

mother had to investigate the weather vane. I reluctantly followed her to the chapel next door. The steeple had blown off and buried the weather vane in the soft ground. We later learned that this was the eye of the hurricane passing over.

Just as we returned home, the sky blackened and the rain and wind increased. Gram had poured the coffee when we heard a pounding on the door. It was cousin Gen (Mrs. Clifford Raynor) who lived further south on Library Avenue. She called "Come quick! The ocean is coming! Get in the car!"

Gram became obstinate. She had no intention of leaving her home, her three-colored cat or her mother's silver tray. I pushed her ahead of me to the car while she clutched the tray. She balked again before the open door.

And then I saw it. A solid, square, gray wall of water about thirteen feet high, slowly but steadily devouring the dividing line between sky and grass at the library, about fifty feet south of the car . . . no curling wave, just a wall. I stood at the car door and watched only the line which appeared stationary. It was hypnotic. I often had told friends of my recurring dream, "that dream," I called it, where in the dream, I ran slowly up Beach Lane, the ocean behind me. It now sounds too preposterous to be true, however it needs to go into this personal account.

Slowly, or so I thought, I pushed Gram into the car, but with such force, that she hit her head on the opposite side. Cousin Gen sped us up to the hangar at the Westhampton Beach Airport, on Riverhead Road. Gram, Mother, the silver tray and I joined others sitting on the floor, heads against the wall. I think there were only a few people there. It was very quiet. I don't remember any conversation. I do recall picturing the map of Long Island in my mind, and thinking, "It's so small, so flat, so narrow. Of course, the ocean will reclaim it one day. It just happens to be in our time. It will be no different from being rolled under a wave, it just takes a little longer."

Before the night was over, somebody picked us up and delivered us to the home of Gram's cousins, George and Mame Burns, on Osborne Avenue in Riverhead. The next morning, the sun was shining brightly as Mother and I returned home.

We found a forty foot boat from Yacht Basin docked against our kitchen windows, alongside the propane gas tanks. The untouched coffee cups were still on the kitchen table. The ocean had washed in about twelve inches above the floor of the house, and everything smelled terrible. The dining room floor had buckled, but the cat was safely upstairs. We felt very fortunate.

We went right up to Main Street to see what had happened, as did everybody else in the village who was able. Our village was a shambles. There was little conversation. It was very quiet. In those days, everyone, summer and winter residents, knew each other. We were a very close-knit community. I remember Dr. James Ewing saying to my mother, "Toni, this town is in shock!"

Our house was one of the few on Library Avenue left on its foundation. Men were at the foot of our street, clearing away the wreckage of Raynor's Garage, searching for bodies from the dunes, and removing them to the temporary morgue at the Country Club. This took days, and the weather had turned very hot.

Several days passed before we could communicate with my father, Jeremiah Ferguson. He was up in Western Nassau County, and couldn't get in touch with us. In turn, we couldn't get in touch with them. The newspapers and communications personnel had reported that Westhampton Beach had been washed right off the map. When he and

other family members finally got through to the headquarters set up in the Patio Building, they only learned that our names had yet appeared on the list of missing persons.

The following days were spent carting water, sandwiches, and disinfectant to our house, Police Headquarters, the National Guard, and the Red Cross. It all became a blur of mud, dripping carpets, the smell of mildew. We couldn't believe that the ocean had done this to us, but we just kept moving, most of the time firm in the knowledge that Westhampton Beach would again appear on the map, even though it might take twenty years for that to happen!

FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT
FINANCING, AND RELATED PRO-
GRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT,
1999

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM KOLBE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 1998

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4569) making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes:

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment, I appreciate the motives of the proponents of this amendment which would eliminate funding for the U.S. Army School of the Americas (SOA). But I disagree with their assessment of the school and its graduates. The closure of the SOA would be detrimental to our relationship with Latin American countries, and could hinder progress in human rights efforts in those countries.

The School of the Americas was established as part of President John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress. It was created from the existing U.S. Army Caribbean Training Center in Panama. In 1984, the SOA was moved from Panama to Fort Benning, Georgia. The purpose of the SOA is to provide guidance to Latin American military personnel so they can respond to drug trafficking, natural disasters, and human rights challenges in their countries. The SOA emphasizes the role of a professional military force in a democratic society. I support these objectives, as democratically elected civilian governments of Latin America support them.

Each year, soldiers from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela and the United States attend the SOA. No other school in the world with such a small operations budget brings together future civilian and military leaders of 16 countries in a purposeful effort to prepare for the future, strengthen alliance within a hemispheric region, to reinforce the principles of democracy, and increase mutual understanding and cooperation among neighboring countries.

The SOA has a very difficult task. It is charged with teaching students from countries with long histories of dictatorships and abuse, the value of promoting human rights. The curriculum is structured so that each student re-

ceives, on average, 30 minutes of human rights training and/or exposure every day. Of course, it is impossible to qualify the number of abuses that the SOA's human rights training has prevented. Consequently, the debate often turns to a finger-pointing game of highlighting the infrequent, but certainly reprehensible, lapses of judgement by a few SOA graduates.

Those who want to see the School close its doors focus their criticism on a few short passages (some less than a sentence in length) from three U.S. Army Intelligence training manuals provided to students in a few SOA classes in the 1980's. Most important is the fact that it has never been established that any of these passages were actually used or taught in a classroom at the School, nor was the "manual" developed by the SOA. Furthermore, not a single human rights violation can be reasonably linked or attributed to the School or its training manuals.

Yes, some 100 of the 60,000 graduates have been guilty of documented human rights abuses. But let's not forget about the other 59,900 graduates. Over 100 of these SOA graduates served or currently serve their nation and its people from the very highest levels of civilian and military office—from chief executive to commander of major military units.

A fair and objective assessment of Latin American history over the last 50 years will demonstrate that the U.S. Army School of the Americas saves lives. For example, in the early 1980's, El Salvador was accused of about 2,000 human rights violations per month; in the latter part of the decade, that figure dropped to approximately 20 each month. Although SOA cannot take all the credit, almost 50 percent of El Salvadoran officers have graduated from the school since 1986.

Not even the most vehement opponent of the School can deny that the overwhelming majority of graduates honorably serve their countries as professional men and women. While failure do occur, I challenge any opponent to demonstrate any correlation between reported misconduct by individual SOA graduates and the professional education and training they received at the School.

If Congress were to close the SOA, it would negatively affect our ability to have a meaningful and cost-effective vehicle to promote democracy and human rights within the ranks of the Latin American military. The State Department, Pentagon, and participating Latin American governments all agree that the SOA program is the best approach to achieving important national security and foreign policy objectives.

If the program were abolished, training for Latin American military personnel would become unavailable or more expensive. Fewer officers and enlisted personnel would be exposed to U.S. training and democratic values. In my view, that is not the way to promote human rights abroad.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this ill-advised amendment.

ATROCITIES IN KOSOVO

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 18, 1998

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Commission on Security and