

Rodrigues Cabrillo, a Portuguese navigator and explorer, best known as the first European to navigate the coast of present-day California. Today there are nine clubs statewide with over 1,975 members. The club members work tirelessly to ensure the preservation of the Portuguese culture, while engaging in service activities to benefit their local communities.

From the beginning, Vera's dedication to the club was evident. In 1978 Vera became Kings County local club secretary and for one period served as both secretary and president. During the 1990s Vera held double duty again, serving as local secretary and Cabrillo Club State secretary from 1991 to 1994. Even after 40 years, Vera will stay on to serve as an active board member for the state and local Kings County Cabrillo Club No. 9.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the achievements of Vera Souza. I congratulate Vera for her dedicated service to the Cabrillo Club and ask that you join me in wishing her continued success and happiness.

## RISK-BASED CREDIT EXAMINATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 7, 2017*

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3911, the Risk-Based Credit Examination Act. This legislation amends the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to make the annual reporting requirements of the Nationally Recognized Statistical Rating Organizations (NRSROs) risk-based.

The Securities Exchange Act was an innovative piece of legislation passed to regulate the secondary trade of securities such as stocks, bonds, and debentures. This act led to the creation of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and is the framework for the current federal regulations on financial markets. H.R. 3911 focuses specifically on federal requirements of NRSROs or credit rating agencies. Currently, the SEC performs annual reviews of NRSROs in eight review areas for its annual reports. These reviews disproportionately burden smaller NRSROs in the market. H.R. 3911 allows the SEC to perform reviews in the eight categories based off of risk-based analyses; reducing the burden on smaller credit rating agencies.

This legislation promotes fairness, encourages small businesses in our financial markets and is a simple fix for a burdensome problem. H.R. 3911 also helps the SEC allocate its energy more efficiently and use its resources more effectively. I support this legislation, and I urge my fellow members to support H.R. 3911, the Risk-Based Credit Examination Act.

## REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, November 13, 2017*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, George Orwell wrote, in his novel 1984, "Who

controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past."

The context of this slogan is Winston's struggle to maintain his memory, his vital connection to truth—against the evil ambition of the all-powerful party to control what we remember of the past, and, through that, to control the pathways into the future.

That is also the context in which the Victims of Congress Memorial Foundation carries on its work. This outstanding foundation held a landmark three-day conference in Washington last week, marking 100 years since the Bolshevik revolution unleashed the evils of communism on the world.

The foundation works to ensure that the memories, the real experiences of millions of people who suffered under communism are preserved—notwithstanding the efforts of powerful persons, ideologies, and interests, for whom the memory of the horrific crimes of communism must be forgotten, or more or less subtly distorted so as to promote their own contemporary agendas.

On one level, reluctance to remember the communist crimes might seem an understandable human weakness—the sheer scale of communist crimes is so vast that it beggars our power of comprehension.

Since 1917 communism has claimed at least 100 million lives, in the Soviet Union, China, Mongolia, Eastern Europe, Indochina, Africa, Afghanistan and parts of Latin America according to the painstaking research of demographers.

Writing in the Wall Street Journal two weeks ago, Professor Stephen Kotkin specified that in China, "Mao's program resulted in one of history's deadliest famines, claiming between 16 and 32 million victims." On Cambodia: "All told, perhaps as many as 2 million Cambodians; a quarter of the population, perished as a result of starvation, disease and mass executions during the four nightmarish years of Pol Pot's rule."

Yet we have a duty to remember the past accurately. Rather than dwell, today, on the many ways in which the memory of communist crimes has been obliterated or retouched, let's consider one thing that is common to most, if not all, of them: they deny the profound spiritual significance of the victims' experiences, and of the perpetrator's crimes.

No one has been more eloquent in calling us back to this than Alexander Solzhenitsyn. In 1983 the great writer received the Templeton Prize, which is made to honor an exceptional contribution to affirming life's spiritual dimension. He opened his remarks with these memorable words:

More than half a century ago, while I was still a child, I recall hearing a number of older people offer the following explanation for the great disasters that had befallen Russia: Men have forgotten God; that's why all this has happened.

Since then I have spent well-nigh fifty years working on the history of our Revolution; in the process I have read hundreds of books, collected hundreds of personal testimonies, and have already contributed eight volumes of my own toward the effort of clearing away the rubble left by that upheaval. But if I were asked today to formulate as concisely as possible the main cause of the ruinous Revolution that swallowed up some sixty million of our people, I could not put it more accurately than to repeat: Men have forgotten God; that's why all this has happened.

Solzhenitsyn recalled us forcefully to the spiritual values that were always at stake in the communist assault on humanity—and remain at stake in the struggle to maintain the memory of what communism perpetrated on the peoples who fell victim to it.

Over my many years in Congress, I have been blessed to meet and work with many other men and women who have been great living witnesses to the effort to maintain a true memory of the crimes of communism. It's no coincidence that most of them have also been witnesses to God, and came into conflict with communism for that very reason.

Thirty-seven years ago, during my first term in Congress, I read *Tortured for Christ* by Romanian pastor Richard Wurmbrand.

It is the true story of unspeakable physical torture and psychological abuse of underground Christians under Romania's Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu—and of Pastor Wurmbrand's harrowing 14-year incarceration. Wurmbrand had defied the communists by declaring openly that Communism and Christianity were incompatible. Sabina, his brave wife, stood by him and also suffered prison and forced labor for her faith.

In 1964 the Wurmbrands were ransomed out of Romania for \$10,000, and in 1966 Richard testified before Congress, taking off his shirt to show Americans the scars from his torture.

Like so many, both my wife Marie and I read his book and were inspired by Pastor Wurmbrand's indomitable faith, breathtaking courage and hope and challenged by his admonishment to believers to cease enabling evil by our naivete, cold-hearted indifference or cowardly complicity.

After being drugged and beaten Pastor Wurmbrand said he was in such bad shape that he even forgot the words to the Lord's Prayer so he simply prayed: "Our Father I have forgotten the prayer, but you surely know it by heart. . . ."

Russia gave us many witnesses to the ugly reality of communism. In the 1980s, my first religious freedom mission was to Moscow and Leningrad in 1982 on behalf of Soviet Jews—the heroic refuseniks, like Natan Sharansky. I got to know many of them and their families. And when in 1989 Frank Wolf and I visited Perm Camp 35 the prisoners told us of their hunger—for food, and for Scripture as well.

In Moscow I also met, and prayed with the Siberian Seven—a group of Pentecostal Christians who fled to the U.S. Embassy and lived there for five years until finally getting exit visas. During that trip—and many subsequent trips to meet Orthodox clergy and believers—began to grasp Alexander Solzhenitsyn's astute observation that communism doesn't merely believe that God does not exist, it hates Him.

Solzhenitsyn called it "militant atheism." Like many of you I saw that hate throughout the Soviet Union, in Romania, the Warsaw Pact Countries—and that God-hatred continues to thrive today within dictatorships like North Korea, Cuba, Vietnam and China.

China has produced many witnesses, and because its communist dictatorship endures, and even hardens its militancy, today, we all have the opportunity to meet those who witness and document its crimes against the Chinese people. As the chair of the China Commission I have many times heard testimony from Bob Fu, Wei Jingsheng, Chai Ling, Harry Wu, Joseph Kung, and so many others.

One of the most memorable encounters I had was in China itself, in 1994. I had the awesome privilege of a private meeting with Bishop Su Zhimin. Bishop Su was the leader of the underground Catholic Church in Hebei province.

We met at dawn, for an outdoor Mass with many other believers. As we spoke and then prayed, the Bishop prayed for his persecutors, he prayed for the misguided leaders of the Chinese Communist Party. Bishop Su's body bore witness to the brutality of China's Communist Party. He was beaten, starved, and tortured for this faith and spent some 40 years in prison. Yet, he prayed not just for the persecuted church, but for the conversion of those who hate, torture and kill. His witness and his faith absolutely amazed me. Love those who hate you as Christ did from the cross? Do good to those who persecute you? For Bishop Su these were more than words, it was his faithful and faith filled response to one of our Lord's most difficult teaching. Unfortunately, only couple years later Bishop Su was arrested again and disappeared. He has not been heard from since.

Over and over in the lives of these heroic witnesses, we see that the effort to stand up for the truth against the communists cost them a great deal. Sometimes it cost them everything but their lives—and almost that too.

To follow in their footsteps, to remember the truth of what communism really was and did, will cost us something too. We will have to remember that what was at stake with communism was not a question of competing economic systems or system of social organization, but the question of God—the human being deprived of any divine connection. This will require us to swim upstream, against the dominant mentality. We will have to think, and at times to speak and act, differently. And this will not always be welcome.

We owe a profound debt of gratitude to the foundation and its supporters, who have done so much to honor the memory of the victims of communism.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF WALLY NUNN

### HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, November 13, 2017*

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Mr. Wally Nunn of Newtown Square, Pennsylvania, for his honorable service in the U.S. Army, his continued service to his community, and his work to honor fallen soldiers.

Mr. Nunn served as an Army door gunner in the Vietnam War, attached to the 17th Assault Helicopter Company with both the First and Third Platoons.

After serving eight years in the service, Mr. Nunn returned to Pennsylvania to pursue a successful career in the private sector. But Mr. Nunn also wanted to continue serving the public. He became Chairman of the Board of the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge. In 1964, ground at Valley Forge was dedicated to Medal of Honor recipients. Over the years this grove was ignored and became dilapidated. Mr. Nunn took the initiative to create and lead the nonprofit, "The Friends of the Grove," who restored this land and care for it today. Thanks to Mr. Nunn's efforts, 3,500

Medal of Honor recipients are recognized again for their courageous acts in support of our nation.

Mr. Nunn continued his service to his community, serving as a member of Delaware County Council and eventually becoming its Chairman.

I thank Mr. Wally Nunn for his dedication to our nation and community. He has shown a selfless devotion to helping others and honoring our nation's heroes. His invaluable impression he made on his community to restore Medal of Honor Grove will be felt for decades.

#### REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN

### HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, November 13, 2017*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON. Mr. Speaker, both House and Senate Republicans have introduced separate plans to update the U.S. federal tax code. Proponents have long argued that the federal tax code is overdue for an overhaul that will incentivize businesses to create jobs, while opponents feel that the existing proposals do not go far enough for middle- and lower-income families.

It has been 31 years since Congress passed its last major tax reform overhaul known as the 1986 Tax Reform Act, signed into law by President Reagan. Since that time, the tax code has continued to grow more intricate in response to the complexities that accompany globalization and the unique challenges that we face in a 21st Century economy. While I agree that a modern tax code is desperately needed to help shore up funding for critical infrastructure projects, scientific research, and education, the Republican tax plan falls short of helping to address these dire needs.

The current plan introduced in the House will expose an estimated 38 million middle class households to increased taxes, while simultaneously reducing the tax liability for some of our wealthiest corporations. The bill proposes disastrous cuts to Medicare & Medicaid, which many seniors and underprivileged Americans rely on for medical care. The plan also eliminates many tax deductions that are favorable to middle class Americans, such as the medical expense deduction, student loan interest deductions, and the state and local Tax deduction. Despite all of these reductions, the House Republican plan will cost the American people \$1.7 trillion dollars over the next 10 years in order to pay for tax cuts for corporations and wealthy Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that many of my colleagues will agree that we are due for a major reform of our tax code. However, we must be extremely careful not to do so at the expense of millions of middle and lower class Americans who are already struggling to get by. An increasingly globalized economy means that we will need to delicately balance our national interests against our ability to compete overseas. However, the current tax reform plans in the House and Senate must do more to protect American workers, their families, and the critical social programs on which they depend.

#### VETERANS CRISIS LINE STUDY ACT OF 2017

SPEECH OF

### HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 7, 2017*

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4173, the Veterans Crisis Line Study Act of 2017. This legislation would create a five year study in the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) on the Veteran Crisis Line.

A troubling 2016 study published by the VA reported that in 2014, 20 veterans died by suicide each day. These numbers are heart-breaking and unacceptable, and we must do more to support veterans' access to mental health services.

Launched in 2007, the Veterans Crisis Line is a subsection of the suicide prevention lifeline, and is a resource created to connect veterans with professionals trained to address their specific needs and prevent suicide. Men and women who have served and their families can reach out for help on this toll free hotline, online chat, or text. H.R. 4173 aims to study the efficacy and outcomes of this resource, pinpointing how the hotline is helping our veterans, and how we can improve it to better address the troubling suicide rates among our nation's heroes.

Veterans are owed the best care and upmost respect when they return from duty and I am deeply troubled by their increased likelihood of suicide. H.R. 4173 will help build our arsenal to combat mental illness and develop resources for the men and women who have selflessly served our nation. I support H.R. 4173 and I urge my fellow members to lend their support as well.

#### RECOGNIZING THE WORK OF FOUNTAIN BROTHERS AMERICAN LEGION POST 1619

### HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, November 13, 2017*

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize dedicated individuals of the Fountain Brothers American Legion Post 1619 who are working to reduce the prevalence of hepatitis C among Vietnam Era veterans.

Vietnam Era veterans are at a significantly higher risk for hepatitis C infection than the general population due to dangerous health practices applied to service members before the virus was discovered. Consequently, many veterans continue to die as a result of complications from hepatitis C.

Due to scientific breakthroughs, hepatitis C is now easily diagnosed and largely curable. To ensure that all Vietnam Era veterans receive proper testing and follow up care, the Fountain Brothers American Legion Post 1619 in my district has been holding regular outreach testing events with the local VA. Post 1619 has tested over 1,200 veterans in the past year, providing the first step for diagnosis and potential life-saving treatment.

On behalf of New York's 21st District, I want to recognize the work that the members of