

Many people across the Gulf Coast are still working hard to rebuild their homes, businesses and lives following last year's hurricanes. While the freedom to protest is one of the foundations of American democracy, it is important to see the effect that it can have. Today, I rise to ask that this letter be entered into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD in its entirety:

MARCHERS HURT SPIRIT, GOOD WILL

"It does not take a majority to prevail . . . but rather an irate, tireless minority, keen on setting brush fires of freedom in the minds of men."—Samuel Adams

I like to think of myself as part of that minority to whom Adams was referring. I know that some grow tired of my constant rant about freedom, about supporting this country and our leaders. Yet, I continue. Why?

Things like the peace march that left Mobile recently is one reason. When I heard about that march, I was in Gulfport, Miss., helping a man put his ceiling back in his house after it was hit by a pine tree during Hurricane Katrina.

A 60-foot pine tree will break any roof on the Gulf Coast. Sixty misguided, self-serving marchers were trying to break the good will and spirit of a people who have been through tragedy.

As I held the piece of drywall up for my friend to nail in, he asked me this: "I wonder what those marchers have done to help people rebuild here on the Gulf Coast." That struck me. What have they done?

As they marched along the road, being photographed and reveling in their notoriety, thousands of people were out there, rebuilding the Gulf Coast. And those soft-headed fabricators of veracity marched on.

As those people marched along the road, having their pictures taken by news photographers, all us old dumb guys were in the background. Black and white, Democrat and Republican, religious and not, we were repairing things, cleaning up, and making this a better place to live.

And those foot soldiers of fabrication marched on, planting their perfidious propaganda with each step. I pray that their crop will fail.—WILLIAM T. WALKER, Theodore, Alabama

HONORING MATT VALENTI NCAA WRESTLING CHAMPION

HON. CURT WELDON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, it is a special honor to recognize Matt Valenti, a student athlete from the University of Pennsylvania, who recently won the NCAA wrestling championship. Penn's sports history records need updating now to include Matt as one of only three wrestlers to have achieved this distinction as national champion. All three wrestlers are bound together by their high level of motivation and their devotion to the time-honored virtues of hard work and sacrifice.

We are all aware of the competitive nature and demanding rigors of this sport. Matt's achievements have set a new benchmark for excellence in this sport. The following statistics speak for themselves and place Matt in an elite category:

He won five consecutive matches against the nation's best wrestlers in the 2006 NCAA

Championships to win the national title at 133 lbs.

He showed courage and determination in reversing and riding Chris Fleegeer of Purdue University to win the national final 3-2.

He accomplished his title by beating the tournament's second and third-seeded wrestlers and a former national runner-up.

He had two pins in five matches at the NCAA Championships.

He showed excellence and outstanding skill by being taken down only once and reversed once in his five matches.

He became only the third national champion in the 102-year history of Penn wrestling.

He led his team to score the most points in an NCAA Championship in team history.

He is a two-time All-American, in 2004 and 2006.

On the day Matt won the NCAA Championship, the pressure on him was immense. The way he wrestled his way to the championship is a testament to his grace under pressure, his good sportsmanship, and most importantly, his example as a role model for youth that make him special to not only to wrestling fans in Pennsylvania, but to everyone who pursues the American dream.

Finally, I would be remiss, if I did not recognize the extraordinary effort and commitment of Head Coach Zeke Jones who inspires and motivates the true grit and discipline so necessary on the mats. His personal commitment to excellence has served the University of Pennsylvania well. We share his pride in Matt Valenti's tremendous success as NCAA Champion and look to Matt to take us to the 2008 Olympics.

CONSUMER CANCELLATION FAIRNESS ACT

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, consumers are currently exposed to difficult cancellation policies for service subscriptions that are more costly and burdensome than continuing the service and paying the annual or monthly fee.

When consumers sign up for a service, they are often told that renewal occurs through automatic charges to their credit cards. When consumers decide to cancel, they run into difficulties, such as long distance phone calls with long hold times, all at the expense of the consumer.

To combat such abusive business practices, I have introduced the Consumer Cancellation Fairness Act.

My bill would require businesses to permit their customers to cancel subscription services in the same manner and by the same means they use to subscribe to such services.

If one click on a Web site or a toll-free call is all it takes to sign up for a service, then one click or a toll-free call should be enough to cancel.

I strongly urge this House to swiftly consider and pass the Consumer Cancellation Fairness Act to protect consumers from further abuse.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. AND MRS. WILLIE THOMAS PONCY ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Willie Thomas Pouncy and Mrs. Lucile Pouncy on the occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary, which began on April 21, 1956, at Rock Elvy Baptist Church in Shady Grove, Alabama.

Mr. Pouncy is a respected member of his church and community. He has served faithfully as a deacon at Rock Elvy Baptist Church since 1954. In 1952, Mr. Pouncy was drafted in the U.S. Army, where he served during the Korean War. Upon completion of his tour of duty, he went on to own and run a small farm in Goshen, Alabama, and work on the railroad in Waycross, Georgia. He also worked for Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees for 19 years. Mr. Pouncy worked diligently to set an example to his seven sons as to what a husband and father should be, and he taught his seven daughters what traits are important in a husband. All the while, Mr. Pouncy had several admirers but none as important as his 14 children and his wife, Lucile.

Mrs. Pouncy was born Lucile Tucker in Shady Grove, Alabama. She is the embodiment of a God-fearing woman. She has always emphasized the importance of God, family, and education. Mrs. Pouncy served Rock Elvy Baptist Church as a secretary and is an usher, board member and deaconess. She managed a household of 14 children while her husband was away with work. She always made sure the homework was completed, chores finished, and Sunday school lessons comprehended. Mrs. Pouncy mastered the art of rearing with a stern will but a compassionate heart. She was not only a mother to her own children, but she served as a second mother to many of the children in the community.

I know Alabama and even our nation have benefited from the union of Mr. and Mrs. Pouncy. Among their 14 children, 32 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren, there are two sons and two grandsons that have served in the recent war on terror. Additionally, they have raised: a social worker, several engineers, a bank president, a counselor, a minister, numerous business professionals, and most important to me . . . my director of constituent services.

Their 14 children: Willie Dean, Willie Thomas, Jr., Claudie Frank, Sharon (deceased), Linda, Michael, Lisha, Winfred, James, Kathy, Salena, Tyrone, Errical and Eric would like me to pass on their word of appreciation to their parents for the example they set, encouragement given, and yes, even for the discipline administered.

Mr. Speaker, in these times it is refreshing to know a family that is committed to the values and outstanding morals that Mr. and Mrs. Willie Thomas Pouncy have encouraged in their marriage and family. I have no doubt that this marriage symbolizes the strength of character and love of God that every American should emulate. Congratulations to Mr. and

Mrs. Pouncy on their 50th Wedding Anniversary—the world is a better place because of their contributions.

FAILURE OF “PLAN COLOMBIA”

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the following article detailing the complete failure of “Plan Colombia” into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. As the article points out, despite more than 4 billion dollars being sent to Colombia to fight the “war on drugs,” the coca crop grew by 21 percent last year. After six years of massive wealth transfers from U.S. taxpayers to the Colombian government, not only has no progress been made, but in fact things are getting worse. Unfortunately, with the way things are done in Washington, this failure of “Plan Colombia” will likely result in calls for even more money to be tossed in the black hole of the drug war. It would be far better to learn from our mistakes and abandon the failed “Plan Colombia.”

[From the Houston Chronicle, April 16, 2006]

COCA CROP JUMPS DESPITE U.S. AID

(By John Otis)

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA.—In a blow to the United States’ anti-drug campaign here, which cost more than \$4 billion, new White House estimates indicate that Colombia’s coca crop expanded by nearly 21 percent last year.

Figures released late Friday by the Office of National Drug Control Policy indicate Colombian farmers last year grew 355,680 acres of coca, the raw material for cocaine. That represents a jump of nearly 74,000 acres from 2004 even though U.S. funded cropdusters destroyed record amounts of coca plants in 2005.

Washington has provided the Bogota government with more than \$4 billion, mostly in anti-drug aid since 2000 for a program known as Plan Colombia—which was supposed to cut coca cultivation by half within six years.

Yet according to the new figures, more coca is now being grown here than when Plan Colombia started. “This is going to turn heads” on Capitol Hill, said Adam Isacson, a Colombia expert at the Center for International Policy in Washington and a long-time critic of U.S. counterdrug strategies in Latin America.

“You’re talking about \$4.7 billion spent on Plan Colombia, and this is all we have to show for it?”

The Bush administration downplayed the significance of the coca crop survey, an annual study of parts of Colombia carried out by the CIA using satellite imagery and on-the-ground inspections.

Rather than an increase in the crop’s size, the higher numbers may reflect a more thorough job of surveying the Colombian countryside, the White House said in a news release.

The statement said the area of Colombia sampled for the 2005 coca estimate was 81 percent larger than in 2004.

“Because of this uncertainty and the significantly expanded survey area, a direct year-to-year comparison (of the size of the coca crop) is not possible,” said the statement.

However, when year-to-year drug crop comparisons have reflected positive trends, U.S. officials have loudly touted the numbers as clear proof of success.

In 2002, for example, the CIA survey showed a drop in coca production and White House drug czar John Walters declared: “These figures capture the dramatic improvement. . . . Our anti-drug efforts in Colombia are now paying off.”

But some U.S. officials and drug policy analysts claim that Colombia has likely been producing far more coca over the past five years than the CIA surveys have indicated.

“The cultivation numbers, wherever they seem to be headed, need to be taken with a grain of salt,” said Joy Olson, director of the Washington Office on Latin America, a think tank. “In reality, coca cultivation and cocaine production exceed the official estimates, perhaps by wide margins.”

What’s more, she said, cheap, potent cocaine remains readily available on U.S. streets, indicating that the drug war in Colombia is having little real impact.

Some U.S. officials have forecast a gradual reduction in assistance for Colombia, starting in 2008. This year, Washington will send about \$750 million in aid to Colombia, the source of 90 percent of the cocaine sold on U.S. streets.

The centerpiece of the U.S. anti-drug strategy here is a controversial aerial-eradication program in which crop-dusters, escorted by helicopter gunships, bombard coca plants with chemical defoliants. But the program costs about \$200 million annually and many critics say the money would be better spent elsewhere. The idea of eradication is to persuade peasant farmers to give up growing coca and to plant legal crops. But funding by the U.S. and Colombian governments for crop-substitution programs pale in comparison to the eradication budget and most efforts to develop alternatives have failed.

Part of the problem is that coca is often grown in remote jungles and mountains that are controlled by Marxist guerrillas, contain few roads or markets, and have almost no government presence. Thus, even as crop-dusters have killed off record amounts of coca, farmers stay a step ahead of the spray planes by pushing deeper into the wilderness to grow more.

In 2000, Colombian farmers attempted to grow about 450,000 acres of coca, about one-third of which was wiped out by the spray planes, according to U.S. government figures. Last year, by contrast, they tried to grow a whopping 780,000 acres. “People with no economic alternatives have not been deterred by fumigation,” said Isacson of the Center for International Policy. “Fumigating an area is no substitute for governing it.”

Despite the rise in coca cultivation, Anne Patterson, a former U.S. ambassador to Colombia who heads the State Department bureau that runs the eradication program, told a congressional hearing in Washington last month that the Bush administration was considering “stepping up” the crop-dusting campaign.

Beyond the drug war, Patterson said, the overall U.S. aid program “has benefited Colombia in ways we had not anticipated.”

She cited better security conditions in the cities and the countryside, where the number of kidnappings and murders has dropped, as well as recent blows to the nation’s narcotics traffickers and guerrilla groups.

RAMSEY, INDIANA WILFRED EDWARD “COUSIN WILLIE” SIEG, SR. POST OFFICE

HON. MICHAEL E. SODREL

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mr. SODREL. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor I introduce this bill to recognize the accomplishments of one man by naming the Ramsey, IN postal facility after a beloved member of our community, “Cousin Willie”. The privilege to introduce this bill with the support of the entire Indiana Delegation makes it all that more special.

If you asked someone in Ramsey who Wilfred Edward Sieg, Sr. was or what he was about, some may not be able to tell you. But if you asked them about “Cousin Willie”, that’s a different story. “Cousin Willie” and Wilfred Edward Sieg, Sr. are one in the same.

Wilfred Edward “Cousin Willie” Sieg, Sr., son of the late Edward and Agnes Gettelfinger Sieg, was born March 16, 1931 in his life-long home of Ramsey, IN. After finishing High School at Corydon High, “Cousin Willie” went on to graduate from Indiana University in 1953 with a degree in marketing. Upon graduation, Cousin Willie served our country as First Lieutenant in the United States Air Force. He continued to serve his country through 1968 as a member of both the Air Force and the Air Force Reserves.

After his active-duty service, Cousin Willie returned home to help run the family business, Ramsey Popcorn Company, alongside his parents and brothers. “Cousin Willie’s” parents started Ramsey Popcorn in 1944 going door to door selling raw popcorn kernels out of the back of their truck. The business soon grew and in the early 1960’s, “Cousin Willie”, along with his three brothers, took over day-to-day operations of the business from his parents and eventually served as President of Ramsey Popcorn Co., Inc. Under his guidance, Ramsey Popcorn Co. grew to become one of the top four producers of popcorn in the world. The company sells roughly 50 million pounds of popcorn a year and exports to over 20 countries throughout the world. Ramsey also sells to house-hold name snack food manufacturers and supermarkets including Kraft, Frito Lay, Campbell’s, The Kroger Co. and Target as just a sample.

Before graduating from IU, “Cousin Willie” married his High School sweetheart, Doris Marie Byrum. “Cousin Willie” and Doris were the proud parents of 13 children. Cousin Willie was a firm believer in hard work and was known to put his kids to work on the family farm doing tough and unwanted jobs. “That way, by the time they get to working at the popcorn plant, they like it just fine.”

Mr. Sieg was truly proud of his small community and felt compelled to become involved in any way he could. In addition to employing many members of his community, he was also a member of the Ramsey Lion’s Club, the Ramsey-Spencer Grange and local Farm Bureau. He was a Rotarian and actively involved in local and state politics as well as the area schools’ athletic programs. He also served as a Member of two Boards; the Ramsey Water Company and the North Harrison Community School Board.

Mr. Sieg passed away on February 2, 2006 at the age of 74 after losing a battle with lung