activities devoted expressly to them. Mayor Spina is also a valued member of the World Wildlife Fund, Common Cause, the West Orange Animal Welfare League, and GASP.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me, our colleagues, the citizens of West Orange, and Sam's friends and family as we recognize Mayor Samuel Spina's valuable contribution to the community.

TIME TO PAY OUR U.N. DUES

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 10, 1998

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, it is time to pay the arrears that we owe to the United Nations.

I include for printing in the RECORD a letter form the Honorable John Whitehead, Deputy Secretary of State in the Reagan Administration, and Chair of the United Nations Association. Mr. Whitehead eloquently outlines the reasons we should pay our arrears, and the costs to United States interests if we do not. He further refutes effectively the argument some have made that we do not actually owe this money to the United Nations.

I urge my colleagues to read this letter, and call on the Congress to take action to pay what we owe.

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

June 1, 1998.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: The United Nations Association of the USA, representing millions of Americans through its nationwide chapters and affiliated organizations, regrets the continuing impasse over payment of US arrears to the United Nations. We urge you to consider the following points during the weeks ahead as Congress grapples with the problem of meeting longstanding financial obligations to the United Nations.

The United States, first of all, faces the loss of its vote in the UN General Assembly at the end of this year under Article 19 of the UN Charter. This penalty is automatically applied if a member state's arrears at the year exceed the previous two years' assessments. With the world's largest economy by far, the US historically has been the largest contributor to the UN system. But, the US is now responsible for some 60 percent of the debt of all member states—arrearages more than double the UN's annual regular budget, which are crippling UN capabilities and paralyzing peacekeeping. Although various contingencies could avoid America's loss of vote at the start of 1999, the mere possibility that the world's leader may be placed in such a position does not befit our great nation.

On another issue of evident priority to American policymakers, the US now has a limited window of opportunity to negotiate a lowering of its United Nations assessment—from its present rate of 25 percent of the UN's regular budget to 22 percent. UN member states have indicated a willingness to reopen negotiations on the assessment level if a substantial amount of US arrears are paid. One might note that the Reagan Administration—in which I served as Deputy Secretary of State—had opposed such a reduction, fearing diminished influence would follow; other countries oppose it on grounds of equity: A member state's assessment is based primarily on ''capacity to pay,'' largely measured by each member's share of world income—over 26 percent for the United States. The US already pays less than this amount. In contrast, for example the 15 member states of the European Union which account for 30.8 percent of world income, are assessed 36.2 percent of UN costs. The assessment on the Japanese, even with their ailing economy, will rise to just above 20 percent in the year 2000.

Those calling for a lowering of the US rate of assessment argue that this country makes appreciable contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security in other ways, particularly through its defense commitments and refugee and other emergency relief programs. They argue that the United Nations does not reimburse the US for these contributions. When the United States Government decides to launch such operations on its own, under its own control—even if blessed by authorizing United Nations Security Council resolutions—other countries have no say in the mission (and indeed, may see it as susceptible to manipulation for US advantage). We would rightly object to paying through the UN for Russian troops under Russian command in Georgia, or for Nigerian troops under Nigerian command in Sierra Leone—so we cannot claim that the rest of the world owes us money for US operations. The Italians, who led a mission in Albania with very close Security Council oversight, acknowledge they have no claim to reimbursement from other UN members for the costs of that operation. With UN control goes UN financial responsibility—and with national control goes national financial responsibility. If a country asserts exclusive control over its deployments, it volunteers to pay the costs on its own.

Most of the United States' debt to the United Nations actually is owed to past peacekeeping activities, particularly in the former Yugoslavia, which the US voted to create. This means that many countries are owed significant sums for their previous contributions of troops and equipment to peacekeeping operations, and countries are increasingly reluctant to offer troops to the UN when there is no reimbursement. There is no doubt that UN peacekeeping is a cost-effective investment in stability—but if UN peacekeeping is to survive, the United States must pay its share of those expenses.

For all the furious debate over US financial contributions to the agencies and activities of the UN system, the US annually spends only about 0.1 percent of our federal budget—or $7 per American—on all voluntary as well as assessed contributions. These limited amounts provide support to combat malnutrition, contain the spread of infectious diseases, minimize the devastating impact of refugee flows, harmonize actions on global environmental initiative, provide economic assistance to developing countries and provide for a neutral intervener to keep the peace in potentially volatile political situations.

The American people do not want the United States to accept the costs of single-handedly being the world's policemen or to address on its own a host of worldwide social, economic and environmental challenges. It serves the national interest to promote consensus-building and burdensharing at the international level and to strengthen the notion of the rule of law on which international stability rests. Opinion research consistently finds that an overwhelming majority of Americans believe in strengthening the United Nations to meet the challenges before us. In a world characterized by a growing web of global connections, the United Nations and its system of agencies and programs offer unique and essential avenues for the United States to exercise leadership in support of its values and its vision for the future.

Sincerely,

JOHN C. WHITEHEAD,

Chairman.

TRIBUTE TO GISSELLE RUIZ

HON. JOHN F. TIERNEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 10, 1998

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute Ms. Gisselle Ruiz of Lynn, Massachusetts who has received an award from the Lynn Hispanic Scholarship Fund, Inc. for academic excellence.

I hope Gisselle appreciates and is proud of her accomplishments. She is most deserving of the many awards which have been bestowed upon her. Her leadership potential and her willingness to give back to her community are evident by the extracurricular activities she has chosen. She is a role model for her peers and an inspiration to her family, being the first to graduate from high school and go on to college. I trust that she understands the value of continuing her education and hope that she will continue her hard work. Her dedication and commitment are to be commended. I have no doubt that she will be successful in her future endeavors.

Indeed, Ms. Ruiz has worked hard to achieve her goals. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand here to recognize the accomplishments of Gisselle Ruiz and I hope my colleagues will join me today in wishing Ms. Ruiz the very best as she continues her education.

THE U.S. ARMY SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS: LEADING THE FIGHT TO KEEP DRUGS FROM REACHING U.S. BORDERS, WHILE PROMOTING DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 10, 1998

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, as many of my colleagues are aware, there has been a concerted effort on many fronts to close the U.S. Army School of the Americas (SOA). The opponents of the school have often used distorted or false information that only serves one purpose—to mislead the American public. Opponents of the U.S. Army School of the Americas are correct to point out that several of the school's graduates have been implicated in crimes, corruption, and human rights violations. Press reports have accurately noted that former Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega was a former student, as was one of the Salvadoran officers responsible for the 1989 assassination of six Jesuit priests. However, my colleagues should be aware that more than 60,000 young Latin American officers have graduated from the SOA since its creation in 1946, the vast majority of whom have served their nations honorably and responsibly. Graduates of the SOA are personally responsible for the return of democracy in Latin American