

from that report, while 99 percent of the 556 college seniors tested at 55 leading colleges and universities (including Harvard and Princeton) correctly identified Beavis and Butthead as popular cartoon characters, just 23 percent had any idea who James Madison was. The questions used in this study appear in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for July 10, 2000 (page H5662–H5663). These multiple-choice questions, which, in truth, a well-educated ninth-grader should be able to breeze through, are increasingly over the heads of college graduates (the average score in the study was 53 percent).

Two years ago, I was very involved in a congressional effort to highlight this appalling situation. This effort led to the unanimous, bicameral passage of a concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 129) which stated, in part, that “the historical illiteracy of America’s college and university graduates is a serious problem that should be addressed by the Nation’s higher education community.” The nonbinding resolution urged colleges and universities to review their curriculum and add requirements for American history courses. However, perhaps it is time for Congress to take a more active role in trying to reverse this continuing loss of our collective civic memory.

To that end, the Defense of Freedom Education Act would offer grants to institutions of higher education, specific centers within such an institution, or associated nonprofit foundations. These grants would be used to establish courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels which teach any or all of the following concepts, which bear both on American history directly and the ideas that serve as America’s foundation:

The concepts, personalities and major events surrounding the founding of America. This includes the philosophical background behind the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the free institutions which we take for granted today. Earlier generations were taught these subjects as a matter of course, but we are increasingly moving towards a time where Americans will think of the 4th of July as simply a day when we shoot off fireworks and hold picnics.

Western Civilization and the defining features of human progress which it embodies. These include democracy, universalism, individual rights, market economies, religious freedom, advanced science, and efficient technology. Programs of study funded under this bill can also examine the impact of the West on other civilizations, the Western debt to other civilizations, the comparative study of high civilization, and the process by which Western and other civilizations may be gradually evolving into a world civilization.

Threats to free institutions. Some of these threats emerge from philosophical systems such as Communism, Fascism, Nazism, and totalitarian thinking in all its guises. Others emerge from widespread human predilections subversive of tolerance, individual rights, and civil society, such as racism, caste consciousness, and zealotry. Some are the products of perverse ambition such as autocracy, despotism and militarism. All threaten freedom, provoke war, and induce terrorism. While we who lived through the 20th Century are painfully aware of the depredations caused by ideologies such as Communism, future generations will not have the benefit of such first-hand experience.

Projects supported under this program could include the design and implementation of courses, the development of centers devoted to the ends of this bill, research and publication costs of relevant readers and

other course materials, and other clearly related activities. Support will also be given to professional development projects designed to help improve the content and quality of education about the founding and the history of free government at the K–12 level. (After all, a huge part of the problem is the awful quality of American history instruction provided by many school systems. A student really shouldn’t have to reach the university level before finding out who James Madison was and why he was important to our country.) While I don’t always see the creation of a new government program as the best way to solve pressing societal problems, there are several precedents in the area of higher education. It seems to me that it is a worthy use of government funds to try and arrest the progressive deterioration of America’s collective memory which is now occurring. I encourage my colleagues to join in cosponsoring this bill and advancing this effort.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JAMES
SUCKLA

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 26, 2002

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a solemn heart that I take this opportunity to pay respect to the passing of James Suckla, who recently passed away at the age of 82 in Cortez, Colorado. James, known as Jack to his family and friends, will always be remembered as a generous, wise cattleman. His voice was heard at many a rodeo, his auctioneering at many a livestock sale, and his advice was sought by many in his community. Jack’s wise management of his ranches and his wisdom and wit on committees earned him a respect that many only dream of and his love and care for his family and friends should be a guide for all to live by.

Jack Suckla was born in Frederick, Colorado on July 25th, 1919, to Anthony and Dorothy Suckla. The youngest of seven children, Jack learned many important lessons in his childhood, which served him well throughout his life. He married Helen Bradfield in Aztec, New Mexico on July 29, 1941 and remained with her for the following sixty years in which they were blessed with children and eight grandchildren. Jack joined the Navy during World War II, and after being wounded, returned to Cortez and followed the rodeo circuit as an announcer for twenty years. Jack awed the crowd during his rodeo career as a saddle bronco rider. He purchased the Cortez sale barn in 1953, and operated it with two of his sons, Larry and Jimmy. Jack went on to serve on numerous committees, including the NCA, SWCLA, BLM advisory board, the Forest Service, Vectra Bank Board of Directors, and the American Legion. His service stands as a testament to his dedication to not only his life long love of ranching but to his community and country.

Mr. Speaker, Jack Suckla was a remarkable man whose leadership and goodwill towards people have inspired so many and whose good deeds certainly deserve the recognition of this body of Congress and this nation. Jack’s departure leaves a gap in many hearts but his memory will surely live on in the thoughts and lives of those who know him. I

join many others in expressing my deepest condolences to the friends and family of Jack Suckla.

INDIA SHOULD ACT LIKE A DEMOCRACY—SELF-DETERMINATION FOR KASHMIR, KHALISTAN AND OTHER NATIONS OF SOUTH ASIA

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 26, 2002

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, India calls itself “the world’s largest democracy” yet it does not act democratic. As you know, a report from the Movement Against State Repression shows that India admitted to holding 52,268 Sikhs as political prisoners. Fort-two Members of Congress from both parties wrote to President Bush to urge him to work for the release of these political prisoners. There are tens of thousands of other political prisoners also, according to Amnesty International, and they must also be released. Recently, the Council of Khalistan wrote to Secretary of State Colin Powell to urge him to work for the release of political prisoners.

India has killed over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, over 80,000 Kashmiri Muslims since 1988, over 200,000 Christians in Nagaland since 1947, and tens of thousands of other minorities. Mr. Speaker, this is not acceptable, and it shows that using the term “democracy” to describe India may not be the best use of the term.

Recently, former Senator George Mitchell said “the essence of democracy is the right to self determination.” I’m not in the habit of quoting Democrats, Mr. Speaker, but Senator Mitchell is right about this. In 1948, India promised the United Nations that it would allow the people of Kashmir to decide their future in a free and fair plebiscite. No such vote has ever been held. Instead, over 600,000 troops have been sent to Kashmir to suppress the legitimate aspirations of the people for freedom. Similarly, in Punjab, Khalistan, which declared its independence from India on October 7, 1987, over half a million troops have terrorized the population to destroy the Sikh Nation’s freedom movement, even though the Sikhs were one of the parties to the agreement establishing the independence of India and were supposed to get their own state. Nagaland, which is predominantly Christian, has been trying to secure its freedom and India has reacted with similar terror. All in all, there are 17 freedom movements within India’s artificial borders.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for all the people of South Asia to enjoy freedom. Until India allows the people to exercise their legitimate rights, we should stop all U.S. foreign aid to India. We also should formally declare our support for self-determination for Kashmir, Khalistan, Nagaland, and all the people and nations of South Asia. These measures will go a long way towards securing the blessings of freedom to all the people of the subcontinent.