□ 1815

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 7½ minutes.

(Mr. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I have been here 23 years. This may be the craziest damned bill I have ever seen. We are here to correct a problem about a proposal that was made by a United States Senator from the State of Minnesota 10, 12 years ago that was not approved by the process, by the public process getting involved,

and they turned it down. It is not a secret, it was proposed by a United States Senator that this is what he wanted to propose for his State.

We are talking about a program that started in the early 70's, and if we look at the Biosphere Reserve sites, they were approved in 1976 in Alaska, in 1987 in Arizona, in 1976 in Texas, 1981 in Texas, 1983 in California in the redwood range, in the Carolina areas in 1986, in 1976 in the Cascades, the Central Gulf in 1983, the Central Plains in 1976, the Channel Islands in 1986, in 1976 in Montana, in 1976 in Alaska, in 1976 in Colorado, in 1976 in Montana, in 1986 in Alaska, in 1988 in the Golden Gate region of the San Francisco Bay area, in 1976 in Oregon, in 1980 in Hawaii, in 1976 in New Hampshire, in 1976 in Kansas, in Tennessee in 1991, my God, we have got to one in this decade, in 1976 in Puerto Rico, in 1990 in Kentucky, in 1984 in the Mojave in California, in the New Jersey pine lands in 1983, 1979 in Colorado. This is some conspiracy to take over the lands of the United States? This conspiracy has been going on and these places have been designated for 20 years, and the Members have just discovered it?

No, I think what has happened is a very extreme element has been elected to Congress, and somehow now they think they want to make this a problem. They want to make a problem out of the fact that the State of Florida wants to nominate the Everglades as a World Heritage area. That puts it on a par with the Sphinx, the Taj Mahal, the Grand Canyon.

Why do they want to do that? Because they are proud of the Everglades. They put together a committee. They nominated it to the United Nations. They also know that if it is on this list, it is really good for tourism, that their economy will do well. That is why people are trying to get on this list from all over the world, because tourists like to go to areas that have these designations, because they are special, they are worldwide environmental assets.

Now we want to tell them they cannot do that unless they get the approval from the Federal Government. These people have lost their minds. Think about it. This is like telling a person who spends their whole life working to go to the Olympics, but because the medal is given to them by an international body, they have to come to Congress to get approval.

Gee, I think that would be hard. Imagine, you spend your whole life ice skating, weight lifting, you are running world class speeds, but it is an international body, and it is about the sovereignty.

This is not about sovereignty, this is about extremism run amuck. This is about some of the areas that are the pride of our States, the pride of local communities. They are the areas we enjoy with our families, and if they are so fortunate to be a World Heritage area, the whole area wins and the Nation wins, in terms of tourism.

If they are a Biosphere area, we try to do some coordination of research.

We do not do any land use planning. What we have learned over the last 20 years is about ecosystems, that if you preserve just a little corner and you do not think about the watersheds or you do not think about the other landscape areas, maybe preserving that area means nothing, because other things go to deteriorate.

We know now that if we clear-cut the areas way up-river, the silt fills the river, kills the fish, destroys the tourism industry, destroys the fishing industry, and maybe even the water quality downstream. So now we like to look in large landscapes and see, can we preserve this?

Now we have been doing this for 25 years, but now somebody says this is a U.N. plot to take over the sovereignty of the United States. It cannot be, folks, it cannot be that we just discovered this 25 years later. This is the U.N. that we owe \$1 billion to. Maybe they are coming to repossess us or something.

I do not get what is going on here, but this is craziness. This is craziness, that we would tell these local communities that somehow they now have to come to the Federal Government to get our approval because their citizens and their local governments and businesses want to participate.

No, something is very wrong here. There is some other agenda. Because it cannot be about the Mammoth Cave area in Kentucky that was established in 1990. It cannot be about the Olympic National Park in Washington that was established in 1976. No, I do not think that is what it is about. It is not about the Golden Gate, the redwoods, the Golden Gate Park, the Presidio; these areas that millions of people come to visit and participate to bring millions of tourism dollars to the San Francisco Bay Area.

I do not think that is what it is about. There is some craziness in the air. Have these guys been swimming in the Potomac? Do they have this piesteria? What is going on here? No, this bill is not on the level, Mr. Chairman. This bill ought to be rejected overwhelmingly for simply understanding that this is simply not on the level.

We are talking about a program that has been through Republican and Democratic administrations, with the designations in some cases 25 years old. Now we discover a problem that demands that we make these areas go through a Federal procedure and rigmorole so they can have their nomination?

They just cannot be voting for this on that theory, because that is contrary to what many of the supporters of this bill say about the involvement of the Federal Government. Apparently it is not about the involvement of the Federal Government, because they are willing to involve the Federal Government when they want to involve the Federal Government to stymie local initiative, to stymie tourism opportunities, business opportunities.

They now want to give the Congress a check over all of that. These are local

areas that have been nominated and participated in a process because they think it will be good for them. Now somehow we are in a war with the United Nations. We should be honored as a Nation that of all of the assets of the world, the Great Wall of China, the Taj Mahal, that they also think that these assets in the country are worth this kind of designation. This is an honor. This is like, you know, we took care of these places, we preserved them. We took care of and preserved the Grand Canyon. We are trying to preserve and protect and are spending hundreds of millions and billions of dollars on the Everglades and the redwood forests and Olympic Peninsula of the Northwest, and the great boundary waters. We took care of that and now we get recognized.

This, again, is like the scientist who works real hard and he gets a Nobel Prize, but it comes from an international body, so we want Congress to decide whether or not he should be able to accept it. This is an honor for our Nation. This is international recognition because we led the world in environmental protection and the protection of these kinds of assets. Now we want to strip our Nation of that honor? I hope they do not.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN. Members are reminded that profanity is not accepted on the floor of the House.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to remind the people that it is not the government, it is this Congress, the House of the people, not the government. Number two, they say, why have we not done it before? We have not because we have some people that believed in one world that were chairmen of the committee and subcommittee chairmen who never allowed us to have this on the floor of the House.

Now I am the chairman of this committee. This is the right thing to do for America, for the people of America. It is our responsibility under the Constitution. They may not believe in the Constitution, but I do. They may believe in one world, but I do not. I believe in the sovereignty of the United States of America.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri [Mrs. EMERSON].

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to join my colleagues to urge the House's support of H.R. 901, the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act. I really do commend my colleague, the gentleman from Alaska, Chairman YOUNG, for his dedication to protecting the rights that were granted to us in the Constitution.