

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 1998

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I was detained yesterday and missed the following rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner:

H. Con. Res. 228, Money Laundering Investigations in Mexico, rollcall no. 255 "yea".

H. Res. 451, Oppose Increase in Postal Rates, rollcall no. 256 "yea".

H.R. 4059, Military Construction Appropriations for FY 1999, rollcall no. 254 "yea".

H.R. 4060, Energy and Water Development Appropriations for FY 1999, rollcall no. 253 "yea".

Amendments to H.R. 4060 by Rep. Foley to eliminate the bill's \$5 million in funding for the Energy Department's Nuclear Energy Research Initiative, rollcall no. 252 "nay".

CONGRATULATIONS TO SARA BONILLA

HON. FRANK RIGGS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 1998

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, Sara Bonilla was born in the small town of Cartago, Costa Rica on May 15, 1956. She is the proud mother of three sons, Fabian Martinez, Juan Carlos and Reuben Augusto, who reside in Batann, Limon, Costa Rica. In 1989, Sara came to the United States to live with relatives in Los Angeles, California.

Since Sara arrived in the United States, she has worked very hard at many different jobs, oftentimes two at a time, to assist her family in Costa Rica. Sara enrolled in and completed classes in both English and computers at a local college. One of the biggest highlights in her life—as well as a big step in her independence—was when she received her driver's license and purchased a used automobile.

Over the years, Sara has constantly sought to improve her English proficiency and her job skills. Today, after ten years, Sara is reaching her goal. Today, at the Masonic Auditorium in San Francisco, California, Sara Bonilla will be sworn in as a citizen of the United States. I offer Sara my congratulations, from one American to another.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY RESOLUTION

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 1998

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, today, I am proud to introduce House Resolution 483 regarding strengthening of the Social Security system. I am pleased that this resolution has 59 original cosponsors and has been endorsed by 14 national organizations representing millions of Americans.

This is a very important day for Social Security. It marks the true beginning of our national

debate about the privatization of this great social insurance program.

I say the true beginning because, until today, the Social Security debate has been one-sided and has shut out the voice of the American people. For too many months, there has been a growing consensus in Washington that privatization—substitution private individual accounts for all or part of Social Security—is a done deal, that economists think it's the only way to go, that young people are clamoring for private accounts, and that Americans in general want it.

This is simply not true. There is no wellspring of public support for privatizing Social Security, there is merely a wellspring of expensive public relations creating the illusion of public support. Today, I am introducing a resolution into the House opposing the creation of private accounts as a substitute for Social Security. This resolution has 59 original co-sponsors and the initial endorsements of national advocacy groups representing Americans of all ages and all walks of life. Together, these initial endorsers represent tens of millions of Americans who are opposed to wrecking the promise of Social Security by privatizing it. Together, I believe this alliance represents the true sense of the American people: that privatizing Social Security is a bad idea and is unnecessary. The early support for this resolution, still in its early stages, should make us question the myth that there is massive public support for partially replacing Social Security with private accounts.

The introduction of this resolution also debunks the myth that there is overwhelming Congressional support for privatization. Fifty-nine Members of Congress, so far, have endorsed this resolution, more than have spoken out in favor of private accounts in general.

This resolution also debunks the well-financed myth that Social Security is in a state of grave crisis. As this year's Trustee report tells us, Social Security—at the very worst—faces a manageable gap of 2.19 percent of taxable payroll. This gap can be closed without reducing Social Security benefits, without raising the retirement age, without forcing individuals to put their retirement income at risk through individual private accounts, and without raising tax rates. This 2.19 percent is not only manageable, but it is quite possibly overstated by the Trustees, who, out of fiduciary caution, use economic assumptions that have been described as extremely pessimistic by leading economists. Let me state it clearly—Social Security is not going bankrupt; Social Security faces a manageable gap which can be closed without dismantling the basic insurance functions it provides.

Finally, I would like to express my hope that the introduction of this resolution will spark a more realistic analysis of privatization. With few exceptions, the creation of private accounts has been presented as a panacea for Social Security's troubles. This view is baffling to many of us in that it overlooks obvious problems with using private stock market accounts as a substitute for Social Security. For example:

The creation of private accounts doesn't account for the millions of children, disabled workers, and widowed spouses who collect disability and survivors' benefits from Social Security;

The switch from a self-funded social program to private accounts will cost Americans

many billions of dollars, a transition cost that will hurt the youngest workers the worst;

Individual private accounts fail to protect individuals from severe downturns in the market; and

Even a system of individual private accounts that enjoys a good average return on investment means that millions of Americans whose investment perform below average will be thrust into poverty.

Social Security is not just a retirement program. Social Security is a national insurance program which, for a remarkably low premium, protects Americans from economic misfortune at every stage of our lives. Even at the best of times, people need insurance, and it is vital that we protect Social Security and preserve its current structure. It is my hope that this resolution will help clarify the public debate and move us in that direction.

TRIBUTE TO CATHY FROST

HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 1998

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Fresno Businesswoman Cathy Frost, owner of Bennett Frost Personnel Services, for her efforts and success in the business arena. Cathy Frost's business has grown to be one of the most successful and thriving personnel services in Fresno.

Cathy Frost was born in Selma, California in 1946. She is married to Robert Frost and has two children, Brian and Kevin. Cathy Frost received a Bachelor of Arts degree from San Jose State College.

Bennett Frost Personnel Services is a successful business that began with only three employees and has now grown to 19. Mrs. Frost's interest in making a difference in the community has landed her the distinction of becoming the first woman president of the Fresno Metropolitan Museum. Other activities include serving as the vice-chair of the New United Way campaign and chair of the search committee for an executive director for the same organization. Cathy Frost is also a member of The Business Council, the Human Resource Association and the YMCA search committee for an executive director.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I pay tribute to Cathy Frost for her efforts and success in the business arena. It is the leadership and care exhibited by Mrs. Frost that should serve as a role model for business owners all over America. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Cathy Frost many years of success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 1998

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, a town meeting in my district that was scheduled at a time when the House was not expected to be in session prevented me from being here for yesterday's vote on H.R. 4060, the FY 1999 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill. I strongly support H.R. 4060. Had I been present, I would have voted YES.

This bill contains \$275,347,000 for the Fernald Environmental Management Project (FEMP), which is based in my Congressional District near Cincinnati, Ohio. The former Fernald Feed Materials Production Center, now the FEMP, was a Department of Energy facility that was part of the United States' nuclear weapons production complex for nearly forty years from 1951 to 1988. The site is heavily contaminated with nuclear waste and other hazardous materials, and has been the focus of extensive cleanup efforts for several years.

H.R. 4060 fully funds the President's request for the Fernald cleanup under the Defense Facilities Closure Account. The Closure Account is designed to ensure the accelerated cleanup of this site under budget and ahead of the original schedule. Accelerated cleanup will not only result in a considerable savings to the taxpayers but also help to protect public health. I would like to point to a disturbing study recently released by the Center for Disease Control that estimates a 1 to 12 percent increase in lung cancer deaths to residents in the Fernald study area as a result of exposure to radon gas emitted from the site's K-65 Silos. The CDC's findings serve to emphasize the need to fully fund the Closure Account, which would ensure that the accelerated cleanup proceeds on schedule to safeguard the residents in the community from future radioactive exposure.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this funding for the FEMP strongly serves the public interest. I commend Chairman LIVINGSTON, Ranking Member OBEY, Chairman MCDADE, and Ranking Member FAZIO as well as their colleagues on the Appropriations Committee and the Energy and Water Development Subcommittee for including these vital funds in the bill. I also want to thank the House for overwhelmingly approving H.R. 4060 by a vote of 405-4.

HONORING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF JONESFIELD TOWNSHIP

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 1998

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise to recognize a distinguished Township in Mid-Michigan as it celebrates its 125th Anniversary. Chartered in 1873, Jonesfield Township was originally known as Green—named after the owner of a local lumber mill. Now a 125 years later, Jonesfield Township has grown and prospered around the quiet community of Merrill. Jonesfield is named after one of its earliest settling families, the Jones' which happened to stumble upon the community after taking the wrong road in the attempt to settle in the area surrounding Grand Rapids.

Jonesfield Township and the community of Merrill are known for the closeness of the residents and their friendly community spirit. Its residents classify the area as a quiet farming community. Today, as the community celebrates its 125th Anniversary it recognizes the excellence of the churches, schools, fire department, and farm families that have helped develop Jonesfield Township into a thriving community. It is the hard work and dedication of many generations that built this community.

This weekend the Jonesfield Township will reflect on its past and the residents can be very proud of their history and growth over the past 125 years. On Saturday, as the citizens of Jonesfield Township reflect on their past—they can be proud of how their community started and where it is today. It is a special, caring community that has grown without sacrificing their special heritage.

SALUTING THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE INTO LABOR UNIONS

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 1998

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to salute one of our most cherished rights as Americans: the right of working people to bank together and organize into labor unions to achieve higher wages and better working conditions.

When people first go to work for a non-union employer, they do so as individuals. Often times, they are not familiar with the specific conditions of work at their workplace. Sometimes those conditions are acceptable, and provide the sort of income that can support them and their families. But, too often those conditions are substandard and the wages are insufficient. In this situation, workers discover that they have many interests in common. They find that by joining together they can begin to work out responses and solutions to the problems that they face in the workplace. And they find that organizing into a labor union is their best vehicle to better treatment, improvements in working conditions, and expand respect on the job.

Since the massive organizing drives of the 1930s, unions have come to play an important role in American society. Unions contribute to the stability of our economy by helping to ensure that working people have the income to purchase the products and services of industry. Unions give workers a voice on the job. Unions help to close the wage gap between men and women. And unions help to uphold fairness and equality of opportunity for all their members in the workplace.

Unfortunately, the right to organize is increasingly under attack. Millions of workers would decide to join a union if they could be assured that they would not be punished for making that decision. Instead, workers who express their pro-union sympathies are routinely harassed, forced to undergo closed-door meeting with employers, and even fired.

In my own district on the west side of Cleveland, the right to organize is not safe. For example, a company with \$80 million in sales pays its workers at starting wage of \$6.25 per hour, barely above the minimum wage. This is a company that received a tax abatement from the City of Cleveland to construct a new building. The company's sales have been growing, but that growth has not translated into higher wages and benefits, or better working conditions. Most employees support themselves and their families on weekly paychecks of less than \$200. Retiring employees do not have a pension plan they can count on. Safety conditions are terrible. Employees have lost fingers and, in one case, an arm. When fires have broken out in the plant, employees have been required to continue work.

Faced with these low wages and dangerous conditions, these workers turned to the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees—UNITE. After workers contacted UNITE, 60 percent of them signed cards saying that they wanted the union to represent them. A petition for election has been filed with the National Labor Relations Board. Yet in the first two weeks of the union's organizing campaign, the following has happened: the employer has held captive audience meetings to frighten the workers; the company has threatened to close the factory completely; and the company has intimidated vocal union supporters by issuing written warnings against them, some for work offenses that occurred months earlier. The union predicts that this anti-union campaign will continue and become more intense in the next six weeks before the union election.

I wish I could report this sort of behavior is unusual. But often this is typical action by employers to block the right to organize by any means necessary. This sort of behavior is shameful. It is turning the clock back to the 19th Century, when workers had few rights.

To guarantee the stability and prosperity of our democratic society, workers must have the right to choose—freely and openly—whether to join together with their fellow workers and select the union of their choice. I urge my colleague to stand up and declare that:

Workers have the right to organize;

People have a right to a job . . . at fair wages with decent benefit;

Workers have a right to a safe workplace . . . and a right to compensation if they are injured;

People have a right to decent health care; and

People have a right to participate in the political process.

The foundation for all of these rights is the right to organize. To all those workers and employees who are fighting to exercise that right to organize, I salute you. Your struggle is difficult and painful, but you are proceeding in the finest traditions of our American history.

A TRIBUTE TO CLARK BURRUS, VICE CHAIRMAN, FIRST CHICAGO CAPITAL MARKETS, INC.

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 1998

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I pay tribute to an outstanding leader and businessman, Mr. Clark Burrus, Vice Chairman of First Chicago Capital Markets, Inc., who was recently honored by the First National Bank of Chicago.

Mr. Burrus has served the First National Bank of Chicago for nearly twenty years, constantly contributing his innovative ideas and valuable insight. Before joining The First National Bank of Chicago, Mr. Burrus served the city of Chicago under Mayors Martin Kenneley, Richard J. Daley, Michael Bilandic, and Jane Byrne. Mr. Burrus was chairman of the Transition Committee on Finance for Mayor Harold Washington and co-chaired Mayor Byrne's Pension Study Commission. Starting in 1975, I had the pleasure of working with Mr. Burrus, while I was an Alderman and he was City Comptroller. It was always a