

Then, in 1947, he ran for the U.S. Senate to fill the unexpired term of Theodore Bilbo. In today's era of contracts and 100 and 500 day timetables, I often think of John Stennis' campaign promise from his first Senate campaign. He pledged to "plow a straight furrow right down to the end of my row." Senator Stennis kept that simple promise with the people of Mississippi and plowed a straight furrow in the U.S. Senate for 42 years.

He served during a time when many politicians grabbed headlines by fanning the flames of prejudice and preying on the fears of the vulnerable. However, Senator Stennis always took the high road with integrity and courage. He was the first Senate Democrat to stand up to the fear of McCarthyism and was crucial in bridging our country's racial divide in the 1960's.

He began his service in the Senate by working each day until the Senate recessed and then studying at the Library of Congress until it closed. He rose to serve as chairman of the Armed Services Committee for 12 years, becoming one of the most influential voices in our Nation's military affairs during the Vietnam war and for much of the cold war. Every weapons system used in the 1991 Desert Storm offensive was authorized and appropriated under the leadership of Senator Stennis.

He also served as chairman of the Appropriations Committee as well as the first chairman of the Senate's Select Committee on Standards and Conduct.

Widely respected for his integrity, diligence, and judgment he was called upon time and again to investigate sensitive political matters. It became routine to refer to him as the "Conscience of the Senate." To illustrate the bipartisan respect he engendered, President Nixon looked to John Stennis' reputation and integrity during the height of Watergate. When President Nixon refused to turn over Watergate tapes to a special prosecutor, he offered to have Senator Stennis listen to their content and verify President Nixon's summary.

Mississippians knew they had no greater friend in Washington. Senator Stennis brought economic development to my home of north Mississippi through the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway. In south Mississippi, he secured the State's largest employer, Ingall's shipyard, and brought about NASA's testing facility for rocket motors, the John C. Stennis Space Center.

Senator Stennis retired from the Senate in 1989, having served eight Presidents from President Truman to Reagan in a career in which he would rise to President pro tempore of the body he so revered. Upon his retirement, President Reagan announced that the Nation's newest nuclear powered aircraft carrier would be named the U.S.S. *John C. Stennis*. The U.S.S. *John C. Stennis* will join the ranks in December of the U.S.S. *Nimitz*, *Vinson*, *Eisenhower*, *Washington*, *Roosevelt*, and *Lincoln*.

After his retirement, Senator Stennis moved to the Mississippi State University campus from which he graduated in Starkville, the home of the John C. Stennis Institute of Government and the John C. Stennis Center of Public Service, created by Congress to train young leaders.

When asked in the twilight of his career how he would like to be remembered, with his characteristic humility he responded, "I haven't

thought about that a whole lot. You couldn't give me a finer compliment than just to say 'He did his best.'" Senator Stennis' unyielding devotion to principle, character, and humility produced one of the greatest statesmen of the 20th century. Senator Stennis did his best and for that my State of Mississippi and America will always be grateful.

LOW-INCOME SCHOOL CHOICE EDUCATION BILL

HON. DAVE WELDON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 1995

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing, with my good friend FRANK RIGGS, the Low-Income School Choice Demonstration Act of 1995.

Mr. Speaker, in some parts of this great country, the state of education continues to decay—despite throwing more money at the problem. The liberal solution is more money, more bureaucracy, more regulation, and greater Federal intrusion into our schools.

I, and my colleagues joining me on this bill, feel differently. We should focus on parental choices, deregulation of classrooms, the acquisition of essential skills and knowledge; and good, objective tests that tell us how our children are doing.

Education is subject to a great many debates and ideas. One of the those ideas is allowing parents to choose the school their children attend. Some may say we shouldn't allow the parents to decide what school might best prepare their child for the world outside. But, I believe it is essential that we allow our parents to determine what is best for their children.

In an article from the Washington Post this past weekend, a high school student was very surprised to find out she had scored perfectly on her SAT test. This was despite knowing she had incorrectly answered at least two questions. How could this happen? Well, currently the College Board, the organization that administers the SAT, is recentering the scores to bring the average back up to 500 points. It is a sad commentary on the state of our Nation's educational system when we have to lower the standards of education in order for our students to score well on their college entrance tests. This must stop. We must better educate our children.

Breaking down old, outdated barriers and confronting the new paradigm of change and innovation has been the hallmark of this Congress. The first 100 days of this Congress brought a tremendous amount of change. The primary thrust of all the ideas that have been circulating is to reduce the role of Government and empower the American people to make their own decision about their lives. The Weldon-Riggs Low-Income School Choice Demonstration Act of 1995 is an innovative and creative way of changing the status quo in the debate about education reform and education choice for all Americans.

This demonstration project is a tiny step, but a step nonetheless, toward change and a better educational future for our most valuable asset, our children.

A good education is a key ingredient in ending the cycle of poverty that entraps so many

of our Nation's children. This bill will liberate the parents of low-income children to choose a school that meets the educational needs of their children.

Improved education is essential for our Nation's economic vitality. Our increasingly competitive global economy demands a well-educated work force, and this bill will serve as a catalyst for improved education.

In 1986, almost 94 percent of high school seniors were unable to solve multistep mathematical problems or use basic algebra. In fact, a 1994 survey by the Carnegie Foundation found that few college professors feel U.S. undergraduates are prepared for higher education: only 20 percent of professors believe undergraduates have adequate written and oral communications skills and only 15 percent feel undergraduates are sufficiently skilled in math and qualitative reasoning.

As for literacy, most young Americans are functioning at rudimentary levels: enough to get through the day perhaps, but not enough to sustain a strong democracy, a competitive economy, and a vibrant culture. According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, functional illiteracy costs U.S. businesses \$300 billion in lost productivity annually.

Our children need the opportunity to pursue a good education. If this educational opportunity is outside their school district, they should have the chance to take advantage of it and find their American dream through quality education.

Last November, the American people sent me and many others to Congress to change the way the Government works. School choice is one step toward changing the attitudes of the Federal Government regarding education.

Under the Weldon-Riggs education bill, the Secretary of Education would review applications from school districts around the Nation and select 10 to 20 school districts to participate in the school choice demonstration project. Children who are eligible for the Federal School Lunch Program could participate, and their parents would receive certificates to use at any public, private, or charter school in the area.

Two \$5 million grants would be available to the most needy districts. They would be targeted to those communities with highest number of low-income children. The remaining grants would be in varying amounts up to \$3 million.

Parents could use the money to send their children to public, including charter schools, or private, including sectarian, schools of their choice. The money could be used to pay reasonable transportation costs and would be limited to the average per child expenditure in the local public school.

The Weldon-Riggs school choice demonstration bill would cover 3 years, with an initial cost of just \$30 million. Each participating school district must submit evaluation information to the Comptroller General for review. Data from the demonstration project would be studied after the 3-year period and a report would be submitted to Congress.

Earlier this year, Secretary Henry Cisneros of HUD said, "Low- and moderate-income families should have greater power to make decisions about their lives, and government should support their quest for self-sufficiency." This same principal should apply to education. These low-income families should have greater power to make decisions about their lives, that's what this bill does.

Mr. Speaker, I urge more of my colleagues to sign on in support of this demonstration project and put a little hope and innovation into our education system.

TRIBUTE TO JIM GRANT

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 1995

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, on May 17 the Overseas Development Council will honor James P. Grant. It will do so at a dinner in Washington to commemorate its 25th anniversary and will present awards to several who have chaired ODC. Jim Grant will be honored in memoriam.

If any word could characterize Jim Grant's distinguished career, and none adequately can, it might be dedication. Jim cared passionately about all the world's people and devoted his life to his dream of everyone on Earth having a real chance to enjoy its bounty.

Whether one knew Jim Grant during his early years in beginning to help others, his work in the U.S. Government trying to develop American assistance that would really matter to people in Third World nations, his days providing leadership as head of the ODC, or his glorious tenure as executive director of UNICEF, the conclusion was the same for so, so many of us. There was no one else quite like Jim—in his combination of imagination, enthusiasm, drive, perseverance, intelligence, and interpersonal skills.

He simply would never give up.

Jim Grant would understand the impetus in our Nation to focus on improving the opportunity for the millions of our citizens who have seen their standard of living stagnate over the last decade, and in many cases decline. At the same time he would not believe that, in doing so, our Nation would want to turn its back on the plight of millions elsewhere. He believed too much in the basic decency of the people of this country, and in this sense he was in all of his bones and in his fundamental attitude very much an archetypal American.

Literally, there are hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of children alive today because Jim Grant lived. Could anyone ask for more of his or her life?

Jim met more of the people he cared about than do most, but most of them he never met. But he could envisage them vividly, as if part of his own family, to whom he was so close and from whom sprang much of his humanity.

I had the privilege of working with Jim, also of seeing him preside over many a meeting. There was no one who could better stimulate a diverse group to work, sometimes struggle to a constructive conclusion—not infrequently the very one he had in mind from the very beginning. As the ODC notes his untimely death by commemorating his life, many who know him well join in and innumerable others who did not know him directly but benefited from his work would do so, if they could.

HONORING THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 1995

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the New York Public Library, one of the Nation's most treasured cultural institutions, and the only library in the world combining a preeminent research collection and a comprehensive system of neighborhood branch libraries, is celebrating its 100th birthday.

For 100 years, the New York Public Library has been a cornerstone of equal opportunity by providing free and open access to information without distinction based upon income, religion, nationality, or other human condition. The only criterion for admission is curiosity.

Through the 82 branch libraries and 4 research centers, the Library serves more than 10 million people each year. The research libraries, which include the Center for the Humanities, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, the Library for the Performing Arts, and the soon-to-be-opened Science, Industry, and Business Library, contain vast treasures which provide researchers, scholars, and students access to the accumulated wisdom of the world.

However, it is the neighborhood branches that are the cornerstone of many New York City neighborhoods. They provide a safe and inviting gathering place for the young, the elderly, and, in fact, for everyone to learn and enrich their lives. The branch libraries reach far beyond the traditional lending role usually associated with neighborhood libraries. The many branch libraries that are located in my congressional district play an extremely important role in the education and socialization of the residents of Bronx County.

I join with my constituents in recognizing the New York Public Library on the 100th anniversary of its founding.

TRIBUTE TO PETER CLENDENIN

HON. THOMAS J. BLILEY, JR.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 1995

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and pay tribute to a good friend and servant to the people of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Mr. Peter Clendenin. On June 30 of this year, Peter will end more than 12 years of service as president of the Virginia Health Care Association, a nonprofit association that represents assisted living, nursing facility, and subacute care providers throughout the State of Virginia.

For the 3 years preceding his tenure at the Virginia Health Care Association, Peter served the Commonwealth as assistant secretary of human resources where he oversaw the development of the budgets for 15 State agencies responsible for implementing security, manpower development, mental health services, and rehabilitation services for the people of Virginia.

Peter began his service to the Commonwealth in 1975 as a senior legislative analyst with the Virginia Joint Legislative Audit and

Review Commission where he worked for 4 years as project director of program evaluations.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to share with my colleagues the many contributions Peter Clendenin has made to the people and government of Virginia, and to wish him well on his future endeavors.

CONGRATULATORY REMARKS FOR MISS CHELSI SMITH, MISS UNIVERSE 1995

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 1995

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Miss Chelsi Smith who was crowned Miss Universe on May 12, 1995, in Namibia, South Africa. Miss Smith has become an inspirational figure to young people across the world.

Chelsi Smith represented the State of Texas at the Miss USA competition in 1995. Upon her award, she continued her duties in South Africa where she represented the United States of America in the Miss Universe competition. Of the 82 contestants Chelsi Smith, of Deer Park, TX, has become the sixth Miss USA to be honored with the title of Miss Universe.

Miss Smith, a 21-year-old woman, was raised in Deer Park, TX, where she graduated from Deer Park High School in 1991. She is a sophomore at San Jacinto Community College, where she intends to complete her studies in early childhood education after fulfilling her reign as Miss Universe.

Chelsi has worked to raise the awareness of racial issues and has served as a motivational spokesperson to the youth of America.

I congratulate Miss Chelsi Smith on her award of Miss Universe. I wish her well as she continues to represent the United States of America and the State of Texas. I am very proud that a fellow Texan has so well represented our Nation. It is with great pride that I extend my congratulations to Miss Smith for her important victory.

MARGARET MONTERO-LEADERSHIP IN THE PORTUGUESE-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 1995

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Margaret Montero, the supreme president of the Associaçao Protectora Uniao Madeirense do Estado da California [APUMEC] a fraternal organization in California's 13th Congressional District. On June 20, 1995, she will finish her term in office.

The APUMEC is a fraternal benefit society which was started in Oakland, CA, in 1913, by several men from the island of Madeira, Portugal. The purpose of the society is to assist any member who might be ill or in need. If a member passes away, the society provides assistance to the member's family. Since 1913, the society has grown in membership to