

Colin Powell, the "Congressional Conversations on Race", which is spearheaded by a bipartisan steering committee made up of equal numbers of Republican and Democrat Members.

The goal is to "evoke the potential among Members of Congress, seeking spiritual insights to provide creative moral leadership on racial issues." They have already sponsored many events to bring about a dialogue on race, and will continue to do so, understanding that the "serious of experiences to deepen Members' understandings and to strengthen their leadership in the realm of race relations" is a worthy goal.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to get involved with this wonderful Institute, to go to the breakfast, if they can, because it is good for us individually and good for the country as a whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MILLER of Florida addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BLUMENAUER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GUTKNECHT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

A NATIONAL HOLIDAY FOR CESAR CHAVEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember a great American leader and hero, Cesar Chavez. He was a husband, father, grandfather, labor organizer, community leader and symbol of the ongoing struggle for equal rights and equal opportunity. March 31, the birthday of Cesar Chavez, has already been declared a State holiday in my State of

California. Today I ask my colleagues to join me in making March 31 a Federal holiday so that our entire Nation can honor Cesar Chavez for his many contributions.

Cesar was the son of migrant farm workers who dedicated his life to fighting for the human rights and dignity of farm laborers. He was born on March 31, 1927, on a small farm near Yuma, Arizona, and died nearly 6 years ago in April of 1993. Over the course of his 66-year life, Cesar Chavez' work inspired millions and made him a major force in American history.

In 1962, Cesar Chavez and his family founded the National Farm Workers Association which organized thousands of farm workers to confront one of the most powerful industries in our Nation. He inspired them to join together and nonviolently demand safe and fair working conditions.

Through the use of a grape boycott, he was able to secure the first union contracts for farm workers in this country. These contracts provided farm workers with the basic services that most workers take for granted, services such as clean drinking water and sanitary facilities. Because of his fight to enforce child labor laws, farm workers could also be certain that their children would not be working side by side with them and would instead attend the migrant schools he helped to establish. In addition, Cesar Chavez made the world aware of the exposure to dangerous chemicals that farm workers and every consumer faces every day.

As a labor leader, he earned great support from unions and elected officials across the country. The movement he began continues today as the United Farm Workers of America.

Cesar Chavez' influence extends far beyond agriculture. He was instrumental in forming the Community Service Organization, one of the first civic action groups in the Mexican-American communities of California and Arizona.

He worked in urban areas, organized voter registration drives, brought complaints against mistreatment by government agencies. He taught community members how to deal with governmental, school and financial institutions and empowered many thousands to seek further advancement in education and politics. There are countless stories of judges, engineers, lawyers, teachers, church leaders, organizers and other hardworking professionals who credit Cesar Chavez as the inspiring force in their lives.

During a time of great social upheaval, he was sought out by groups from all walks of life and all religions to help bring calm with his nonviolent practices. In his fight for peace, justice, respect and self-determination, he gained the admiration and respect of millions of Americans and most Members of this House of Representatives.

Cesar Chavez will be remembered for his tireless commitment to improve the plight of farm workers, children

and the poor throughout the United States and for the inspiration his heroic efforts gave to so many Americans.

We in Congress must make certain that the movement Cesar Chavez began and the timeless lessons of justice and fairness he taught be preserved and honored in our national conscience. To make sure that these fundamental principles are never forgotten, I urge my colleagues to support House Joint Resolution 22 which would declare March 31 as a Federal holiday in honor of Cesar Chavez. In the words of Cesar and the United Farm Workers, *si se puede, yes, we can.*

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WOLF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

FISCAL DISCIPLINE AND REDUCING THE DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because we stand on a threshold of a truly remarkable time, a time when we will be able to do wonderful things for this country and for our children.

In fiscal year 2001, we will have for the first time in decades a surplus in our budget, in the general fund budget. What we do with this surplus will tell a great deal about us, about our resolve, about how serious we are in providing a strong, fiscally sound country for those who come after us.

Some would have us spend this surplus on a multitude of well-intentioned programs and initiatives. But this is a time for restraint, not largesse. Others would have us return the surplus to the American people in the form of broad, across-the-board tax cuts. But for the average taxpayer, that would provide a small short-term gain when we have the ability to provide a much longer term and larger benefit.

That benefit can be provided if we use this projected surplus over the next 15 years to keep the budget balanced and pay down the national debt.

Under the administration's debt reduction program, our debt payments will be reduced from today's level of 14 percent of the national budget to only 2 percent by the year 2015.

The numbers are huge. We owe in public debt \$3.7 trillion. Under the President's debt reduction plan, that would be reduced to \$1.3 trillion by 2015. This would be an immense gift to the American people, and it would benefit all Americans, families, farmers and businesses. It would provide a real long-term benefit to almost every economic level of American society, unlike a broad, across-the-board tax cut