

The fears of these voucher critics was confirmed on the floor of the House of Representatives when the lead sponsor of the DC voucher amendment admitted that under his plan the Department of Education would have to begin accrediting religious schools to ensure that only qualified schools participate in the voucher program because religious schools currently do not need to receive government accreditation. Government accreditation is the first step toward government control.

Several private, Christian schools in my district have expressed concerns that vouchers would lead to increased government control of private education. This concern is not just limited to Christian conservatives; the head of the Jewish Anti-Defamation league opposed the recent DC voucher bill because he feared it would lead to ". . . an unacceptable effort by the government to monitor and control religious activities."

Voucher supporters will fall back on the argument that no school is forced to accept vouchers. However, those schools that accept vouchers will have a competitive advantage over those that do not because they will be perceived as being superior since they have the "government's seal of approval." Thus, those private schools that retain their independence will likely be forced out of business by schools that go on the government dole.

We have already seen how a Federal education program resembling a voucher program can lead to Federal control of education. Currently, Federal aid to college students is dispersed in the form of loans or grants to individual students who then transfer these funds to the college of their choice. However the government has used its support of student loans to impose a wide variety of policies dealing with everything from the makeup of student bodies to campus safety policies. There are even proposals for Federal regulation of the composition of college faculties and course content! I would remind my colleagues that only two colleges refuse to accept Federal funds (and thus Federal control) today. It would not be a victory for either liberty or quality education if the experience of higher education was replicated in private K-12 education. Yet, that is the likely result if the supporters of vouchers have their way.

Some supporters of centralized education have recognized how vouchers can help them advance their statist agenda. For example, Sibhon Gorman, writing in the September 2003 issue of the Washington Monthly, suggests that, "The way to insure that vouchers really work, then is to make them agents of accountability for the private schools that accepted them. And the way to do that is to marry the voucher concept with the testing regime mandated by Bush's No Child Left Behind Act. Allow children to go to the private school of their choosing, but only so long as that school participates in the same testing requirements mandates for public schools." In other words, parents can choose any school they want as long as the school teaches the government approved curriculum so the students can pass the government approved test.

Instead of expanding the Federal control over education in the name of parental control, Congress should embrace a true agenda of parental control by passing generous education tax credits. Education tax credits empower parents to spend their own money on

their children's education. Since the parents control the education dollar, the parents control their children's education. In order to provide parents with control of education, I have introduced the Family Education Freedom Act (H.R. 612) that provides all parents with a tax credit of up to \$3,000. The credit is available to parents who choose to send their children to public, private, or home school. Education tax credits are particularly valuable to lower income parents.

The Family Education Freedom Act restores true accountability to education by putting parents in control of the education dollar. If a child is not being educated to the parents' satisfaction, the parent will withdraw that student from the school and spend their education dollars someplace else.

I have also introduced the Education Improvement Tax Cut Act (H.R. 611) that provides a tax credit of up to \$3,000 for in-kind or cash donation to public, private, or home schools. The Education Improvement Tax Cut Act relies on the greatest charitable force in history to improve the education of children from low-income families: the generosity of the American people. As with parental tax credits, the Education Improvement Tax Cut Act brings true accountability to education since taxpayers will only donate to schools that provide a quality education.

Mr. Speaker, proponents of vouchers promise these programs advance true market principles and thus improve education. However, there is a real danger that Federal voucher programs will expand the welfare state and impose government "standards" on private schools, turning them into "privatized" versions of public schools. A superior way of improving education is to return control of the education dollar directly to the American people through tax cuts and tax credits. I therefore hope all supporters of parental control of education will support my Family Education Freedom Act and Education Improvement Tax Cut Act.

TRIBUTE TO ST. DAVID'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH ON ITS 108TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 2003

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to St. David's Church in the Bronx, New York, a treasured Bronx institution and a historic house of worship that celebrated its 108th anniversary on September 26, 2003.

St David's Church was founded in 1895 to address the needs of poor blacks, especially the dining car waiters and Pullman porters who roomed in the area of the New York Central Railroad Depot and had no place to worship.

Mr. Speaker, as a part of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, St. David's strongly believes in the Diocesan mission objective of effective church presence in poor communities. In order to meet that objective, St. David's is constantly involved with community outreach. Presently, it has after school programs, summer day camps, and senior citizens programs to provide structured educational and recreational activities to the people who live,

work, and worship in their community. For the past 108 years, St. David's has been a cornerstone of the Bronx community, providing its parishioners not only with a place of worship, but also with invaluable services in order to assist them in enriching their lives.

Institutions such as St. David's Episcopal Church give life and vitality to distressed areas throughout the United States. The services they provide to their communities deserve recognition. Therefore, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing and honoring St. David's Episcopal Church for 108 years of service to the people of the Bronx, New York.

TRIBUTE TO JACKIE WEAVER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise before this body of Congress and this Nation today to pay tribute to the life and memory of a great citizen from my district. Jackie Weaver of Pueblo, Colorado recently passed away at the age of eighty. Jackie was a caring woman who gave selflessly to those around her. As her family mourns her passing, I would like to pay tribute to her memory before my colleagues here today.

Jackie was born in Frederick, Maryland in 1923, and she worked as a chemist in New York City before marrying her husband, D.A., in 1946. After moving to Pueblo with her family in 1978, she became an active member of the community, working with the Christian Women's Club and the youth ministry of her church. In addition, Jackie devoted time to the Reach-for-Recover Program of the American Cancer Society and the Pueblo Kiwanis Club. Jackie cared deeply about children and worked to improve their lives by caring for three foster children and by adopting a child through the World Vision Ministries.

Mr. Speaker, Jackie Weaver's dedication and commitment to her family and her community has touched many lives. She tirelessly gave to her family and community. While Jackie has passed on, her legacy will continue to live. I am honored to join with my colleagues in honoring Jackie here today.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MOTHER TERESA

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 2003

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the memory of a remarkable woman who dedicated her 87 years of life to reaching out to poor, suffering and dying people all over the world, Mother Teresa.

Mother Teresa was born in Albania on August 26, 1910. She chose to become a Roman Catholic sister at age 18 and was assigned to a convent in Calcutta where she taught history and geography at St. Mary's School. Discontent to simply teach, Sister Teresa dedicated her life to creating a new religious order to serve the sick, disabled and dying no matter where they lived.

In 1948, Mother Teresa received approval from the Pope to create a religious order known as the Missionaries of Charity. She sought out nuns who were educated as nurses and asked them to train her. She returned to Calcutta where she opened a hospice. In her later years, Mother Teresa devoted her time and energy to establishing hospice programs for suffering from AIDS.

In 1979, Sister Teresa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and in 1985, the Presidential Medal. She was also given the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Foundation for Hospice and Homecare. However, it was clear that what she most cherished was the satisfaction of delivering care and comfort to millions of needy people.

Guided by her 40 years of leadership, the Missionaries of Charity grew from one to more than 400 missions worldwide. Today, there are approximately 5,000 sisters in the order.

Mother Teresa was universally loved and will always be remembered. This was evidenced by the fact that both chambers of Congress passed commemorative resolutions within just days of her death in 1997. They also posthumously awarded her the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest honor bestowed on a civilian.

The world will again remember her legacy of compassion when Pope John Paul II celebrates a three hour Mass next month for her beatification.

Mr. Speaker, throughout her life, Mother Teresa knew no limits when caring for others as she gave unconditional love to all. On this day, let us once again remember her lasting contributions and goodwill for all mankind.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN GUATAMALA

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 30, 2003

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, on July 14, Guatemalan Constitutional Court justices made history by declaring null and void two previous court rulings banning infamous former dictator Efraín Ríos Montt from seeking presidential office. Efraín Ríos Montt, the retired brigadier general and current head of Guatemala's national legislature, has been universally condemned for waging a "scorched earth" campaign against indigenous Mayan civilians during his 1982–1983 presidency. Some of the worst abuses in Guatemala's brutal 36-year civil war occurred during Ríos Montt's rule. Wisely enough, the drafters of Article 186 of Guatemala's 1985 Constitution engrossed a ban to prevent leaders responsible for staging military coups from ever again seeking the Guatemalan presidency. Yet Ríos Montt, who came to power through just such a coup in March of 1982, recently obtained a favorable ruling from Guatemala's highest court despite this earlier provision. He managed this by using his influence to pack the court with additional members who were personally loyal to him. In addition, he sought to legitimate his candidacy by claiming that the 1985 Constitution cannot be applied retroactively to actions taken three years before it was enacted.

The State Department repeatedly has stated that Ríos Montt's continued involvement in Guatemalan politics is an obstacle to effective

U.S. relations with that country. In fact, events would seem to indicate that Ríos Montt's candidacy is an equal threat to domestic stability within Guatemala; a number of weeks ago, mass protest in support of the ex-dictator's candidacy, clearly manipulated by Ríos Montt and other leaders of his party, turned violent as mobs rushed into government buildings and seized them, including the Supreme Court. Since the Bush administration is so concerned with human rights in Iraq, what about Guatemala? Regional alliances such as the proposed U.S.-Central American Free Trade Agreement are bound to be jeopardized by Ríos Montt's self-serving insistence on seeking the presidency, even at the country's democratic prospects. We as a body must strive to understand the potential implications and the high costs of Ríos Montt's continued involvement in Guatemalan politics if we are to accelerate our steps towards the goal of promoting effective relations with the Central American region.

On September 15, the United States recertified Guatemala, reversing a decision made in January due to the country's consistently poor efforts to stem the northward flow of narcotics that end up in our streets. Circumstances, however, suggest that the recertification was motivated not so much by any improvement in Guatemala's drug interdiction efforts, but by the Bush administration's ceaseless search for the expansion of free trade, even if it costs the U.S. hundreds of thousands of solid jobs. The Bush administration, eager to enact its Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) proposal, seems to have been responding to certain pressures to renew Guatemala's certification whatever its justification; twenty-one of our esteemed colleagues took the principled step of writing to the White House and saying that they would not vote for CAFTA without such recertification, and Guatemala, home to Central America's largest population and most formidable economy, would not likely approve the trade agreement if it remained decertified. This leads one to wonder, then, what the certification process and the war on drugs are really about, as the controversial and inequitable specter of free trade has clearly taken precedent.

The following very timely memoranda on Guatemala's many problems were authored by Molly Maas and Jessica Leight, research associates at the highly respected Washington-based Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA), a non-partisan organization that has long been committed to addressing issues associated with human rights, democracy and economic justice throughout the Western Hemisphere. COHA has been referred to by Senator EDWARD KENNEDY in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD as "one of our Nation's most respected bodies of scholars and policy-makers."

RIOS MONTT DECLARED ELIGIBLE TO RUN IN GUATEMALA'S UPCOMING ELECTION (Jessica Leight and Molly Maas)

On Tuesday, July 14, one of the most brutal dictators in modern Guatemalan history, General Efraín Ríos Montt, was declared a legitimate candidate for the November presidential elections by the country's highest court. Since Guatemala gained its independence from Spain in 1821, this largely poor Central American nation has suffered under a series of foreign rulers and pathological homegrown despots. Yet, arguably, none of its leaders have been more infamous than

Ríos Montt, who seized power in a 1982 coup and presided over an unremittingly harsh dictatorship for eighteen months until a counter-coup installed General Oscar Humberto Mejía Victores as the country's military leader. Today, Guatemala's official Commission for Historical Clarification labels atrocities committed under Montt's regime as "genocide," and impartial observers argue that the ex-dictator was responsible for some of the worst human rights abuses in the country's 36-year civil war, including tortures, massacres, the destruction of hundreds of indigenous communities, and illegal detentions and murders of human rights advocates and indigenous leaders.

RIOS MONTT'S QUEST FOR THE PRESIDENCY

Since his fall from power in 1983, Ríos Montt has twice attempted to run for the Guatemalan presidency, in 1990 and in 1995. Each time, he has been blocked by the country's courts on the grounds that Article 186 of the 1985 Constitution forbids the candidacy of all former coup leaders, a provision that was expressly designed to deter a presidential bid from Ríos Montt. Despite these previous dismissals, however, the ruling FRG party, which controls the legislature as well as the presidency, once again nominated Ríos Montt as its presidential candidate this past May, and the Constitutional Court—the nation's highest judicial authority—approved his candidacy on July 14. The decision in this case was blatantly biased, as the current court was especially expanded, i.e., "packed" with Ríos Montt supporters. The president of the Constitutional Court, Mario Guillermo Ruiz Wong, is the former interior minister of the current FRG administration of President Alfonso Portillo, while another justice served as Ríos Montt's personal lawyer. Three of the four judges who voted in favor of the ex-dictator have links to Portillo's administration.

Following this ruling, a lower court, the Supreme Court of Justice, issued a contradictory injunction that temporarily suspended Ríos Montt's candidacy. In response, protests rocked the capital on Thursday, July 24, with thousands of former beneficiaries of Montt's dictatorship joining more recent recruits to his rightwing cause in the streets of Guatemala City. Though FRG leaders and Ríos Montt himself vehemently denied any role in organizing or even encouraging the demonstrations, the protest was marked by a suspicious lack of spontaneity. Pro-FRG peasants were trucked in from across the country by organizers wearing such masks to conceal their identity, and the entire operation had the mark of a well-planned and well-orchestrated demonstration of political intimidation.

Most damning for the FRG and the Portillo administration was the lack of effort on the part of the police to control violence by the protesters, as well as the army's refusal to intervene even after President Portillo announced on radio and television on Thursday afternoon that he had ordered the armed forces out "to guarantee respect of private property and the physical security of persons, as well as the defense of human rights." Though the demonstrators dispersed after receiving instructions to do so from Ríos Montt on Friday morning, the capital continues to wait in fear for a return of the usually armed *encapuchados*. Perhaps even more alarmingly, the government's commitment to the preservation of basic public order, as well as its control over the armed forces—largely unreformed following decades of unrestricted and brutal war against the guerrillas—remain in grave doubt. Having only so recently emerged from forty years of two devastating civil war which cost upwards of 200,000 lives, Guatemala seems on