ask Thy particular blessing and mercy on George and Laura Bush. You have been working a long time on them, Father; you started back in the Senate with Old Man Prescott, and you came on through with George Herbert Walker Bush and Barbara, and blessed our nation with their leadership. And from their family, you have created a legacy of love, a legacy of mercy, a legacy of compassion, a legacy of peace, prosperity and justice. These we see not as their achievements so much as Your blessings.

We ask that as they embark upon the whirlwind which is our history, that You may strengthen them and guide them; surround them—the Cabinet, the Congress, the governors, the mayors, the ambassadors, the business leaders, all who are brought together in this creative time, which indeed is Your time—surround us with the guidance and love and strength of Your angels. Keep us always mindful of the presence of Your son.

Bow us daily on our knees together as we break bread and as we serve Thy holy name, to see to it that all of your children everywhere might share in the freedom, the blessing, the abundant life of grace and mercy that we so readily take for granted in these United States. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage for the living and serving of these days. In Jesus' name, amen.

(Applause.)

Rep. WAMP. Our closing song was not written by Senator Orrin Hatch, but it will be performed by Wintley Phipps. Welcome him back, please. Wintley. (Applause.)

(Song, ''It Is Well With My Soul'', is performed by Wintley Phipps.)

Rep. WAMP. I would ask the audience to please remain in place while President Bush and our first lady, and the Vice President and Mrs. Cheney leave the stage.

Thank you, Mr. President. (Applause.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. INSLEE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Kentucky (Mrs. NORTHUP) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. NORTHUP addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FORD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FORD addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ADDRESSING MONETARY PROBLEMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, the markets today are reeling. The financial markets are indeed in big trouble. This could mean a couple of things to all of us. First, it could mean economic hardship for many of our citizens. It also could mean that our budget figures will be completely changed here in the not-too-distant future, and we should be paying attention.

Some people claim that they are not quite sure why markets go up and all of a sudden crash; and others say if only Alan Greenspan would just print more money, inflate the currency faster, lower the interest rates, all would be well. But I do not think it is that simple.

It is very clear that we have these cycles and these booms coming from a monetary system that is pure fiat. Fiat money means that the money is created out of thin air, and the characteristic of a fiat monetary system is that you have overspeculation, you have stock market booms, you have stock market crashes, and you have a business cycle. This comes from the mismanagement of money, mainly because man, in his efforts to plan, to have economic central planning through monetary policy, is incapable of providing the information necessary that a free market is supposed to have.

Only a free market can tell us what interest rates should be or what the money supply should be. But we have become dependent on a Federal Reserve system that pretends to know all these things, and we have allowed Alan Greenspan to believe that he can regulate the entire economy as well as the stock market by the Open Market Committee.

Inflation is nothing more than the creation of new money out of thin air. Sometimes it raises prices in certain areas, and other times in other places. But the whole principle of fiat money is when you create new money, you devalue/lower the value of the dollar.

This is what is happening. Right now we are increasing the money supply as measured by MZM at the rate of 20 percent per year. This means that, ultimately, that dollar that we use to purchase goods and services will go down in value. And yet the only thing that we hear about is the cry to the Federal Reserve, just print more money, faster, because that will save us all. It will raise the stock market; it will make sure that the economy does not go down and go into a downturn.

This is not the case. Ultimately what we have to have is monetary reform, currency reform. We have to have a time when once again we have money that cannot be created out of thin air. We have to have money of value, something that governments and politicians cannot create out of thin air. Unless we address that, we are going to continue with these problems.

This can be very serious. Just in the last year there has been $4 trillion of value lost in the stock market. Of course, it was artificially high, and now it is going to be artificially low, and these sudden changes reflect the disequilibrium built into the system once we have a monetary system of this sort.

In 1996, the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board talked about the exuberance, the irrational exuberance in the stock market; and yet I think he knew, I certainly knew, and others knew, that there was irrational exuberance, because even at that time we were printing money like crazy. There was overspeculation.

If he had been seriously concerned about the exuberance getting out of control in 1996, he might have considered not inflating the currency quite so rapidly, not devaluing the money quite so rapidly. But what has he done since that time? The Federal Reserve has literally created $2.3 trillion of new money since 1996, further creating a bigger bubble, which eventually had to collapse, and that is what we are in the midst of. It can be tough. It is going to be tough for a lot of people. We can have this economic downturn, and this means jobs and a standard of living that will be threatened.

This type of a monetary system also encourages us to do things unwisely. When interest rates are lower than they are supposed to be, we borrow more money and we do not save as much money, so savings has a negative rate. Yet people are way in debt, business people are in debt, and then business people are actually encouraged to do things that are not wise. They overbuild; they build into the system overcapacity and mal-investment which eventually has to be cleansed out of the system.

So this mantra of saying all we need is more inflation will not work. Inflation caused the problem. The inflation of the monetary system is the problem. To believe that all we need is more inflation to solve the problem is a serious error. We need currency reform.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HYDE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE PRESIDENT'S EDUCATION INITIATIVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, today is a historic day. We have introduced in the House H.R. 1, the President's education initiative. I am not an initial cosponsor, but I am basically supportive of this legislation and am looking forward to continuing to work in tweaking it.

Let me raise a couple of points that were of special concern. First, I think that the President's goal of leaving no children behind is admirable, and he is trying to develop accountability standards to make sure we actually know that no child has been left behind.

Some of us on the conservative side of the spectrum have been concerned

about how you hold someone accountable and how those testing standards are going to be implemented and whether this could lead to a monopoly test that would in effect become a national test.

We have worked for weeks to try to clarify this language, and I believe by having an alternative available to the States, in addition to their State test, which is to be primary, in addition to the protections that we have for home schools and private schools and public schools that do not receive, if there are any, Federal funds, public schools that do not receive Federal funds, they are not covered by this. We have tried to make sure that the tests cannot be released on any basis without parental approval, that the language is clear to parents, that it is posted.

We still have a few things we are continuing to work through, but there has been great progress in addressing many of the conservative concerns about a national test that we had under the previous administration.

□ 1500

A second area of discussion has been the safe and drug-free schools. I believe that this prevention program, the only prevention program oriented directly at school-age children, needs to preserve its separate funding stream. The President of the United States supports this, the United States Senate supports this, and I believe that the House should support this as well.

It is not a separate funding stream in this bill, although all of the changes that we had suggested and worked with in drug-free schools to make it a more effective program are in this bill. We worked hard in the last session of Congress to try to improve that program. I believe we made great progress. I believe that an amendment that I and others will offer in the committee will address the funding stream question and probably pass very easily and, if not, it will be addressed in the appropriations bill, as it has been in the past.

Because we cannot talk about aid to Colombia and the Andean region that is line item and specific, it is not block granted. We cannot talk about anti-drug efforts in the Justice Department that are not block granted but line-itemed and then say, with prevention and treatment we are going to block grant it with other programs. We need to have drug-free prevention programs in this country that are effective, and I think most Members of Congress, if not the overwhelming majority, quite possibly unanimously, would favor that position.

The third area is that the education bill is the first actual piece of legislation that also addresses the charitable-choice question. We worked this through committee last year in ESEA and it is in the 21st century. It is not a part of a school day, it has to deal with after-school programs. Those who want to get copies of this bill, in the language we can see language that we worked through that is tighter than the language on the welfare bill, tighter than the language on drug treatment, because in these programs, students do not have a choice, there is just one after-school program in their area.

So we have said that not only can government funds not be used to proselytize, but private funds cannot be used for proselytization either during the period that government funds are in it. Because when we have a choice and we can do to different programs, no government funds can ever be used for proselytization, but private funds could be. But when there is only one choice available to students, we have to be even more protective of religious liberty. I believe that we will see in the 21st century a model of how charitable choice can work in those areas which is slightly different than how it will work in other bills.

So today's H.R. 1 is historic because not only is it the first big step in President Bush's ''Leave No Child Behind'' in education, it is also the real first step of actual legislation introduced with specifics on charitable choice.

EDUCATION IN AMERICA TODAY MEANS A CRUSADE FOR OPPORTUNITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FERGUSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, we might call today kind of opportunity day, since today is the day that the Republican majority introduced their bill on education reform that has been long awaited. The bill introduced by the Republican majority is the administration's bill. We have all waited for this great education initiative which responds to the fact that the American people have, over the last 5 years, consistently said that education is a priority; they would like to see government do more in the area of education. They would like to see every level of government, but they particularly would like to see the Federal Government, do more to help improve education. So the Republican bill was introduced today. I have not seen the details of the bill, but we, of course, have had for several weeks the outline that the administration issued very early this year. That outline talks about focusing on failing schools and targeting Federal resources so that most of the Federal resources go to the most disadvantaged students in these failing schools.

Now that was introduced formally as a bill today. At the same time, we introduced a 21st century higher education initiative today from the Democratic side of the aisle. The Democratic Caucus, under the leadership of the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) and the ranking member on the Committee on Education and the Workforce, the gentleman from California (Mr. MILLER), we have fashioned a bill which we call the 21st Century Higher Education Initiative. And that bill was discussed at great length today at a press conference.

We held a press conference today and we talked about the bill today, in particular, because today is the 2nd day of a very important conference being held here in the City of Washington, D.C., the National Association for Equal Opportunity, NAEO, which represents Historically Black Colleges and Universities, predominantly black colleges and universities, and is holding their annual conference this weekend. It will go on until this Friday.

Mr. Speaker, among the colleges represented by NAEO are 118 Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and those institutions have been the subject of some controversy over the last few weeks in that the Committee on Education and the Workforce where I serve as a member chose to place all minority colleges, both the three categories of Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, and the tribally controlled colleges were all placed in a subcommittee away from the core of the higher education concerns. We have resolved that dispute. And I do not want to go into it in any great detail, but I think it is relevant, because as we focus today on the introduction of the administration's education reform bill and the introduction of the democratic initiative called the 21st Century Higher Education Initiative, it is important to place in perspective the role that those institutions can play. They can play a great role in education reform.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities are only a tiny part of the larger constellation of higher education institutions in America. There must be about 3,000, more than 3,000 overall higher education institutions in America, and the 118 Historically Black Colleges and Universities constitute a very tiny segment of that constellation. Even if we add the Hispanic-serving institutions which are defined as institutions which have at least 25 percent of their student body as Hispanics, and we have the tribally controlled colleges, which are the colleges which serve native Americans, we still have a relatively small number of institutions, minority-focused institutions in the larger constellation of higher education institutions.

Of course, most of the African Americans now in America are attending colleges that are not Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Larger numbers are out there in the various State universities and the private colleges because discrimination, which is the reason the Historically Black Colleges and Universities were created, has greatly lessened. In fact, that kind of blatant discrimination which cut off opportunities completely from African-