

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PROPOSED HISTORY STANDARDS CRITICIZED

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 1995

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, there has been much controversy surrounding the national history standards proposed by the National Center for History in the schools at the University of California, Los Angeles. As many others have pointed out, these proposed standards contain many obvious omissions and present a slanted view of American history. This Member commends to his colleagues an editorial which appeared in the Omaha World-Herald on January 19, 1995.

HISTORY STANDARDS ARE FAR OFF THE MARK

The academic committee that produced national standards for teaching history will take another look at its work. Certainly another look is in order. A number of historians and teachers have condemned the standards as anti-European and anti-American.

Two sets of standards were produced, one for American history and one for world history. Both have been widely criticized. Gary Nash, a University of California at Los Angeles history professor who was involved in both projects, said, "We will look for examples of ideological bias or imbalance and will make appropriate changes."

The group shouldn't have to look far. Liberal academics in the project snuffed attempts by others on the committee to include time-honored mileposts in U.S. history and world history. The resulting standards consist of a dizzying list of politically correct concepts, including detailed attention to marginal events and people who seem to have been included mainly as examples of white, European, male imperialism.

A gathering of early feminists in Seneca Falls, N.Y., is mentioned nine times in the U.S. history standards. Nowhere do the standards acknowledge the first meeting of Congress. The Ku Klux Klan is mentioned more frequently than George Washington. Sen. Joseph McCarthy, whose memory is hated because of his often-imprecise charges of communist infiltration in American institutions, receives more attention than Thomas Paine and other early leaders whose words continue to inspire freedom fighters around the world.

However, other societies escape the harsh criticism directed at the United States. In the world history standards, the Aztec culture is praised for its achievements in astronomy and agriculture. But the historians give the Aztecs a free pass on the subject of their practice of human sacrifice. It isn't mentioned.

The world history standards focus disproportionately on long-dead cultures that contributed little to life as it is currently lived in most parts of the world. But the standards treat almost as an afterthought the main sweep of civilization that stretched from the Fertile Crescent through Greece and Rome, through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance and the Enlightenment to the ultimate flowering of democracy across much of the globe.

Defenders of the standards say that they are only a guide. Even if adopted by President Clinton's Goals 2000 program, the defenders say, the standards are merely advisory.

But "advisory" standards have a way of becoming mandatory. They need to be reviewed before they take effect.

Eliminating anti-Western and anti-American bias, even if the original authors were able to do that, wouldn't solve all the problems. The standards also sneer at the traditional process of learning facts about important people, ideas and events. Rather, a sloppy, game-playing approach is encouraged. Students are to "learn" by making up imaginary conversations among historical figures. Or they are to speculate about what it was like to be a member of an oppressed group in the Middle Ages. One suggestion is to conduct a mock trial of John D. Rockefeller.

It is absurd to suggest that accurate historical insights can be achieved by people who don't have their facts straight.

Indeed, as one critic suggested, the standards appear to be "seriously flawed in concept, in tone and in content throughout." The drafters of the standards have far to go in addressing the serious concerns that have arisen.

TRIBUTE TO NEWTON AND ROCHELLE BECKER

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 1995

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, we ask our colleagues to join us in recognizing Newton and Rochelle Becker for their generous support of the House of Justice, Bet Tzedek Legal Services in Los Angeles.

Newton and Rochelle Becker have made the largest single private contribution to Bet Tzedek in its 20-year history. They have specifically earmarked this gift for the purchase of state-of-the-art computer equipment and software to bring Bet Tzedek's quality legal services to an even higher level of excellence. In honor of their profound commitment and generosity, Bet Tzedek is naming its library in their honor.

Newton and Rochelle Becker have a tremendous devotion to quality legal representation for the disadvantaged and have played a significant role in providing legal services for tenants, consumers, employees, and victims of fraud. They believe that equality before the law is an empty slogan as long as access to quality legal services is denied those without financial means. Their work for Bet Tzedek has advanced in a most tangible way the ideal of equal representation under the law.

We ask our colleagues to join us in thanking the Beckers for their great contribution to our community and in wishing them great success in all future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF CHIUNE AND YUKIKO SUGIHARA

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 1995

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to the attention of the Congress the work of an extraordinary couple, Chiune and Yukiko Sugihara, who against their own government and amid a sea of hostility, saved the lives of thousands of Jewish men, women, and children from the horrors of the Holocaust. Together, they will be remembered, as Raoul Wallenberg and Oskar Schindler are, for their isolated acts of defiance and extraordinary courage and resistance against the Nazi horrors.

In the summer of 1940, Chiune Sugihara, a minor official in Japan's Foreign Ministry, was stationed in the Japanese Consulate in Kaunas, Lithuania. After the Nazi blitzkrieg of Poland, thousands of Jewish refugees fled to that tiny country. In Kaunas, rumors began that the Consulate was issuing transit visas, and crowds of hopeful applicants gathered outside the consulate gates. At this time, it is unclear what the Sugiharas were feeling. According to the Holocaust Oral History Project, it is possible that Sugihara was introduced to the brutality of the Nazi regime and to the plight of the Jewish refugees in Lithuania after befriending a young Jewish boy, named Solly Ganor, who had gone to the consulate asking for stamps. Whatever the motivation, the need for action, in the Sugiharas' mind, was clear: without action, many of the Jewish refugees would die.

Chiune Sugihara cabled his government three times, asking permission to grant visas. Each time, permission was denied. After consulting with his wife, Sugihara simply chose to issue the visas on his own authority. His wife recollects: "He told me, 'Yukiko', I'm going to issue the visas. I'm going to go against the Foreign Ministry. On this, my husband and I were one." The record of his actions is undeniable: the records of the Japanese Foreign Ministry show that Sugihara issued 2,139 visas in the time between July 9 and August 31, 1940. Each visa was for a household, and it is estimated that between 6 to 10 thousand people may have received passage out of the path of the darkness befalling other Jewish populations throughout Europe. Those who received the precious paper left Lithuania by way of the Trans-Siberian Railway, then by ship to Japan, where most stayed only briefly before leaving, via China, to other destinations.

When the Soviets invaded Lithuania, all the consulates were ordered closed, yet Sugihara obtained an extension to continue his work. He issued visas from a nearby hotel. His wife massaged his hands to enable him to continue writing each handwritten visa. Even as he and his wife were finally forced to leave Kaunas,

• 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.

he continued writing visas on the train platform. His wife remembers: "Even as the train started going, he continued writing, leaning out of the window. Finally, he said 'Forgive me. I cannot write any more. I pray for your good luck.' People started to run alongside the train, and one of them shouted, 'Sugihara, we will not forget about you. We are going to see you again.'"

It was not until 1968, however, before this would happen. After the war, he was fired from his post with the Foreign Ministry, and worked at odd jobs before working in Moscow for a Japanese trading company. Finally, he was tracked down by one of the refugees whose life he had saved. Finally, nearly 30 years later, he was honored in Israel as a righteous gentile, an honor bestowed upon those who had worked to save Jews from the Holocaust. Though Sugihara died in 1986, his wife, Yukiko, has been honored in Japan by Jewish-Americans who benefitted from his visas, as well as by surviving members of the famed Japanese-American combat battalions who liberated Dachau and, finally, by the Japanese Government. On Sunday, January 22, Yukiko Sugihara will be honored in San Francisco for the bravery, compassion, and humanity exhibited by her and her husband.

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to truly express the legacy of the Sugiharas. But the best legacy cannot be expressed in words, but seen in their good works: the lives of the people they saved. Their continued presence, and their families' presence, gives inspiration and hope to future generations of humanity.

AMENDING HOUSE RULES TO PERMIT CHAIRMEN TO SCHEDULE COMMITTEE HEARINGS

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 1995

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a change in House rules designed to restore what has been the practice in this House for as long as I have been here, and that is to allow committee, and by implication, subcommittee, chairmen to schedule hearings of their committees and subcommittees.

Clause 2(g)(3) of House rule XI requires each committee to announce hearings a week in advance unless the committee determines there is good cause to schedule a hearing sooner. While it has been the standing practice of committees to defer to the discretion of their chairmen to make this decision in setting hearings, according to the Parliamentarian's Office, committee should mean committee. Under clause 2(g)(5) of rule XI, if a point of order is made against any improper hearing procedure in a timely manner in committee, and is improperly overruled or not considered, then it may be renewed on the floor against consideration of the bill that was the subject of the improper hearing.

Such an instance has arisen already in this Congress, and, as far as we can determine, is the first time that a chairman's authority to schedule hearings has been challenged. As a result, we will have to waive that point of order to consider the bill in question.

Mr. Speaker, in checking on the legislative history behind this rule, there is no explanation as to why the word "committee" is used re-

garding the announcement of hearings as opposed to "chairman." The fact is that clause 2(c)(1) of rule XI already authorizes committee chairmen to call committee meetings without any prescribed advance notice. Certainly committee meetings, at which bills are marked-up and reported, are far more important than hearings.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would think that Members would want to encourage chairmen to hold hearings as opposed to not doing so for fear of inviting points of order; or, in the alternative, of having to convene a committee meeting with a quorum present to first authorize any hearing.

It would be my expectation that committee chairmen would not abuse this new rule by calling spur of the moment hearings under their authority to give less than a week's notice, and that this will only be done in the most urgent of circumstances.

But I do think it is important that we allow committees to proceed with hearings on measures whenever possible, and that we not put obstacles in the way of chairmen who want to hold hearings prior to marking-up and reporting legislation.

I intend to hold a markup on this rule change later this week so that we can proceed in an orderly fashion with hearings in this Congress.

The text of the resolution follows:

H. RES. 43

That, in rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, clause 2(g)(3) is amended clause to read as follows:

"(3) The chairman of each committee of the House (except the Committee on Rules) shall make public announcement of the date, place and subject matter of any committee hearing at least one week before the commencement of the hearing. If the chairman of the committee determines that there is good cause to begin the hearing sooner, the chairman shall make the announcement at the earliest possible date. Any announcement made under this subparagraph shall be promptly published in the Daily Digest and promptly entered into the committee scheduling service of the House Information Systems."

THE STAFF PROTECTION ACT OF 1995

HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 1995

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, today I have introduced, on behalf of myself and 18 of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle, the Staff Protection Act of 1995, H.R. 628.

This title speaks directly to the nature of this legislation. Currently, under the United States Criminal Code, our staff members are not protected from assault, threats, or violence caused to them while performing their official duties.

I learned of this breach in the law through personal experience. In 1993, I and members of my District office staff, were threatened repeatedly by a person with a record of violence. Several staff members were forced to endure this harassment on a daily basis and became fearful of their physical safety. After making direct threats on the lives of staff members, this person was indicted by the U.S.

attorney and arrested. I was subpoenaed to testify in Federal court in Los Angeles about the threats made against me and members of the staff. Due to my appearance in court, I missed five important votes.

Unfortunately, the only attainable evidence was of this person physically threatening my district director and not me personally. Since the United States Code does not protect members of one's official staff, the judge dismissed the case. As a result, this individual was released, and the staff's safety and peace of mind have continued to be placed in jeopardy.

My staff is not the only one to suffer from this kind of harassment. Many of us know of other offices where violence to the staff has been threatened and/or acted upon. This measure will ensure that congressional staff and their families have the same legal protection afforded to Members of Congress and their families. There is no reason why Federal law should not protect members of our staffs while they are serving in an official capacity.

Mr. Speaker, this proposal has received broad, bipartisan support. It costs nothing to change the law. The benefit is the safety of those who serve this institution and our constituents with immeasurable dedication and loyalty.

I enclose the text of H.R. 628:

H.R. 628

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Staff Protection Act of 1995".

SEC. 2. PROTECTIONS FOR STAFF OF CERTAIN OFFICIALS.

Section 115 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)(A), by inserting "a member of the staff or" before "a member of the immediate family";

(2) in subsection (a)(1)(B), by inserting "or a member of the staff of such an official, judge, or law enforcement officer;" after "under such section,";

(3) in the matter following subparagraph (B) in subsection (a)(1), by striking "or law enforcement officer" each place it appears and inserting "law enforcement officer, or member of the staff"; and

(4) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking "and" at the end of paragraph (3);

(B) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (4) and inserting "; and"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(5) 'member of the staff' includes any person acting in a staff capacity, whether on a paid or unpaid basis."

SAUDI ARABIA'S UNFAIR TREATMENT OF GIBBS & HILL, INC.

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 1995

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my continued disappointment and frustration with the Government of Saudi Arabia and its ongoing unfair treatment of the American company Gibbs & Hill, Inc. [GHI]. In the late 1970's and 1980's GHI was decimated by financial losses incurred on the design of a desalination project in Saudi Arabia