

to the \$80,000 needed. Organizer Anna Hoffman sat outside a local ShopRite with Janet Thatcher, Ruth Lincoln, Estelle Lokowsky, Josephine Knoblock, Linda Trimboth, Mabel Kauffman, and Grace Meyer, taking turns sitting at a table, collecting money.

Mr. Speaker, there are many women veterans who served valiantly and without regard for their own lives in both World Wars, Korea, Vietnam and the gulf war. Their efforts need to be acknowledged and honored.

The refurbished memorial was dedicated on September 14, 1997, to all Hunterdon County veterans. I thank each and everyone of these men and women who served our great Nation.

INTRODUCING THE DAVIS-BACON REPEAL ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 23, 1997

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Davis-Bacon Repeal Act of 1997. The Davis-Bacon Act of 1931 forces contractors on all federally-funded construction projects to pay the local prevailing wage, defined as "the wage paid to the majority of the laborers or mechanics in the classification on similar projects in the area." In practice, this usually means the wages paid by unionized contractors. For more than 60 years, this congressionally-created monstrosity has penalized taxpayers and the most efficient companies while crushing the dreams of the most willing workers. Mr. Speaker, Congress must act now to repeal this 61-year-old relic of the era during which people actually believed Congress could legislate prosperity. Americans pay a huge price in lost jobs, lost opportunities and tax-boosting cost overruns on Federal construction projects every day Congress allows Davis-Bacon to remain on the books.

Davis-Bacon artificially inflates construction costs through a series of costly work rules and requirements. For instances, under Davis-Bacon, workers who perform a variety of tasks must be paid at the highest applicable skilled journeyman rate. Thus, a general laborer who hammers a nail must now be classified as a carpenter, and paid as much as three times the company's regular rate. As a result of this, unskilled workers can be employed only if the company can afford to pay the Government-determined prevailing wages and training can be provided only through a highly regulated apprenticeship program. Some experts have estimated the costs of complying with Davis-Bacon regulations at nearly \$200 million a year. Of course, this doesn't measure the costs in lost jobs opportunities because firms could not afford to hire an inexperienced worker.

Most small construction firms cannot afford to operate under Davis-Bacon's rigid job classifications or hire the staff of lawyers and accountants needed to fill out the extensive paperwork required to bid on a Federal contract. Therefore, Davis-Bacon prevents small firms from bidding on Federal construction projects, which, unfortunately, constitute 20 percent of all construction projects in the United States.

Because most minority-owned construction firms are small companies, Davis-Bacon keeps minority-owned firms from competing

for Federal construction contracts. The resulting disparities in employment create a demand for affirmative action, another ill-suited and ill-advised Big Government program.

The racist effects of Davis-Bacon are no mere coincidence. In fact, many original supporters of Davis-Bacon, such as Representative Clayton Allgood, bragged about supporting Davis-Bacon as a means of keeping cheap colored labor out of the construction industry.

In addition to opening up new opportunities in the construction industry for small construction firms and their employees, repeal of Davis-Bacon would also return common sense and sound budgeting to Federal contracting, which is now rife with political favoritism and cronyism. An audit conducted earlier this year by the Labor Department's Office of the Inspector General found that an inaccurate data were frequently used in Davis-Bacon wage determination. Although the inspector general's report found no evidence of deliberate fraud, it did uncover material errors in five States' wage determinations, causing wages or fringe benefits for certain crafts to be overstated by as much as \$1.08 per hour.

The most compelling reason to repeal Davis-Bacon is to benefit the American taxpayer. The Davis-Bacon Act drives up the cost of Federal construction costs by as much as 50 percent. In fact, the Congressional Budget Office has reported that repealing Davis-Bacon would save the American taxpayer almost \$3 billion in 4 years.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to finally end this patently unfair, wildly inefficient and grossly discriminatory system of bidding on Federal construction contracts. Repealing the Davis-Bacon Act will save taxpayers billions of dollars on Federal construction costs, return common sense and sound budgeting to Federal contracting, and open up opportunities in the construction industry to those independent contractors, and their employees, who currently cannot bid on Federal projects because they cannot afford the paperwork requirements imposed by this Act. I therefore urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting the Davis-Bacon Repeal Act of 1997.

FOREIGN SPENDING

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 23, 1997

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the topic of foreign spending. While it is to our benefit to assist less fortunate countries, it is also important to ensure that taxpayer resources are well spent. I would like to share one opinion as written by Mr. Cory Flohr from Colorado.

"America must change the way it does business with regard to foreign assistance spending. For too long, our government has taken billions of dollars out of the pockets of the hardworking taxpayers of this country, only to squander it in far-off lands in an attempt to settle our national conscience. At best, the recipients have benefitted very little from our handouts. At worst, these people, who truly are in need of real assistance, have been left in a worse predicament than that in which they were found.

"As a nation of immigrants, America has a distinct interest in, and direct responsibility

to, the world outside of our borders. Not only do our ancestral ties often bind us emotionally to the well-being of our familial homelands, but our nation's economic, political, and military interests rely directly on the prosperity, stability, and security of the rest of the world. Furthermore, Americans are simply, and arguably, the most generous, compassionate, and "charitable people on Earth. It is just our nature to assist those in need.

"For these reasons, it is not surprising that the issue of foreign assistance can evoke strong feelings from a large portion of our population. Unfortunately, our prosperous nation learned long ago that we can quickly engage, if not solve, the world's problems by throwing money in the general direction of the source. The problem is that very few substantial and complicated problems can be effectively solved with cash alone. This is especially true of the afflictions most developing countries face which are driven by flawed national policies and which cannot be cured until meaningful policy changes are enacted from within.

"The unfortunate fact is, that although our country has dumped hundreds of billions of dollars overseas, the great majority of the recipient countries are no better off today, and in many cases worse off, than they were before. For example, of the 64 countries that have received U.S. foreign aid for 35 years or more, 41 have economies that have remained virtually the same or have deteriorated over the past three decades. Of those 41 countries, 21 of them are poorer today than they were thirty years ago.

"Now many people argue that while the economies of recipient countries may not have improved, their plight can be blamed on factors beyond their control—natural disasters, lack of natural resources, civil unrest, or colonial exploitation. These explanations would be enlightening if not for very significant contradictory examples from the past. Many of the world's richest countries, Japan for one, have virtually no natural resources. America, a former British colony, was torn apart by a devastating Civil War in the 1800's, yet managed to "generate massive economic growth both during, and after the war.

"The one thing, however, that all economic powerhouses have in common, and that all poor countries lack, is a policy of economic freedom. This concept is characterized by the ability of individuals to pursue their own economic desires with minimal governmental intervention and control, low barriers to trade, lowered taxes, limited regulatory burdens, high foreign investment, freedom of private property ownership, and access to competitive banking.

"No amount of government-to-government charity will ever create wealth, nor can it counteract the detrimental effects of repressive economic policies that do nothing but stifle productive output and discourage the creation of wealth. This is why, rather than continuing to send our bundles of cash overseas year after year, we should instead demand, demonstrate, and encourage those countries to begin implementing long-lasting, and self-sustaining economic reform. Unless, of course, our true goal is to play the role of global welfare provider, keeping recipient countries in a subservient role and dependent upon America's handouts.

"Many try to justify America's high level of foreign spending by arguing that, compared to the mammoth size of our overall federal budget, the expense is negligible. No amount of money taken out of the American taxpayer's pocket should ever be considered negligible, particularly when we are talking about \$12 to \$13 billion per year. There are simply too many hardworking families living paycheck to paycheck in this country for

that argument to work. No, instead of blindly throwing money at the world's problems, hoping they will disappear long "enough to ease our conscience, it's time to pull in the reins, make some tough decisions, and provide some real foreign assistance."

Mr. Speaker, we can all learn a valuable lesson here. Our government has an opportunity to optimally utilize our resources in a responsible and beneficial fashion so as not to waste resources but to accomplish the most good for the global community.

AMTRAK REFORM AND PRIVATIZATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 22, 1997

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration of the bill (H.R. 2247), to reform the statutes relating to Amtrak, to authorize appropriations for Amtrak, and for other purposes:

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Chairman, this Member rises in support of H.R. 2247 and in support of continued long-distance Amtrak service.

During the 104th Congress this Member voted against a similar bill due to concerns about its possible adverse impact on long-distance routes through States such as Nebraska. In a statement which appeared in the November 30, 1995, CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, this Member expressed the view that passenger train service should not be confined only to high-density corridors. If Federal subsidies are provided to Amtrak then it should continue to serve as a truly national system. Federal subsidies from taxpayers from throughout the Nation for a limited, regional system would not be justified.

While these concerns remain, this Member also recognizes that H.R. 2247 contains necessary and appropriate labor reforms and other restructuring provisions designed to provide relief for the ailing railroad. In addition, most important, passage of this reform legislation is necessary to allow Amtrak access to the \$2.3 billion for capital improvements included in the recently enacted Taxpayer Relief Act.

Therefore, this Member supports H.R. 2247 and expresses his hope that Amtrak will continue to provide at least the current important long-distance transportation alternative routes for and across the sparsely settled States such as Nebraska and others in the Northern Great Plains and Rocky Mountain West. Amtrak clearly should continue to have an important role in the Nation's overall transportation.

A TRIBUTE TO AMBASSADOR
SHYAMALA B. COWSIK

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 23, 1997

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ambassador Shyamala B. Cowsik,

the Deputy Chief Minister at the Indian Embassy in Washington, who will leave at the end of this month to become India's Ambassador to Cyprus. Her departure comes at the end of 2 years of service in Washington and at a time when relations between Washington and New Delhi are very positive.

Mr. Speaker, I have enjoyed the opportunity to come to know Ambassador Cowsik in her current capacity. She has been an excellent source of information and assistance and has played an integral role in helping to enhance relations between the world's largest democracy and the modern world's oldest democracy. I know my colleagues join me in congratulating Ambassador Cowsik on her work in Washington on behalf of the Indian Government and wish her every success in her new position in Cyprus. I look forward to continuing to work with her on efforts to build peace in Cyprus.

SALUTE TO MARTHA DOMINICK

HON. JOHN M. SPRATT, JR.

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 23, 1997

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Mrs. Martha Dominick, of Gaffney, SC for her years of distinguished service to the people of my State.

Martha Dominick was a school teacher and guidance counsel for 44 years, and inspiration for hundreds of students.

As a member of the Gaffney Business and Professional Women's Club, she worked tirelessly to raise the status of women in our society. She campaigned for the equal rights amendment, helped women compete for political office, taught study courses for women in the Methodist and Lutheran churches, and became the only woman to serve on Gaffney's Zoning Board of Adjustment and Appeals.

Martha Dominick's fight for women's rights has not gone unnoticed. The South Carolina Conference on the Status of Women presented her with their Distinguished Service Award. She won recognition as the Outstanding Business Woman and Leader in South Carolina. This week, she will receive South Carolina's most prestigious award, the Order of the Palmetto. And this December, the Gaffney Business and Professional Women's Club will break ground on the Martha Dominick Women's Center, which will provide skills and training for women entering the job market for the first time.

Martha Dominick has reached out not only to women and young people, but to her entire community, volunteering for the American Heart Association, March of Dimes, Community Chest, and 4-H Club, and helping families in need. Her love and compassion, her intelligence and wit, and her style and grace inspired all whom she touched.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that Martha Dominick is one of my constituents, and I am pleased to recognize her today on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives.

CONGRATULATION'S TO THE GARY
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER,
INC. ON IT'S FALL FUNDRAISER

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 23, 1997

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Gary Community Mental Health Center, Inc. [GCMHC] on its Fall Fantasy Fundraiser. In particular, I would like to commend Danita Johnson Hughes, GCMHC's chief executive officer, on this special occasion. The fundraiser will be held at the Center for Visual and Performing Arts in Munster, IN, on Sunday, October 26, 1997. All proceeds from the Fall Fantasy Fundraiser will be used to benefit the organization's new children's emergency shelter, the ALPHA Center, which has been in operation since September 3, 1997.

The GCMHC has continued to extend its commitment to serving the northwest Indiana community with the establishment of the ALPHA Center, which is an acronym for "All of Life's Problems Have Answers." The center operates as an emergency shelter for children between the ages of 6 and 17, who have been removed from their homes due to neglect and/or physical and emotional abuse. Referrals to the program come from the courts and the Department of Family and Children Services, which determine how to best continue the care these children need and deserve. The ALPHA Center provides transitional and reintegration programs, such as individual and family therapy, tutoring, substance abuse counseling, therapeutic recreation, and after care services. Prominent in all facts of the center's operations is genuine compassion and concern for the children it serves.

The GCMHC was founded in 1974 as a nonprofit organization with the goal and vision of providing effective lifestyle intervention and treatment programs for individuals, couples, families, and children. The organization seeks to serve the community by offering quality behavioral health care services, administered by an experienced staff of physicians, psychiatrists, therapists, case managers, and office support personnel. Several GCMHC programs are specially designed to address the needs of young people in the community. The center's Placement Diversion Program, for instance, works to prevent unnecessary placement of children into residential psychiatric programs, while working to strengthen the relationship between family members. In conjunction with the Gary school system, the center also strives to address the needs of school-age children with behavioral difficulties through its Act Program. The GCMHC also offers substance abuse counseling to both adolescents and adults.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my other colleagues to join me in congratulating the Gary Community Mental Health Center on the occasion of its Fall Fantasy Fundraiser and the recent establishment of the ALPHA Center. I wish the GCMHC continued success in all of its endeavors, as the services this distinguished organization has provided over the years have been invaluable to the residents of Indiana's First Congressional District.