

prison for violating the State Security Law. It was insinuated that he was paid by the U.S. Government to spy on behalf of the Dalai Lama. No evidence to support such a claim has ever been produced. The 16 hours of film Mr. Choepel sent to India during the first weeks of his project simply contain footage of the traditional music and dance he said he had gone to document.

Persistent inquiries to Chinese authorities regarding Mr. Choepel's whereabouts and the condition of his health have produced little information. I wrote to the head of the Chinese Communist Party soon after Mr. Choepel's detention and received no reply. I raised his case personally in meetings with President Jiang Zemin and other Chinese officials last November in Beijing and received no reply. I have written to President Jiang since then to urge his personal intervention in this case and received no reply. I am just one of many who have sought information about Mr. Choepel to no avail. As of today we have no information as to where Mr. Choepel is being held, or even if he is still alive.

This is an outrageous situation. A former Fulbright Scholar has been deprived of 18 years of his life as a result of spurious charges by a government that will not even reveal his whereabouts. I have urged the White House to raise Mr. Choepel's case with President Jiang. I plan to do the same. If President Jiang is interested in fostering closer ties with the United States, he could make no gesture more meaningful than ordering his release.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that excerpts from an article entitled "Who Is Invited to the Banquet?" by Jeff Kaufman of the Rutland Daily Herald be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Rutland Daily Herald, Oct. 23, 1997]

WHO IS INVITED TO THE BANQUET?—TIBETAN FROM VERMONT REMAINS IN CHINESE PRISON
(By Jeff Kaufman)

In a few weeks, the Clinton administration will welcome Chinese President Jiang Zemin on his first state visit to the United States. Champagne, smiles, encouraging words and a good dose of pomp and circumstance will be broadcast, not just to Americans, but around the world. Sidebar statements about human and workers' rights will be drowned out by televised images that will instantly convey the central message of such a historic meeting: The leaders of the world's most powerful countries are celebrating joint ventures and common purpose.

* * * * *
Anonymity for political prisoners is a tyrant's ally, so here is a name and a story to personalize the kind of cruelty imposed by China's prison archipelago. This individual case may be not be typical in that it involves a young man who left the safety of America to travel to his native Tibet, but it is all too typical in its show of intolerance, judicial abuse and lack of regard for basic standards of human rights.

Tibetan exile and Fulbright scholar Ngawang Choepal came to this country at the age of 27 to study ethnomusicology at Middlebury College in 1993. In the summer of 1995, he returned to Tibet to film a documen-

tary about traditional Tibetan music and dance. Sixteen hours of video were sent to friends in the West; they show beautiful images and sounds of a great culture, but no military installations, no political protests, not a critical word against China.

Nonetheless, Chinese authorities arrested Ngawang Choepal in Lhasa's Shigatse market in September 1995. He was incarcerated for 15 months without being allowed to meet his family, independent legal counsel, or American representatives. Sen. Patrick Leahy visited Beijing in November 1996 and appealed directly to President Jiang Zemin on behalf of Ngawang. That plea was at first followed by a vague promise to examine the case. A month later, Chinese authorities convicted Ngawang Choepal of espionage and providing information "to the Dalai Lama clique's government-in-exile and to an organization of a certain foreign country."

The sentence imposed was stunningly severe: 18 years in prison. Eighteen years in a Chinese jail for videotaping people dancing to old Tibetan songs.

The Chinese government has ignored assurances from the United States that Ngawang Choepal is just a non-political music student, several congressional resolutions in his support, pleas from his family and a number of worldwide letter-writing campaigns.

In fact, the international Campaign for Tibet reports that the American Embassy in Beijing is not even certain in what prison Ngawang is being held.

Ngawang Choepal's case is tragic on its own very personal terms and as a reflection of a much wider Chinese decision to wipe out all opposition no matter how benign and no matter how inadvertent.

Such an outrageous violation of human rights should be a serious obstacle to productive relations between the United States and China (it certainly would be if the offending country had less trade potential).

Sadly, President Clinton and in essence our whole country will soon host the man who is responsible for locking up Ngawang Choepal and who could instantly set him free. When President Jiang Zemin visits America later this month, he'll be toasted, feasted, and courted by businesses and lobbyists. Ngawang Choepal's voice will not pass through the thick stone walls that he faces every day.

Who will speak out for him and thousands like him?

It should be our president and secretary of state using the impressive clout of the United States. Soon we will see what this country really stands for.

DEATH OF FORMER SENATE PRESS GALLERY SUPERINTENDENT DON C. WOMACK

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I was saddened to learn that Don C. Womack, who served as superintendent of the U.S. Senate Press Gallery from 1973 to 1981, died of cancer Thursday morning at his home in Arlington at the age of 87.

Don was born in Danville, Virginia August 22, 1910. He moved to the Washington Area in 1935, and attended the Corcoran School of Art and George Washington University. He managed a string of movie theaters in Northern Virginia before taking a job as staff assistant in the House of Representatives Periodical Press Gallery in 1948, beginning a 33-year career as a press liaison on Capitol Hill.

Don began working in the Senate Press Gallery in 1951. He briefly left to serve as superintendent of the House Periodical Gallery in 1954 and 1955,

then returned to the Senate to be deputy superintendent, and continued in that capacity until his promotion in 1973.

Don became superintendent of the Senate gallery during a tumultuous time—the beginning of the Watergate hearings. He weathered the storm, and received a commendation from the Standing Committee of Correspondents, the governing body of the Congressional press galleries, for his handling of the hearings.

During his tenure as superintendent, Don presided over press coverage of the Senate during such major events as the end of the Vietnam War, the Panama Canal Treaties debates, and the ABSCAM hearings. He assisted with media arrangements for the Republican and Democratic Conventions and the Presidential Inaugurals from 1948 to 1988. He was a tremendous help to Senators, staff members and the members of the press.

A Southern gentleman with a quick wit and warm sense of humor, Don was one of the true characters to roam the halls of Congress. He was beloved by reporters and Senators alike for his storytelling, his affable nature, and his seemingly endless repertoire of jokes. He will be greatly missed.

My deepest sympathy goes out to his wife, Mary Womack; his two daughters, Kay Duda of Alexandria and Patricia Fair of Eatontown, New Jersey; his five grandchildren; eleven great grandchildren, and his great-great grandson.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

REPORT OF ACHIEVEMENTS IN AERONAUTICS AND SPACE FOR FISCAL YEAR 1996—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 75

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit this report on the Nation's achievements in aeronautics and space during fiscal year (FY) 1996, as required under section 206 of the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2476). Aeronautics and space activities in FY 1996 involved 14 contributing departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

A wide variety of aeronautics and space developments took place during FY 1996. The Administration issued an integrated National Space Policy, consolidating a number of previous policy directives into a singular, coherent vision of the future for the civil, commercial, and national security space sectors. The Administration also issued a formal policy on the future management and use of the U.S. Global Positioning System.