

HONORING ANDREA YEUTTER OF  
ADRIAN, MICHIGAN FOR HER  
OUTSTANDING ESSAY

**HON. NICK SMITH**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 3, 2002*

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a young scholarship winner from my district, Andrea Yeutter of Adrian, Michigan. Andrea has written an excellent essay that speaks about the part our Constitution plays in guiding our lives. It's always heartening to see young people concerned about the problems we face and interested in the affairs of government. Andrea speaks of our good fortune to live in a land where we are free to speak our minds and shape our own lives, a land safe for people of all religious faiths. In this essay Andrea Yeutter also speaks to the responsibility our Constitution places on us: the responsibility to nurture and defend this country so that we can pass on to our children a nation of greatness and freedom. I request that her essay be placed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

**STRENGTH IN OUR CONVICTIONS**

(By Andrea Yeutter)

Over two hundred years ago, our founding fathers sat in a crowded, stuffy room discussing how America should be governed. They knew too well the hard, oppressive hand of a government with too much power, but they also realized that without a strengthened central government our Nation could not survive. After much heated debate they emerged with a revolutionary new document—the Constitution of the United States of America. This outline of America's founding principles would be the envy of the world for generations to come, as well as a blessing to those who would live under it. In order for our Nation to continue in the prosperity and strength we have known, however, it is essential that each citizen respect the Constitution, the laws based on it, and the courts that interpret it. It is also essential that the laws we make and the rulings we hand down in our courtrooms be congruent with the intents our founding fathers had when writing the Constitution. Only in this way can we preserve the values passed down to us.

The United States is unique in that it was founded on the belief that "all men are created equal." Although in its early days slavery still existed and women still were not allowed to vote, America soon evolved into a Nation holding dearly to the principle that equal rights, equal justice, and equal opportunity belong to all, regardless of race, creed, color, nationality or sex. Even though we often take our privilege of equality for granted, we are reminded how truly fortunate we are when we are reminded of the atrocities taking place in other countries without this idea. Surely the Afghan women under the Taliban would have given anything to be American citizens, as well as the millions of poverty-stricken Indians who are victims of a degrading caste system. The principle of equal opportunity for all has allowed many people to improve themselves and the conditions in which they live. It gives us a sense of dignity to know that we are held as equals before the law, and a sense of responsibility to know that we are, for the most part, in control over the measure of success we achieve. This freedom is basic to a good government.

Our founding fathers, believing strongly in these principles of equality and freedom,

wisely established a government that would exist to protect the freedom of each individual, not to restrict it. They knew that men, if left to themselves, would act selfishly and limit the freedoms of others for their own benefit, and that governments would do the same if given too much power. Therefore, they set up some very definite boundaries and limitations for the central government to respect. I believe that if they were to see our country now, they would be grieved at how far the government has been allowed to pry into individual liberties. It is necessary for us, in the age of government expansion, to support the principle that governments should get involved only in those things that the people cannot do well, or at all, for themselves. This means that the government should play a minimal role in the private lives of its citizens, not going overboard on unnecessary taxation, or excessive social legislation, nor creating huge bureaucracies that bumble through issues the public could take care of itself. Rather it should partner with other facets of society to assist those who cannot provide for themselves chiefly through lower taxes, and allowing greater economic opportunity. This enables and encourages people to become self-supporting, productive citizens who take pride in their independence, rather than becoming weak, lazy complainers looking eagerly for the next welfare check to roll off the mill, forged by the sweat of hard-working taxpayers.

If we hold to the values of individual freedom and minimal government interference, it is essential that we have a strong economy that will allow for a self-sufficient public. This strong economy must be laid on a foundation of a free enterprise system, and the encouragement of individual initiative. When this is accomplished, it produces business owners and workers that are proud of their hard work and of their accomplishments. They create better products at lower prices, which further stimulate the economy, creating more opportunities for people to advance themselves monetarily. In order for this to continue, however, the government must maintain sound money and be responsible for their economic endeavors. The rights of life and liberty are meaningless if citizens are deprived of their property through excessive taxation, inflation, and government waste. These things destroy individual initiative and the free-enterprise system. They invade the bounds of personal liberty by robbing individuals of their hard earned dollars, fostering the decay of economic prosperity, as well as creating growing resentment towards the government, which eventually leads to the downfall of a nation.

In order to remain strong internally, and as a leading Nation of the world, America must continue to uphold the values it was founded upon. This means limiting the scope of government at home, while strengthening its position abroad. America must be uncompromising in the support of individual liberty across the globe, punishing those who attack it, and giving assistance to those who desire to gain it. Granted, we cannot become the "policemen" of the world, but it would be a crime against our blessed freedoms and against the values we hold so dear to sit by like weaklings and watch the freedoms of our fellow men decay. World peace and friendship will only continue through strength in our convictions and in our actions.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS HELP TO STAMP OUT HUNGER

**HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 3, 2002*

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, May 11, 2002, the National Association of Letter Carriers teamed with an army of volunteers, will march forward to stamp out hunger in our country's largest one day food drive. With the current war in Afghanistan, our televisions have been flooded with images of individuals who struggle daily to meet their nutritional needs. Malnutrition seems to be a problem that only affects those half a world away. Unfortunately, the war on hunger is also battled in the United States every day.

On May 11th, letter carriers from across the Nation will join together to collect nonperishable food items from their customers that will then be sorted and delivered to local food pantries for distribution. Last year, letter carriers in the metropolitan Milwaukee area, with the help of the Hunger Task Force, collected over 763,000 pounds of food to insure that the over 40,000 moms, dads, and children that go to local pantries for nutritious food did not go hungry.

These donations come at a critical time when supplies at pantries are traditionally low and demand for food to feed school-age children typically peaks, as access is restricted to school breakfast and lunch programs. Currently, 42 percent of low income children nationally depend on school programs to provide both breakfast and lunch. As the food drive takes place right before the local schools go on summer break, the timing of this event makes the National Association of Letter Carriers' Food Drive extremely important to the health of the most needy in our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I am here today to ask that my colleagues lend their support to the letter carriers' drives in their own hometowns and districts. To my neighbors and friends in Milwaukee and Waukesha counties, I ask that you pick up a few extra nonperishable items on your weekly shopping trip. As these essential donations stay in the community, those that you work with and live near will benefit from your generosity.

"Stamp Out Hunger" gives everyone the chance to help their fellow Americans while working for solutions to end hunger in their community.

EXPRESSING SOLIDARITY WITH ISRAEL IN ITS FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

**HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 2, 2002*

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in expressing our solidarity with Israel as they join the United States in the war against terrorism and the quest for peace in the Middle East region.

Israel has been a long time ally of the United States and was founded on the same democratic principles and freedoms as the