

would not even allow that amendment to be offered. That is what I mean, and what many of these letter writers mean, when they talk about the corruption and the incompetence of the Bush administration and the failure of the Bush administration to provide safe drinking water and body armor and other things for our troops to protect them and supply them in a far-away land.

#### CONDEMNING RELIGIOUSLY INSENSITIVE REMARKS OF GENERAL WILLIAM BOYKIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today 16 of my colleagues and I have introduced a resolution calling on the President of the United States to censure and reassign General Boykin for his religiously intolerant remarks against people of Islamic faith.

As Members of Congress, we should all be embarrassed and disturbed by General Boykin's controversial remarks made in uniform over a period of time which includes such statements as, quote, "Our spiritual enemy will only be defeated if we come against them in the name of Jesus." "I knew that my God was a real God and the Muslim God was an idol." "Islamic extremists hate the United States because we are a Christian nation." And, "President Bush is in the White House because God put him there."

These remarks do untold damage to our efforts to reach out to the Iraqi people and the Muslim world and to battle terrorism.

Last week the President rightly criticized the Prime Minister of Malaysia for his anti-Semitic remarks by telling him his comments were, quote, "wrong and divisive," end quote. I agree with these criticisms, but the administration must show the world that it is willing to condemn all religiously intolerant remarks, including those that occur within our own military.

President Bush's failure so far to criticize General Boykin's remarks make it imperative for Congress to demand action. Our Nation must show the world that we will not stand for the type of intolerant behavior exhibited by General Boykin.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,  
Washington, DC, October 17, 2003.

Hon. DONALD H. RUMSFELD,  
Secretary of Defense,  
The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I am writing to express my extreme displeasure over Lieutenant General William Boykin's remarks about the war and the Muslim religion. Lt. Gen. Boykin serves as deputy undersecretary of defense for intelligence and is charged with heading a Pentagon office that focuses on finding Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein and other targets. This is a critical policymaking position, and it is outrageous that someone who holds such extreme, closed-minded, zealous views would be allowed such a prominent position in our military.

Lt. Gen. Boykin's remarks over the past few years, including remarks that Islamic extremists hate the United States because "we're a Christian nation," that "our spiritual enemy will only be defeated if we come against them in the name of Jesus," that President Bush "is in the White House because God put him there," and that Boykin's "god was a real god and [the Muslim god] was an idol," are disgraceful and wholly inappropriate for a man in his position. These remarks are inflammatory to Muslims in our communities and abroad.

While every American has the freedom to speak his mind and express his opinion, it is essential that those who hold high profile, policymaking positions in our government exercise judgment in their public speaking. Lt. Gen. Boykin clearly lacks such judgment. I urge you to reassign or reprimand him; we cannot afford to have such an extremist speaking on behalf of our nation and our military.

Sincerely,

JOHN CONYERS, JR.  
Ranking Member

#### LT. GEN. BOYKIN CONTROVERSY CHRONOLOGY

June 2002: William G. ("Jerry") Boykin speaks from the pulpit at the First Baptist Church of Broken Arrow, Okla., describing photos that he had taken of Mogadishu, Somalia from an army helicopter in 1993. He said that he noticed a strange dark mark over the city and that he had an imagery interpreter trained by the military look at the mark in the photo. "Ladies and gentlemen, this is your enemy," he said to the congregation as he flashed the pictures on a screen. He continued, "It is a demonic presence in that city that God revealed to me as the enemy."

January 2003: Boykin tells the following story in a speech at a church in Daytona, Fla.: "There was a man in Mogadishu named Osman Atto," whom Boykin described as a top lieutenant of Mohammed Farah Aidid. When Boykin's Delta Force commandos went after Atto, they missed him by seconds, he said. "He went on CNN and he laughed at us, and he said, 'They'll never get me because Allah will protect me.'" "Well, you know what?" Boykin continued. "I knew that my God was bigger than his. I knew that my God was a real God and his was an idol."

June 2003: Pentagon announces that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has nominated Boykin for a third star and names him to a new position as deputy undersecretary of defense for intelligence. Boykin's duties include reinvigorating Rumsfeld's "High Value Target Plan" to track down Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, Mullah Omar and other terrorist leaders. Boykin speaks from the pulpit of the Good Shepherd Community Church in Sandy, Ore., displaying slides of Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, and North Korea's Kim Jung I. He asks the congregation, "Why do they hate us? The answer to that is because we're a Christian nation. . . . We are hated because we are a nation of believers." Our "spiritual enemy," Boykin continued, "will only be defeated if we come against them in the name of Jesus."

October 15, 2003: Audio and videotapes of Boykin's appearances before religious groups while wearing his Army uniform over the last two years surface and are reported on by NBC News on the "Nightly News with Tom Brokaw."

October 16, 2003: Rumsfeld declines to criticize Boykin's remarks and praises the general's military record. Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, issues a statement that he did not think Boykin broke any rules.

October 17, 2003: Pentagon officials confirm General Meyers' assessment and report that

lawyers in the Department of Defense General Counsel's office found no legal grounds for action against Lt. Gen. Boykin after a preliminary review of Boykin's reported remarks. Rep. John Conyers, Jr. sends a letter to Defense Secretary Rumsfeld calling for him to reassign or reprimand Boykin, arguing that "While every American has the freedom to speak his mind and express his opinion, it is essential that those who hold high profile, policymaking positions in our government exercise judgment in their public speaking. Lt. Gen. Boykin clearly lacks such judgment." Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John Warner joined the ranking minority member of his committee, Sen. Carl Levin, in asking Defense Secretary Rumsfeld to refer this matter to the Department of Defense Inspector General to conduct an investigation into the conduct and remarks made by Boykin and asking that Boykin be reassigned while the investigation was pending. Boykin issues an apology to ". . . those who might have been offended by [his] statements . . ." and denied he was anti-Islam.

October 20, 2003: In response to a statement made by Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad that "the Jews rule the world by proxy" and that Islamic nations should unite against being "defeated by a few million Jews," President Bush takes Mohamad aside during the economic summit in Bangkok and tells him that what he said was "wrong and divisive," and that "it stands squarely against what I believe in."

October 21, 2003: Rep. Conyers issues a statement to Rumsfeld arguing that the "Inspector General review of General Boykin's statements . . . is insufficient to deal with the growing controversy." Rep. Conyers continues, "What we need from the Administration now is a clear and resolute condemnation of remarks which are hateful and racist in nature and content. The fact that General Boykin, our lead military official in charge of rooting out terrorism, can be permitted to spew invectives which undermine not only our friends and allies, but millions of our own citizens without being reassigned from his sensitive position is shameful."

October 22, 2003: President Bush is asked by reporters about Gen. Boykin's comments during his trip to Asia. Bush says that the subject had come up during his meeting with Muslim leaders from Asian countries and offers a mild rebuke of Gen. Boykin's controversial statements: "I said, [Boykin] didn't reflect my opinion . . . it just doesn't reflect what the government thinks." Bush goes on to say that Gen. Boykin will not be reassigned as a result of his controversial remarks.

H. RES. 419

Whereas Lieutenant General William Boykin, United States Army, who is currently serving as Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and War-Fighting Support, has recently made a number of intolerant remarks against people of the Islamic faith while wearing his military uniform during numerous public addresses;

Whereas those remarks by Lieutenant General Boykin include the following: Islamic extremists hate the United States because "we're a Christian nation"; "Our spiritual enemy will only be defeated if we come against them in the name of Jesus"; President Bush "is in the White House because God put him there"; "I knew that my God was a real God, and [the Muslim God] was an idol"; "The enemy that has come against our nation is a spiritual enemy" named Satan;

Whereas Islam is a monotheistic faith, a faith whose followers are an integral part of the social fabric of America and many other countries;

Whereas the position currently held by Lieutenant General Boykin requires him to interact routinely with Muslims from all over the world;

Whereas Lieutenant General Boykin has failed to retract his remarks or to issue a full apology for those controversial and divisive statements;

Whereas the remarks made by Lieutenant General Boykin have impaired the image of the United States worldwide and threaten to endanger United States forces in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

Whereas such remarks by a high-ranking military official undermine the war on terrorism by insulting Muslim allies of the United States and Muslim citizens of the United States, including those Muslim citizens in the United States Armed Forces: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns bigotry and intolerance against any religious group, including people of the Islamic faith; and

(2) calls on the President—

(A) to clearly censure Lieutenant General William Boykin, United States Army, for his religiously intolerant remarks against people of the Islamic faith; and

(B) to reassign Lieutenant General Boykin to a new position in which his views will not impact United States Government policy decisions toward Muslims.

#### HOW IS A SURGEON TO SURVIVE IN BUSINESS?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PORTER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise again this week as I have done in previous weeks to call attention to declining Medicare reimbursement for physicians. Effective January 1, 2004, physicians and other providers paid pursuant to the Medicare physician fee schedule face at least a 4.2 percent cut in reimbursements.

For nearly 40 years, Medicare has provided necessary health care to those millions of patients across this country. Another steep cut in reimbursement rates is now forcing many physicians who care for Medicare patients to make very difficult choices. Complicating the situation, Mr. Speaker, further, is the fact that doctors in some areas are experiencing double and even triple-digit percentage increases of their liability premiums. In a host of States, like my State of Georgia, surgeons are scrambling to find affordable liability insurance, if it is available at all.

When doctors are forced out of practice, patient access to care is further compromised. Fewer doctors overall translates into greater difficulty obtaining an appointment for every patient but especially those who rely on Medicare.

Earlier this year we passed H.R. 5, the HEALTH Act to combat the problem of increased liability premiums at the Federal level. Unfortunately, this commonsense legislation has now languished in the Senate. I reiterate my support for this bill, and I urge its

swift passage by the entire Congress so that President Bush can sign it into law this year.

Until that time, however, one of the main costs of running a medical practice for many high-risk specialists, including general surgeons, will continue to be liability insurance. Looking at this chart, you can easily see that increases in liability premiums have grossly outpaced Medicare reimbursement.

Using information collected by the independent trade publication Medical Liability Monitor, this chart compares the average liability premiums for general surgeons to the Medicare physician payment update. In 2001, physicians received a 5.1 percent Medicare payment update. During that same period liability premiums increased 14.6 percent. Then the next year Medicare physician payments were cut 5.4 percent. While doctors are trying to manage this cut, their liability premiums spiked to an additional 29 percent. There is no doubt that at least with respect to liability premiums, Medicare reimbursement continues to fall far behind the cost of doing business.

As an OB/GYN myself, I can assure you that a physician's practice is indeed a small business. When faced with decreasing income and soaring expenses, doctors cannot simply increase the cost of patient visits. To keep medical practices open, doctors make tough choices. Some doctors delay the purchase of new equipment; others reduce the size of the staff. Many increase the percentage of non-Medicare patients they see, leaving insufficient time in a busy schedule to see a sufficient number of Medicare patients.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to relay a story that demonstrates just how the cuts in physician reimbursements are affecting medical practices in my home State of Georgia. Dr. Harry Sherman, former president of the Georgia chapter of the American College of Surgeons, has lived in Georgia for more than 70 years. He remembers when Congress first enacted Medicare. Now, about 40 percent of his surgical patients are Medicare.

I recently had an opportunity to speak with Dr. Sherman at the American College of Surgeons annual meeting in Chicago. During our conversation, it became clear to me that Dr. Sherman obtains a great deal of personal satisfaction from treating Medicare patients.

As a physician myself, I understand that unique bond that develops between doctor and patient, but as the cost of doing business continues to increase and the level of reimbursement drops, further and further, he admits that it influenced his decision about when to retire.

Dr. Sherman is one of Georgia's most seasoned surgeons. He was born and raised in Georgia, and is truly an asset to his community and his patients. When continued Medicare payment cuts are forcing good surgeons like Dr.

Sherman to retire for financial reasons, something is badly wrong.

One of the greatest achievements of the Medicare program is the access to high-quality care it has brought to our Nation's seniors and disabled patients. This level of access cannot be expected to continue in the face of deep Medicare cuts and growing liability premiums.

Mr. Speaker, doctors are the linchpin of the Medicare system. Let us not force them out of the system. Stop the 4.2 percent Medicare physician cut; help doctors help those who need their care the most.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### OXI DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MALONEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, today I join people of Greek descent in Astoria, New York, the country, and the world in saluting the courageous acts of the Greeks against Mussolini and Hitler.

October 28, 2003, marks the 63rd anniversary of a very historic day in Greek history. On October 28, 1940, the Italian Minister in Athens gave an ultimatum to the Prime Minister of Greece, demanding the unconditional surrender of Greece. His answer was "Oxi," which means "no" in Greek.

Military success for the Italians would have sealed off the Balkans from the south and helped Hitler's plan to invade Russia. In fact, the Italian army was fully equipped, well supplied, and backed by superior air and naval power. They were expected to overrun Greece within a short time. Fortunately, the Greek Army proved to be well trained and resourceful despite their lack of military equipment.

In less than a week after the Italians first attacked, it was clear that their forces had suffered a serious setback in spite of having control of the air and fielding armored vehicles. On November 14th, the Greek Army launched a counteroffensive and quickly drove Italian forces far back into Albania. On December 6th, the Greeks captured Porto Edda and continued their advance along the seacoast toward Valona. By February 1, 1941, the Italians had launched strong counterattacks, but the determination of the Greek Army coupled with the severity of the winter weather, nullified the Italians' efforts.