

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, March 19, 1996, to receive testimony from the unified commanders on their military strategies, operational requirements, and the Defense authorization request for fiscal year 1997 and the future years defense program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 19, 1996, to conduct a nominations hearing of the following nominees: Stuart E. Eizenstat, of Maryland, to be under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade; and Gaston L. Gianni, Jr. of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be allowed to meet during the Tuesday, March 19, 1996, session of the Senate for the purpose of conducting a hearing on oversight of the Federal Communications Commission.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 19, 1996, at 10 a.m. in SD-226 to hold a hearing on "Reauthorization of the Hate Crimes Statistics Act."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 19, 1996, at 9 a.m. in SH-216 to hold an open hearing on intelligence matters.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Governmental Affairs, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 19, 1996, to hold hearings on the Asset Forfeiture Program—A Case Study of the Bicycle Club Casino.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NEAR EASTERN AND SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 19, 1996, at 10 a.m. to hold hearings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWERS

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Seapower of the Committee on Armed Services authorized to meet at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, March 19, 1996 in open session, to receive testimony on Department of Navy Expeditionary Warfare Programs in review of the Defense authorization request for fiscal year 1997 and the future years Defense program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

APPROPRIATIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY

• Mr. SIMON. Mr. President, last Thursday I offered an amendment to the omnibus appropriations bill to restore funding for three Federal literacy programs. The Senate will vote on this amendment tomorrow.

Adult education and literacy programs are essential to reducing welfare dependency, crime, and unemployment. Yet all Federal, State, and local public and private nonprofit literacy programs combined serve only 10 percent of those in need.

Last year, I had the pleasure of meeting with a group of new readers who had recently completed basic literacy programs. These individuals shared with me the difficulties they had faced and how learning how to read and write had changed their lives for the better. I was so struck by their stories that I contacted their Senators encouraging them to meet with their States' new readers. I do not know how many of my colleagues took me up on this offer, but I trust that those who did found this experience as informative and as inspiring as I did.

I also asked one of the women who visited me, Elaine Randall, to write out her story, as I thought it was particularly moving. She was kind enough to send it along to me. I ask that her account be printed in the RECORD.

The letter follows:

Dear Senator SIMON:

Thank you for meeting with me and the other adult learners who were in Washington for the National Institute of Literacy (NIFL) work group meeting on July 23-24. These 20 adult learners from around the country met with NIFL staff to open a dialogue on the students' views of literacy policy and practices, and to explore ways to take a more active role in shaping them.

We were chosen as participants in this NIFL student work group for our local,

state, and national literacy involvement. Besides receiving adult basic education or English as a Second Language instruction, we are student leaders "giving back"—working towards solutions. We are not the only ones out there doing this. We are only a handful of adult learners who start and lead student support groups; speak to encourage others to join a literacy program; encourage businesses to fund literacy organizations; and advise our programs on ways to improve recruitment, retention, and learning gains. These are only a few examples of the kinds of contributions students all over the country are making to "give back" as much as they "get" from the literacy field.

Each of us has worked long and hard to become contributors in the literacy field. We have been improving our basic reading and writing skills and developing our leadership abilities. This is where we are now, but it's not where we started. As non- or low-level readers, each of us has had different experiences throughout our lives. However, those experiences and the feelings and the emotions they caused were very similar.

Being able to read is expected daily in American life. Before an adult literacy program started in my area, it seemed like there was no chance for me to learn how to read. My choices in life were severely limited—I constantly guarded against being put into situations where I would have to read and write. I discovered how society mistreats those who cannot read.

While other children were learning to read and write in school, I learned early on what it meant to be illiterate in our society, and why it was important to cover it up and how to do it. By second grade all my classmates knew I was behind, which made me a target of their taunting. Kids who were friends in my neighborhood did not care to talk with me in class for fear of being called stupid—"If you talk with a dummy, you must be a dummy too." My best friend was older than me and didn't know I was having trouble with reading. When my third grade teacher began keeping me after school every day, to give me more time to do classwork, my best friend didn't understand why I had to stay instead of walking home with her. I couldn't tell her, because I had learned the year before what happens when people find out you can't read.

I always wanted to learn and know what other people knew, but no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't catch up. School seemed like a prison where I was being punished for not being smart enough. I wanted to drop out when I became old enough.

By the time I was in high school, I had become a master in "school survival." School survival was going to school everyday, knowing no matter how hard I tried, I was still going to fail. So, I learned to balance between trying hard enough to please my teachers without excessively tormenting myself in the process. Another part of my school survival was to figure out what I would need to graduate: how many credits, which courses were the easiest, and the minimum number of academic classes I would have to take.

I realized I'd need a high school diploma in order to help cover up my illiteracy in the future—especially when it came to finding a job. I knew an employer would be less likely to suspect I couldn't read very well if I had a high school diploma. The day I graduated, I tried to read my diploma, but I could only read a few words. Nonetheless, I felt I had earned it through hard work and a lot of tears.

It was not easy to find a job that didn't require reading. My employment options were limited since I did not have a trade. I had tried taking some trade classes in high

school. I could understand the theory of what the teachers were saying, but didn't learn what I needed to know—that was in a book. I've always been a hard worker and knew if I could get my foot in the door somewhere, I would do a good job. After identifying a job in manufacturing, I still had to fill out the job application as well as read and sign forms. To this day, I don't know what I signed. I could only hope I would not do something that violated what was in those forms.

I went as far as I could in jobs with the minimum amount of reading or writing involved. My supervisors considered me a valuable employee and never suspected I had trouble reading. I felt I had the potential to do more. When a literacy program for adults started at my local library, I finally had an opportunity to get the help I needed so I could do more.

It wasn't until a few years ago that I discovered the reason why I had so much trouble learning to read and write. I have a language-based learning difference—clinically diagnosed dyslexia and attention deficit disorder. At least now I know what I'm dealing with. It was not my fault—I was smart enough. What I needed was a teaching and learning method that worked for me.

There is a difference between learning to read and reading to learn. I first needed to learn how to read and that has taken time. I've been working on my education for almost nine years and I am still taking classes two nights a week. During the same time, I have had to work to support myself. Like most adults, I do not have the luxury of going back to school full-time because I must fulfill other obligations and responsibilities.

There is no "quick fix" solution—two years and you're finished. It is a long process. It is one we all must agree to commit to. There are many more adults like me who, with the right help, can get better jobs and lead more productive lives. They, too, can begin to "give back" to the system.

Thank you for your commitment to help improve the adult literacy system. Around the country, there are many adult learners equally committed to improving the system in addition to their own education. It's great to know we have people like you working with us to make it possible for adults who cannot read, write, or speak English to get the help they need.

Sincerely,

ELAINE W. RANDALL.●

THE GAMBLING LOBBY VERSUS FRANK WOLF

● Mr. SIMON. Mr. President, Congressman FRANK WOLF is a Republican and I am a Democrat, but we have joined with Senator LUGAR and others in proposing a commission to look at where this Nation is going and the question of legalized gambling.

The most casual observer must recognize that we are headed for some problems.

I was pleased to see the editorial in the Washington Post, "The Gambling Lobby v. Frank Wolf," which I ask to be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

The reality is that one of the reasons the gambling lobby is so effective is the huge amounts of campaign contributions that are provided.

And, as we know from indictments and convictions across the land, the

gambling gentry do not hesitate, from time to time, to get into illegal activity to promote their enterprises.

I am proud of my colleague, FRANK WOLF, for what he is doing, as I am proud of Senator RICHARD LUGAR and the other cosponsors in the Senate.

The Post editorial follows:

THE GAMBLING LOBBY V. FRANK WOLF

A funny thing is happening with the gambling issue in the House. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Va.) has been pressing for a useful bill to create a national commission to study the economic and social impact of the spread of gambling, and the bill was making good progress. Mr. Wolf's bill has already cleared the Judiciary Committee and is supposed to go to the floor of the House in early March.

But in the interim, the bill has gone to the House Resources Committee, which claims jurisdiction because the measure affects gambling on Indian reservations. House Resources now plans another set of hearings on the bill, and Mr. Wolf is understandably worried that the hearings might be used to further delay consideration. Given the wide support the bill has—it's hard to argue against a national study of gambling's spread or to pretend there are no national implications to this trend—the danger is that the bill will be killed not directly but by endless delay and amendment.

The American Gaming Association (the gambling industry likes the 17th century drawing room sound of "gaming") insists that it is not opposed to a national study of gambling. But it sees the Wolf bill, as written, as just the first step in an effort by Congress to impose some federal rules on an industry that has so far been largely regulated by the states. It also complains that the commission as set up in the Wolf bill now has no representation from state officials (governors or legislators), even though one of the main purposes of the committee is to provide more objective information to local officials than they usually get from the gambling industry.

These objections strike us mostly as clever ways for the industry to gum up the progress of useful legislation. In particular, it would be foolish to limit the commission's mandate. With the spread of gambling—especially to Indian reservations, whose casinos have ways around state regulation—there may well be a case for some national rules. If any event, it's certainly an issue the commission should debate.

The gambling industry has a great deal of money, has been making large campaign contributions and recently hired some of Washington's most influential lobbyists. We have no doubt that the industry can bring a lot of pressure against Mr. Wolf's bill and construct some ingenious stratagems to weaken it. The issue is whether the House leadership will play along, mouthing kind words about Mr. Wolf's efforts while trying to undermine them. The leaders should not play that game. They should keep the promise and let an undiluted version of the Wolf bill go to the floor on schedule.●

MAIL BALLOT VOTING

● Mr. SIMON. Mr. President, I suppose there is no columnist whose writings I read, and with whom I agree more consistently, than Carl Rowan.

And his recent column about the mail voting experiment in Oregon is no exception.

Every move forward to enlarging the voter franchise has been resisted. That

includes giving voting rights to African-Americans, native Americans and to American women.

And the secret ballot which we prize so much today was not part of our early history.

We have gradually made improvements, despite the objections of many people who were wedded to the status-quo.

I do not suggest that on the basis of the Oregon experiment, we should nationally move to mail voting yet, but I would like to see several States try it, because my instinct is that it is likely to be an improvement over the present system.

I ask that the Carl Rowan column be printed in the RECORD.

The column follows:

A KNOCK AT MAIL BALLOTS IS A KNOCK AT DEMOCRACY

(By Carl Rowan)

The political mentalities of the 1770s and 1950s are bursting out all over now that Oregon has had a successful mail ballot to fill the seat of disgraced Sen. Bob Packwood.

I hear cries that the mail ballot cheapened the election, robbing the vote of the sacred majesty that the framers of our government intended.

I hear complaints that the mail ballot permitted uneducated people "who don't even know the names of their congressmen" to vote.

We're told that it allowed all people to vote without expending the small amount of energy and sacrifice of going to a neighborhood polling place, undermining the notion that "the vote is a precious thing."

This is swallowed by some as the sentimentality of patriotism, but it is, in fact, undemocratic gibberish that ought not override the fact that the Oregon election lifted the percentage of voters to about 65 percent of those eligible, a figure that made democratic participation almost as high as in European countries. It saved Oregon about \$1 million. And it produced results that any Republican could applaud.

So we are to deplore this election as a violation of what "the framers" intended? I remember that the framers counted black citizens as three-fifths of a vote. And women as zero percent of a vote. Naturally, neither I nor my wife is much impressed by a reminder of what the framers believed about the semi-slave status of African-American males, or women.

The framers created a situation under which many states could decree that only the propertied could vote. When that idea and "poll tax" requirements were beaten down, polling places were located where millions of poor, ill minority citizens could not get to because they lacked transportation or couldn't leave their jobs.

Nothing in a neighborhood polling place could be more sacred to deprived citizens than casting their first ballot—primarily because the mail ballot allowed them to do so.

So spare me this balderdash about how this country must return to a respect for what "the framers" intended!

I find especially offensive the complaints that mail ballots were cast by "uninformed, uneducated" citizens. In the 1950s some states had laws requiring "literacy tests" for those seeking to vote. That was implemented in ways where white registrars could deny the ballot to blacks who couldn't answer "correctly" such questions as "How many bubbles in a bar of soap?"

Everyone I've heard deploring the mail ballot would be incensed if anyone accused