

IN HONOR OF SOUTHWESTERN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S EL SOL
MAGAZINE

HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Southwestern Community College student journalism publications. Southwestern College, in Chula Vista, California, is one of our region's premier journalism programs whereby students publish a newspaper and a magazine for the students and surrounding community members. With the journalism students' dedication, Southwestern College has asserted itself as one of the top college newspapers in the nation with their newspaper, *The Sun*. Additionally, these dedicated journalism students devoted off-time hours to design, create and publish a magazine, *El Sol*. They were also instrumental in finding the funding in order to publish their student magazine. Southwestern College has reason to be proud of their Journalism Department's accomplishments and the hard work and dedication of student advisor Max Branscomb, Ed.D., should also be recognized. As the recipient of the Society of Professional Journalists National Journalism Teacher of the Year award, Dr. Branscomb's dedication to the field of journalism is creating an environment whereby the results of his instruction are motivating students toward careers in journalism. In honor of Dr. Branscomb and the Southwestern College students in the Journalism Department, I do hereby recognize February 6, 2014, as the "Southwestern College Journalism Students Day" in the City of Chula Vista.

HONORING ALEXIS "LEXIE" KAMERMAN

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Alexis "Lexie" Kamerman, a courageous and talented young woman who tragically lost her life in an Afghan terrorist attack on January 17th. Lexie was killed in a Kabul restaurant that was specifically targeted by the Taliban because of its popularity with westerners.

A 27-year-old Chicago native, Lexie was committed to rebuilding Afghanistan through education, particularly for young women and girls who might not otherwise have the opportunity to go to school. In her role as a Student Development Specialist at the American University of Afghanistan, Lexie worked to help the next generation of Afghan women take their place as leaders in society. Friends and family of Lexie point to her strength, fearlessness, and passion as key to her decision to serve.

Lexie grew up in Chicago, and graduated from the Latin School in 2004. She attended Knox College, where she was a fierce competitor on the water polo team. Lexie received her M.A. in Higher Education from the University of Arizona.

Sadly, the American University of Afghanistan community lost another member during

the January 17th attack: political science professor Alexandros Petersen from Washington, DC. He was only 29. While both Lexie and Alexandros were far too young to be taken from us, their talent and passion for serving others, regardless of the potential dangers, are examples to which we should all aspire.

My deepest condolences go to the friends and family of Lexie Kamerman, particularly her parents, Jack and Alison.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHRIS STEWART

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, February 5th on rollcall 38 for H.R. 3590 I inadvertently voted "yea" for the amendment instead of "nay." My intention was to vote against the measure.

RECOGNIZING MAJOR GENERAL CATHY LUTZ

HON. STEVEN M. PALAZZO

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the life of Major General Cathy Lutz, the first female Major General of the Mississippi Air National Guard, who went to be with the Lord on January 18, 2014.

With over 30 years of military service, Major General Lutz broke "glass ceiling" barriers, while maintaining civility and humility. She lived her life in service to friends, family, and country and professed "military and nursing" the means in which she served God and man.

Called "one of our nation's premier advocates for better health care for . . . soldiers and servicemen," Major General Lutz coordinated retrieval efforts of wounded servicemen following the terrorist attack against the USS *Cole* and led a medical squadron based out of Saudi Arabia.

In all, Major General Lutz commanded three squadrons in the National Guard and received eight military awards, including the Legion of Merit for "exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements."

While serving the Mississippi Air National Guard, Major General Lutz involved herself in the Mississippi art community. She showed her work with the Mississippi Art Colony and established an art farm in Flora, MS, along with her husband, retired Major General William Lutz.

Mississippi lost a dear daughter with the death of Major General Cathy Lutz. On behalf of the United States Congress and the people of Mississippi, we recognize her life and service.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. ROBERT
GEORGE'S ADVOCACY FOR RELI-
GIOUS FREEDOM

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I submit an excerpt from remarks made by my friend Dr. Robert George, McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence at Princeton University and chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, upon receiving the John Leland Award from the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission in December. In his statement, Dr. George succinctly spells out the different ways in which countries around the world undermine religious freedom, whether through hostility toward religions, sponsorship of radicalism, enforcement of unjust laws or failure to protect citizens against religious violence.

Today, religious freedom is in peril around the world. In his remarks, Dr. George admirably shows Americans what they can do to secure greater liberty for people of faith, and of no faith, who are in harm's way because of what they believe. We are privileged to live in a country where freedom of religion is constitutionally guaranteed—may we strive to secure this right for citizens of all countries.

ROBERT P. GEORGE, JOHN LELAND AWARD, SOUTHERN BAPTIST ETHICS AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION, RAYBURN GOLD ROOM, WASHINGTON, DC, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2013 [EXCERPTS]

. . . So why *does* religious freedom matter? Why should promoting and defending it abroad, no less than honoring it at home, be a high priority for our country?

The way some people see it, the reason for respecting religious freedom is purely instrumental and self-interested. If you and I disagree in matters of religion, I should tolerate your beliefs and religious practices so that you will tolerate mine. Religious freedom, on this view, is not so much a moral or human right as it is a kind of mutual non-aggression pact.

It's not difficult to see the attraction of this view or to explain why some people hold it. A world in which each community lives in fear that another will seize power and oppress its practitioners is hardly an ideal state of affairs for any of them—except, of course, the group that happens to come out on top. But that is exactly what happens where there is little or no religious freedom protection. Everyone fears what will happen to their own group. And so the answer to the problem is clear. Each group tolerates the other groups so that it, too, will be tolerated.

But there's a problem with this view. The problem is not that it's in any way inaccurate or untrue. Instead, the problem is that it doesn't go far enough. It ignores the fact that at its core, religious freedom means something far deeper and more profound than people grudgingly tolerating each another in a kind of *modus vivendi*.

It means the right to be who we truly are as human beings. The fact is that as human beings, we are drawn to ponder life's deepest questions and seek meaningful, truthful answers. Where do we come from? What is our destiny? Is there a transcendent source of meaning and value? Is there a "higher law" that pulls us above personal interest in order to "do unto others as we would have them do unto us?"

No matter how these questions are answered, one thing is indisputable: Human beings can't stop asking them, and would be diminished precisely as human beings if they were to try to do so. And that suggests that the religious quest is a constitutive part of our humanity—an aspect of our flourishing as the kind of creatures we are, namely, rational, intelligent, and free actors.

And this, in turn, suggests that we must cherish and honor, preserve and protect, the right of persons to ask and answer these questions as best they can, and, within the broadest limits, to lead their lives with authenticity and integrity in line with their best judgments of conscience.

And so, both as individuals and together with others in community, religious freedom means the right to ponder life's origins, meaning and purpose; to explore the deepest questions about human nature, dignity, and destiny; to decide what is to be believed and not to be believed; and, within the limits of justice for all, to comply with what one conscientiously judges to be one's religious obligations—openly, peacefully, and without fear.

John Henry Newman once observed that "conscience has rights because it has duties." We honor the rights of conscience in matters of faith because people must be free to lead lives of authenticity and integrity by fulfilling what they believe to be their solemn duties.

But authenticity and integrity are directly threatened whenever there is coercion or compulsion in matters of faith or belief. Indeed, coercion does not produce genuine conviction, but pretense and lack of authenticity. Clearly, a coerced faith is no faith at all. Compulsion may cause a person to manifest the outward signs of belief or unbelief, but it cannot produce the interior acts of intellect and will that constitute genuine faith.

Therefore, it is essential that freedom of religion or belief include the right to hold any belief or none at all, to change one's beliefs and religious affiliation, to bear witness to these beliefs in public as well as private, and corporately as well as individually, and to act on one's religiously inspired convictions about justice and the common good in carrying out the duties of citizenship. And it is vital that religious liberty's full protections be extended to those whose answers to life's deepest questions reject belief in the transcendent.

Because the right to freedom of religion or belief is so central to human personhood, we would expect that in places where it is dishonored, societies would be less happy and secure. And according to a growing number of studies, that is precisely the case across the world.

These studies show that countries that protect religious liberty are more secure and stable than those that do not, and nations that trample on this freedom provide fertile ground for war and poverty, terror and radical movements.

In other words, not only do religious freedom abuses violate the core of our humanity, they do grave harm to the well-being of societies.

They do so politically—as religious freedom abuses are highly correlated with the absence of democracy and the presence of other human rights abuses.

They do so economically—as religious persecution destabilizes communities and marginalizes the persecuted, causing their talents and abilities to go unrealized, robbing a nation of added productivity, and reducing that nation's ability to fight poverty and create abundance for its citizens.

They do so morally—since wherever religious freedom is dishonored, the benefit of

religion in molding character is diminished, and with it, the self-discipline necessary to handle the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

And finally, they do so socially—since wherever religious freedom is abused, peace and security become ever more elusive.

For the United States, all of this has a direct bearing on our own security.

For example, of the four countries that hosted Osama bin Laden during his notorious life—Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Pakistan—each is an incubator of terrorism in the form of violent religious extremism, and all have perpetrated or tolerated repeated religious freedom violations.

And as we all know, the 9/11 attacks on our country were plotted in Afghanistan, which was run by the Taliban which originated in Pakistan, with 15 of the 19 attackers coming from Saudi Arabia.

In December of last year, the Institute for Economics and Peace, an Australian think tank, released a ranking of nations based on the number of terrorist attacks launched between 2002 and 2011. At the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, we consider seven of these countries—Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Somalia, Nigeria, and Russia—to be serious violators of religious liberty. . . .

Clearly, religious freedom matters greatly. And sadly, according to a recent Pew study, 75 percent of the world's people—more than 5 billion human beings—live in countries with governments that significantly restrict this fundamental right. Such restrictions range from burdensome rules and regulations on building houses of worship to detention and imprisonment, torture and murder.

. . . All of these abuses violate not just American standards of religious freedom, but international human rights standards and covenants as well.

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, in Article 18, that:

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

Since 1966, the governments of 167 countries have signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, a binding treaty with protections similar to Article 18.

Nations around the world also affirmed the 1981 Declaration on Religious Intolerance, and other regional bodies, such as the OSCE, the Council of Europe, the Organization of American States, also confirm religious freedom as a fundamental liberty. . . .

As an independent, bipartisan, U.S. federal government advisory body, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom is firmly committed to the human rights standards found in these documents.

As a key part of its mandate, USCIRF monitors religious freedom worldwide and makes policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and to Congress.

Based on our monitoring of religious freedom conditions, we have seen a number of discernible patterns to religious persecution.

First, we have seen the following categories of religious freedom violations engaged in or tolerated by governments: state hostility; state sponsorship; state enforcement; and state failure.

The second pattern we have seen is that in every one of these categories, Christians are among the persecuted.

And a third pattern we've noted is the stubborn persistence of anti-Semitism worldwide, including in the nations of Western Europe, where it again appears to be on the rise.

As to the categories of religious freedom abuses I just mentioned, state hostility involves the government actively persecuting people or groups on account of their beliefs.

State sponsorship refers to the government actively promoting—and sometimes even exporting—ideas and propaganda, often of a violent, extremist nature, that include hostility to the religious freedom of others.

State enforcement refers to the government applying laws and statutes such as anti-blasphe-my codes to individuals, often members of religious minorities, thus violating freedom of expression as well as freedom of religion or belief.

And state failure means that the government is neglecting to take action to protect those whom others are targeting due to their beliefs, creating a climate of impunity in which religious minorities or dissenters are threatened, intimidated, or even attacked and killed.

When it comes to state hostility toward religions, one of the worst persecutors is Iran's theocratic regime. The Iranian government has executed people for "waging war against God," while relentlessly targeting reformers among the Shi'a Muslim majority, as well as religious minorities, including Sunni and Sufi Muslims, Bahai's, and Christians. The Iranian regime has also stirred up anti-Semitism and promoted Holocaust denial.

Regarding state sponsorship of radical ideology which targets the religious freedom of others, Saudi Arabia continues to export its own extremist interpretation of Sunni Islam through textbooks and other literature which teach hatred and even violence toward other religious groups.

Regarding state enforcement of laws and statutes that repress freedom of expression and religion, Egypt and Pakistan enforce anti-blasphe-my or anti-defamation codes, with religious minorities bearing the brunt of the enforcement.

Regarding state failure to protect religious freedom, the actions of the governments of Egypt and Pakistan exemplify those of nations which do not protect their citizens against religion-related violence. Ironically, both nations' enforcement of blasphemy codes fuels some of the worst violence by encouraging vigilantes to target perceived transgressors.

. . . In Egypt, since the fall of Hosni Mubarak, including the periods of time before, during, and after President Morsi's rule, the government has tolerated widespread abuses against religious minorities, including Coptic Orthodox and other Christians, and Bahai's, Shi'a Muslims, and dissident Sunni Muslims.

It has failed to make serious efforts to bring the perpetrators of violence to justice or to respond to virulent anti-Semitism in state-controlled media.

In Pakistan, the government's longtime failure to protect religious freedom was on brutal display in 2011 with the assassinations of Salmaan Taseer, a Muslim who was Governor of Punjab province, and Shahbaz Bhatti, a Christian who was Pakistan's Minister for Minority Affairs and a valiant religious freedom advocate.

Both officials were killed for opposing Pakistan's blasphemy law, which is used as a weapon of repression against Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

This year was clearly one of the worst for both Shi'a Muslims and for Christians in Pakistan, as attacks by extremists on these communities accelerated with impunity.

Clearly, impunity remains one of the world's most serious and growing religious freedom concerns and challenges. Across much of the world, there have been incidents of religiously-related violence which are not being addressed by investigations, trials, or punishments.

. . . And so, let me conclude by saying that for those of us who care about religious freedom, we have a job to do.

First and foremost, each of us as citizens needs to make the case to our fellow Americans on behalf of supporting religious freedom abroad. We need to explain why this matters for our country and for our world.

We must tell others the story about what is happening to victims of religious persecution around the world. We must not let them be forgotten or let their plight be ignored.

And then, as we increase our numbers on the ground, we can move Washington to do the right thing by supporting religious freedom. We must make it clear to those in public office that we expect them to honor religious freedom both at home and abroad, and that we intend to hold them electorally accountable if they fail to do that. We must insist that religious freedom be given the priority it is due under the International Religious Freedom Act in the conduct of our international diplomacy and foreign policy. Trade considerations are important; geopolitical strategic considerations are important; but religious freedom is important, too. It is not a second-class concern—at least not since IRFA became the law of the land. . . .

I have not spoken much today about domestic religious freedom issues. I do not want to close, however, without saying this: The first and most important way in which the President of the United States can promote religious freedom abroad is by honoring religious freedom here at home. Again, speaking for myself, and not on this occasion as Chairman of USCIRF, I call on President Obama to withdraw the HHS mandates that threaten religious freedom in the implementation of the Affordable Care Act—and to do so before being compelled to withdraw those mandates by the Supreme Court in the lawsuits now pending. Indeed, the administration should—across the board, at home and abroad—embrace a robust view of religious liberty, one going beyond the mere “freedom of worship”—one that respects the right of religious believers and religious institutions to honor the requirements of their consciences without governmental interference, except in those circumstances—mercifully rare in our own country—where restrictions on religious freedom are necessary to protect the religious freedom of others or to prevent violence or other intolerable harms. . . .

HONORING BEURT SERVAAS

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Beurt SerVaas, a dedicated community leader and former president of the Indianapolis City-County Council.

Beurt SerVaas was an accomplished businessman and a devoted public servant who spent the better part of his life serving the people of Indianapolis. Dr. SerVaas was first elected to the Marion County Council in the early 1960s and became a chief architect of the Uni-Gov changes that consolidated parts of city and county government. Dr. SerVaas' distinguished business career included bringing the Saturday Evening Post to Indiana and rescuing several struggling businesses ranging from engine rebuilders to makers of cleaning products.

The state of Indiana and the city of Indianapolis have lost one of their most distin-

guished citizens and a dedicated civic leader. On a personal note, Dr. SerVaas was a friend and a supporter of mine, who could always be counted on for his gentle wisdom and smile.

Beurt SerVaas set an example to which we can all aspire. He was a visionary leader who dedicated his life to serving others and making his country and community better places to live. This included service in the United States Navy and the Central Intelligence Agency. His commitment to Indiana will be forever appreciated. I ask the residents of the 6th Congressional District to join me in keeping his wife Dr. Cory Jane SerVaas, daughters Joan, Amy, and Kristin, and his sons Eric and Paul, in their thoughts and prayers.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote number 38, the DeFazio Amendment No. 6 to H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Acts of 2013, I was recorded as an “aye.” It was my intention to vote “no” on the amendment.

As an avid sportsman, I strongly oppose legislation that would threaten opportunities for recreational fishing, hunting, and shooting on our Nation's public lands.

IN RECOGNITION OF MERRILL BLUM

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Merrill Blum upon his retirement from the Vietnam Veterans Association of the Cape and Islands.

Following his service in the United States Army, Mr. Blum found his true calling working for numerous veterans' services programs throughout Massachusetts, and his remarkable efforts were recognized by the Department of Labor as a model for the nation. His commitment to serving veterans brought him to work with the Vietnam Veterans Association of the Cape and Islands, focusing on projects such as the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project, Homelessness Prevention Council, and on my Advisory Commission on Veteran Services. Throughout his career Mr. Blum has demonstrated his true commitment to helping soldiers improve their lives once they return home. In finding his calling in life, Mr. Blum made a lasting impact on countless American heroes within our community.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Merrill Blum upon his retirement. I ask that my colleagues join me in thanking Mr. Blum for his service and commitment to our nation's veterans.

CONGRATULATING FLIR SYSTEMS, INC.

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to congratulate FLIR Systems, Inc. on the launch of FLIR ONE, the first consumer-oriented thermal imaging system. Introduced on January 7, 2014, FLIR ONE is the first product of its kind that provides thermal imaging technology to consumers using a unique smart phone accessory case. This is a tremendous step toward making infrared technology accessible and affordable to the general public.

FLIR Systems, Inc. is a global leader in the design, manufacture, and marketing of sensor systems that enhance perception and awareness. Their technological innovations have a wide range of utility including aerial and ground surveillance, environmental monitoring, navigation and transportation safety.

The work of FLIR Systems, Inc. is not only positively impacting Central Florida by providing our community with jobs; their innovations are resonating around the world. With the global debut of FLIR ONE scheduled for Spring 2014, I wish FLIR Systems, Inc. continued success.

RECOGNIZING GO TO 2040 FOR RECEIVING THE EPA SMART GROWTH ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, this week the Environmental Protection Agency recognized seven organizations from across the country that are working to ensure sustainable urban growth with the National Award for Smart Growth Achievement. I am proud to recognize the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's GO TO 2040 initiative for receiving this honor.

GO TO 2040 focuses on sustainable prosperity—working within Chicago and around the world to cement the city's place as an economic and cultural center. By 2040 Chicago will need to accommodate up to 25 percent more residents. The plan addresses public transportation, community planning, government cooperation, and resource management to ensure that Chicago remains a vibrant and diverse city, with room for our communities to grow.

GO TO 2040 has four challenges for city and state government to consider—creating livable communities, maximizing the potential of human capital, ensuring efficient government, and promoting regional mobility. Those issues impact all major metropolitan communities, and this roadmap is an important step as we look to build a sustainable future for our cities.

GO TO 2040 is a leading example of the type of work that will preserve and improve our urban centers for generations to come. I am proud to recognize the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's work to keep our city great.