

protests marking the Seattle WTO Ministerial meeting in December, 1999.

Mr. Speaker, George Becker's success as a labor leader has been because of his intelligence, skills, and tenacity. Because of all of those attributes and above all, because he has never forgotten where he came from, his career has improved the lives of millions of American workers and their families. I hope my colleagues will join me in congratulating Steelworkers union president George Becker upon his retirement and for a lifetime of dedicated service to not only the men and women of his beloved Steelworkers union, but all working men and women.

SALUTING THE TUSKEGEE
AIRMEN

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2001

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, February marks Black History Month and its arrival has afforded us the opportunity to spotlight some of the most courageous men in our nation's history. I am referring to the Tuskegee Airmen, African-Americans who were asked to simultaneously fight the institutionalized segregation of their homeland and the battle hardened pilots fielded by the Luftwaffe of dreaded Nazi Germany.

On the very site where some nine thousand Republic Thunderbolt fighters were built during World War II, a permanent tribute has been created by the American Airpower Museum in Farmingdale, Long Island that salutes the valor and sacrifice of the Tuskegee Airmen. A full size replica of their P-51 fighter welcomes the museum visitor and helps explain the story of these amazing airmen.

I was honored and pleased to be able to join members of the Tuskegee Airmen, and the many friends of Republic Airport and my constituents in dedicating this exhibit during Black History Month.

Tuskegee Airmen flew more than 15,500 sorties and completed nearly 1,600 missions and they are credited with never losing an American bomber to enemy fighters while flying escort. This tribute at the American Airpower Museum at Republic will forever remind us that racism did not deter these brave men from serving their country, defending our freedoms and protecting our future.

In addition, credit must be offered to two companies that came forward to underwrite this effort—Equal and Avirex—whose support made this tribute possible. These firms reflect the type of public-private partnership that is ensuring our nation's heritage is preserved, protected, and celebrated. I congratulate them for their efforts and publicly salute their commitment to this task.

The remarks of Lee Archer, a Tuskegee Airman ace who is credited with five kills, will ring forever at this historic defense plant. He repeated the words of fellow African-American Air Force pilot Chappie James, "you agitate, you demand, you argue but when the country is in trouble you hold her hand."

JANUARY 31, 2001 SPEECH TO THE
UNIVERSITIES RESEARCH ASSO-
CIATION

HON. SHERWOOD L. BOEHLERT

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2001

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I had the honor to present my maiden speech as Chairman of the House Science Committee to the Universities Research Association on January 31, 2001.

In my remarks, I outlined my goals and initial priorities for the 107th Congress. As I said in the speech: I want to ensure that we have a healthy, sustainable and productive R&D establishment—one that educates students, increases human knowledge, strengthens U.S. competitiveness and contributes to the well-being of the nation and the world. With those goals in mind, I intend to concentrate initially on three priorities—science and math education, energy policy and the environment—three areas in which the resources and expertise of the scientific enterprise must be brought to bear on issues of national significance.

Mr. Speaker, for the information of my colleagues, I submit herewith the full text of my remarks into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

CONGRESSMAN SHERWOOD BOEHLERT
(R-NY) SPEECH TO UNIVERSITIES RE-
SEARCH ASSOCIATION—JANUARY 31,
2001

It's a pleasure to be with you this morning. This is actually my first speech as chairman of the House Science Committee, so I want to use this opportunity to give you a general sense of where I hope to take the Committee. You can think of this "maiden speech" as a kind of experiment—if it works, you'll be the only people to have heard these themes when they were fresh; if it doesn't work, you'll be the only people to have heard them—period.

Actually, though, after serving on the Committee for 18 years and having worked with many of you, the issues before the Science Committee are hardly virgin territory for me.

I even think I know the recipe for becoming a popular chairman. My formula was prompted by Clark Kerr's famous advice on how to become a popular university president. He said that to be successful at running a university you just had to provide three things—"football for the alumni, parking for the faculty and sex for the students." Committees are supposed to be a bit more tame, so I figure the three things I have to provide to be popular are: press coverage for the Members, parking for the staff, and money for the scientific community.

I do indeed intend to provide those three items, but I want to go beyond that. I want to build the Science Committee into a significant force within the Congress and, with that momentum, I want to ensure that we have a healthy, sustainable, and productive R&D establishment—one that educates students, increases human knowledge, strengthens U.S. competitiveness and contributes to the well-being of the nation and the world.

With those goals in mind, I intend to concentrate initially on three priorities—science and math education, energy policy and the environment—three areas in which the resources and expertise of the scientific enterprise must be brought to bear on issues of national significance.

Education is perhaps the most pressing dilemma of the three. I imagine that by now we can all recite the litany of evidence that our education system is not performing adequately—particularly—but not exclusively—at the K-12 level. There are the TIMSS surveys showing that U.S. students lag behind their peers in other nations. There is the predominance of foreign students in our graduate programs. There is our continual need to increase the number of H-1B visas to meet our employment needs. There is the underrepresentation of women and minorities in science and mathematics. And the list goes on and on.

The evidence is easy to adduce because it's been familiar for so long. In fact, I dare say, the concerns have not changed appreciably since I first joined the Science Committee in 1983. Unfortunately, a familiar list of solutions doesn't spring as readily to our lips.

Now, I hope you won't be surprised to learn that I don't have a ready set of solutions. I have not been holding back on providing answers all these years just so I could offer them up the moment I became chairman. What I do have is a set of questions that I hope will frame the Committee's agenda as we put together an education program, in concert with the Administration and other House committees.

Here are some of my questions. First, how can we attract more top students into science and math teaching?

This is a fundamental question. No curriculum, no piece of technology, no exam is going to cure our education ills if we don't have teachers who are conversant with the subject matter they are teaching, and who can communicate their excitement and their comfort, to the students. I think scholarships are part of the answer, but clearly we need something more systemic.

Second, how can we ensure that technology actually improves education? The government's focus needs to shift from merely providing access to technology to figuring out how to use it in a manner that truly offers education, not distraction or empty entertainment or even mere information.

Third, how can we use exams in a way that promotes critical thinking, retention of knowledge and a love of learning? The current mania for measurement is a necessary antidote to an era marked by a lack of accountability. But the wrong kinds of tests will not only mask evidence of a continuing decline; they could contribute to it.

This isn't a speech on education policy, so I'll leave the matter there, for now—except to say that the question I've raised—and indeed the entire national discussion about education—must be of active concern to your institutions.

And one of my goals will be to find new ways to draw on the resources of our great research universities to help answer the kinds of questions that I just posed. The partnership between universities and industry has grown markedly closer in recent years; the relationship between universities and our nation's school systems must do the same.

Universities can also play a role in addressing my second priority area—energy policy. Clearly, as President Bush has said, we need a comprehensive energy policy that looks at all aspects of supply and demand, in both the short- and long-term.

But my focus will be on ensuring that we concentrate sufficiently on alternative sources of energy—wind, solar, fuel cells, etc.—and on conservation and efficiency. These are areas that have been underfunded in terms of both research and deployment.

Moreover, we have spent so much time over the past 20 years having philosophical battles over government energy programs that we haven't devoted enough effort to figuring out how to make the programs work better. The energy supply programs of the Department of Energy (DOE) are due for a good, hard look from people who unequivocally support their goals.

In the area of environment, as well, our government research programs need to be reviewed by people who genuinely want to improve them, by folks who want more reliable results, not more convenience ones. We need to ensure that research in ecology and other environmental sciences—fields in which we know astonishingly little—that such research is adequately funded and is conducted by top scientists both inside and outside the government.

But in making environment a focus of the Science Committee's work, I want to do more than explore the workings of government research programs. I want the Committee to be a central forum to learn about the science behind ongoing—and, even more importantly, brewing—controversies in environmental policy.

Two prominent examples spring to mind immediately. First, global climate change, where the scientific consensus is growing all the time that we face serious consequences from human-generated emissions of greenhouse gases; and second, biotechnology, where I believe more serious attention needs to be paid to concerns about possible ecological impacts even as we acknowledged the potential benefits of genetically modified organisms.

Now, I realize, of course, that I have been speaking to you for a while without mentioning any of the science policy issues usually discussed at URA gatherings. Well, I did say that this was an experiment—but it's not supposed to be one that tests your patience.

But I wanted to start with my three immediate priorities because they will be the subject of our first three full Committee hearings—probably in early March—and because I think that the entire research community needs to think more about such issues, about the intersection of research with our national goals and concerns.

But I don't mean to indicate the Committee will turn away from the equally critical concerns about the health of the research enterprise itself.

So let me say unambiguously that I will fight to increase research funding, in general, and funding for the physical sciences, in particular. Unique and vital DOE facilities, like Fermilab, must continue to prosper, even as we participate in international projects like the Large Hadron Collider.

With that commitment in mind, I want the Committee, early on, to take a serious look at the balance within the federal research portfolio. Now we all know that that is a somewhat euphemistic way of raising the question, "Is biomedical research bulking too large in the federal research budget?" Those who believe that the National Institutes of Health (NIH) are eating up a disproportionate share of the federal budget have two solid facts on their side: the extraordinary growth in that share, and the dependence of the American economy, and of biomedical research itself, on a wide range of research disciplines. And a cursory look at the numbers certainly gives one the feeling that things may be a little out of whack.

But if we are to take action, we're going to need to dig a little deeper and ask some tougher question. How would we know if NIH

was over-funded in either relative or absolute terms? Given the public concern with health and the advances in biology why shouldn't NIH get a larger share of the pie? Hasn't one set of concerns always loomed largest in the federal R&D budget whether that be the Manhattan Project or the Cold War or the Space Race?

These are not meant, in the least, as merely rhetorical questions. They are difficult questions that ought to be explored further if we're going to make a case for either limiting NIH's growth or greatly increasing the budget for every other field.

Similarly, we need to ask tough questions, if we're really thinking about doubling the entire federal civilian science budget. Questions like: Why double? What are we going to get for that money? How will we know if we are under- or over-spending in any field?

The science policy debate sometimes seems composed entirely of randomly generated numbers. We really need to push for more data.

I don't say this out of any opposition to the proposed bill that would set a goal of doubling the science budget. In fact, I'm kindly disposed toward that bill. I would like to find a way to pass it. The bill might do some real good because it would put Congress on the record as saying that science spending is a real priority.

But that shouldn't obscure the fact that doubling will never become a reality if we can't make a much more solid case to the appropriators.

It's a case that is going to have to be made agency by agency, as well as in general terms. Looking at DOE, for example, I want to get a much clearer sense of the Department's needs as it tries to upgrade aging facilities and replace a retiring workforce. And despite years of post-Cold War studies, my sense is that we still don't have a clear policy regarding the role of the national laboratories.

If we're going to increase the federal science budget, we also need to take a much harder look, brushing aside all cant, at the changing nature of our research universities. I'm thinking here especially of the questions raised by the growing partnership between universities and industry.

That partnership, encouraged by legislation, is having many beneficial effects. But it's time we make sure that we understand better how it's affecting the university—in terms of education, the free flow of information, the nature of university research, and the development of intellectual property, to name just a few matters of concern.

This is the time to review that relationship, when it is still developing and fluid. Neither partner has been sufficiently willing to do that. University officials sometimes simultaneously argue, on the one hand, that partnerships are at the cutting-edge of organizational arrangements and, on the other, that their hallowed institutions are still seeking the truth in the time-honored way that has not changed appreciably since the Middle Ages. I exaggerate, of course, but the discussion really does have to be a little bit more open.

Universities ran into trouble in undergraduate education, in part, because they were unwilling for too long to acknowledge that the rise of the modern research university had changed the nature of the campus. That reluctance stemmed from the understandable fear that raising questions would lead some to argue that research and education could not productively co-exist. But in the end, the lack of discussion hurt under-

graduate education in a way that put research at greater risk. An honest, open look at partnerships now should help make them more productive rather than hampering them.

Obviously, there are many more issues before the Committee, but what I've discussed should give you a good sense of my approach and concerns.

My goal is to be your staunchest ally and your fairest critic. To be Shakespearean about it, my role model will be Cordelia—King Lear's daughter who would not utter false professions of love, but who stood by her father when everyone else had deserted him. I won't press the analogy—I don't want to imply that university presidents will become crazed, naked old men wandering helplessly about the moors.

All I mean to say is that you can count on me to fight for the nation's interest by bolstering, and drawing on the expertise of the scientific community. You can also count on me to ask tough and uncomfortable questions to ensure that the scientific community is acting in its and the nation's long-term interests. I intend to do that openly, fairly, cooperatively and with true intellectual curiosity.

I want to run the Committee in a way that would make Einstein smile. I want to make sure that as long as I'm chairman, no one plays dice with your universe.

I look forward to working with all of you.

IN HONOR OF GOV. RICK PERRY,
BORDERFEST TEXAN OF THE
YEAR RECIPIENT

HON. RUBÉN HINOJOSA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2001

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, every year since 1977, the City of Hidalgo in my district has held BorderFest. This is a four day event celebrating the diverse ethnic groups in South Texas. Not only are there entertainment, educational and cultural events, but each year a recipient is chosen for the prestigious Texan of the Year award.

Past recipients of the award have included business and community leaders, college presidents, and government officials. This year's recipient is Texas Governor Rick Perry.

Governor Perry was recently sworn in as the 47th Governor of the State of Texas. He previously served as Lieutenant Governor, Texas Commissioner of Agriculture, and a representative to the Texas Legislature. He is a graduate of Texas A&M University and served in the U.S. Air Force.

As a fifth generation Texan, Governor Perry has devoted his public life to serving his fellow Texans. He is committed to public school reform, and has pledged to make the Texas higher education system the best in the nation. He has also recognized the need to rebuild the state's infrastructure and take advantage of new technology. He is known for his willingness to work with members from both parties to get the job done.

Rick Perry is well-deserving of this honor, and I commend the BorderFest Award committee for its selection of Gov. Perry.