

DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE,  
JUSTICE, AND STATE, THE JUDI-  
CIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES  
APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

SPEECH OF

**HON. TIM JOHNSON**

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 26, 1995*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2076) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes:

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Chairman, I must express my serious concern with a provision included in the fiscal year 1996 Commerce, Justice, State appropriations bill which eliminates line-item funding for Native American populations within the Legal Services Corporation. In the bill, the Appropriations Committee has not only reduced funding of the Legal Services Corporation by 30 percent—from \$400 million to \$278 million, but the committee also eliminated the separate line item for native American population funding, which last year provided \$10 million for native American programs nationwide. The elimination of this line-item funding will lead to the termination of legal services for some of America's most underserved population, our low-income native Americans.

Because our Nation's Founders made the establishment of justice the first specific function of the new government, justice is the historic mandate of a free society. The Legal Services Corporation provides justice to people who could otherwise not afford it, ensuring equal access to justice. On countless Indian reservations across the nation, Indian legal services are the only source of legal aid to the poor and underrepresented.

Presently there are 33 Indian legal services programs in existence. The \$10 million in fiscal year 1995 funding made possible the work of approximately 150 attorneys, paralegals, and tribal court advocates serving clients on over 175 Indian reservations as well as 220 Alaska Native villages. The work of these attorneys has helped tribes develop tribal courts, and create programs for the prevention of domestic abuse and violence. On remote reservations with unique cultures and needs, legal services attorneys are the first line of contact and counseling for families in crisis. They enforce child support, and help ensure the delivery of health care services to the poor, elderly, and disabled.

In my State of South Dakota, there are nine federally recognized tribes whose members collectively make up one of the largest Native American populations in any State. At the same time, South Dakota has 3 of the 10 poorest counties in the Nation, all of which are within reservation boundaries. Dakota Plains Legal Services, serving North and South Dakota, employs 10 attorneys, 8 paralegals, and roughly 10 support staff in 7 offices, all but 1 on reservations. Dakota Plains helps low-income Indians in tribal as well as Federal courts with civil and criminal disputes. If the line-item for Native American populations is not restored, Dakota Plains Legal Services would lose 70 percent of their operating bud-

et—virtually shutting down services to Indians in my State.

Additionally devastating is the bill's requirement that Indian legal services programs compete for the remaining LSC funding under a census-based formula—a scheme that will result in even further cuts to Native American programs. The current legal services line-item funds Indian legal services programs at a level that is three to four times greater than the actual number of reservation-based individuals listed in the 1990 census. Since the inception of the Legal Services Corporation in 1974, it has been conceded by both Democrats and Republicans that effective legal services for Indians cannot be provided strictly on census-based numbers because: First, many tribes are not large enough to justify the funding of even one lawyer; and second, actual operating costs for Indian legal services attorneys are much higher than for other legal services programs because of geographic remoteness, and the availability and high costs of goods and services on reservations. Increased funding on a non-census basis helps overcome these and other factors, such as language and cultural barriers. Past studies have justified the need for increased funding for Indian legal services by as much as seven times the numbers that a straight Census-based formula would yield.

For the past 30 years, Indian legal services have become an integral part of this Nation's promise of equal access to justice. The elimination of the line item for Native American populations will deny justice to Native Americans in my State and across the country. I urge my colleagues in the eventual conference on this measure, and on the appropriate authorizing committees to closely consider the ramifications of this poorly thought out provision.

#### MY VISION FOR AMERICA

**HON. WILLIAM M. "MAC" THORNBERRY**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, July 28, 1995*

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, Each year the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and its Ladies Auxiliary conduct the Voice of Democracy broadcast scriptwriting contest. This past year more than 126,000 secondary school students participated in the contest competing for the 54 national scholarships totaling more than \$109,000, which was distributed among the winners. The contest theme this year was "My Vision For America."

Ms. Erin Kenyon of my district was the State winner for Texas. The following is her winning script:

#### MY VISION FOR AMERICA

We all have a vision of America. Thomas Jefferson saw independence. Abraham Lincoln envisioned unity. Susan B. Anthony pictured women voting. Martin Luther King, Jr. foresaw a land of equality for all races. My vision for American isn't too different from theirs—I see a diverse nation, unified by a people with a generous spirit, who are willing to be a beacon of hope and democracy to the whole world.

Throughout history, Americans have faced and met the demands of life in the frontier with a patriotic zeal. Early in America, pioneers were faced with the challenge of build-

ing their homes and barns quickly to avoid the ravages of winter. Instead of each man taking on this incredible task by himself, people decided that by working together more could be accomplished. In much the same way, my vision of America has citizens working together for the betterment of our country.

The rallying cry of the American revolution, "United we stand, divided we fall," can be a guide for us in solving the problems which now plague American society. A man in California who was tired of the gang graffiti sprawled on walls across his neighborhood formed a group to paint over it. Volunteers help with youth programs such as boy's and girl's clubs and scouting which provide interests to keep kids off the streets. Volunteers across the country devote their time to teaching the illiterate how to read. These are just a few examples of how ordinary Americans can make an extraordinary difference in the lives of their fellow countrymen. In my vision, every person would see citizenship as a shared responsibility. We must not only be a United States, but a United people.

Webster's dictionary defines patriotism as love, support, and defense of one's country. It seems sometimes as if Americans become so torn with their difference that they lose sight of what really matters. That diversity doesn't have to divide us; it can be the glue that binds us to our goals and dreams.

The same is true for our government. Our representatives should realize that the national interest comes before political partisanship. Political campaigns should be based on constructive ideas, not destructive mudslinging.

In my vision racial and political differences aren't inevitable obstacles, but solvable problems. Conquering them will lead us to a more perfect union.

Finally, my vision is for America to be a world leader. Now is not the time to be isolationists. We must maintain our military superiority in order not to use it. For with that very strength, we have the power to promote world peace—economically and diplomatically. Like President Woodrow Wilson said, "America cannot be an ostrich with its head in the sand." Shrinking from our responsibility leaves the rest of the world with nowhere to turn. We should be a role model for countries throughout the world to follow.

In my vision of America, hope and opportunity exist for each and every one of us. We owe much to those whose visions of America have changed our lives—Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony, Martin Luther King, Jr. and many other patriots. My vision is for America to be a country of patriotic people, united in being a model of democracy and hope to the world with the courage to look unafraid towards the future.

**AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES, APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996**

SPEECH OF

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, July 28, 1995*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1976) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and related agencies programs for the fiscal year