

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, due to pressing personal business, I was unable to vote on the conference report on S. 1124, the Department of Defense Authorization bill.

Although this conference report did make important changes from the version which was vetoed by President Clinton, there remain serious policy issues such as the proposed restrictions of overseas abortion and the language requiring the discharge of HIV-positive personnel, about which I continue to have serious concerns. As such, had I been present, I would have voted "no".

GILROY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
HONORS MAN OF THE YEAR TOM
CARR

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce in honoring Mr. Tom Carr of Gilroy, CA, for his extraordinary volunteer efforts. Mr. Carr has been named "Man of the Year" after also receiving "Volunteer of the Year" recognition from the city of Gilroy and the "Elk's Distinguished Citizenship Award."

What is so noteworthy about Mr. Carr is the pride that he takes in his community and his dedication toward keeping his city safe and beautiful. I am aware that Mr. Carr spends on average several hours each day eradicating graffiti from throughout the city. His work sends a signal, loud and clear, that we will not allow taggers to take over our neighborhoods. That is important, because fighting graffiti is a vital step toward keeping our streets safe.

Likewise, Mr. Carr has been a staunch supporter of our local police department by helping to raise funds for special projects that enable the department to better serve the public.

Mr. Speaker, on February 2, 1996, at the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce's Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner, Mr. Carr will formally receive his award. At this time, I would like to invite my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in saluting this fine community volunteer.

DOD AUTHORIZATION
CONFERENCE REPORT

HON. VIC FAZIO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Mr. FAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise reluctantly in support of the fiscal year 1996 Defense authorization conference report. I would like to

begin by thanking the chairman and the ranking member of the National Security Committee who worked hard to bridge their differences and produce a bill that the President will sign into law.

I would like to point out that I voted against this conference report back in December because of the objectionable language governing national missile defense policy and the restrictions on the President's constitutional prerogatives to make foreign policy. My vote against the initial conference report was the first time in my congressional career that I cast a "no" vote on a defense bill, be it authorization or appropriations. Moreover, the reservations and the objections to the original conference report by the respected Senator from Georgia, Mr. NUNN, cast serious doubt on the wisdom of enacting such restrictive and potentially harmful language.

As President Clinton said it last night, "since the dawn of the nuclear age, there is not a single Russian missile pointed at the United States and North Korea has frozen its dangerous nuclear weapons program." We have accomplished that because both Democratic and Republican administrations have worked tirelessly to ratify the START Treaty which significantly reduced the nuclear stockpile between the former Soviet Union and the United States. And now we are on the verge of further reducing weapons of mass destruction by embracing START II.

We cannot and should not do anything to endanger the prospects for ratification of START II. I voted against the conference report in December precisely because it amounted to an anticipatory breach of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. Further, the language contained in the bill would have had a significant impact on Russian consideration of the START II Treaty which will reduce Russian nuclear weapons by 25 percent.

I am pleased to see that the language regarding the deployment of a national missile defense system was struck from the bill as well as the language restricting the President's ability to utilize U.S. troops for peacekeeping missions. It is clear by now that for all of the dire predictions and the harsh rhetoric aimed at the President's proposal to send troops to enforce the peace in Bosnia, the President's plan has largely been a success thus far. We have stopped the bloodshed and have ushered in new hope for the future of all Serbs, Muslims, and Croatsians.

While I applaud the compromise that was made with respect to this conference report, I am dismayed that the conference committee neglected to delete the abortion language and the language that discharges those HIV-positive service members.

I think it is important for the Congress to take note that this was the first time in decades, a defense appropriations bill was enacted without an authorization bill being enacted first.

I support the compromise version of the conference report knowing that this bill authorizes more money than I would personally prefer. But given the realities of our current mission in Bosnia, the need to maintain military readiness and move forward with defense conversion efforts, I believe it is important that

we pass this bill and have the President sign it into law.

IN PRAISE OF THE PBS AND MR.
GEORGE COVINGTON

HON. CHARLES WILSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Mr. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a friend and fellow Texan, Mr. George Covington, on his upcoming appearance on the Public Television series "People in Motion."

George has spent the past 20 years establishing himself as one of this country's most vocal advocates for the millions of Americans with disabilities. He worked for and has been a member of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. He served on the staff of former Speaker Jim Wright as the speaker's disability specialist and for Vice President Dan Quayle, as Special Assistant for Disability Policy. With my office, he designed and implemented the first fully accessible mapping of Capitol Hill and the monuments. This project, the Tactile Capital, provided hand-held braille and table-top scale maps of Washington, DC, that brought our Nation's capital into focus for the first time for millions of visitors with low or no vision.

He is an internationally recognized speaker on universal design, disability rights, and photography. That last entry is particularly noteworthy, because George has been legally blind since birth and now has only 5 percent usable vision. His career has spanned the fields of law, journalism, education, government, and disability civil rights. But he is the first to tell you point blank that he does not want the burden of being "inspirational" to able-bodied people—and add that this is the wish of most people with disabilities.

It is for this reason that George's appearance is so very appropriate and important to a series like "People in Motion." He has spent most of his life fighting negative images, myths, and stereotypes about people with disabilities.

Last year PBS broadcast the first installments of this unique series. In April, PBS stations around the country will air three new episodes of "People in Motion." Like the premier episodes, these seek to break through the standard media representation of people with disabilities, and will help change forever the way most of us see those with a disability. With a census estimate of 49 million Americans falling into this constituency, I suggest that it is important for us to learn more about these fellow citizens.

I want to commend PBS for its commitment to "People in Motion" as well as recognize the important contribution of local public television stations planning to air this series. I urge you to watch this outstanding series, so that we may all applaud the work of people like George Covington and the foresight of PBS programming.

ROGER ERICKSON'S DEPARTURE FROM THE WCCO GOOD MORNING SHOW

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, today I want to pay tribute to Roger Erickson, one of Minnesota's special radio personalities, as he steps down from hosting WCCO Radio's Good Morning Show. Although Roger Erickson is not retiring, as of February 1, 1996, after 35 years on the WCCO Station Good Morning Show, he will hand over control of the program to his new on-air partner, Dave Lee.

Just a few years ago, Charlie Boone, a long-time cohost, stepped out of this special Good Morning program and, in a way, Erickson's departure marks the end of an era. I have no doubt, based on the good talent of Dave Lee and the format, Good Morning will remain a Minnesota early morning tradition. But the warm surround sound of Roger Erickson's dulcet tone crooning "Good Morning" or school announcements will be missed.

Over the past three and a half decades, Roger Erickson has become a preeminent voice in Minnesota morning radio. Roger has relayed the news with insight and compassion and entertained us with stories and humorous sketches. His school closing announcements have become a Minnesota institution: Generations of children have listened breathlessly to Roger on cold winter mornings hoping to hear their school called. Roger's warmth, spontaneity, and imagination have earned him thousands of loyal listeners. Some conjecture has it that in his youth he was a character in a Charlie Brown comic strip.

Roger Erickson's radio shows have been popular not only because he is a gifted broadcaster, but because he truly understands Minnesota and the culture of subtle Scandinavian humor. Roger was raised on a farm in Winthrop and studied speech and theater at the University of Minnesota. He was determined to work for WCCO Radio and, in 1959, took a job as Bozo the Clown on WCCO-TV in Minneapolis to get his foot in the door at the station. Within 2 months he was offered a WCCO Radio job, and he has continued there ever since, entralling local audiences with spoofs like "Minnesota Hospital," "Charlie's Cafe Mediocore," "Air Lutefiska," and, most recently, fishing stories from two characters, Gill and Finn.

WCCO Radio prides itself on its Good Neighbor approach to broadcasting and Roger Erickson exemplifies the very best of the Good Neighbor tradition. Although we will miss hearing Roger's voice every day on the Good Morning Show, we are pleased he is continuing his work at WCCO in other capacities and wish him the very best in all his endeavors.

[From the Minneapolis Star-Tribune, Jan. 4, 1996]

NO MORE SCHOOL CLOSINGS FOR ERICKSON AS
HE LEAVES COHOST ROLE AT WCCO

(By Noel Holston)

Shouldn't there be an honorary school closing or something?

WCCO Radio's Roger Erickson says he has had enough of the early-to-bed, early-to-rise lifestyle that's been his for almost 35 years. He plans to give up his cohost role on 'CCO's "Good Morning Show" on Feb. 1.

Erickson will continue to participate in prerecorded "Good Morning" features, such as the "Minnesota Hospital" spoofs. He'll still do personalized plugs for certain advertisers and work on Saturdays with Charlie Boone. But he's handing over the helm of the weekday show to Dave Lee, who has been part of it for the past four years.

"I'll still be around the station four or five days a week," Erickson said Wednesday. "I may even do some live stuff occasionally."

"I won't be doing school closings, my one claim to fame," he added.

Erickson said he had been talking with general manager Jim Gustafson for some time about cutting back. "Roger actually wanted to make this change sooner, but he graciously agreed to wait until now," Gustafson said.

Erickson lists his age at 47, but that's in Jack Benny years. He's actually closer to 67, and he concedes that his wife, Margaret, has been after him for years to make some adjustments that would allow him to stay up a little later than his usual 7:30 or 8 p.m.

Erickson said he has never seen "ER," let alone "Late Show with David Letterman."

"I hear there are people who eat dinner as late as 6 o'clock," he said. "Is that true?"

"You really don't have a life at night," he continued, more seriously. "I know I'm not the only one. I know there are a whole lot of people doing a variety of jobs who have those kind of hours, so I'm not going to sit here and complain. I've had just a great run. I've loved doing that morning show."

Erickson, born and raised in Winthrop, Minn., studied theater at the University of Minnesota.

He gushes about the great early training he got doing radio drama for campus station KUOM-AM.

Erickson left a Stillwater radio station in 1959 to take his first job in Minneapolis, which wasn't as one would guess, at the Good Neighbor of the North—or even on radio.

"I auditioned at WCCO about 2,000 times," Erickson recalled. "I knew it was where I wanted to be, but I'm sure that, like most radio stations, they listened to the tape and then they put it aside. So I never got a call. And then the Bozo opportunity came up."

The Bozo opportunity?

Erickson said the original Bozo the Clown, Chicago broadcaster Larry Harmon, syndicated his show's format to TV stations around the country, which had only to hire a live clown to talk to kids and introduce the provided cartoons.

"I thought, 'This is the opportunity I'm looking for. I'm going to go into [radio] through the back door. I'm going to go in through television.'"

Erickson auditioned to be Bozo at WCCO-TV, Channel 4, and got the job. Two months later, the radio station offered him a job as well.

After a couple of years of night work, WCCO teamed Erickson with Maynard Speece ("a great storyteller who regularly challenged the parameters of Minnesota taste") on the 5 to 7 a.m. shift and with Charlie Boone in the afternoons.

"I would run over [to Channel 4] between 7 and 9 and put on the [Bozo] makeup and the costume and do some live spots for maybe Hostess Twinkies, take the makeup off, run back," Erickson said. "Charlie and I would start working on our afternoon show, work up to 1 o'clock, go on the air 1 to 3. About 3:30, I go back over to television, prepare the Bozo show, which went from 4:30 to 5. And at least once or twice a week, I'd visit a store as Bozo the Clown, with about a thousand kids lined up. And I wouldn't have had it any other way. It was fantastic."

Boone and Erickson eventually became the morning team, and their weekday partner-

ship lasted until 1992, when Boone cut back his hours. They reigned supreme in the mornings for almost three decades, challenged only by the Knapp and Donuts team on KSTP-FM in the '80s and finally edged out in, the '90s by Tom Barnard's morning crew on KORS-FM. The "Good Morning Show" remains one of WCCO's strengths.

Erickson dropped out of Monday mornings last fall, a move designed to lighten his workload and give heir apparent Lee an opportunity to flex some different muscles.

"I feel very comfortable leaving now," Erickson said. "It's in good hands."

ENDING COLA INEQUITY

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss an issue of great importance to our Nation's military retirees: COLA equity.

The thousands of veterans and military retirees in my district have repeatedly asked that the inequity in COLA's for military and Federal civilians be ended—most recently during a veterans' town hall meeting I held last week.

This House has been unprecedented in dedicating itself toward ending the problem of inequity in military cost of living adjustments for military retirees. Early last year, legislation was introduced by my colleague, Mr. JIM MORAN, to end COLA inequity. The House also included a provision ending the disparity in COLA's in the budget reconciliation bill—a provision which, unfortunately, was removed by the Senate. In response, my Republican colleague, Mr. BILL YOUNG, introduced a new, fast-track bill to accomplish the same task. I am proud to have cosponsored both Mr. YOUNG's and Mr. MORAN's bills, and I applaud the tenacity with which the House leadership has pursued this important matter.

A provision to end the COLA inequity problem was included in the conference report of the Department of Defense authorization bill, which the House approved today. While I strongly supported the provision, I could not support the entire bill, a bill which mandated a \$7 million increase in defense spending over the President's original budget.

This spending increase comes at a time when other Federal programs—especially programs serving veterans—are suffering from serious budget cuts. For example, last year's Veterans Affairs budget, which provides for medical care for millions of veterans and military retirees and the construction and improvement of VA medical facilities, was cut by nearly \$1 billion from 1994. At the very least, we cannot speak about mutual sacrifice in ending the deficit at the same time that we actually increase spending in defense.

I will continue to support the House's legislative efforts to remove the COLA inequity once and for all. Our Nation's military retirees deserve no less.

OUR 2 CENTS' WORTH

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday marked the first day workplace and civil rights