

and vandalism. Now, the junior Senator from Maryland is threatening to go out there and cut down the fence. Employees of the census bureau are busy trying to prepare for the 2000 Census. Is it too much to ask for them to have peace of mind that their cars will be protected from vandals while they are at work? I mean really. All they want is to keep their fence. Doesn't the Junior Senator have more pressing issues to consider?

LET US HAVE AN UP OR DOWN
VOTE ON SCHOOL VOUCHERS
FOR EVERYONE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized during morning hour debates for 3 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, if the average American had a kid in almost any public school today, what do you believe she would say if someone advertised free money for scholarships to attend private or religious schools? How about you colleagues?

If you are like most Americans, you believe that private schools are more selective, have better classes in some important subjects, have a better teacher/student ratio. Why not apply? Private certainly have better reputations in many parts of the country. Free money for such schools would probably get many takers if advertised anywhere in this country among any group.

Last year, some District of Columbia ministers were asked to sign on to a letter to support free scholarships—that is how it was called—for D.C. kids. They, too, jumped at the opportunity.

When they found out that these scholarships were, in fact, publicly funded vouchers, which take taxpayer dollars away from public schools, they felt deceived, had a press conference, and took their names off of the letter and off of the campaign.

In public meetings around the District, I have raised this subject regularly with my constituents who have now applied in numbers over 7,000 for some free scholarship money. Who in America would not? They are no different, however, from the 69 percent of Americans who say that they do not want public money to go to vouchers for private schools. In the District, 89 percent have voted against private school vouchers.

What the majority puts up against this vote is a poll slanted with words to try to defeat what the people said at the polls. Why is the majority picking on D.C.? If they are for vouchers, why not bring a bill to the floor to have an up or down vote for everybody for vouchers? What are they afraid of? Why do they go for the smallest, least powerful district in America? We are not the only district, I have to tell my colleagues, that has poor public schools.

I think it just may be because so many States have turned down vouch-

ers at the polls, just as D.C. has. Listen to hear whether your State is in this list.

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New York, Michigan, Nebraska, Oregon, Idaho, Maryland, Washington, Missouri, Alaska, California, Massachusetts, Utah, Colorado. What a cross-section of America has turned down private vouchers with public money at the polls!

Even when voucher advocates lose, however, they double back and lose again, always by more than they lost the first time. In California they lost first by 61 percent; then by 70 percent. In Washington State first by 61 percent; then they lost by 65 percent. In Massachusetts the first time they lost by 62 percent, then they lost by 70 percent. And here in the District, vouchers, public vouchers with public school money, have lost by 89 percent.

My constituents do want a better education for their children, but they are neither foolish nor selfish. They want educational choice but not at the expense of their own public schools here in the District.

I ask my colleagues: Do we want to help poor children get a better education, or do we want a veto, or do we want a lawsuit? Because that is all we will get out of a voucher bill for the District coming to the floor at this time.

If we are serious, there is a way to get scholarships for the remaining kids. Please join me in a group committed to raising private money for children who want to attend private schools in the District of Columbia.

STOP THE VIOLENCE IN KOSOVA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR) is recognized during morning hour debates for 3 minutes.

Mr. BONIOR. Madam Speaker, our morning papers carried the grim news of the makeshift morgue in Kosova where Serbian authorities displayed the remains of 51 ethnic Albanians who died in an attack on their village. Bodies were proudly displayed by the Serbian police, showing the world the results of their destruction of a tiny village in Kosova. Some of the dead were women and children, and many were innocent civilians. The men had been executed by the police, often in front of their wives and their children.

Although this news has come as quite a shock to most of the world, we should have all seen it coming. For 9 years Serbia has repressed and harassed the people of Kosova and dozens have died. But within the past 10 days this campaign of terror has escalated into full-scale violence. Seventy-seven have died and scores more have been beaten and jailed and harassed.

We must say strongly and forcefully that this repression and this violence

cannot continue. The lessons we learned from Serbian aggression in Bosnia cannot be forgotten now. We and our allies cannot sit idly by on the sidelines. We cannot allow Milosevic to carry out his campaign of ethnic intimidation, violating the human rights of the people of Kosova.

Imposing an arms embargo and sanctions is the least we can do. Milosevic must know that any more bloodshed will not be tolerated. He must also know that the wishes of the people of Kosova cannot be ignored.

Madam Speaker, in the past we have taken to the floor to make the case for giving the people of Kosova greater freedom and independence, but today we come to the floor with a more urgent purpose, to make a plea for their lives. We must remember the commitments that have been made to protect ethnic Albanians in Kosova. We must not stray away from those commitments now, even though it means making difficult decisions.

We brought peace to the people of Bosnia only after we showed Milosevic that his brute force would be countered with swift and decisive military action. Now is the time to make sure he knows that he faces the same consequences if the violence in Kosova is not put to a stop.

This crisis has far-reaching implications but we must also keep it in focus. The people of Kosova are being brutalized and we must not allow it to continue.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Reverend Dr. Thomas F. Gulbranson, Senior Pastor, First Assembly of God Church, Alexandria, Virginia, offered the following prayer:

Our gracious Heavenly Father, the one who gives grace to all people, we exalt Your name and implore Your righteousness. Thank You for this day and this particular time in history. You have blessed this Nation and we trust that You will continue to do so. May You draw together this great country of many cultures under the banner of love.

We thank You for these lawmakers that have dedicated their lives to the service of this great Nation. May You continue to give each one of us strength and the fortitude to make choices according to Your divine will.