of the minority, one must examine the nature of the bills and the types of amendments offered. Interestingly, of the ten examples cited by the Republican Leadership Task Force on Deliberative Democracy as egregious examples of the Rules Committee unreasonably denying amendments for floor consideration, the first five amendments were not even germane to the measures being considered. It is common knowledge that House rules and precedents require all amendments to be germane to the text they would amend. Therefore, I see nothing unreasonable about the Rules Committee's decision not to make these amendments in order. Moreover, another two amendments cited by the Task Force would have been subject to other points of order. In sum, seven of the ten amendments cited by the Task Force would not even have been made in order under an open rule.

As for the restrictive rules that the Rules Committee has reported to date, let me say this: the baseball season is only one month old—just because the Tigers are now in the lead doesn't mean they're going to win the pennant. In other words, be patient. There is no rigid program governing the types of rules to be reported by the Rules Committee. Rather, each rule will be determined on a case by case basis.

As you know, the Rules Committee recently reported open rules on three bills—nobody should be surprised when such contentious issues such as reconciliation and campaign finance are considered under structured rules—but as the House moves further into its legislative season I anticipate more open rules being reported by my committee.

Another change I would recommend relates to the motion to recommit. The change would arguably strengthen the minority's ability to act as a constructive partner in the development of legislation. I endorse a modification of the plan proposed by Tom Mann and Norm Ornstein in one of their earlier reports to the Joint Committee.

I propose amending House Rule XVI, clause 4, so as to guarantee the minority a motion to recommit with instructions whenever a special order reported by the Rules Committee precludes the minority from offering amendments in the Committee of the Whole. This right would be subject to a couple of conditions. First, the motion would be guaranteed only if offered at the specific direction of the Minority Leader or his designee. Second, upon receipt of the motion, the Speaker would have the power to postpone debate and votes on the motion and final passage for up to two hours.

I consider these conditions to be reasonable as they would allow the minority a vote on its position on major issues and at the same time allow the majority a reasonable amount of time within which to prepare its response to the minority's alternative. Theoretically, limiting control of the motion to recommit to the Minority Leader or his designee would ensure that the motion would be used in a serious, constructive manner. Members with fringe views would be unable to make frivolous motions.

A third change I would recommend involves clause 2(l) (5) and (6) of House Rule XI which respectively provide for a three day period within which members may file supplemental, additional or minority views to be included in a committee's report, and an additional three day period for members to review the committee report before the measure is considered by the House. In his recent statement before the Joint Committee, Mr. Solomon expressed concern that the opportunity for members to review committee reports was too often being waived due to scheduling considerations. Let me say I empathize with Mr. Solomon and hope that my plan alleviates some of his concerns.

My proposal tries to balance the legitimate need for flexibility in scheduling legislation for floor action with the important right of members to express their alternative views and to review committee reports prior to debating a measure on the House floor. I don't believe the rule as it is presently written allows us to use our time efficiently. Presently, the three day period for filing views begins to toll the day immediately following the day on which a committee orders a measure reported and expires at midnight of the third day. Since presently there is no automatic authority for a committee to file immediately upon the expiration of this third day, it may be another day before the committee files its report, and yet another day before the report becomes available in the document room. Only then will the three day layover period for members' review of the report begin. Thus, more than two weeks may go by before a bill becomes available for floor consideration.

In the interest of both preserving this important right and using our time well I would recommend the following: tighten the way in which the three day period for filing views is calculated by starting the clock tolling immediately upon a committee's ordering of a bill reported. Often many valuable hours remain in a day on which a bill is ordered reported. Additionally, I would recommend giving committees automatic authority to file until midnight of the third day.

These changes arguably would achieve the dual goal of allowing for more efficient scheduling of legislation and insuring an adequate period for members to file and review views. While the Committee on Rules would still reserve its right to waive the three day layover requirement, I believe that if these changes were to be made the need for such waivers would be significantly reduced. In fact, I think it is safe to assert that had this proposal been in place earlier this Congress, none of the waivers of the three day layover period granted by my Committee would have been necessary.

My final recommendation is that the House, in some manner, implement the Oxford-Union style debate program proposed by Norm Ornstein and Tom Mann. Such a program strikes me as a useful vehicle for conducting thoughtful, substantive, and balanced debate on important national issues. Unlike one-minutes or special orders which tend to be one-sided monologues free of contest or rebuttal, such a program would allow for a meaningful exchange of ideas between members and would serve as a valuable supplement to our regular debate time on major legislation.

In closing, I would like to add that I agree with the prevailing sentiment that procedural or mechanical changes alone will not cure the ailments of this Institution. Attitudinal change is as important an ingredient. I am encouraged by the progress that is already being made in this area and hope that we can sustain this spirit of cooperation throughout the 103rd Congress.

I again thank the members of the Joint Committee for this opportunity to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions.

FROM MOAKLEY SUBSTITUTE FOR H.R. 3804, AUG. 1, 1994

SEC. 112. AVAILABILITY OF LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION.

(a) VIEWS.—Clause 2(l)(5) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives is amended—

(1) in its first sentence, by inserting ''and including the day the measure or matter is approved'' after ''holiday''; and

(2) after its second sentence, by inserting the following new sentence: ''Upon receipt of all such views, the committee may (without permission of the House) file the report until midnight of the third such calendar day.''.

AMENDMENT TO H.R. 3801 OFFERED BY MR. MOAKLEY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1994

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Legislative Reorganization Act of 1994''.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS ON HOUSE RESOLUTION 5, ADOPTING HOUSE RULES

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 21, 1997

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, since the House adopted House Resolution 5 on January 7, 1997, establishing the standing rules of the House for the 105th Congress, several questions and comments have been raised as to the application or interpretation of the new rules.

Let me first direct my colleagues to the debate on House Resolution 5 in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of January 7, 1997, during which additional materials were inserted in the RECORD for the benefit and guidance of Members and committees. The text of the resolution itself begins at page H8 of the RECORD. My introductory remarks explaining the rules package begins at page H10. Immediately after my remarks are a ''Highlights and Section-by-Section Summary'' (pp. H11–12), followed by a more detailed ''Section-by-Section Analysis'' (pp. H12–15), and a letter from Ways and Means Committee Chairman BILL ARCHER further explaining the more specific definition of income tax rate increases contained in House Resolution 5 with respect to the three-fifths-vote rule and the prohibition on retroactive income tax rate increases (p. H15). I have also included in the RECORD a press release and table on comparative legislative data for the 103d and 104th Congresses (pp. H15–16); and a brief history of how the process for adopting House rules at the beginning of a Congress has evolved over the last century (pp. H16–17).

Mr. Speaker, since the adoption of the rules on January 7, I have: First, responded to two letters from colleagues regarding the ''truth-in-testimony rule;'' second, responded to a letter from the minority leader forwarded to my Rules Committee office by the Speaker; and third, written to the Parliamentarian to further clarify the intent and application of the rules that allows for exceptions to the 5-minute limit in questioning hearing witnesses, copies of which have been sent to all committee chairmen and ranking minority members. In addition, I have inserted remarks elsewhere in this RECORD in response to Mr. DINGELL's inserted statement on the new rule on time allowed for filing views on committee reports.

Mr. Speaker, at this point in the RECORD, I include my exchange of correspondence with Representatives FROST and SKAGGS on the ''truth-in-testimony rule''; the minority leader's letter to the Speaker on several provisions in the rules package and my response; and my

letter to the Parliamentarian on the rule allowing for extended questioning of witnesses.

The materials follow:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 24, 1996.

Hon. GERALD B. SOLOMON,
Chairman, Committee on Rules, The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing to express my opposition to the so-called ''Truth in Testimony'' amendment to the Rules of the House of Representatives. It is my understanding that while this amendment was not included in the package of amendments to the Rules of the House for the 105th Congress approved by the Republican Conference in November, it is currently under consideration for inclusion in that package. While I have not yet been provided with language of this or any other proposed amendment, I must register my strong opposition to including such a potentially far reaching amendment in the Rules of the House without providing those affected the opportunity to comment.

Having served as Chairman of the Democratic Caucus Committee on Organization, Study and Review for 10 years, I am fully aware that rules changes for a Congress are matters that are vetted through the party process. But it was my experience that serious and substantive changes to the operations of the House of Representatives were given ample opportunity to be discussed and analyzed within the Democratic Caucus. Had an amendment of this magnitude been proposed during my tenure as Chairman of that Committee, I can assure you that I would have referred it to the Committee on Rules for consideration in the regular committee process. I urge you to do that in this instance.

I cannot argue that substance of this proposal since I have not yet seen any language. But I do want to make a procedural case against including this amendment in the Republican rules package on January 7. This is a substantive matter and one that deserves full analysis and examination. I urge you, as Chairman of the Committee on Rules, to oppose including the amendment in the Republican rules package.

I appreciate your attention to this matter, and with every best wish for a happy New Year, I remain

Sincerely,

MARTIN FROST.

COMMITTEE ON RULES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 9, 1997.

Hon. MARTIN FROST,
Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MARTIN: Thank you for your letter of December 24 expressing your opposition to the new ''Truth-in-Testimony'' rule, and for raising the issue for discussion at our Committee's organizational meeting yesterday.

You are correct that the proposed rule change was not included in the package presented to our Conference on November 22nd. It was initially felt that the Leadership would simply urge committees to adopt it as a committee rule, since nothing in House Rules would preclude that. However, during the discussion of the draft rules package at the November Conference, several Members spoke-out in strong support for including a uniform disclosure requirement in House Rules. The Leadership subsequently agreed with that recommendation and the provision was included in the package that was finally adopted by the Conference on the morning of January 7th.

Your point about the need to refer for Rules Committee consideration rules changes ''of this magnitude,'' and how Democrats did this, is both curious and well taken. I do not recall the proposal for delegate voting in the Committee of the Whole ever being referred to the Rule Committee and yet it was included in your last Democratic House Rules package at the beginning of the 103rd Congress. On the other hand, the Doolittle ''Truth-in-Testimony'' rule was referred to the Rules Committee and was presented to us by Rep. Doolittle on July 17, 1996—the first in a series of four hearings we conducted entitled, ''Building on Change: Preparing for the 105th Congress.'' (See pages 29–33 of printed hearings) So, contrary to your assertion that there has been no opportunity for comment, there has been plenty of opportunity dating back to the July 17th hearing. I'm only sorry you were not able to attend that hearing and therefore missed the testimony and the opportunity to question Rep. Doolittle on his proposal

As a result of some subsequent concerns expressed about the penalty in the Doolittle resolution of expunging a non-complying witness' testimony from the hearing record, we dropped that provision before it was presented to the Conference and the House.

I appreciate your calling my attention to the David Skaggs letter (which was delivered to us in the middle of our organizational meeting yesterday) calling for a Rules Committee hearing to discuss the effect and purpose of the ''truth-in-testimony'' rule.

The simple purpose of the rule is public disclosure of public funds received by an individual or organization so that Members and the public alike will have a better perspective on a witnesses' interests as they relate to the subject matter of a hearing. The simple effect of the rule will be better-informed committee members as they prepare for and participate in their committees' hearings. Too often, such information is requested at a hearing, and witnesses do not have it readily available. Consequently, it is only supplied at a later date for the hearing record when it is too late to ask relevant questions bearing on that information.

Madison, in Federalist 58 referred to the House's ''power over the purse,'' as ''the most complete and effectual weapon with which any constitution can arm the immediate representatives.'' Certainly, in this regard, it is a legitimate function, indeed an obligation, of our committees to have a better understanding of how public funds are being expended—by whom and for what purposes—especially as we continue to downsize the government and move towards a balanced budget. Our hearing and oversight process is one of the best methods we have for obtaining such information so that our committees, and ultimately the Congress, can effectively deliberate and make the best possible and most informed and prudent decisions.

What would be the effect of non- or partial-compliance? As we explained in our section-by-section analysis of the rules package that was inserted after my floor statement on H. Res. 5 yesterday (Congressional Record, Jan. 7, 1997, pp. 11–17), non-compliance would neither prevent a witness from testifying, nor result in the testimony being stricken from the hearing record. However, I think it could result in an objection to a unanimous consent request that the written statement be included in the hearing record, leaving only the oral summary of testimony actually presented as part of the official hearing record.

You can be assured that, just as we did during the 104th Congress with respect to the rules adopted on opening day of that Congress, the Rules Committee will be conducting ongoing oversight of the operation of this and other new rules as we prepare for the 106th Congress.

Sincerely,

GERALD B. SOLOMON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
January 8, 1997.

Hon. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON,
Chairman, Committee on Rules, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing to request that the Committee on Rules hold a hearing to take testimony and discuss the effect and purpose of section 10 of the H. Res. 5, adopting the Rules of the House of Representatives for the One Hundred Fifth Congress.

As you know, section 10, the so-called ''Truth in Testimony'' provision, requires any person appearing in a nongovernmental capacity as a witness before committees of the House to include as part of her written statement a list of the amount and source of all federal grants, subgrants, contracts, or subcontracts received during the previous three fiscal years by the witness or entities she represents.

As I stated yesterday on the Floor of the House, I have strong concerns about the effect and purpose of section 10 and regret that it was adopted without the full and thoughtful consideration made possible by committee hearings.

I believe this provision will only create another barrier to citizens exercising their right to petition the government, in this case the House of Representatives. In many cases, this provision will also force organizations to divert resources from productive work to the paperwork and administrative activities made necessary by the provision's requirements.

Again I urge the Committee on Rules to schedule a hearing to consider the effects of section 10 of H. Res. 5.

Sincerely yours,

DAVID E. SKAGGS.

COMMITTEE ON RULES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 9, 1997.

Hon. DAVID E. SKAGGS,
Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR DAVID: Thank you for your letter of January 8 urging that the Rules Committee hold a hearing to discuss the effect and purpose of the new ''truth-in-testimony'' rule.

The fact is that we did hold a hearing on July 17, 1996, at which the proposal was presented by its sponsor, Rep. Doolittle, and discussed. The testimony was offered as part of our series of four hearings (at which you testified) entitled, ''Building on Change: Preparing for the 105th Congress,'' from which many of the rules changes adopted by the House were initially proposed.

The simple purpose of the rule is public disclosure of public funds received by an individual or organization so that Members and the public alike will have a better perspective on a witnesses' interests as they relate to the subject matter of a hearing. The simple effect of the rule will be better-informed committee members as they prepare for and participate in their committees' hearings. Too often, such information is requested at a hearing, and witnesses do not have it readily available. Consequently, it is only supplied at a later date for the hearing record when it is too late to ask relevant questions bearing on that information.

Madison, in Federalist 58 referred to the House's ''power over the purse,'' as ''the most complete and effectual weapon with which any constitution can arm the immediate representatives.'' Certainly, in this regard, it is a legitimate function, indeed an

obligation, of our committees to have a better understanding of how public funds are being expended—by whom and for what purposes—especially as we continue to downsize the government and move towards a balanced budget. Our hearing and oversight process is one of the best methods we have for obtaining such information so that our committees, and ultimately the Congress, can effectively deliberate and make the best possible and most informed and prudent decisions.

What would be the effect on non- or partial-compliance? As we explained in our section-by-section analysis of the rules package that was inserted after my floor statement on H. Res. 5 yesterday (Congressional Record, Jan. 7, 1997, pp. 11–17), non-compliance would neither prevent a witness from testifying, nor result in the testimony being stricken from the hearing record. However, I think it could result in an objection to a unanimous consent request that the written statement be included in the hearing record, leaving only the oral summary of testimony actually presented as part of the official hearing record.

I do not think the requirement will, as you assert, ''force organizations to divert resources from productive work to the paperwork and administrative activities made necessary by the provision's requirements.'' Any business or organization that does not have ready access to basic information on the source and amounts of its Federal grants and contracts over the last three years is probably guilty of questionable or sloppy bookkeeping practices, which in turn raises the question of whether they should be entrusted with expending taxpayer funds in the first place.

You can be assured that, just as we did during the 104th Congress with respect to the rules adopted on opening day of that Congress, the Rules Committee will be conducting ongoing oversight of the operation of this and other new rules as we prepare for the 106th Congress.

Sincerely,

GERALD B. SOLOMON,
Chairman.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 9, 1997.

Hon. NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Since floor procedures yesterday limited our ability to have a full debate on all of the Republican Conference's recommended rules changes in H.Res. 5, I am writing to notify you of additional objections to certain provisions that our Leadership and minority members have put forth. Please note recommendations on the following seven points:

In section 8(a)(2), strike the proposed new subparagraph (2), providing that investigative and oversight reports will be ''considered as read'' in committee under certain circumstances, and redesignate accordingly;

Strike section 10, placing information burdens on non-governmental public witnesses by requiring them to disclose federal grants and contracts they have received;

Strike section 12, creating exceptions to the five-minute rule in hearings;

Strike section 14, reducing the time allotted for Members to file supplemental, minority, or additional views;

Strike section 15, creating a slush fund for committees;

Strike section 17, permitting ''dynamic scoring'' estimates to be included in reports on major tax bills;

In the last sentence of section 25, strike '', or at the expiration of January 21, 1997, whichever is earlier''.

I would hope that you might consider revisiting these matters in light of minority objections. I am certain that such efforts would enhance the spirit of bipartisanship and comity in the 105th Congress.

Sincerely,

RICHARD A. GEPHARDT.

THE SPEAKER'S ROOMS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 13, 1997.

Hon. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT,
Minority Leader, The Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. LEADER: This to acknowledge your letter regarding the rules changes contained in H. Res. 5. I have asked Rep. Gerald Solomon, chairman of the Committee on Rules, to review your comments to see if some accommodations can be made.

Regardless of the outcome of Chairman Solomon's review and his recommendations, I sincerely hope that you and other members of the Democrat leadership will do your utmost to see that the rules of the House are followed and that decorum is maintained.

Rest assured that the Republican leadership is committed to protecting the decorum of the House and the dignity of its proceedings.

Sincerely,

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker.

COMMITTEE ON RULES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 16, 1997.

Hon. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT,
Minority Leader, The Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR DICK: This is to acknowledge the Speaker's transmittal to me of your letter expressing concerns about several of the House Rules changes adopted on the opening day of the 105th Congress.

You have asked the Speaker that we might revisit these in light of minority objections, and in the spirit of bipartisanship and comity in the 105th Congress.

As I have already indicated in letter to both Martin Frost and David Skaggs with respect to the ''truth-in-testimony rule'' (one of those on your list), it is my full intention that our Committee will carefully monitor the operation of all the new rules adopted in H. Res. 5 as part of our ongoing oversight responsibilities over House rules and procedures.

As you will recall, during the course of the last Congress the Rules Committee reported modified versions of suggestions that were in your minority opening day rules amendments relating to the gift rule and book advances and royalties. Moreover, towards the end of the second session we held four hearings on ''Building on Change: Preparing for the 105th Congress,'' at which we heard from Members of both parties who had suggestions for further rules changes. Many of those proposals were incorporated in this year's opening day package.

In summary, I fully intend to proceed on a bipartisan basis as we monitor the effectiveness of the rules changes and consider possible adjustments, additions or deletions. I welcome your continuing advice and suggestions as we proceed with this effort.

Sincerely,

GERALD B.H. SOLOMON,
Chairman.

COMMITTEE ON RULES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 16, 1997.

Mr. CHARELS W. JOHNSON III,
Parliamentarian of the House, Office of the Parliamentarian, The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHARLEY: It is my understanding that some questions have been raised regarding the application of section 12 (''Exceptions to the Five-Minute Rule in Hearings'') of H.Res. 5, adopting House Rules for the 105th Congress. The purpose of this letter is to clarify the intent of that rule.

Section 12 amends clause 2(j)(2) of House Rule XI which previously provided that: ''Each committee shall apply the five-minute rule in the interrogation of witnesses in any hearing until such time as each member of the committee who so desires has had an opportunity to question each witness.''

The amendment adopted to that rule by section 12 of H. Res. 5 provides that, ''Each committee may adopt a rule or motion permitting an equal number of its majority and minority party members each to question witnesses for a specified period not longer than 30 minutes,'' and that, ''A Committee may adopt may adopt a rule or motion permitting committee staff for its majority and minority party members to question a witness for equal specified period of time.''

In the section-by-section analysis of the rules changes that I inserted following my introductory remarks on H.Res. 5 (Congressional Record, January 7, 1997, pp. H12–15) it is noted that, ''That rule or motion could permit designated majority or minority party member or staff to question witnesses for a period longer than their usual 5-minute entitlement (p. H14, emphasis added).'' The underscored words were intended to clarify that the exception to the five-minute rule for extended questioning applies to only those members designated. It in no way is meant to supplant the right of other committee members to question witnesses for five-minutes, though the extended questioning period could occur before other members are recognized.

It is not the intent of the rule to permit a motion that provides for further extended questioning of the same witness after 60-minutes of extended questioning has already been allowed. The 60-minutes should be the maximum limit on extended questioning of the same witness, whether by designated majority and minority party members or staff, in order to protect the rights of other members of a committee to exercise their rights to question a witness under the five-minute rule.

The analysis goes on to indicate that: ''A motion under this House rule would not be privileged for any member of a committee to offer. Instead, it would be at the discretion of the chair to recognize a member to offer such a motion.'' However, it is not the intent of this rule that either a committee rule or motion allowing for such extended questioning should be used solely for the purpose of permitting such extended questioning only of witnesses of the chairman's or committee majority's choosing. Just as the rule imposes an equal time requirement for the parties' in the extended period for questioning witnesses, it is expected that the committee chair and/or committee majority would treat the minority fairly in allowing for extended questioning of a witness or witnesses of their choosing, and therefore that such arrangements could be worked out between the chair and ranking minority member in advance of a hearing.

For example, if the majority wishes to apply the extended questioning rule to witnesses A and B, the minority should be allowed to apply the extended questioning to witnesses C and D, i.e., an equal number of witnesses of their choosing. That is not to say that the minority should have a veto over extended questioning of witnesses A and B of the majority's choosing simply because the minority may not want to use their half of the time.

In summary, the rule was designed to provide fairness to both parties, both in terms

of the time allowed for the extended questioning of witnesses, and in the determination of which witnesses may be subjected to such extended questioning.

I hope this will help to further clarify the rule's intent for any questions directed to your office, and for the purposes of any committee rules or motions developed to implement this rule.

Sincerely,

GERALD B.H. SOLOMON,
Chairman.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO SARA AND SIMHA LAINER

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 21, 1997

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Sara and Simha Lainer, close friends of mine for more than 40 years and people passionately dedicated to the welfare of the Jewish community of Los Angeles. This year the couple are receiving the Lifetime Humanitarian Achievement Award from the West Coast Friends of Bar-Ilan University in Israel. I cannot think of two more deserving recipients.

Sara Lainer, a distinguished author of scholarly articles, has been an active volunteer on behalf of Hadassah, Pioneer Women, General Israel Orphans Home, the Yiddish Culture Club, and many other organizations. She continues to lecture in Hebrew and Yiddish to groups in Los Angeles, and she holds an honorary doctorate from the Hebrew Theological College, Jewish University of America. Her commitment to the intellectual and spiritual components of Judaism is extraordinary.

Simha Lainer, who ran a successful real estate business in the San Fernando Valley, is a strong supporter of, and a dedicated volunteer with, the University of Judaism, the Jewish Community Foundation, the ADL, and West Coast Friends of the Hebrew University. Anyone who cares about the Jewish community of Los Angeles owes a huge thanks to him.

In 1989, the Lainers established the Simha and Sara Lainer Fund for Jewish Education, which has thus far awarded $290,000 in scholarships to 400 children around the city. I can think of nothing more important than ensuring Judaism remains vibrant and alive in Los Angeles.

Simha and Sara raised three sons, Mark, Nahum, and Luis, who have followed in the tradition of their parents in working hard on behalf of their community. I am indeed lucky to be good friends with all three, as well as their wives, Ellie, Alice, and Lee.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting Sara and Simha Lainer, whose tireless efforts to make this a better world inspire us all.

HONORING THE ROTARY GREATER MIAMI URBAN PEACE CONFERENCE

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 21, 1997

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on February 8, 1997, the Rotary Clubs of Dade County will sponsor the Greater Miami Urban Peace Conference at the Wolfson Campus of Miami-Dade Community College.

Inspired by Rotary International President Luis Giay, the conference will focus on solutions to the problems of youth and violence. Rotary seeks to identify effective programs which demonstrate results, but which could benefit from additional assistance to reach their full potential. Rotary's purpose is to go beyond merely examining problems. They want to connect hundreds of Dade County Rotary volunteers with projects to stem youth violence.

I commend the work of Rotary to constructively address a matter of growing local and national concern. It is easy to rush toward punitive measures before providing positive role models to those most in need. Rotary is assembling forces who have the ability to provide real solutions to a very real challenge. I am sure that my colleagues will join me recognizing the Dade County Rotary Clubs for their endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. ISABEL MÉNDEZ

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 21, 1997

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding Puerto Rican woman, Mrs. Isabel Méndez, who has dedicated her life to taking care of others, especially Hispanics in New York City.

Mrs. Méndez was honored by the House of Puerto Rican Cultural Heritage, known as ''La Casa de la Herencia Cultural Puertorriqueña,'' on January 11 in New York City for her longtime commitment to the advancement of the Hispanic community.

She was born in Yabucoa, Puerto Rico. In 1926, at the age of 17, she came to New York City. Since her arrival, she has fought every day to improve the living conditions of Hispanics and has helped them overcome the difficulties that are a part of the experience of immigrating to a new land.

In 1932, Mrs. Méndez was instrumental in founding the first Hispanic Catholic Church, ''La Milagrosa Church,'' in El Barrio, east Harlem. Together with her husband, Tony Méndez, who was the first Puerto Rican male district leader of the Democratic Party, she fought tirelessly for the welfare of Hispanics in the city.

In 1950, she founded the Puerto Rican Association of Women Voters, which is still in existence. Through this organization she assisted in furthering the advancement of Puerto Rican women. Mrs. Méndez also served as an interpreter for 24 years, first as a volunteer and later on as an employee, at the New York City civil court.

Through her community activism, she has helped to ease the road for those who have come after and who have embraced New York City as their new home. She is the widow of Tony Méndez and the mother-in-law of State Senator Olga A. Méndez.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Isabel Méndez for her devotion to our community and for making all of us Puerto Ricans and fellow Americans proud.

THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION IN AMERICA

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 21, 1997

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, let me commend to you the following article from an editorial in the Post Star newspaper in Glen Falls, NY. This article succinctly expresses my reasons for calling for the abolishment of the U.S. Education Department. While this Department was created with a noble eye toward protecting and advancing public education in this country, in reality it has only created dubious Federal mandates while siphoning scarce Federal dollars away from the students that truly need it. By creating an Office of Education to continue to represent public school interests and allowing more parental involvement, students will ultimately be much better served.

[From the Post Star, Glen Falls, NY]

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT NEEDS TO BE DISMANTLED

If you wonder what big idea Bill Clinton intends to ride into history, consider this one: Education.

Everybody agrees education is a wonderful thing, but increasingly, Americans fret about the quality of public schooling. The issue of instructional quality has split the educational establishment. On one side stand votaries of the National Education Association, which has worked long and hard to define mediocrity down. On the other are devotees of educational choice and home schooling, programs designed to spare kids the travail of politically correct education.

Enter President Clinton, promising to bridge the chasm. In a recent speech to the Democratic Leadership Council, he echoed Americans' apprehensions about the state of education: ''We must dramatically reform our public schools, demanding high standards and accountability from every teacher and every student, promoting reforms like public choice, school choice and charter schools in every state.

At the same time, he staked out new ground for Uncle Sam: ''I am not for federal government national standards. But I am for national standards of excellence and a means of measuring it so we know what our children are learning.''

Here is Bill Clinton doing what he does best: bending a conservative issue to liberal ends. He has made it clear in subsequent talks that he wants to defend teachers unions, while creating a larger federal role in determining what students should and shouldn't learn.

That's not an encouraging sign, given recent trends in government-sponsored instruction. As Lynne Cheney has noted to devastating effect, school textbooks today subject students to politically correct nonsense. Some standard history books, for instance, mention Harriet Tubman more often than George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Robert E. Lee combined!

Meanwhile, self-esteem programs assure students that accuracy isn't everything in mathematics: If you come close, that's good enough. (Tell that to the Internal Revenue Service.)

The President's case for standards rests on the beguiling but dubious notion that experts know enough to set ''proper'' standards. There are no data to support that claim, and considerable evidence that schools tend to thrive in direct proportion to parental involvement in school. In other words, mother and father know best.