

stewardship, the Medtronic Foundation has been recognized by Business Ethics Magazine for its demonstrated leadership in ethics and social responsibility. The Foundation has reached out to patient groups in exceptional ways, last year alone, offering \$12 million in grants to non-profit organizations in communities worldwide.

Bill George's decision to leave the company comes at a time when Medtronic is well-poised to tackle the challenges of a new millennium, and to build upon its rapid developments in medical technology, computer technology, drug therapy and gene therapy. And there is perhaps no one better suited to launch the company's new vision than Art Collins.

Art Collins has already played an integral part in Medtronic's success. As Chief Operating Officer and former President of the Board of Directors, Art Collins has helped to expand the company's global presence. He joined Medtronic in 1992, serving as Corporate Executive Vice President and President of Medtronic International with responsibility for all Medtronic operations outside the United States. He brings a unique perspective and a creative vision to his new post.

Mr. Speaker, I speak on behalf of the millions of patients worldwide who have benefited from Medtronic's work in paying tribute to Bill George. He is a gifted leader, a proud American and a decent man. He's made our country better with all he's done and I shall always be grateful to know him and to have worked with him.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL SHANNON,
JR.

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call the attention of my colleagues to a friend and constituent of the sixth district whose devotion to his family was paralleled only by his dedication to the labor community.

Born in New York City and raised in the Lafayette section of Jersey City, Michael J. Shannon, Jr. moved to South Amboy, New Jersey in 1968 where he continued to reside with his family.

Michael began his career working his way from shop steward to chief steward at the Maxwell House coffee plant in Hoboken. Facilitating the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union Local 56 as an organizer, business agent, and officer, Michael was ultimately elected local vice president. In addition to these services, he also served as vice president of the Monmouth-Ocean Counties Central Labor Council (AFL-CIO) and was a member of the Rutgers University Trade Union Consulting Council. Because of his dedication and commitment to the labor community, Michael is being honored with the Tenth Annual Partnership Award from the Monmouth County Workforce Investment Board. This award is being presented to recognize Michael's outstanding achievement as a leader in organized labor.

Michael was also a committed husband and father to his wife Patricia and two children, Bridget and Michael. He served our country as a corporal in the Marine Corps and received an honorable discharge in 1962. With community involvement being an important part of his life, Michael was a third degree member of the Knights of Columbus Council 426.

It is my sincere hope that my colleagues will join me in honoring Michael J. Shannon, Jr. for his inexhaustible enthusiasm and many achievements in the progress of organized labor and his community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE AGRICULTURE EDUCATION FREEDOM ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Agriculture Education Freedom Act. This bill addresses a great injustice being perpetrated by the Federal Government on those youngsters who participate in programs such as 4-H or the Future Farmers of America. Under current tax law, children are forced to pay federal income tax when they sell livestock they have raised as part of an agricultural education program. Think about this for a moment. These kids are trying to better themselves, earn some money, save some money and what does Congress do? We pick on these kids by taxing them.

It is truly amazing that with all the hand-wringing in Congress over the alleged need to further restrict liberty and grow the size of government "for the children" we would continue to tax young people who are trying to lead responsible lives and prepare for the future. Even if the serious social problems today's youth face could be solved by new federal bureaucracies and programs, it is still unfair to pick on those kids who are trying to do the right thing.

These children are not even old enough to vote, yet we are forcing them to pay taxes! What ever happened to no taxation without representation? No wonder young people are so cynical about government!

It is time we stopped taxing youngsters who are trying to earn money to go to college by selling livestock they have raised through their participation in programs such as 4-H or Future Farmers of America. Therefore, I call on my colleagues to join me in supporting the Agriculture Education Freedom Act.

STILL A NATION AT RISK

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, today marks the eighteenth anniversary of "A Nation at Risk." The sobering report on declining student performance in American public schools was first published in 1983 by the National

Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE). Its impact on the American education empire has been tragically negligible.

Created in 1981, the NCEE was appointed by then Secretary of Education T.H. Bell and was comprised of university presidents, high school principals, teachers, a former governor, and school board members. The commission's purpose was to "help define the problems afflicting American education and to provide solutions," according to its chairman, David Pierpont Gardner.

In its report entitled "A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform," the NCEE noted the United States, which once enjoyed "unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science and technological innovation, is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world." Eighteen years later, the United States is still a nation at risk.

Last October, a subcommittee of the U.S. House attributed the nation's stagnant student achievement to the government's failure at prioritizing student performance and its reluctance to reward results. America's poorest children are too often trapped in schools that can't teach. Moreover, the Congressional "Education at a Crossroads" report exposed rampant waste, fraud and abuse within the U.S. Department of Education. While states and local schools are held to strict standards for use of federal funds, the Department cannot account for hundreds of millions of dollars.

Despite the NCEE's early warning that America's education system is at risk, little has changed. The government's monopoly on public school services remains unchallenged. Except for poor children in a few courageous communities, real school choice is a privilege for only the rich.

Yet while state and local schools receive billions more in federal spending, they are constrained by new burdensome regulations, unfunded mandates and paperwork requirements which divert scarce resources from classrooms. Today there are more than 760 education-related programs administered by 39 Federal agencies at a cost of \$120 billion a year, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

The federal government's first big offensive into local school management occurred in 1965 with the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Since that time, federal policy has consistently expanded its bearing on America's classrooms and has tied the hands of state legislators and local school board members, despite the U.S. Constitution's suggestion of state and local primacy of authority. Results have been pathetic.

For example, the federal government's most massive program, Title I, was designed to improve the academic level of poor and underserved students. Federal investments totaling \$118 billion since 1965 have left 19% of Title I schools still failing to make adequate annual achievement gains, officially classified as "in need of improvement."

In testimony before Congress, Colorado's state schools chief, Dr. William Moloney explained the government's failure: "ESEA has remained, as always, a neutral phenomena based on inputs rather than results, more on accounting than accountability, an entity always more interested in what you were rather than what you were doing."