

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, today my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER), and I are introducing the Instructional Materials Accessibility Act, which makes sure that blind students will be able to enjoy an equal opportunity to a quality education.

It often takes months for a blind student to have the same materials as his or her sighted peers because of the cumbersome process needed to translate a textbook into Braille or other specialized format. This legislation will eliminate these delays by putting in place standards to assist States and school districts in delivering instructional materials to blind students.

I would urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

U.N. ABSURDITIES

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, for 12 years we have amassed a mountain of proof that Saddam Hussein has both weapons of mass destruction and the missiles he needs to launch them.

Right now, Saddam Hussein is violating a long string of binding U.N. resolutions. He continues to repeatedly violate the terms of the 1991 ceasefire, which amounts to a resumption of war.

As we heard last evening, our President is determined to stop Saddam Hussein before it is too late by disarming him of weapons of mass destruction. But over and over we hear the President's critics say that he should not act without the United Nations.

Now, President Bush agrees that the U.N. can be very helpful, but sometimes the U.N. does the wrong thing. Last year, the U.N. placed some of the world's worst human rights abusers on its Commission on Human Rights. Now, of all countries, Libya is going to chair that body.

If that is not bad enough, Iraq, Iraq is in line to take over the U.N. Conference on Disarmament. Could anything be more ludicrous?

President Bush should do the right thing with or without the United Nations.

COMMENDING INDIA ON ITS CELEBRATION OF REPUBLIC DAY

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with Indian Americans across the Nation in recognition of India's Republic Day, which was celebrated this last Sunday. Fifty-three years ago India's constitution, greatly influenced by America's Founding Fathers, was adopted to solidify its parliamentary democracy.

Today, India is the world's largest democracy, of over 1 billion people; and

the shared values of American and Indian people have never been more apparent. Our countries share a love of freedom; and both uphold the ideal of equality of all people, regardless of faith, gender, or ethnicity.

As the co-chair of the House India Caucus, along with the co-chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), I commend both President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, elected leaders of the world's two largest democracies, for continuing to actively cultivate strong ties between the United States and India.

URGING CONGRESS TO PASS THE PRESIDENT'S LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES, AND LEGISLATION HOLDING CRIMINALS RESPONSIBLE FOR HARMING UNBORN CHILDREN

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

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, last night the President of the United States challenged this Congress to tackle many problems facing our country, such as health care reform and economic growth. The President also urged Congress to pass legislation banning partial birth abortions and human cloning. All of these are extremely important goals.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, I am confident that we will again pass a bill that will hold criminals responsible for harming unborn children. Last session we did pass such legislation, but under current Federal law an individual could attack a pregnant woman, injuring that woman and killing the child. While the assailant could be tried for the assault against the mother, no legal action is available under Federal law to address the murder of the child.

This is not the case in many States in this Nation. In fact, 24 States, including my home State of Pennsylvania, have passed unborn victims' laws.

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These are effective laws that have been upheld by the courts on a number of occasions when they have been challenged. In fact, all legal challenges to such unborn victims laws have failed. And a number of Federal courts have turned away challenges to State unborn victims laws.

An expectant mother who loses a child as a result of an attack by a violent criminal before she gets to hold her child deserves recourse. Well, this recourse would never be a substitute for her terrible loss. I do not think it is too much to ask to have a similar unborn victims laws on the books. Last year we passed this act. I am confident we will pass this bill again.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). Under the Speaker's an-

nounced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

HONORING FORMER CONGRESSMAN LUCIEN BLACKWELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today with a very heavy heart as the passing of a dear, dear friend of mine and a dear friend of a lot of people, former Congressman Lucien Blackwell.

Lucien Blackwell was a Korean decorated war hero. He was a Member of this body. He was a member of the Pennsylvania State Legislature, a member of city council, and he was a very famous labor leader. Lucien Blackwell was a champion for the little people.

Two things come to mind when you talk about Lucien Blackwell: He was a warrior, and he had passion. He was a warrior and a fighter for the people who could not fight for themselves, and he spoke for people who could not speak for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, in my 18 years as a party chairman for the city of Philadelphia, he was my vice chair. He stood beside me for 18 years, and for 18 years there was never a motion on the floor that he did not make or he did not second. He was without question a man of integrity and a man who will be missed.

I was with him the day before he passed. We did our normal politicking and our famous back-room scheming, always to try to help somebody else.

I would not be here today if it was not for Lucien Blackwell. When this seat became vacant, the first congressional seat of Pennsylvania, he was going to fill it. He was going to come back and resume his career as a Congressman. And then 2 days prior to submitting the name, he said to me that he met with his family, was having breakfast with his granddaughters and grandsons, and they said to him, Pop-Pop, if you went back to Congress we could not be doing this with you. So he thought better of it. He thought better to stay with his family and not to come back to this body, and that is why I am here. He nominated me, and I took that congressional seat.

I feel a little responsible for allowing his family to have him for 5 more years, which is a very short time.

Mr. Speaker, the Nation, this body lost a good man. The State of Pennsylvania lost a good man. The city of Philadelphia and the labor movement lost a good man. His family, they lost a loving husband; his loving wife, city council lady Janey Blackwell. His family lost a father, a brother, a grandfather, a great grandfather. And, Mr. Speaker, I lost a good friend. He will never be forgotten, and for sure he can never be replaced.

HONORING FORMER CONGRESSMAN LUCIEN BLACKWELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise to comment on the life and legacy of our former colleague Lucien E. Blackwell, who served as a Congressman for the Second District, and prior to that served for two decades as a member of the city council of Philadelphia, where he served as a chairman of the finance committee and moved through the council all of the critical and major pieces of legislation that impacted the growth and development of the city of Philadelphia as we know it today. And even before that service, he served as an elected official in the State legislature in Pennsylvania.

I remember almost three decades now ago when he led an effort with the late State representative David P. Richardson of Pennsylvania to clean up the conditions at our youth detention facility headquartered in our side of the State of the Youth Study Center on the parkway. He fought in the city council and passed the first major minority set-aside legislation once he found out that African American and women-owned businesses were getting less than 2 percent of the city procurement business, and created a program that opened a door for disadvantaged businesses to have an opportunity at the procurement in Philadelphia.

As my colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY), has indicated, he started his public career, however, as a labor leader where he leveled the Longshoreman's Union in Philadelphia. And immediately prior to that he served our Nation in the Korean War conflict. He was a veteran of that conflict, and he won medals for his commitment and his service fighting with the Korean War veterans, and was a part of the effort to create an appropriate memorial for Korean veterans.

So Lucien E. Blackwell, who died suddenly at the age of 71, as it is reported, leaves now his wife, who is a city councilwoman in Philadelphia and a major leader in our city, and a host of children and grandchildren, who are going to in their own way make a mark and live up to the legacy of Lucien Blackwell.

And Philadelphians, Pennsylvanians, and all across this country people remember the passion of Lucien Blackwell, particularly his effort to be concerned about those who were considered in some quarters to be little people or outside of the mainstream of power. He fought with Maleek for ex-offenders. He fought to feed the homeless in Philadelphia, sometimes to the chagrin of the establishment. He fought to include labor fully in the discussions of economic development in our city, major building projects and every other respect.

Lucien Blackwell should be remembered by this House as not just a

former Member, but someone whose life of service honored the House by him being a Member here, and for all of his service to our country we should be grateful. And I would just like to say that for a lot of those people, the Linda Brickhouses, the Kentues at the grassroots political network, and all of the people he worked with, John Macklin on the disadvantaged business efforts, the minority business efforts, and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY), who he worked with shoulder to shoulder developing the political machinery in our city, at least in terms of the Democratic Party, but he also reached across the aisle and worked quite well with our Republican colleagues to make our city what it is today.

We are indebted. And I join my colleague from the First Congressional District in honoring his memory, his legacy, and I know that this House will find appropriate ways as we go forward to more formally recognize his service.

I thank the Speaker for allowing us this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FILNER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CRISIS IN RURAL HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. MARSHALL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, this is the first time I have had an opportunity to speak to the Speaker, and it is an honor to do so. I speak on behalf of rural America, Mr. Speaker. It is an issue that is bipartisan. It is an issue that is of great concern to an awful lot of Americans.

Last night in his State of the Union Address the President said all seniors should have the choice of a health care plan that provides prescription drugs. I hope that the President's plan when it comes out takes the opportunity to address some of the weak points in Medicare and to truly provide access to prescription drugs for seniors throughout the United States, including in rural areas.

At the moment, Mr. Speaker, the formula for deciding how to reimburse medical providers discriminates against providers that are in rural areas. In my district we have had two rural hospitals close in the last 2 or 3 years. One closed, then reopened, and went through two or three different sets of management. We have had a number of rural hospitals that have struggled just to make ends meet.

This is caused in part by our funding formula under Medicare, and I hope the President in crafting his plan for prescription drugs and for Medicare re-

form will take into account the need to protect rural areas, to protect the citizens that are in rural areas, and to protect the economies of rural areas.

At the moment the funding formula for Medicare reimbursement discriminates against rural providers and benefits urban providers. That formula needs to be adjusted. I believe this matter has been addressed before in the House. I hope that the Rural Health Care Caucus will be presenting to the House a bill that will address this matter, and I also hope that the President and the House will support that bill. If the President could incorporate the concepts behind that bill, which during the last session was called the Rural Community Hospital Assistance Act, then I think the Medicare reform that is offered by the President could well address the crisis in health care that we see today in rural areas.

REPUBLIC VERSUS DEMOCRACY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, at the close of the Constitutional Convention in 1787, Benjamin Franklin told an inquisitive citizen that the delegates to the Constitutional Convention gave the people a Republic, if you can keep it. We should now apologize to Mr. Franklin. It is obvious that the Republic is gone, and we are wallowing in a pure democracy against which the Founders had strongly warned.

Madison, the Father of the Constitution, could not have been more explicit in his fear and concern for democracies. "Democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contentions, have ever been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property, and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths."

If Madison's assessment was correct, it behooves those of us in Congress to take note and decide, indeed, whether the public has vantaged when it occurred and what to expect in the ways of turbulence, contention and violence, and above all else what can we and what will we do about it.

The turbulence seems self-evident. Domestic welfare programs are not sustainable and do not accomplish their stated goals. State and Federal spending and deficits are out of control. Terrorism and uncontrollable fear undermines our sense of well-being. Hysterical reactions to dangers not yet seen prompt the people at the prodding of the politicians to readily sacrifice their liberties in vain hope that someone else will take care of them and guarantee their security.

With these obvious signs of a failed system all around us, there seems to be more determination than ever to antagonize the people of the world by pursuing a world empire. Nation-building, foreign intervention, preemptive