

me this was the setting that was most meaningful and most purposeful.

This was the setting under Father Putka where we learned quite a lot about character and character education. We learned quite a lot about our history as a great Nation, a nation where, as our Founders observed in our Declaration of Independence, is a nation where we are organized around certain God-given unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and that our Founders appealed to the Almighty for the rectitude of their intentions, and in fact they pledged to each other their lives and their fortunes and their sacred honor with a firm reliance upon the protection of that same divine providence.

Now those are lessons that I would submit one does not learn everywhere. They are lessons that frighten some people when it comes right down to it because there are many people in government schools and in government settings and centralized bureaucracies who are afraid of the lessons that people like Father Putka teach their students. They are afraid that individuals might take his lessons seriously about not being conformed to this world, about renewal of the mind, that we may recognize what is good, what is bad, what is perfect, what is imperfect, what is proper and improper. Those are lessons that more and more students need to learn and need to hear, especially here in America.

Father Putka keeps in touch with his students; I can assure my colleagues of that. He kept in touch with me when I was a State senator back in Colorado. For 9 years I would hear from him frequently on issues that we were dealing with in the State legislature, issues dealing with family, issues dealing with life and death, euthanasia, all kinds of topics of those sorts. I spoke with him often about the relevance of our Constitution and the decisions that we make every day. A constitutional scholar, he has reminded me every single day, recalling from those lessons at More High School in his classroom about how we organize ourselves as Americans and how we are, in fact, governed by that Constitution.

Teachers like Father Putka understand full well that the students that they teach are in fact messengers that we send off to a distant time, and what message will they carry? They will be future leaders perhaps, they will be business leaders and government leaders or perhaps even spiritual leaders or maybe teachers themselves. What message will they convey?

Mr. Speaker, I can tell my colleagues that the message I am here to convey is that we have to move away from a centralized bureaucratic structure of public schooling. The Republican Party is committed to the freedom to teach and the liberty to learn. We believe full well that every student in America ought to have the same choices I did to choose the educational setting of their choice, the same kind of choices that

occurred to our President here in Washington, DC.

Mr. Speaker, congratulations to all the teachers throughout the country today on this commemoration of their profession.

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#### REVITALIZE PELL GRANT PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MCGOVERN] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to express my strongest support for increased funding for the Pell Grant Program. In developing a national education strategy and in constructing an economic vision for the future, we must strive to ensure that every American who wants to go to college can, in fact, afford to go to college.

The tax system is one way of providing relief to families attempting to put a child through college, but tax credits and deductions alone will not make higher education more affordable for every working family.

As the Boston-based Education Resources Institute has reported, low-income students need grant aid to help cover tuition costs. Otherwise, an entire community could effectively be shut out of the American dream.

As I have met with the presidents of universities, community colleges, and vocational and technical schools throughout my congressional district in Massachusetts, I hear everyone saying the same thing: We need more grant aid and we need increased funding for Pell grants.

These educators understand that students are struggling to meet rising college costs. The average tuition in a 4-year public college in Massachusetts is over \$4,000. The average private school costs nearly 4 times that amount. In 1980 through 1981, the average Pell grant award paid for 26 percent of the total annual cost of attending a 4-year public institution. Today the average award covers only 16 percent of that cost.

What happened? The problem with Pell grant funding comes not from institutions of higher learning, Mr. Speaker, but rather from a Congress that has neglected to keep financial aid awards consistent with the rising cost of living. In announcing the recent budget agreement, the White House noted that the President's mere \$300 increase for Pell grant is the largest such increase in the past two decades.

This sad reality is an indictment of Congress' failure to truly commit itself to expanding educational opportunity for all of our young people. While congressional appropriations for Pell grants have increased modestly over the last 17 years, the real dollar

amount for the grant when adjusted for inflation has actually decreased by 13 percent during this period.

The Pell Grant Program is the heart of Federal grant aid for families in need. It targets those students most likely not to attend college because of a lack of funds. These are the children of modest income working families and those of middle income families who are struggling to send several children to college at the same time.

Mr. Speaker, President Clinton has proposed raising the maximum Pell grant award from its present level of \$2,700 to \$3,000. But to be frank, this modest increase, while welcome, simply will not cut it. If education is truly at the top of our national agenda, our Federal investment must reflect this fact.

That is why Senator PAUL WELLSTONE and I have introduced legislation to increase the maximum Pell grant to \$5,000, bringing the award to the level at which it was created, adjusted for inflation. This legislation is supported by respected groups like the American Jewish Committee, the National Urban League, the Education Trust, the National Association of La Raza, the National Association of Social Workers, the NAACP, and the U.S. Student Association.

The cost of increased funding for Pell grants is not prohibitive. Last year, the Pell Grant Program totaled \$6.4 billion and benefited about 3.4 million students in this country. My bill requires about \$7 billion more per year, less than three-tenths of 1 percent of the Federal budget. And we should remember that Pell grants pay a huge dividend in the form of a more productive, highly educated work force.

I am committed to balancing the budget, Mr. Speaker, and I believe every dollar that the Government spends must be viewed in this framework. But balancing the budget is all about making choices. And when it comes to investing in our children's education, I am absolutely convinced that America's future hangs in the balance.

On this issue then, we simply cannot pinch pennies. Every American child deserves the opportunity to become a productive member of our society. As we move into the 21st century, we must guarantee that no student who aspires to a college education is left behind simply because she or he cannot afford it. An ever adjusting Pell grant fund for inflation is one way to avert such a tragedy.

#### NATIONAL TEACHER APPRECIATION DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, today I also want to pay tribute to the many

teachers around this country. It is National Teacher Appreciation Day. My father was a teacher. In fact, I am probably one of the few people in this body that knows what it is like to live on a teacher's salary.

I did not have him for a class; although, my older brother Rich did. My brother Rich was a valedictorian of his class. My father's class was the only class in which he received a B. So maybe it is better that I did not have him as a teacher. But I want to pay tribute to the many people who have invested and poured their lives into preparing me for a better future, and I have been marred for life by the people who have invested and taken the time and energy and have been dedicated and committed to preparing and equipping me for the future that was ahead of me.

Today I stand here as a product of their investment. Today I am a little bit of Margie Peters, little bit of Mike McKernan, little bit of Coach Applebee. There are great lessons that have been learned, and there is no greater laboratory in which to learn those lessons, to impart knowledge and to instill values than in the classroom.

I would like to visit with Members just briefly today about one person in particular that had a profound impact on my life, and it was a basketball and track coach, a red-haired Irishman named Jerry Applebee. We do not get C-Span in the town in which I grew up, and so we have got his picture here. He probably will not see this. But I want to make reference to one game in particular that I recall as a senior in high school in which we had an opportunity to win the district basketball tournament. It would have been my last opportunity and his last opportunity to advance to the State tournament. And I had an opportunity toward the end of that game to make a shot that could have won that game and sent us on and advanced us in the playoffs. And as the play was called and the ball was inbounded and I received the ball and took the shot and missed it at the buzzer, with that perished our last opportunity at a State tournament and certainly his last opportunity as well.

I remember sitting in the locker room after that game was over and feeling dejected and responsible for the loss; and Coach Applebee, as was his custom, he came alongside, and the bus was getting ready to leave, and said, "John, the bus is ready to leave, it is time to go. And, by the way, track starts next week."

He learned and reinforced a lesson that has stuck with me for a very long time, and that is, it is not so much about winning or losing as it is about learning, and the lessons I learned along the way and the teaching and the coaching that I had the opportunity to sit under his guidance and leadership were some very important lessons that when you win, you win with grace, that when you lose, you lose with dignity, that you always play by the rules, and

that you always play hard. That was his way.

I never asked whether or not Coach Applebee was a Democrat or a Republican. But it was interesting, because when I decided to seek my party's nomination for the U.S. Congress, he was one of the first people that came forward and helped. We had a little pie auction in my hometown of about 700 people, and he was the first one to step up and buy pies. In fact, I think he bought the first 4 or 5 pies and bid the price up on them because he wanted to make sure that nobody else thought that they were going to be able to get off easy.

That is one of the things I think that is characteristic of a lot of teachers around this country, and that is the personal time, the investment, the energy, the dedication, the commitment they make to building character into the next generation of Americans.

Today I want to thank those who had an impact on my life, a profound impact, as well as many others like them around this country who, day in and day out, go about their business and certainly it is not for the money because, particularly in our State, it is not a very lucrative profession, but they do it because they believe very strongly in helping to equip and helping to build a better future for our country.

So today we pay tribute, and I want to thank the many teachers around this country who are about the process of educating and preparing and building character into us and equipping us so that we might be the kind of people and achieve all the things we possibly can and strive for a better future as well for our kids and our grand kids.

#### GUAM'S QUEST FOR COMMONWEALTH CONTINUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from GUAM [Mr. UNDERWOOD] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, next year marks the 100th anniversary of the end of the Spanish-American War, with the territory of Guam being one of the spoils of that conflict. It has been 100 years since Guam has been a colony of the United States. And before that, Guam was a colony of Spain for over 200 years.

We are a people who can adapt and adjust to wars, typhoons and changes from outside forces. But we have been a colony of one Nation or another for far too long. We have taken steps to change our inability to make decisions for ourselves which govern our everyday lives. We have begun the journey for change in plebiscite in 1982, and our journey for commonwealth status continues today.

The people of Guam, American citizens in the Western Pacific, will not remain colonized for another century. We

have been loyal citizens under the American flag. We have developed economically to the point where we have a booming tourist industry, the envy of many Asian Pacific nations. We could develop even further if we did not have so much Federal constraints imposed upon us as an unincorporated territory.

To help us develop further, we are striving for an improved political relationship with the Federal Government through the Guam Commonwealth Act, H.R. 100. I introduced H.R. 100 on the first day of the 105th Congress. This important legislation embodies the aspirations of the people of Guam for more self-governance and signals to the American people that we are serious about changing from our current status under an organic act to a negotiated commonwealth status.

We embarked on this journey in 1982 when the people of Guam voted for commonwealth in a plebiscite. A draft commonwealth proposal was presented to the U.S. Government, both the executive branch and the legislative branch. The Congress, through the House Subcommittee on Insular and International Affairs, held a hearing in 1989 in Hawaii. At that time, the administration raised a number of objections and the chairman of the subcommittee asked the Guam officials at the hearing to meet with the executive branch officials to resolve or narrow their differences on how best to structure a new relationship.

It has been 8 years since the executive branch has been meeting with the representatives of the Guam Commission on Self-Determination. Numerous meetings were held to discuss, debate and deliberate on a variety of issues embodied in the draft commonwealth proposal.

We have had to deal with an inter-agency task force of individuals who resisted changes to the status quo in traditional Federal territorial relations. We have worked with four Presidentially-appointed special representatives who led the Federal negotiations with Guam officials. It has been a taxing, debilitating experience filled with a few minor breakthroughs and a few major agreements on structuring a commonwealth, but we still have not reached final agreement.

After 8 years, we still do not have an official position from the administration; and this is true whether it was in the Bush administration or the current Clinton administration, whether they will support or oppose the Guam Commonwealth Act. I urge the administration to bring closure to this process so that Guam can assess its options on how best to proceed.

I personally asked the President last month to complete this long delayed process, but we are not going to wait for the answer. We are ready to move on to another playing field; namely, the U.S. Congress.

Last month, the Governor of Guam, bipartisan members of the Guam Commission on Self-Determination, and