

□ 1030

LOCAL SCHOOL CONTROL

(Mr. METCALF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I once asked the Washington State superintendent of public instruction a question: What would happen in the classrooms of our State if we cut your budget 50 percent? His answer, most of what our office does is to counsel and help local school officials to cope with all the Federal rules and regulations.

This is a very good answer. The very best and most simple thing we could do to improve education is to eliminate Federal rules, regulations, and endless bureaucratic redtape and return control of local school districts and school power to school boards.

COMMUNISM AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

(Mr. EDWARDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, there are few issues more important to the future of our Nation than public education. That is why I was amazed and deeply disappointed that yesterday a Republican House Member actually on the floor of this House compared America's public schools to the Communist legacy. To mention our public schools in the same breath with the idea of communism is extremism at its worst. It is the kind of extreme statement I am sure that would make Joseph McCarthy proud.

In my opinion, this Republican statement ranks right up there with the John Birch Society calling former President Eisenhower a Communist. I would suggest this is the type of extremist belief that has caused great problems for the modern day Republican Party.

I am proud that the Democratic Party, based on the values of Thomas Jefferson, not Carl Marx, believes public education is a vital American institution, not something related to the Communist legacy.

AIDS

(Mr. GANSKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk about something that will be voted on today. Despite some recent successes, AIDS continues to ravage our country. But even as public education campaigns have helped discourage some high-risk behaviors, needle sharing remains one of the most significant modes of HIV transmission.

Mr. Speaker, the battle against AIDS will continue to be uphill until we can reduce the transmission of HIV through shared needles. Numerous studies have shown that needle exchange programs hold promise as a means to slow the spread of AIDS.

AUGUST IN WASHINGTON

(Mr. GUTKNECHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, President Clinton has just returned from a 3-week vacation on Martha's Vineyard. We all hope the President got some well-deserved rest, but in case he did not get a chance to pick up a paper or watch the news, here is some of what he missed during the last 3 weeks.

First of all, Paula Jones got her date in court. It was also revealed that Vice President GORE used his soft touch to raise some hard cash at the White House on the taxpayers' dime. It was also reported in the news that his former Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Espy, was indicted on 36 counts of garden variety corruption and unethical behavior. And finally, the Whitewater prosecutors obtained another guilty plea from a witness. Augusts are usually pretty dull months here in Washington, but not with this administration.

EDUCATION IS THE GREAT EQUALIZER IN AMERICA

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, there are certain ideas that are quintessentially American: Freedom of speech; freedom of religion; the notion that every American child, rich, poor, boy or girl, every American child is entitled to a public education. It is one of the things that makes this Nation great.

So, frankly, I have been dismayed and, quite frankly, disgusted by the assault on public education being waged by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, quite frankly, I could not believe my ears when I heard the gentleman from Colorado refer to public education as "a monopoly," "government-owned schools," and even making reference to public education and public schools in this country as part of a "communist legacy."

Mr. Speaker, they should be ashamed. Access to public education is one of the most precious and fundamental privileges of American life. It is irresponsible, it is simply wrong to imply that America's public schools are "Communist."

Mr. Speaker, I urge my Republican colleagues to stop their efforts to not only defund but, in fact, to degrade American public schools and American public education. It has been the great equalizer in this great Nation of ours.

IMPROVING EDUCATION SHOULD BE OUR TOP PRIORITY

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress, we have no more sacred responsibility than to devote our full collective energy to improving education all across this Nation. For starters, we need to commit today to the highest possible academic standards for our children. Today students will be entering a highly competitive work force that will demand greater knowledge and skills. High educational standards are the key to preparing our children for the global economy of the 21st century.

Second, we need to begin rebuilding our crumbling schools. A recent GAO report has found that one-third of American schools need extensive repair. Our children deserve to attend class in an environment that is conducive to real learning. Finally, we, as a Congress, must commit to the cause of reducing overcrowding in schools.

A new Department of Education report found that 52 million children have enrolled in schools this fall, threatening to make the problem of overcrowding a national crisis. We should do all we can to help local school districts deal with this challenging issue. Democrats will continue to make education our top legislative priority.

I call on my Republican colleagues, I plead with them to stop the obstructionism, to join with us in our efforts. Let us put our kids first.

The General Accounting Office conducted a review of these programs and found that a Connecticut program could reduce new HIV infection among participants by 33 percent in 1 year. A 1997 consensus panel of the NIH was emphatic on the possible benefits of needle exchange programs, stating they do not increase needle injecting behavior among current drug users, do not increase the number of drug users, and do not increase the amount of discarded drug paraphernalia.

I encourage my colleagues, do not take away the Secretary's discretion on the needle exchange program today.

COMPARING PUBLIC EDUCATION TO COMMUNISM

(Mr. GREEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Speaker, here we go again. After the Civil War, we had radical Republicans trying to punish the South. Now we have latter day radical Republicans attacking public education, and yesterday we had a Republican colleague compare public education to a Communist legacy.

Public education is a local responsibility; State and school districts, especially parents. To compare public education to communism does a disservice to the millions of students, teachers, and parents who work hard every day to educate their children.

Mr. Speaker, 75 percent of Americans support public education. It is unconscionable to equate support for public education with communism. Communism and public education? Not in our United States.

EXTREMISM

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to get this correct. I just heard the Democrat Party say that the Republicans who freed the slaves in the Civil War were radical extremists. I just want to make sure we got that right in the RECORD. The Republicans who led the fight against slavery were radical extremists? Very interesting concept.

I thought that that chapter of our Nation's history was a sad one, but unfortunately a necessary one.

I think it is a real mischaracterization when you try to say because someone is saying the Government does not have all the answers, that you say that that means that they are extremist.

Look at the Washington, DC, school system. Washington, DC, schools are not even open. In fact in our office, we have a student from Washington, DC, because she cannot go to her school because the inept, incompetent, overspending, potentially corrupt government system run by the U.S. Congress

to a large degree in Washington, DC, cannot even open.

I think you can balance out the best of government and the best of the private sector and do what is best not for political parties but for the children of America and education.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM NOW

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, remember the handshake, the handshake between Speaker GINGRICH and President Clinton, June 11, 1995? The agreement that would go forward with campaign finance reform in this country at least?

Eight hundred and twenty-two days ago, \$2.5 billion ago, untold scandals ago, they shook hands. Now what does the Speaker say? The Speaker says there is not enough money in the system; we should undo the few remaining reforms and protections we have.

The Republicans want to focus only on the Democrats' problems. The Democrats have problems. I admit it. The system is corrupt and corrupting for both sides of the aisle. That is true. But remember Simon Fireman, the vice chairman of Mr. Dole's Committee on Finance, was convicted of money laundering. He received a \$6 million fine, pled guilty to 74 counts of laundering illegal contributions for the Republican Presidential candidate, and was sentenced to 6 months in jail. This is a problem on both sides of the aisle. We need campaign finance reform action now.

EDUCATION

(Mr. LAHOOD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to express, in part, my agreement with the gentleman from Texas who says that local people want to have control over their local school boards. That is why we have local elected board members, to run the schools so that they can hire the administrators and the teachers to do that.

Yet, here in Washington, we have people at the White House and other agencies wanting bureaucrats to tell local boards what kind of test scores they should have, what kind of standards they should have.

Mr. Speaker, local people do not want to be told what the standards should be. They know what the standards should be. They do not want bureaucrats in Washington dictating to them what kind of standards should be set. That is why they get elected.

I would encourage those people who are trying to persuade local elected officials that people in Washington know more about it is just absolute nonsense. We should discourage that and give people back the opportunity to

run their schools the way they should be run.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the further consideration of H.R. 2264, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Thursday, July 31, 1997, and rule XXIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2264.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2264) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes, with Mr. LAHOOD, Chairman pro tempore, in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Wednesday, September 10, 1997, the bill was open for amendment from page 78, line 12, through page 78, line 22.

Are there any amendments to this portion of the bill?

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

DOMESTIC VOLUNTEER SERVICE PROGRAMS, OPERATING EXPENSES

For expenses necessary for the Corporation for National and Community Service to carry out the provisions of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended, \$227,547,000.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

For payment to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, as authorized by the Communication Act of 1934, an amount which shall be available within limitations specified by that Act, for the fiscal year 2000, \$300,000,000: *Provided*, That no funds made available to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting by this Act shall be used to pay for receptions, parties, or similar forms of entertainment for Government officials or employees: *Provided further*, That none of the funds contained in this paragraph shall be available or used to aid or support any program or activity from which any person is excluded, or is denied benefits, or is discriminated against,