body and suggested that there was another kind of experience that does exactly that; that provides a tremendous amount of benefit to the Nation; that does amazing things for the soul, uplifting in nature; that it can change a person’s attitude about life; that it can motivate you to do great things, all these things I have heard on the floor as to the reason why we have to fund the arts?

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that there is another argument I could make using exactly the same logic. What if I were to come before the body and say, I know something that we should be doing that does all of the things I have just said, is an incredible influence on our lives that provides an outlet for emotional needs of millions of people, and it is called religion and I am going to ask this body to appropriate $150 million this year for religion.

Now, the first thing that someone would say not to do this because there is this wall of separation that exists in the minds of many, but nowhere in the Constitution, by the way, that separates church and State. But the real reason why we cannot do it and the reason I would never suggest it because the minute we decide to fund religion in this body, we will then begin to decide whose religion, what brand of religion. What about this particular denomination? Why should they not be funded as opposed to that denomination?

Someone somewhere would have to make a decision. So we would establish an Endowment for Religion, and we would appoint some people to it. We would say we will give them the money because Congress does not want to get into the battle about which religion to fund. We will give $150 million to the National Endowment for Religion, and they will make the decision because they are the experts. They know what is best. If they give it all to the Baptists, that is fine. If they split it up with the Jews, the Catholics, the Presbyterians, whatever, it is their decision to make. It is their $150 million. They will make the decision. How many Members in this body would agree with such a thing? No one. I suggest that we would not get very many votes for such a proposal. And rightly so.

It is not our place because the minute that we start doing that, we are automatically discriminating if we pick one over another, which must be done. There is absolutely no difference, Mr. Speaker, none whatsoever, in the funding of the arts and the funding of religion. Each one of those things has its particular brand. It appeals to certain individuals and not others. Someone has to make a decision about which one of those things gets funded, and then we will come to the House and hold up a list of things that has been funded by that organization and some people will be outraged by it, as I imagine there were some tonight as I was going through the list of things that we have funded that the government has paid for. Some people will listen and say that is great stuff. I wish a billion dollars was put into it.

What happens is there is discrimination in this thing through the list of things that somebody gets one, every one artist gets funded, some artist does not, and that means somebody is making a decision about which is better. I suggest that is an impossible decision to make for everyone. It is absolutely appropriate for everyone. Let us simply talk about it here, but, Mr. Speaker, I think that is pretty much accepted as being true. We know that there are these competing sets of values out there trying to grab us and get us on their side, whatever that might be.

Now, I happen to believe completely that there is such a thing as good art, good music. I believe that it can all of the things that people say, I believe we can be inspired by it. We can be motivated by art to do wonderful things. But I also suggest, Mr. Speaker, that if there is such a thing as good art, good music, good literature, then there is such a thing as bad art, bad music and bad literature. And it has the opposite effect of the good art. I believe that is true. That is my personal observation, my personal belief.

I choose not to impose that belief on anyone else. I think that I will make the case when I am allowed here on the House floor, allowed to debate this issue in any public forum, I will talk about the fact that I believe we are in the midst of a culture war and there are competing sides in that war that are actually grappling for the soul of the Nation. I will try my best to defend what I believe to be the good side as opposed to the bad side, but that is my decision to make. And it rests on my ability to convince my friends or relatives, as well as it does with any one of us here as to who is right and who is wrong.

Even as a Member of the Congress of the United States, it is not in my authority to force anyone out there to agree with me by the power that is vested in me as a Member of this House to vote for a tax to enforce my particular view of who should be helped in those culture wars. We have to do it through the power of persuasion.

This place, Mr. Speaker, is the place in which the battle occurs oftentimes, maybe even daily. Because this is the place in which we have determined that a great debate should go on about the nature of our society, about the kind of people we are. It is the place of ideas. It is certainly the free marketplace of ideas. And we are allowed to come before the body as I have tonight to express our opinions. I hope that we have to a certain extent, anyway, even a small extent tonight, made a case for allowing that debate to occur without the influence of the power of government to tax and help one side in it as opposed to another.

Let us simply talk about it here, but, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that there again is no more hypothetical thing that we do here in the Congress of the United States than to take money away from people in support of a particular brand of art or music and then argue about whether or not that should happen with regard to religion.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to Mr. ARMEEY (at the request of Ms. SOLIS) to revise and extend heretofore entered, was granted to:

Mr. THOMAS (at the request of Ms. SOLIS) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SOLIS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. LANGLEY, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. SANDERS, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. UNDERWOOD, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. JEPSON, for 5 minutes, today.
Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, for 5 minutes, today.

The motion to adjourn was accord-
ingly (at 10 o’clock and 10 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, June 28, 2001, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker’s table and referred as follows:


2699. A letter from the Assistant Director National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, Department of Education, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2700. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2701. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2702. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2703. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2704. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2705. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2706. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2707. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2708. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2709. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2710. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2711. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2712. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2713. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2714. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2715. A letter from the Assistant Director for Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2716. A letter from the Chief Operating Officer, National Institute for Public Construction and Acquisition of State Facilities (RIN: 2900–A323) received June 22,