

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 246

Commemorating the 53rd anniversary of Senator Margaret Chase Smith's "Declaration of Conscience" speech in which she defended the American rights to free speech and dissent.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 21, 2003

Mr. ALLEN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Government Reform

RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 53rd anniversary of Senator Margaret Chase Smith's "Declaration of Conscience" speech in which she defended the American rights to free speech and dissent.

Whereas, on June 1, 1950, United States Senator Margaret Chase Smith, a Republican from Maine, issued her "Declaration of Conscience" in a speech to the Senate, in response to the defamatory accusations that characterized the anti-communist crusades of Senator Joseph McCarthy and others;

Whereas, in the speech, Senator Smith defended the basic American principles of "the right to criticize; the right to hold unpopular beliefs; the right to protest; the right of independent thought", and affirmed that "the exercise of

these rights should not cost one single American citizen his reputation or his right to a livelihood”;

Whereas history has judged well Senator Smith’s appeal for protection of the fundamental American rights of free speech and dissent, in contrast to the efforts by Senator McCarthy and others to employ questions of people’s patriotism as a political weapon; and

Whereas, on June 6, 1989, President George H.W. Bush awarded Senator Smith the Presidential Medal of Freedom and stated that “Senator Smith’s finest hour came when she issued the ‘Declaration of Conscience’, an historic and courageous speech denouncing McCarthyism, and she spoke out when so many others remained silent”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) commemorates the 53rd anniversary of Sen-
3 ator Margaret Chase Smith’s “Declaration of Con-
4 science” speech in which she defended the funda-
5 mental American rights to criticize, to hold unpopu-
6 lar beliefs, to protest; and of independent thought;
7 and

8 (2) affirms that the principles enunciated in the
9 “Declaration of Conscience” remain valid today.

○