

can see a very modest upward trend from 1990 to 1992 to 1996 at the three different grade levels, 4th, 8th, and 12th. As you can see, we are nowhere near approaching the level of improvement that is necessary if we are going to meet any of the national goals that we have set out for ourselves.

Delays in developing standards have been made worse by the fact that, despite the abundance of tests and report cards published by State and local education agencies, very little of the information is comparable from district to district, or very little of the information is set at a high enough standard for us to make reasonable comparisons to these international tests.

As Education Week recently pointed out, "If the data that we depend on to monitor the economy were as incomplete, as unreliable, and as out of date as the data we depend on to monitor education in the United States, we might as well have the economy of a Third World country."

Instead, we have a hodgepodge of different tests and standards, most of them testing basic skills rather than world-class materials, a lot of data that only describes how students in one area are doing compared to how they did in the previous year.

Differences in student "pass rates" on State and national testing indicate enormous gaps in what we are testing for. Let me show you the final chart that I have here, Mr. President, to make that point. You can see from this chart entitled "State NAEP Scores for 4th Grade Reading Compared to the State's Own Assessment" that, for example, in the State of Wisconsin, it shows here that 35 percent of the students are shown to reach the standard that NAEP sets on their National Fourth Grade Reading Test. In their State standard test, Wisconsin shows 88 percent of their students meeting the standards. So you can see there is very little comparability between what the States are testing for and the level of performance that they are expecting and what the NAEP, the national assessment, is testing for.

As a result, we still have schools that are doing superbly, and we also have schools that are doing miserably. Many times they are in the very same areas and in the same school districts. Parents and educators often do not even know which of those types of schools their own children are in.

In response to this situation, many have come to agree that we need to set our standards much higher and we need to gather more accurate information in order to improve achievement, as has been done with great success in several parts of the private sector.

The National Association of Business, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the Business Round Table have now focused their joint efforts on raising standards and promoting more accountability in our schools.

The National Education Association president, Bob Chase, spoke out about

the need for his 2.2-million-member union to support key changes such as these.

Frequent education critics Checker Finn and Diane Ravitch recently offered surprising enthusiasm for standards. Let me quote: "how powerful it will be for parents and teachers to compare the math prowess of 8th graders in, say, Phoenix and Minneapolis, to the performance of their peers in Korea and the Czech Republic."

In addition to national polls showing strong support for high standards, a Public Agenda poll last month showed that high school students themselves know that our expectations for them are low, and those very high school students respond accordingly.

Raising academic standards has proven to be an immense and costly job for States and for school districts, who have been left to do the job largely on their own. They have been struggling to make the necessary progress but have been unable to do so. For these reasons, we need renewed national efforts toward making standards a reality in the near future.

ALBERT SHANKER

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I would like to say a few words about the recent death of a great education leader, Albert Shanker, who was as committed and effective in the fight for National standards as anybody in our country. For those of us who believe that the Federal Government should do more to improve the quality of education in the country, Al Shanker's death was a great loss. More than anyone else in the Nation, Al Shanker was the visionary pushing for higher standards and national standards for teachers and students alike.

In a recent piece in the Washington Post, E.D. Hirsch, Jr., said it very well:

If a single person could be said to be responsible for the shift in sentiment that prompted the President to call, in his State of the Union Address, for national educational standards—a proposal that would have been unthinkable a few years back—it would be Al Shanker.

Albert Shanker had an abiding belief that collectively we in America could improve the lives of all of our citizens. He dedicated his life to that belief. He also believed passionately that public schools were the great strength of our country and were the means by which we could improve the lot of Americans.

A recent essay by Albert Shanker was contained in the New York Times. I would like to read two paragraphs from that. This is an essay that he wrote in a publication a few years ago. He said:

Why do I continue when so much of what I've worked for seems threatened? To a large extent because I believe that public education is the glue that has held this country together. Critics now say that the common school never really existed, that it's time to abandon this ideal in favor of schools that are designed to appeal to groups based on ethnicity, race, religion, class, or common

interests of various kinds. But schools like these would foster divisions in our society; they would be like setting a time bomb.

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Public schools played a big role in holding our nation together. They brought together children of different races, languages, religions, and cultures and gave them a common language and sense of common purpose. He was not outgrown our need for this; far from it. Today, Americans come from more different countries and speak more different languages than ever before. Whenever the problems connected with school reform seem especially tough, I think about this. I think about what public education gave me—a kid who couldn't even speak English when I entered first grade. I think about what it has given me and can give to countless numbers of other kids like me. And I know that keeping public education together is worth whatever effort it takes.

Al Shanker believed that the National Government needed to commit itself to improving our Nation's schools. Should we have national education goals? Al Shanker believed strongly that we should. Should we have educational standards? Al Shanker believed we should so that every parent could determine whether their child was getting the education that they deserved.

Mr. President, I was privileged to work with Al Shanker on several issues but, most importantly, on the issue of improving standards for our schools. His vision and his strength of commitment were always an inspiration.

With his death, the American Federation of Teachers lost a superb president and all of us in America lost a tireless champion for public education and for a better America.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

A TRIBUTE TO ROY D. NEDROW

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a lifetime commitment to law and order in the United States. On March 1, 1997, Mr. Roy D. Nedrow retired as the Director of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, ending 33 years of law enforcement service to the community at the local, State, and Federal levels.

Mr. Nedrow began his law enforcement career in 1964 with the Berkeley, CA, Police Department and served there for 6 years, first as a patrolman and later as a training sergeant and detective. In 1970, Mr. Nedrow was appointed a special agent with the U.S. Secret Service where he distinguished himself during assignments in the field and at the Service's Headquarters. As a result of his outstanding performance and talents, Mr. Nedrow earned a number of promotions culminating in his appointment to the Senior Executive Service and assignment as the Service's Deputy Assistant Director for the Office of Investigations where he oversaw the investigations and protective support activities conducted by the Service's 1,200 special agents at its more than 100 field locations.

On December 28, 1992, Mr. Nedrow retired from the Secret Service to accept