DR. CAMILLE COSBY ON VIOLENCE

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 29, 1997

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, violence is tearing apart the fabric of our society. It affects us collectively. But it affects many individuals, as well. Our challenge must be to eradicate violence from this Nation, and all its associated hardships for children, families, and communities.

Few people are not aware of the terrible tragedy which beset the family of Bill and Camille Cosby. Their son Ennis was tragically killed in a senseless act of violence earlier this year.

Dr. Camille Cosby made the following remarks, related to her experience at a ceremony which I attended recently, and which moved me greatly. I strongly urge my colleagues to read them and contemplate their meaning for us all.

Violence is not funny. Violence has been sensationalized and glorified in movies, television, radio and the print media. Violence is not entertainment. Violence is excessive proliferation of guns and illegal drugs. Violence is profit driven. Violence is greed. Violence feeds on low self-esteem.

Violence can evolve from repetitive, indecent, and crude racial, sexual, and religious distortions that can shape hateful attitudes about one another. Those images are seen, heard, and read by the world's people everyday. America, you and the world have lost the truth with few exceptions.

I am appealing to you, the public, to not support, with your dollars, any media or other entities which honor needless violence.

Thank you, thank you the world's people, for your thousands and thousands of letters of concern and prayers. My family and I are deeply appreciative that you have expressed respect and praise for our beautiful son, Ennis. And my dear essence family, I thank you for this prestigious award.

THE MARKET ACCESS PROGRAM IS NOT CORPORATE WELFARE

HON. FRANK RIGGS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 29, 1997

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to speak on a topic that is embroiled in heated rhetoric and misinformation.

Last week the Committee on Agriculture held a hearing to examine the effectiveness of agriculture export programs, including the Market Access Program [MAP].

This issue is once again in the public spotlight due to an ''NBC Nightly News'' piece broadcast last week, on their weekly ''Fleecing of America'' segment. Such attacks are part of an annual barrage of rhetoric and misinformation targeting one of the few public-private partnerships that works, and works well.

As you know, the congressional district I represent includes the Napa Valley, widely regarded as the prime growing region of the U.S. wine industry. The U.S. wine industry produces an award-winning, high-value product that competes with the best in the world.

However, the agriculture sector in the United States, and specifically wine, continues to face unfair trading practices by foreign competitors. Domestic agriculture industries must compete with lower wages and heavily subsidized industries in Europe, East Asia, and other emerging global regions. The European Union alone subsidizes its wine industry by over $2 billion.

Now there are colleagues of mine who label the MAP as just another form of corporate welfare. Nothing more could be further from the truth. The MAP is an invaluable resource for American agriculture to compete against massively subsidized foreign agriculture exports. What is more, it is a resource that allows America's small farmers to compete in highly restrictive foreign markets. In fact, the MAP is pro-trade, pro-growth, and pro-jobs.

Critics of the program continue to ignore the fact that in 1995, the Agriculture Subcommittee on Appropriations reformed the MAP to restrict branded promotions to trade associations, grower cooperatives, and small businesses. The primary emphasis of the MAP is toward the small family farmer. A sizable number of the so-called large corporations receiving MAP money are actually grower cooperatives.

The purpose of the MAP is to move high-value American grown agriculture products overseas, to knock down trade barriers, and to create and protect American jobs. A recent study by the University of Arizona showed that for every dollar of MAP funds spent overseas promoting American wine there was a return of $7.44.

What is more, the five largest wine recipients of MAP funds purchase 90 percent of their grapes from independent grape growers. In past years, of the approximately 101 wineries that received matching funds through the Market Access Program, approximately 89 of them were small businesses.

Often times, the only way American wine can break into an overseas market is through the active promotion of labels such as Gallo, Robert Mondavi, and Kendall Jackson. Once realizing the superb quality of the product, the foreign consumer will then sample more obscure labels based upon their previous experience. This is a basic lesson in advertising and how an industry promotes its products.

In the world marketplace, competition is fierce. Every year, American jobs become more dependent on foreign trade. Efforts to dismantle our leading export promotion program are penny wise and pound foolish. To retreat in the international marketplace is shortsighted and counterintuitive. We must actively engage our trading partners and open up emerging markets to our agriculture goods.

Don't be fooled by the rhetoric. Do what is right for America and protect our jobs by supporting exports.

INTRODUCTION OF THE COMPUTER DONATION INCENTIVE ACT

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 29, 1997

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Computer Donation Incentive Act, which would provide greater tax incentives for corporate donations of computers, software, and related training for educational purposes. Specifically, the legislation would give an enhanced tax deduction to companies for such donations to public elementary and secondary schools, libraries, recreational centers, and other governmental entities. It also would provide an enhanced tax break to nonprofit and government organizations that provide computer training to people with disabilities.

I am pleased to have worked closely with my colleague from Michigan, Representative DEBBIE STABENOW, in developing this initiative.

Bringing our classrooms into the 21st century is a tremendously expensive undertaking that cannot be accomplished by government alone. We need to encourage greater public-private partnerships for upgrading the technology in our schools to make them world class centers for excellence in education.

In Silicon Valley, private efforts, like Challenge 2000 and net day, have emerged because our high tech industry recognizes that a computer-literate work force is needed to keep companies competitive in the global market. And while some businesses have been donating computer hardware to schools for several years, they have only recently begun to recognize that teachers need to be trained to use that equipment if they hope to employ it properly in the classroom. The Computer Donation Incentive Act will go a long way to encourage more companies to invest in our schools, our people, and their own future success.

Under current law, computer donations from manufacturers to public schools qualify for a normal tax deduction worth the cost of making the equipment. At the same time, donations to private schools, colleges, and universities qualify for an enhanced tax deduction worth approximately the production cost of the equipment plus half of the profit that the manufacturer would have received if the equipment had been sold on the market.

The Computer Donation Incentive Act would make the enhanced tax deduction available for computer hardware and software donations to public K–12 schools, libraries, recreational centers, other government entities, and qualified organizations that provide computer training to people with disabilities. It would also offer the enhanced deduction to nonmanufacturers that make charitable computer contributions within 3 years of the date that computers are purchased. Further, companies could claim the enhanced tax deduction for donations of up to 8 hours of teacher training associated with hardware and software donations.

Other features of the legislation include: An enhanced tax deduction for computer contributions to nonprofit organizations that repair and refurbish equipment that is subsequently donated to public schools, other qualifying government organizations, and groups that provide computer training to people with disabilities; an enhanced tax deduction for donations of digital augmentative speech devices; a sense of Congress provision that one of the main purposes of the legislation is to encourage computer donations to schools serving low income communities; and a General Accounting Office study to be conducted before 1999 on the effectiveness of the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to help encourage companies to make a positive difference in our public schools, libraries, and recreation centers by supporting the Computer Donation Incentive Act.