

Mrs. Pouncy on their 50th Wedding Anniversary—the world is a better place because of their contributions.

FAILURE OF “PLAN COLOMBIA”

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the following article detailing the complete failure of “Plan Colombia” into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. As the article points out, despite more than 4 billion dollars being sent to Colombia to fight the “war on drugs,” the coca crop grew by 21 percent last year. After six years of massive wealth transfers from U.S. taxpayers to the Colombian government, not only has no progress been made, but in fact things are getting worse. Unfortunately, with the way things are done in Washington, this failure of “Plan Colombia” will likely result in calls for even more money to be tossed in the black hole of the drug war. It would be far better to learn from our mistakes and abandon the failed “Plan Colombia.”

[From the Houston Chronicle, April 16, 2006]

COCA CROP JUMPS DESPITE U.S. AID

(By John Otis)

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA.—In a blow to the United States’ anti-drug campaign here, which cost more than \$4 billion, new White House estimates indicate that Colombia’s coca crop expanded by nearly 21 percent last year.

Figures released late Friday by the Office of National Drug Control Policy indicate Colombian farmers last year grew 355,680 acres of coca, the raw material for cocaine. That represents a jump of nearly 74,000 acres from 2004 even though U.S. funded cropdusters destroyed record amounts of coca plants in 2005.

Washington has provided the Bogota government with more than \$4 billion, mostly in anti-drug aid since 2000 for a program known as Plan Colombia—which was supposed to cut coca cultivation by half within six years.

Yet according to the new figures, more coca is now being grown here than when Plan Colombia started. “This is going to turn heads” on Capitol Hill, said Adam Isacson, a Colombia expert at the Center for International Policy in Washington and a longtime critic of U.S. counterdrug strategies in Latin America.

“You’re talking about \$4.7 billion spent on Plan Colombia, and this is all we have to show for it?”

The Bush administration downplayed the significance of the coca crop survey, an annual study of parts of Colombia carried out by the CIA using satellite imagery and on-the-ground inspections.

Rather than an increase in the crop’s size, the higher numbers may reflect a more thorough job of surveying the Colombian countryside, the White House said in a news release.

The statement said the area of Colombia sampled for the 2005 coca estimate was 81 percent larger than in 2004.

“Because of this uncertainty and the significantly expanded survey area, a direct year-to-year comparison (of the size of the coca crop) is not possible,” said the statement.

However, when year-to-year drug crop comparisons have reflected positive trends, U.S. officials have loudly touted the numbers as clear proof of success.

In 2002, for example, the CIA survey showed a drop in coca production and White House drug czar John Walters declared: “These figures capture the dramatic improvement. . . . Our anti-drug efforts in Colombia are now paying off.”

But some U.S. officials and drug policy analysts claim that Colombia has likely been producing far more coca over the past five years than the CIA surveys have indicated.

“The cultivation numbers, wherever they seem to be headed, need to be taken with a grain of salt,” said Joy Olson, director of the Washington Office on Latin America, a think tank. “In reality, coca cultivation and cocaine production exceed the official estimates, perhaps by wide margins.”

What’s more, she said, cheap, potent cocaine remains readily available on U.S. streets, indicating that the drug war in Colombia is having little real impact.

Some U.S. officials have forecast a gradual reduction in assistance for Colombia, starting in 2008. This year, Washington will send about \$750 million in aid to Colombia, the source of 90 percent of the cocaine sold on U.S. streets.

The centerpiece of the U.S. anti-drug strategy here is a controversial aerial-eradication program in which crop-dusters, escorted by helicopter gunships, bombard coca plants with chemical defoliants. But the program costs about \$200 million annually and many critics say the money would be better spent elsewhere. The idea of eradication is to persuade peasant farmers to give up growing coca and to plant legal crops. But funding by the U.S. and Colombian governments for crop-substitution programs pale in comparison to the eradication budget and most efforts to develop alternatives have failed.

Part of the problem is that coca is often grown in remote jungles and mountains that are controlled by Marxist guerrillas, contain few roads or markets, and have almost no government presence. Thus, even as crop-dusters have killed off record amounts of coca, farmers stay a step ahead of the spray planes by pushing deeper into the wilderness to grow more.

In 2000, Colombian farmers attempted to grow about 450,000 acres of coca, about one-third of which was wiped out by the spray planes, according to U.S. government figures. Last year, by contrast, they tried to grow a whopping 780,000 acres. “People with no economic alternatives have not been deterred by fumigation,” said Isacson of the Center for International Policy. “Fumigating an area is no substitute for governing it.”

Despite the rise in coca cultivation, Anne Patterson, a former U.S. ambassador to Colombia who heads the State Department bureau that runs the eradication program, told a congressional hearing in Washington last month that the Bush administration was considering “stepping up” the crop-dusting campaign.

Beyond the drug war, Patterson said, the overall U.S. aid program “has benefited Colombia in ways we had not anticipated.”

She cited better security conditions in the cities and the countryside, where the number of kidnappings and murders has dropped, as well as recent blows to the nation’s narcotics traffickers and guerrilla groups.

RAMSEY, INDIANA WILFRED EDWARD “COUSIN WILLIE” SIEG, SR. POST OFFICE

HON. MICHAEL E. SODREL

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mr. SODREL. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor I introduce this bill to recognize the accomplishments of one man by naming the Ramsey, IN postal facility after a beloved member of our community, “Cousin Willie”. The privilege to introduce this bill with the support of the entire Indiana Delegation makes it all that more special.

If you asked someone in Ramsey who Wilfred Edward Sieg, Sr. was or what he was about, some may not be able to tell you. But if you asked them about “Cousin Willie”, that’s a different story. “Cousin Willie” and Wilfred Edward Sieg, Sr. are one in the same.

Wilfred Edward “Cousin Willie” Sieg, Sr., son of the late Edward and Agnes Gettelfinger Sieg, was born March 16, 1931 in his life-long home of Ramsey, IN. After finishing High School at Corydon High, “Cousin Willie” went on to graduate from Indiana University in 1953 with a degree in marketing. Upon graduation, Cousin Willie served our country as First Lieutenant in the United States Air Force. He continued to serve his country through 1968 as a member of both the Air Force and the Air Force Reserves.

After his active-duty service, Cousin Willie returned home to help run the family business, Ramsey Popcorn Company, alongside his parents and brothers. “Cousin Willie’s” parents started Ramsey Popcorn in 1944 going door to door selling raw popcorn kernels out of the back of their truck. The business soon grew and in the early 1960’s, “Cousin Willie”, along with his three brothers, took over day-to-day operations of the business from his parents and eventually served as President of Ramsey Popcorn Co., Inc. Under his guidance, Ramsey Popcorn Co. grew to become one of the top four producers of popcorn in the world. The company sells roughly 50 million pounds of popcorn a year and exports to over 20 countries throughout the world. Ramsey also sells to house-hold name snack food manufacturers and supermarkets including Kraft, Frito Lay, Campbell’s, The Kroger Co. and Target as just a sample.

Before graduating from IU, “Cousin Willie” married his High School sweetheart, Doris Marie Byrum. “Cousin Willie” and Doris were the proud parents of 13 children. Cousin Willie was a firm believer in hard work and was known to put his kids to work on the family farm doing tough and unwanted jobs. “That way, by the time they get to working at the popcorn plant, they like it just fine.”

Mr. Sieg was truly proud of his small community and felt compelled to become involved in any way he could. In addition to employing many members of his community, he was also a member of the Ramsey Lion’s Club, the Ramsey-Spencer Grange and local Farm Bureau. He was a Rotarian and actively involved in local and state politics as well as the area schools’ athletic programs. He also served as a Member of two Boards; the Ramsey Water Company and the North Harrison Community School Board.

Mr. Sieg passed away on February 2, 2006 at the age of 74 after losing a battle with lung

cancer. The town of Ramsey, Harrison County, and the state of Indiana lost a proud and prominent member of their community. I am privileged to have had such an outstanding Hoosier as a constituent and I cannot see any greater honor for a father, husband, community leader, employer, veteran and friend known for his dedication to family, faith, business and community, Wilfred Edward Sieg, Sr., Cousin Willie than by bestowing this honor upon him.

COLLEGE ACCESS AND
OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 609) to amend and extend the Higher Education Act of 1965:

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to support H.R. 609, the College Access and Opportunity Act. While this bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act is by no means perfect, the bill represents an expanded opportunity and a chance to succeed for the hundreds of thousands of minority students who dream of obtaining a college degree. That is why I plan to vote for the bill today.

College degrees open many doors to the future. Students that obtain bachelor degrees have on average higher earning potentials, more competitive jobs, and higher standards of living. But many minority students are unable to obtain a college degree because they lack the necessary resources to do so, and as a result the doors to opportunity often remain closed. Data from 2000 shows that only 13 percent of Hispanics and 15 percent of Blacks in California earned a bachelor's degree, compared to 31 percent for Caucasians.

Despite its flaws, H.R. 609 contains key provisions that will help Hispanics and other minorities succeed academically from the day they enter Kindergarten to the day they receive their college diploma and beyond.

The bill supports minorities in elementary and secondary education by recruiting minorities to the teaching profession and focusing on the needs of Limited English Proficient students.

In addition, the bill creates new "Centers for Excellence" programs that will prepare teachers, including minority teachers, to become "Highly Qualified" in K-12 classrooms.

Beyond high school, the bill reauthorizes the High School Equivalency Program (HEP) that assists low-income migrant and seasonal farmworkers to obtain a high school diploma or certificate, and it reauthorizes the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) that provides tutoring and counseling to migrant students in their first year of college.

The bill also supports Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) by establishing a new HSI grant for graduate degrees and by eliminating the two-year wait between grant applications.

In closing let me highlight some of my concerns, which I hope will be addressed as the bill moves through the process to passage. In particular, I am concerned that the bill does

not invest in critical student aid programs on a high enough level. The most telling example is that of Pell Grants, which help many disadvantaged children to go to college. This bill would set maximum Pell Grants at the abysmally low amount of \$6,000. I was especially disappointed that Democrats were not allowed to offer an amendment to authorize higher funding levels for Pell Grants and other student aid and support programs.

Nevertheless, this bill does provide a much needed single definition of higher education and reauthorizes successful programs such as GEAR UP, TRIO, grants for alcohol and drug abuse prevention, and the Perkins Loan. These efforts to strengthen existing programs and provide benefits for Hispanic and other minority students who dream of a college education led me to vote for H.R. 609 today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, on the evening of April 6, 2006, I was unable to vote due to an important prescheduled speaking engagement, for which I was granted a leave of absence. I would like the RECORD to reflect that, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on Roll Call vote numbers 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98 and 99.

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND JEROME
A. GREENE

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rev. Jerome A. Greene, a dear friend, who used his life to uplift and empower others. Although Reverend Greene passed away on August 23, 2004, his lifetime of service lives on in the hearts and minds of the residents of the Bronx. On Wednesday, April 19, 2006, his city and his home borough will show its gratitude to this remarkable man by renaming Teller Avenue between E. 168th and E. 169th "Reverend Jerome A. Greene Place".

Reverend Greene was born March 12, 1941 in Welch, West Virginia to Emmanuel Greene and Savannah Elsie Anderson. As a young man he led the fight for the integration of his high school in West Virginia and became the first black male to graduate with honors. Upon graduating from high school, he moved to Queens, NY and enrolled in City College. Graduating with a degree in education, Greene began his teaching career in Harlem in 1963.

In 1967, Reverend Greene left the public school system to serve as Director of Programming, Evaluation, Education and Training at the Morrisania Community Progress Center. Although he was no longer with the public school system, Reverend Greene remained committed to improving the educational experience of New York students. Realizing the importance of putting more teachers in the classroom, he helped to secure millions of dollars

to create more than 600 paraprofessional jobs in various school districts. His efforts not only earned him the nickname "Father of Paraprofessionals" but the respect and admiration of the young men and women he helped to employ, myself included. My experiences as a paraprofessional in the late 1960's provided me with a unique understanding of the public school system and helped to shape my career as a public servant. I will always be grateful to Reverend Greene for helping to open the door that enabled me to serve my community.

In 1975, Reverend Greene married his beloved Aurelia and for 29 years they worked side by side in an effort to improve the lives of the residents of the Bronx. It was not long after his marriage that he began teaching prayer ministry in his home, which ultimately became the Bronx Christian Charismatic Prayer Fellowship, Inc. In 1991, the church moved to its current location on Third Avenue in the Bronx, providing the good Reverend with more space to teach the benefits of living a virtuous life.

Reverend Greene also served as Treasurer and Chairperson of Bronx Community Board #4 and was elected Male District leader of the 77th Assembly District, where he served until his passing in 2004.

The recipient of many civic and professional awards, Reverend Greene was well loved and well respected. His works will continue to impact the lives of New Yorkers for generations to come. Surely, that is the mark of a great life.

May "Reverend Jerome A. Greene Place" forever stand as a reminder of his selfless efforts to improve the lives of his fellow man and may it compel us all to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, for his indomitable spirit that continues to inspire even though he has passed on, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Rev. Jerome A. Greene.

TRIBUTE TO GRAND RABBI OF
SATMOR, RABBI MOSES
TEITELBAUM

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join the Satmar and Jewish communities across the world in mourning the passing of the Grand Rabbi of Satmar, Rabbi Moses Teitelbaum. Thousands amassed in Brooklyn and Monroe, New York on short notice to show their respect and admiration. It is indeed a tribute to Rabbi Teitelbaum's leadership that the Satmar community now numbering over 120,000, experienced remarkable growth during his tenure.

Rabbi Teitelbaum's life was one of perseverance, dedication and commitment to the Satmar and Jewish communities. A survivor of Auschwitz and the Holocaust, Rabbi Teitelbaum began a new life in the United States after he lost his immediate family to the Nazi genocide. As perhaps a tribute to his life, his first great, great granddaughter was born on the day the Rebbe passed away.

I was blessed with the opportunity to meet with the Grand Rabbi on numerous occasions in his home in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. A simple and humble man, his poignant advice and