CONDEMN THE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AGAINST WEST PAPUA BY THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD
OF GUAM
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Friday, July 26, 2002

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to a problem of growing concern in Southeast Asia. I want to inform my colleagues of the human rights violations committed by the Indonesian government against the people of West Papua. For the last forty years, West Papuans have lived under the rule of a government that has virtually declared martial law on people who only want to participate in the determination of their own destiny. Like in East Timor before their independence from Indonesia, the military and local law enforcement officials continue to violate the human and civil rights of West Papuans.

West Papua has been under the rule of foreign governments for almost three hundred years, beginning with colonization by the British in 1793 to the Dutch in the mid-twentieth century. In the early 1960s, West Papuans almost succeeded in gaining their own nation when a Dutch-sponsored election for a local government called the West New Guinea Council. Unfortunately, the results of the Dutch plan were rejected by the United Nations. The people of West Papua then joined my colleagues of the human rights violations committed by the Indonesian government against the people of West Papua. For the last forty years, West Papuans have lived under the rule of a government that has virtually declared martial law on people who only want to participate in the determination of their own destiny. Like in East Timor before their independence from Indonesia, the military and local law enforcement officials continue to violate the human and civil rights of West Papuans.

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Mr. Speaker, our actions in East Timor helped give birth to the world’s newest democracy that thrives today. We must continue to note the events in West Papua and take action when it is necessary. For too long, we have remained silent on the issues of human rights and the democratic freedoms that all people are entitled to. Had Congress not intervened when East Timorians were under heavy rule by the Indonesian government, surely they would not be celebrating the freedoms that they enjoy today.

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I ask my colleagues to imagine living each day under the threat of violence. Imagine living with the knowledge that at least one member of every family in your town has experienced a loss of a loved one at the hands of the Indonesian militia. Imagine living with the fear that you may be surrounded by armed gunmen, only to be found buried and burned in a shallow grave. West Papuans don’t have to imagine. They live with this every day.

We acted in the case of East Timor and the results have been spectacular. Since it became a sovereign nation on May 20, 2002, the people of East Timor have gained the human rights and liberties of which all people are entitled to. Had Congress not intervened when East Timorians were under heavy rule by the Indonesian government, surely they would not be celebrating the freedoms that they enjoy today.

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HONORING ELI SIEGEL
HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS
OF MARYLAND
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Friday, July 26, 2002

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great Baltimorean poet, educator, and founder of Aesthetic Realism, Eli Siegel.

Mr. Siegel was born in 1902 and grew up in Baltimore, Maryland where his contributions to literature and humanity began. Mr. Siegel founded the philosophy Aesthetic Realism in 1941, based on principles such as: man’s deep reality is the present, and the present world is identical with the present world on an honest or accurate basis, and that the world, art, and self explain each other: each is the aesthetic oneness of opposites.

Mr. Siegel explained that the deepest desire of every person is, “to love the world on an honest basis.” He gave thousands of lectures on the arts and sciences.

Mr. Siegel’s work continues at the not-for-profit Aesthetic Realism Foundation in New York City, where classes, lectures, workshops, dramatic presentations, and poetry readings are offered. In addition, a teaching method, based on aesthetic realism, has been tested in New York City public schools. The teaching method has been tremendously successful. Understanding and using the teaching method may be used as an effective tool to stop racism and promote tolerance, because it enables people of all races to see others with respect and kindness.

In 1925, Eli Siegel won the esteemed “Nation” Poetry Prize for “Hot Afternoons Have Been in Montana,” which brought him to national attention. In 1949, the death of his father, Mr. Siegel, struck a major blow to Mr. Siegel’s work for the settings of Druid Hill Park. And so, it is fitting that on August 16, 2002, the city of Baltimore will dedicate the Eli Siegel Memorial at Druid Hill Park on a site near the Madison Avenue entrance, not far from his early home on Newington Avenue. The bronze memorial plaque, designed by students of Aesthetic Realism, includes a sculptured portrait and poetry.

Mayor Martin O’Malley has designated August 16, 2002 as “Eli Siegel Day” in Baltimore. At this time, I would like to join the Mayor in proclaiming a few of Eli Siegel’s poems found in the June 5, 2002 of the Aesthetic Realism Foundation magazine for the record.

In April 1865 Abraham Lincoln died. In April 1868 the city of Baltimore will dedicate the Eli Siegel died in 1978, but his thinking and the education of Aesthetic Realism will be studied in every English, literature, and art classroom across the nation for years to come.

I would like to end this tribute by reciting a poem Eli Siegel wrote honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.:

SOMETHING ELSE SHOULD DIE: A P O M W I T H R H I M E S
(By Eli Siegel)

In April 1865 Abraham Lincoln died. In April 1868 Martin Luther King died. Their purpose was to have us say, some day; injustice died.

Eli Siegel wrote poems for more than six decades. These poems expressed his thoughts on people, feelings, everyday life, love, nature, history. I am proud to offer this tribute.

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SOMETHING ELSE SHOULD DIE: A Poem

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E1446 CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — Extensions of Remarks July 29, 2002

First, we reprint a column about the firemen of Baltimore. The way of seeing people that is in it stands for who Mr. Siegel was, and is central to Aesthetic Realism. Fifty years later, in his Goodman Professorship lectures of the 1970s, he said with ringing clarity that the most important question for America is “What does a person deserve by being himself?” is the big question today, in 2002: to cries to be asked plainly and answered honestly. It was at the basis of the kind, passionately logical thought of Eli Siegel as he wrote about Baltimore’s firemen.

In his teaching of Aesthetic Realism, Mr. Siegel showed that there are two aspects to what constitutes a person, and values. He was beautiful and unambiguous about people’s need for both, and we see both in this article: 1) Every person deserves to live with dignity—deserves sufficient money, just compensation for his labor, respectful working conditions. And 2) a person deserves to be comprehended, his thoughts and feelings understood. In Aesthetic Realism, Mr. Siegel provided the means by which every person, in all our dear individuality, can be understood to our very core.

The second writing in the 1925 paper concerns a memorial hall, just opened to the public in Baltimore, honoring soldiers of that city who died during World War I. Under the heading Concerns a memorial hall, just opened to the public in Baltimore, honoring soldiers of that city who died during World War I.

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Humanity needs the knowledge and honesty of Eli Siegel. These exist now and forever in Aesthetic Realism.

[Horizons of Johns Hopkins University, the Modern Quarterly, his columns in the Baltimore Sun, and

Whereas, the people of Baltimore are proud to join with Eubie Blake, National Jazz Institute, Morgan State University and others in honoring the centenary of the great Baltimorean poet, philosopher, and educator Eli Siegel (1892–1978), who in 1907 founded the philosophy Aesthetic Realism; and

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Whereas, he won the esteemed Nation Poetry Prize in 1925 for his “Hot Afternoons Have Been in Montana,” which he said was affected by thoughts of Druid Hill Park, and about which William Carlos Williams wrote, “I say definitely that that single poem, out of a thousand others written in the past quarter century, secures our place in the culture of the world”; and

Whereas, the honesty, kindness, and greatness of mind Eli Siegel possessed were described by Eubie Blake, Frederick Douglass Free Library, Congresswoman Elijah Cummings, Maryland Historical Society, Coppin State College, Eubie Blake National Jazz Institute, Morgan State University, Mayor of Baltimore, William Smolich, and others in honoring the centenary of the great Baltimorean poet, philosopher, and educator Eli Siegel (1892–1978), who in 1907 founded the philosophy Aesthetic Realism; and

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[From the Baltimore American, February 12, 1925]

CITY TREATS FIREMAN UNFAIRLY, DUE MORE PAY, ASSETS SIGEEL

[By Eli Siegel]

The talented young poet, Eli Siegel, who joined the American staff this week, turned the light of his open-minded genius yesterday on the lives of the Baltimore firemen. He went out and discovered hitherto unrevealed duties which they perform. In his columns in public schools he salutes Eli Siegel for his great contributions to knowledge and humanity beginning in the City of Baltimore.

Now, therefore, I, MARTIN O’MALLEY, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF BALTIMORE, do hereby proclaim August 16, 2002 as “Eli Siegel Day” in Baltimore, and do urge all citizens to join in this celebration.

In WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set the Great Seal of the City of Baltimore to be affixed this twenty-eighth day of April, two thousand two, and thereunto affix my hand.

[SEAL]

MAYOR OF THE CITY OF BALTIMORE

[From the Baltimore American, April 5, 1925]

WAR IS REMEMBERED BY ELI SIEGEL

1. A mother who has lost her son here sees the War Memorial Hall

He is in his grave
Which I have never seen
And I am here.
In this great building that looks so well.
His grave must be small and people
I’m sure never look at it.

Look at that great man make a speech;
He’s talking about the firemen.
I like the looks of this place.
But I’d rather see Tom’s grave.
And, Oh, God, I’d like to see him.

2. A seventeen-year-old goes in

Say, Ed, it sure looks good, doesn’t it?
I’ve seen men working on it days and days,
When I used to ride by on the car.
In California’s First District, over 100,000 people sought the services of our 18 community health centers on over 300,000 separate occasions. These CHCs play an especially vital role in the rural areas of my district, given the financial and geographic constraints of these populations. Approximately 20 percent of the people served by our CHCs are farmworkers and their dependents are either uninsured or on Medicaid. Over 65 percent earn less than the federal poverty level each year. Were it not for the critical services our CHCs provide, many Northern Californians would have gone to the emergency room or they would have gone without any care altogether.

In this way, CHCs are a cost-saver for our health care system—by providing a significantly cheaper alternative to emergency room care for basic treatment—and they improve overall community health. They deliver care to those that would otherwise go without and they target that delivery to their service population. This means that patients receive care when they need it, where they need it and in a way that makes them comfortable and that they understand.

To accommodate different schedules, centers offer daytime, weekend and after-hours care. To accommodate language barriers—in some areas of my district Latino patient loads are as high as 62 percent—most centers offer services in both Spanish and English. And, to accommodate those who cannot travel to receive services, many centers operate mobile units. These “clinics-on-wheels” travel to our schools, migrant camps, community centers and homeless centers.

CHCs provide a truly comprehensive range of care, with basic services including adult and pediatric primary care, obstetrical and gynecologic care, mental health, medical case management, nutrition and dietary instruction and mental health counseling. In addition, some clinics are also able to offer dental care, tobacco cessation programs and HIV care. Outreach and education campaigns are an integral component of their service delivery and all community health centers help those who are eligible to enroll in California’s Medicaid and CHIP programs.

I thank the community health centers of Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, Lake, Napa, Sonoma and Solano counties for their dedication to the health and welfare of the residents of the First District of California. As we move towards National Community Health Center week, I urge my colleagues to help raise awareness of the important services that their local CHCs provide. Undoubtedly, many more Americans would lack access to care were it not for the commitment of our nation’s community health centers to the service of the poor and medically needy.