

WHY WE NEED CAMPAIGN
FINANCE REFORM

HON. JAY INSLEE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, the faith of the American people in their elected government is slowly slipping away. The cause of this malaise is our defective, broken campaign finance system. The astronomical costs of Federal campaigns are having extremely detrimental effects on our democracy; qualified candidates are discouraged from running, and special interest dollars continues to drown out the voice of the average citizen. This outrage is evident to everyone, except, members of the leadership.

The shortest route between our campaign finance system and reform is the opportunity to vote on the bi-partisan Campaign Finance Reform Act, otherwise known as the Shays-Meehan bill. We have garnered over 188 signatures on our campaign finance discharge petition. We mean it when we say we want reform and we want it soon. If we can't get a scheduled vote from the Republican Leadership, we reform-minded Members will force a vote through this petition.

Mr. Speaker, this is a truly modest proposal, but its impact could be nothing short of extraordinary. First, this legislation will finally ban "soft money." With this past election cycle, we saw "soft money" contributions more than double since the last off-year election, totaling over \$220 million.

Second, this legislation also includes the Campaign Ad Fairness Provision, reigning in the unregulated "issue campaigns" to require them to play by the same finance laws as federal campaigns.

Third, this legislation gives teeth to the FEC and provides greater, timelier public disclosure of individuals contributing to campaigns.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is not an infringement of free speech, but a restoration of the public trust. American people are tired of watching Congress sit back and do nothing as the amount spent in elections grows higher and higher, and trust in the system sinks lower and lower. We need to get big money out of the electoral process, and give power back to the people.

I know that the people of the 1st congressional district of Washington want real, meaningful reform, and I urge you to support the Bi-partisan Campaign Finance Reform Act.

STAMP OUT HUNGER

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the National Association of Letter Carriers and Anthony B. Morell Branch 737 in Santa Ana as they prepare for their "Stamp Out Hunger" food drive. This event will take place on Saturday, May 8. The letter carriers have asked area residents to donate non-per-

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ishable food by leaving the donations outside their mailboxes on May 8. Letter carriers will collect the food during their normally scheduled mail routes. The food collected will benefit CDC's Orange County Food Bank and the Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County. These two food banks serve over 240,000 people each month.

"Stamp Out Hunger" is the largest one day food drive in the nation. This is the seventh year of participation by Branch 737 of the Santa Ana letter carriers. Last year letter carriers around the nation collected more than 52 million pounds of food. All went to local food banks in their communities. In the Santa Ana district alone, 69,000 pounds of food was collected for the Second Harvest Food Bank and the Community Development Council, the two food banks in our region.

Unfortunately, hunger continues to be a problem in Orange County. There are still over 30,000 men, women, children and senior citizens who go hungry every night. We are hoping to reduce that number as much as possible, by getting every citizen involved in the food drive.

I commend Branch 737 of the National Association of Letter Carriers for their valiant efforts to make a difference in our community and to stamp out hunger.

LUBBOCK LETTER CARRIERS PARTICIPATE IN FOOD DRIVE FOR NATION'S NEEDY

HON. LARRY COMBEST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the National Association of Letter Carriers for their tremendous efforts to help the hungry in communities across the nation. On May 8th, 1999, local branches of the Letter Carriers, in conjunction with the United Way and the United States Postal Service, will participate in a drive to collect non-perishable food and other needed items to stock the shelves of local food pantries. This endeavor will fill pantry shelves for the coming summer months in more than 10,000 hometowns in every corner of the United States.

This worthwhile event has taken place for countless years in the past, and this year's drive promises to be one of the most successful. The Lubbock, Texas branch of the Letter Carriers is rolling up its sleeves and preparing for a first-class turnout on May 8th. I am confident that the good citizens of Lubbock will rise to the challenge to ensure that this year's drive is an overwhelming success.

The Lubbock branch of the National Association of Letter Carriers is deserving of our full support and praise for their work in the fight against hunger in the 19th District of Texas. Their efforts truly exemplify the spirit of service and giving that draws our community together. With a little help from us all, the May 8th food drive can touch the lives of the many West Texans who are in need.

May 5, 1999

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, on May 4, I was unavoidably detained back in my congressional district due to the devastating tornado storm and missed roll call vote numbers 105 (H. Con. Res 84), 106 (H. Con. Res. 88) and 107 (H. Res. 157). Had I been present I would have voted yes on passage on each of the three bills.

TRIBUTE TO THE CONABLE
FAMILY

HON. THOMAS M. REYNOLDS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the occasion of the dedication of the Wyoming County Courthouse in Warsaw, New York, in the name of the Conable family, whose members have a long and proud history of dedication to public service.

Family patriarch Barber Conable served as Wyoming County judge from 1924-1951. Following his retirement, his son, John Conable assumed the judgeship from 1952-1983. John's brother, Barber Conable, Jr., went from practicing law in nearby Batavia to this House of Representatives, where he served for 20 years as a Member of Congress. Following his service in the House of Representatives, Barber Conable, Jr. served as President of the World Bank, from which he retired several years ago.

As we noted at the building's dedication ceremony on April 27th, no other family in Wyoming County's history has come close to the level and commitment of public service as the Conables.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that this House of Representatives join me in saluting the Conable family for their tremendous dedication to public service, and to salute all the residents of Wyoming County on the occasion of the dedication of the Wyoming County Courthouse.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. MARY JANE
RODGES

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a life long resident of Cleveland, Mississippi and my constituent, Mrs. Mary Jane Rodges. Mrs. Rodges will celebrate her 85th birthday on May 22, 1999. Mrs. Rodges, a devoted mother, dedicated church woman, and retired educator of local acclaim has much to be thankful for and is well deserving of our high praise. She taught in the Mississippi public school system for 40 years, helping to prepare thousands of young

people for a brighter future. Mrs. Rodges was just as devoted to her church as she was to building the minds of others. She shared her talents and uplifted the congregation of St. Paul Baptist Church in Shaw, Mississippi, as its musician, for more than 50 years.

Mrs. Rodges' greatest accomplishment though has to be the five children she raised—who all became valuable and productive citizens of our country. One of her daughters, Mrs. Bobbie L. Steele, who is a Commissioner for Cook County in Chicago, Illinois, is planning a grand celebration for her mother. This is a well-deserved event for an exceptional woman and I stand here on the floor of the House of Representatives today and ask all to join me in wishing Mrs. Mary Jane Rodges "Happy 85th birthday".

WIC: 25 YEARS OF BUILDING A
HEALTHIER AMERICA

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for WIC, the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children. It is vital that, in order to ensure that people grow up and live healthy lives, they receive proper nutrition.

WIC is an indispensable organization that serves over 7.4 million pregnant women, new mothers, infants, and preschool children in over 10,000 clinics nationwide. Thankfully, WIC is designed to aid those who regrettably have an income level of 185 percent of poverty or less, are enrolled in Medicaid or have been recommended by a health professional. It is essential that we ensure healthy children and adults by making sure that mothers receive proper nutrition long before their children are born and during their early years of development. Children will perform better in school and lead more productive lives when they receive the proper nutrition from the very beginning.

A common theme in all branches of government today is that of the importance of the family. WIC strengthens families by providing low-cost services to families who are at risk due to low income and nutritionally related health conditions. Because two-thirds of all WIC families live below the poverty level, the services they provide are essential in making sure that these families stay together.

The strength of any nation comes from the strength of its people. In order for us to assure that the United States remains strong we must be sure that all of our citizens are healthy, starting from the time when they are very young. WIC is a program that ensures just that. Accordingly, I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

EXPOSING RACISM

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, in my continuing efforts to document and expose racism in America, I submit the following articles into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

MISSING POINT OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION;
BLACK HENS SHOULDN'T CATER TO WHITE
FOXES

(By Leonard Pitts, Jr.)

As if Florida didn't already have problems, here comes Ward Connerly to pick a fight over affirmative action.

The thing that makes you sit up and take notice, of course, is that Connerly is black. Who isn't fascinated at the sight of a hen campaigning for the foxes?

This particular hen is pretty good at what he does. The Sacramento businessman has spearheaded ballot measures that overturned affirmative action in Washington state and his native California. Monday, Connerly announced a petition drive aimed at doing the same thing in Florida. God must hate the Sunshine State.

Don't get me wrong. I think there's good reason to question affirmative action, if not to oppose it outright. It seems fair to ask if, by setting aside contracts and classroom seats for minorities and women, government does not inadvertently reinforce in them a victim's mentality—an insidious sense that they lack the stuff to earn those things on their own merits.

That observation, however, must be balanced by the observation that white men have long enjoyed a kind of de facto affirmative action. After all, for generations, the nation used every legal and extralegal means to deny women and racial minorities—blacks in particular—access to education and entrepreneurship. It retarded the progress of those groups while offering white men set-asides and preferences that allowed them to move ahead by prodigious leaps.

It's not too much to ask the country to make right what it made wrong. Especially considering that the hostility toward blacks and women has hardly ended, but only become more subtle. If we don't redress the inequity through affirmative action, fine. But how do we do it? Because it's crucial that we do.

It'd be good if Connerly showed any grasp of this. Instead, his stated reason for opposing affirmative action is that it's racially divisive.

Which is such an asinine assessment that you hardly know where to begin responding to it. Perhaps it's enough to simply ask which campaign to open closed doors was ever anything but divisive. The Civil Rights Movement? That was divisive. Feminism? Yep, divisive, too. The United Farm Workers boycott? Pretty darn divisive. The Civil War? Golly gosh, that was about as divisive as it gets.

Hell, division is predictable. Those who enjoy privileges seldom surrender them easily or willingly.

But it's not simply the abject stupidity of Connerly's reasoning that offends. Rather, it's the way that reasoning offers aid and comfort to the new breed of white bigotry. The one which tells us that white people are the true victims of racism.

You know the rhetoric . . . victimized by preferences, victimized by employers, victimized by political correctness that accepts a Miss Black America pageant or an Ebony magazine but, darn it, would have hissy fits over Miss White America or a magazine called "Ivory." The most virulent of modern white bigots will tell you with a straight face and evident sincerity that he is only fighting for equality. And never mind that by virtually every relevant measure, white men—still!—enjoy advantages that go well beyond simple parity.

Most people—black, white and otherwise—understand this and recognize cries of white victimization for what they are: only the latest effort to turn the language of the civil rights movement to the cause of intolerance. Only the most creative attempt to dress racism up as reason.

There are valid reasons for disliking affirmative action. That it's divisive is not one of them. And while it's troubling that some white guys won't understand this, disconcerting that they would embrace an image of themselves as powerless and put-upon, it's downright galling to see that ignorance validated by a black man.

Some would call Ward Connerly an Uncle Tom. It is, to my mind, an unfortunate term that's been too often used to discourage black intellectual independence. I won't call Connerly that.

I will, however, suggest that he is a confused Negro who should know better than to allow his skin color to be used as moral cover by those whose truest goals have little to do with liberty and justice for all.

If this hen has any sense, he might wonder at the motive of the foxes at his back.

CHILDREN GROW EMOTIONALLY AS THEY ENACT
HISTORY'S STRUGGLES

(By Naomi Barko)

NEW YORK.—An argument erupted in a New York middle school recently over a subject that in most classes would have elicited only a yawn: the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I. The class had been divided in half, with one side asked to look at 10 specific points of the treaty through German eyes, the other through the eyes of the Allies.

An immediate murmur ran through the room: "It isn't fair!" could be heard from many corners—and not only from the "Germans."

Besides losing most of their army and navy, substantial territory and all their colonies, the Germans had been forced to accept both the responsibility and the expense for all the loss and damage suffered by the Allied governments and their civilian populations.

But were the Allies really only after revenge, teacher Veronica Casado asked her students. "No," argued one of the Allies. "We wanted to make sure that Germany would never again be strong enough to start a war, and we wanted to safeguard all the new little countries that had been created—Austria and Poland and Czechoslovakia!"

In this class, called Facing History and Ourselves, the emotions these seventh and eighth graders were feeling were as important as the facts they had learned, said Casado, who teaches at the Dual Language Middle School, an alternative public school in Manhattan. They were beginning to understand the German anger and resentment that helped to seed the rise of Nazism and the onset of World War II.

Cited by both the U.S. Justice Department and the Department of Education as an exemplary program, Facing History and Ourselves was founded in 1976 in Brookline,