

BOATING AND CARBON MONOXIDE:
THE SILENT SERIAL KILLER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN), my colleague, I look forward not today but perhaps on the floor here where we can engage in a debate. In fact, I would savor the opportunity to engage in a debate with the gentleman.

Unfortunately, this evening I am not going to be able to rebut the comments that the gentleman has made. Obviously, there is strong disagreement and maybe next week or some week we can make an arrangement where the gentleman and I could show up here on special orders and both sides can yield a little and have a discussion. I would look forward to that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. If there is a particular time, I am available either now or at some other time that the gentleman suggests.

Mr. MCINNIS. I will suggest something to the gentleman tomorrow and maybe we can engage as early as tomorrow evening. Unfortunately, this evening, as the gentleman will soon see, I am going to leave the subject of energy completely and talk about a family in Colorado. But aside from that, perhaps we could contact each other tomorrow.

I think it would be healthy, Mr. Speaker, for us to have this kind of discussion, because certainly I think some of the statements made on that side are inaccurate. I am sure that the Democrats, especially the liberal Democrats, would find some of my comments inaccurate.

But that is not my point for being here this evening. My point here this evening is I want to tell a story. It is a story of great tragedy. It is a tragedy that did not have to happen. It is a tragedy that could have been avoided. It is a tragedy that was brought about in part because of inattentiveness of a governmental agency.

It is a tragedy that has ruined a family, maybe not ruined a family, but certainly marred this family's life.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that my colleagues will pay close attention to the story that I am about to tell this evening. It is about a serial killer. We have all heard about serial killers. We have had a lot of publicity lately about a serial killer. But this is a serial killer that could have easily been brought under control.

This is a serial killer that we could have captured, so to speak, very early in the game. But because of the fact that this serial killer who was known to be a serial killer, who was ignored by the system, this serial killer has resulted in many, many deaths.

My story again this evening will focus on two of those deaths, two young boys, two young boys who had no idea they were in the midst of a serial killer, two young boys whose lives were snuffed out in a matter of a few seconds.

The young boys' families and the young boys' friend's family who were also in the vicinity, how their life has been marred forever because of the fact that attention was not given to the ramifications of a serial killer. In fact, the episode itself was almost by design.

What am I talking about? Let me put it up. I would ask my colleagues and I ask, Mr. Speaker, to stick with me for the next 30 minutes or 40 minutes. This is the serial killer.

I say to my colleagues I hope each and every one pay attention to this, because this could have ramifications to any of my colleagues' constituents that may be recreating as the boating season begins, that may be recreating on a houseboat.

I hope, at the conclusion of my remarks, that one of the first things that my colleagues do when my colleagues return to their districts is that my colleagues speak at town meetings and so on. Take an opportunity to tell your constituents if they have a houseboat, watch out for the serial killer. I am going to tell my colleagues all about the serial killer.

This evening, I am going to spend a few minutes telling this story; and, fortunately, by telling this story, the family of these two young men through a lot of soul searching have had enough courage to step forward and allow me to talk about their tragedy. In fact, they had enough courage to come to Capitol Hill last week and to testify in front of committees.

As the mother of these two children said, she brought to Washington, D.C. a broken heart. That is what she delivered to Washington, D.C., a broken heart. It takes a lot of gumption for some folks to really come out and tell that.

Let us talk a little more about that. I will get into that later on. But let us look at boating and carbon monoxide, the silent serial killer. Let me repeat that, the silent serial killer. Right there, the back of that boat on the swimming platform.

This tragedy, by the way, occurred last August. Let us take a look at The Arizona Republic's article. It was published on December 31, 2000. Frankly, it is one of the best news accounts of a story that I read in my professional career.

It was by Maureen West and Judd Slivka, I hope that is the correct pronunciation of the author. It is August 2, and the sun is shining on the white paint of the houseboat named the Canyon Explorer. That is the name of the houseboat, the Canyon Explorer. Who wants to go skiing and who wants to go tubing, Ken Dixey, the father asks the nine kids on the 55-foot houseboat. Only two of his sons, Dillon, 11, and Logan, 8, want to go.

A pause in the story. There is Dillon. There is Logan. By the way, there is Ken. My colleagues will hear that name during the story. When I refer during the article, I will refer to Ken and his wife, Bambi. By the way, they are from Parker, Colorado. Dillon was 11 years old. Logan is 8.

Let us go back to the article. Who wants to go skiing and who wants to go tubing, Ken Dixey asks the nine children on the 55-foot houseboat, only two of his sons, Dillon, 11, and Logan, 8, want to go. Anybody else want to ski? But there are no other takers.

So Ken and Bambi Dixey of Parker, Colorado take their two youngest out alone on the fifth day of their annual houseboat vacation, with so many other people around, a total of nine children and four adults, there has not been much time to spend with one particular person.

The Dixeys have been coming out to Lake Powell for 15 years with their friends, Mark and Polly Tingey of Fort Collins, Colorado. At first, the couple went alone, but then as their children grew out of diapers and into swim trunks, they took them along.

At first, the children lived in life jackets on board the boat, but as they got older, all of the children turned into excellent swimmers as if born to water. Logan, in fact, wanted to be a Navy SEAL.

In 1994, Ken Dixey and Mark Tingey secretly bought a share of a privately owned houseboat as a present to their wives. The boat was named the Canyon Explorer, and it was a 55-foot Stardust Cruiser.

Every year, they reserved the first week of August on that boat for the past 12 years, they had taken the same route on the lake: leave Bullfrog Marina in Utah, putter along to Iceberg Canyon, spend a night there, and then move on to Neskahi Wash, which stands off an isolated still inlet that is perfect for skiing.

The inlet has a natural diving board too, a rock shelf that is natural for kids to catapult themselves off it. They nicknamed the place Jump Rock, and it became a tradition to visit there. Even after Logan hit the water the wrong way the year before, Logan banged himself up but he kept jumping anyway.

Another tradition was the first day safety lecture that the fathers gave their children: no running or playing tag on the boat, always swim with a buddy, the buddy system.

With the children getting older and more independent, Mark added something to his safety lesson this year. If we ever lost anyone, he told the kids, it would change our lives forever. So the father says to his two sons, as well as to the other children on the boat, if we ever lost any one of you, it would change our lives forever. So pay attention to these safety rules.

It is now 5 days later after the first day, August 2, a good day, and the safety lecture seems to be far away. Beneath the blazing sun, Logan masters

the art of slaloming and skiing on one ski. He had tried it a few times before, but something had always gone wrong.

On this day, something finally clicks, he nails it. Logan, remember, the rock jumper, is fearless. When one of his friends could not haul in a fish, he jumped in and tackled it, hooks and all.

He loses one of his front teeth on this day. It is a baby tooth, and his mother, Bambi, promises that she will hide it that night for the Tooth Fairy. Although Logan is an adventurer, Dillon has persistence, refusing to let go of the tow bar cutting back and forth through the ski boat's wake.

He sings as he skis, and he talks to the rocks as he zips by. Let go, his father yells playfully, but 11-year-old Dillon does not listen. It is too much fun skimming along the lake.

Though he suffers from an occasional migraine headache, Dillon is confident. He is a little league pitcher at the top of his game. The last time out before this trip, he actually pitched a no-hitter. He is going to be a baseball star, he says. Then he is going on to become an actor. I have got plans he tells everyone. Nobody doubts him.

Logan, always a cuddler, sits on his dad's lap, while Ken drives the boat. When Bambi's attention is elsewhere, Ken lets Logan, 8, steer the boat and shows him how to work the clutch on the boat.

Logan is the aggressive and outgoing one who would crack jokes with the adults at a party. While the other kids goofed around with Nintendo downstairs, Dillon is the sweet kid, the boy who told the girl who had just gotten glasses that she looked nice when she did not want to go into her classroom.

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When they make it back to the Canyon Explorer, Logan is fired up and tells the other kids about his skiing accomplishments and about the tooth fairy's impending visit.

The parents start the grill for dinner. Normally it is chicken and burgers, but tonight it is steak. After dinner, the adults wash dishes while the kids play on the boat. The kids are itching to go in the water for a swim. It is a nightly tradition.

The adults turn the houseboat's generator on to power the television and run the air conditioner. Temperatures are falling, but it is still in the 80-degree area. Outside it is getting darker. The moon is a milky silver in the sky. Someone flips the back lights on, illuminating the water. It is shortly before 9 o'clock in the evening. A thunderhead is gathering strength on the horizon, dark against the darkening sky.

The adults walk to the front of the houseboat to get candy bars out of the freezer. With this crowd, we need all the energy we can get, they joke; and they hear splashes from the back of the boat.

Dillon sticks his head out of the houseboat cabin and looks at the

adults. His mother looks back at Dillon. Dillon cocks his head, mugs for her, and then walks away.

About 5 minutes later, the serial killer strikes. It is Connor, the Dixie's 14-year-old son, running up the side of the houseboat screaming something about Dillon and Logan, something about Dillon flopping in the water. Everyone thought he was joking around, and then he was gone. All the kids now are screaming.

Ken and Mark run to the stern of the boat. The children are back there pointing at the water. Dillon and Logan went down. They have not come back up. Up front, Bambi has a flash of a thought. Dillon's migraine headaches. It must be something else, something worse. Epilepsy? But Logan is missing, too. Both of them are missing.

They were swimming, and they ducked beneath the boat, surfacing in the cavity beneath the swim deck, precisely where the serial killer laid in wait. That is where the generator vents its odorless, colorless carbon monoxide gas.

It is hot, the children hear Dillon say. Moments later, moments later, Dillon's body appears 15 feet off the side of the houseboat, twitching, the children said. Then Dillon disappears.

At the same time, the Tingey's 13-year-old son Mark, Jr., is on his knees on the graded swim platform. He sees Logan bumping his head against the platform. Tingey reaches under it. He tries to grab the 8-year-old, but Logan sinks and he sinks too quickly for Mark, Jr., to grab him.

Ken and the elder Tingey, Mark, dive into the water. Tingey looks beneath the water, but it is too silty. He grabs a pair of swim goggles and looks again. Nothing. An accomplished SCUBA diver, Ken Dixey, the father, dives towards where the children last saw Dillon's bubbles, but he cannot reach the lake bed.

He manages to make it to the bottom closer to the water's edge, but he runs out of air, and he has to surface. On a good day, the father can dive free-dive to 40 feet. For some reason, he cannot do that today. He comes up for air, and he ducks down again.

They turn out the lights, and they turn off the generator, thinking that the boys' disappearance might have something to do with fumes. But there is no light at all, and quickly the lights and the generator go back on.

About 15 minutes after the first scream, Tingey and Dixey bump into each other alongside the ship's side. In 20 years, in 20 years of knowing Dixey, Tingey has not seen a thing that this man cannot do. But his face, his face now says it all. They are gone. "I will never see my boys alive again."

Bambi is up front trying to raise someone, anyone on the ship's VHF radio. But she cannot raise anybody. She keeps trying.

The two men make a plan. Ken, Ken will dive deep to reach the boys. Tingey will swim to the rear where

they were last seen beneath the swim deck, a place that the kids discovered a few days earlier while untangling a rope.

Tingey swims to the houseboat's stern and slips under the swim deck, but there are no children under the swim deck. He begins to feel light-headed and sick. Something clicks in his head. I am in danger. Something else. The fumes, it had something to do with what happened to the boys.

Tingey struggles out from beneath the platform. Cole, the Dixey's 16-year-old son pushes him to the swim deck where he and others congregate, shouting the missing boys names: Logan. Dillon. Logan. Logan. Dillon. Dillon.

It is 15 minutes until Tingey feels normal again. As soon as he does, he grabs his cell phone, and he gets in his ski boat to race out of the canyon where the signal can register on the local cell phone. He dials 911. It is now 10:20 in the evening Utah time, a little more than an hour after both of these young boys disappeared.

Ken, the father, is still diving. He is bumping into rocks. He is grabbing anything under water that has form, anything that could be one of his sons. Bambi is swimming around the sides of the boat to see if the children have somehow gotten stuck.

When the boys' parents finally get out of the water, they begin walking along the water's edge crying, looking to see if their boys have washed up onshore. It is a gruesome vigil made worse by the night that was still darkening.

On the boat, the children are on their knees, the rest of the children are on their knees; and they are praying, and they are crying.

Out on the lake Tingey is calling Bambi's best friend in Parker. "You need to come out here now," he says. "You need to help the Dixeys get back home when this is all over."

Ken, worried about Tingey since his experience on the swim platform, comes out in a ski boat to check on his friend. The phone call is done. The two men head back to the houseboat, each in their own boat.

Now, why did I this evening go through this story with all of my colleagues? Why relate such a horrific incident to my colleagues here? Why did I go into the detail about the father and the mother yelling for Logan, yelling for Dillon? Why did I talk about these two young people? The reason is simple. This thing is a serial killer right here.

Do my colleagues know what, how many more Logans and how many more Dillons are going to be out there in one of these boats? We are just starting the boating season this year. How many more of these tragedies are going to occur? If we do our job, if the Coast Guard does its job, if parents do their job now, the parents that have found out from us, if we can all team together, and that is exactly what the Dixeys have asked us to do and the

Tingeys have coordinated an effort to do, we think we can save a lot of lives.

Do my colleagues know something, that life might be one's own child. It might be one's life. Listen to me carefully about the defect on this boat. Listen to me carefully about what happens on fumes on houseboats. This could have been avoided.

The whole reason I am talking about Logan tonight, the whole reason that I am talking about Dillon tonight is because these deaths, these two young men, one of them wanted to be an actor, the other was well thought of, both expert swimmers. These deaths could have been avoided, and these families want to avoid any other deaths.

Is it just restricted to these two young men? We do not think so. We know on Lake Powell alone that there are at least nine other confirmed deaths that we know of in the past, they were classified as drowning deaths or swimming accidents. It is this tragedy, it is this tragedy last summer that brought to the attention of several interested people, hey, something is out there. There is a serial killer out there.

What a coincidence, a tragic coincidence that two young boys, brothers, died within seconds of each other. Something on that boat, something on that boat led to those deaths. That is when the investigation really got some momentum.

Now, let me tell my colleagues that, years ago, 1995, there was a letter written to the Coast Guard by an expert in this field saying, Coast Guard, be aware, there is a silent killer in existence on houseboats throughout this country, not just Lake Powell. Let me tell my colleagues here, we are not just talking about a lake in the West. These houseboats are distributed nationwide.

They sent a letter to the Coast Guard. They said there is a silent killer out there. We have got the proof. There is no question about the defect on the boat. There is a defect on these houseboats. They are not being repaired by the houseboat manufacturers. We have got to educate the public.

There was a letter written to this, basically to this problem. Unfortunately, it got filed away. The Coast Guard ignored the letter. It was 5 years ago, well, well, well before the deaths of these two young men.

Now, that said about the Coast Guard. Let me tell my colleagues that the Coast Guard now, under its current admiral, under the vice admiral and the people in the Coast Guard, are completely cooperative. They have been, I think what one would classify as a good partner. They are becoming tenacious, not only in their educational campaign so that we do not have another death like Dillon and like Logan. They are also tenacious in the recall effort that we have tried to put together.

We have got quite an effort back here in Capitol Hill to try and make sure that we never again have to experience

what some of my colleagues here on the floor, what some of us experienced last week when we listened to the tragedy of the Dixey family. Hopefully, there will not be another family like the Dixey family as a result of one of these silent killers on the houseboat.

Let us take a look at a little more detail exactly why this houseboat is a silent killer, why it is a serial killer.

First of all, carbon monoxide. Let us talk. Now we all know about carbon monoxide. We are around carbon monoxide all the time. If one walks down the sidewalk, and a car goes by here in Washington, D.C. or Denver, Colorado, or San Francisco, or Miami or New York, or wherever one wants to go, there is lots of cars; and we have carbon monoxide. But we have been raised to believe that carbon monoxide is not dangerous in an open area.

Carbon monoxide. All of us knows, it is deadly if one starts a car in the garage and one runs the engine, the carbon monoxide accumulates in the garage. There is nowhere for it to go. It is fatal. We know that.

We know that if one sticks a hose on the exhaust and one starts to breathe it, within a few seconds, one is going to be dead. We know that.

What this tragic incident of the Dixeys brought to light is that this silent killer can kill in the open. That is exactly what happened here.

Let us go over it, because part of my effort this evening is to educate all of us so that we can go back to our constituents and tell our constituents what to look out for, to help in this educational effort that the Dixeys and the Tingeys have really spearheaded. That is their purpose in coming back and sharing this horrible, horrible tragedy with us, because they want to educate other people about how to avoid that serial killer that found them early that evening.

Be aware of these kind of symptoms. Carbon monoxide, it is colorless. It is an odorless gas. Now, we have heard that. One does not know it is around. It has no color to it. It has no odor to it. One does not know that one is inhaling carbon monoxide gas.

Incomplete combustion of carbon chemicals, it is the leading cause of poisonings in our country. If one looks across our country, that is the number one cause of poisonings. As I said, it is a silent killer.

Here is what is important, symptom progression. First of all, one starts to get dizzy. One gets a headache. One becomes nauseous, disoriented. One can have convulsions, one will have convulsions, coma and death. Of course the order and the length of how long this goes is totally dependent on the quantity that one takes into one's body.

Now, for any of my colleagues that have a houseboat or have any of their constituents who have a houseboat, please, please, please pay attention to me now for the next few moments. Let me show my colleagues where the serial killer rests. Let me show my col-

leagues what results in almost instantaneous death if one is within the reach of that serial killer.

Here it is. This is the back of a houseboat. Any of my colleagues that have been on a houseboat will recognize this is the back of the houseboat. This is the canvas that goes around. Right in this area is where one's TV is, one's living quarters, and so on. This is the swimming platform. One can see the houseboat, by design, has a step down right here. One steps from this deck on to this small deck.

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That is the swimming platform. Here you can see they have a slide that actually goes right off. This area right here, this entire area, is designed to be a swim platform. That is where you do the swimming. They do not want you swimming in the front of the houseboat. They did not design the houseboat for you to swim on the side of it, they designed it right here. So you swim right there. There is the ladder. That is the swim ladder right there.

Guess what is happening? Some of these houseboats, including the houseboat, the Canyon Explorer that the Dixeys and the Tingeys were on, unbeknownst to them, had the generator which turns the lights and the air-conditioning on, not a big engine, small motor, not the motor that drives the boat, but a generator that provides electricity and power within the living quarters, it has its exhaust exit right in here and right over here.

Now, let me show my colleagues what happens to it. Again, take a close look at this. This is the back. Here is our problem. This is where the arms of the silent killer are. There is where they are going to reach out, anywhere within either side of this ladder.

Here is what begins to happen. You go inside the houseboat. Now, here is the glass sliding door. You go in the houseboat, turn on the generator in there, here is the swimming platform and the swim ladder right here, and so you turn on your generator, and this is what begins to happen with the exhaust. Now, remember, when you just take a look at the exhaust, you see mere exhaust. You do not see the carbon monoxide. You can see the exhaust, you just do not see the content of the carbon monoxide. You see more smoke coming out of a car that has not been tuned up down here on Main Street.

So here, when they start it up, there is a little tiny exit valve right here, right on this side, and there is a small one right over here. And what begins to happen is the exhaust goes out into an open area. Again, this case brought to our attention that you can get carbon monoxide poisoning in an open area. That has not been our assumption. It has all changed as a result of those tragic deaths.

What begins to happen is that gas does not come out into the open. Because of the chamber that is created

right underneath the swim deck, where logically you would swim, frankly I would swim under there, it begins to turn in circles and it begins to circulate within that cavity. It is not exiting the cavity with any kind of velocity. It is locked into that cavity right there. When you jump in the water, as you go down the ladder, you are within inches. Your face is within inches of that silent killer.

Let us take a look at what the measurements are. We had some scientists that went in on this. We had some people that went in and did the expert work on this. Take a very careful look at what happens. This is carbon monoxide. The only important thing we need to remember here is its parts per million. It just gives us some kind of measurement so that we can get an idea of what is going on underneath this deck. So the numbers are parts per million, and I am just going to give you an idea of the intensity that is building up in this deck.

Let us look. Okay, 35 parts per million. Thirty-five is the maximum exposure allowed by the EPA in outside air for a 1-hour period of time. So our Federal regulations, through the EPA, say that the maximum exposure that we will allow to be polluted for a 1-hour period of time is 35. Thirty-five is also the maximum exposure allowed by OSHA in the workplace over an 8-hour period of time. So over an 8-hour period of time, when OSHA comes in and inspects a workplace, it is a violation if they find an amount or a concentration over 35.

At 200 parts per million, you begin to feel some symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning. One, you begin to have a mild headache, you begin to feel fatigue, you have nausea, dizziness, and you become confused. That is at 200. At 400, you begin to have a serious headache.

Now, remember, 35 is what EPA said really ought to be the maximum over an hour. At 400, you begin to get a serious headache. Other symptoms intensify within a 1- to 2-hour period of time; 2½ to 3½ hours at 400 and you collapse in danger of death. So doubling that, at 800, we are doubling that, at 800 dizziness, nausea, convulsions. Within 45 minutes, you are dead. In 2 hours, at 800, you are dead in 2 hours.

Now, let us begin to take a look: 1,200. 1,200. Remember, 35 is the maximum EPA wants out there over an hour period. Now, 1,200 exposure considered to be immediately dangerous to life and health. If you have a measurement of 1,200 parts per million of carbon monoxide, death is impending. The danger is immediate. You are in an emergency situation.

Let us go on from that emergency situation. We have measured in the back of boats, and I am not talking about below the swim deck, I am talking about this area right here. Up here, in this area right here on a houseboat. If that generation is going, we have measured carbon monoxide, not locked

underneath, but carbon monoxide on these decks in this category right here, in excess of 1,200; the amount measured in open air near the rear end of several boats that were examined. So several of the boats they found a level, not in the water, not next to the generator, in an open arena, exposure considered to be immediately dangerous to life and health.

Let us go on. If you go to 3,200 parts per million, 3,200 parts per million, you will be dead in 30 minutes. If you go to 6,400 parts per million, you will be dead in 10 to 15 minutes. That is at 6,400. Now, look at 10,000. In 6,400, you are dead in 10 to 15 minutes. Boom, it is over. Ten thousand, the amount that was measured in open air on or near the swim platform of several boats.

So at 6,400, 6,400, around there, if you are exposed to that, you are dead in 10 minutes. What they found out in this area right here, this area right here, are measurements of 10,000. Ten thousand. Remember, it is has always been the assumption that if the carbon monoxide gets out, it dilutes so quickly that it is not harmful to humans. Ten thousand was the measurement in the back of the boat.

At 12,000, it is immediate death. Death is immediate at 12,000. Seven thousand to 30,000. Remember, 12,000 is immediate. Thirty thousand is the amount measured on houseboats on Lake Powell under the swim platform. Thirty thousand is the measurement underneath this swim platform if your generator exhaust comes out underneath it. And several houseboats on Lake Powell today and several houseboats on lakes throughout this country have a measurement of 30,000, and 10,000 is instant death.

You want to know what happened to the Dixeys' sons? That is exactly what happened to the Dixeys' sons. You want to know a death that was avoidable? They knew that was in existence. You think these houseboat manufacturers repaired those boats? They did not repair them. They knew about them. They knew there was a problem. The Coast Guard knew there was a problem.

You wonder about how the Dixeys felt when they knew about this? I mean, what gives? Do we know we have a silent killer; do we know we have a serial killer?

Now, again I want to come back and tell you that the Coast Guard is now tenacious. We all wish they would have done it 5 years ago. But I will tell you, it bothers me with the manufacturers of these boats. What do you think when you put an exhaust out underneath a swim platform? That is exactly where this exhaust comes out.

You can see here on this picture, I hope, colleagues, you can see on this picture the haze in there. That is where it exits. What kind of rocket scientist would tell you that on a swim platform that might be where the people do their swimming. Of course it is where they do their swimming. That is where you must have an expectation that

people will be in that water; that people will be within inches of that exhaust.

You need to know something? There are lots of people today, in fact, there may be some today as I am now speaking to my colleagues, there may be some out there today who have children now currently swimming off the back of their boat. It is boating season. I hope not. Because if it is happening, we stand to have another horrible, horrible tragedy like the Dixey family went through.

We are trying to do everything we can with this. First of all, the Arizona Republic, to their credit, they have done an excellent job in trying to get that story out. Of course, Arizona is a big boating State. 48 Hours is going to do a story on it. USA Today has done a story on it. New York Times has done a story. All the Denver Press, the Colorado Press, the Grand Junction Daily Sentinel has done excellent stories, Associated Press is getting that story out, and local TV news is getting it out.

We are starting to get word out where that serial killer is located. Because if we know where it is located, and we educate the public where this serial killer hides out, we can avoid the kind of tragedies that we saw with the Dixey family. It is our obligation to try and be as tenacious as we can be, to be as determined as we can be to get the message out. When you get on a houseboat this summer, you should say this to your constituents; when you get on a houseboat this summer, for God sakes, take a look at the back by the swim platform. Where does that generator exhaust come out?

And if you are renting a boat, you should insist it have a carbon monoxide detector inside the boat. And if the carbon monoxide detector goes off, pay attention to it. I went down to Lake Powell not long ago, and I was talking to the maintenance guy down there on rental boats. They have carbon monoxide detectors on those houseboats at Lake Powell that are rented by the concessionaire. And by the way, they have revented, or they do not vent on the back on those houseboats that are rented. But I asked him, I said, well, what do you find about these carbon monoxide detectors? The guy said most of the time these detectors come back disconnected because the people who have rented the boat think the thing is malfunctioning because it is going off. Do not do that. You have just invited the serial killer into your bedroom if you think that carbon monoxide detail detector is not working.

Now, why? Why am I so intense this evening? And why do I continue to reiterate the tragedy that the Dixey and the Tingey family suffered at Lake Powell in August of last year? Am I against the houseboat manufacturers, as some might suggest? Of course not. I love being out on Lake Powell. Water sports generally are very safe if you

are responsible, as the Dixey family was. They lectured their kids. They sat all these kids down, gave them a safety lecture before they did that. When they were young, they were in life jackets. As they grew older, they took swimming lessons, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Responsible safety lessons are necessary.

But what is sad about this situation, and the reason that I get so worked up about it, is no matter how many swimming lessons the Dixeys would have given these two young men, no matter how much, no matter how much time Ken, or no matter how much time Bambi spent with these two boys on swimming lessons, no matter how many safety lectures they would have given them, if they would have been 5 feet away from these young boys, and by the way, they were not much further away than that, nothing could have saved those boys.

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Why? Because the killer that got them, that carbon monoxide under the swim platform where people expect people to swim was instant death. That is exactly what happened. That is why I get worked up about it.

Is it avoidable? You bet. One, you can vent this carbon monoxide straight up. What does it mean? It means it is going to cost a little money. Last week in our committee hearing, we had a committee hearing, the Dixey family and the Tingey family were willing to come to Washington and spill all of their sadness. The mother brought a broken heart. The father in his testimony in front of our committee last week said, "As a father, I feel I have an inherent responsibility. Probably the ultimate charge, an inherent responsibility, to protect my family. As my boys were drowning, I know that they thought and they expected that I would rescue them."

Well, Mr. Dixey, you never had a chance. You and Bambi could have done everything possible, but because of the fact you did not know about that serial killer lurking underneath the swim platform of your houseboat, you had no chance.

Frankly for a couple like that, Mr. Speaker, for a couple like that to have these guilty feelings about what they could have done, there is nothing they could do. But somebody could have done something about it. First of all, the Coast Guard back in 1995; and again, they are doing something about it now. The boat manufacturers, and I should add now that the boat manufacturers, now that we have a recall, I went to the Coast Guard and I said, "Put a recall."

The Coast Guard said, "We are not sure we can." They do their research, and they can put a recall. Now we have cooperation from the boat manufacturers, but that cooperation did not start until we had a recall. We did not get cooperation 5 years ago. Some of these boat manufacturers I think knew what was happening.

It should have been fixed. And if it would have been fixed, we would have two young men in our presence today. They would be alive, Dillon and Logan, and Bambi and Ken, they would not be in this kind of situation.

So colleagues, what do I want the message to be to you tonight? Try and educate. Have town meetings if you have an opportunity. We have a Memorial Day break coming up. We know on Memorial Day a lot of people go to the water. This is an opportunity for you, too. I want to do it. This is an opportunity for you to tell the story that I am relaying to you tonight, for you to tell the Dixey story and relate as the Dixeys have prayed ever since they lost their two wonderful children, as they have prayed as someone might, for you to go out and tell their story so no other family suffers as the Dixey family has.

That is if you have a houseboat, for gosh sake's, be aware of the danger of carbon monoxide. If you have got a houseboat, when you go to rent a houseboat, or if you are going to use a houseboat and it has carbon monoxide, it has generators, this is not the engines that drive the propellers, this is the generator that keeps the lights on inside the cabin.

If you rent a houseboat this weekend, Mr. Speaker, take a look at the back. If the generator exhaust comes out the back, tell the owner of that houseboat, number one, you are not going to rent it. And number two, he should not rent it to anybody. Tell him he has a silent serial killer on his hands, and his responsibility is to put a lock and key on that boat and until that boat is refitted, not let anybody touch it. If you do not, some of our constituents are going to suffer the same horrible tragedy which creates a nightmare every night of the Dixeys' life. I am asking for my colleagues to help this evening.

Mr. Speaker, this evening I was ready to talk about the budget. I wanted to talk about energy. I wanted to rebut the previous comments that were made obviously attacking President Bush I think unfairly. But sometimes there is a priority. My priority tonight was to put aside the discussion on the budget, to put aside the discussion on our energy problem, to try and relay a message about how deadly and how dangerous these houseboats are, and how important it is for us, Mr. Speaker, and how important it is for everyone that we come in contact with when we go out on our Memorial Day break, to know exactly what the danger of these houseboats are. It is very, very important.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, let me just thank specifically the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LOBIONDO), the gentleman called a hearing on boating safety, and to thank my colleagues that have given us the time and their energy to get this message out. I do want to issue a deep appreciation to the families and so on who are willing to help us get this message out.

I wish Mr. Speaker and all of my colleagues a safe Memorial Day weekend.

QUALITY OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be joined this evening by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), my good friend.

Mr. Speaker, I want to begin, as the first Independent elected to Congress in 40 years and I have been here now for 11 years, I want to talk about some issues that are often not addressed by my colleagues in the House or the Senate and some issues that are not talked about on television or radio with our corporate media but issues that need to be discussed and debated and thought about.

The first issue that I want to talk about is the most important issue. That is the quality of American democracy.

Mr. Speaker, we have an American flag behind us, and the American flag reflects the struggle and the deaths of so many Americans who fought and died to preserve our democracy. Democracy is a big deal. It means that the people, ordinary people, working people, low-income people, people who are not wealthy and powerful, but ordinary people having the right to control their own lives and making the decisions which impact on their children and on the future of the country, that is a big deal and something that we kind of take for granted.

What I am extremely concerned about, that the quality of our democracy and our democratic traditions are deteriorating, and that more and more people are giving up on our democratic process or not paying attention to what is going on and believe for many very good reasons that this institution, that Washington, D.C., is controlled by big money interests who do not pay attention to the lives and struggles of ordinary people, to the middle class. People are saying why should I bother to vote, why should I bother to participate. The deck is stacked against me, big money controls both political parties, big money controls the agenda.

Let me just say a word about what goes on in this country in terms of money. Let me quote if I can, Mr. Speaker, from today's Washington Post. "Vice President CHENEY held a reception at his official residence last night for \$100,000 donors to the Republican Party, giving the Democrats, after years of enduring GOP criticism of their use of the perks of office for fund-raising a chance to accuse Republicans of engaging in the same practices. CHENEY's hospitality was a prelude to tonight's Presidential gala, a black-tie dinner that is expected to raise at least \$15 million for the Republican National Committee, and will