

the coal industry and the mercantile and cultural center for mining towns in the surrounding area.

Perhaps the town's most important attribute, however, is its hundreds of civic-minded citizens who share a vision to preserve and revitalize this very historic place. In recent years, the community has pulled together to promote tourism and economic development. I am confident all these efforts will prove to be successful and in the coming years, Uniontown will remain a very bright and unique jewel in the heritage of our Nation.

Again, I congratulate all the citizens of Uniontown and know they will have a wonderful day to celebrate their beginnings and renew their community spirit.

THE 50TH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION REUNION AT ST. AGNES HOME FOR BOYS

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 1996

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, the St. Agnes Home for Boys in Sparkill, NY, was an outstanding home for orphaned boys for over 100 years. It closed its doors forever back in 1977, but the many boys who were raised by the loving Dominican Sisters of Sparkill will never forget their kindnesses and the outstanding lessons of life that they learned there.

In its over 100 years of existence, thousands of orphaned and needy boys were reared at St. Agnes home. The home taught these youngsters the importance of patriotism, which is underscored by the fact that over 555 graduates of St. Agnes served in the Armed Forces of our Nation during World War II alone. It is hard to believe that any school so small anywhere else in the Nation could possibly have produced so many soldiers. Sadly, 39 of them were killed in action during that conflict—a record of valor which is probably unequalled.

One graduate of St. Agnes, Gerald F. Merna, is today the vice president of the American Defense Preparedness Association, headquartered in Arlington, VA. Another is his brother James, a resident of Lanham, MD, who now serves as chairman of public relations for the St. Agnes Alumni Association. Jerry, James, and their four brothers all were raised at St. Agnes. Their eldest brother, George, was killed at the age of 19 in a sea battle during World War II.

On August 24 of this year, the St. Agnes Alumni Association conducted its 50th anniversary reunion. Seventy-five alumni of St. Agnes from all across the Nation came to Rockland County, in my congressional district, to pay tribute to the sisters, and the sports coaches, who molded them into outstanding citizens, and to reminisce about their incredible experiences at St. Agnes.

The Speaker of the House generated a great deal of controversy last year regarding his comments on orphanages. Here is an example of an orphanage which filled a community need and became a beacon for thousands of youngsters.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to insert into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the newspaper article dated August 25 which appeared in the Rock-

land Journal News recounting the recent reunion:

[From the Rockland Journal News, Aug. 25, 1996]

ST. AGNES ALUMNI CELEBRATE MEMORIES

(By Richard Gooden)

Sparkill.—Art Kingsley provided humor, emotion and nostalgia yesterday during the 50th anniversary celebration of St. Agnes Alumni Association's founding. He held the attention of 75 feisty people, in 85-degree heat, on the grounds of the Dominican Convent.

That was the easy part.

In order to prepare for the day's events, the 73-year-old World War II veteran and former resident of the St. Agnes Orphanage used a chain saw to remove two plaques from a wall of the Hallan Building. He bought a third plaque. He then dug a shallow 10-by-5 bed on the lawn, filled it with gray stone and embedded the plaques in a cream marble.

"This is a beautiful work of art," said James Merna, a resident of St. Agnes from 1946 to 1950 and now head of public relations for the alumni association. "Art Kingsley made this all happen today."

The corner plaques were dedicated to St. Agnes physical education teacher James Faulk and the nuns who worked at the home. The convent closed the orphanage in 1977.

The plaque in the middle honored the 39 soldiers that attended St. Agnes, who died in World War II and the Korean War.

Merna, a stocky round-faced man, eager to help all in attendance, reminisced on the transformation from childhood to manhood at St. Agnes.

"We went from the ballfields of St. Agnes to the battlefield of World War II and the Korean War," said the Marine veteran who graduated from Tappan Zee High School. Merna challenges any orphanage to equal or eclipse the 555 St. Agnes residents who went on to become soldiers.

Merna credits Faulk, who died in 1985, with shaping the orphans into productive citizens. In honor of his role model, Merna named his first child James Faulk.

Pete Lawton, a resident at St. Agnes from 1940 to 1948, also shared his recollections of the football coach while posing for a picture beside the plaques.

"This man was an inspiration to us kids," said Lawton, a Congers resident who was at the orphanage from age 6 through 13. "He is the major reason why most of the St. Agnes kids lived decent lives."

WELCOME TO AMBASSADOR JASON HU

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 1996

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Mr. Speaker, greetings and best wishes to the Republic of China's Washington representative, Ambassador Jason Hu. He comes to Washington from his last post as the Republic of China's Director-General of the Government Information Office. With his wide government experiences and a solid background in politics and commerce, Ambassador Hu will forge ever stronger links between his country and ours. I heartily bid him welcome and look forward to working with him and his colleagues.

As I welcome Ambassador Hu to Washington, I hope the Republic of China will be able to return to the United Nations and other inter-

national organizations as soon as possible. As an economic power and a symbol of democracy, Taiwan deserves the world's respect and recognition. Since 1949, the Republic of China on Taiwan has moved from an agricultural society, exporting only bananas and sugar, to a major trading nation today. Moreover, the 21 million people on Taiwan are prosperous and free.

Last but not least, I would like to take this occasion to congratulate President Lee Teng-hui and Vice President Lien Chien. I wish them good luck as they prepare to celebrate their National Day on October 10, 1996.

GOLD ISN'T A WACKO IDEA

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 1996

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, an old friend, Owen Frisby brought to my attention an August 19, 1996 article featured in The Detroit News, pertaining to the gold standard.

I have contended for years that in order to revitalize our Nation's economy, we must remove from Government the temptation and the ability to produce chronic budget deficits. Restoration of a dependable monetary standard based on a commodity with fixed value would, by making monetization impossible, accomplish this. It is for this reason that I have introduced legislation in previous Congresses reestablishing the Gold Standard.

The author of the article emphasizes that the Gold Standard has been tested, and proven over the centuries as the best mechanism to protect against destructive inflation and deflation. I commend to the attention of my colleagues, "Gold Isn't a Wacko Idea."

[The Detroit News, August 19, 1996]

GOLD ISN'T A WACKO IDEA

Even before Jack Kemp had been named as Robert Dole's running partner, the Clinton White House was on the attack. In addition to bashing his tax-cutting ideas, aides to the president cited Mr. Kemp's affinity for a return to the gold standard as further proof that he's an economic wacko. Should he choose to pursue the issue, however, we have little doubt that's an argument Messrs. Dole and Kemp would win.

The gold standard has pretty good history, after all. Alexander Hamilton placed America on a gold standard as part of his effort to refinance the young country's debt following the Revolution. The link with gold was broken temporarily during the Civil War and in the early 1930s, but it was soon reestablished in both cases. And for good reason: The gold standard proved a durable and politically potent means of ensuring the value of the dollar.

After the remaining links to gold established under the postwar Bretton Woods agreement were finally broken by Richard Nixon in the early 1970s, inflation soared. The market price of gold itself vaulted from \$35 an ounce to \$850 an ounce. It's still selling for more than \$380 an ounce—more than 10 times its price only 25 years ago.

If you wonder why the American middle class is still feeling "anxious" about its living standards, you need look little further than at the massive expropriation of wealth and income that this represents. Little wonder it is so tough to wean people from such "middle-class entitlements" as Medicare, Social Security benefits, day-care and college tuition subsidies.

Many conservative "monetarists" share the belief of liberals that gold is "a barbarous relic," in the words of the late, great British economist, John Maynard Keynes.

They prefer allowing the dollar to "float" in value, letting its price be determined in world markets by supply and demand. And the Federal Reserve System, under Chairman Alan Greenspan, appears to be doing a credible job of wringing inflation out of the economy and keeping the dollar stable against other currencies.

But it's no secret that one reason for Mr. Greenspan's success is that he keeps a close informal eye on gold prices. Before he became Fed chairman, he openly expressed support for a gold standard on grounds that gold is an excellent barometer of the supply and demand for paper money.

But Mr. Greenspan may not be around forever. And interest rates remain stubbornly high by historical standards, imposing a huge cost not only on the federal budget but on the average American. These higher interest rates reflect the premium charged by lenders who must worry about the future course of the dollar. When gold was the standard, long-term rates seldom rose above 4-5 percent, compared with at least 6-8 percent today.

Few ordinary citizens can comprehend the Federal Reserve's money-market manipulations. They must guess at what's going on behind the doors at the Fed. The result is they demand a premium as a hedge against future inflation.

But even ordinary citizens can understand a gold standard. When the price of gold rises, they know that inflation may be in the offing. When it falls, they know it's time for the Fed to print more dollars in order to fend off deflation. A gold standard gives voters a practical reality check on the performance of the elites in Washington.

In short, the gold standard is no wacko idea. It's been tested over centuries. It may not be perfect, but it has provided a better hedge against the ravages of inflation and deflation than most other systems. And it is a fundamentally democratic mechanism that enhances the ability of the ordinary citizen to control his or her destiny. What's wacko is the notion the folks in Washington have done such a swell job maintaining the value of the dollar.

THE MEDICARE AND MEDICAID RECOVERY ACT OF 1996

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 1996

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Medicare and Medicaid Recovery Act of 1996.

Providers and suppliers are using the Bankruptcy Code as a vehicle to defeat the Secretary's effort to recoup overpayments from the Medicare trust funds. Specifically, providers and suppliers, who owe financial obligations to Medicare, are seeking relief from bankruptcy courts to have their outstanding overpayments, which are unsecured, discharge or greatly reduced. The Medicare Program has been unsuccessful in efforts to halt such action.

Federal bankruptcy legislation is designed to provide equality to all creditors in the distribution of a debtor's assets. However, there are three main exceptions to the equal distribution principle that allow some creditors to receive

more than others. The three main devices for some creditors getting more are, first, liens, second, exceptions to discharge, and third, priorities.

With the third main exception—priority—creditors have a demand to first payment from any assets the debtors have available for payment to unsecured creditors. Creditors with priorities get paid before other unsecured creditors.

The Federal Government has long had a priority for taxes, duties, and related penalties. However, it does not have a priority for nontax claims, such as Medicare and Medicaid overpayments to providers. The Government's priority for nontax claims was abolished in 1979.

A 1992 report issued by the Office of Inspector General, entitled "Federal Recovery of Overpayments from Bankrupt Providers," found that as of March 1991, the Medicare trust funds lost \$109 million due to the ability of providers and suppliers to discharge their outstanding overpayments. While the report recommends giving Medicare claims a priority status in bankruptcy, better cost savings would be achieved by excepting these claims from discharge. This bill would correct this situation by prohibiting providers and suppliers from using a bankruptcy forum to avoid these outstanding obligations.

This bill addresses a second problem—individuals who owe financial obligations to the United States, or who have had a program exclusion imposed against them for other reasons, are seeking relief from the bankruptcy courts to have their exclusion subject to the automatic stay. Currently, the Secretary of HHS is required to exclude from participation in the Medicare and State health care programs health care professionals who have defaulted on their student loan or scholarship obligations owed to the United States. There are also a number of other bases for exclusion, such as criminal convictions related to the delivery of a health care item or service, or patient abuse. The purpose of the Secretary's exclusion authority is to protect the public, as well as the beneficiaries of the Medicare and State health care programs, from individuals and entities who have demonstrated by their past conduct that they are untrustworthy. This bill makes clear that the Bankruptcy Code should not be used to defeat this congressional purpose.

TRIBUTE TO THE THREE VILLAGE POST NO. 336 OF THE JEWISH WAR VETERANS

HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 1996

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America, a venerable veterans' organization that is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year.

In particular, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in saluting the Three Village Post No. 336 of the Jewish War Veterans, located in Port Jefferson Station, Long Island, NY. As members of America's armed services, Three Village Post members served their country with exemplary patriotic duty. As part of the

Jewish War Veterans they epitomize those patriotic ideals, striving to maintain recognition of their comrades' sacrifices, while working to protect the rights and well-being of all veterans.

The oldest, continuously active veterans organization in the United States, the Hebrew Union Veterans Association was established on March 15, 1896 by Civil War veterans of the Union Army. Part of the group's original function was to help dispel the persistent falsehood that Jews did not serve in the Civil War. After World War I, when the group's rolls ballooned, they changed their name to the Jewish War Veterans—USA.

To celebrate the J.W.V. centennial anniversary, on Sunday, October 27, the Three Village Post will hold a special ceremony at the North Shore Jewish Center, in Setauket. At the centennial celebration, post members, their family, friends, and supporters will pay homage to those Jewish War Veterans who have fought and sacrificed in defense of democracy, so that America may remain strong and its people free. As Post Commander Robert Sandberg wrote to me, in a brief history of J.W.V. and Post No. 366: "The J.W.V. can be doubly proud. First, that we can live peacefully and freely in this wonderful country, and second, that American Jews themselves and their forebears fought and helped win that peace and freedom."

Since establishing its charter on January 27, 1975, the Three Village Post has sustained the benevolent and patriotic traditions of the J.W.V. Its members have spent thousands of volunteer hours working with the residents of the Northport Veterans Hospital and the State Veterans Home at Stony Brook. Each year, two local high school seniors receive a Jewish War Veterans' scholarship. To maintain the community's awareness of the sacrifices our veterans have made, post members participate in the local Memorial Day and Independence Day parades, along with the grave site memorial services at nearby Calverton National Cemetery.

In this, the Jewish War Veterans' centennial anniversary year, its members continue to work for the ideals on which the organization was founded. Remembering the sacrifices of all veterans is central to those ideals and the J.W.V. is working tirelessly to convince the U.S. Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp to honor the Jewish War Veterans' 100th anniversary. Mr. Speaker, it was the selfless sacrifices of all veterans that have made America a great republic. None have sacrificed more, nor have others worked harder to protect America's democratic ideals than our Jewish war veterans. I respectfully request that the entire U.S. Congress join me in saluting the 100th anniversary of the Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America. Congratulations.

TRIBUTE TO TOM BEVILL

HON. SIDNEY R. YATES

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 1996

Mr. YATES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of my dear friend, TOM BEVILL. TOM is retiring after this session and I am saddened to see such a thoughtful legislator leave this