

JUNETEENTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to celebrate a major holiday in the African-American community known as Juneteenth. The genesis of this holiday began on January 1, 1863, then President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation which freed the slaves. Unfortunately, because of the Civil War being waged along the borders dividing north and south, Lincoln's message of Emancipation was not received by all. Slaves in Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas continued their lives in bondage until April of 1865 when the Civil War ended and Union Army troops were sent throughout the south to enforce the freeing of black slaves. One hundred and twenty-one years ago today, Union Army troops led by Gen. Gordon Granger reached Galveston, TX and the news of the Emancipation Proclamation was given.

The memory of this event, affectionately nicknamed Juneteenth, is celebrated each year across the region and is now a State holiday in Texas. This Juneteenth celebration affords us a chance to acknowledge and remember the history of slavery in this country, and honor the many generations that suffered through this terrible era so that their children might live better, more dignified lives. But most importantly, June 19 is a celebration of liberty and opportunity; a time to recognize the many accomplishments and contributions historically made by Americans of African descent; and focus on the many challenges ahead so that we might continue to strive forward together, with the unity and brotherhood of all men and women in America today. Happy Juneteenth.

TRIBUTE TO SFC. DONALD H. DUGAN

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

Mr. DORNAN. Mr. Speaker, tonight I noticed in my clippings that the one businessman who was held hostage in Iran from Sherman Oaks, CA, Mr. Jerry Plotkin, died. He said, when Mayor Tom Bradley called Jerry Plotkin Day in Los Angeles, after his return from 444 days of captivity, that the treatment under the Ayathollah's henchmen in Tehran was horrible from the first day. He lost 40 pounds, began smoking again, and it obviously shortened his life. He died younger than I am.

I looked at that figure, the Election Day was on November 4. They had been in captivity for 444 days. It cost a good man his Presidency, Jimmy Carter, a moral man, a decent man, a man who always tried to tell the truth, unlike some leadership now.

I looked at that clipping about Jerry Plotkin's death and I said, as good a man as Jimmy Carter was personally, he deserved to lose. When the leader of the world's greatest free superpower cannot get American citizens, one businessman and 51 marines and other Gov-

ernment employees and high-ranking State Department people, when he cannot get them out of captivity, he deserves to go down to defeat.

This is not to say that Ronald Reagan turned some magic key and got the 52 hostages home from Iran. But the change of leadership at the top gave the Iranians an excuse to say the Carter years were over. Here is your hostages. We got a fresh start.

This thought hit me, Mr. Speaker. I am wearing the pin of the 1st Armored Division, the main division that is in Bosnia. It is now rumored, and Mr. Christopher and Mr. Perry come right out, our Secretaries of Defense and State, and said, we may have to leave them there longer. This thought hit me, that our men in Bosnia are a form of hostage.

If Mr. Clinton is reelected, they are obviously going to stay. If Mr. Dole is elected, just like Mr. Reagan in 1980, our men are going to come home, men and women from Bosnia.

They are no longer in an armored division. People who know what it takes to keep an armored division up to training speed are now pointing out that you take men out of their M-1 tanks and their Bradley's since last December with no training, it is not an armored division anymore. It is not a mechanized infantry division, it is a light infantry division.

There are 139 days until election night, when we wake up in the morning. If America wants its men and women home from Bosnia, then the best thing they can do is to defeat Bill Clinton and elect the 43rd President of the United States, Bob Dole.

Thinking about our men in Bosnia, I have been promising to do this for a widow, Miriam Dugan from Fort Hood, TX, for months now.

When her husband, who I think is a hero, SFC. Donald Dugan was killed February 3, going beyond his orders to try and defuse a land mine that was set at child-eye level and said to these children, stand back, and told his friends, we are here to make this place safe for Bosnian children, and he said to these children, mine-o, mine-o, boom boom, move back, and then died a few seconds later, this man, who was called McGyver after the TV adventuresome character, here is his picture from the Army Times, Mr. Speaker. If that is not the poster for a manly, tough special forces or armored division sergeant, I do not know what is.

I want to put in the RECORD his widow's letter to the Army Times, who said,

I would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to express their sympathy for my husband's passing. My family and I hope that everyone who knew him remembers him the way he was and not how he has been represented.

She means by this administration, as though he did something wrong to keep Mr. Clinton's skirts clean.

She said,

He is deeply missed and thought of often. Donald will always be close to the hearts of his family and his soldiers.

Earlier she said,

He devoted 17 years serving his country in the U.S. Army. The Army was my husband's life. I am happy he was doing exactly what he enjoyed most when he passed away, working with and protecting his soldiers, his civilians and the children.

I put her statement into the RECORD.

DUGAN WIDOW REMEMBERS HUSBAND, TELLS HIS STORY

I am writing this letter on behalf of my husband, SFC Donald H. Dugan, and my family.

My husband was killed handling an explosive device while deployed in Bosnia.

I would like to take this opportunity to let everyone know that he was not the type of person that the media has represented him to be. He was portrayed as careless for trying to disarm the explosive when specific guidance had been issued to leave explosives alone.

He was not careless—he was caring. He was a very loving and devoted husband, father and military leader. My husband made the ultimate sacrifice. He gave his life to save others.

Through the many cards and letters that I have received from soldiers who worked with my husband, I believe he attempted to disarm the device to protect children who were playing in the area.

Since he is unable to tell his side of the story, I felt it was necessary to write this letter.

No one will ever know the exact facts of what happened that day, but one fact is certain: he was well loved and respected by his soldiers, comrades, friends and family.

Many unfavorable statements have been made about the circumstances surrounding the death of my husband in Bosnia. The people who made these statements did not know him or the type of man he was. Donald was a selfless man who thought of others' needs and welfare ahead of his own.

He devoted 17 years serving his country in the U.S. Army. The Army was my husband's life, and I am happy that he was doing exactly what he enjoyed most when he passed away—working with and protecting soldiers and civilians. He truly believed in the mission in Bosnia and was happy to go.

I would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to express their sympathy for my husband's passing. My family and I hope that everyone who knew him remembers him the way he was and not how he has been represented.

He is deeply missed and thought of often. Donald will always be close to the hearts of his family and soldiers.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.