

Whitman made "Livable New Jersey" the theme of her second and final inaugural address.

The most important strength of the Livable Communities movement is that it transcends even bipartisan politics. Over 200 local and state ballot initiatives faced voters this November from around the country signaling a new era of grassroots pressure to create more livable communities and to have government become a better partner in that effort. I would note that an overwhelming majority of those initiatives passed.

For some it is too easy to discount the Federal role, citing local control, fear of regulation or simply misreading history. The fact is the Federal Government has been a partner with local government and the private sector in shaping the landscape and building communities since the Federal Government first started taking land away from the native Americans, who were largely hunters and gatherers, and gave it to European farmers, who cut and burned the forests for farms.

Now that President Clinton and Vice President GORE have made Livable Communities a priority, raising new levels of interest, it is more important than ever that the problems of dysfunctional communities be addressed by we in Congress.

This movement brings together communities, large and small, rural and urban, inner city and suburb. This Congress has an historic opportunity to rise above partisanship and business as usual to work together to improve the quality of life of all Americans.

These proposals will not end up costing great sums of money; indeed, by and large, they will save money and create wealth. They are not going to put people at risk. They will indeed strengthen the lives of our communities and enrich them.

It does not require picking winners and losers. Livable Communities do not discriminate against one another, they reach out to include people. There is something in it for everyone.

During the work of the last Congress, on the ISTEPA reauthorization to create T-21, I used a scriptural reference found in Isaiah, 58:12. If anything, it is more applicable for the Livable Communities initiative.

Those from among you shall build the old waste places; you shall rise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.

In the weeks ahead, I will be suggesting simple, inexpensive steps that we can all take to make our communities safe, economically secure and healthy; from not having our communities held hostage to the whims of billionaire sports franchise owners, to making the Post Office obey local land use, planning and zoning codes and work with local communities before they make decisions that have the potential of tearing the heart out of historic small town America; to reforming flood in-

surance, to make it more cost effective and efficient.

It is time for us in Congress to heed the Prophet Isaiah and to be about this important work of making our communities more livable.

□ 1630

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas 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 Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

AMERICA'S LEADERS, PAST AND PRESENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I would like to highlight tonight the accomplishments of Jennifer Valoppi, a woman who has served as a wonderful example for teenage girls in my community of South Florida, and at the same time she has committed herself to her profession, rising to excellence within her chosen field as a television anchor.

In 1997 Jennifer conceived, created and founded what is now a very successful program in South Florida called Women of Tomorrow. She convinced her employer, NBC 6, to sponsor this wonderful, ambitious program that has helped so many teens who otherwise might not have successful role models to look up to.

"Women of Tomorrow" is structured in such a way that it pairs professional women in our South Florida area with teenage girls in order to improve their self-esteem, and it also provides guidance and nurturing in their lives. This fantastic program is designed to show young women the endless possibilities ahead of them as they embark on the beginning of their adult lives.

Mentors meet with small groups, usually no larger than 10 girls in a group, to discuss the girls' ambitions, their motivations, their positive attitudes, the achievement of their dreams, in addition to sharing personal stories of triumph and, of course, temporary setbacks and obstacles.

In addition to launching this wonderful organization devoted to teenage girls, Jennifer Valoppi is a multi-E Emmy award winning journalist who has twice been named "Best TV News Anchor." She inspires us with her dedication and her drive to improve the world around us.

Madam Speaker, Jennifer Valoppi has made a tremendous mark on our community. I applaud all of her efforts, and I hope that more women of South Florida get in touch with Jennifer and also become part of this teen mentoring program, Women of Tomorrow.

THE DANTE FASCELL NORTH-SOUTH CENTER

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, another leading citizen of our community unfortunately is no longer with us, and I would like to say a few words about this very unique individual.

In Latin there is a phrase "sui generis" which refers to something unique and rare. I can think of no other way to describe our former South Florida colleague, Dante Fascell. Dante was a man of vision and of skill, whose intellect and political sense were instrumental in the passage of countless foreign policy measures throughout his tenure in this House, and in particular during the 14 years that he had the great privilege of chairing the Committee on International Relations which was then called the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Dante Fascell was a vital figure in the fight for democracy in my native homeland of Cuba, in all of Central America. He authored programs such as the Cuban Refugees Assistance Act, and he advocated the founding and was successful in establishing Radio and TV Marti. The freedom fighters throughout our Western Hemisphere always knew that they enjoyed the support of Chairman Dante Fascell because he not only fought to protect the national security interests of his country, our beloved United States, but he was unwavering in his efforts to help those who are struggling to regain their rights as freedom-loving human beings, as citizens of the world, and as brothers and sisters in the greater family of nations.

Dante Fascell understood the idiosyncracies, the internal political dynamics, the historical context, and the global developments which impacted our region, especially the North-South relations, and for this reason he spearheaded and was successful in the creation of the North-South Center in his hometown of Miami and his beloved university, the University of Miami. He did this in order to promote an even greater understanding of the issues, in order to move the discussions toward a proactive solution-based approach.

It is appropriate that the father of the North-South Center, the man whose vision and perseverance helped make this dream a reality, be honored by having the North-South Center carry his name and the University of Miami, and in this fashion the legacy of Dante Fascell will continue to inspire future generations of leaders.

So I am honored today to say some words of praise to a man who is no longer with us, Dante Fascell, but also to praise today's leaders who are very much with us, like Jennifer Valoppi,