

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

THE TRUE INTENT OF THE FIRST AMENDMENT

HON. JAMES H. (JIMMY) QUILLEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 16, 1995

Mr. QUILLEN. Mr. Speaker, my good friend and constituent W.W. Belew, of Bristol, TN, is a prominent businessman and an inspiration to his community and church. Bill kindly sent me a copy of the following article from Reader's Digest that I believe every Member of Congress should read. We have just finished the season when high schools around the Nation hold their annual graduation exercises, and students everywhere were again denied their rights to include religious references at this important time in their lives. The reason for this is the unfortunate and harmful decision of our judicial system to take religion entirely out of any public enterprise. I believe that this decision is wrong, and the article sent to me by Mr. Belew clearly states why. I look forward to being able to vote for a constitutional school prayer amendment soon to rectify this situation, and I am hopeful that my colleagues will join me in this endeavor.

[From the Reader's Digest, Dec. 1994]

THE SUPREME COURT IS WRONG ABOUT RELIGION

(By M. Stanton Evans)

A rabbi prays at a Rhode Island high-school graduation ceremony. This brings a lawsuit, and a court prohibits invocations at such ceremonies. In Morrow, Ga., a school-board attorney advises a class officer to delete reference to God from her commencement remarks—because it is unconstitutional. A federal judge abolishes the Good Friday holiday in Illinois public schools.

Over three decades ago the Supreme Court declared that prayer in the public schools was unconstitutional—a violation of the First Amendment, which states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion." Since then traditional religious beliefs and customs have retreated before a secular onslaught by our courts.

Was the First Amendment really intended to build a "wall of separation" between church and state? History is clear: it was not. The Founding Fathers wanted to protect religion from federal-government interference, not diminish its influence in our public life.

What were the religious convictions of the framers?

Some historians, as well as members of the Supreme Court, have implied that the Founding Fathers were religious skeptics. In fact, the vast majority of those who gathered in Philadelphia to create the Constitution were church-going believers.

They included Presbyterian Hugh Williamson, a former preacher from North Carolina; Roman Catholics such as Daniel Carroll of Maryland; Quakers John Dickinson of Delaware and Thomas Mifflin of Pennsylvania.

Ben Franklin asserted, "The longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of

men." George Washington, for his part, had urged his troops "to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier," and wrote in his Farewell Address that "reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."

What were the public customs at the time of the First Amendment?

The providence of God was openly and officially acknowledged. Most states had religious requirements to hold office. South Carolina, for instance, said no one was eligible for the legislature "unless he be of the Protestant Religion."

The term "establishment of religion" had a definite, agreed-upon meaning: an official church, vested with privileges denied other churches and supported by the public treasury. Such was the Church of England in Great Britain—and churches in nine of the 13 Colonies at the outset of the American Revolution.

Because of growing religious diversity, however, pressure mounted within the Colonies to disestablish these churches. In 1785, James Madison co-sponsored a bill in Virginia to disestablish the Protestant Episcopal Church and prohibit taxes from being used to support any church. He did not act out of animosity to religion, but mainly at the request of other denominations who felt unfairly treated. Nor did he intend to erect a "wall of separation" between church and state: on the same day, he introduced a bill "for appointing days of public fasting and thanksgiving."

What was the federal policy?

Religious belief was officially sanctioned. Days of prayer and appeals for divine assistance were common. The Continental Congress appointed a chaplain and provided for an opening prayer as one of its first items of business.

When the Continental Congress passed the Northwest Ordinance, governing territories beyond the Ohio River, one of its goals was the promotion of religion. One lot in each parcel of land in the territories was to be "given perpetually for the purposes of religion." And in 1780, in the midst of Revolutionary conflict, the Congress also took steps to print an American Bible, as the supply from England had been cut off.

How was the First Amendment written?

After his election to the House of Representatives, Madison proposed a Bill of Rights on June 8, 1789. It assured that "the civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship, nor shall any national religion be established."

In debating the bill the House made it clear that its objective was to prevent Congress from establishing a "national" religion that would threaten the religious prerogatives of the states.

The specific First Amendment language adopted—"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion"—was worked out by a six-man committee, including two members of Connecticut's state-established Congregational Church. The meaning was clear. Congress was forbidden to legislate for or against church establishments. It could neither set up a national church, nor interfere with the established churches in the states.

Official support for religion persisted well after adoption of the First Amendment. The

established church of Massachusetts, for example, lasted until 1833, when it was abolished by the state itself, not the Supreme Court.

In recent times, the Supreme Court has "applied" the First Amendment's establishment clause to the states. Thus, what was once prohibited only to the Congress is now also prohibited to the states. Yet even if this approach is valid, it hardly warrants banishing religion from public life.

The Court has prohibited prayer in state-sponsored schools, yet Congress itself has engaged in officially sponsored, tax-supported prayer, complete with paid official chaplains, from the very outset. The day after the House approved the First Amendment's establishment clause, September 25, 1789, it called for a day of national prayer and thanksgiving—the precursor to our present national holiday.

President Washington said: "It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits and humbly to implore His protection and favor."

The Supreme Court's term "wall of separation" comes from a letter Jefferson wrote to Baptist officials in Danbury, Conn. In it, he affirmed his view that establishing or disestablishing a church was not a question for the federal government. In his second inaugural address, Jefferson stated that in matters of religion, he had "left them, as the Constitution found them, under the direction and discipline of State or Church authorities acknowledged by the several religious societies."

Later, Jefferson told a clergyman that his views were based on the states' rights Tenth Amendment as well as on the First: "Certainly no power to prescribe any religious exercise, or to assume authority in religious discipline, has been delegated to the general government. It must then rest with the states as far as it can be in any human authority."

The conclusion seems irresistible: that no wall of separation between religious affirmation and civil government was intended by the First Amendment. The wall of separation was between the federal government and the states.

The Constitution, including the First Amendment, was the work of believers in God who expressed their faith through public prayer. We have come to a day when a child's mention of God in a graduation address or the presence of a Nativity scene in a public place triggers threats of legal action. This is a gross distortion of our Constitutional history and a dishonor to our Founders.

TRIBUTE TO MAUMEE VALLEY GUIDANCE CENTER ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR 35TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 1995

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today and pay tribute to an outstanding organization located in Ohio's

• 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.

5th Congressional District. On June 22, 1995, the Maumee Valley Guidance Center will celebrate their 35th anniversary.

The guidance center is a community mental health center serving residents of Defiance, Fulton, Henry, and Williams Counties in OH. Under the leadership of executive director, William Bierie, and the center's dedicated staff of professionals, it has steadfastly served northwest Ohio for 35 years.

The Maumee Valley Guidance Center believes in the principles associated with continuous quality improvement as supported by various health care accrediting agencies and consistent with organizations committed to excellence.

The purpose of continuous quality improvement is to provide a mechanism whereby ongoing and systematic monitoring and evaluation of the quality of client services can be accomplished. Continuous quality improvement activities provide direction for the development and implementation of change toward improved quality of care and client outcome.

Mr. Speaker, anniversaries are a time to reflect on past accomplishments, they are also a time to look toward new horizons. The staff of the guidance center has made it their responsibility to serve those in need by keeping pace with the ever increasing challenges facing mankind. I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the achievements of the Maumee Valley Guidance Center and encourage them to continue to uphold what has become the standard for service in Ohio.

IN HONOR OF RITA GERBER

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 1995

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in honoring a constituent of mine and longtime Westchester resident, Rita Gerber. Rita is concluding a 1-year term as president of the Westchester/LAX Chamber of Commerce, and is being honored by her colleagues at the chamber's annual dinner on June 27.

Under Rita's leadership the Westchester Chamber experienced a significant increase in membership, and received its first ever ranking in the Los Angeles Business Journal's listing of the largest Chambers of Commerce in Los Angeles County. The chamber now boasts over 375 members.

Rita oversaw a year of firsts at the Westchester/LAX Chamber. The chamber held its first business recognition dinner and also launched the flight path, a walking tour that commemorates pioneers in aviation and aerospace history. The flight path dedication was attended by retired Brig. Gen. Chuck Yeager. Another first was the chamber's protectors' breakfast held to honor men and women in law enforcement. These events would not have been possible without Rita's ability to turn ideas into action. Rita lent the enthusiasm and the consensus building skills she possesses to see these projects through.

During Rita's tenure the chamber took a lead role in the formulation of the Los Angeles City general plan, the blueprint for future progress and growth in Los Angeles. In addition, the chamber was instrumental in building

a coalition between business leaders and educators in Westchester, ensuring that the area's most valuable asset, its children, are given as many opportunities as possible to learn.

Rita is truly a modern woman. Along with all her responsibilities as president of the Westchester/LAX Chamber, she still finds time to spend with her husband Greg, and daughter Christine, 12, their proudest accomplishment. Her friends appreciate her infectious laugh, and her great sense of humor. Please join me in honoring a very special person, Rita Gerber.

TRIBUTE TO THE DESCENDANTS OF JACK SPANN OF SUMTER

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 1995

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the descendants of Jack Spann of Sumter, SC as they celebrate their family reunion.

Jack Spann was born May 16, 1844, in Middleton Township in my hometown of Sumter County, SC. Jack was the son of Milton and Lettie Spann, who had one other son, Dave.

Born into slavery, Jack received his freedom around 1854, prior to the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation. After receiving his freedom, Jack lived on Scriven Moore's place as a tenant farmer in a community known as Scuffletown.

Jack Spann was also a minister and was assistant to the pastor of St. Luke AME Church for many years. He could quote the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. It was said of him, "If Christianity was ever demonstrated, Jack Spann was an excellent example." When a member of the community died, families called on Jack Spann to pray with them.

In 1876, Jack Spann married Sophie Bradford, with whom he had 11 children, 6 of whom died in infancy and early childhood. Those who lived to adulthood were: Harriet, Annette, Jack, Joseph, and Henry. Sophia Bradford Spann died in 1889 and is believed to be buried in the old St. Luke AME Church cemetery.

In 1891, Jack married Alice Jackson Singleton, a young widow, who had a child from her first marriage, Sipio, who was known as "Fisher." Jack and Alice had nine children of their own: James, Richard, Albert, Samuel, Mary Alice, Eliza, Willa, and Sarah—twins, and Lummie. After a long and fruitful life, Jack Spann died in Sumter County at 7:35 a.m. on June 11, 1925, at the age of 81. Alice Spann died in Kershaw County on July 29, 1948, at the age of 76.

Mr. Speaker, on June 23, 1995, Jack Spann's descendants, including his only surviving child, Eliza Spann Missouri Pickett, 92 years of age, will gather in New York to celebrate their family reunion and to honor the memory of Jack Spann and all of their long-gone relatives. Please join me in congratulating this fine family.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GEORGE E. BROWN, JR.

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 1995

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, On June 8, 1995, I was unable to vote on rollcall vote No. 366, final passage for the fiscal year 1996-97 Foreign Aid and State Department Authorization Act, because of the need to return home to my congressional district in California for officials and family business. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

IN RECOGNITION OF THE INSTITUTE IN BASIC LIFE PRINCIPLES

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 1995

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in a day when crime and juvenile delinquency are growing concerns internationally, I would like to commend a group of outstanding young people who are striving to set a new standard of strong moral character and social good works in our Nation and around the world. Among these young people are the 130 individuals below who recently traveled to Taiwan, and the Republic of China, to represent positive qualities before government leaders, in public meetings, and most importantly of all, in presentations to and personal conversations with over 14,000 Chinese students. The youth named below traveled to the Republic of China on April 1, 1995 and visited the cities of Taichung, Taipei, and Kaoshiung before departing on April 17, 1995. The leaders with whom they met included Dr. Ma Ying-Jeou, the Minister of Justice, R.O.C.; Dr. Yung Chao-Hsiang, Political Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Education R.O.C.; Dr. Hwang Jen-Tai, Administrative Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Education, R.O.C.; Mr. Wu Den-Yih, Mayor of Kaohsiung; Mr. Wu Ying-Jang, Commissioner of the Bureau of Education of Taipei; Dr. Wu Chung-Lih, Deputy Director of the Government Information Office, R.O.C.; Dr. Li Tchong-Koei and Dr. Jeng Sen-Shyong, President and Vice President of the China Youth Corps with the directors of their cabinet; Dr. Chen Chien-Chin, Speaker of the House for the Taipei City Council; and various other educational leaders of all three cities. In the course of these contacts, invitations were extended for additional groups of these young people to come to Taiwan, The Republic of China and initiate long-term projects with Chinese youth and families.

Steve Alexander (TX), Julie Allen (TX), Dominique Bakash (IN), Kimberly Barber (GA), Matthew Barnes (IN), Jamie Becker (CO), Mary Bolin (NE), Bethany Bowman (MI), Matthew Bowman (MI), Tom Boyle (CT), Bud Bramblett (GA), Billy Briscoe (OK), Joshua Brock (GA), Bert Bunn (NC), Gracie Butler (AL), Mike Canciglia (WA), Jonathan Carlsile (MO), Mary Carpenter (SC), Pamela Chamberlin (IN), Faith Chen (NY), Karen Chen (NY), and Stephen Chen (NY).

Timothy Chen (NY), You-Lan Chen (NY), Amanda Collyer (MI), Bridget Conklin (CT), April Cooney (OR), Jill Cooney (OR), Abby