

The SMSU Lady Bears squad has one more conference game and perhaps as many as three tournament games left in their season that will allow Stiles to raise the new bar even higher.

The accomplishments of Jackie Stiles have been noticed by fans, other players and coaches who typically have guarded her with two and sometimes three defenders. She is the first player in the history of the Missouri Valley Conference to earn back-to-back "Player of the Year" honors and the first sophomore to earn that title. She has made the first team All-Missouri Valley Conference in each of her first three years on the court at SMSU.

Jackie Stiles grew up playing basketball in Claffin, Kansas where she was highly recruited by colleges and universities nationwide as a perimeter shooting guard. Today, her 58 percent field goal percentage ranks among the 20 best in the nation.

Jackie Stiles is an All American both on the court and off. She is as good a student as an athlete. Majoring in physical education, Stiles has maintained a sparkling 3.45 grade point average into her senior year and has been named to the Missouri Valley Conference Scholar-Athlete first team every year in her career.

Stiles has become an icon on the basketball court in Springfield, Missouri. She is a role model for younger women who would like to follow the good-student, good-athlete trail she is blazing. She is a key reason that while some women's basketball games around the country draw crowds numbered in the hundreds, the Lady Bears' games often draw larger crowds than the men at Southwest Missouri State University. Thursday night's game at Hammons Student Center at SMSU drew the second biggest crowd in school history with more than 9,100 fans there to witness history. Fans in Southwest Missouri believe Jackie Stiles stands a lot taller than her 5 foot, 8 inch frame.

I'd like to wish Jackie Stiles and her teammates continued good shooting in their pursuit of a crown in the Missouri Valley Conference and in the women's NCAA tournament later this month.

TRIBUTE TO POET LAUREATE
STANLEY KUNITZ

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 13, 2001

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to pay special tribute to Stanley Kunitz, who was born in my hometown in Worcester, Massachusetts. Stanley Kunitz is an outstanding poet who began his career in 1930 when he wrote his first book of poems titled "Intellectual Things". Prior to this book, Stanley Kunitz studied at Harvard College where he received his BA in 1926 and his MA in 1927. It was after his years of study that he began writing his first book of poems. Unfortunately his first book was barely recognized and he did not publish his second book, "Passport to War", for another fourteen years. The Second World War interrupted his career, and after returning from the war he joined the faculty of Bennington College. Although Stanley Kunitz was years

removed from poetry he persevered to eventually win the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1958 for his first "Selected Poems".

For a writer whose working life spans thirteen Presidents, Kunitz's commitment is all the more amazing. Stanley Kunitz is realistic and simple, the furthest from extravagant, which at the time when he wrote was rare. This is evident in his opposition to the long epic poem, which was popular in American Poetry during the first half of the twentieth century. What Kunitz's work lacks in glamour it compensates for in serious and influential purpose.

The popularity of Stanley Kunitz's work is evident in his many awards and accomplishments. In addition to his Pulitzer Prize he received the Bollingen Prize, a Ford Foundation grant, the Levinson Prize, and the Shelley Memorial Award to name a few. In 2000 he was named United States Poet Laureate. Stanley Kunitz is the founder of the Fine Arts Center in Provincetown, Massachusetts and Poets House in New York City. Stanley Kunitz has also worked as a translator, creating English versions of Russian Poems.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Mr. Kunitz for his enthusiasm and commitment to his poetry and society. He truly exemplifies that ability is never ending.

COMMENDING MERKAZ BNOS HIGH
SCHOOL ON ITS SELECTION AS A
BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL BY THE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 13, 2001

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Merkaz Bnos High School, in Brooklyn, NY on its selection as a Blue Ribbon School by the United States Department of Education.

Merkaz Bnos High School is an all-girls academic institution comprising grades nine through twelve. Its current director, Rabbi Chaim A. Waldman, founded the yeshiva in 1990 under the guiding principle of giving "every girl the chance to maximize her potential within a nurturing and supportive environment." In awarding the Blue Ribbon, the Department of Education recognizes that the Yeshiva has succeeded tremendously in carrying out its mission.

The Blue Ribbon School Program was established in 1982 by the U.S. Secretary of Education with three goals in mind. To identify and recognize outstanding public and private school across the United States, to offer a comprehensive framework of key criteria for school effectiveness, and to facilitate the sharing of best practices among schools. Schools selected for recognition have conducted a thorough self-evaluation, involving administrators, teachers, students, parents and community representatives in the completion of their nomination forms. This process included assessing their strengths and weaknesses and developing strategic plans for the future.

Merkaz Bnos High School is one of only seventeen private schools selected nationally and the only Yeshiva to be honored with the Blue Ribbon Award, one of the most prestigious awards in the country. In awarding this honor the Department of Education stated the

"yeshiva presents a picture of a school completely focused on helping students achieve high academic standards while developing a strong sense and knowledge base on their Jewish heritage".

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Merkaz Bnos High School on its Blue Ribbon Award and wishing the entire school community—students, teachers, staff members and parents—continued success and many great simchas in the future.

A SALUTE TO THE BRONCOS

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 13, 2001

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Fayetteville State University women's basketball team for their tremendous accomplishment this week. Their spirit and determination throughout the season has been an inspiration to us all.

On Saturday, March 3, the FSU Broncos defeated North Carolina Central University 63-59 to win the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association Tournament for the first time in twenty-two years. This is truly an amazing achievement for Coach Eric Tucker and the entire Bronco team. The Broncos will now embark on a new journey, playing in the NCAA Division II tournament for the first time since 1997.

Throughout the year, the women Broncos have represented the students and faculty of FSU well by sticking together and demonstrating good sportsmanship. Coach Tucker has instilled in his players the ethic of dedication, sacrifice, and teamwork in the pursuit of excellence, and instilled in the rest of us a renewed appreciation of what it means to win with dignity and integrity. I am sure that the Broncos will demonstrate these important characteristics on the national stage during the NCAA tournament.

My fellow colleagues, please join me in congratulating this extraordinary group of women and their coaches, parents and classmates who cheered them on and made this year's CIAA tournament one to remember. Congratulations, Broncos! We will be watching you in the NCAA tournament, and we wish you the very best.

ADDRESS BY DR. JOHN DUKE ANTHONY ON VIOLENCE IN AMERICA AND KUWAIT

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 13, 2001

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following for the RECORD.

ON VIOLENCE IN AMERICA AND KUWAIT: THE KUWAIT-AMERICA FOUNDATION

(By John Duke Anthony)

This past week's tragic incident in California in which yet another student at an American school killed his classmates was as senseless as all the similar acts that went before. It is no less tragic for the likelihood that, short of effective remedies, the phenomenon is destined to recur in the future.

As with the earlier school killings, there will be much wringing of hands and soul searching among pundits and politicians in search of ways to cope with this ongoing blight on a significant segment of American society. In the debates that will ensue, much can be learned from a hitherto little known effort by the Kuwait-America Foundation that is helping to address this problem and others related to the violence that persists in the lives of Americans and Kuwaitis.

Two weeks ago, the nonprofit and non-governmental Kuwait-America Foundation (KAF) administered a multifaceted program to commemorate both the fortieth anniversary of Kuwait's independence and the tenth year since its liberation from Iraqi aggression. Over a period of several days, KAF manifested a growing phenomenon in international relations: the efficacy of having such organizations play pivotal roles in matters of global importance.

Like innumerable other Arab and Islamic philanthropic associations, KAF has yet to become a household word in America. However, the day is fast approaching when it will be recognized as having become a respected albeit low-key activist in support of laudable objectives in American national life.

Until ten days ago, KAF was not as well known in Kuwait as one might have thought. Many outside observers had believed, mistakenly, that Kuwait's government and private sector must have held annual commemorative events to honor the country's liberation from aggression ten years ago.

A COUNTY'S YELLOW RIBBON

Not so. The commemorative activities were the first of their kind. The previous national decision to forgo any annual outpouring of joy at the return of the country's internationally recognized government, and with it, the restoration of freedom and safety to the Kuwaiti people, was deliberate.

The decision not to celebrate was, in essence, reflective of a people's collective preference instead for wearing a yellow ribbon in memory of hundreds of missing Kuwaiti and other nationals who have yet to return from the months-long nightmare that Iraq unleashed against Kuwait on August 2, 1990.

For most, the idea of rejoicing with so many of their fellow citizens' still in Iraq was seen as premature and inappropriate. It was overshadowed by the ongoing grief over the country's hostages, its missing in action, and the fate of other nationalities abducted to Baghdad in the waning days of the war that have yet to be accounted for by Iraq.

The Numbness of Numbers. In Kuwait as elsewhere, the process of coming to terms with the impact of an adversary's aggression and violence against it is considered by most to be an essential component of reconciliation. But among outsiders who have wanted to see reconciliation between Kuwait and Iraq occur sooner rather than later are many who appear to wonder whether the concern about those missing from Kuwait has been a Kuwaiti pretense or, at least exaggerated for effect.

If so, many reason, could it not be little more than a carefully crafted device deliberately tailored to garner international sympathy for the country's ongoing deterrence and defense needs that might not be as effectively obtained in any other way?

By the standard of Great Power populations, the number at issue, cynics seem prone to emphasize, appears to be minuscule. In noting that the total is 608, the tendency of some has been to think that this is a typographical error and that one or more digits must be lacking.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The Kuwaiti citizens who vanished from their country in the course of being spirited

off to Baghdad by Iraqi forces a decade ago are hardly faceless statistics. No Kuwaiti of this writer's acquaintance knows fewer than four who disappeared without, to date, there being a trace of what happened to them. By extension, most Kuwaitis know and regularly come into contact with an average of forty other Kuwaitis who long for the return of those missing.

Because the population of the United States is so large, and that Kuwait is so small, it is difficult for many Americans to grasp the extent of the tragedy that befell the Kuwaiti people as a result of the Iraqi invasion and occupation.

The following, however, provides perspective that may be otherwise hard-to-come by. In terms that U.S. citizens can relate to, the number of Kuwaitis missing in Iraq is equivalent to 270,000 Americans being incarcerated and unaccounted for in undisclosed sites in Canada or Mexico. In terms that the British and French can understand, it is as if 60,000 of their citizens had been forcibly seized, carted across the border, and, to this day, were still being held in a neighboring country.

On a related additional Richter scale of human tragedy, the recent commemorative events in Kuwait, in which this writer was privileged to participate, revealed yet another daunting set of numbers. One of the highlights was the unveiling by Kuwaitis, former President Bush, and former British Prime Ministers Thatcher and Major, of a memorial to the war dead resulting from the country's liberation. Listed were the names of the 351 Kuwaitis and 331 Allied Coalition country and other nationals killed during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

Three hundred fifty-one. Some may say, 'for an international conflict that dominated the headlines for more than half a year, that's not so many.'

Those Killed: American Comparisons. Any in doubt as to 'how many is many?' might ask a Kuwaiti. The number, again in terms equivalent to the population of the United States, is equal to 135,000 Americans having been killed. For further context and comparisons, consider that the United States lost 58,000 in Vietnam.

Here, two points are especially pertinent. The first is that the proportionate number of Kuwaitis killed by Iraqis, is comparison with Americans killed in Vietnam, is almost three times as many. The second is that Iraqis killed this many Kuwaitis over a period of just seven months. The 58,000 Americans that died in Vietnam were killed over a 12-year period, i.e., a span of time nearly 24 times as long.

The survivors of the Kuwaitis killed during the conflict, including their spouses, children, and other relatives of those missing and unaccounted for, were front and center recently in Kuwait. Former U.S. President George Bush, Sr., U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, former British Prime Ministers Dame Margaret Thatcher and John Major, General Norman Schwarzkopf, and many other prominent international leader associated with the country's liberation met with them. They listened to their pleas for assistance and vowed not to rest until their countrymen's return or until the missing have been fully accounted for by their captors.

KAF, Violence, and The Do The Write Thing Program. On display by KAF in the same ceremonies was another side of the same coin minted in the currency of violence. These were American grassroots leaders of KAF's "Do The Write thing (DTWT) Program." The Program exists in a growing number of American cities that have long been plagued by exceptional levels of violence among their inner city youth. A range of civic, religious, and professional leaders

from Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, and Washington, DC were among the cities represented.

In the aftermath of the reversal of Iraq's aggression, a great many Kuwaitis wanted to convey their gratitude to the United States in a way that would have practical meaning and great symbolic significance to what lay at the heart of a country and a people's violation. To this end, KAF spearheaded a one-of-a-kind movement to ensure that the lives of Americans and others that had fallen in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm were not in vain.

Reaching Out to American Schools. KAF has reached out to American school districts where guns and acts of violence remain commonplace, where parents, with abundant reason, worry for the safety of their children, and where students and other children often live literally in fear of their lives.

In so doing, KAF joined forces with national and local humanitarian and nonprofit associations, including the National Urban League, the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations, the U.S.-GCC Corporate Cooperation Committee, and several other civic and professional organizations. Ever since, KAF has been working with leaders in America's urban centers in a way that, thus far, is unparalleled among non-governmental and nonprofit groups in other countries.

Of direct relevance to what transpired in a California school last week, KAF has targeted a core constituency within which the incidence of acts of violence per capita in the United States remains all too frequent: intermediate and secondary school students. Working with school superintendents, principals, guidance counselors, and teachers, KAF several years ago initiated a bold and innovative program that has met with increasingly widespread appeal among American leaders concerned with curbing the incidence of crimes against youth. The program has inspired thousands of American students to write essays about the effect of violence on their lives and what they propose to do to bring about its end in their community.

Paneled judges read the essays and select the finalists. The winners, together with their parents or teacher, get to visit Washington, DC. There they are recognized in an awards ceremony attended by national dignitaries, meet their Congressional representatives and officials at the Department of Justice and the Office of Education, and tour the cultural and civic highlights of the nation's capital.

In arriving to this way of contributing something of meaning and lasting value to the United States, the citizens of Kuwait, through KAF, have unlocked a powerful positive force for good. The beneficiaries are numerous American metropolitan areas previously in a quandary as to how best to begin to loosen the grip of violence upon their communities.

KAF, in essence, has provided hope for countless American youth who had all but given up hope that there was a reason to believe that they could make it to adulthood unscathed by the infliction of physical pain upon them or a loved one by someone in their community. It provides them a ticket to non-violence.

A Recipe for Responsible Citizenship. Participation in KAF's Do the Write Thing Program offers American students a sure-fire recipe for instilling a significant measure of personal responsibility, accountability, leadership skills, and the means to responsible citizenship. And it does all this in association with the students' parents, teachers, schools, and a plethora of civic and professional associations within their communities.

A student's right of entry to the DTWT Program is completion of a three-part essay.

Students write about how violence has affected their lives. They suggest ways for ending this scourge upon the quality of life in many of America's inner cities. They express their resolve to do what they can to make a difference by having nothing to do with this phenomenon that, left unchecked, will continue to rob their community and country of a promising component of its future leaders.

Sound schmaltsy? Not to the survivors of thousands of those gunned down in the prime of their life, like those in California, Colorado, Georgia, and elsewhere. Not to those who had previously despaired of having a reason to believe that they could make it through school without their or someone dear to them being killed or falling victim to bodily harm en route.

Not to the unsung heroes and heroines among teachers who struggle daily and valiantly, often against seemingly insurmountable odds, to try to instill a sense of self-worth, values, and the pursuit of excellence among America's leaders of tomorrow.

Not to school guidance counselors, leaders of youth associations, crime prevention and law enforcement officers, and civic as well as business, professional, and religious leaders committed to offering youth a range of opportunities for self-development no matter how disadvantaged their personal, home, and community situations might be.

Not to former Kuwaiti Ambassadors to the United States Shaikh Saud Nasser Al-Sabah and Dr. Muhammad Salim Al-Sabah. Not to KAF Chairman Dr. Hassan Al-Ebraheem, KAF Vice-Chairman Anwar Nouri, and not to KAF co-founding board members Fawzi Al-Sultan and Daniel Callister. Not to Kuwait University President Dr. Faizah Al-Kharafi, Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science Director General Dr. Ali Al-Shamlan, and the Kuwaiti members of KAF's board of directors.

Not to Administration and Congressional leaders who endorse President Bush's encouragement and empowerment of private sector initiatives that seek to reverse the emasculating effects of school and urban violence on our country's would-be future leaders.

Practical Idealism. What KAF has done is help bring into being in an important corner of American national life the essence of practical idealism. It has done so through joining hands with the National Campaign to Stop Violence, the National Guard, the regional and local offices of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Council of Great City Schools, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the U.S. Department of Education, the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations, and the U.S.-GCC Corporate Cooperation Committee. Each of these organizations supports KAF's Do The Write Thing Program.

KAF's programs and activities also receive support from nearly a dozen Kuwaiti companies and leading American multinational corporations. In addition to the Marriott Corporation, the list of U.S. firms that support KAF's Do The Write Thing Program is impressive and growing. They include U.S.-GCC Corporate Cooperation Committee members Boeing Corporation, Booz Allen Hamilton, Bryan Cave, Ltd., Chevron Corporation, CMS Energy, ExxonMobil, General Dynamics, General Electric Corporation, Lockheed Martin, Lucent Technologies, McDonnell Douglas, Merrill Lynch, MPRI, Northrop Grumman, Parsons Corporation, Philip Morris Companies, Inc., Raytheon, SAIC, Texaco, and TRW.

KAF Student, Teacher, and Parent Award Ceremonies. Anyone search for an injection of idealism would do well to attend one of the DTWT awards ceremonies. Present at

each is an assemblage of national dignitaries and, in the wings, a significant number of journalists, television producers, and film crews.

The opportunity to observe the press in such a setting is illuminative of the powerful impact that this program has on young and old alike. In few other settings are media professionals so predictably moved to tears as they are by the impact that the Do The Write Thing Program has on American youth, their teachers, and their parents.

Each year during the filming of the annual awards ceremony, this writer has seen cameramen involuntarily reach for their handkerchiefs. They become caught up in their emotions from seeing, at the end of their lens, a mirror image of someone who could easily be their daughter or son.

This is what invariably happens when one sees and hears the students read their prize-winning essays to appreciative adult audiences in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol and elsewhere.

The stirring and uplifting scene happened again ten days ago in Kuwait instead of Washington. An added feature to the ceremonies commemorating the anniversary of the country's liberation was a recent KAF-commissioned film about the DTWT Program. The film premiered at the Kuwait-based Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development, the Arab world's leading intra-regional development assistance agency. The audience was virtually a "Who's Who" of all the national and international leaders that had been involved in lifting the veil of violence from Kuwait ten years ago.

The film's main actors were an unlikely collection of celebrities: former President Bush, former Secretary of State James Baker, former Secretary of Defense and now Vice-President Dick Cheney, current Secretary of State Powell, and General Norman Schwarzkopf. Each testified to the efficacy of the Do The Write Thing Program as a major contribution to the national challenge of ending the continuing pattern of violence in the lives of America's inner city students and children.

A Symphony and Two American Teenagers. One of the many highlights of the several days' festivities in which this writer was a participant was a specially-produced symphony by a Kuwaiti artist that included strands of "America the Beautiful." The symphony was performed by an ensemble of Kuwaiti musicians.

At the end of the concert, young Rominna Vellaseenor, a 13-year-old student from an inner city school in Chicago, took the stage to read her essay. One could barely see her head behind the podium as she hurled thunderbolts of insight about the phenomenon of violence in America. She was followed by John Bonham, now in university but earlier a student and resident of a crime-plagued neighborhood in Washington, D.C.

Rominna, one of this past year's Do The Write Thing Program winners, was there with her mother. John was a prize-winner several years ago. Rominna's essay was cast in the immediacy of the here-and-now of a life that has been seldom far from crime in her school and community. John's was forged from the perspective of the rear view mirror, contrasting the downwardly spiraling life he had led before he participated in the program and the one hundred and eighty degree turn-around for the better that it has taken since then. Following their speeches and the film, there was not a dry eye in the audience, the President's included.

KAF's Further Preparation of America's Leaders of Tomorrow. Only days before the anniversary celebrations began, a group of American university and high school students had visited Kuwait as participants in

the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations' Kuwait Studies Program. What all had in common was their outstanding participation as delegates to one of the National Council's annual Model Arab League Leadership Development Programs, which are currently underway and involve 2,000 students and their teachers in Models in 18 cities across the United States.

For years now, KAF, the University of Kuwait, the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science, and the American Embassy in Kuwait, headed by former Ambassadors Edward Gnehm and Ryan Crocker, and by current Ambassador James Larocco, have hosted the Kuwait Studies Program for promising American youth that have performed with distinction in the Model Arab Leagues.

Considering that all of the participants to date are still in their twenties, the results, to date, are phenomenal. One of the program's alumni is currently assigned to a major U.S. government post that deals daily with pressing issues pertaining to the Kuwait-U.S. bilateral relationship. Another entered the Foreign Service and was posted to the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait. Another is a career military officer working full time on strategic U.S. defense planning relating to Kuwait and other GCC countries.

Yet another alumnus of the program is currently a Rhodes Scholar. Others include the winner of First Prize for Best Master's Thesis on the Middle East at Oxford University last year, a former intern at the National Council and KAF who is finishing her Ph.D. at Stanford, and one of the best of a new breed of American foreign affairs specialists who is currently teaching tomorrow's military leaders and defense strategists at one of America's service academies.

More than half a dozen of the Kuwait Studies Program and Model Arab League alumni have returned to Kuwait for a year of intensive Arabic language training at Kuwait University. Others are working in the United States for member companies of the U.S.-GCC Corporate Cooperation Committee that have invested in Kuwait's economy. Each of these young American leaders of tomorrow has been exposed at length to a side of Kuwait culture and society quite different from any they could have imagined short of visiting the country and meeting with its people.

KAF As A Bridge To The Future. In this way, KAF is helping to prepare a cadre of Americans that will manage the future bilateral Kuwait-United States relationship and America's ties to other Arab countries, the Middle East, and the Islamic world.

This group of American youth that KAF has assisted is only a few years older than those mowed down by gunfire in the California school. Each acknowledges their debt to KAF and recognizes it as an organization that helped them, much earlier than most of their peers, to take responsibility for their actions and to do what they can to make a positive and lasting difference in the lives of others.

For any nation in search of a cure for the phenomenon of violence and other behavioral excesses that plague its society, it is incumbent upon its leaders to look first and foremost to their country's own resources for solutions. This, to be sure, has been and will continue to be done by America's national, state, and local leaders. But here is a sterling example of how one can also learn much that is timely and relevant from the private sector and civic activist efforts of a dedicated group of Kuwaitis.

These Arab allies, though geographically remote, are no less profoundly concerned than Americans are with funding the means to come to grips with the vicious cycle of violence cycle of violence visited upon their

country and people. They are committed to doing something positive and lasting about it, both here and in Kuwait, in the course of working side by side with their counterparts in the United States.

The efforts of the Kuwait-America Foundation to help American youth expand their horizons and break the barriers of violence have emerged from the horrors of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the deepening bonds of U.S.-Kuwaiti friendship spurred by Kuwait's liberation ten years ago. The spirit of understanding and reciprocal respect that these efforts represent are a testimonial to the wisdom, necessity, and mutuality of benefit that flow from closer U.S.-Arab relations.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 8, 2001

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, this massive tax plan is not balanced, not fair, not honest, not bipartisan, and not responsible.

It will spend down every penny of our hard-won surplus before we have ensured the future of Social Security and Medicare. It will deprive working Americans of the help they need and deserve. It will imperil our capacity to improve education, health care, and the environment. It relies on accounting gimmicks and rosy forecasts. And it places at risk a decade of unprecedented prosperity.

Apparently, the Republican leadership knows it. Why else would they ram through this tax plan before we even have a budget in place, and without the serious analysis the American people expect and deserve?

Frankly, this is the administration's first big test of its stated commitment to bring about a new, bipartisan tone in Washington, and, as one who believes in bipartisanship, I am sorry to say that it has failed that test completely.

Instead of rewarding a select few at the expense of others, let's give generous tax cuts to the families who need it most, while paying down the debt and investing in our future. That's the right approach. I urge my colleagues to vote no on this massive giveaway, and vote yes on the Democratic alternative.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RAIL MERGER REFORM AND CUSTOMER PROTECTION ACT

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 13, 2001

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to introduce the Rail Merger Reform and Customer Protection Act. This legislation would extend the reach of the antitrust laws to the railroad industry while providing the Surface Transportation Board (STB) with additional criteria on which to evaluate future railroad mergers.

For virtually every business in the United States, mergers and acquisitions in excess of \$10 million are subject to antitrust review by the Antitrust Division of the Department of

Justice. Railroads, however, are treated differently. Under current law, the STB has exclusive jurisdiction over most matters concerning rail transportation including mergers and acquisitions. In exercising that authority, the STB has approved a series of mergers over the past 20 years since passage of the Staggers Act which has resulted in widespread consolidation in the rail industry. This consolidation has reduced the number of rail carriers from 63 Class I railroads to just 7, resulting in significant service disruptions, negative impacts on shippers and a reduction in competition.

Mr. Speaker, believe it or not, the railroad industry is the only industry, except for America's favorite pastime, baseball, that is almost entirely exempt from the substance of the antitrust laws. With the rail industry now consolidated to seven major railroads, and the stage set for a possible final consolidation, there is an increased potential for the rail industry to exercise market power and monopoly abuse against shippers. In order to protect shippers and promote true competition, it makes sense to treat the railroads like other industries and subject them to the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice and full application of antitrust laws.

Currently, the Department of Justice can only comment on proposed mergers. In previous mergers the recommendations of DOJ were ignored. For example, the Department of Justice pegged the Union Pacific-Southern Pacific merger "most anti-competitive rail merger in history." In that merger, the STB ignored not only the concerns expressed by Department of Justice, but also the concerns of rail customers, organized labor, and the United States Department of Agriculture. I believe that the Department of Justice, an agency that can objectively evaluate the impact of mergers and protect shippers from the continual decrease in competition, needs to have a strong voice in mergers reviewed by the Surface Transportation Board.

My legislation would require both the Department of Justice and the STB to review and approve future rail mergers. Under this proposed regulatory framework, the DOJ would approve a merger unless it substantially restrains commerce in any section of the country or tends to create a monopoly in any line of commerce. The STB would still be required to review and approve a merger under a similar standard but it would also judge the proposed merger by a broader public interest standard. However, my legislation would not allow a merger to move forward without approval from both Department of Justice and Surface Transportation Board.

In this day and age, there is no public policy reason to justify the industry's special treatment, particularly since the railroads have enjoyed considerable deregulation under the Staggers Act and the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) Termination Act. The passage of these laws which reduced the scope and effectiveness of the regulatory agency, makes it more necessary than ever for shippers to have the full panoply of remedies available against monopolistic activities.

Under my legislation, the STB would also be required to examine several additional criteria before approving a merger. Future mergers and consolidations would not be approved unless it was shown that the merger: (1) provides additional rail to rail competition and

competitive options for rail customers; (2) improves service to customers; and (3) will not reduce competitive rail routes available to current railroad customers. Additionally, the legislation ensures that relief can be sought under the current regulatory framework or through the antitrust laws.

I am pleased that the Alliance for Rail Competition, the Consumers United for Rail Equity, National Farmers Union, American Farm Bureau Federation, National Association of Wheat Growers, the American Forest and Paper Association, the Transportation Intermediaries Association, Otter Trail Power, Minnesota Power, the National Association of Chemical Distributors, and the American Chemistry Council have endorsed this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort to ensure that the railroad industry is subject to the same laws as every other industry. It is in the public interest to raise the bar for review of the last few remaining mergers and to have oversight by the Department of Justice on the actions of the railroads.

REMEMBERING A GREAT MAN: ABRAHAM QUEZADA AMADOR

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 13, 2001

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember a great man, Abraham Quezada Amador, who died one year ago at age 70. For 30 years Abraham was the founder and director of Comite Regional Campesino, a nonprofit organization that has assisted countless individuals and families become United States citizens.

Abraham made the measure of difference in the lives of countless people. Indeed, it was not unusual to see dozens of people lined up outside the door of his home office patiently waiting their turn to talk with Abraham. He was always willing to offer his help and advice regarding their citizenship applications. Immigration and Naturalization Service documents or letters they needed to have translated, as well as a myriad of other things. Abraham shared his knowledge and expertise with kindness, understanding, and a smile larger than life itself.

Abraham was a strong, tireless, and compassionate leader who dedicated his life to assisting those in need, and he has been sorely missed by all whose lives he touched. He devoted his life to helping others and was the most caring and unselfish person I have ever known. We miss his kind words, his sage advice, and his contagious smile. I feel fortunate to have known Abraham for so many years and I am proud to have been his friend.

Abraham is survived by his wife, Maria Guadalupe Aceves, his daughters Lupe Saldana, Blanca Amador, Anna Blevins and Gloria Amador, his sons of Antonio, Abraham Jr., Alphonso and Roy, and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I invite my colleagues to join me as I remember this great man who left a wonderful legacy and made the measure of difference in the lives of so many.