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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 1990

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, each February our Nation commemorates the achievements of black Americans by marking Black History Month. This occasion affords us the opportunity to recognize the many important contributions which black Americans have made to the culture and history of our country. Black History Month reminds us how far we have come, but it also reminds us how far we still must go.

As we take this opportunity to reflect upon the progress that our society has made toward achieving racial equality during the 20th century, I ask my colleagues to consider the important transformation of American politics that began a generation ago with the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. What happened in the elections of 1989 was unimaginable just two decades ago.

In this past election, more black politicians across the Nation proved they can attract voters across racial lines. Blacks are no longer limited to districts and contests where the majority of voters are black. In 1989, black candidates claimed major election victories across the Nation. In two important elections, two blacks—one a grandson of slaves and the other the son of a barber—were elected to offices which no black has previously held. Doug Wilder of Virginia made history as the Nation's first elected black governor—in a State with an electorate that is only 17 percent black. In New York City, David Dinkins was elected mayor in a city that is only 25 percent black. Other blacks have been elected to leadership in jurisdictions in which blacks are not the majority—Norm Rice as mayor of Seattle, Michael White as mayor of Cleveland, and Chester Jenkins as mayor of Durham, NC. Here in the House of Representatives our distinguished colleague, Congressman BILL GRAY, of Pennsylvania, was elected majority whip, the highest House leadership office held by an African-American, and the Democratic National Committee is now headed by Ronald Brown.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Martin Luther King's dream is still alive. We are moving toward the day that children are judged, not by the color of their skin, but by the quality of their character. But there is still much that must be done before we reach that day. There are still too many signs of intolerance, and too many black Americans' lives are far removed from the individual successes of Doug Wilder, David Dinkins, Ron Brown, or BILL GRAY. While economic, political, and social gaps between black and white Americans have narrowed, they have not closed. By almost all aggregate measures—income and living standards; health and life expectancy; educational, professional, and residential opportunities; political and social participation—the well-being of blacks remains behind whites.

Mr. Speaker, we must continue to insist upon basic rights for all of our citizens. The Supreme Court has launched a serious challenge to our Nation's civil rights laws. These

rights were hard fought and difficult to win. They must not be weakened. We must also continue to pay close attention to improving educational opportunities, removing the inequities of employment, increasing the stock of affordable housing, and protecting our communities from the evils of drugs. We must remain committed to curing the problems of discrimination.

Mr. Speaker, Black History Month gives us an opportunity to honor black Americans and the important contributions they have made to American society. It also gives us the opportunity to measure periodically our achievement in assuring the equality and opportunity to which we give public voice. This annual celebration is an occasion for all of us—and particularly those of us in the U.S. Congress—to renew our commitment to equality and opportunity for all Americans.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BIOTECHNOLOGY PATENT PROTECTION ACT

HON. CARLOS J. MOORHEAD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 1990

Mr. MOORHEAD. Mr. Speaker, today my colleague, Congressman RICH BOUCHER, and I are introducing legislation to assist our biotech industry. The purpose of this new bill is to stand up for the American biotechnology industry by eliminating the unfair advantages that our patent law now confers on foreign countries.

Too often in recent years we have seen home-grown American industries—developed through good old-fashioned American ingenuity, determination and sweat—captured by foreign competitors. A recent example of this is last Friday's announcement that the largest biotech company in America, Genentech, Inc., a California based company, has been purchased by a Swiss Pharmaceutical Co. Biotech was invented and perfected in this country. Since the discovery of DNA, nearly two decades ago, the United States has been the world leader in biotech research. We should be sure that we remain the commercial leader as well. We cannot afford to stand idly by as American initiative and invention is once again turned into commercial gold by our competitors overseas.

Section one of the bill would correct what many believe to be a loophole in U.S. law and authorize the U.S. Patent Office to grant patents for processes used to make biotech products. Such patents are routinely issued in Europe and Japan.

Section two of the bill would extend the U.S. International Trade Commission's jurisdiction to cover certain biotech inventions. I was an original author of the process patent amendments of the 1988 trade bill. Those amendments were designed to prevent the importation of foreign products into the United States when the manufacture of such products within the United States would violate our patent laws. But in light of developing technology, those amendments have not proved fully

adequate. So this new bill, which is clearly within the spirit of the 1968 amendments, allows us to finish some unfinished business:

Section three contains the effective date. The effective date is prospective. But one of the areas we will closely review at the hearing is the effect this section might have on particular companies. A problem exists because of an ongoing court case. We do not intend to interfere with the case between Amgen and Genetics Institute. Both hold patents on a similar substance. We must review the situation in that case so that we do not inadvertently penalize those parties.

While we do not believe that American biotech companies should get special protection against foreign competition, we do believe that our companies should be allowed to compete on a level playing field. Foreign companies should not be able to evade U.S. patent laws for products sold in the United States simply by moving production offshore. And our companies should receive the same process patent protection that their competitors receive in Japan and Europe.

Fundamental fairness requires as much, and so does our obligation to innovative American companies, American workers, and all the many people who will enjoy the benefits of biotech products.

AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE AGAINST CHEMICAL WEAPONS AND THE FISCAL YEAR 1991 REQUEST FOR NEW CHEMICAL WEAPONS

HON. DANTE B. FASCELL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 1990

Mr. FASCELL. Mr. Speaker, in September 1989 the Australian Government hosted a government-industry conference against chemical weapons. Chemical industry and government representatives strongly endorsed a chemical weapons agreement in Geneva to ban chemical weapons and their proliferation worldwide. The results of the conference are succinctly summarized in the following statement by Senator Gareth Evans, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia. This statement indicates optimism and real movement toward a worldwide chemical weapons agreement. It is my conviction that Congress and the administration must seize this leadership opportunity, make achievement of a chemical weapons ban on arms control priority, halt United States production of new binary chemical weapons, and begin a bilateral destruction of current CW stocks with the Soviet Union.

Foreign Minister Evans' statement follows:

STATEMENT BY FOREIGN MINISTER GARETH EVANS

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This Conference has been a unique event, bringing together not only governments, who have the responsibility for negotiating and implementing the forthcoming Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), but also representatives of the world's chemical industry, who will be directly affected by its implementation.

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