

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

AMERICAN VETERANS COMMITTEE (AVC) INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS PLATFORM AND RESOLUTIONS

HON. ALBERT RUSSELL WYNN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2000

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the American Veterans Committee (AVC). The American Veterans Committee is an outstanding organization of American veterans with ongoing concerns and interest in our foreign policy and international affairs. I submit for the RECORD their International Affairs Platform and Resolutions, as prepared by the American Veterans Committee, International Affairs Commission and adopted by the American Veterans Committee (AVC) National Board at the National Board Meeting, Tuesday, August 26, 1997, with appropriate changes as of November 1999.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS PLATFORM

We, the members of the American Veterans Committee (AVC), believe that in international affairs the objective of the United States of America is the maintenance of peace. All else aside, the world must avoid the holocaust of nuclear war. The end of the Cold War, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the fall of the Berlin Wall brought much hope of the avoidance of nuclear war—at least among the major powers—in the foreseeable future. Many international problems remain, and the United States has been active—along with the United Nations—in dealing with hostilities in the Middle East and the Balkan States, Central and Southeast Asia, such African states as Somalia, Rwanda and Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo), and in Central America and the Caribbean. The work of the United States has aided in establishing and restoring elective governments wherever possible.

Within that framework, our foreign policy, like our domestic policy, must seek always to enhance social justice for and the welfare of the individual, in all classes and without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, language, sex, sexual orientation, or age. Our policies should strive for realization of the world envisioned in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a world in which all might eat and sleep in safety, live under and vote in an elective government, with realistic hope and opportunity their reasonable aspirations.

I. THE UNITED NATIONS AND WORLD GOVERNANCE

The United Nations (UN), despite its weakness, continues to be the best hope for peace in the world. American support of the UN must be an essential part of our foreign policy. The authority of the UN must be strengthened in a process in which selected elements of national sovereignty will be progressively transferred, in a manner that will enhance the fundamental freedoms and the well-being of all the peoples of the world.

AVC supports the following principles, reforms and programs for a more effective United Nations:

1. International law governing disputes and conduct of UN member states, and other

states, with one another should be improved, clarified, codified, and obeyed. The U.S. and all member states should work within the UN for the development of clear, well understood and respected international law. All member states should accept the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to interpret and implement international law. Other steps of clarification of and respect for international law might include:

(a) a procedure whereby the Security Council would decide, in cases of continuing bilateral disputes that threaten world security, to require the UN member states involved (including Security Council members) either to present themselves to conciliation proceedings or to take the dispute to the ICJ;

(b) General Assembly authorization of the Secretary General, under Article 96 of the Charter, to turn to the ICJ for advisory opinions;

(c) the establishment of an International Criminal Court to try individuals accused of specific violations of international law; and

(d) provision for individuals or groups that believe their rights have not been respected to petition the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights for reaction and then, if the issue is not resolved, to petition the General Assembly for a hearing.

2. The United States and other debtor states must pay their United Nations past and current dues and assessments in full to honor their treaty obligations. Consequences for continued non-payment must be instituted.

3. The effectiveness of the UN must be improved through better financing, including such mechanisms as—

(a) a treaty among member states to establish partial self-financing of UN peace-keeping and other programs through a worldwide tax on airline tickets, currency exchanges, and the value of ocean freight;

(b) a surcharge on international postage items;

(c) rent for the exclusive use of satellite positions;

(d) national legislation within member states to ease the way to voluntary individual contributions to UN programs through tax-deductibility of contributions; and

(e) sale of UN bonds to private individuals and of extra premium postage stamps.

4. The UN structures for dispute mediation and conflict prevention and resolution should be strengthened through the establishment of a UN Peace Observation Corps of 100 to 200 highly-trained professional observers and mediators to assist the Security Council and Secretary General—backed by a competent research and analysis unit—to track potential crisis situations and, further, to identify the most successful approaches to conflict prevention and resolution from past crises.

5. United Nations peace-keeping capability should be improved through such means as:

(a) predesignation of peace-keeping units in their own forces by member states with provision for joint training of such designated units to be financed either through voluntary contributions or regular peace-keeping expenditures;

(b) a task force established by the Security Council to study the practical detail of a small UN Readiness Force, to be placed at the disposal of the Security Council—10,000

troops composed of volunteers contributed by member states in small units (companies or battalions)—and with the purpose of intervention in the early stages of possible conflict before it expands to widespread fighting and, when not engaged in peace-keeping operations to train peace-keeping personnel of interested member states;

(c) a second task force established by the Security Council to investigate practical steps to use more effectively the Military Staff Committee (Article 47 of the UN Charter) with responsibility for enforcement, peace-keeping operation, and disarmament.

6. Further international cooperation for peace and sustainable development should be enhanced through the establishment of a UN Economic Security Council to take the place of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), its functions being to balance the interests of citizens, nations, and corporations in an increasingly globalized economy and, in particular, to improve coordination on economic and social programs within the UN system.

7. Movement should be made toward a genuine career UN civil service, with training of UN staff on all levels to include the recognition of diversity of cultures. And, further, with the elimination of political appointments, level-by-level over a period of years, with all positions in the UN Secretariat except those of the Secretary General and his immediate staff being held only by those who have passed the UN entry examination or met other well-established professional criteria including maintenance of a high-level of performance.

8. The influence of civil society at the UN should be strengthened through measures such as a biennial Citizens' Assembly at the UN representing all NGOs. The Citizens' Assembly would develop concepts and proposals for transmittal to and discussion by the General Assembly, especially as regards widest possible participation of NGOs at all UN conferences.

9. The integrity and independence of the Office of the Secretary General, as expressed in the UN Charter, are crucial to the strength and effectiveness of the United Nations. The U.S. should oppose any attempt to weaken the powers of this office. AVC commends the leadership of the present Secretary General Kofi Annan, in making the organization work more effectively.

10. The formation of supra-national authorities of a regional nature consistent with the UN Charter and treaty arrangements which limit the sovereignty of the participating nations in order to secure mutual advantages, such as the European Union, Euratom, and others. The United States should further encourage initiatives through the Council of Europe or otherwise to create, consolidate, and strengthen institutions which may lead to a politically stable and prosperous European entity.

11. In pursuit of the goals of the United Nations and the dream of a world free from exploitation as well as the scourge of war, the establishment of democratic governments throughout the world should be encouraged and persistently supported.

II. WORLD VETERANS FEDERATION (WVF)

The American Veterans Committee points with pride to and pledges continuing support for the World Veterans Federation, a worldwide organization of former combatants

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

whose activities are a remarkable example of the kind of private international cooperation on which lasting world peace and justice can be built.

III. NUCLEAR TESTING AND DISARMAMENT

Complete elimination of nuclear weapons testing and the establishment of international controls on this most dangerous weapons technology must be the goal of American foreign policy. Our world finds itself in the unique and unenviable position where one generation can make life on Earth unlivable for later generations.

The adoption by the United Nations of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in September 1996 is a significant advance with all five Permanent Security Council states among the signatories. Complete and total disarmament is the ultimate *summum bonum*, but this is an objective remote in time; immediate achievement is not feasible. Efforts toward that goal should be made by the United States nonetheless and should be encouraged in other nations. Mankind can never reach its true destiny if it must continue to allocate so high a percentage of its resources to forge the weapons of war.

IV. CHEMICAL WEAPONS—UN TREATY BANNING SUCH WEAPONRY

The American Veterans Committee (AVC) without reservation supports the adoption by the United Nations of a treaty that bans in the world the use of chemical weapons. And at the time of the development of this AVC/IAC Platform, AVC urges the United States Senate to support ratification of the UN treaty on chemical weapons.

AVC believes that the world-wide ban on testing nuclear weapons on the total elimination of the anti-personnel landmines, and the ban on the use of chemical weapons have a major role in ensuring the continuation of civilization on this Earth.

V. UNITED STATES AND ITS ALLIES

Inevitably differences will arise between the United States and its allies, but these are differences which can be and must be resolved around the conference table. In its negotiations the US should seek no more than the rights and privileges of a willing partner.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was formed in a world considerably different from the world of today. The American Veterans Committee (AVC) supports the reassessment by the NATO nations of their membership and role. Its continued organization and operation should reflect the changing purpose. AVC recognizes the appropriateness of NATO extending its membership to the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland. Further, AVC recognizes the importance of the continuing discussion of NATO and Russia with respect to a broader membership, while at the same time being aware of the concern of Russia with respect to broad membership that may also include former Soviet republics.

In Latin America we must bend every effort to erase the image of the United States as a prosperous, patronizing, and paternalistic benefactor or intervenor. It should be the objective of the US foreign policy to create instead an image of a US that wants to be a good partner as well as a good neighbor—in helping the peoples of Latin America work out their own destiny.

The US should, at every turn, encourage the UN or the Organization of American States (OAS) to be the forum in which to resolve differences and disagreements among or with our Latin American neighbors. We must show by word and deed that we have no desire to impose our own form of government or way of life upon any country of Latin America. The United States nevertheless continues to believe in the effectiveness of a democratic form of government.

Relations with Cuba continue to be difficult, but we believe that the US should resume humanitarian aid to the Cuban people, an aid cut off as a result of the downing of two US civilian planes by the Cubans in the Cuban waters. The policy of penalizing other countries which trade with US firms—firms that have been nationalized by the Cuban government—has seriously strained relations with some of our closest allies and, therefore, should be abandoned as soon as possible.

VI. THE UNITED STATES AND THE WORLD

At the end of the twentieth century and the second millennium, the US must continue to be willing to help the developing nations of Africa, Asia, and Latin America to direct their own destinies. The UN forum must be held open to the developing nations. And the services of the UN specialized agencies, for example, the World Health Organization (WHO), and the many non-governmental organizations (the NGOs) must appropriately be focused on the needs of the developing nations.

The gap between the social and economic bases of the developed countries and those of the developing countries continues to widen. The decline in relative socio-economic position of developing nations, accompanied as it is by a population explosion (now being recently addressed), has led to dangerous tension and the outbreak of violence and disorder in many areas of the world. Africa faces particularly difficult problems, and African institutions seeking to solve these problems, such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU), deserve our continuing support.

Acknowledged that the ability of the United States to underwrite services in assistance of all foreign countries is limited, its efforts to aid developing countries should be utilized at points of greatest potential for success. Priority should be given to those countries which can make the most rational and productive use of such aid, humanitarian considerations aside under conditions of famine and natural disasters. In evaluating the effectiveness of United States' aid, due weight should be given not only to economic and environmental considerations but also to the strengthening of democratic institutions and the consolidation of efforts on a regional basis.

Only when asked and only when it is clear that armed force is necessary to thwart a take-over by powers inimical to the survival of a weak and developing nation should the United States furnish military assistance. Even then, it should be with the approval and cooperative assistance of the United Nations and regional organizations.

VII. RUSSIA AND CHINA

The end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union into Russia and the several independent states—plus the freeing of Eastern Europe and the separation of the three Baltic States—has caused a monumental improvement in the international relations of the United States and Russia and the Eastern European states as well. With many problems remaining, all have moved toward democratic governments and free market systems.

China also does not seem as threatening as it has in the past—as the “free market economy” has penetrated even this nation state. At the same time, quarrels between the United States and China—both with respect to the independence of Taiwan and “human rights”—are expected to continue. Trade between the U.S. and China will surely expand despite the disapproval in the US of the latter China policy. The US should use its trading relationship to continue to press for relaxation of China's stern measures against

dissent, especially as China prepares to take over during this year Hong Kong—once the market capital of Southeast Asia.

VIII. ISRAEL AND THE ARAB STATES

The American Veterans Committee strongly supports the efforts of the United States to continue the peace process begun at Camp David in 1979, continued at Madrid in 1991, further affirmed at Oslo in 1993, and today reflected in the Wye Memorandum agreements of the Prime Minister of Israel and the Head of the Palestinian Movement. Although no rigid deadline should be set, the ultimate goal should be the fulfillment of the UN Security Council Resolution 242 (1967), which requires that Israel evacuate the territory occupied in that year in return for recognition by Arab countries of Israel's sovereignty, territorial integrity, political integrity, and peace. Exception must be made for areas absolutely necessary for Israel's existence as a state.

IX. WORLD TRADE

Unlimited global economic growth through global free trade in a global free market. That has long been an American dream; for some, almost a religion. In 1945, two great international financial institutions (IFIs) were erected, and a third envisaged, to make the dream real. In collaboration with other World War II winners—all great capitalist powers—and some developing world possessors of great natural resources, the U.S. hosted and led the Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, meetings that launched the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the “World Bank”) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). A third institution, to promote and regulate global trade, was postponed. In 1995, however, it opened for business as the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Two assumptions that undergirded the Bretton Woods institutions' establishment are deeply flawed. The first is that growth and enhanced world trade will benefit everyone. The second is that growth will not be constrained by the inherent limits of a finite planet.

The first fallacious assumption was summarized and popularized by President Kennedy's famous dictum, “A rising tide lifts all boats.” The trouble with that is, of course, many more people don't have boats than do. For the have-nots, the rising tide means run for the hills or drown on the beach.

At Bretton Woods, U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau advocated rapid “material progress on an earth infinitely blessed with natural riches.” He asked participants to embrace the “elementary economic axiom . . . that prosperity has no fixed limits. It is not a finite substance to be diminished by division.”

That perception is now widely controverted, most importantly in the “Earth Summit” deliberations and agreements at Rio in 1992. But, as economist David C. Korten points out, the World Bank and IMF, in their “structural adjustment programs,” are still holding faithfully to Morgenthau's half-century-old mandate. They “have pressured countries of the South to open their borders and convert their economies from diverse production for local self-sufficiency to export production for the global market.”

Under the regime of the Bretton Woods institutions and the new World Trade Organization (WTO), the planet's far from infinite resources are being divided in ways that are, first, wasteful and environmentally unsustainable; and, second, so uneven, unjust and cruel as to incite armed revolutions—some now underway.

The brave new world of IFIs, trans-national corporations (TNCs), and free trade has enormously benefitted the fortunate few

and as enormously dispossessed the unfortunate many. The winners win big; the number of billionaires on our planet increased from 145 in 1987 to over 400 now. The combined wealth of these individuals equals the combined incomes of the poorest 45% of the world's people. But the losers lose even bigger: Korten tells us that World Bank programs alone have created millions of refugees, many in their own countries.

The WTO and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) are creating new jobs, often by displacing others. They are eroding labor and environmental standards. The American Veterans Committee favors renewed and thorough public discussion of both these treaties, followed by their renegotiation and extensive revision or replacement with others more friendly to people.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS RESOLUTIONS

1. THE BALKAN STATES

Having goals of peace, security, and development in the Balkans and well aware that what was once Yugoslavia is now Yugoslavia/Serbia, Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Slovenia;

Noting with appreciation that the World Veterans Federation (WVF) brought together its member organizations (International Conference, Luxembourg, 5-7 May 1996) to arrive at "principles to be followed and measures to be taken" for attainment of those goals . . . and that the Luxembourg International Conference carefully took into account the position adopted in Dayton (Ohio/USA) with respect to Bosnia-Herzegovina;

Aware that peoples of different ethnic, religious, and historical background do have differences, sometimes substantial almost insurmountable differences;

Supporting the elections of a democratic state and urging the peoples to support the results of the elections wherever in the Balkan States;

Also supporting the position that individuals accused of "war crimes or crimes against humanity" must be brought before the appropriate court;

Believing with respect to the totality of the Balkan States that "recognition by every State in the region of all the other States in the region and renunciation of all forms of nationalism leading to the notion of 'greater State,' ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and intolerance toward minorities";

Continuing to respect the final act of Helsinki, which emphasizes the security and cooperation in Europe;

The American Veterans Committee continues to adopt the position that mediation and discussion, together with (a) peace-keeping, economic, and infrastructural support from NATO and the UN, including in both instances the United States of America, and (b) vital governing provisions Bosnia-Herzegovina and other Balkan States will lead to a state of multi-ethnic, multi-culture, and multi-denomination with full respect for the rights of all the people concerned.

2. BAN ON "ANTI-PERSONNEL" MINES

Recognizing that the President of the United States has himself used the phrase "global humanitarian tragedy caused by the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines";

Reviewing the long-standing position of the American Veterans Committee (AVC) in support of the total ban of land mines, or anti-personnel mines;

Recalling also that the statement to the President of the United States of generals of the United States Armed Forces established that land mines hurt the United States more than they helped our Armed Forces;

Continuing to observe that around the world children and women and other civil-

ians have sustained injuries and even death from land mines.

The American Veterans Committee continues respectfully to urge the President of the United States to adopt a strong position with the goal of eliminating land mines, or anti-personnel mines, from our global life, a position by the President that includes the end of use by our Armed Forces of such mines.

3. CUBA

Observing Fidel Castro has been in power in Cuba for more than forty years and that all efforts to remove him and change his regime have been and continue to be futile;

Believing that the Helms-Burton Act has not been and will not be effective in achieving its stated goal(s), and judging further that this Act of Congress has only created conflict between us and our close allies;

The American Veterans Committee believes that the Helms-Burton Act should be repealed; further, that the United States should establish diplomatic ties or permit commercial relationships with Cuba . . . the U.S. acting thus in its own self-interest.

4. ISRAEL AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Applauding in the early days of the American Veterans Committee (AVC) the establishment of the nation of Israel;

Supporting the leadership of President Jimmy Carter in bringing together Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel and Egypt's leader Anwar Sadat and further supporting the agreement developing from the meeting of Begin and Sadat;

Noting with satisfaction the further movement toward conciliation, reconciliation, and peace formulated by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and the present and immediate past Prime Ministers of Israel;

Urging the leaders of Israel and Palestine today to continue using mediation in arriving at agreements, including an agreement with respect to East Jerusalem;

AVC continues to support the right of Israel to peace and economic and socio-cultural development and the use of the instrument of discussion and mediation in the consideration of all elements and aspects of difference and conflict between Israel and the neighboring peoples and nations—whether they be Palestine, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, or any other nation state; AVC in supporting the above stated developments in Israel in no way implies that it does not support similar development of Palestine as well as all and other nations as they too seek peace and improvement of the quality of life for their peoples.

5. THE UNITED NATIONS—SUPPORT WITH REFORM

Recognizing that the American Veterans Committee (AVC) has been a staunch supporter of the United Nations since its inception in 1945 and has taken a very active role in the World Veterans Federation, a role that has enabled AVC to serve in the capacity of an NGO;

Recognizing nevertheless that time has brought the need for reform of a number of the systems and activities of the UN and those of some of its member states;

Observing further that some member states and even our own nation, the United States, have failed to meet their financial obligations as dues-paying members in the UN;

Resolved by the American Veterans Committee:

1. THAT the United States and other debtor states must pay their United Nations dues in full to fulfill their treaty obligations; that consequences for continued non-payment must be instituted.

2. THAT the effectiveness of the UN must be improved through better financing, in-

cluding such mechanisms as (a) a treaty among member states to establish partial self-financing of UN peace-keeping and other programs through a worldwide tax on airline tickets and the value of ocean freight; (b) a surcharge on international postage items; (c) rent for the exclusive use of satellite positions; (d) national legislation within member states to ease the way to voluntary individual contributions to UN programs through tax-deductibility of contributions; and (e) sale of UN bonds to private individuals and of extra premium postage stamps;

3. THAT the UN structures for dispute mediation and conflict prevention and resolution be strengthened through the establishment of a UN Peace Observation Corps of 100-200 highly-trained professional observers and mediators to assist the Security Council and Secretary General—backed by a competent research and analysis unit—to track potential crisis situations and, further, to identify the most successful approaches to conflict prevention and resolution from past crises;

4. THAT United Nations peace-keeping capability be improved through such means as (a) predesignation of peace-keeping units in their own forces by member states with provision for joint training of such designated units to be financed either through voluntary contributions or regular peace-keeping expenditures; (b) a task force established by the Security Council to study the practical detail of a small UN Readiness Force, to be placed at the disposal of the Security Council—10,000 troops composed of volunteers contributed by member states in small units (companies or battalions) . . . and with the purpose of intervention in the early stages of the possible conflict before it expands to widespread fighting and, when not engaged in peace-keeping operations to train peace-keeping personnel of interested member states; (c) a second task force established by the Security Council to investigate practical steps to revive the Military Staff Committee (foreseen in the UN Charter) with responsibility for enforcement, peace-keeping operation, and disarmament;

5. THAT the Security Council become more responsive to the concerns of the General Assembly through arranging for regular presentation of the Assembly to the Council and discussion by the latter of the views of the General Assembly, as reflected in the Assembly Resolutions, with the President of the Assembly given ex-officio membership on the Council, and through continued study of the representative qualities of the UNSC membership;

6. THAT the rule of law among nations be strengthened through (a) a movement toward universal acceptance of the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice by introducing a procedure where the Security Council would decide, in cases where continuing bilateral disputes threaten world security, to require the UN member states involved (including Security Council members) either to present themselves to conciliation proceedings or to take the dispute to the International Court of Justice; (b) General Assembly authorization of the Secretary General to turn to the International Court of Justice for advisory opinions; (c) the establishment of an International Criminal Court to try individuals accused of specific violations of international law; and (d) provisions that individuals or groups who consider that their rights have not been respected may petition the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights for reaction and then, if the issue is not resolved, to petition the General Assembly for a hearing;

7. THAT further international cooperation for peace and substantial development be enhanced through the establishment of a UN

Economic Security Council to take the place of ECOSOC, its functions being to balance the interests of citizens, nations, and corporations in an increasingly globalized economy and, in particular, to improve coordination on economic and social programs within the UN system;

8. THAT movement be made toward a genuine career UN civil service, with training of UN staff on all levels to include the recognition of diversity of cultures. And, further, with the elimination of political appointments, level-by-level over a period of years, with all positions in the UN Secretariat except those of the Secretary General and his immediate staff being held only by those who have passed the UN entry examination or met other well-established professional criteria including maintenance of a high-level of performance;

9. THAT the influence of civil society at the UN be strengthened through enhancing the role and access of citizen organizations with regard to their participation in proceedings of the General Assembly and all UN conferences through a biennial Citizens' Assembly at the UN representing all NGOs to develop concepts and proposals for transmittal to and discussion by the UN General Assembly;

10. THAT isolationism within the United States be fought in all its forms, as the US with about five percent of the world's population needs the UN to serve as a necessary and vital bridge to the rest of the world; and

11. THAT funding of the UN Trusteeship Council should end inasmuch as there are no longer any Trust Territories, thereby eliminating a stark example of bureaucratic waste within the UN itself and setting a precedent for other comparable action as warranted.

6. US RATIFICATION OF RELEVANT CONVENTIONS, PROTOCOLS, AND TREATIES ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Recognizing the importance of the United Nations Conventions on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and other international conventions and treaties which promote the human rights of women and their desire for full equality with men in all pursuits of life;

The American Veterans Committee (AVC) calls for the United States Senate (a) to endorse the CEDAW which would make the United States a signatory to the CEDAW, and (b) to support other international conventions and treaties promoting the rights and interests of women;

AVC affirms the proposition spelled out in The Platform For Action that human rights are universal and equally applicable to women; the inherent and indivisible rights of women must be affirmed by the international community, and support the Mission Statement from Beijing that "equality between women and men is a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice and is also a necessary and fundamental prerequisite for equality, development, and peace." [N.B. The previous statement flows from the United Nations 4th International Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China, September 1995.]

7. US RATIFICATION OF UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COVENANTS

Supporting since the adoption by the United Nations nearly a half-century ago of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" the philosophy and concept of human rights for all people all over the globe;

Supporting further the United Nations Human Rights Covenants on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights—as well as the United Nations Human Rights Covenants on Civil and Political Rights;

Noting that more than 175 nations of the world have ratified the UN Human Rights Covenants;

Noting further that the United States of America became a signatory, during the administration of President Jimmy Carter to the UN HR Covenants;

The American Veterans Committee (AVC) respectfully urges the President of the United States to take all immediate and reasonable steps to move the United States not only as a signatory but also as a nation ratifying both United Nations Human Rights Covenants (a) Economic, Social, and Cultural as well as (b) Civil and Political Rights.

8. US SUPPORT FOR THE REPORT ON THE IMPACT OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDREN

Noting with satisfaction the release of the important study of the "Impact Of Armed Conflict On Children" (Grace Machel Study);

Reaffirming the American Veterans Committee's traditional support for strict adherence to international humanitarian laws and human rights standards in situations of armed conflict;

Reaffirming further our support for the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child;

The American Veterans Committee (a) calls upon the international community to offer special care and protection of refugee and internally placed children and (b) further calls international support for the findings of the of the Report, including calling upon governments to prevent the recruitment of children under the age of 18 and to demobilize any children under that age.

9. THE UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION/US AND THE WORLD FEDERALIST ASSOCIATION

Recognizing for decades that the World Federalist Association (WFA) in the United States and World Federalism elsewhere in the world have appropriately emphasized the global nature of the Earth and our life thereon;

Recognizing further that the work of the United Nations Associations/US in its support of the United Nations itself has similarly reflected an understanding of the global nature of the world;

Observing that both of these organizations have emphasized the great need of peoples to work together for a better world at the same time their governments work together in the United Nations for peace and security;

Having members of the American Veterans Committee (AVC) also in positions of leadership and membership in the WFA and likewise in positions of leadership in the United Nations Association/US;

Believing today that the WFA position is still sound and that its annual and regional and assembly meetings are productive . . . likewise noting the effectiveness and value of the National Assembly of the UNA/US;

Believing today that the WFA position is still sound and that its national and regional meetings are productive, having produced recent leadership in advancing the international criminal court, the Hague Appeal for Peace and adequate UN funding . . . likewise noting the effectiveness and value of the results achieved by the national and regional assemblies of the UNA/US;

American Veterans Committee finds that both the work of the United Nations Association/US and the World Federalist Association have goals and programs that lead to a stronger and more productive relationship of the peoples in the nations of the world; and, therefore, AVC supports both of these organizations.

10. WORLD VETERANS FEDERATION—A HALF CENTURY OF AVC SUPPORT

Reviewing with gratification the nearly half century history of the World Veterans Federation (WVF) and the funding membership of the American Veterans Committee

(AVC) in WVF in 1950 as well as the continuing AVC membership now in 1997;

Reviewing also the long and consistent programs and work of WVF in behalf of veterans as well as those who have suffered on account of war—the WVF program always including support of the United Nations;

Recalling the guidance of WVF by the CREDO created by the late United Nations Under-secretary General Ralph J. Bunche . . . the Credo having the celebrated phrase "None can speak more eloquently for peace than those who have fought in war";

Noting that WVF has consistently brought veterans from all over the world to its General Assemblies, Council meetings, and such special meetings as the 1990 Conference on the Mediterranean held in Malta, and observing that WVF now looks forward this year to its 23rd General Assembly to be held in Seoul, Korea;

Taking pride in the fifty-year leadership of WVF Presidents and Secretaries General, including the present leader General Bjorn Egge and Secretary General Serge Wourgaft;

Observing also that contributing to WVF over many, many years have been and are such AVCers as the late United States District Court Judge Hubert Will (WVF US Council Member for the three terms and WVF International Vice President), Executive Director June A. Willenz (who heads the WVF Standing Committee on Women), Stanley Allen (who has served the WVF US Council for more than four decades as its Executive Secretary), and Dr. Paul P. Cooke (who serves the WVF US Council at this time as its Alternate Council Member);

The Americans Veterans Committee continues to support without reservation the World Veterans Federation and looks forward to continuing membership and contribution to WVF programs.

IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF NELSON B. GRAY V ON HIS APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2000

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, today I pay special tribute to an outstanding young man from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am happy to announce that Nelson B. Gray V, of Norwalk, Ohio, has been offered an appointment to attend the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

Mr. Speaker, Nelson's offer of appointment poses him to attend the United States Military Academy this fall with the incoming cadet class of 2004. Attending one of our nation's military academies is an invaluable experience that offers a world-class education and demands the very best that these young men and women have to offer. Truly, it is one of the most challenging and rewarding undertakings of their lives.

Nelson brings a special blend of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming class of West Point cadets. While attending Edison High School in Milan, Nelson has attained a grade point average of 4.047, which places him seventh in his class of one hundred forty-three students. Nelson is a member of the National Honor Society, French National Honor Society, Honor Roll, Varsity Scholarship Team, and has placed highly on the American Legion Americanism and Government test and

the Greater Toledo Council of Teachers Mathematics exam.

Outside the classroom, Nelson has distinguished himself as a fine student-athlete. On the fields of competition, he has earned letters in Varsity Football and Baseball, and was named Field Captain of the Varsity Football team this year. Nelson has also been active in the Boy Scouts of America, earning the rank of Eagle Scout in 1998. He is a member of the French Club, Drama Club, Choir Band, and was a representative to Buckeye Boys' State.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask my colleagues to stand and join me in paying special tribute to Nelson B. Gray V. Our service academies offer the finest education and military training available anywhere in the world. I am sure that Nelson will do very well during his career at West Point and I wish him the very best in all of his future endeavors.

SENSE OF THE HOUSE IN SUPPORT OF AMERICA'S TEACHERS

SPEECH OF

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 9, 2000

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, today I honor teachers throughout our nation and speak in support of H. Res. 492, which expresses a sense of the House of Representatives in support of America's Teachers.

Teaching is one of the oldest and most important professions in the world, yet it is a profession which is underappreciated by too many. I come to the House floor today to demonstrate my appreciation for the teachers who shaped my life and those who inspire our children today.

Diane Hooper is one such individual from California's 14th Congressional District who has devoted her life to shaping and improving the lives of tomorrow's leaders by educating and inspiring her students. Ms. Hooper teaches math at Sequoia High School and she was named San Mateo County's Teacher of the Year for 2000 for her outstanding contributions.

The 14th Congressional District is blessed with Vonneke Broekhof-Miller and team teachers Brenda Goldstein and Andrew Lucia. They teach middle school science at Peterson Middle School in Sunnyvale and were honored at the 1999 American Teacher Awards last November.

Paul Jorgans, a teacher at Stanford Middle School in Palo Alto was recognized for developing cutting-edge curriculum for integrating computer technology into classroom curriculum. Clarence Bakken from Palo Alto Unified School District, Gayle Britt from the San Carlos School District, and Shane Tatman from the Cupertino Union School District were recognized for excellence in teaching by the Innovations in Teaching Awards Program. These teachers are shaping the way students learn in the 21st Century by using innovative and proven methods that inspire other teachers and lead to increased student learning and greater achievements.

Teachers touch the future and shape it every day. My sister, Veronica Georges, teaches in the Sequoia School District and my daughter and son-in-law are devoted edu-

cators as well. They along with Linda Mitchell, Pat Dawson, Sheila Haberkorn, Kris Weaver, and Dale Deffner are the mothers, fathers and sisters of my staff who are influencing America's future today. I'm exceedingly proud of them and the superb work they do daily.

This statement of recognition by the House of Representatives is but a small tribute of gratitude to those who have dedicated themselves to education. On behalf of a grateful nation, I salute every teacher in our land!

TRIBUTE TO SOUTHERN HOMES SERVICES

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2000

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Southern Homes Services (SHS) as it celebrates its 150th anniversary. Since 1840 SHS has provided quality services to preserve, build and stabilize the lives of children and families within their communities.

During the first 100 years of its existence SHS provided services for youngsters who had been placed in its care because of the death of their fathers and the mothers' inability to care for their children. But, in the early 1950's SHS refocused its mission. The result was the adoption of a psychiatric residential treatment program for children that included support services for their families.

Today SHS is a multi-disciplined, multi-facility that is licensed as a Residential Treatment Facility. Annually it provides comprehensive services to more than 2,000 children and adolescents with severe emotional problems. Its comprehensive mental health and social services include: foster and kinship care; residential treatment services; an on-site licensed private school; outpatient mental health and psychiatric services; in-home family preservation services; and mentor/volunteer opportunities.

In February 2000, SHS became one of the first children's services agency to be accredited as a behavioral Healthcare Organization by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO).

In recognition of its 15 decades of providing critical services to at-risk children when their families are the most vulnerable, I join SHS as it celebrates this important milestone.

TAIWAN INAUGURATES A NEW PRESIDENT

HON. EARL F. HILLIARD

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2000

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to Mr. Chen Shui-bian who will be inaugurated as the tenth president of the Republic of China on May 20th. I am honored to stand before you today in a spirit of freedom and change. President-elect Chen Shui-bian's victory on March 18, 2000, signals a new milestone for Taiwan's history of democratization. His Excellency defeated two other formidable opponents, and for the first time in Chinese history, an opposition party attained real political power from the ruling National Party. Tai-

wan united and is now clearly a model for reform and promise for most Asian countries.

As Taiwan voters collaborate on a brighter future, reevaluating the past proves a desirable democratization record which must be commended. The United States, and all countries of the free world, should pledge open support to President Chen Shui-bian, and encourage meaningful discussions of reunification issues in an effort to build better relationships with mainland China.

I congratulate a leader of vision and express my full confidence in Taiwan's President-elect Chen Shui-bian and the people of Taiwan.

HONORING REV. DR. JOE SAMUEL RATLIFF

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2000

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Rev. Joe Samuel Ratliff for his 30 years of service in the ministry.

Since 1980, Rev. Ratliff has faithfully addressed the needs of the Brentwood Baptist Church community. Throughout his tenure as the church's spiritual leader, Rev. Ratliff has brought remarkable vision, transforming the 400-member church into a dynamic 10,000-member congregation. Brentwood has experienced unprecedented growth since Rev. Ratliff has been at the helm, including a new 1,800-seat sanctuary, land acquisitions, and an enhanced role as public servant and community activist in the surrounding community. The growth and success that Brentwood Baptist Church has undergone stems from a visionary pastor who is truly connected to his community and to his congregants.

Rev. Ratliff is the eldest of his mother's nine children. As a child growing up in Lumberton, NC, he was always active in the church, and played piano at services as a teenager. But he did not aspire to a career in the ministry until after he moved to Atlanta to attend Morehouse College. It was in his junior year that Rev. Ratliff recognized the power of the church in bringing about change and making a positive impact on the community. He took his first pastorate as a college senior, and went on to earn his master of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees from the Atlanta's Interdenominational Theological Center. Before coming to Brentwood in 1980, Rev. Ratliff served Cobb Memorial Church in Atlanta and as acting dean of chapel at Morehouse College. In 1988, he was a research fellow at Harvard University for a semester.

During his 20 years as pastor for Brentwood Baptist Church, Rev. Ratliff is credited with building one of the fastest-growing churches in America. At the same time, he has provided congregants with an outlet for giving back to the community. A stellar example of the good works performed by the church includes the Brentwood Community Foundation, a program that serves the needs of HIV/AIDS patients by providing housing and health care. Programs include a mobile health unit and services for pregnant teens and young adults who are HIV-positive. The church also raises money to benefit students' scholarships.

Rev. Ratliff's religious and spiritual dedication to the community and to his growing congregation have won him many distinctions and

awards, including induction into the Martin Luther King Jr. Board of Preachers, the Julie and Ben Rogers Ecumenism Award from the Anti-Defamation League of Houston, and "Minister of the Year" award for improving ecumenical dialog and interracial understanding in Houston.

Mr. Speaker, throughout his 30 years in the ministry, Rev. Ratliff's intelligence, enthusiasm, and can-do spirit has served his congregations well. He brings tireless energy and compassion to each of his endeavors, whether its as a pastor, community leader, or friend. His contributions to the ministry and his energy in addressing the needs of his congregation and surrounding community are truly commendable.

WORLD BANK AIDS MARSHALL
PLAN TRUST FUND ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 15, 2000

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, thank you for bringing this important piece of legislation to the floor this week.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3519, the World Bank AIDS Marshall Plan Trust Fund Act.

I would like to thank Congressman LEACH for including the core provisions of BARBARA LEE's original bill, H.R. 2765, the AIDS Marshall Plan and Congressman Dellums for his public awareness regarding the importance of this bill.

This bill garners bipartisan support, including the Democratic Caucus and the CBC which both recognize the necessity of HIV/AIDS funding in Sub-Saharan Africa. Further, I was an original co-sponsor of AIDS Marshall Plan legislation authored by Congresswoman BARBARA LEE.

Mr. Speaker, I personally saw the devastation that the AIDS epidemic is causing in Africa during a visit with the President during March of 1999. During that trip, I visited places like St. Anthony's Compound in Zambia where grandparents were caring for grandchildren orphaned by AIDS.

In Uganda, the government showed the delegation the impact of AIDS as we met with a grandmother who was caring for 38 of her grandchildren because they were orphaned by her 11 children.

I also met with Ugandan First Lady Janet K. Museveni who is leading the campaign to help orphans as we discussed the fact that over 13 million children have been orphaned because of AIDS.

This trip emphasized to me the dire circumstances existing in Africa today and the obligation countries like the United States have to combat this disease.

The goal of this bill to create a trust fund administered by the World Bank to combat the AIDS epidemic is long overdue.

By directing the Secretary of Treasury to enter into negotiations with the World Bank and member nations, H.R. 3519 would serve as the impetus for an international response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

This bill would authorize the United States to contribute \$100 million a year through fiscal

year 2005 to this fund which would provide grants for prevention care programs and partnerships between local governments and the private sector that would lead to education, treatment, research, and affordable drugs.

Organizations like the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) would be recipients of these grants.

By providing grants to organizations like UNAIDS, this bill could help address the "drug corruption" in sub-Saharan Africa by requiring that only those countries that eliminate corruption are eligible for trust funds.

Just last week, this Congress passed the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act in which there is a structured framework for this country to use trade and investment as an economic development tool throughout Africa and the Caribbean.

Unfortunately, the conference report does not include Senators FEINSTEIN and FEINGOLD's Amendment that would have prohibited the Executive Branch from denying African countries to use legal means to improve access to HIV/AIDS pharmaceuticals for their citizens. This amendment would have clarified the African Growth and Opportunity Act so that African Governments, in accordance with the World Trade Organization policies, could exercise flexibility in addressing public health concerns.

Thus, this amendment would simply allow countries to determine the availability of HIV/AIDS pharmaceuticals in their countries and provide their people with affordable HIV drugs.

Despite the failure of Senators FEINSTEIN and FEINGOLD's amendment, the White House still recognized the importance of access to drug therapies by issuing an Executive Order just last week Wednesday to provide access to HIV pharmaceuticals and medical technology.

This Executive Order incorporates the language of the Senator Feinstein-Feingold Amendment and declares that the United States would not invoke a key clause in U.S. trade law against sub-Saharan African countries concerning the protection of patents on AIDS drugs. Like the Senators' amendment, the Executive Order would instead hold the African countries to the less stringent standard of the WTO on intellectual property protection.

Furthermore, I am pleased the House-Senate conference report includes amendments, which I offered during last year's consideration of the House bill.

The first provision encourages the development of small businesses in sub-Saharan Africa, including the promotion of trade between the small businesses in the United States and sub-Saharan Africa. This is an important victory for small business enterprises in America that are looking to expand remarkable trade opportunities in Africa.

It was once said, "There is nothing more dangerous than to build a society, with a large segment of people in that society, who feel that they have no stake in it; who feel that they have nothing to lose. People who have a stake in their society, protect that society, but when they don't have it, they unconsciously want to destroy it." Although Martin Luther King was not speaking of AIDS, his comment rings true in so many aspects today.

The private sector must take responsibility for the eradication of this disease if these U.S. businesses are going to use African resources for their economic benefit.

Thus, I am pleased that an additional amendment I offered was incorporated into the conference report. This provision encourages U.S. businesses to provide assistance to sub-Saharan African nations to reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS and consider the establishment of a Response Fund to coordinate such efforts.

This is important because HIV/AIDS has now been declared a national security threat. My provision reflects a national and international consensus that we must do everything we can to eliminate the HIV/AIDS disease.

Senior Clinton Administration officials clearly express their frustration that by all estimates on HIV/AIDS, that nearly \$2 billion is needed to adequately prevent the spread of this disease in Africa per year.

Although, some say this may not be feasible at the moment, and the \$100 million a year donation from the U.S. is not either, we no longer can deny that this disease is an epidemic of enormous proportion that can no longer be ignored.

The very fact that the Clinton Administration formally recognized a month ago that the spread of HIV/AIDS in the world today is an international crisis by declaring HIV/AIDS to be a National Security threat is illustrative of the devastating effect of this disease.

It is estimated that 800,000 to 900,000 American are living with HIV and every year another 40,000 become infected. Although newer and effective therapies have led to reductions in the mortality rate of people with HIV/AIDS, the demographics of this epidemic have shifted. Thus, women, young people, and people of color represent an alarming portion of the new cases of HIV/AIDS.

Globally, more than 16 million have died from AIDS since the 1980's, 80% of them in sub-Saharan Africa.

The creation of a WorldWide trust in which nations would be able to obtain grants to address the needs of HIV/AIDS victims globally is truly needed.

We know that 60% of those that have died from AIDS are in sub-Saharan Africa.

An even more heart-wrenching statistic is that 13 million children have lose one or both of their parents to AIDS and this number is projected to reach 40 million by 2010.

AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for nearly half of all infectious disease deaths globally.

The percentage of the adult population infected with HIV or suffering from AIDS is alarming. To name a few: In Zimbabwe—25.9%; Botswana—25.1%; Namibia—19.4%; and South Africa—12.9%.

Additionally, in places like Namibia there has been a 44.5% drop in the life expectancy. Now adults in Namibia are only expected to live 38.9 years.

In Zimbabwe, the life expectancy is only 38.8 years and in Malawi, 34.8 years. Not since the bubonic plague of the Middle Ages, has there been a more devastating disease.

Yet, HIV/AIDS is 100% preventable. There is no reason for 2 million to die a year in Sub-Saharan Africa and 4 million to become infected.

The AIDS Marshall plan will help to ensure that the federal government commits to addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic over the next several years.

The survival of Africa is at stake. The United States can and should be the leader in generating a global response to this incredible contagion.

Now is the time to act and I urge my colleagues to support this measure in its entirety.

IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF NATHAN J. NAHM ON HIS APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY AT WEST POINT

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2000

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, today I pay special tribute to an outstanding young man from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am happy to announce that Nathan J. Nahm of Tiffin, Ohio, has been offered an appointment to attend the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

Mr. Speaker, Nathan's offer of appointment poises him to attend the United States Military Academy this fall with the incoming cadet class of 2004. Attending one of our nation's military academies is an invaluable experience that offers a world-class education and demands the very best that these young men and women have to offer. Truly, it is one of the most challenging and rewarding undertakings of their lives.

Nathan brings an enormous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming class of West Point cadets. While attending Columbian High School in Tiffin, Nathan has attained a grade point average of 3.64, which places him twenty-first in his class of two hundred sixty-nine students. Nathan is a member of the National Honor Society, Honor Roll, Who's Who Among American High School Students, and has earned several Scholar-Athlete awards.

Outside the classroom, Nathan has distinguished himself as an excellent student-athlete. On the fields of competition, Nathan has earned letters in Varsity Football and Basketball. Nathan was named Captain of the Tiffin Columbian Varsity Basketball team this year. Nathan has also been active in the Tiffin Columbian Boosters Club and the Technology Advisory Council.

West Point has become a home away from home for the Nahm family. With Nathan's appointment, he stands ready to walk the same path as his two older brothers, Blair and Reed, as a West Point cadet.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask my colleagues to stand and join me in paying special tribute to Nathan J. Nahm. Our service academies offer the finest education and military training available anywhere in the world. I am sure that Nathan will do very well during his career at West Point and I wish him the very best in all of his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2000

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was unavoidably absent on a matter of critical importance and missed the following votes:

On H. Res. 491, naming a room in the House of Representative wing of the Capitol in honor of G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery, introduced by the Gentleman from Indiana, Mr. PEASE, I would have voted "yea."

On H.R. 4251, Congressional Oversight of Nuclear Transfers to North Korea Act of 2000, introduced by the gentleman from New York, Mr. GILMAN, I would have voted "nay."

On H. Con. Res. 309, sense of Congress with regard to in-school personal safety education programs for children, introduced by the gentleman from Delaware, Mr. CASTLE, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2000

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, May 10, and Thursday, May 11, I missed roll-call votes 160-179. On these dates, I was representing the Subcommittee on Courts and Intellectual Property at the opening of the Diplomatic Conference on the Patent Law Treaty in Geneva, Switzerland. As Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Courts and Intellectual Property, I believe congressional representation at this meeting was important, and I was honored to address the delegates of the conference.

COMMENDING THE ANN ARBOR HURON SCHOOL MUSIC DEPARTMENT

HON. LYNN N. RIVERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2000

Ms. RIVERS. Mr. Speaker, today I commend the Ann Arbor Huron High School Music Department for being named as a Grammy Award Signature School. Their hard work and commitment to excellence has made this achievement possible and it brings me great pleasure to have the opportunity to share this day with them.

As a former member of the Ann Arbor School Board, I know the special significance of such an achievement for a high school music program and I look forward to future accomplishments from the department.

RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF HERRIN, IL

HON. DAVID D. PHELPS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2000

Mr. PHELPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize one of the towns in my district. On April

17, 2000, The City of Herrin marked the 100th Anniversary of its incorporation, and I thought it appropriate to acknowledge this city's great heritage of farming, coal mining, and industry. I would also like to commend the spirit of its citizens working together for a better community.

The City of Herrin gets its name from its first settler, Isaac Herring, a veteran of the War of 1812. Mr. Herring received a parcel of land, which became Herrin, as a land-grant for his service in the war. Mr. Herring later shortened his name, and that of the town, to Herrin.

Herrin was incorporated as a city in the election of April 17, 1900. At this time Herrin also elected its first mayor, Mr. C.E. Ingraham. Today Herrin is admirably served by Mayor Victor Ritter.

Herrin began as a farming community with cotton being the primary crop. It was later discovered that Herrin was surrounded by vast veins of bituminous coal. The coal helped Herrin to grow rapidly and to develop as a leading community in the region, attracting numerous immigrants seeking work in the coal mines. At one point, thirty coal mines operated within six miles of the city. The coal fields of Herrin were ripe for widespread union organization at this time.

Following World War II, Herrin's leaders and the Chamber of Commerce actively sought new industry for the community. Because of their efforts, Herrin is still one of the area's largest industrial cities, being home over the years to the Norge Division, Borg-Warner Corporation (now Maytag), Smoler Brothers, Inc., International Staple and Machine Company, Allen Industries, Container Stapling Corporation, Dura-Containers, Central Technology, Inc., and National Tape Corporation. Today Herrin continues providing business infrastructure and promoting even more industry, along with a better quality of life for its citizens.

Herrin's first school was a log structure built in 1844. Today Herrin's schools provide quality education to approximately 2,600 students from the greater Herrin area. Southern Illinois Healthcare, owner of Herrin Hospital, provides excellent healthcare for the region, as well as many jobs for the area. Herrin is also a deeply religious community, exemplified by its many churches of differing faiths. These churches, along with other charitable organizations, work together in providing help for those in need, the Herrin Food Pantry being a prime example.

Herrin is also home to the annual Herrin Festa Italiana celebration, which is held over Memorial Day. The festival is known to draw around 60,000 people over the four-day weekend. Home to one of the most popular city parks in the area, Herrin provides seasonal recreation including swimming, fishing, and picnicking. The park is also home to several ballfields used by a variety of school teams and city leagues.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the citizens and leaders of Herrin on their Centennial celebration, and also in wishing the City of Herrin continued prosperity in the new millennium.

IN HONOR OF MRS. LINDA
STEIGLER

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2000

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Mrs. Linda Steigler, a teacher at Welch Middle School in the 25th Congressional District, who this Thursday will be honored at the last concert of the school year by her eighth-grade band students.

Mrs. Steigler's dedication to her band students has been boundless. Parents of the members of the Welch Middle School band will tell you that her positive influence on her students' futures are immeasurable. Mrs. Steigler's instruction and passion for music bring education to life for her students, and her outstanding efforts deserve recognition.

Mrs. Steigler inspires her students with the power of music. Her instruction taps into music's potential to enhance human development and speed up the learning process. She gives the Welch Middle School band students a leg-up in their education through musical instruction that will last their entire lives. The diversity and talent of her band students is an admirable sight to behold.

Mrs. Steigler has had students compete and place in various music competitions. She has worked to get music scholarships at Mars Music Store for students, awarding them with free music lessons and instruments for those who could not afford them. She has held various fundraisers to support the students on field trips, allowing them to broaden their experiences through travel that they could not otherwise afford. She inspires them to go to music camps during the summer, and to work

hard at their music—some students arrive at school early just for additional practice. She often works single-handed and tirelessly to spread the gift of music.

It is the involvement and support of dedicated teachers such as Mrs. Steigler at Welch Middle School that reaps ever-lasting rewards for these young people on their paths to adulthood. Studies have shown that children who take music score higher on standardized tests than students who are never taught an instrument. When students learn music, there is an overlap that occurs in nearly all subjects.

I, along with the Eighth-grade members of the Welch Middle School Band, salute Mrs. Linda Steigler for her accomplishments and her commitment to teaching. She is an outstanding role model for her students, parents, and other teachers.

IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF NEIL
HARBER ON HIS APPOINTMENT
TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES
MILITARY ACADEMY

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2000

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, today I pay special tribute to an outstanding young man from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am happy to announce that Neil Harber of Bascom, Ohio has been offered an appointment to attend the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

Mr. Speaker, Neil's offer of appointment poises him to attend the United States Military Academy this fall with the incoming cadet class of 2004. Attending one of our nation's

military academies is an invaluable experience that offers a world-class education and demands the very best that these young men and women have to offer. Truly, it is one of the most challenging and rewarding undertakings of their lives.

Neil brings a tremendous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming class of West Point cadets. While attending Hopewell-Loudon High School in Bascom, Neil has attained a grade point average of 3.97, which places him sixth in his class of sixty-five students. Neil is an Honor Roll member, and has received the Honor Award for Spanish, English, History, and Biology. Neil has received Scholastic Awards in Baseball and has been recognized for his academic efforts at Tiffin University.

Outside the classroom, Neil has performed very well on the fields of competition and has distinguished himself as an excellent student-athlete. Neil has earned letters in Varsity Football, Basketball, and Baseball. In addition, Neil was named Captain of both the Varsity Football and Basketball teams this year. Neil was named the Hopewell-Loudon Outstanding Male Athlete of the Year in 1998–1999. Neil has also been active in Student Council, Choir, Traveling Ensemble, and Quiz Bowl. He was a delegate to Buckeye Boys' State and currently serves as Vice President of the Senior Class.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask my colleagues to stand and join me in paying special tribute to Neil Harber. Our service academies offer the finest education and military training available anywhere in the world. I am sure that Neil will do very well during his career at West Point and I wish him the very best in all of his future endeavors.