

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

THE CONSTITUTION AND THE AMERICAN DREAM

HON. WILLIAM F. GOODLING

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I want to share with you one of the best speeches I have ever heard. It was not delivered by a professional speaker, but by a professional student at the Christian School of York before several hundred people attending a banquet.

Jonathan delivered the speech with conviction and compassion—without notes.

THE CONSTITUTION AND THE AMERICAN DREAM
(By Jonathan D. Markley, Christian School of York)

"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free!"

When hundreds of foreign immigrants mouthed these words in the late 1800s, they dreamt the impossible dream: freedom! They came, from Ireland, and Poland, and South-eastern Europe. These families risked, quite literally, everything that they called their own. They severed their traditional family ties to the homeland. And they chased after something that was truly inconceivable to them and yet, for once, absolutely within their grasp. What earthly call could possibly elicit so great a sacrifice? That call was freedom! The call of the American Dream!

It has been well over one hundred years now since Emma Lazarus penned those exhilarating words. Yet, in the interim, the same Dream that beckoned immigrants to our shores has been abused. That Dream requires that we be involved in our government. It is not an option; rather it is a God-given privilege! And because we have proven lax in our responsibilities, our patriotic American Dream is fading . . . fading into a maze of apathy. For example, only 49% of the American people voted in last year's election . . . Certainly, we have shirked our duties!

The American Dream, with its rights and responsibilities, is guaranteed by two theories built into our United States Constitution. These concepts, Limited Government and Popular Sovereignty, remove the power of government from any one party and, instead, vest that power totally in the control of the people. Our Constitution does not refer to a ruling body with absolute authority; but, rather, the preamble states, "We the People . . . do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." What a revolutionary idea: People ruling themselves! Government by the consent of the governed! The conclusion of this argument, therefore, is that such freedoms demand our involvement.

We can readily observe just how severely the sands of time have dulled our sense of this privilege. In this decade, our court dockets are jammed with tort litigation suits, totally countless millions; proving, once again, that our concept of the American Dream seems limited to personal benefits instead of prosperity for all Americans. Consider the epidemic of flag-burning—deliberately desecrating our country's ideals. My friends, this

is not merely an issue of a person's rights to burn a piece of fabric. No! It is indicative of a mindset that pervades our nation and threatens to stifle our comprehension of the true essence of liberty in a free society.

Our passion for patriotism has flickered dangerously in the last decades. Today, it is not uncommon for many to argue against the Constitution and against American Dream, as if the former is hopelessly dogmatic and hackneyed and the latter is only realized by avaricious capitalists. How they are wrong!

To see what the American Dream really symbolizes, journey with me to Valley Forge in the winter of 1778. As the torrents of snow cascaded down upon the remnants of the Continental Army, they were realizing tremendous personal sacrifice for this ideal of freedom. Nevertheless, an internal spark motivated them to lay down their own lives upon the fields of Brandywine and Bunker Hill. They never wavered in their patriotic dedication to our infant republic. In the words of Bart McDowell, they all were guilty of treason. "They knew the risks—death by hanging for themselves, poverty and dishonor for their families—," and yet there was absolute conviction in Patrick Henry's voice when he asked "Is life so dear, is peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?" What then followed was one of the most noble allegiances ever made to America. he said, "I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!" His words shook both those house chambers and the hearts of every soul who was willing to protect liberty with life itself, if sacrifice so required. Today, where is that spirit, that zeal, that fire of patriotism?

After our revolution, they founded a document to protect that Dream for their posterity. Their Constitution has guided our country through two hundred years of change and transition: through war and peace; through slavery and emancipation; through poverty and prosperity. Our Constitution has been a beacon of hope for our citizens, challenging them to dream, regardless of their birth; or nationality; or creed; or religion. Because our forefathers struggled valiantly to obtain these hopes and dreams, we cannot afford to be apathetic! Becoming involved is hardly convenient, but we must measure our own consecration to this cause in light of their noblest of sacrifices, their purest form of heroism. Far from being dogmatic or hackneyed, our Constitution has transcended time. Certainly, it is not obsolete! Certainly, it can lead us into the next century!

Let us remember once again, let us ponder deeply the words of Emma Lazarus. Somehow, these words paint a poignant image of the American Dream that must never be expunged from our consciences. Once we have ascertained these privileges, we must be willing to pay the price:

"Give me your tired, your poor,
your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me.
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

I pray, that that lamp, beside that golden door, may never be extinguished in our world!

TRIBUTE TO PAT ASSALONE

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention the selfless and steadfast dedication and outstanding public service of Pasquale "Pat" Assalone, to the community of West Paterson.

After more than 30 years of service on the West Paterson police force, Deputy Chief of Police Assalone is retiring. Pat has been a dedicated and loyal servant of the public, coming up through the ranks within the police department and eventually being promoted to the rank of deputy chief of police.

Pat is a well-decorated officer, with numerous meritorious service awards and citations from the department. He has been honored by the State Police Benevolent Association many times for meritorious service, life saving, and honorable service. As the deputy chief of police, Pat oversees every facet of the department's administration, from training to public relations, scheduling to grants.

Always serving above and beyond the call of duty, Pat has been a natural leader within the police department as well as the community. He was an integral part in the institution of the borough's Drug Abuse Resistance Education [DARE] program 6 years ago and has been an instrumental part in maintaining the success of the program ever since.

Pat remains steadfast in his commitment to the community and his family: wife, Judy, daughter Lisa, and two grandchildren, Shane and Steven, and to the memory of his loving son, Vincent, who has recently passed away.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me, our colleagues, Pat's family and friends, members of the law enforcement community, and the entire borough of West Paterson, in recognizing the outstanding and invaluable service of more than 30 years to the community of Deputy Chief of Police Pat Assalone.

IN MEMORY OF JOSEPH PATRICK O'NEIL

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Joseph Patrick O'Neil, a son of Parma, OH, who lived the American dream.

Mr. O'Neil was a truckdriver and a proud union member of Teamsters Local 407. Mr. O'Neil earned the respect of his fellow union members during his 43 years with the union. He served in the position of recording secretary for 11 years. He also served as a steward.

Mr. O'Neil was a veteran, and served in the U.S. Army during World War II as a master

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

sergeant in Germany and France. He was awarded two Bronze Star medals for valor at Normandy and in central Europe.

Mr. O'Neil is survived by his wife of 51 years, Erika; sons, Edward of Brunswick and Kevin of Lakewood; and two grandsons.

He will be missed.

IN COMMEMORATION OF NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, far too often, the criminals who terrorize our society are glorified through massive media attention, while the rights of the victims and the general public who are made to suffer and live in fear are virtually ignored. While the rights of these destructive individuals are scrupulously and vigilantly guarded, the rights of those whose lives they devastate fall by the wayside.

This travesty is the focus of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, which falls this year on April 13–19. During this week, organizations such as the Capital District Coalition for Crime Victims' Rights, are focusing their efforts on bringing maximum public attention to the many trials and tribulations faced by the victims of crime in America. On April 14, the Capital District Coalition dedicated a plaque at the site of a tree planted last year in commemoration of all the victims and survivors of crime in Saratoga County, NY, in my congressional district. Events such as this are critical in the effort to raise awareness of the impact of crime on its victims and their families. I sympathize immensely with the heartbreak suffered by those whose lives are permanently altered by the devastating effects of crime, and who then must sit by while they are often either ignored or victimized even more by the justice system. We in Congress are trying to do our part to remedy this shameful situation by enacting legislation such as the Victims' Rights Act of 1995, but it is the tireless efforts of individuals and organizations who devote countless amounts of their time and effort that will ensure that the crisis in victims' rights takes its rightful place at the forefront of the media's attention.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to rise in recognition of National Crime Victims' Awareness Week. Hopefully, through this designation and the work of crime victims' rights organizations nationwide, victims of crime in America will receive the respect and consideration to which they and their rights are entitled.

BYE-BYE NATO

HON. DAVID R. OBEY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, Thomas Friedman, the respected international affairs columnist for the New York Times, has written an excellent column questioning the wisdom of the expansion of NATO.

He raises important concerns about whether or not the expansion of NATO will, in fact, di-

lute it, making it less likely that NATO will serve as an effective military instrument to defend any of the countries under its umbrella.

It is a sobering article and I urge every member of the administration to heed the concerns raised by Mr. Friedman:

[From the New York Times, Apr. 14, 1997]

BYE-BYE NATO

(By Thomas L. Friedman)

BRUSSELS.—Some enterprising Russian p.r. experts recently visited NATO headquarters and suggested a novel way to ease tensions between an expanding NATO and Russia: Just change NATO's name, the Russians suggested, because NATO is a four-letter word for Russians. So how about calling it TO-MATO (Trans-Oceanic Military Alliance and Treaty Organization), or POTATO (Peace Organization for Trans-Atlantic Ties and Operations), or maybe VODCA (Vanguard Organization for Defense, Cooperation and Assistance)?

NATO's savvy boss, Javier Solana, laughed off the Russian proposal. But discussions with officials here left me convinced that if NATO goes ahead with its expansion, just about everything other than its name will be changing—and that's too bad. I rather liked NATO the way it was—a tightly knit group of like-minded democracies capable of taking on any military foe in the world. Everyone is assuming that NATO can expand and keep that focused identity. Don't believe it. The real truth is NATO is now locked on a path of expansion that will dilute its power every bit as much as baseball expansion diluted Major League Pitching and made every 90-pound weakling a home-run threat.

It didn't have to be this way. NATO has always had two core functions. One was defense management—the commitment by each member to defend the others in the event of attack. The other was peace management—the commitment by NATO's 16 members to share their defense plans and budgets so that everyone knew what his neighbor was up to. Mutual defense kept peace between NATO and Russia and peace management kept peace among NATO's 16 members.

The question NATO asked itself after the cold war was: How do we preserve our defense strength while expanding our peace management capabilities to stabilize newly liberated Central Europe? It came up with a solid idea: Partnership for Peace. P.F.P. was a junior NATO in which 27 non-NATO European states—including Russia—engaged in joint exercises, sent ambassadors to NATO, were educated on NATO standards, discussed problems and participated with NATO in peacekeeping in Bosnia. The one thing P.F.P. members didn't get was NATO's commitment to mutual defense, which was confined to the core 16. The beauty of P.F.P. was that it preserved NATO's core strength while creating a framework to fill the power vacuum in Central Europe—without threatening Russia or setting up a competition over who gets into NATO and who doesn't.

So what happened? Unfortunately, in 1996 the Clinton team abandoned P.F.P. in favor of expanding NATO's core members. It was a clinical effort to attract votes from Polish, Czech and Hungarian Americans by promising their motherlands membership. This silly decision set NATO on a slippery slope to who knows where.

NATO now has three options. One is that it eventually expands to Russia's border, including the Baltic states Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. If that happens, it will be the end of NATO as a mutual defense alliance because there's no way the U.S. Army is going to guarantee the Estonia-Russia border. In this scenario NATO becomes just a mini-U.N.

Or as a senior NATO military officer told me: "The more nations that come in, the more NATO becomes just a collective security organization, in which members watch each other—not a collective defense group against a common enemy. That's not the NATO we have now."

Scenario 2 is that NATO doesn't expand beyond Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic and tries to maintain its current defense and peace management functions, with just three new members. But then we'll have a permanent gray zone of states between NATO and Russia. The states left out will fight to get in and Russia will fight to keep them out.

Scenario 3, the one the White House is counting on, is that NATO begins to expand now but simultaneously deepens NATO-Russia cooperation and aid to Russia. This creates so many incentives for Moscow to be nice that NATO will be able to steadily creep toward the Russian border, and fill in the gray zone with new members, without alienating Moscow.

Which will it be? No one at NATO can tell you. In other words, NATO expansion is a swan dive into an unknown future. What a reckless way to deal with the most successful military alliance in history.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FAMILY TAX CREDIT ACT OF 1997

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to introduce legislation to provide much-needed tax relief to America's middle class. Today—April 15—millions of Americans are putting their tax forms in the mail. Last year, the average American family paid 38 percent of their income taxes—Federal, State, and local taxes—to feed an ever hungry Government that demands more and more taxpayer dollars. Contrast this April 15 with April 15, 1947. Fifty years ago, Americans paid just 22 percent of their income in taxes.

My bill, the Family Tax Relief Act of 1997, would provide a \$500 per child family tax credit to every middle-class family with children under age 18. The Family Tax Relief Act of 1997 will cut the income tax burden of a family of four earning \$30,000 per year 51 percent, and the tax burden of a family earning \$40,000 by 30 percent. Families earning \$75,000 would see their tax burden reduced by 12 percent. The credit is for truly middle-class families—phaseouts begin to cut or eliminate the credit for families making over \$75,000. Fifty million children, from 28 million Americans families, are eligible for the credit. The credit eliminates the total tax burden for families making less than \$23,000.

In the last Congress this family tax credit was a part of the Balanced Budget Act that was vetoed by the President. The American people sent us to Washington with a clear mandate—reduce the crushing weight of taxes on everyday middle-class American households and cut spending.

But one key thing has been left out—middle-class tax relief. That is why I am introducing this legislation today. I believe that it is vitally important for Members of Congress to send a clear signal to all that middle-class tax relief will be an absolutely required component