

my friend, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR), for offering this motion to instruct; and I would recommend to my colleagues to support this motion and send a message to the conferees that this is the direction we need to move in in farm policy in our Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The Chair would announce that the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) has 9½ minutes remaining, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR) has 2 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) has 14½ minutes remaining; and that pursuant to the previous order of the House of today, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

#### RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1711

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. HART) at 5 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.

#### REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 580, FAIRNESS FOR FOSTER CARE FAMILIES ACT OF 2001

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 107-412) on the resolution (H. Res. 390) providing for consideration of the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 586) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that the exclusion from gross income for foster care payments shall also apply to payments by qualified placement agencies, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTION TO OFFER MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2646, FARM SECURITY ACT OF 2001

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, pursuant to clause 7(c) of rule XXII, I hereby announce my intention to offer a motion to instruct the conferees on H.R. 2646. The form of the motion is as follows:

Mr. BACA 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. 2646, an Act to provide for continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2011, be instructed to agree to provisions contained in section 452 of the Senate

amendment, relating to restoration of benefits to children, legal immigrants who work, refugees, and the disabled.

#### MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2646, FARM SECURITY ACT OF 2001

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the further consideration of the motion to instruct conferees on the bill, H.R. 2646, offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH).

The Clerk will rereport the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. SMITH of Michigan 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. 2646 (an Act to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2011) be instructed—

(1) to agree to the provisions contained in section 169(a) of the Senate amendment, relating to payment limitations for commodity programs; and

(2) to insist upon an increase in funding for—

(A) conservation programs, in effect as of January 1, 2002, that are extended by title II of the House bill or title II of the Senate amendment; and

(B) research programs that are amended or established by title VII of the House bill or title VII of the Senate amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. When proceedings were postponed earlier today, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) had 9½ minutes remaining; the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) had 14½ minutes remaining; and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR) had 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the time of the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR) be returned to my time to be yielded to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) upon his arrival.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

□ 1715

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Just to review from where we were an hour ago, I think it should be made clear to all of our colleagues and the American public that the purpose of subsidies since the beginning, since back in the 1930s when we tried to make sure that the agricultural industry was going to survive, the purpose has been to protect family farmers. Unfortunately, over the years, we have had programs that made it tough for any farmer to survive, because part of the farm policy in this country has been to encourage a little more production than what we need.

The effect of that increased production a little over and above the current market demand meant that prices tended to stay down. So there was an attempt, of course, to keep those prices

somewhat low for consumers and what happened in the evolution and the pressures that were put on farms in the United States over these years was that the small farmer was backed up against the wall, the medium-sized farmer felt like if he added a few more acres, then he might be able to send his kids to the same music lessons and schools and have the same benefits as their country cousins, so that medium-sized farmer said, "Look, well, I'll buy some more land, I'll spend a couple of hours extra a day and try to make it."

What we have done is had programs that encouraged larger and larger farms. That is part of the reason that we have this motion to instruct today, is to give a little greater relative advantage to the smaller farms by, in effect, saying all of your production is going to be eligible for the price support payments that we have in farm programs.

Where the big, larger farms, the very big farms, we are saying, there is going to be a limit to how much of your commodity that you produce that is going to be eligible for this price protection. Therefore, it is going to have the effect on these larger farmers to think twice about what the market price is going to be if there is no support subsidy price.

The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) and I, we both want to have a situation where we expand markets, where we have better farm prices and hopefully the kind of farm prices that the support payments that are guaranteed in this farm bill will not even be applicable because that is what we are looking at, is better farm commodity prices to keep more farmers in business.

Unfortunately, today about 82 percent of all of our farm subsidies go to just 17 percent of the farms. By providing unlimited subsidies, we have encouraged huge corporate farm operations to get bigger and bigger, squeezing out family farmers. With this we have encouraged excess production that has tended to reduce prices paid to farmers.

That is why I think it is so important that we have some kind of price limit, that somehow, someday, someplace, whether it is a limit of \$275,000 as suggested by the Senate or maybe a half a million, but it is bad for farmers, it is bad for the support they get from the American people to have these exorbitant millions of dollars given to some of these megafarm operations.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BERRY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. Once again, I want to say how much I appreciate the opportunity to stand before this House and proclaim what a wonderful job and what an extraordinary thing the American farmer is. I know the gentleman from Michigan is a good fellow. I know he means well. He does not intend to hurt anyone. And I have great respect for him. Unfortunately, I would have to say that he just

simply does not understand the food production system in this country and as hard as I have tried to explain it, we still seem to be hung up on this issue.

Let me just tell you what would happen if this motion to instruct were honored by the conferees. We would resurrect the marriage penalty, something we did away with last year. A divorced couple would be eligible for \$175,000 more in government subsidies than a married couple. It discriminates against women. It disenfranchises women. Women would get one-fifth of what a man gets when they qualify for farm programs. There is nothing right about that. But one of the worst things it would do, and I cannot imagine that the people that wrote this really knew what they were doing when they wrote it, it would basically impose the death tax.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Point of order, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. HART). The gentleman will state his point of order.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Was that a derogatory remark towards the Senators that wrote this language in the farm bill and is that appropriate in the Chamber?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded not to make improper references to the Senate.

Mr. BERRY. Madam Speaker, if I may reclaim my time, I do not remember saying anything about the Senate.

But having dealt with that issue, it resurrects the death tax. In the First Congressional District of Arkansas, people work hard. They save their money. They try to accumulate a small farm. They are able to do that in some cases, and they have been able to do it in the past 60 to 70 years because we had a good, strong farm program. And they pass it on to their widow. That land takes care of that widow until she is gone from this earth. If this motion to instruct were honored by the conferees, we would lose that ability for the widow to benefit from farm programs, because they would not be eligible anymore the way this is written. That is the reason I question the way it was written.

It has been said over and over today that these farm programs cause overproduction. I would try to explain one more time the only reason we need to have farm programs and a safety net for our farmers in this country is to ensure the adequate production of food and fiber so that the American people do not have to depend on production offshore to get enough to eat. If this program is so bad, why do we not have a great accumulation?

We do not have overproduction today. I would also make the point to have enough to eat, you have to have too much, because there is no way to gauge accurately how much crop to plant so that you produce exactly so much that the American people have enough and that they have a reason-

ably priced food supply and a safe food supply.

What the people that support this motion to instruct do not understand is, if this were allowed to stand, if the conferees accepted this, it would be a dramatic move toward bad conservation, it would cause even more consolidation. The consolidation of American agriculture has not been driven by farm programs. It has been driven by technology. It just simply does not take as many people to produce a pound of food anymore than it did 50 years ago. That has changed. It takes a lot more equipment. It takes more expensive equipment. That is what is driving the consolidation of American agriculture.

We have heard people talk today about how bad conservation needs to be dealt with, and I agree with that. But the fact is poor folks have poor ways. When our farmers are nearly broke, they cannot take the necessary conservation measures that they would like to take and that they know they need to take in some cases.

They are forced to take bad short-cuts. They are forced to do things that they do not even want to do in an attempt to be an efficient producer. Over and over again, we have heard that these payment limits that have been talked about so much, and the fact is we have payment limits today. We have had payment limits since 1985. This is not something new. We have complied with those laws all along.

We will comply with whatever law is written and whatever the House and Senate come out with for a farm bill, out of the conference committee with. But the fact is, that has nothing to do with the size of the farms. What we are talking about here is penalizing the most efficient producers in the world, the people that are really, really good at what they do, we are talking about making it much more difficult for them.

We have to have a safety net, as I said, because it is a national security issue to have enough food supply within our own country. If we do not have a safety net in times like this when the value of the dollar is so high that it takes American producers out of the market through no fault of their own, it is not because of overproduction. It is because the value of the dollar is so high that you can go to Argentina or Brazil and buy half, again, as much product as you can in the U.S. for the same amount of money.

When our farmers are caught in that situation, they have to be protected. This is the only way we have of doing that. That is why we need a farm bill. That is why you have to have payment limits set at least high enough so that you can have an economically viable unit and so that that producer can be economically efficient enough to be the provider of the cheapest food and fiber supply in the history of the world.

I would also point out that if this motion to instruct conferees were

passed, it would ignore that there is a lot more to farming and to being a successful farmer and a successful producer than just sitting on a tractor. It would be denying benefits to farmers who may not labor but handle finances and risk management. It would create a situation where it would be very difficult for some of our producers because they do not spend all their time in the field. It would put in question almost any producer. I think one thing that has been missed by the upper Midwest is that the rules that this would put in place for many producers of corn and soybeans in the Midwest, especially the ones that use no-till technology, would not even qualify themselves if they were required to put in a thousand hours before they were eligible.

Many of those producers that this bill is intended to help very likely would not qualify under these rules. I think that they need to be studied much more carefully before we even think about adopting these.

There are many things that have been said that just simply are inaccurate. I would go back to my original statement. The people that support this motion to instruct simply do not understand the food and fiber production system in this country, and they certainly do not appreciate the incredible productivity of the American farmer.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. Let me just say that a Senate that quite often is partisan in trying to come to agreement overwhelmingly supported this idea of some kind of a payment limitation. The gentleman from the other side of the aisle suggests that this kind of a limitation hurts a lot of the hard-working family farmers. Let me just report to you the following information that comes from the Congressional Research Service, prepared by Jasper Womach, Agricultural Policy Specialist. The report calculates how many acres of the different commodity crops would have to have been grown to reach the \$150,000 limit that we put in this suggestion of instructing conferees.

Allow me to go down through them. Wheat based on the price of wheat last year, you would have to exceed 60,000 acres of wheat. Corn, it would take over 27,000 acres of corn to get close to the \$150,000 limit. Soybeans, it would take over 5,000 acres of soybeans to get close to the \$150,000 limit.

□ 1730

Cotton, it would take 11,000 acres of cotton to reach the \$150,000 limit. Rice, it would take over 2,600 acres of rice to reach the \$150,000 limit.

Let me stress this: whether it is 27,000 acres of corn or whether it is 2,600 acres of rice, we are dealing with an average commercial farm operation in the United States of 460 acres. So I

think suggesting that this measure has a limit or cap on anyone except the very, very large farmer is not being fair in terms of communicating what this legislation does.

Let me just suggest that you may have heard from some of the big international commodity traders or farm groups in opposition to this idea; but make no mistake about it, they do not speak for the majority of farmers and ranchers in the United States. Here is how I would back up that statement.

Last year, 27 of the Nation's land grant colleges from all of the Nation's regions came together to poll their farmers and ranchers on their opinion of the farm bill. On the issue of farm payment caps there was enormous consensus, and that was, nationwide, 81 percent of the farmers and ranchers agreed that farm income support payments should be limited and targeted more to the small farms.

With that, Madam Speaker, I will reserve the balance of my time for a comment or reaction from the gentleman from Arkansas.

Mr. BERRY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, as I have already said repeatedly this afternoon, we already have limits. No one disagrees with that. I guess what we are having a problem agreeing on is what defines a small farmer.

I can tell you that when combines cost \$250,000 to farmers, when tractors cost anywhere from \$100,000 to \$250,000, when everything else that we use is in the same price range, it does not make any difference what a group of people that come together and declare that they think there needs to be a limit applied to some of these things, it does not matter whether they think there should be a limit or not. It becomes a matter of economic reality that we have to deal with those high prices of our production input. It does not matter where that takes place, whether it be in the upper Midwest, or in the mid-South, where I come from.

I would also make the point that the numbers that have just been put out here are just a part of the story. I do not think that the \$150,000 on loan deficiency payment has been in question. I think it has been in everybody's bill, and I certainly do not have any problem with it. But, as I said, that is only a small part of the story.

I would go back to what I said in the beginning a few minutes ago. To run the risk of disqualifying a widow that very likely is something over 70 years old and disenfranchising her just because she is not physically able anymore to manage her property and she is not going to be able to take advantage of the estate that her husband passed on to her, to run the risk of doing something like that I think is shameful; and I think it is terrible that that was put into this bill that way.

Now, the gentleman from Michigan has said that there is no question in his mind that everybody that was involved

in this knew what they were doing, and I will take him at his word. I would make the point that if you look at the entire bill, what this limit really does in California, a cotton farmer would hit the limit at 355 acres. In Georgia, a cotton farmer would hit the limit with 682 acres. So that is a considerable difference from the numbers from the CRS that were just put out a few minutes ago.

I also think that we cannot stress enough the fact that this particular motion to instruct and the amendment that it supports disenfranchises women. I have never understood, I still do not understand, I do not think I will ever understand, why we would treat women differently under a farm bill than we do men.

I can tell you that until the time when I came to Washington, D.C., my wife and I were full partners in my family farm. She was every bit as much responsible for any degree of success that we had. She worked just as hard as I did, and she was not entitled to anything.

Now, this bill corrects that a little bit, makes it so she is entitled to one-fifth of what I would be entitled to. But why would we want to intentionally disenfranchise women and create a situation where the widows in farm country that were left with a nice farm to help take care of them the rest of their days and have a decent standard of living would be disenfranchised to the point where they would lose the benefits that helped them have a decent standard of living? I just simply do not understand why we would want to do that.

I would also once again emphasize that the whole purpose of a farm bill and a safety net for our agriculture producers is to ensure that we have adequate production and processing capacity in this country, to be sure that we are able to feed ourselves for a reasonable portion of our disposable income. That is an incredibly important part of our national security.

Over and over and over again we stand on this floor and belabor the point that we have not taken care of business as far as our energy supply is concerned, and I hear them talk about overproduction and I hear them talking about big farmers taking advantage and big farmers getting too much.

We are talking about doing something in a farm bill that would severely damage the most incredibly successful production system that has ever existed in the history of the world. The United States farmer, the American farmer, has done the greatest job of producing a commodity of any industry that has ever existed, and very likely ever will exist; and we are talking about a system that has worked, a system that has served the American people so well. In my part of the country they have a saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Well, this ain't broke, and it does not need to be fixed.

I agree, there should be limits; but they should be set at a level where our

producers can have an economically viable unit, and where they can have the opportunity to be successful and to do so well what they do best.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. HART). The gentleman from Michigan has 5 minutes remaining.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I would like to correct the gentleman from Arkansas when he states that this proposal limits the participation of retired farmers or retired farmers' spouses or widows of retired farmers. The Senate proposal provides exemptions. For example, retired farmers and widows of farmers can have their labor and management requirements met by a relative. If you have additional sons or relatives on the farm, if they are actively participating, they are also eligible for the \$150,000.

I think we should remind everybody that up until the last 2 years, the limit on LDPs and marketing loans was \$75,000. The year before last, because prices were so low, we upped that to \$150,000. We are facing a situation now where when we passed this bill through the House, unfortunately, in the bill we passed through the House it was stated that there were limits on commodity loan payments, marketing loan payments.

Technically that is true, but it is not totally honest, as I pointed out, because there was a loophole, and the loophole was the ability of farmers to use certificates and forfeitures.

So they went and got a non-recourse loan. They were given the lending money. They gave title of that commodity to the government. Then, if they wanted the same benefits as a loan deficiency payment or a marketing loan, they simply kept the money and told the government to keep the commodity.

Moreover, this bill fails to address the use of generic commodity certificates that I think are so important, and that is why we are suggesting to this body that we look very closely at closing this loophole and not hoodwinking the individuals and people that might think there is some kind of a limit simply because there is a limit on part of that price support payment.

Farmers are going broke. We need help to the smaller family-sized farms. When I say smaller family-sized farms, maybe it is 1,000, 2,000, 5,000, 10,000 acres; but it is not the 80,000 acres, it is not the 100,000 acres, where land bearers have these lands, they have tenants, where they can divide up this money. That is why we have these press reports of these enormous amounts of millions of dollars that some of these farmers and farm operations were receiving, is because of that particular loophole.

Madam Speaker, in closing let me say that we often hear that farmers and ranchers are too independent to

grams that send out billions of dollars to the biggest farm entities? All this does is damage our ability to help people we originally intended to help, the small, average, medium-size farms, and even now the larger family-size operations.

Look back at the intent of our first farm bills. We have never intended to subsidize every single acre of every single bushel. We need to move back closer to having the marketplace be part of that decision on how much of what crop a producer produces. So to say to these giant farm operations that we are going to subsidize you at a level that is going to protect however many bushels or pounds that you produce of whatever commodity, then we encourage that additional production.

I say one of the effects of this kind of limitation is to have that big farmer think twice and look at the marketplace, look at the demand, and put some effort into expanding our international markets, expanding our ability to sell our products in foreign lands.

So I would ask, Madam Speaker, that we support this effort to have some kind of a limit on payments. I am so convinced, spending my life in agriculture and as a farmer, that if we continue to have this bad publicity of these huge million-dollar payments, I think we are going to, if you will, jeopardize the future of farm programs.

This bill also says let us make a greater effort in conservation and in agricultural research that can help all farmers.

Madam Speaker, I include the following for the RECORD.

The following table, prepared at your request, shows the number acres it would take to reach \$150,000 if LDPs were made based upon actual past marketing loan prices and season average farm prices.

ACRES NEEDED TO RECEIVE \$150,000 IN LDP BENEFITS BASED ON SEASON AVERAGE PRICES

Commodity crop year	Average yield (units/acre)	Marketing loan price (\$/unit)	Season ave. price (\$/unit)	Hypothetical LDP pmt. (\$/unit)	Acres for \$150,000 in LDPs (acres)
<b>Wheat (bu.):</b>					
2001/02 Forecast	40.2	\$2.58	\$2.80	-\$0.22	na
2000/01 Estimate	42.0	2.58	2.62	-0.04	na
1999/00	42.7	2.58	2.48	0.10	35,129
1998/99	43.2	2.58	2.65	-0.07	na
<b>Corn (bu.):</b>					
2001/02 Forecast	138.2	1.89	1.90	-0.01	na
2000/01 Estimate	136.9	1.89	1.85	0.04	27,392
1999/00	133.8	1.89	1.82	0.07	16,015
1998/99	134.4	1.89	1.94	-0.05	na
<b>Sorghum (bu.):</b>					
2001/02 Forecast	59.9	1.71	1.85	-0.14	na
2000/01 Estimate	60.9	1.71	1.89	-0.18	na
1999/00	69.7	1.74	1.57	0.17	12,659
1998/99	67.3	1.74	1.66	0.08	27,860
<b>Cotton (bu.):</b>					
2001/02 Forecast	706	0.5192	0.3140	0.21	1,035
2000/01 Estimate	632	0.5192	0.4980	0.02	11,195
1999/00	607	0.5192	0.4500	0.07	3,571
1998/99	625	0.5192	0.6020	-0.08	na
<b>Rice (cwt):</b>					
2001/02 Forecast	64.29	6.50	4.20	2.30	1,014
2000/01 Estimate	62.81	6.50	5.61	0.89	2,683
1999/00	58.66	6.50	5.93	0.57	4,486
1998/99	56.63	6.50	8.89	-2.39	na
<b>Soybeans (bu.):</b>					
2001/02 Forecast	39.6	5.26	4.25	1.01	3,750
2000/01 Estimate	39.6	5.26	4.54	0.72	5,261
1999/00	36.6	5.26	4.63	0.63	6,505

ACRES NEEDED TO RECEIVE \$150,000 IN LDP BENEFITS BASED ON SEASON AVERAGE PRICES—Continued

Commodity crop year	Average yield (units/acre)	Marketing loan price (\$/unit)	Season ave. price (\$/unit)	Hypothetical LDP pmt. (\$/unit)	Acres for \$150,000 in LDPs (acres)
1998/99	38.9	5.26	4.93	0.33	11,685

The calculations in this table assume LDPs are made on the difference between the marketing loan price and season average price. In practice, farmers are able to choose the day to receive the LDP. Years where the season average price is above the marketing loan price, payments are not applicable. Estimated prices are from USDA, World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates, April 10, 2002. Forecast prices for 2001/02 are mid-points of forecast price ranges.

Senators Grassley and Dorgan want to help the family farmers! The fact is, so does the Senate. In a body that exhibits a lot of partisan disagreement, the amendment for payment limitations showed a large bi-partisan support! Quotes follow:

“When is enough enough? How long will the American public put up with programs that send out billions of dollars to the biggest farm entities?”—Senator Charles Grassley (R-IA)

“Many of the benefits provided through current ag programs are being funneled to large, non-family agriculture corporations while family farmers are being short-changed. That’s just plain wrong.”—Senator Byron Dorgan (D-ND)

“The amendment would remove the loopholes that allow a handful of large farmers to receive unlimited payments . . . without real payment limitation reform, we will continue to weaken the same farmers we claim we want to help.”—Senator Chuck Hagel (R-NE)

“This is a modest amendment. I stress ‘modest.’ . . . there were 98,835 recipients of farm subsidies in Indiana during [1996–2000]. There are 6, out of 98,000, who would be affected by this amendment”—Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN)

“I am very pleased that we were able to pass this important payment limitation amendment”—Senator Tom Daschle (D-SD)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time has expired.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair’s prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

BUSH ADMINISTRATION FOREIGN POLICY

(Mr. FRANK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. FRANK. Mr. Speaker, it is becoming sadly clearer that the Bush ad-

ministration foreign policy consists of a successful military victory in Afghanistan, in a bipartisan fashion, with the military it inherited from Bill Clinton, but a series of muddles, mistakes, and errors elsewhere.

Most recently, we had the administration outrageously both incompetent and insensitive with regard to democratic values with regard to Venezuela. There was a coup in Venezuela against a president for whom I would not have voted and who I would wish would be voted out of office, but the notion that it is okay for America to disregard our supposed commitment to democratic values because we do not like the president who was elected is unfortunate, and it is even worse when it is done in such an incompetent fashion.

Our administration was congratulating the victors in this coup long after it became clear that the coup had not become successful. Someone said in the French revolution that something was not just a crime, but was a blunder. From the standpoint of defending democracy, the Bush administration in Venezuela managed to do both.

I include for the RECORD a very interesting article from the Washington Post of April 16, entitled “U.S. Seen as Weak Patron of Latin Democracy,” as well as a very good article on the same day, April 16, from the New York Times by Paul Krugman. They both document the extent to which we both fail to defend our values, and even do that in a wholly incompetent fashion.

The articles referred to are as follows:

[From the New York Times, Apr. 16, 2002]

LOSING LATIN AMERICAN

(By Paul Krugman)

Many people, myself included, would agree that Hugo Chávez is not the president Venezuela needs. He happens, however, to be the president Venezuela elected—freely, fairly and constitutionally. That’s why all the democratic nations of the Western Hemisphere, however much they may dislike Mr. Chávez, denounced last week’s attempted coup against him.

All the democratic nations, that is, except one.

Here’s how the BBC put it: “Far from condemning the ouster of a democratically elected president, U.S. officials blamed the crisis on Mr. Chávez himself,” and they were “clearly pleased with the result”—even though the new interim government proceeded to abolish the legislature, the judiciary and the Constitution. They were presumably less pleased when the coup attempt collapsed. The BBC again: “President Chávez’s comeback has . . . left Washington looking rather stupid.” The national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, didn’t help that impression when, incredibly, she cautioned the restored president to “respect constitutional processes.”

Surely the worst thing about this episode is the betrayal of our democratic principles; “of the people, by the people, for the people” isn’t supposed to be followed by the words “as long as it suits U.S. interests.”