



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 105th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 143

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1997

No. 123

House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. MILLER of Florida].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 16, 1997.

I hereby designate the Honorable DAN MILLER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 21, 1997, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI] for 5 minutes.

FAMILIAS LATINAS EN LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, yesterday began Hispanic heritage month. And for that reason and many others, I am very privileged to read a letter from Familias Latinas to the President and Mrs. Clinton.

The following letter is the product of a radio program called Buenos Días California on KIQI AM in San Francisco. The hosts of the show, Carlos de Marty and Marcos Gutierrez, asked, "What would you say in a letter to the

Clinton family?" The suggestions from the Spanish listening audience were recorded and a letter written as follows:

DEAR PRESIDENT AND MRS. CLINTON: Congratulations to you and your daughter on selecting Stanford University for her formal education. This means you will be in our State more often since you will want to keep your family together. And that, Mr. President, is the reason for this letter, family unity.

The people who have signed this letter believe that the Latino family in the United States lives in an atmosphere of fear, paranoia, frustration, uncertainty and despair which is detrimental to our community and may eventually have negative effects on the community at large. We want to communicate our feelings and request action now. Our family unit is under a great deal of pressure from propositions and laws which have flourished under your presidency. Among these are Propositions 187, 209 and the latest, a proposition to do away with bilingual classes. We are having a difficult time understanding why you have not been as supportive of us, as we were of you during the last two presidential elections.

Let us look at the specific elements which are hurting our family unit starting from the elderly and working down to our children. Our non-citizen grandparents live in fear of losing their benefits even though they spent a lifetime contributing to the collective wealth of our country, not only in taxes paid, but in hard work done for little pay which allowed the country to flourish. Some of our parents are being deported, even though they have established roots in this country.

You will be leaving your daughter at Stanford for four years in a friendly atmosphere. Imagine having to destroy your family because of immigration rules. Imagine having to leave your children in this country because you are being deported. We must remember that a lot of the men and women being deported now to Central America, came to the United States in defense of democracy, under the hardship of civil war. Citizenship should not be used as a wedge between family members.

Many of us in the Latino family live in a cycle of poverty which forces both parents to work more than eight hours a day. This results in long hours of loneliness for our children. A lot of times we cannot afford to get

good care for them. We are sure that because of your busy schedule there were times when you left your daughter alone, but never under inadequate care.

On the educational front, many non-Latino students get preferential treatment because of their parents' connections to educational institutions. Our children don't. In the recent past our students had affirmative action. Now they don't.

On the drug front, it is hard to imagine that the Nation which can focus on little rocks in far away planets, cannot see the enormous amount of drugs coming into our communities. Instead of sensible help, your government has allowed the construction of a sophisticated, profit-oriented prison system which sits waiting for our children.

All these elements, working steadily and daily, have taken their toll on our family unit. We are sure, Mr. President and Mrs. Clinton, this is not what you want. With these signatures, we are declaring our collectively dissatisfaction with the racist, anti-immigrant and anti-Latino atmosphere which has been allowed to prevail for too long. We need your administration's support for our tradition of family unity. We come to this land, as your ancestors did, to find a better way of life, to build community and loyalty to a wonderful country like the United States.

As far as our past, we believe that the Latino community has contributed to the progress of the United States in times of peace, and specifically with our blood in times of war. We know the length of the list of the Latinos who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. These contributions should have earned for us a more active participation in our country's internal affairs and specifically in the future negotiations and plans between the United States and Latin America.

We recommend that you accommodate more Latinos within your sphere of power so that perhaps you could see our plight under a different light. Many of us feel that as descendants of the original inhabitants of parts of the United States, specifically as described in the Guadalupe-Hidalgo Treaty, we deserve better treatment.

We feel that your role as a leader is to strengthen the Nation's points of agreement, not its differences. We believe that you, Mr. President, have a responsibility to act as a catalyst to rid the xenophobic attitudes

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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



Printed on recycled paper containing 100% post consumer waste

H7283

which have been allowed to enter our Nation's mainstream. We ask that you undertake a rigorous campaign to establish yourself as a leader who will not tolerate anti-immigrant and anti-affirmative action attitudes.

We also ask for our Government's support for a Latino U.S.A. summit in Washington, D.C. to discuss the issues which concern our families in this country. We also want full participation in the President's Initiative on Race. We are sure that the items which we have outlined can be addressed through communication and mutual respect.

Signed, Familias Latinas en los Estados Unidos.

Mr. Speaker, may I add that a letter has gone from members of the Hispanic Caucus in the House of Representatives to the President asking him to receive the enclosed letter, and with it there will be over 30,000 signatures.

TRIBUTE TO FLORIDA SHERIFFS YOUTH RANCHES

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, many people come to the floor to complain about things or complain about how things are done. But this morning, Mr. Speaker, I am glad to share a success story with my colleagues about the outstanding efforts of a dedicated group in my home State of Florida. I am talking about those involved with the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches.

The Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, Inc., is celebrating 40 years of making a difference in the lives of our State and of our young people. Over 30,000 boys and girls have benefited from the guidance and care provided by this organization over the past four decades.

Although created to serve Florida's 67 counties, the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches had its genesis in Texas, the result of a trip by two Florida sheriffs in 1955. Sheriff Don McLeod of my home county, Marion County, and Sheriff Ed Blackburn, Jr., of Hillsborough County were in Texas to pick up two fugitives from Florida. While talking with a local deputy, they heard about a nearby camp for needy and neglected boys. They learned that a former wrestler had started the camp with four boys salvaged from the local slums and how this caring individual turned their lives around by providing a home, support, and discipline.

The next day they took charge of their prisoners for the drive back to Florida. One was a young man 18 years old and badly injured, and the other a 17-year-old girl who was 5 months pregnant, two young people who, without proper guidance, got into big, big trouble. The two sheriffs decided that if a former wrestler could make a difference, then certainly law officers working together could repair damaged lives. After all, they knew full well that the youthful victims of neglect, abuse, and indifference too often take to crime.

Sheriffs McLeod and Blackburn presented their idea to the Florida Sheriffs Association. Later that year the Association persuaded the Elks Club of

Suwanee County and a local businessman to donate 140 acres on the banks of the Suwanee River for the ranch. With loans from area banks and contributions to the Association, they began building the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch.

Financial contributions, donations of materials, and volunteers helped build the first camp, and four boys moved into the facility in January 1959. Thirteen years later, the Sheriffs opened a camp for girls. And in 1976, a coed facility was built to reunite siblings.

I would like to take note of the support provided by such individuals as Sheriff John P. Hall, Sr., who served as the first treasurer of the Youth Ranches and was sheriff of Clay County, in my congressional district, for a record 36 years. I also commend his children, J.P. Hall, Jr., and Dena Mae Lemen, for continuing their devoted services to the Youth Ranches. These folks are also in my congressional districts.

Mr. Speaker, today there are six camps operated by the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches. The goal of these ranches is quite simple: to prevent juvenile delinquency and develop lawful, productive citizens through a broad range of family centered services. They use the basics, tried and true traditional values, to mend broken spirits and lives.

The success of this program is found in the simple values embraced by most Americans today, basic family values that, when abandoned, lead to anguish and despair. By building character and instilling the concept of service and self-sacrifice, these young people learn the importance of community. Add in study, faith and hard work, and we have the ingredients for a future generation of outstanding citizens.

The Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches are a product of a vision for building a better future for Florida's children, a vision which has flourished with the generous support of Florida's citizens.

It is easy, Mr. Speaker, to look to the Government to solve the problems within our society. However, if we want results, we need to look to ourselves and communities for these solutions. There are many examples of this truth, and I commend the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches for making the difference in the lives of 30,000 troubled Florida youths. Thank you for 40 years of service to Florida and Florida's youth.

I also commend J.P. Hall, Jr., and Dena Mae Lemen for coming up here and sharing this 40-year anniversary here in Congress, and I wish them another 40 years or more of success.

TIME FOR ACTION ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, each day that this Congress has been in action, and not very complete action since we began in September, there have been Members of this House who

have come to the floor and have raised the issue of campaign finance, because we realize that unless the House acts within the next month on the issue of campaign finance, that there may be more headlines of people complaining about campaign finance but absolutely nothing will be done to remedy the problems before the 1998 elections. The time for action is now.

As I was home in Austin, TX, this weekend visiting with people, I was reminded again of how much Americans are concerned with the way that their government is operating and with the fact that the cost of these campaigns just seems to go up geometrically with each election. And I came across a book down there in Austin that would suggest that even our children can understand what is at stake with reference to this race for campaign dollars. It is called "The Money Tree" by Sarah Stewart.

It is a book about gardening really, a woman named Ms. McGillicuddy who is quite a gardener, and one day a strange new tree begins to form in her garden. She is not really sure what it is. But before she knows it, it is doing something that maybe all of us have dreamed about at one time or another. The leaves are coming out as long, green hundred-dollar bills.

At first she is pretty happy about the idea that she has got a money tree growing in her yard. She continues to cultivate it, along with doing her other work. But soon she finds that she has many new friends, and it seems like everyone in the area is coming to look at the money tree and to borrow a ladder and interfere with all of her normal work as a gardener, a housekeeper, and someone who takes care of the animals and does other things in her area. She cannot get any of her ordinary work done because people are over there trying to grab those hundred-dollar bills off her money tree.

Finally, after a long time, she decides that maybe she is better off without the money tree, and she chops it down and converts it into firewood. This is a story our children might understand, and a story that people who observe their Congress might also understand. We have Members of Congress and any serious candidate for Congress out trying to find the money tree just about every day of the year, every year, year in, year out.

□ 1045

Some of those who have experience with gardening and cultivating on a larger scale, like the tobacco companies in this country, seem to have mastered the money tree and its influence over Members of Congress pretty well. They are the top soft money contributors of dollars that are largely unregulated and uncontrolled and which have a truly corrupting influence on the operation of this Congress. That is why many of us are coming out day in, day out now and saying, put a ban on soft money, cut down the soft money tree,