

seen my friend be the consummate professional, and I extend to him my very best wishes in his new endeavor and challenge.

Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute tonight to an important anniversary. 125 years ago this very night, the first African-American Congressman was sworn into the U.S. House of Representatives. He was a Republican—a member of the party of Lincoln. He was the Honorable Joseph Hayne Rainey and it was the start of a legacy that continued. Senator Hiram Rhodes Revels of Mississippi was the first black Senator and then Congressman Jefferson Long of Georgia, Robert DeLarge of South Carolina, and Robert Elliot of South Carolina and the list goes on with 20 more Members of Congress serving with Mr. George White of North Carolina serving in the 55th and 56th Congress.

Following the seating of Congressman White in 1897, 15 sessions of Congress passed until another African-American was elected to Congress. In 1928, Oscar De Priest of Illinois became the first African-American elected to Congress from outside the South.

What an odd turn around has occurred and what an important time for us to stop and take stock. Folks, I look forward to the day when all of us will be judged by the content of our character rather than the color of our skin. These people we honor tonight has gone before us as trailblazers—as members of the only party that was founded on an idea—the idea of freedom.

The party of Lincoln believed in equality of opportunity, empowering people, not government, cultural renewal because these are principles which transcend race, creed, color. Lincoln so fervently believed in a government of the people, by the people and for the people that his emancipation proclamation enabled all of us—those who have gone before me and the current African-American Members of this Congress to serve. Freedom also make it possible for every person in this U.S. to have the opportunity to serve regardless of race, creed, or color. Black Americans and white Americans must be full partners in developing policy of this great Nation.

Those were brave souls who first ran after being enslaved. Those were brave souls who against all odds decided they would put their name in the hat for public service. Those were brave souls who went before us in Congress and we must honor them by doing the right thing, now.

Mr. Speaker, we must honor these hallowed Halls and the sacred trust of those who sent us here by telling the truth, by honoring the constitution and by making sure that the ultimate source of power is always with the people of this great Nation.

We must honor those who sent us here by honoring God and seeking his guidance on important issues as those who went before us. We must honor the trust of these Halls by being kind and

extending a hand to all people to serve with us.

Mr. Speaker, on this 125th anniversary of the first African-American, Mr. Joseph Rainey from South Carolina to serve in Congress, I thank God for this Nation that allows J.C. Watts, Jr.—the fifth child of J.C., Sr. and Helen Watts to also stand and serve in this Congress. I owe a great debt to those who have gone before me and I hope that we can leave an even better legacy for our children—red, yellow, black, and white.

SEND THE RIGHT MESSAGE: SHOW SUPPORT FOR AMERICAN TROOPS SENT TO BOSNIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. WELDON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening in anticipation of this body voting on a resolution in regard to the situation in Bosnia sometime before the end of this week.

Mr. Speaker, like many of my colleagues in this body, I have expressed grave reservations over the last several months about the possibility of placing our ground troops in the Bosnian theater. I have recorded my vote on at least two occasions in opposition to sending ground troops in, despite having supported the President's use of U.S. forces for air strikes, for the sealift and airlift, and for the command and control and other support necessary for NATO's involvement in that part of the world.

While I have opposed the use of ground forces in Bosnia, and while this body has gone on record on at least two occasions in stating its opposition to the use of ground forces, at one time by a vote that gathered in excess of 300 Members of this body in a bipartisan manner, all of us know that in fact the President has made his own decision to deploy troops and, in fact, that deployment is taking place as we speak here this evening.

Therefore, it would be my hope that the resolution that we consider this week does not, in fact, send in any way a signal to our troops that we do not support them.

Mr. Speaker, I come tonight before our colleagues and I ask them to consider cosponsoring this evening, or tomorrow morning, sometime tomorrow, House Concurrent Resolution 118. This bipartisan legislation was introduced by myself and my good friend, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, PAUL MCHALE, who is also a member of the Committee on National Security.

Mr. Speaker, House Concurrent Resolution 118 is a sense of the Congress resolution that has had its language mirrored in two other pieces of legislation; one that has since been introduced in the House, and a second that has been introduced in the Senate by Senator DOLE, that basically puts this body on record saying that while we

have voted against sending ground troops into Bosnia, that in fact the President as Commander in Chief of the military has the authority to do that and has done such.

Therefore, while he has taken actions that we have, in fact, expressed our concern with and oppose, it is time now to support the troops as they follow out the requirements laid out by their Commander in Chief, the President of this country.

So, Mr. Speaker, our resolution states we in fact support the troops, even though we have opposed the policy. But it goes on to state something even more important, Mr. Speaker, something that I think every Member of this body wants to express their support for. That is, now that we have committed troops to Bosnia, and now that this President as Commander in Chief has spoken, we want to make sure that there is no second guessing of the military requirement to support those troops; that in fact when General Joulwan, who is the theater commander for the entire operation in the Bosnian theater, asks for support, troops, or equipment, that there is not a second guessing of that request; that that request is dealt with immediately and is dealt with in a forthright manner.

The reason why it is important for this body to emphasize that support being immediate, Mr. Speaker, is because of what occurred in Somalia, where a similar request came in by the commander in charge of the Somalian theater in August, 1 month before an air fight occurred between American forces and one of the Somali warlords, which caused 18 young Americans to be killed.

There are some who have said that if we had given that commanding officer the support he asked for, perhaps we could have saved those 18 lives. So, while we may disagree with the President's policy, but he has the right to do what he has done, and while we want to support our troops, let us also go on record, Mr. Speaker, in a very emphatic way, and say that we want to make sure that the administration knows, that the Pentagon knows, that when the commanding officer in Bosnia asks for additional backup, that he gets immediate consideration. That is perhaps the most important statement that we can make this week.

Mr. Speaker, I hope our colleagues will cosponsor House Concurrent Resolution 118 and will also vote for it if given the opportunity to consider its passage when it comes to the House floor. House Concurrent Resolution 118 enjoys broad bipartisan support. The gentleman from Pennsylvania, JACK MURTHA, one of our leading members of the minority party on defense, is supportive, as is the gentleman from California, DUKE CUNNINGHAM, as are members of our Committee on National Security, the gentleman from Rhode Island, PATRICK KENNEDY, and the gentleman from Hawaii, NEIL ABERCROMBIE, as well as some of our younger

Members, the gentleman from Montgomery County, PA, JON FOX, and others who are joining with us in making this statement.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage our colleagues to join with us tonight and tomorrow in supporting House Concurrent Resolution 118, to send the right message from this body as to where we stand in terms of full support for a decision that many of us oppose, but now must show that the troops will not be shortchanged when it comes to protecting their lives and their well-being.

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FORT BRAGG ATTACKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JONES). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, today I wrote a letter to Attorney General Janet Reno, and I would like to share its contents with my colleagues. I wrote:

I am certain you have heard about the slaying of an African-American couple by three Caucasian soldiers from Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

These senseless slayings were apparently random, inasmuch as the slain couple was merely walking along a Fayetteville street and the three accused soldiers did not know them. The incident, however, raises new questions about the presence of radical and extreme groups within the United States military.

I must, therefore, urge that a thorough Justice and Defense Department investigation be undertaken.

At least one of the three soldiers held white supremacist views and was known to display a Nazi flag over his barracks bed and to keep a 9mm handgun in his locker. I understand that a bomb-making manual was also found in his room. More disturbingly, all of the suspects appear to be members of a right-wing group called the "Special Forces Underground," which publishes a magazine called the "Resister."

Members of this group have been seen wearing black boots with white laces, red suspenders flight jackets and chains, an unofficial uniform.

I also understand from news sources that the accused soldiers engaged the unsuspecting couple, harassed them and when the couple responded, they were both shot in the head, assassination style.

The brutal and random nature of the slayings has sent a chill throughout Fayetteville and has left many residents puzzled, bewildered and greatly concerned.

Beyond concern, however, are the many questions that are left in the wake of this terrible incident, questions that can only be answered through an official inquiry. We must learn how widespread is the membership of this group.

Is the group confined to Fort Bragg or is it organized in other locations in the Army or other branches of the military? Were superiors at Fort Bragg aware of the activity of this group?

Did these superiors have any advance warning of this group's violent tendencies and could their response have been more swift and effective enough to avoid these killings? If they did not have advance warning or knowledge, why didn't they?

And, are there legitimate policies and practices missing that could discourage these groups? Has the Army worked with local law enforcement and local government to gather intelligence on such groups?

Again, I urge you to take whatever steps are necessary to insure that a Justice and Defense Department investigation is undertaken and that members of Congress are informed of the results of that investigation.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert the letter into the RECORD.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 12, 1995.

Hon. JANET RENO,
Attorney General of the United States,
U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

DEAR ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I am certain you have heard about the slaying of an African-American couple by three Caucasian soldiers from Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, North Carolina. These senseless slayings were apparently random, inasmuch as the slain couple was merely walking along a Fayetteville street and the three accused soldiers did not know them. The incident, however, raises new questions about the presence of radical and extreme groups within the United States military. I must, therefore, urge that a thorough Justice and Defense Department investigation be undertaken.

At least one of the three soldiers held white supremacist views and was known to display a Nazi flag over his barracks bed and to keep a 9mm handgun in his locker. I understand that a bomb-making manual was also found in his room. More disturbingly, all of the suspects appear to be members of a right-wing group called the "Special Forces Underground," which publishes a magazine called the "Resister." Members of this group have been seen wearing black boots with white laces, red suspenders, flight jackets and chains, an unofficial uniform.

I also understand from news sources that the accused soldiers engaged the unsuspecting couple, harassed them and when the couple responded, they were both shot, in the head, assassination style. The brutal and random nature of the slayings has sent a chill throughout Fayetteville and has left many residents puzzled, bewildered and greatly concerned.

Beyond concern, however, are the many questions that are left in the wake of this terrible incident, questions that can only be answered through an official inquiry. We must learn how widespread is the membership of this group. Is the group confined to Fort Bragg or is it organized in other locations in the Army or other branches of the military? Were superiors at Fort Bragg aware of the activity of this group? Did these superiors have any advance warning of this group's violent tendencies and could their response have been more swift and effective enough to avoid these killings? If they did not have advance warning or knowledge, why didn't they? And, are there legitimate policies and practices missing that could discourage these groups? Has the Army worked with local law enforcement and local government to gather intelligence on such groups?

Again, I urge you to take whatever steps are necessary to insure that a Justice and Defense Department investigation is undertaken and that members of Congress are informed of the results of that investigation. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Thank you for your consideration and cooperation.

Sincerely,

EVA M. CLAYTON,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. RIGGS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. RIGGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

SALUTES TO KWEISI MFUME AND SHIMON PERES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I want to join my colleagues in making a salute to Congressman KWEISI MFUME, a man of great compassion, a great colleague, a champion for civil rights, a man of passion, integrity and resolve who is accepting the new position of head of the NAACP here in the United States. As its new leader, he will take the NAACP to new heights of accomplishment because of his strength of character, his compassion for others, and his dedication to principle. We all wish him well in his new position.

I would also like to make a salute to Shimon Peres who gave a very stirring speech today before a joint session of Congress. I had the opportunity to meet with now the prime minister, then the foreign minister of Israel this summer in a special congressional delegation visit, only to see his leadership, his vision, his perseverance, his love of Israel and his love of America.

As Prime Minister Shimon Peres said today, he was speaking of his fallen comrade Yitzhak Rabin, he said they "were always firm believers in the greatness of America, in the ethnic generosity inherent in our history and our people. For us, the United States of America is a commitment to values before an expression of might."

He continued by stating that Israel is a small land, 47 years old, but 4000 years deep in history. Before coming here to the United States, Prime Minister Peres visited King Hussein. They discussed the possibilities of transforming the Jordan River Valley which is, in fact, an elongated, extended desert into a Tennessee Valley. He then met with President Mubarak of Egypt in a highly congenial atmosphere. They agreed to put aside bitter memories and to postpone certain disputed issues for a future date.

He finally met with Chairman Arafat of the PLO and his expression of condolence had the ring of a sincere desire for peace.

What is next for Israel? Peace with Syria and Lebanon, the two remaining adversaries on Israel's borders. Peace with these two countries may well prove to be the greatest contribution to the construction of a new Middle East peace.

In Shimon Peres' own words, he said the following:

Nothing would capture the imagination of young people everywhere than a gathering