

RED RIBBON WEEK IN COLUMBUS,
GEORGIA

HON. MAC COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 1998

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, recently, I attended the "kickoff event" for Red Ribbon Week in Columbus, Georgia. Red Ribbon Week highlights the combined efforts of public and business groups to fight drugs throughout the community, but particularly in our schools. The event brings together and encourages participants in this outstanding effort.

This year, Mr. Jack Pezold was chosen to be the keynote speaker. Mr. Pezold has been an extremely active member of the Columbus community and has set an example which should be an inspiration to young people.

Although Mr. Pezold has been very successful in his business endeavors, it is his altruistic activities for which he will longer be appreciated and remembered. Mr. Pezold has been a major contributor to the "Drug Free You and Me" program in the Muscogee County schools for many years. He also has contributed his time and plane to fly for the "Angel Flights" program, an organization which flies sick children and their families to different cities to receive medical treatment. In addition, he is Honorary Chairman of the Childrens' Miracle Network. He is involved with the Partners in Education Program, and this year purchased a portable classroom for the school, in addition to the other things he does for the school throughout the year. Mr. Pezold is extremely active and supportive in the maintenance of the Ronald McDonald House of West Georgia, of which he is Chairman.

It was because of his concern over the contents of broadcast programming for children that Mr. Pezold bought his first television station. In the ensuing years, he worked to provide a high quality of viewing from this media which has such an impact on growing children. Although he no longer owns his stations, he continues his efforts in support of actions and programs which will build character and integrity in our young people . . . and adults as well. Therefore, it was particularly appropriate for Jack Pezold to provide the keynote address to the adults and young people involved in "Red Ribbon Week." Because his remarks which uphold the need for character, honor and integrity are so pertinent to our debate in Congress today, I submit them for the review of my colleagues. I hope we will all keep these standards in mind as we work to uphold the trust which have been placed in us by the American public.

REMARKS BY MR. JACK PEZOLD, RED RIBBON WEEK, COLUMBUS, GA.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this morning. First I want to congratulate each of you for your part in kicking off this Special Week, Red Ribbon Week. There is a genuine spirit of partnership here in Columbus, between the public and business sectors that is bridged, to large degree by our Chamber of Commerce. I want to commend you for that in helping to deal with the scourge of drugs in our community. Each of you understand the importance of healthy lives and lifestyles. We are gathered here to celebrate, highlight and recommit ourselves to what we believe to be the standard for ourselves, our families, and our community.

I think it is good that this body of leaders have individually and collectively committed to do something about our problem, on a local basis in a positive way. These are the people that stand for what is right, even if it isn't cool.

How did we get where we are today, we ask. All too often we have stood back as the experts, the secular humanists, who believe that we are our own God, who have told us throughout sixties and seventies that we are each islands, that we should be free to do whatever feels good, and if it doesn't feel good, do it until it does. Let me tell you about those kind of experts. These are the intellectual elite who denigrate our heritage and spiritual underpinnings as old fashioned, out of date and out of step with the current politically correct thinking. These are the Hollywood Icons that have been created as prophets by Godless, shameless, money mongers who would sell their mother to Satan for money. They are masters of the glitz and the glamour and deceit. They fill our television and movie screens with the images of lifestyles and behaviors, always without consequences, that feeds our prideful spirits. A 30 minute or 2 hour episode of mind numbing violence, sex, drugs, alcohol and any other form of outrageous behavior imaginable and unimaginable.

I know from which I speak. On May 1 of this year I sold 2 television stations. I bought that first station because I felt strongly about the content of children's programming. I regret that I was unable to do more to influence the direction of that programming, but I was able to do some things. My point is that I have seen the inside of this industry and while there are many fine individuals, they are on a slippery slope. This culture is cultivated by some of the richest and by virtue of their industry, the most powerful people. Their power rests in their ability to shape the huge entertainment industry, even our daily newscasts. They fill our children's minds with experiences so incredibly graphic, they could pass for real.

How in the world can this happen, that our values and ideals are sacrificed without insurrection right before our very eyes? How did the Adolf Hitler come to power? Both are just as insidious and pervasive. Both promised a break from the past, that because of who we are as human beings, we have a divine right to a special heritage. Parents and the conventional leadership are preventing us from achieving the divine utopian place of happiness, and prosperity where we deserve to be. Not once have I heard the Hollywood Money Mongers mention consequences for the lifestyle influence they exerted on our lives. Never once did Adolf Hitler mention to the German people the destruction and ruin that his quest for power would bring upon them. The result is millions and millions of men, women, and children lost their very lives so that one man's greed could be satisfied. The money Mongers are costing lives as well, sacrificing the souls of our children for lining their pockets with absolutely no thought given to the long term consequences of their greed. Just a few days ago, I read where Clarence Thomas asked an elementary class what they would do if a monster were trying to suck out their brains. The answer the kids gave was to throw their TV in the dumpster! Perhaps they know better than we!!

The result is that we now have all sorts of behavior being justified under the guise of It Doesn't Matter. I am here to tell you this morning that it does matter. It matters to the children, who are our future, who without love and attention and nurturing will grow up with the TV as their mentor. Have we forgotten that each of us is born on this

earth inherently ignorant, but with a phenomenal learning capacity for good or evil. But is it not true that good or simply "doing the right thing" requires some degree of pain and suffering. At times we must forfeit immediate gratification, making short term sacrifices for long term gain. But the Experts would have us believe that we can have it both ways. You can have it all. Just drink this, smoke that, say that, act this way and you will be cool and accepted and rich and powerful and beautiful and gifted and smart and admired and loved and all of the marvelous positive adjectives that our vocabulary can command.

The problem is, sooner or later, reality steps in. The world nor life itself in any way resembles the conjectures that we are led to believe are accurate. Remember a few years ago when the women's revolution came about. The word from the Experts was that you can have it all. Not only that, but having any less than a career was degrading. Mothers were degraded for staying at home to raise their children. That is not smart work. Put someone in your place at home and go out into the exciting life of the world. Children don't need mom's and dad's are totally irrelevant. Only recently has this theory been proven to be overblown and downright wrong. We now await the next version of social experiment that these Experts will impart on us, tearing apart our families, the very fabric of our society.

A few years ago, we were assured by these Experts, that ability mattered, not character. We now, as a result of our Expert engineered dumbing down, have our leaders deliberately lying to us, and telling us that It Doesn't Matter. We can have it all. We have a strong economy, everyone that wants a job can have one, we have a budget surplus, and we are at peace. As a result, a full majority of the population agree that this is OK. Because making us feel good far overshadows a little anomaly like lying! And their spin doctors nightly remind us that it doesn't matter, because everybody does it, and besides, where would we be if they were not our leaders. Besides,

These leaders are doing a good job! Imagine the arrogance. Ladies and Gentlemen, I submit to you this morning that the beginning of the end of all of the greatest civilizations that have ever inhabited this earth began with a lie. A lie, by their leaders, to the people in order to curry some form of favor or power or money to those leaders. How could they have not seen through this thin mask, you might ask? Because they, as we, are intoxicated with the visions of a glorious future where we are cool and accepted and rich and powerful and beautiful and gifted and smart and admired and loved and on and on. We need to be vigilant, not of the threats from outside, but from inside our own homes. We need to come together as one community, one family, committed to the good that God has ordained us for and stand up for rightness, what we know in our hearts to be right. Not the Expert Version of Rightness, for the long term good of our family, our community, our nation. We are the beacon to the world. We are the children of the poor, humble descendants of the immigrants who migrated here in search of a better future. Which of us would return to our forefathers native land in search of a better lifestyle and future? Our forefathers forsaked all that they had in their homeland in search of opportunity. God has chosen to bless this nation far beyond any riches accumulated by any civilization in history. These blessings are ours to use and multiply and safeguard and cherish for future generations. Or to squander on ourselves under the delusion of becoming cool and accepted and rich and powerful and beautiful and gifted and smart and admired and loved. . . .

The choice is ours. Our freedom demands the choice be made. We need to be bigger than our individual selves in the here and now and look at what is best for our children's future. What legacy are we going to leave for them, that we stood up for the Biblical standards of moral character, of right from wrong, of honesty, integrity, and righteousness and pass on this high threshold of absolute standards. Are we going to pass on to our children the slippery slope of a declin-

ing empire whose inhabitants are so consumed in themselves that they fail to recognize the worth of our heritage, the very moral fabric which sustains our freedom in this country. Can we long endure this slide? Is there not a bottom to every fall? Are there not consequences?

Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to challenge each of you today, to go out of this facility committed to embrace the faith of our forefathers and share the standards and ideals of

rightness with our children, grandchildren, students, employees, and co-workers. I truly believe that God will honor our efforts by blessing and rewarding us and our community. Your reward will surely be exceeded by many, many magnitudes, the small sacrifices which you have made. Thank you for the opportunity to be with you today and may God continue to bless you and your family.