

My uncle, the Late Robert F. Kennedy extolled the importance of creativity in our children's lives. "Too often, the arts have been thought of as nice, but rather non-essential part of education. When we give our children the chance to explore and develop their own creativity, we encourage the sensitivity and ability for self-expression that is so crucial a part of the well-informed, well-educated person."

I commend the Council for Art Education for creating Youth Art Month and for its efforts to instill in America an appreciation for art and art education. I sincerely hope that our children and future generations will cherish and celebrate art and the enormous contribution its forms have made to this great Nation.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DAN WHITTLE ON THE SUCCESS OF WHITTLEMANIA

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 29, 1996

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the tremendous contribution Dan Whittle has made to the success of Habitat for Humanity in Rutherford County.

In 1993, Dan and the community joined together to host a bean dinner to raise money for cancer patient Ben Webber's family. Ben Webber left a wife and child when he succumbed to cancer. His lifelong dream of owning a house was realized for his family through the money Dan and Habitat raised. The Webber dinner was the forerunner of what has come to be known as "Whittlemania."

This year, the Second Annual Whittlemania for Habitat was a tremendous success. Demos' and Toot's restaurants served over 1,000 meals and owners Jim and Doris Demos donated the \$6 ticket price to Habitat. Whittlemania made more than \$7,000, quadrupling last year's results.

The community pulled together, and the following businesses and individuals made Whittlemania happen: Demos' and Toot's restaurants, the Daily News Journal, Whittlemania chairman Darwin Colston, Garden Plaza Hotel, the Printing Department, city employees of Smyrna and Murfreesboro, Tennessee General Services Commissioner Larry Haynes, Fant Smith and Outdoor Communication, and Dan's wife, Pat.

Dan is a reporter and columnist for the Daily News Journal, a Murfreesboro newspaper. In his February 8th column on Whittlemania, he says, "It is mind-boggling and heartwarming personally to have a community-wide, charitable, fund-raising event named for you and for that, I am thankful. I love this community that cares so much for people."

Well, Dan, Rutherford County is thankful to you. Its people know how much you care. You have shared your personal story of homelessness with us, but more than that, you have reached out, time and time again, to help friends and strangers. It has been said that the success of a man can be gauged by how many lives he's touched. Congratulations on your success and the success of Whittlemania.

BALANCE THE BUDGET

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 29, 1996

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, President Clinton has proven time and time again that he is big Government's little buddy. He is a tax and spend liberal though his rhetoric would have the American people believe otherwise.

My Republican colleagues and I have a proven track record when it comes to our commitment to downsize Government and the Federal deficit. To date, the Appropriations Committee has cut \$22 billion and terminated 175 wasteful programs and we continue to make real cuts that are necessary to put us on the glidepath to a balanced budget.

The President keeps telling the American people that he wants a balanced budget too. He says the era of big Government is over. Well, we have seen no evidence of it. In fact, he is now asking Congress for an additional \$8 billion in social spending without trying to find savings elsewhere to help offset their cost. Any family that has ever tried to balance their own budget knows it will not balance if you keep spending in every direction and not cutting somewhere.

Mr. Speaker, we have the opportunity to make a down payment on a balanced budget and the future of our children. We have the opportunity to make Government smaller and more cost effective we will do what is right for America's hard-working taxpayers. The President must do the same.

THE CARIBBEAN BASIN INITIATIVE

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 29, 1996

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, One of the legislative accomplishments of which I am most proud is my association with the passage of the Caribbean Basin Initiative [CBI] in 1982. The CBI was truly bipartisan legislation, introduced by President Ronald Reagan and embraced by the Democratic Congressional leadership led by former Chairman Dan Rostenkowski of the House Committee on Ways and Means.

The CBI has been truly a success story, a great example of what President Reagan called friends helping friends in the letter that he sent me after signing the legislation to provide our Caribbean neighbors with greater access to our market in the United States. I don't believe that we fully appreciated at that time how much mutual benefit there would be over the years in CBI. Now the Caribbean has become a significant purchaser of goods and services from the United States, helping to create jobs here at home.

The CBI has been responsible for a decade of unparalleled growth in trade between the United States and the Caribbean, acting as a catalyst for exports, investment and employment creation in the economies of the United States and the Caribbean. As the growth process in CBI economies has been strengthened by increased United States investment in increased purchases of United States goods

and services. Each dollar spent by the Caribbean generates 60 cents per dollar of United States exports. Jamaica, for example, purchases more than 65 percent of its imports from the United States. Trinidad and Tobago purchases more than half of its imports from the United States.

In 1991, the last year prior to the embargo, Haiti purchased 61 percent of its imports from the United States. Restoring the economy of the new Haiti, therefore, is not a matter of charity or foreign assistance, it is a policy that is rooted in the realization that there is mutual self-interest for Haiti and the United States in making the Haitian economy viable. The Caribbean is a significant market for United States exports and these exports produce jobs in the United States.

Ambassador Bernal, in his editorial, addresses this reality and challenges us to keep the United States-Caribbean trade relationship vital by providing parity to access to the United States markets to that provided by our trading partners in NAFTA. As one of the original cosponsors of the Caribbean parity legislation which was reported out of the Ways and Means Committee Subcommittee on Trade last year, I am looking forward to working with Chairman CRANE and the administration to achieve its passage in the present Congress. [From the Wall Street Journal, Mar. 22, 1996]

A JAMAICAN'S CASE FOR TRADE PARITY WITH NAFTA

(By Richard L. Bernal)

U.S.-Caribbean commercial links have generated American jobs at a rate of nearly 17,000 a year since the mid-1980s. U.S. overall exports to the Caribbean have expanded by more than 100%, and Caribbean exports to the U.S. have climbed by roughly 50%. By the end of 1994, combined U.S.-Caribbean trade stood at \$24 billion.

The 24 nations of the Caribbean Basin—among them Jamaica, Trinidad, the Dominican Republic and all Central American countries—have enjoyed these strong economic and trade relations during the past dozen years largely through the mechanism of the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). But recent changes in U.S. trade law have put the long-term viability of this relationship in jeopardy. Under the North American Free Trade Agreement, for example, Mexican exports now enjoy access to the U.S. market exceeding that accorded to Caribbean exports. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade implementing act has exacerbated these effects by phasing out a program that regulated the importation of textile and apparel products from all countries.

As a result, Caribbean countries are now forced to compete in their largest market at a substantial competitive disadvantage. In the two years that Nafta has been in effect, there has been a steady diversion of trade and investment away from the Caribbean Basin nations. In the textile and apparel sector alone, Mexico has displaced other Caribbean countries. It is now the single largest source of U.S. garment imports from this hemisphere. Such diversion has begun to erode U.S.-Caribbean trade relations, weakening the employment base of hundreds of thousands of Americans who depend upon strong U.S.-Caribbean trade links.

During a visit with Central American leaders last month, Secretary of State Warren Christopher announced that President Clinton will include in his fiscal year 1997 budget request a key proposal to strengthen U.S.-Caribbean Basin economic relations. Coming on the heels of Cuba shooting down two unarmed civilian planes. Mr. Christopher's announcement underscores the compelling U.S.