

to send it to Washington to support education programs reflective only of the values and priorities of Congress and the Federal bureaucracy, not the parents.

The \$3,000 tax credit will make a better education affordable for millions of parents. Mr. Speaker, many parents who would choose to send their children to private, religious, or parochial schools are unable to afford the tuition, in large part because of the enormous tax burden imposed on the American family by Washington.

The Family Education Freedom Act also benefits parents who choose to send their children to public schools. Although public schools are traditionally financed through local taxes, increasingly, parents who wish their children to receive a quality education may wish to use their credit to improve their schools by helping financing the purchase of educational tools such as computers or extracurricular activities such as music programs. Parents of public school students may also wish to use the credit to pay for special services for their children.

Greater parental support and involvement is surely a better way to improve public schools than funneling more Federal tax dollars, followed by greater Federal control, into the public schools. Furthermore, a greater reliance on parental expenditures rather than Government tax dollars will help make the public schools into true community schools that reflect the wishes of parents and the interests of the students.

The Family Education Freedom Act will also aide those parents who choose to educate their children at home. Home schooling has become an increasingly popular, and successful method, of educating children. According to recent studies, home schooled children outperform their public school peers by 30 to 37 percentile points across all subjects on nationally normed, standardized achievement exams. Home schooling parents spend thousands of dollars annually, in addition to the wages foregone by the spouse who foregoes outside employment, in order to educate their children in the loving environment of the home.

Ultimately, Mr. Speaker, this bill is about freedom. Parental control of child rearing, especially education, is one of the bulwarks of liberty. No nation can remain free when the State has greater influence over the knowledge and values transmitted to children than the family.

By moving to restore the primacy of parents to education, the Family Education Freedom Act will not only improve America's education, it will restore a parent's right to choose how best to educate one's own child, a fundamental freedom that has been eroded by the increase in Federal education expenditures and the corresponding decrease in the ability of parents to provide for their children's education out of their own pockets. I call on all my colleagues to join me in allowing parents to devote more of their resources to their children's education and less to feed the wasteful Washington bureaucracy by supporting the Family Education Freedom Act.

THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS: A 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 1997

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing House Concurrent Resolution , a resolution that reconfirms the importance of our bilateral relationship with the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

April 2, 1997 was the 50th anniversary of a special political relationship and strategic partnership between the United States and the people of the Marshall Islands. On that date in 1947, the Security Council of the United Nations approved the Trusteeship Agreement for the Former Japanese Mandated Islands.

This agreement was negotiated by the Truman administration and gave the United States strategic control of a vast area of the Pacific formerly held by Japan as a League of Nations Mandate. What became known under U.S. law as the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands [TTPI] was the only U.N. trusteeship out of eleven created after WWII classified by the Security Council as "strategic."

Recognition of the strategic nature of the U.S. administration of the TTPI was appropriate in light of the fact that in 1946, while the islands were still under military occupation following the end of hostilities that ended Japanese rule, the U.S. already had commenced its vital nuclear weapons testing program at Bikini in the Marshall Islands.

In 1946 President Truman had sent a young Congressman from Montana on an inspection trip to the region. Mike Mansfield came back and argued eloquently on the floor of the House that the Congress should approve the trusteeship agreement with the United Nations because the U.S. national interest would be served by strategic control of the islands. He was right.

The 2,000 Marshall Islands became the focal point of the U.S. strategic program. In addition to the nuclear testing program at Bikini and Enewetak from 1946 to 1958 the United States has maintained one of its most vital military installations anywhere on earth in the Marshall Islands throughout the second half of this century; the Mid-Pacific Missile Testing Range at Kwajalein Atoll.

Thus, while the U.S. also has maintained relations with the other island groups in the region, the relationship with the Marshall Islands has been a special strategic partnership. This was recognized in the bilateral agreements between the U.S. and the Marshall Islands which were concluded at the time the U.N. trusteeship was terminated based on entry into force of the Compact of Free Association.

For example, the separate bilateral agreements with the Republic of the Marshall Islands included not only the military base rights at Kwajalein, but the agreement establishing the framework within which the U.S. would continue after termination of the trusteeship to address the effects of the nuclear testing program on the people of the Marshall Islands and their homelands. For these island peoples, the nuclear testing program is a legacy that looms as large in their lives as WWII does in the American experience.

In other words, it is a legacy of fortitude in the face of a threat to survival itself. The U.S. nuclear testing program in the cold war era, far more than the fact that major battles of WWII itself had taken place in the Marshalls, was the defining experience of the Marshallese people in this century.

Obviously, there have been legal claims and controversies arising from the intrusion of the nuclear age into the world of the islanders. But this resolution recognizes that out of the adversity there was also forged an alliance that has been sustained throughout the years. The Marshallese people had the wisdom to recognize that the United States was playing a vital role in the maintenance of international peace and security, and although they demanded justice and the redress of injuries as all people have the right to do, the Marshallese people and their leaders never turned their back on the U.S. when we needed them as a strategic partner.

During the twilight years of the cold war the Marshall Islands stood by the United States even though they had far more reasons—if they had wanted them—to move out of alignment with this nation than many of those governments which did just that. The Marshalls, however, never viewed the close political and strategic partnership with the U.S. as an unmanageable constraint on their cultural and political identity as a nation.

Thus, the relationship between the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the United States represents not only a successful strategic partnership, but a successful process of decolonization consistent with the goals of the U.N. trusteeship system. This is a foreign policy success of which the Congress and the people of the United States should be proud. Understanding and sustaining this success may have significance for the U.S. in its relations with other peoples and nations as well, and this should not be overlooked.

This is a special relationship which we cannot allow to be neglected or unduly diminished as a result of ill-conceived policies which do not take into account the legacy of the past and the prospects for the future. Narrow thinking based on short-term priorities should not control the determination of how this relationship will be managed as the first term of the Compact of Free Association comes to an end. Congress must take responsibility to exercise oversight with respect to the formulation of a long-term policy for our bilateral relationship with the Marshall Islands.

As an ally and strategic partner, the Republic of the Marshall Islands has paid a uniquely high price to define its national interest in a manner that also has been compatible with vital U.S. national interests. That is what an alliance is in its most essential form, and that is what Congress will recognize by adopting this resolution. I urge my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution .

REPORT FROM INDIANA—RON CLARK

HON. DAVID M. MCINTOSH

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 1997

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to give my Report from Indiana.

In the Second Congressional District of Indiana there are so many good people.

Good people doing good things.

In my book, these special individuals are Hoosier Heroes.

Hoosier Heroes because they have dedicated their lives to helping others.

Mr. Speaker, Ron Clark of Anderson, IN, is a Hoosier Hero.

For the past 31 years of his life, he has dedicated himself to the admirable profession of teaching.

He taught honors English and drama with passion that inspires.

This senior thespian enthusiastically directed lives on and off the stage, offering guidance to the young men and women of Highland High School.

He touched young lives in their formative years, building up their self-confidence and nurturing their love for theater. Ron left an indelible impression on all those who took his class.

He took kids with special needs and nurtured them with an unconventional teaching style, engaging children at their own level.

Principal Brown of Highland High School called him an "exemplary teacher and excellent role model."

Mr. Brown told the tale of how Mr. Clark took a troubled child who was misguided and got him on the right path by involving him with acting.

Ron inspired a number of students to pursue theater in college. But regardless of whether they pursued theater or not, each developed a special appreciation of the stage, giving them a taste of the magic that so many dream of.

Former drama department chair and colleague Linda Trout remarked, "He always picked challenging plays and put on two a year, which is one more than people usually do. And he got students involved with everything from directing to making the props. He even wanted to get kids from the junior high school involved."

Ron was always going out of his way to help the students, conducting numerous workshops for the local junior high school. In fact, he took students to New York every year for workshops and Broadway plays. This is the kind of man he was.

He was given the "Hoosier Teacher of the Year" award by the Indiana Teachers of English in recognition for his excellence in teaching.

At the farewell production, a play of Dickens' "A Tale of Two Cities" was performed to an audience of grateful students, parents, and alumni.

Former students from across the country embarked on the pilgrimage back to their old high school, just to see their beloved mentor.

They brought gifts and congratulations, thanking Ron for making such an impact on their lives. His wife, Sandra, compiled a book of letters written by appreciative faculty, staff, and students.

This was the last play in the career of Ron Clark—the final act in a rich and memorable life of teaching children.

On the final day at school, he said to Principal Brown, "I'm retired but I'm not done. If you ever need me to come and help at school, just let me know."

And for that reason, Ron Clark of Anderson, IN, is a Hoosier Hero.

Mr. Speaker, that is my Report from Indiana.

TRIBUTE TO WES BISGAARD

HON. DUNCAN L. HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 1997

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the remarkable dedication and contributions of a constituent in my district, Mr. Wes Bisgaard of Holtville, CA. Wes is the manager of the Imperial County Farm Bureau, but he will soon be retiring and I would like to take a moment to commend his devoted service to his community.

The Bisgaard family's move to California reads like the "Grapes of Wrath". After the dust bowl the family moved from their farm in North Dakota to California where they joined other family members in operating a dairy farm. Later, the family members began their own farm in Holtville, CA, where they remain today.

During World War II, Wes worked for Douglas Aircraft on the new DC-3, and later became a quality control supervisor as the DC-4, the first pressurized aircraft, was developed. This plane was later appropriated by the Federal Government as a war transport plane and renamed the C-54. During this period Wes met and married Mildred "Millie" Eppelman.

In 1952, Wes and Millie along with their two children, Karen and Christopher, moved to Imperial Valley to join his brother and once again take up his first love: farming. The Bisgaard brothers farmed 1,000 acres in alfalfa, lettuce, cotton, sugar beets, barley, cabbage, and later wheat for seed.

Agriculture is of critical importance to Imperial Valley. Since he arrived in Holtville, Wes has been a very active member of the local and State farming community, serving on a number of advisory boards and commissions. Wes has been a director of the Imperial County Farm Bureau for over 40 years. During that time he served as president of the bureau early in its history, then again from 1990 through 1994, and is now its manager. He served as director for District 1, San Diego and Imperial Counties, of the California Farm Bureau Federation for 11 years, as well as director for its Cal-Farm Insurance Bureau and the Cal-Farm Life Insurance Co. Wes is a 30-year member, and first chairman, for the Cotton Pest Control Board of the California Department of Food and Agriculture. On the international front, Wes has served for nearly 30 years as cochairman of the International Cotton Pest Work Committee, which coordinates scientific information developed by both the United States and Mexico.

Salinas Lettuce Marketing Coop helped Imperial Valley farmers form the Highline Lettuce Coop with Wes as one of the founding directors. During a time when farm workers were often sacrificed in favor of increased profits, Wes successfully encourage Highline to build for the Bracero Mexicans a permanent labor camp constructed of block, with showers, a walk-in cooler, air conditioning, etc. These are just a few of Wes Bisgaard's accomplishments.

Although Wes is formally resigning from the management of the Imperial County Farm Bu-

reau, his contributions to our community and our State will be long remembered. In fact, if I know Wes, his gifts of time to and his love for our Valley are far from over. I am joined by the many families involved in the farming community of Imperial Valley when I say thank you for all that you have done, and we look forward to working with you in the future. Although the Farm Bureau will miss him, I am certain that he will continue to fight for the needs of the Valley.

THE HONORABLE CARRIE P. MEEK HONORS MR. ODELL JOHNS, SOUTH DADE'S GREAT COMMUNITY LEADER

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 1997

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a distinct honor to pay tribute to one of Miami's unsung heroes, Mr. Odell Johns. His untimely demise from the scourge of diabetes last Monday, June 2, 1997 will truly leave a deep void in our community.

Mr. Johns, 65, represented the best and the noblest of our community. Having dedicated a major portion of his life to the civil rights movement since the early sixties, he tirelessly continued his historic struggle to ensure the creation of employment services and equal educational opportunities for our South Dade residents, regardless of ethnic background, creed, or gender.

"He was known in his community as the man to turn to when a job needed to get done in South Dade," said Col. Brodes Hartley, president of Community Health Initiative. "Whether it was public housing, economic development for local business or the health care needs of the community, he always found time to get involved."

A meticulous father and a firm believer in the centrality of God in his family and his community, he was driven by his Christian stewardship on behalf of others, especially those who could least fend for themselves. Because of his missionary zeal of consecration to the well-being of others, many of South Dade's impoverished residents can now have access to primary health care and mental health services. His brand of leadership was genuinely anchored on his sterling integrity and resilient initiative. Most of my district's South Dade constituency has credited him with virtually every major improvement that is now benefiting the community for which he cared so deeply.

In 1953 Mr. Johns graduated from my Alma Mater, Florida A&M University, with a political science degree. He subsequently responded to his country's calling by joining the U.S. Army, serving as an officer with the rank of lieutenant in the Artillery Corps.

During the civil rights movement the acumen of his intelligence and the longevity of his commitment was felt at a time when our community needed someone to put in perspective the pains and agonies of disenfranchised African-Americans and other minorities yearning to belong and participate in the American dream. Along with Col. Hartley, he was one of the leaders in the bus boycott in Tallahassee, FL, that subsequently followed the landmark