

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL WALTER E. GASKIN

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 7, 2006

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great Georgian and a great American, MG Walter E. Gaskin, who is taking command of the 2nd Marine Division this week, in this, his 32nd year in the United States Marine Corps.

Major General Gaskin was born and raised in Savannah, Georgia, and attended Savannah State University on a Naval ROTC scholarship. He graduated in 1974 and was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant. Upon completing training, he was assigned to the Second Marines. He served as a Rifle Platoon Commander and Executive Officer of Company K and the 106 Recoilless Rifle Platoon Commander for 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marines.

The young Marine went on to be stationed in Okinawa and at Parris Island, before returning home to Savannah to serve as the Marine Officer Instructor and recruiting officer for Naval ROTC at his alma mater. While in Georgia, he also served as the assistant Officer Selection Officer at the Recruiting Station in Macon.

In 1984, Gaskin joined the 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines where he served as an Operations Officer. From there he was selected to attend the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. From 1987 until 1990, he served as an action officer at Marine Corps Headquarters and Marine Corps Combat Development Command (MCCDC), in charge of Unit Environmental Training Programs, Jungle, Cold Weather, and Combined Arms Exercises. Next, Gaskin served as Head, Ground Forces Branch in Seoul, South Korea, then as an Operations Officer for the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force during exercises in Norway.

Gaskin then attended the U.S. Army War College and was subsequently assigned as the Executive Officer, 6th Marines, 2nd Marine Division. In 1995, he assumed command of 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marines, and later he deployed to the Mediterranean Sea as the Commanding Officer of Battalion Landing Team under the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit. There he participated in Operation Assured Response and Quick Response in Defense of American Embassies in Liberia and the Central African Republic. In 1998, he returned to Camp Lejeune as Head of Expeditionary Operation for the Second Expeditionary Unit.

In January 1999, Major General Gaskin assumed command of the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit. In September of that year, he deployed with them to the Mediterranean Sea as Landing Force Sixth Fleet. While there, the 22nd participated in the Bright Star Exercises in Egypt and the Infinite Moonlight Exercises in Jordan. His unit also served as the Strategic Reserve for operations in Bosnia and Kosovo.

In March 2000, he became the Commanding General, Training Command, Training and Education Command, MCCDC. Major General Gaskin then rose to Chief of Staff, Naval Striking and Support Forces Southern Europe and Deputy Commanding General, Fleet Marine Forces Europe, in Naples, Italy. He took command of Marine Corps Recruiting Command in September 2004. In October 2005, he was promoted to the rank of Major General.

His personal decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit with Gold Star in lieu of 2nd award, Bronze Star with combat "V," Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with 2 Gold Stars in lieu of 3rd award, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal and the Combat Action Ribbon.

Mr. Speaker, Major General Gaskin is the highest ranking African American in the Marine Corps. He is an inspiration for young men and women, and I stand here to honor him today for his years of service to this Nation.

TRIBUTE TO JONATHAN A. SAIDEL

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 7, 2006

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Jonathan A. Saidel, former Controller for the City of Philadelphia.

Jonathan Saidel served as Philadelphia's City Controller for 16 years, winning reelection most recently in 2001 with 87.5 percent of the vote. As Controller, he has won local and national plaudits for reforming and professionalizing the Controller's office, his dedication to fiscal discipline, and proposing innovative ideas to grow Philadelphia. His 1999 book "Philadelphia: A New Urban Direction" continues to be used as a textbook in college level urban studies courses.

Jonathan Saidel has been called "a taxpayer's best friend" for his outspoken advocacy of reducing Philadelphia's crushing tax burden in order to spur economic development and stop the exodus of people and jobs from the city. His work with then Mayor Edward Rendell in the early 1990's helped return Philadelphia from the brink of bankruptcy. His groundbreaking audits and proposed government reforms have saved the taxpayers over 500 million dollars since 1990.

Jonathan Saidel is a great humanitarian involved with political causes and organizations too numerous to mention, serving on the Special Olympics, Boy Scouts, Salvation Army and the Variety Club. He is a Lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania's Fels Center of Government and teaches Government Finance as an Adjunct Professor in the MBA Program at Drexel University.

Mr. Speaker, Jonathan Saidel has long been recognized for his outstanding commu-

nity and civic involvement, and it is for these reasons that I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues rise to honor him.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD W. POMBO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 7, 2006

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, on June 6, 2006 I missed recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall votes 226, 225, 224, and 223.

TOM FOX, AN AMERICAN HERO

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 7, 2006

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. Tom Fox, an American hero who tirelessly gave his life to help bring peace to Iraq but whose life was mercilessly taken from us at the hands of killers on March 9, 2006. I am here to commemorate the life of such a selfless and dedicated individual.

Mr. Fox was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee and graduated with a double degree in music performance and education from George Peabody College for Teachers, which is now part of Vanderbilt University, in Nashville. An accomplished musician, he joined the Marine Band and spent twenty years playing his clarinet for them.

His passion gradually shifted from music toward peace activism and he joined the Quaker Church. His views on non-violent social activism strengthened his resolve to fight against the injustices in the world. In 2002, he joined the Christian Peacemakers Team and traveled to one of the most dangerous and violent parts of the world, Iraq.

For two years, he devoted his time and energy to promoting peace and understanding between Christians and Muslims, Iraqis and Americans. In partnership with local Iraqi human-rights organizations, he committed himself to non-violent forms of intervention, such as accompanying young Iraqi refugee children to the Syrian border, and living in the same conditions as ordinary Iraqis in the downtown quarters of a Baghdad neighborhood—without security or protection around his apartment dwelling.

His dedication for helping others was always apparent in everything he did. A quiet, good-natured soul, he insisted on understanding the hearts and minds of every person he met, believing that "there is part of God in every person". His complete faith in the goodness and humanity of others allowed him to stand through more violence and hatred than most of us will ever see in our lives.

• 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.

Despite the roadside bombings that he walked by, despite the mortars that fell above his home, and despite the death threats he received before being kidnapped, Mr. Fox always understood why he was in Iraq. In his own words, he said: "We are here to root out all aspects of dehumanization that exist within us. We are here to stand with those being dehumanized by oppressors and stand firm against that dehumanization. We are here to stop people, including ourselves, from dehumanizing any of God's children, no matter how much they dehumanize their own souls."

His legacy will always serve as a testament that to fight for what you believe in and to understand others is not to use violence or coercion. We preserve the dignity of our humanity and our goodness by each loving action we take on behalf of others.

"Too many are willing to die for war and too few are willing to die for peace."

[From Connection Editorial, Mar. 16, 2006]

TOM FOX

In the pages of *The Connection*, since the beginning of the war in Iraq, we have periodically been called to write obituaries for men and women who have been killed in the conflict both in Iraq and Afghanistan.

These were people who traveled to Iraq in service to their country. Losing them has been devastating to family and friends; their grief is sometimes tempered by knowing that their loved one died in doing something they believed in.

The war in Iraq also served as a call to service to Tom Fox of Springfield. It was a call of a different kind, but one driven by deep conviction and a sense of duty. Fox, a Quaker and a pacifist, was troubled by the U.S. military response to terrorism, and traveled to Iraq as part of a Christian Peacemaker Team.

Fox and other members of his team were taken hostage in November 2005, and Fox's body was found last week.

The Christian Peacemaker Teams group "embraces the vision of unarmed intervention waged by committed peacemakers ready to risk injury and death in bold attempts to transform lethal conflict through the non-violent power of God's truth and love."

In a Feb. 16, 2005 interview with the *Connection Newspapers*, Fox said he believed peace in Iraq could only be achieved through non-violence.

"[The Iraqi] people are not being served by violence," Fox said. "It doesn't help anyone. There is always going to be conflict, but it's a question of how we deal with it. Do we settle problems with words, or do we bring out the clubs and act like cavemen?"

Tom Fox's friends and associates say that he would forgive his kidnappers and his killers, knowing that they acted out of fear. He would reject any anger or any effort at reprisal.

Fox wrote: "We reject violence to punish anyone. We ask that there be no retaliation on relatives or property. We forgive those who consider us their enemies. We hope that in loving both friends and enemies and by intervening nonviolently to aid those who are systematically oppressed, we can contribute in some small way to transforming this volatile situation."

It is remarkable to see fellow human beings who walk in the path of their convictions. It is heartbreaking to see the person die as a result.

But his death was not futile—no more than the death 2,000 years ago of the one he followed.

[From the Springfield Connection, Mar. 23, 2006]

CARRYING THE LIGHT: FRIENDS OF TOM FOX REMEMBER HIS LIFE, URGE PEACEMAKING WORK TO CONTINUE AFTER HIS DEATH

(By Amber Healy)

In the nearly two weeks since news of his death became public, friends of Springfield native Tom Fox have been trying to make peace with their friend's passing.

He was no martyr, they say. Rather, he would most likely be uncomfortable with all the attention focused on his work in Iraq as part of the Christian Peacemaker Teams for the past few years.

"When Tom went to Iraq, we saw a side of him that we weren't aware of before," said Doug Smith, clerk of the Langley Hill Meeting of Friends, a Quaker congregation in McLean.

Fox kept a blog in which he wrote about his struggles and work in Iraq, Smith said, which provided a deeper look into a man who had a "depth of spirit" he didn't reveal to many people.

Smith thinks it was this unassuming nature that helped Fox connect with the Iraqi people, living among them in Baghdad for three- or four-month intervals since 2003 and collecting their stories of loved ones who had been imprisoned or taken hostage.

"He was able to sit and talk with just about anyone," Smith said. "There wasn't anything extraordinary about him."

Fox joined Christian Peacemaker Teams, a non-government organization promoting peace, with headquarters in Chicago and Toronto, as an alternative to impending war after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. He did not join CPT with the intent of going to Iraq, Smith said, but instead because "it was something he wanted to do. He liked that [they were] a group that tried to get into the middle of a conflict, hear all sides and find a way to bring them together."

As a Quaker, Fox was following in "a long history of peace work and social activism," something he ultimately gave his life for, Smith said.

The Rev. Carol Rose, a director at CPT, said she first met Fox when he began the training all volunteers go through before being assigned to one of the eight conflict zones they work in around the world.

While in the middle of one of the most dangerous places in the world, Rose said Fox "always had a peaceful presence. He was very much at home there," despite being well aware that, as a foreigner, especially as an American, it would be best to keep a low profile.

Fox all but refused to "blend in," she said, instead preferring to go to checkpoints around Fallujah, talking with the guards who worked there and the residents who spent hours waiting to cross to the other side.

Fox had a natural curiosity and desire to learn about the people he'd meet, said Rose.

"There was no hope in trying to keep Tom hidden, there was no way to keep him from standing out," she laughed. "He was well-known and well-loved by his Iraqi colleagues."

CPT's continues in Iraq, she said, despite Fox's death and the uncertain fate of Harmeet Sooden, James Looney and Norman Kember, three coworkers who were kidnapped along with Fox back in November. Fox was the first CPT member to be killed in Iraq, she said.

If things had worked out differently, Fox could have been assigned to work in Palestine, or on a Native American reservation in Canada, or in Colombia, where other CPT workers are placed. Instead, he made himself at home in Iraq, said longtime friend Paul Slattery.

"Tom had a quiet self-assurance that this was where he wanted to go, that there were people in Iraq that were hurting and he had to go and do what he could to help them," Slattery said.

Working in Iraq, helping to create a Muslim group based on the CPT practices, was the "high point" of Fox's life, he said.

"If Tom had come back here and lived to retirement age, I can see him sitting in a rocking chair and looking back on his life in Fallujah and Baghdad with a smile on his face," Slattery said.

There have been moments when Slattery said he has questioned himself, wondering if maybe he should have been more assertive of his skepticism.

"But he wanted to do this, and it was my job to support him. I don't feel guilty, but in a way I do feel bad, that maybe in some way I wasn't the advocate for the people who loved him and didn't want him to do it," he said. "But that wasn't my role."

Fox had a strong faith and an equally strong belief that he was "called" to go to Iraq, despite the dangers he knew were there, said friend Pearl Hoover, minister of the Northern Virginia Mennonite Church in Fairfax. Since Fox's death, Hoover said part of the loss people have been feeling is the sense of love that emanated from him.

"Tom knew how to love and let someone be where they are instead of where he thought they should be," she said.

Some people may find it difficult to understand why he felt so compelled to put himself in a war zone in the name of peace, Hoover said, but it is no different than a soldier signing up to serve his or her country.

"It is just as costly to be a peacemaker as it is to be a warrior," she said.

The last time Fox was in Virginia, he met with his support group at the McLean Family Restaurant to catch up, share stories and photographs, said close friend Hoyt Maulden. Something didn't seem quite right when Fox arrived, said Maulden, but he didn't know what it was until Fox pulled out a large, brightly colored gift bag that was "uncharacteristically loud and colorful and flashy."

Fox had brought back a hand-hammered copper plate from a market in Iraq, which he had wrapped in gift bags for the five people he kept in closest contact with while working overseas, Maulden said.

"Tom always went out of his way to do the right thing, and in this case, he wanted to do it up right and make it a special event to give us these gifts," he said.

Memories like that one have been a comfort to Maulden since learning of Fox's death, but he said it has been more comforting talking with people who understand why Fox was working in Iraq, why it was important to him and why it must continue.

"Tom was so ordinary in some ways, but that is what's important to remember," he said. "It doesn't take a superhuman kind of person to do what he did. Tom didn't do anything other than be faithful to what he believed in."

[From the Springfield Connection, Mar. 23, 2006]

A SIMPLE TWIST OF FATE

(By Amber Healy)

A little over a year ago, I had the opportunity to sit and talk with Tom Fox in the Borders bookstore in Springfield. We spent a little over an hour and a half talking about his work in Iraq, his dedication to peace and the path he felt he was called to take. Neither of us had any way of knowing where that path would take him a few months later, nor could he have imagined the impact that conversation has had on me, both personally and professionally.

Tom spoke about his life and his work with directness that told more about his sense of purpose in life than any article, any movie, or tale ever could. He believed in the life he led, in the work he did, in the people of Iraq so much that he put himself in harm's way for months at a time over the past three years. And while he may not come back to tell us all he learned, all the progress he made, all the stories he heard of suffering and hard work and struggles, his life speaks volumes.

A father of two grown children, Tom left behind a life of respectable hard work as the assistant manager of a department in a Whole Foods, a life of routine and safety, to put himself where he felt needed. He joined the Christian Peacemaker Teams to go into war zones, places by definition rife with danger, where his life would be threatened just by being there. He was trained about the dangers, make no mistake about that. He was warned, he was prepared, he was unwavering in what his mission in life held. He put himself, as CPT members vow, in the way.

Tom was not the first American to die in Iraq. He's not even the first person outside the war to lose his life there. So what makes his loss different? What can we learn from the life and death of a 54-year-old man?

He can teach us about forgiveness. Tom would want us to forgive the person who killed him because his violent death was an act of fear, not an act of terrorism. His capture, along with James Looney, Harmeet Sooden and Norman Kember, his CPT co-workers, was an act of desperation, not one of hatred. The actions of the members of the Swords of Righteousness Brigade have been out of anger at something bigger than these four men. It was retaliation, perhaps, but they picked the wrong people to victimize. He would be quick to point out that thousands of Iraqis have lost loved ones, through kidnapping or death, for decades. He would mention that his death is one of countless others in the name of war. He would not want to be made an example of, he would not want to be seen as anything other than another loss during wartime. He was a soldier for peace.

For the teenagers who knew Tom and spent time with him at Quaker retreats or youth groups, I am so terribly sorry for your loss. Your teacher has brought you to a point where you can follow in his footsteps in whatever way you are meant. His love of life can be found in all of your smiles, the memories you have of him, the stories you share with each other.

For the members of the Langley Hill Friends Meeting, I grieve with you for the loss of your Friend. He was a truly remarkable man who will be missed more than any of us can say. But the life he led was full of light.

For Tom's children, my heart breaks for you. I have no words to help ease your pain or offer you sufficient comfort. Your father belonged to you more than anyone, and you shared him with all of us. We are so grateful for that, and I hope that might bring you some comfort.

Peace is possible. We just have to remember that it still exists, it can be found, in time of turmoil and grief and war and seemingly insurmountable pain and suffering. The light is always there, even in the darkest night, the most frightening storm, the most painful tests. Peace is always within reach if you stretch out your hand to find it.

[From the (Alexandria) Gazette/The Connection Newspapers, Apr. 6, 2006]

SPeAKING FROM THE SILENCE OF THE FRIENDS OF ALEXANDRIA MEETING: QUAKER FRIENDS AT WOODLAWN EXPERIENCE THE CONTINUING REVELATION OF HISTORY, COMMUNITY, SPIRITUALITY

(By John Teschner)

A few minutes before 11 a.m., the greetings and conversations in the hallway are petering out and the Friends of the Alexandria Meeting at Woodlawn are slipping into the meeting room to begin worship. Despite the faint hum of voices still audible outside, the silence within the room envelopes each friend as he or she steps through the door into the stillness.

The room is either 155 or 140 years old, depending on which side of the room the question refers to. Its white walls with dark wood paneling are interrupted frequently by windows, and the sunlight streams through the clear panes. A wood stove still sits on one side of the room, but on this clear and cold March morning the warm air is flowing from modern vents. The wooden benches face towards the center, parallel to the walls behind them. They are constructed simply and solidly. Some bear graffiti left by the bored hands of idle men. They are the name of people and places, Union soldiers temporarily hospitalized or picketed on a long patrol, leaving a record that they existed, that they had a home.

The worship meeting has begun, though no one has begun it. The stillness folds inward.

"Quakers believe that they come into worship to wait on God. We believe in continuing revelation, that God directs us. By sitting in this silence and listening we receive that direction and support," said Linda Spitzer, the clerk of Woodlawn Quaker Friends Meeting, a position that, like many aspects of the Quaker community, resists definition but is essentially an elected executive who serves a three-year term.

"You're there with your own thoughts," said Meghan Evans, a Friend in the meeting.

"Holding things up to the light," added Christine Fernsler, who is a teacher at Sidwell Friends School.

Meeting lasts one hour. It is possible the entire hour may be spent without a word being spoken. More commonly, a Friend will be moved to stand and make a statement, putting into voice thoughts engendered by the meditative silence. These statements are usually brief and infrequent. Even a "talkative" meeting will contain more silence than speaking. But words dropped into stillness are heavy, and the ripples they leave in people's thoughts last long after the speaker has taken a seat again.

"When people speak out of the silence, we often hear that of God in them . . . It's not a canned sermon, what bubbles up is what's on people's mind," said Spitzer.

"What's coming out of meeting—spoken and unspoken—is perspective," said Holly Mason. "It changes your priorities—what's really important or less important. That's what all religion really does . . . Meeting is the format that works for me to worship . . . it puts a lot more responsibility on you, on the individual. The ministry is not the responsibility of some overreaching priest or clergy, but from within and from each person."

The Alexandria Friends Meeting at Woodlawn was founded by a group of Quakers from New Jersey and Pennsylvania. They moved to the area in the late 1840's for two reasons: to find oak timber suitable for selling to Northern builders of clipper ships and to start a plantation that would employ free blacks and prove that it was possible to make money without slave labor. "You see

how practical these people were," says Jones.

Quakers find diverse ways of bringing the spirituality of meeting into their lives. During the announcements after the meeting, Mason stood up and offered to teach people how to make soap. "I just want to fill my house with people I make soap as a hobby and I want to invite people over," she explained.

"Most of us Quakers . . . think it's really important to put into action what we believe in any way that we are gifted or led. Even though it is a mystical religion, we get involved in the world . . . the mix of mysticism and practicality is why it appeals to me," said Nancy Jones, the meeting's liaison to Ventures in Community, a coalition of social services and faith-based organizations along Route 1. "If God is in everyone of us—when I say God I mean the spirit, life, there are so many names and they're all inadequate—if that presence is within everyone, that leads to certain ways of relating to other people and the world—animate or inanimate . . . I'm comfortable with one-on-one interactions with people. So I find myself situations where I get to relate in that way . . . That's one of my strengths and gifts." One way Jones expresses her gift is by being a chaplain at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital. She also has volunteered, along with other Friends, with the Hypothermia Project, staying overnight at Rising Hope's temporary shelter for homeless people during the cold months.

Glenn Elvington describes how Quakers view the business and budget decision-making process as a "spiritual exercise." In earlier days, "One of the few reasons to be read out of a meeting was to go bankrupt," he said. "The way Quaker spiritual practice blends into everything we do in interacting with the real world is through business meetings. Business meetings held with a sense of worship." During these meetings the clerk attempts to "get a sense of the meeting" in order to reach a decision. The sense is based more on a spiritual intuition of compromise and agreement rather than on winner-take-all votes or autocratic executive decisions.

"Sometimes people think Quakers are maybe naive," said Fernsler, "but it's a really thought-through seeking to nourish what's good in others. I know it's not so easy sometimes."

Quakers are and have been active in movements for prison reform, abolition, equal rights, and peacemaking. In the 19th century, many Quaker homes were stops on the Underground Railroad that helped escaped slaves reach free states. In the 21st century, Quakers have been prominent in the anti-war movement. Tom Fox, who was taken hostage and ultimately murdered in Baghdad, attended the Woodlawn Meeting until the mid-1980's. Some of his family members still attend the meeting, and many Woodlawn Friends shared strong bonds with Fox.

"That's where the peacemaking is rooted, in building fellowship between people," said John Stephens, who has helped manage a memorial Web site for Fox. He was discussing Quakerism's identity with Christianity and its philosophical roots in the bible. Stephens cites the letters of Paul, which describe the Eucharist as the simple act of sharing a meal and bringing people together. "That is really what Tom [Fox] was most involved in," Stephens said, "sharing meals with people and building civility on frontiers between friend and enemy."

Gordon Roesler describes the meeting's participation in the Friends Committee on National Legislation. "One of their primary goals is increasing peace and opposing war

. . . Peacemaking of course is more than just anti-war, much more."

"And more than just legislation," Stephens adds.

"We believe that peacemaking is very local as well as international," Roesler said. He explains that the meeting works closely with United Community Ministries, a local non-profit. "We view that as peacemaking." Stephens added to this. "What Tom's example reveals to us is that peacemaking is not so much laying demands on the others but enduring sacrifice to serve others . . . Much of peace activism [as practiced by other entities] is making decisions for others." But "Christian peacemaking emphasizes serving rather than dominating . . . With Christian peacemakers, most of the work involves accompaniment, being with groups under attack." But, Stephens said, Fox and his colleagues found that in Iraq their presence often exacerbated violence. So they "had to reinvent" their role. They "trained a Muslim peacemaker task force" and on how to navigate the bureaucracy of the different governing organizations that hold power in the country.

Tom Fox's death brought his work to the attention of the country, but the Friends at Woodlawn remember a life dedicated to small acts of fellowship. Warren Treuer's lasting memory dates from two decades ago, when Fox knew he would be moving to a new meeting. "One of the last things he did was crawl under the building, in the mud, to wrap insulation around the pipes," Treuer said.

As this recollection suggests, maintaining the historical continuity of the Woodlawn Friends community and the building that shelters it is a practical expression of spirituality. This means that the meeting house's location within the grounds of Fort Belvoir has created concern for many Friends.

"It's hard because here we are, a peace activist church, sitting on the edge—surrounded by—a military base," said Spitzer. "We have a lot of members who feel very strongly about peace." In response to Sept. 11, a military checkpoint was built at the intersection with Route 1 that controlled access to the meeting house as well as to the base. Some Friends refused to pass through this entrance because of their pacifist beliefs. Belvoir worked with the Meeting to build an alternate drive. On Sunday mornings, the army allows Friends to pass through without entering the checkpoint.

Jim Nations, clerk of the Trustees Committee (which is comparable to a non-profit organization's board of directors) says that he is appreciative of Fort Belvoir for giving them Sunday access and letting them tap into the fort's water system.

Although Spitzer says some soldiers do attend the meeting, many people on the base, as well as in the wider community, know little or nothing about the small white building tucked in among the trees near Woodlawn Gate. James Cartwright was stationed at Belvoir until he retired in 1992. "The first time I walked in here and sat down for worship I knew this was where I was meant to be." That was 12 years ago. But when he was stationed at Belvoir, "I didn't even know it was here. I drove past the building a whole lot and didn't even know what it was." He said he hopes new signs will make that more clear.

"There's been a lot of disagreement among Quakers" over their relationship with the military, Cartwright said. But Quakerism hasn't changed his perceptions of his own military service. "My perception was changing before that, which is what led me to find them." Cartwright had protested Vietnam, but was drafted. He agreed to join volun-

tarily only if they would allow him to enter the medical corps. He began as a corpsman and worked his way up to respiratory therapist, the trade he practices today.

Cartwright said the meeting has a lot of appeal for its youngest members. "We have families that come here because their kids bring them back." Children say "this is one place they could always come and feel totally accepted for themselves . . . We treat children with respect. We treat them as equals. We're on a first name basis. They call me James . . . We don't put any conditions on them, on how they look or dress or be or believe . . . It's a very warm, loving community . . . You see the teenagers interacting with the little kids. You see little kids sometimes walk into meeting and instead of sitting with their parents they sit with someone else."

Rachel Messenger brings her daughter to meeting, just as her parents brought her. She has been attending meeting "since I was two years old." She remembers when the building had pit toilets and the Friends met only once a month. "It was a lot smaller then [in the 1960's]. It's really evolved into what it is today," she said. "I find it different than the rest of the world. I find it a lot more loving, more accepting, more tolerant . . . I wanted to raise my daughter in a loving environment."

Like many American communities, the Friends of Woodlawn are confronting the gaping holes that war tears into the fabric of daily life. Tom Fox heard something in the silence that called him across the earth to bring simple acts of fellowship into a war zone. But during the Civil War, Woodlawn itself was a war zone, caught in the no-man's land between North and South.

Chalkley Gillingham, one of the meeting's founders, kept a journal during this period. During the battle of Bull Run, he wrote, "while we sat in meeting we heard the noise of war and roar of battle." Later he recorded that "we continually hear the din of drums and guns." At various times, the meeting house was commandeered as a picket for soldiers, officers' quarters and a field hospital. But throughout these disruptions, and true to his Quaker sense of practicality, Gillingham maintained the workings of the farm as best he could. May 13, 1864: "Nearly done planting corn; also very busy about the nursery and tree planting . . . our milk business changed the first of this month into an ice cream business—the [Union] hospitals [in Alexandria] have got someone else to serve them [milk]. We buy all the cream we can get in the neighborhood, say 20 to 50 gallons, and make ice cream. [We] sell it at one dollar a gallon."

Gillingham's tombstone can be found in the small graveyard behind the meeting house. The names of Union soldiers are carved into the walls and into the benches of the building itself. The Friends of Woodlawn are sitting in the silence.

A friend is moved to speak. He recalls an article in the Washington Post detailing how scientists studying the background radiation of interstellar space hypothesize that 13.7 billion years ago, in one trillionth of a second, our universe sprang into being from the size of a marble. The friend reads a quotation from the "Tao Te Ching," seeking to understand the deepest origins of science and faith. In this historic, wood-paneled room, with its lantern brackets and iron stove, it is this searching, the silence and the speaking from it, that is the strongest link to Gillingham and the meeting's past.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 7, 2006

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on following amendments to H.R. 5441 on June 6, 2006:

King of Iowa Amendment (Roll No. 223): Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Kingston of Georgia Amendment (Roll Call No. 224): Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Mr. Speaker, I was also unable to vote to Table the Appeal of the Ruling of the Chair (Roll Call No. 225). Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

And finally, Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on passage of H.R. 5441 (Roll Call No. 226). Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

SUPPORT FOR THE WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION COMMISSION

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 7, 2006

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, and its chairman Dr. Hans Blix, on the release of their major report entitled, "Weapons of Terror: Freeing the World of Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Arms." I urge my colleagues to consider and heed the vital recommendations put forward by Dr. Blix and the Commission. At a time when the spread of weapons of mass destruction endangers all of humanity and the international community struggles to find unity in the face of this threat, the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission shows us a way forward to a WMD-free future.

As the former Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Executive Chairman of the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), Dr. Blix is uniquely well-qualified to speak on the issue of weapons of mass destruction, and we would do well to listen closely.

I would recommend that all of my colleagues read this important and timely report. I ask that a summary of the Report's principal recommendations be inserted into the RECORD at this point.

WEAPONS OF TERROR—FREEING THE WORLD OF NUCLEAR, BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL ARMS SYNOPSIS

Why Action Is Necessary: Nuclear, biological and chemical arms are the most inhumane of all weapons. Designed to terrify as well as destroy, they can, in the hands of either states or non-state actors, cause destruction on a vastly greater scale than any conventional weapons, and their impact is far more indiscriminate and long-lasting.

So long as any state has such weapons—especially nuclear arms—others will want them. So long as any such weapons remain in any state's arsenal, there is a high risk that they will one day be used, by design or accident. Any such use would be catastrophic.