

The Congressional Budget Office forecast a federal budget surplus totaling \$268 billion for fiscal year 2001 and a budget surplus of over \$4.5 trillion over the next ten years. We are the most powerful and richest nation on earth. Economically, we can afford to end homelessness among veterans. Morally, we must. Morally, there is no other choice that we can make. We must make use of the full arsenal of programs and tools to help homeless veterans regain their self-worth, their dignity, their pride and their self-sufficiency.

I am pleased the Heather French Homeless Veterans Assistance Act of 2000 has already received support from the Veterans Organizations Homeless Council. The members of the Veterans Organizations Homeless Council represent ten major national veteran service organizations. These organizations are The American Legion, AMVETS, Blinded Veterans Association, Disabled American Veterans, Jewish War Veterans, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Non Commissioned Officers Association, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Vietnam Veterans of America. The Veterans Organizations Homeless Council "strongly supports the comprehensive recommendations advanced by Congressman LANE EVANS, Illinois, in a legislative proposal that will offer a strategic program to break the vicious cycle of veterans homelessness in cities and towns across this Nation."

In addition, I am also very pleased this legislation has won the support of Miss America 2000. Heather French has carried a torch of compassion which has shown light on the plight of America's homeless veterans. She has given voice to homeless veterans who have been voiceless and visibility to homeless veterans who have been invisible to society in general. Her efforts have raised the awareness of the American people regarding the struggles and circumstances of the thousands of homeless men and women who have served our nation in uniform.

By her words and deeds Miss America 2000 has demonstrated her steadfast commitment to leaving no homeless veteran behind. From the halls of Congress, to homeless shelters, and to communities across America, Heather French has inspired us to a single goal—ending homelessness among America's veterans. As Miss America 2000, Heather French has well represented the Miss America Organization—the largest provider of scholarship assistance, exclusively for women, in the world. As an advocate for our homeless veterans, Heather French has maintained The Miss America Organization tradition of many decades of empowering American women to achieve their personal and professional goals, while providing a forum in which to express their opinions, talents, and intelligence. Her year of service as Miss America will end next month, but her commitment will not. She will continue to speak for those who are voiceless, seek shelter for those who have none, and remind us of our obligation to those who have served.

Heather French has said, "homeless veterans want to be able to regain personal pride by taking personal responsibility to remove the barriers that have prevented their transition to productive citizenship." "I applaud this legislation that focuses on a comprehensive package of proposals that will lead to ending homelessness among our nation's veterans so they can once again be proud citizens."

The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV) has also endorsed this legislation. NCHV executive director Linda Boone has said "this bill will become the platform to address homeless veterans' issues in the 107th Congress and we look forward to a continued active relationship between Ms. French and Mr. EVANS towards the goal of ending homelessness among our nation's veterans."

I am proud to have the support of Ms. French, major veterans organizations, and community based providers of services to homeless veterans. I urge my colleagues to support and cosponsor H.R. 5311, the Heather French Homeless Veterans Assistance Act of 2000.

HEATHER FRENCH HOMELESS VETERANS
ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2000
SUMMARY OF H.R. 5311

1. Findings
2. National Goal to end homelessness among Veterans within a decade
3. Establish the Homeless Veterans Advisory Committee, Department of Veterans Affairs
4. Requires annual meeting for Interagency Council on Homeless
5. Evaluation of homeless programs
6. Changes in veterans equitable resource allocation methodology
7. Grant program for homeless veterans with special needs
8. Coordination of services for veterans at risk of homelessness
9. Centers of Excellence in integrated mental health services delivery
10. Expansion of authority for dental care
11. Programmatic expansions
12. Various Authorities
13. Temporary Assistance Grants
14. Emergency Homeless Grants
15. Technical Assistance Grants
16. Manufactured Housing Loans
17. Increase Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program annual authorization to \$50 million

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE ON
PEACE PROCESS IN NORTHERN
IRELAND

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2000

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support of House Resolution 547 and I commend my colleague, Congressman Neal, for bringing this important measure to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, the last 4 years have brought great change to Northern Ireland and we are all hopeful that these changes will eventually yield peace. Unfortunately, the devil is in the details. One of the most glaring of these details is the matter of policing. If there is going to be lasting peace in Northern Ireland, then there must be reform of the Royal Ulster Constabulary [RUC]—Northern Ireland's police force. The RUC is comprised of 92 percent Protestant officers and human rights organizations have historically accused this police force of brutality against Catholics in the region.

Without addressing this contentious and complex problem, it will be impossible for peace to reign in Northern Ireland. I might add

that the United States is no stranger to incidents of police brutality. In fact, we have bills pending in Congress which call for reforms of police enforcement practices. We know in the United States that if a community does not have trust in the law enforcement charged with policing them, then chaos and unrest will rule. We must be consistent in our country and when we call for peace in other countries, like Northern Ireland. That is why I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of House Resolution 547.

This resolution encourages the British Parliament to follow the recommendations of the Patten Report: To give the police force a new name, new badges and symbols free of the British or Irish states; to no longer fly the Union flag at police stations; and, to substantially increase the proportion of Catholic officers to 30 percent of the total force in 10 years.

If the parties involved in the peace agreement can accept these recommendations and implement them in a timely fashion, then I believe that they can achieve lasting peace in Northern Ireland. Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support House Resolution 547.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2000

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, September 25th, I was unavoidably detained in my district.

On rollcall No. 487, H. Con. Res. 399, recognizing the 25th anniversary of the enactment of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, had I been present, I would have voted "yes".

STS. CYRIL AND METHDIUS
CHURCH CELEBRATES CENTEN-
NIAL

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2000

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the enduring faith of the parishioners of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church in Edwardsville, Pennsylvania, which will celebrate the centennial anniversary of its founding on October 22, 2000.

The parish has its roots in the immigration of people from Slovakia who began to settle in the Wyoming Valley in the late 1870s and early 1880s. They came to the area upon hearing of the abundant work in the coal mines. At that time, there were no churches specifically for people of Slovak descent, so they attended churches where most of the members' first language was English.

Around 1885, a Slovak parish, St. Stephen's Church, was founded in Plymouth and many people from the Edwardsville area traveled there on foot for services on Sundays and other holy days. However, this travel was difficult, especially in the winter months, and so the Slovak people of Edwardsville joined together and began work to build their own church.