

commitment of the Irish community. The traditions of celebrating the history and lineage of the families of Ireland have become ingrained in our community. Generations after generation continue the reminder of the importance of St. Patrick's Day.

From a small crew and a block long parade to the success of today's 100,000 plus participants, Kansas City demonstrates the values of keeping tradition alive. I enjoy the parade and all of the community cheer and enthusiasm. This morning the excitement was captured for the nation on ABC's "Good Morning America" program. Even on a cold and dreary day, Kansas City's St. Patrick's Day Parade brings the shining Irish pride of all of us to light.

Mr. Speaker, I salute the 25th Anniversary of Kansas City's St. Patrick's Day Parade and the excitement it has brought to our community and its residents through the hard work and determination of the Irish community of my district.

PRESERVE CRITICAL DATA IN THE 2000 CENSUS

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a resolution expressing the Sense of the Congress that the 2000 Census should continue to collect demographic and socioeconomic data to promote sound decision making.

On March 31, 1997, the Census Bureau submitted to Congress the subject matters for questions on the long form. The long form is sent to one in six households. Its questions will provide the only accurate and reliable source of demographic, social and economic data about our population and housing. The Census Bureau will collect only data that is specifically required by law or a Federal court for the implementation of programs or the allocation of Federal funds; the Bureau has dropped its 1990 questions that have no explicit statutory justification.

The public sector relies on Census long form data. Federal agencies must have the information collected by the Census Bureau on the long form in order to administer federal programs. They also need this information to ensure that programs are inclusive, representative, and serve the needs of local populations. The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights needs the data to monitor discrimination based on national origin.

Beyond the federal government, the largest non-federal users of long form information are local governments. The National Association of Counties adopted a resolution calling for a census long form "to provide the useful demographic information necessary to guide our country into the 21st century." In addition, state, county, and municipal agencies; educators and human service providers; researchers; and political leaders all rely long form data. Members of Congress depend on accurate information. The questions on the long form give us insight into our communities, our transportation and infrastructure, our housing, and our ethnic constituencies.

The private sector is a secondary, but important, beneficiary of long form data. Census

data promote economic stability and growth in every sector of our economy. Retail, services, communications, and manufacturing companies rely on this data to allocate resources and develop investment strategies; to determine the location of new stores and plants; to assess the need for job training, educational, and child care programs; and to meet customer needs and preferences. Transportation providers use census data to assess the need for roads, highways, and transit systems. The housing industry relies on census data to gauge housing conditions, predict loan demand, and improve and expand housing in under-served markets. The private sector could not possibly replicate the information in the census.

We must send a message to those involved in the 2000 Census—the Congress, the Census Bureau, and the Administration—that we must preserve the long form, the only tool that gives us a comprehensive picture of who we are as a nation.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, this week it was publicly disclosed that former Wisconsin Senator William Proxmire has Alzheimer Disease. Senator Proxmire, who had a long and distinguished career in the U.S. Senate, is a friend and mentor to me and many other Wisconsin citizens.

Yet, he will probably be best remembered not for what he did in the Senate but by how he got here. Senator Proxmire was famous for his efforts to shake the hands of as many citizens of Wisconsin as possible, standing hours on end at the State Fair and outside the Green Bay Packers games.

One year Senator Proxmire spent a total of \$184 on his reelection campaign! Can you imagine a Senator spending only \$184 on his reelection in today's political climate?

Next week, I hope we will remember my friend and mentor, Senator William Proxmire, as we debate campaign finance reform. His example should make our decision easy.

INTRODUCING THE COLLEGE TUITION REDUCTION AND INFORMATION ACT OF 1997

HON. WILLIAM F. GOODLING

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleague from California, Mr. McKEON, in introducing the College Tuition Reduction and Information Act.

In today's technology and information based economy, getting a high quality postsecondary education is more important than ever. For many Americans, it will be the key to the American dream. Historically, higher education prices have increased at roughly the rate of inflation. However, since the early 1980's, college tuition has spiraled at a rate of two-to-three times that of inflation every year. Ac-

cording to a report released by the General Accounting Office (GAO), between 1980-1981 and 1994-1995, tuition at 4-year public colleges and universities increased 234 percent, while median household income rose 82 percent, and the consumer price index rose only 74 percent.

Over the past year, I have held hearings across the country as my Committee worked to update and improve the Higher Education Act. One consistent theme I have heard from parents and students where ever I went was the reality that paying for college is a huge financial burden, and that for some, a college education will soon be out of reach. It is alarming to me that, at a time when the higher education programs under my Committee's jurisdiction provide roughly \$40 billion per year in student financial aid, parents and students tell me they cannot afford to pay the college bills. It is clear to me, as it is to anyone that has ever sent a child to college, that college is too expensive.

This trend in college pricing is especially alarming in that it only seems to apply to higher education. There are many other endeavors and many businesses that must keep pace with changing technologies and federal regulations. However, in order to stay affordable to their customers and stay competitive in the market, they manage to hold cost increases to a more moderate level.

That is why I'm joining my colleagues today in introducing this important legislation to implement a number of the recommendations of the Commission on the Cost of Higher Education. It is time that we all did something to control college costs. I want to ensure my colleagues and families across the country that I will continue to work hard to see that every American has access to a quality postsecondary education at an affordable price. This legislation will provide a needed step in that direction.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation, and to cosponsor the College Tuition Reduction and Information Act.

MEMBERS CRITICIZE CROATIAN GOVERNMENT IN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform my colleagues of a letter to President Clinton expressing the deep concern of members about the Croatian government's authoritarian and non-democratic actions. Because the United States is sending financial aid to Croatia we must monitor the situation. I am inserting a copy of this letter along with a translation of a related March 13, 1998 Voice of America broadcast.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

Washington, DC 20515

Hon. WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON,
President of the United States,
The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: We are writing to express our deep concern regarding the Croatian government's continued pattern of intolerance toward the basic freedoms of political expression, a free press, and civil liberties. While we expected that the transition

from a former communist republic to a democracy would not happen overnight, it has been seven years since Croatia declared itself an independent democratic nation, and little progress has been made in implementing democratic reforms. This was recently reaffirmed by the State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1997. In its report, the State Department makes the finding that in Croatia "the continuing concentration of power within the one-party central government, makes Croatia's nominally democratic system in reality authoritarian."

Most print and broadcast media continue to be owned by the Croatian government resulting in considerable restriction on freedom of the press. Journalists who criticize the government face harassment and even prosecution. The Association of Electronic Media Journalists was established in October 1997, and issued a manifesto ("Forum 21") with 21 points calling for professional and open electronic media. The State Department found "13 of members who worked for state radio and television, came under immediate pressure and threats from the HDZ [President Tudjman's party] and the state-run media to curtail these outside activities." The State Department further reported "The Government maintained an unofficial campaign of harassment of the independent media throughout the year."

In August 1997, the Croatian government brought charges against two prominent human rights activists, Ivan Cicak, long-time President of the Croatian Helsinki Committee, and politician Dobroslav Paraga, President of the Croatian Party of Rights 1861. The government alleged that both men had violated the Criminal Code by disseminating false information with the intent of causing political instability in the country. According to the State Department Report, "... the same and similar statements had been made by these individuals—with no ensuing public disorder—several years previously and that similar sentiments were expressed by others." The charges were brought against these men within days of their meeting with the investigators from The Hague War Crimes Tribunal in which they turned over documentation involving allegations against several high government officials.

In addition, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) found the presidential election in June of 1997 to be "fundamentally flawed" and came to a similar conclusion with regards to the parliamentary and local elections in April 1997. The President's ruling party was given an overwhelming advantage in coverage by the state-owned electronic media throughout the election year. Furthermore, there is a disturbing trend over the past few years by the Croatian government to use administrative courts to replace heads of democratically elected parties. The method is simple, the party is registered as being headed by someone who is favored by the ruling party.

The judicial system continues to be heavily influenced by the Croatian Administration. In 1997, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Krunoslav Olujic, was dismissed. Three members of the State Judiciary Council were witnesses against him while at the same time they also decided his fate. The OSCE reported that Olujic's dismissal "put in question the separation of powers provided for by the Constitution."

Mr. President, we believe it is well past the time for Croatia to hold fair and free elections based on election laws which do not favor the ruling party over the opposition. The government should return democratically elected leaders of Parliamentary parties who were removed by administrative measures. There must be multi-party control of the election process. An independent

media must be allowed to report without fear of reprisal, and the judiciary must be independent from any political influence. We therefore urge you to increase the pressure on the Croatian government to come in line with internationally recognized democratic principles through all means at your disposal, including the disbursement of U.S. assistance.

Sincerely,

Tom Lantos, Tom Campbell, Tony P. Hall, John Edward Porter, Martin Frost, Henry J. Hyde, Benjamin A. Gilman, Luise V. Gutierrez, William O. Lipinski, Edolphus Towns, Jesse L. Jackson Jr., Joel Hefley.

VOICE OF AMERICA—AMERICAN CONGRESSMEN REQUEST OF PRESIDENT CLINTON THAT HE INCREASE THE PRESSURE ON THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA TO BECOME A DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY

(By Bojan Klima)

A group of very influential American Congressmen recently sent a letter to President Bill Clinton and submitted a resolution to the U.S. Congress. The lawmakers wanted to increase the pressure on the Croatian government to come in line with fundamental democratic principles. The Congressmen urged the American President that he use all means at his disposal, including disbursement of U.S. assistance. Among the many distinguished cosponsors and signatures are influential Benjamin Gilman, Chairman of the International Relations Committee, Congressman Tom Lantos, a member of this Committee, and Congressman Henry Hyde. What is the reason for this contact with President Clinton?

INTOLERANCE TOWARD FUNDAMENTAL POLITICAL FREEDOMS

The lawmakers expressed deep concern regarding the Croatian government's continued pattern of intolerance toward the basic freedoms of political expression. In these documents the Congressmen spoke of freedom of expression, freedom of media and several violations against civil rights of individuals. For example, they wrote that the government has control of most of the electronic and print media. Journalists who criticize the government face harassment and even persecution. One example, the American State Department found thirteen journalist, who worked for State radio and television and who are members of Forum 21, received pressure and threats because they are members of this independent group.

MEDIA IS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT; CASES CIIKAK, PARAGA AND OLUJIC

In the letter to the President the U.S. Congressmen quoted two cases, Ivan Cicak and Dobroslav Paraga, who were charged in August for violating the Criminal Code by disseminating false information with the intention of causing political instability in the country. The Congressmen wrote in the letter to President Clinton that charges were brought against these men within days of their meeting with investigators from the Hague War Crimes Tribunal to whom they had turned over documentation involving allegations against several high government officials. U.S. lawmakers quoted some other examples of the non-democratic nature of the political system in the Republic of Croatia. Media presentation of the electoral campaign during the last presidential election was so non-objective that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) proclaimed the election "unfair." Furthermore, there is a disturbing trend by the Croatian government to use administrative courts to replace heads of democratically-elected parties. Instead of the democratically-elected heads, the party is registered as being headed by someone who is

favored by the ruling party. And the judicial system continues to be heavily influenced by the ruling party. The U.S. Congressmen cited the dismissal of Krunoslav Olujic, the President of the Supreme Court of Croatia and referred to the report of OSCE that Olujic's dismissal put in question the separation of powers provided for the Constitution.

SEVEN YEARS SINCE INDEPENDENCE, THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA HAS MADE VERY LITTLE PROGRESS TOWARD DEVELOPING DEMOCRACY

The American Congressmen wrote the American President that while they had not expected that democracy would happen overnight in a former communist republic, they found it regrettable the Republic of Croatia has made very little progress toward democracy development in the last seven years. They urged President Clinton to increase pressure on the Croatian government to carry out several demands: first, that Croatia should hold fair and free elections based on election laws which do not favor the ruling party over the opposition; second, the government must return democratically-elected leaders of Parliamentary parties who were removed by administrative measures; third, there must be multi-party control of the election process; and fourth that journalists and judges must be allowed to function without fear of reprisal or political repression. Finally, these very influential American Congressmen requested of President Clinton that he increase the pressure on the Croatian government to come in line with internationally-recognized democratic principles. The Congressmen requested that President Clinton use all means at his disposal, including U.S. economic assistance.

SUPPORT GROWS FOR CREDIT UNIONS

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

HON. STEVE C. LATOURETTE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Mr. LATOURETTE and I wish to state that support for H.R. 1151, the Credit Union Membership Access Act, continues to grow. Below are ten of the more than 100 editorials from newspapers all across our nation which support giving consumers the right to choose a non-profit, cooperative, credit union for their financial services.

Surveys have consistently shown that consumers strongly support the value and services they receive from their credit unions. That is why the Consumer Federation of America endorses H.R. 1151, the Credit Union Membership Access Act.

A bipartisan group of more than 190 Members from all regions of our country, and all parts of the political spectrum, are now co-sponsoring the Credit Union Membership Access Act. We should pass it quickly so that credit unions can stop worrying about their future and return to serving their members.

[From the USA Today, Mar. 4, 1998]

COURTS SLAP AT CREDIT UNIONS HURTS CONSUMERS

Consumers seeking bank services want low costs, higher returns and convenience. Last week, the Supreme Court struck a blow against all three.