

During the 1950's, Father Fred was assigned to various churches in Michigan including Sacred Heart in Mt. Pleasant, St. Joseph's Church in Manistee, St. Michael's in Muskegon, and Our Lady of Assumption in Rothbury. After completing one year at the Carmelite Monastery in Traverse City in 1960, Father Fred was then assigned to the Traverse City Regional Psychiatric Hospital where he remained from 1959 until the hospital closed in 1989.

For the past six years, Father Fred has served as Pastor of St. Joseph's parish in Mapleton, MI. It has been at St. Joseph's Parish where Father Fred has done his best work. As pastor, he has made numerous physical improvements to the parish and provided accessibility to the facilities for the physically impaired.

Father Fred has touched many, many people over the years, but no one will question the tremendous influence he has had on and the love he has for children. He has baptized over 200 children in his last six years at St. Joseph's and truly considers them to be the lifeblood of the church and her future. The children of the parish, like the adults there and elsewhere, consider Father Fred to be more than their priest: they think of him as their friend.

Father Fred has truly made his mark on society with his extensive work and effort on behalf of the needy. After the hospital closed in 1989, he founded the Father Fred Foundation, an organization that provides food and clothing to those in need. The foundation has grown from what was a very small office to what is now a large building with over 100 volunteers. Fortunately for the foundation, he will continue to serve as its director after his retirement.

Father Fred reminds us every Thanksgiving that it is better "to serve than to receive" by hosting dinner at one of the area's finest restaurants, not for his parishioners, but for the needy. Father Fred recruits elected government leaders, community and business leaders as servers for his guests.

Father Fred has been recognized by numerous organizations for his work, including the Traverse City Chamber of Commerce who presented him in 1991 with the Distinguished Service Award. He is also the recipient of the Sara Hardy Memorial Award in recognition of his work on behalf of human rights.

In the book of Hebrews it states, "one does not take this honor on his own initiative, but only when called upon by God, as Aaron was * * * you are a priest forever." Father Fred has been called by God to be a spiritual leader and a humanitarian and has fulfilled each of those callings now and forever.

Mr. Speaker, Father Fred will be honored at a retirement dinner on August 11, 1996 at the Grand Traverse Resort in Traverse City, Michigan. At that time, past and present parishioners, friends and family will thank him for all that he has done for them and so many others. On behalf of northern Michigan, the entire State and this House, I thank Father Fred for his contributions to so many causes and extend to him best wishes for an enjoyable retirement from the church and for many years to come as Director of the Father Fred Foundation.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE
EMPOWERMENT ACT OF 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 1, 1996

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 123) to amend title 4, United States Code, to declare English as the official language of the Government of the United States.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I stand in strong opposition to H.R. 123, the English Language Empowerment Act and in support of the Serrano English Plus substitute. H.R. 123 is devious, unconstitutional, and unnecessary.

Supporters of this legislation say that it simply declares English as the official language. I contend that that is not true and that that bill's reach is far-reaching. Section 163(b) of the legislation states that "No person should be denied services, assistance, or facilities either directly or indirectly provided by the Federal Government solely because the person communicates in English." H.R. 123 provides an entitlement for those that speak English and permits citizens to sue. But what does that really mean? Well, at federally sponsored programs or benefits would have to be in English. If the Federal Government directly or indirectly supports opera, community cultural festivals, and even sports events like the Olympics, taxpayers are entitled to receive all federally sponsored services in English or they can sue.

The English-only requirement also would place restrictions on Internet communication. Because the Federal Government operates Internet servers, a Federal Web site that links into multilingual or non-English pages would indirectly provide services in other languages—depriving citizens of their right to English services—and would subject the Federal Government to frivolous lawsuits.

Telecommunications and broadcasting are not exempt from the bill's provisions. The Federal Government regulates telecommunications and grants, sells and regulates broadcasting licenses. Under the requirement of this bill, the Government would be prohibited from granting licenses to foreign language stations without the threat of a suit.

Even law enforcement could be handicapped by H.R. 123. While non-English languages may be used for reasons of public safety and to protect the rights of victims of crime or criminal defendants, what about the work that is done where neither the criminal nor the victim is identifiable? Much of the investigative work done by the FBI, DEA, and ISN falls into this category.

The substitute I will offer is the modified text of a bill of which I am the primary sponsor, House Concurrent Resolution 83, the English Plus resolution. It states the Government's policy should be to encourage English as our common language, to empower its citizens by encouraging multilingualism, and to promote English proficiency through educational opportunities; but also to avoid infringing on indigenous languages; and to oppose measures that place undue burdens on one's ability to obtain services, representation or protection from the Federal Government because of limited English proficiency.

English Plus maintains that the primary language of the United States is English and that all members of our society should recognize its importance. It proclaims that our Nation's strength lies in its pursuit of justice, opportunity, and diversity. It is unnecessary to legislate what we have established by custom and tradition. Clearly there's no threat to our common language. According to the 1990 census report, 97 percent of the American population speaks English. Of those who speak Spanish at home, 80 percent indicated that they speak English "well" or "very well."

English Plus recognizes that multilingualism is an asset, not a liability to our competitiveness in our global economy. Multilingualism encourages global competitiveness and better international relations. In fact, now more than ever Americans are learning foreign languages. According to a report by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, there has been a 5-percent increase in the number of high school students who take foreign language classes and more college students are taking an interest in foreign language classes.

We are a nation of immigrants and have built our culture upon that diversity. In fact, the authors of the Constitution drafted the document in both English and German. During World War II, the Korean war, and the Vietnam war, the military used speakers of native American languages to communicate in a sort of unbreakable code. You can see an indication of the history of diversity in this nation if you look around at the names of cities like Los Angeles which is Spanish for "the angels" and Pueblo, CO, which is "City, Red" in English and the Rio Grande, "Big River," one of our natural resources. We have always been a nation with diverse languages and learning other languages should be encouraged.

My substitute opposes the imposition of unconstitutional language policies on the Federal Government and the American people. In 1923, the Supreme Court declared that restrictionist language policies like those in H.R. 123 were unconstitutional. In addition, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals reaffirmed that view by nullifying Arizona's English-only policy. While we want everyone to be able to be proficient in English, we must not employ measures that are inconsistent with the Constitution's guarantees of freedom of speech, representative democracy, due process, and equal protection under the law.

The Serrano substitute supports the view that our Nation's strength lies in its pursuit of justice, freedom and opportunity. English-only supporters say that the common bond of our Nation is our language. Nothing can be further from the truth. Democracy—not religious, ethnic, or linguistic uniformity—is what holds this country together. Extremist language policies like H.R. 123 are devious and racist, uniting people behind misplaced patriotism. Just think of the hardship that it would place on athletes and tourists at the Olympics if services and information were only provided in English. Inhumane policies like those found in H.R. 123, will only encourage divisiveness and resentment and delay full participation of all people in our society.

The Serrano substitute promotes the view that English proficiency is achieved through educational opportunities. Denying services and information will not help one single person learn English. Immigrants and new arrivals

want to learn English—I cannot stress that enough. Studies indicate that current immigrants are learning English faster than they did 100 years ago. In California, classes operate 24 hours a day and, in New York, some immigrants must wait up to 18 months to take classes to learn English. In response to that, Republicans in the House passed the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill which cut bilingual education, the program that teaches children information in their language and gradually makes the transition into completely English language classes. The House also cut the adult education program which provides funds for English as a Second Language classes.

The English Plus substitute maintains that services, information, and government protection should not be denied because of limited English proficiency. Among H.R. 123's provisions is the repeal of bilingual voting ballot requirement. It infringes on citizen's ability to receive information about elections and ballots in a language that they are comfortable with and violates the equal protection clause of the Constitution. In 1993, when I served as chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, I authored legislation to broaden the requirements under section 203 of the Voting Rights Act, which apply to bilingual voting ballots, which Congress passed with bipartisan support. Even Presidential hopeful Bob Dole supported it. Under H.R. 123 citizens from American territories like Guam and Puerto Rico—who are born U.S. citizens—would be exempt from the bill only while they live in those jurisdictions. Once they move to the States, as many of my constituents did, they will not be able to receive information or services from the Government in Spanish.

My substitute maintains the belief that our democratic process demands the highest level of speech protection. As Members of Congress, it is essential that we be able to communicate, whether in writing or orally, with constituents, colleagues, and other government officials. It is not uncommon to receive requests for information in other languages. H.R. 123 would literally prohibit representatives from communicating in writing through correspondence, press releases, and newsletters, unless it is in English.

While I think that both our bills aim to strengthen our country, the English Plus substitute empowers by encouraging opportunity and diversity while H.R. 123 imposes divisive and restrictive policies that infringe on constitutional rights. My bill affirms that English is the common language of the United States and encourages citizens to learn it. I urge my colleagues to support the English Plus substitute and if it fails, vote "no" on H.R. 123, the English Language Empowerment Act.

HONORING RAUL S. VARGAS

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay special tribute to a lifelong friend and colleague, Mr. Raul S. Vargas, director of the University of Southern California Mexican American Alumni Association as we celebrate 25 years of his valuable

service to Hispanic students pursuing a higher level of education.

Born on May 21, 1939 in Lordsburg, NM, to a family of coppermine workers, Mr. Vargas lost his father at the age of 2 in a tragic underground mining accident. His mother remarried and in 1944, his family resettled in a low-income complex in Miami, AZ—the place where he and his five siblings were raised. After his early years of schooling in Miami, his family relocated to San Manuel, AZ, in 1957. While in high school, he played the trombone, served as student body vice president, and was also a star basketball player for the Miami Vandals. After graduating high school, he moved on to Arizona State University where he received a degree in business administration in 1961.

Shortly after graduating from ASU, he served a 3-year tour of duty with the U.S. Army in Berlin. He returned to Arizona State University during 1964 to complete his teaching credentials. He obtained his teaching credentials in 1966 and began a distinguished career teaching in math and Spanish at the junior high school level in Ontario, CA.

In 1970, Mr. Vargas witnessed the Vietnam antiwar demonstrations and the East Los Angeles riots which inspired him to pursue social causes at the community level. His passion for fostering better relations between civic leaders and community members led him to work at the Rio Hondo Area Action Council [RHAAC] where he handled community action programs. However, his yearning to teach and work one-on-one with students led him back to the education sector where in 1971, he joined the faculty and staff of the University of Southern California.

It was at USC where he began working at the department of student affairs and services as director of the USC Mexican American Alumni Association. Mr. Vargas began primarily as an academic adviser providing guidance and counsel to students, who were primarily first-time college graduates of their respective families. He found these college students to be talented and hardworking who were often hampered by the financial constraints of a college education. Recognizing the impact of such constraints, he concluded that this was the source of high college dropout rates for Hispanic students.

Realizing the issue was not being addressed, Mr. Vargas decided to do something about the situation. In 1974, he set up a series of meetings with USC alumni, faculty, business and civic leaders, and students which established the foundation of the USC Mexican American Alumni Association Scholarship Fund. Today, the USC-MAAA Scholarship Fund exceeds \$5.0 million dollars and has assisted over 3,500 students at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Because of his determination and hard work, Mr. Vargas did much more than fulfill his desire to help young students pursuing higher education—he committed his life to it and has changed peoples lives forever.

It was at Arizona State University where I met and shared a room with Mr. Vargas. Gradually, we developed a friendship that has grown and strengthened throughout the years on both a professional and personal level. As a former teacher myself, I commend Mr. Raul Vargas for having the vision to change individual lives, the courage to make his dreams a reality, and the commitment to follow through

with this plan for the past 25 years. I commend Raul Vargas for his hard work, determination, and invaluable contribution to our Nation's youth.

THE ECONOMY IS STRONG AND GROWING

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, this morning we were going to hold a hearing of the Joint Economic Committee to hear the July jobs report. It was canceled. And that's a shame—because the President has an economic record any President could be proud of.

After 3½ years of President Clinton, the economy continues to grow stronger and stronger. We've created more than 10 million new jobs—a faster rate of job growth than under any Republican administration since the 1920's. In our global economy, job creating exports have increased by one-third—up \$162 billion. And today's job report, issued by the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that we added 193,000 more jobs in July.

We have the highest rate of new business incorporations since World War II, with the Commerce Department reporting that our Nation's economy grew at an extremely healthy 4.2-percent annual rate from April through June, and with the lowest combined rates of unemployment, inflation, and mortgage rates since the 1960's.

Best of all for both working Americans and our fixed-income retirees under President Clinton we've sustained this growth while keeping inflation stable and low.

Mortgage rates are the lowest they've been in 30 years. The result: Millions of Americans have been able to purchase their first home, giving us the highest homeownership rate in 15 years.

Mr. Speaker, the current issue of Money Magazine reports: "The majority of Americans are better off on most pocketbook issues after 3½ years under [President] Clinton, who's presided over the kind of economic progress any Republican would be proud to post."

Barron's reports "In short, Clinton's economic record is remarkable. Clinton also rightfully boasted that, 'our economy is the healthiest that it has been in 30 years.'"

This record is no mere happenstance. It is the result of tough decisions. Under President Clinton, the deficit has been cut to \$117 billion this year—the lowest deficit as a percentage of GDP of any major economy—and less than half of what it was when he took office.

In fact, were it not for the interest on the debt accumulated during the Reagan and Bush years, we would be running a surplus. Alan Greenspan said earlier this year that the deficit reduction in President Clinton's 1993 Economic Plan was "an unquestioned factor in contributing to the improvement in economic activity that occurred thereafter."

On that other side, some are still talking about hundreds of billions of dollars in tax cuts for the wealthiest. President Clinton has proven that responsible deficit reduction that maintains our investments in research and development, in our cities, our kids, our schools, and infrastructure can work.