

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## THE CONSTITUTION AND THE AMERICAN DREAM

**HON. WILLIAM F. GOODLING**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 15, 1997*

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I want to share with you one of the best speeches I have ever heard. It was not delivered by a professional speaker, but by a professional student at the Christian School of York before several hundred people attending a banquet.

Jonathan delivered the speech with conviction and compassion—without notes.

THE CONSTITUTION AND THE AMERICAN DREAM  
(By Jonathan D. Markley, Christian School of York)

"Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free!"

When hundreds of foreign immigrants mouthed these words in the late 1800s, they dreamt the impossible dream: freedom! They came, from Ireland, and Poland, and South-eastern Europe. These families risked, quite literally, everything that they called their own. They severed their traditional family ties to the homeland. And they chased after something that was truly inconceivable to them and yet, for once, absolutely within their grasp. What earthly call could possibly elicit so great a sacrifice? That call was freedom! The call of the American Dream!

It has been well over one hundred years now since Emma Lazarus penned those exhilarating words. Yet, in the interim, the same Dream that beckoned immigrants to our shores has been abused. That Dream requires that we be involved in our government. It is not an option; rather it is a God-given privilege! And because we have proven lax in our responsibilities, our patriotic American Dream is fading . . . fading into a maze of apathy. For example, only 49% of the American people voted in last year's election . . . Certainly, we have shirked our duties!

The American Dream, with its rights and responsibilities, is guaranteed by two theories built into our United States Constitution. These concepts, Limited Government and Popular Sovereignty, remove the power of government from any one party and, instead, vest that power totally in the control of the people. Our Constitution does not refer to a ruling body with absolute authority; but, rather, the preamble states, "We the People . . . do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." What a revolutionary idea: People ruling themselves! Government by the consent of the governed! The conclusion of this argument, therefore, is that such freedoms demand our involvement.

We can readily observe just how severely the sands of time have dulled our sense of this privilege. In this decade, our court dockets are jammed with tort litigation suits, totally countless millions; proving, once again, that our concept of the American Dream seems limited to personal benefits instead of prosperity for all Americans. Consider the epidemic of flag-burning—deliberately desecrating our country's ideals. My friends, this

is not merely an issue of a person's rights to burn a piece of fabric. No! It is indicative of a mindset that pervades our nation and threatens to stifle our comprehension of the true essence of liberty in a free society.

Our passion for patriotism has flickered dangerously in the last decades. Today, it is not uncommon for many to argue against the Constitution and against American Dream, as if the former is hopelessly dogmatic and hackneyed and the latter is only realized by avaricious capitalists. How they are wrong!

To see what the American Dream really symbolizes, journey with me to Valley Forge in the winter of 1778. As the torrents of snow cascaded down upon the remnants of the Continental Army, they were realizing tremendous personal sacrifice for this ideal of freedom. Nevertheless, an internal spark motivated them to lay down their own lives upon the fields of Brandywine and Bunker Hill. They never wavered in their patriotic dedication to our infant republic. In the words of Bart McDowell, they all were guilty of treason. "They knew the risks—death by hanging for themselves, poverty and dishonor for their families—," and yet there was absolute conviction in Patrick Henry's voice when he asked "Is life so dear, is peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?" What then followed was one of the most noble allegiances ever made to America. He said, "I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!" His words shook both those house chambers and the hearts of every soul who was willing to protect liberty with life itself, if sacrifice so required. Today, where is that spirit, that zeal, that fire of patriotism?

After our revolution, they founded a document to protect that Dream for their posterity. Their Constitution has guided our country through two hundred years of change and transition: through war and peace; through slavery and emancipation; through poverty and prosperity. Our Constitution has been a beacon of hope for our citizens, challenging them to dream, regardless of their birth; or nationality; or creed; or religion. Because our forefathers struggled valiantly to obtain these hopes and dreams, we cannot afford to be apathetic! Becoming involved is hardly convenient, but we must measure our own consecration to this cause in light of their noblest of sacrifices, their purest form of heroism. Far from being dogmatic or hackneyed, our Constitution has transcended time. Certainly, it is not obsolete! Certainly, it can lead us into the next century!

Let us remember once again, let us ponder deeply the words of Emma Lazarus. Somehow, these words paint a poignant image of the American Dream that must never be expunged from our consciences. Once we have ascertained these privileges, we must be willing to pay the price:

"Give me your tired, your poor,  
your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

I pray, that that lamp, beside that golden door, may never be extinguished in our world!

## TRIBUTE TO PAT ASSALONE

**HON. BILL PASCHELL, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 15, 1997*

Mr. PASCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention the selfless and steadfast dedication and outstanding public service of Pasquale "Pat" Assalone, to the community of West Paterson.

After more than 30 years of service on the West Paterson police force, Deputy Chief of Police Assalone is retiring. Pat has been a dedicated and loyal servant of the public, coming up through the ranks within the police department and eventually being promoted to the rank of deputy chief of police.

Pat is a well-decorated officer, with numerous meritorious service awards and citations from the department. He has been honored by the State Police Benevolent Association many times for meritorious service, life saving, and honorable service. As the deputy chief of police, Pat oversees every facet of the department's administration, from training to public relations, scheduling to grants.

Always serving above and beyond the call of duty, Pat has been a natural leader within the police department as well as the community. He was an integral part in the institution of the borough's Drug Abuse Resistance Education [DARE] program 6 years ago and has been an instrumental part in maintaining the success of the program ever since.

Pat remains steadfast in his commitment to the community and his family: wife, Judy, daughter Lisa, and two grandchildren, Shane and Steven, and to the memory of his loving son, Vincent, who has recently passed away.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me, our colleagues, Pat's family and friends, members of the law enforcement community, and the entire borough of West Paterson, in recognizing the outstanding and invaluable service of more than 30 years to the community of Deputy Chief of Police Pat Assalone.

## IN MEMORY OF JOSEPH PATRICK O'NEIL

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 15, 1997*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Joseph Patrick O'Neil, a son of Parma, OH, who lived the American dream.

Mr. O'Neil was a truckdriver and a proud union member of Teamsters Local 407. Mr. O'Neil earned the respect of his fellow union members during his 43 years with the union. He served in the position of recording secretary for 11 years. He also served as a steward.

Mr. O'Neil was a veteran, and served in the U.S. Army during World War II as a master

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