

shape the content of media coverage of politics. The media can be the check on misconduct and tyranny by government, expose public officials' errors and abuses, inform public policy, and improve the quality of democracy. The problems with the media should be dealt with by the media and the people rather than the government.

IN HONOR OF THE CLEVELAND
SOCIETY OF POLES

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Cleveland Society of Poles on its 75th Anniversary. This non-profit organization is dedicated to financially assisting groups and individuals training in the arts. Members of the Society consist of business people and professionals in the Cleveland area.

The Society is striving to make 1998, its 75th Anniversary year, the best ever. Numerous charitable, civic, and educational groups as well as individuals will benefit from the commitment the Cleveland Society of Poles and its members have made to promoting the arts. In turn, the Cleveland community benefits from the organization's continued support of the arts by seeing its cultural, educational, and economic vitality grow and flourish.

My fellow colleagues, please join me in celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Cleveland Society of Poles.

HONORING THE COMMUNITY SERVICE OF
SGT. EDWARD D. CARDOZA

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Sgt. Edward D. Cardoza upon his retirement from the Milpitas Police Department which is located in Milpitas, CA, in California's 13th Congressional District.

Sgt. Cardoza began his career in law enforcement in 1968 after receiving an honorable discharge from the United States Air Force and attending college. On October 27, 1969, he was transferred to the Milpitas Police Department. He was promoted to corporal in 1974 and then to the rank of sergeant in 1982.

During his 29 years with the Department, Sgt. Cardoza served in many different areas. He showed interest early in his career in the K-9 program. He was a K-9 officer for several years before becoming the coordinator of the K-9 Department where he has served as coordinator for the last ten years. He was a patrol sergeant for several years. In this capacity he was responsible for supervising other police personnel in their response to the needs of our citizens. He also worked in the detective bureau and the youth service bureau and was instrumental in starting the police reserves program.

For the past 3 years, Sgt. Cardoza has been serving as a traffic sergeant. In this capacity he has worked closely with city traffic

engineers to help reduce the traffic accident rate for the city of Milpitas. Recently he was instrumental in the conception, design, and implementation of the Department's DUI enforcement trailer which will be used to assist in the reduction of the incidence of drunk driving.

Sgt. Cardoza has also been an active member of the community—through his service on the youth service bureau of the Department, he became involved in many of our community's youth programs. He coached PAL baseball, YBA basketball, and little league. He has also served on the board of directors for Santa Clara PAL, Milpitas PAL, and treasurer for BMX.

During his years of service, Sgt. Cardoza received over 70 letters of appreciation and commendation from the citizens of Milpitas and from numerous branches of government.

Mr. Speaker, on January 30, 1998, Sgt. Cardoza will be honored by family, friends, colleagues, and members of the community on the occasion of his retirement from the Milpitas Police Department. I applaud him for his 29 years of distinguished public service to our community. His dedication and commitment will be sorely missed and I wish him luck in all of his future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY
MONTH

HON. CHARLES E. SCHUMER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in celebrating Black History Month. I would like to take a moment to reflect on the courageous leadership and civic duty that has shaped the communities of New York throughout the years. Now, as we approach the new century, New Yorkers of all ethnic backgrounds will face a new set of economic, social and political challenges. If we stop and recognize the perseverance of African-Americans in times of change, their record of commitment to the pursuit of prosperity, integrity and opportunity for their families and friends and community at-large speaks for itself.

The tireless work of community and religious leaders in guiding African-American communities have done much to improve the quality of life in our city. I am proud to honor this important occasion where African-Americans join hands to acknowledge their accomplishments and contributions to our society and the world.

The level of civic participation in today's culture is depressingly low among average American citizens. I am always inspired by the community spirit and leadership I witness from African-Americans in New York. Our society would be a better place if more Americans emulated the civic duty and moral strength of our African-American counterparts. I hope that Black History Month is recognized and honored by citizens of all backgrounds. I honor the work, vision and courage of my African-American friends and colleagues in Congress and throughout New York. May our city continue to be honored with your leadership.

TRIBUTE TO HOWARD T. ROBINSON, SR.—FIRST EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

HON. WILLIAM (BILL) CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, on November 8, 1997, Howard Theodore Robinson, Sr., the first Executive Director of the Congressional Black Caucus, lost his life in a car accident. His death was a great tragedy for the African-American community. He touched so many lives and was a key participant in the socioeconomic movement of minorities.

I vividly remember the day I was introduced to Howard during a congressional trip to the Far East. At that time, Howard was labor attaché for the American embassy in Tokyo. Congressman Gus Hawkins and I met with him. We were so impressed with Howard that we recommended to our colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus that he be hired as the organization's first executive director. Our instincts proved to be correct. He was a great administrator. The CBC is the powerful organization that is today in part because of Howard's contributions.

Howard worked tirelessly to advance the causes of minorities, particularly African-Americans, and made great sacrifices on their behalf. When he accepted the position of CBC Executive Director, he left a prestigious position at the State Department. But, he was on a greater mission. In his letter of acceptance he stated that he was taking the job "with the full recognition that the Caucus may not, at this time, be in a position to match my current salary. But, because I believe that the purposes and objectives outlined by the Caucus are basic to the future of all Americans, I am willing to abandon my position as a senior Foreign Service office, in order to dedicate the next years of my life to the objectives that you in the Caucus have set out to achieve."

In addition to his foreign service career, which included U.S. Consulate to the French West Indies and Advisor to the U.S. Delegation to the International Labor Organization Conference in Geneva, Switzerland, Howard Robinson had a distinguished career in radio. In 1991, he became the host of "The Creative Entrepreneur", a talk show about small businesses. Later on, he hosted a second show called "Dynamics of Public Policy", a show about policy in southern New Jersey. The title of the second show was changed to "In The Public Interests" when Howard left New Jersey and went solo. The shows were expansions of Howard's efforts to help minority communities. They both proved to be key informational sources in their respective communities and helped many to empower themselves economically and politically.

Howard's sacrifices and contributions will not be forgotten. His work touched people who will always remember how Howard helped them to envision and live up to their potential. The name "Howard T. Robinson, Sr." will be indelibly marked on their journey to economic independence.

TRIBUTE TO GARY M. THOMAS

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Gary M. Thomas, who has served as the President of the United Chambers of Commerce of the San Fernando Valley for the last two years.

Gary has worked diligently for two years to strengthen the United Chambers of Commerce. He has selflessly dedicated his time and effort to improving our community, through several leadership roles. Gary has worked to ensure the financial security of our community as a co-founder of the Economic Alliance of the San Fernando Valley and the Chairman of Mayor Richard Riordan's Valley Business Corps. In this capacity, he has initiated efforts to keep businesses located in the San Fernando Valley, while working to encourage their expansion.

Gary's expertise has been recognized by many leaders in our state. He is the Chairman of California State Assemblyman Tom McClintok's Business Advisory Commission and an invaluable member of State Assemblyman Robert Hertzberg's Business Advisory Commission.

Gary also plays an active role on the boards of directors for several of our community's most valuable organizations, including the San Fernando Valley Charitable Foundation, the Valley Leadership Institute, the advisory board for Columbia West Hospitals, the Wellness Community and the West Valley Boys and Girls Club.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, please join me in honoring Gary M. Thomas for his dedication to maintaining and improving the quality of life in our community. We are grateful to Gary for the time he has served as President of the United Chambers of Commerce of the San Fernando Valley and wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

THE BUDGET

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, December 31, 1997, into the Congressional Record:

CELEBRATING FISCAL RESTRAINT

The most highly praised accomplishment of this past session of Congress was passage of the agreement to balance the budget by 2002. Federal budget deficits have been too large for too long, and this bipartisan agreement was a welcome development. But I am becoming increasingly concerned about comments suggesting that our fiscal problems are behind us. Despite all the talk about a balanced budget, I believe it is much too early to celebrate fiscal restraint.

Status of deficit: There is no doubt that major progress has been made on the budget deficit in recent years. Over the past five years it has been reduced from \$290 billion to \$23 billion in 1997, both because of the 1993 deficit reduction package passed by Congress

and the strong U.S. economy. The 1997 deficit was much lower than expected because federal revenues grew by nearly 9 percent while spending increased only about 2.5 percent.

In addition to the small federal budget deficit in 1997, state and local governments ran a combined budget surplus of \$29 billion. That means that the government as a whole enjoyed a budget surplus in 1997, something that has not happened for many years. Less government borrowing means lower interest rates on everything from home mortgages to car loans.

Thus far in fiscal year 1998, which began on October 1, revenues are coming in faster than expected and spending is slower than expected, so some budget experts think that the federal budget could even be balanced this year.

Concerns: Despite the progress, there are several reasons for being cautious about thinking that our country's fiscal house is in order and that the only question now is how to spend the budget surpluses.

First, progress on reducing the deficit depends heavily on the continued strength of the U.S. economy. If we are off in our assumptions about how the economy will perform in the months and years ahead, the deficit could again balloon. Even an average-size recession could add \$100 billion to the deficit for a year or two. It would be a huge mistake to pretend that the business cycle has been repealed. I've come to the conclusion that it is risky to start worrying about how to handle a surplus when we don't have it yet and it may not materialize.

Second, even with a balanced federal budget, we still have the huge accumulated federal debt to contend with. The federal debt is what was built up during each of the years in which the federal government was running a deficit, and it now stands at a huge \$3.8 trillion. The interest payments that the federal government makes on that debt are now almost \$250 billion each year. That's 15% of total federal outlays. Reducing these debt service costs through paying down the debt should be a priority.

Third, I am worried about discretionary spending increases under the balanced budget plan. Since 1990, discretionary (non-entitlement) spending—the spending that Congress passes each year on roads, defense, parks, and the like—has been frozen at around \$550 billion. Yet in 1997, spending for a host of discretionary programs was increased, for everything from health research and highway building to anti-drug efforts and the FBI.

The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 assumes that discretionary spending caps will keep spending increases less than the rate of inflation, with most of the tough decisions left to future Congresses and the next President. The assumption that these caps will be adhered to is certainly called into question by the performance during the first year. With the pent-up demand for more spending on all kinds of worthy projects we have to wonder whether fiscal restraint has come to an end.

Fourth, I am concerned about how the tax cuts in the balanced budget agreement are structured. The problem is that although in the first few years the bulk of the tax cuts go to middle-income families, backloaded tax cuts favoring higher-income households kick in later and would mushroom after 2002. Long-term the agreement will be much more costly than the deceptive figures for the early years suggest and it will become less fair. It will accentuate the income inequality that has been increasing in this country in recent years, in which the rich have gotten richer and everyone else has struggled to stay even or seen their income decline. The traditional function of the federal govern-

ment has been to lean gently against these kinds of trends in the economy. It serves as a moderator of inequality. This agreement leans the other way.

Fifth, the agreement masks the long-term problems facing entitlement spending for older persons. Over the next few years Social Security will be building up a surplus, and that surplus—which will reach \$120 billion in 2002—is one of the main reasons this budget agreement projects an overall budget surplus of \$32 billion in 2002. But everybody knows that the Social Security system is incurring large future liabilities that exceed its surpluses and that it needs major reform to avoid insolvency.

The long-range problem is that the budget is increasingly dominated by spending for older persons in the form of Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. These entitlement programs will rise powerfully as the baby boomers begin to retire early in the next century. Congress and the President ought to begin an attack on them now while they are much more manageable.

Conclusion: I have been quite uneasy about the self-congratulatory rhetoric that Members of Congress in both parties and the Administration have engaged in as a result of the balanced budget agreement. I supported the agreement because we're better off with it than without it. It does move us in the direction of a balanced budget, but it is much too early to claim that it eradicates the deficit. It was neither as tough nor as fair as it ought to be.

Over the past several years we have made considerable progress in reducing the deficit, and our economy is stronger as a result. It would be a large mistake to abandon that fiscal discipline as I am fearful we may be doing.

A lot more work needs to be done on balancing the discretionary part of the budget, addressing the tilt toward the wealthy in the back-loaded tax cuts, and restructuring Social Security and Medicare for the long term. Our focus should remain on these challenges, not on how to spend a non-existent surplus.

SALUTING MANTENO, IL,
CHAPTER, FFA**HON. JERRY WELLER**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a fine group of young people from the Eleventh Congressional District who are members of the Future Farmers of America in Manteno, Illinois. During the 70th National FFA Convention in Kansas City, the young men and women from the Manteno FFA chapter received special recognition in the FFA's National Chapter Award Program.

The Manteno chapter was one of over 450 chapters from around the nation that was recognized for their achievements in developing their chapters program of activities. Among these activities are citizenship, community awareness and personal leadership development programs that give students a chance to work with community leaders and local organizations.

As you know Mr. Speaker, the FFA has over 7,500 local chapters across the United States and its territories serving close to a half million students. The FFA's mission is to help shape the lives of students by developing their leadership qualities, personal growth, and