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## COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

### HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, August 2, 1995*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1555) to promote competition and reduce regulation in order to secure lower prices and higher quality services for American telecommunications consumers and encourage the rapid development of new telecommunications technologies:

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Chairman, I intend to vote for H.R. 1555 and against attempts to weaken it.

I believe in competition. I believe in reduced regulation. I want markets, not mandarins of the bureaucracy, to control what communications services are available to us and how much we pay for them.

The electorate's message that came here with us was a clear signal. It rises above the din of those who clamor for controls.

The people told us get the bureaucrats out of our houses and off our lines. Americans reject the idea that privileges or special advantages should be given by government to certain companies, allowing them to carry on a particular business and control the supply of certain services.

Much as our constituents may enjoy the game of Monopoly, they don't want its impact on their real-life pocketbooks.

I intend to keep my word to the people I represent. Their final judgment will not be modified by me.

## DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

SPEECH OF

### HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, August 2, 1995*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2127) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes:

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Chairman, in connection with the remarks I made on August 2, 1995, I wish to submit the following additional remarks and extraneous materials which include the following items:

A. The letter of dying coal miner Jacob L. Vowell killed with 183 others in a coal mining accident.

B. The text of articles on OSHA which appeared in the Washington Post on July 23 and July 24.

C. A summary of the quotes which were contained in the Washington Post articles.

LETTER OF DYING COAL MINER JACOB L. VOWELL KILLED WITH 183 OTHERS

Ellen, Darling, goodbye for us both. Elbert said the Lord has saved him. We are all praying for air to support us, but it is getting so bad without any air.

Ellen I want you to live right and come to heaven. Raise the children the best you can. Oh how I wish to be with you, goodbye. Bury me and Elbert in the same grave by little Eddy.

Goodbye Ellen. Goodbye Lily. Goodbye Jemmie. Goodbye Horace. Is 25 minutes after 2. There is a few of us alive yet.

JAKE and ELBERT.

Oh God for one more breath. Ellen remember me as long as you live. Goodbye Darling.

Letter written by Jacob L. Vowell while he and 26 others barricaded inside a Tennessee mine after a May 19, 1902, explosion. Although the makeshift barricade held out the bad air for over 7 hours, the trapped miners were eventually overcome by suffocating gases. The disaster claimed 184 lives.

[From the Washington Post, July 23, 1995]

THE HILL MAY BE A HEALTH HAZARD FOR SAFETY AGENCY—SHIFT IN POLITICAL FORCES BRINGS GOP PUSH TO WEAKEN OSHA

(By Michael Weisskopf and David Maraniss)

Thomas Cass Ballenger, in his rolls as small-town industrialist, civic benefactor and veteran congressman from the western hills of North Carolina, always displayed a talent for fund-raising. But the money never came easier than during the congressional elections last fall, when he traveled around his state soliciting contributions for candidates who would serve as ground troops for the Republican revolution.

Whenever Ballenger spoke, checkbooks opened at the mention of the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA), a regulatory agency that had emerged as a symbol of everything the business world disliked about the federal government. His vision of a House of Representatives controlled by Republicans, as Ballenger later described it, went like this:

"I'd say, 'Guess who might be chairman of the committee who'd be in charge of OSHA?'"

"And they'd say, 'Who?'

"And I'd say, 'Me!'

"And I'd say, 'I need some money.'

And—whoosh!—I got it. This was my sales pitch: 'Businessmen, wouldn't you like to have a friend overseeing OSHA?'"

Indeed they would

They liked the idea so much that they gave Ballenger more than $65,000 to distribute to Republican candidates, including five from North Carolina who went on to win seats previously held by Democrats. The partisan transformation of the Tarheel delegation was an essential part of the Republican takeover of the House, and it led, among other things, to a new and decidedly pro-management chairman for the House subcommittee on work-force protections—Cass Ballenger. A panel that for years had been controlled by the son of a Michigan auto worker killed in an industrial fire was now headed by a deceptively easygoing, 68-year-old good old boy from Hickory who was educated at Amherst, inherited his family's box company and made his fortune producing plastic bags for underwear.

Ballenger and his allies are now fulfilling a promise made during the campaign. With the strong lobbying support of business coalitions, including corporations who are both repeated OSHA violators and leading financial contributors to the GOP, they are pushing the first viable legislative effort to diminish OSHA's powers since its creation a quarter-century ago. The Safety and Health Improvement and Regulatory Reform Act of 1995 would shrink the size of the investigative staff, shift the emphasis to consultation, eliminate separate research and mine-safety operations, and curtail the agency's powers to penalize workplaces that fail to meet federal health and safety standards.

Most of the attention in the House this seminal political year has been focused on the "Contract With America," the balanced budget and Speaker Newt Gingrich's pronouncements. But the OSHA measure is at the center of a quieter struggle, albeit one with major philosophical and economic consequences. The refashioning of OSHA—in combination with attempts to repeal wage and union security laws enacted over the decades by Congress's old Democratic majority—amounts to what labor scholars call the most serious effort to rewrite the rules of the American workplace in the postwar era.

The vast bureaucratic system constructed from those laws was based on a question of trust: Whom do you trust with a worker's welfare—the employer or a federal regulator? The time has come, members of the Republican Congress argue, to reword the answer. "I think employers now take a different approach with their workers than they have in the past," said Rep. Lindsey Graham, a freshman Republican from South Carolina and a member of Ballenger's subcommittee. "My job is to get the government up to speed with the times. And the times for me are to reevaluate the role of a the federal government in private business. If you believe that is the mandate, OSHA is a great place to start."

Although OSHA was established during the presidency of Richard M. Nixon and has been run by Republican-appointed administrators for 18 of its 25 years, it is scorned by House Republicans as the archetype of a liberal program gone astray. They describe it as a place where swarms of inspectors swoop down to intimidate innocent merchants, professionals and manufacturers, drown businesses in paperwork and are more interested in imposing fines than ensuring safety.

"They need to do what the hell they're told," said Charles W. Norwood Jr., a dentist from Georgia and the most intense of the Republican freshmen I his dislike of OSHA. "They've been sitting in their little cubicles for 25 years thinking they knew what was best for every industry in this country. They don't. And they don't want to know. All they want to know is what they can get away with to collect money from us."

Many Democrats find their predicament ironic. Year after year they complained that OSHA was ineffective and needed more inspectors and tougher standards. I the last session of congress, before they lost control, they pushed legislation that would strengthen the agency in the very places where Republicans seek to weaken it. But now they are caught in a rear-guard action defending the status quo, arguing that OSHA, for all its faults, has been a savior for American workers. They cite statistics showing that OSHA saves an estimated 6,000 lives each year and has led to significant decreases in workplace injuries and illnesses. Behind the cover of reform, they say, Republicans are exacting corporate revenge, using the paperwork complaints of small businesses to enrich the management class at the expense of blue-collar workers.

The arguments mark a profound shift of political forces. For years business had felt an obligation to pay homage to the Democratic masters of Congress, even where their interests differed. The .Republican takeover created opportunities to bring politics in line with corporate objectives, none more important than rewriting labor laws and loosening the grip of government regulations. In moving from a marriage of convenience to one of shared passions, the business world has showered the Republican Congress with financial rewards. In a single evening last May, at the "New Majority" dinner to

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