

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

REPRESENTATIVE WOLF'S TRIP TO TIBET

HON. NEWT GINGRICH

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD two articles from the Washington Post about my Republican colleague FRANK WOLF's recent trip to Tibet. Gaining admittance only by concealing his identity as a Member of Congress, Representative WOLF observed first hand the repression of human rights that stands in sharp contrast to all that America stands for.

The time has come for President Clinton to join with Representative WOLF and me in encouraging the new Chinese leadership to move toward a freer and more open Tibet, where individuals can worship without fear and unleash their creativity and talents in ways that will bring increased prosperity not only to Tibet, but to China as well. As the world's beacon of hope and freedom, America must do her part to encourage this transition.

[From the Washington Post, Aug. 22, 1997]

REPRESENTATIVE WOLF'S TRIP TO TIBET

Northern Virginia Rep. Frank Wolf has never been one for the typical junket. His advocacy of human rights and religious freedom in other countries has taken him to the Siberian gulag, to Ceausescu's Romania and to war-ravaged Chechnya. Now he is just back from Tibet—the first House member to visit that oppressed land, he says, since Chinese forces moved in nearly 40 years ago.

What Mr. Wolf found will not shock anyone who has followed Beijing's brutal repression of Tibetan culture, religion, language and people—a repression applied with what Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan has called "Stalinoid dementia." We hope, though, that Mr. Wolf's report will awaken some Americans who haven't paid sufficient attention to Tibet's slow suffocation.

A vast land along the Himalayan top of the world, Tibet is home to only 6 million people—no conceivable threat to China's billion-plus. But China has virtually sealed Tibet off, keeping reporters and human rights observers out and even barring California Rep. Christopher Cox, a member of the Republican leadership. Mr. Wolf gained access, along with an aide and a Tibetan-speaker, by joining a tour group and not advertising his profession. (He dressed in "traditional tourist garb," Mr. Wolf says.)

What he found, Mr. Wolf says, is repression more brutal than he witnessed in Soviet Russia or Communist Romania. While Chinese in Beijing have won some measure of liberty, at least in economic affairs, he says, "there is no freedom in Tibet, period." People are watched and afraid—yet, when they realized Mr. Wolf and his associates were from America, they were willing to risk imprisonment to describe their plight. Like their leader in exile, the Dalai Lama, most Tibetans are not seeking independence but only the freedom to speak their language and practice their Buddhism without being thrown in jail or having their children taken away.

Mr. Wolf, like many members of Congress of both parties, urges the Clinton adminis-

tration to make Tibet—and the hundreds of Tibetan prisoners of conscience—an important part of U.S.-China dialogue leading up to and during a planned presidential summit this fall. He also urges U.S. churches, synagogues and citizens to mount the kind of letter-writing, prisoner-adopting campaigns that helped sustain Soviet dissidents. Tibetans don't have the kind of diaspora that kept Soviet Jewry, Armenia, Poland and other captive nations on the U.S. agenda during the Cold War. But they have an equal claim on America's conscience, and their treatment provides a useful measure of the true nature of the Chinese regime.

[From the Washington Post, August 3, 1997]

THE MAN WHO WON'T GIVE UP

(By Mary McGrory)

Frank Wolf, the Republican congressman from Northern Virginia, has a conscience. He assumes that his fellow Americans do too, and that if he tells them how bad things are in countries they seldom hear about, they will do something about it. He is inevitably considered naive. He doesn't mind. His faith in his fellow man comes from his faith in God. He is a devout Presbyterian who believes passionately in good works and has raised his five children to volunteer on behalf of the unfortunate.

Wolf is just back from another of his trips to difficult, dangerous places. This time it was Tibet, which has been groaning under the Chinese yoke. He slipped in on an ordinary tourist visa, which did not identify him as a member of Congress. Tibetans risked their lives to tell him about the oppression and religious persecution they are suffering. His press conference afterwards at the National Press Club was packed—perhaps because it is August, and the news drought is severe. He told an international audience that "China is squeezing the life out of Tibet. . . . It is unspeakably brutal."

Wolf's success in rousing the American people is still to be seen, but he got China's attention. The New China News Agency issued a statement of outrage from a Tibetan official who accused Wolf of being a troublemaker and a bad reporter: There is no religious persecution and all is well with happy Tibetans. Wolf was, of course, delighted with additional notice to his cause.

Some reporters may have been goaded into attendance at the press conference by one of Wolf's typically reproachful, guilt-producing letters calling on the recipient to fulfill a moral obligation by spreading the word about whatever ghastly situation he has just observed. Last January, Wolf went to East Timor in Indonesia and brought back an account of killing that he thought President Clinton should do something about. He later wrote to him in terms that show he has heeded the counsel of the 15th-century German mystic Thomas a Kempis: "Fawn not upon the great." In Wolf's letter of May 29, he told the president that he better shape up on East Timor because people are making connections between U.S. inaction in that wretched land and the campaign scandal of the White House raking in millions from Asians with axes to grind.

"Respectfully but with candor, Mr. President, many believe your administration has adopted or changed its policy with regard to Indonesia and East Timor because of influence exerted by the Riadys and as a result of

the for profit relationship which developed between the Lippo Group and Mr. Web Hubble (sic). Press reports of Mr. Hubble's personal visit to East Timor have only fueled this belief. I do not know if this is true. . . . I do know, however, that we have no effective policy . . . in East Timor."

Wolf gives himself a missionary's license to speak truth to the mighty. The appalling conditions he describes vindicate his frankness and his importunities. His Northern Virginia constituency may not relate to his anguish over such places as El Salvador, Burma, Sudan, Bosnia, Chechnya and Ethiopia. But Wolf keeps both feet on the ground—or rather on the highway—at all times. He is chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee on transportation, a post that gives him great power. And his constituent service—watching over the rights of the many federal workers who live in Virginia's 10th District—is famous.

His evolution from "pothole politician" to watchman on the ramparts of world freedom happened gradually. First, he went to Ethiopia in 1984 with Rep. Tony Hall (D-Ohio), a crusader against hunger who is Wolf's best friend in Congress and a fellow member of a House Bible study group. They went to Romania together and saw misery that made them come home and promote a bill against Most Favored Nation (MFN) treatment for the Ceausescu government. Since then, Wolf has never looked back or lost hope.

At his press conference, he urged Americans to write letters to Tibetan political prisoners. Based on the experience with Soviet prisoners of conscience, he says the Tibetans might not get the letters, but wardens made conscious of outside observation might give better treatment. He wants more congressional delegations in Tibet so that Chinese overlords will know the world has not forgotten. And he can see the day, when MFN will be denied to China. The American people are way ahead of Congress, their president and the business community, according to polls. One showed overwhelming opposition to MFN for China, 67 percent to 18 percent.

Wolf's inspiration is William Wilberforce, a prominent 19th-century British politician who spent his life working to abolish the slave trade. It took 34 years for Parliament to outlaw it, a month after Wilberforce's death. "It just takes time," says Wolf.

HAPPY 30TH BAY COUNTY HOME BUILDERS

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, when all is said and done at the end of a very long day, we look forward to going home for some rest from our days' efforts. When we arrive at our own private refuge, it is because of the great care taken by professional home builders in the construction and remodeling of this most important place that we can truly relax.

Today, the Bay County Home Builders Association is celebrating its 30th anniversary as

• 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.

a chartered association. It is affiliated with both the Michigan Association of Home Builders, and the National Association of Home Builders, to be sure that its members can share their own discoveries and learn from other colleagues in the profession ways to better and more economically construct housing that will last.

The Bay County Home Builders Association has grown from its original 21 members to its current membership of 85 builders and remodelers and 153 associate members, including financial institutions, subcontractors, material suppliers, and others who are involved in some fashion with the building industry. They are involved in a wide range of activities that ultimately benefit the homeowner, including offering seminars on preparing for a builder's license and other subjects of importance to the industry. They provide a very important service in helping to further inform the public of recent developments in construction and design, including the most impressive annual Home Show and Parade of Homes.

The association is also a vital partner in many community projects, including its work with the Bay County Chamber of Commerce and the Bay County Growth Alliance.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES VERNON

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute Charles Vernon upon his retirement from the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board and resignation of chairmanship of the Santa Monica Bay restoration project. It is an honor to recognize Charles for his work toward water pollution control.

Throughout the last 8 years, Charles' work has been vital to the success of the Santa Monica Bay restoration project. He was instrumental in working to secure Santa Monica Bay's nomination as a National Estuary Program and subsequently the founding and creation of the restoration project in 1989.

Since its founding, the Santa Monica Bay restoration project has been the primary organization dedicated to preserving the bay for citizens in our community. Charles has consistently held key leadership positions serving as vice chair of its management committee and upon start of bay restoration plan implementation, chair of the governing Bay Watershed Council and Bay Oversight Committee. It is because of Charles' hard work and dedication we have made progress in revitalizing our bay.

Beyond his work with the restoration project, Charles is an individual of great integrity and personal warmth. His wholesome nature reflects that of his past when he was a farmer, reaping the miracle of life from the ground. It is no wonder that today he is dedicated to maintaining the sanctity of our precious resources.

"I wiped away the weeds and foam, I fetched my sea-born treasures home; But the poor, unsightly, noisome things had left their beauty on the shore, with the sun and the sand and the wild uproar." These words of Ralph Waldo Emerson eloquently describe Charles' devotion to saving our precious Santa

Monica Bay. It is for his work and extraordinary dedication, Mr. Speaker, that I ask you and my distinguished colleagues to join our community in thanking Charles for his dedication to the bay. I congratulate Charles Vernon upon his retirement and wish him great success in all future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHARLES E. SCHUMER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Speaker, this morning I participated in one of America's most important traditions: voting. Every time I step in the voting booth I am reminded that we must not take for granted the rights that we Americans have to decide who will represent us in the White House, Senate, House of Representatives, statehouse, city hall, city council, school board, and the list goes on.

For that reason, please let the record show that I was unavoidably detained and was unable to cast two adjournment votes this morning in the House.

TRIBUTE TO THE PUERTO RICAN TRAVELING THEATER

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay a special tribute to a hard working group of people who compose The Puerto Rican Traveling Theater [PRTT]. The PRTT produces plays by Hispanic writers from all heritages, and performs them alternately in Spanish and English. These programs, which the company provides for free for the economically disadvantaged, have been hugely successful. During Hispanic Heritage Month, I think it is only appropriate to honor this group, which has made such a contribution to the Latino community.

On September 18 the theater celebrates its 30th anniversary season at the Copacabana with a star-studded gala entitled "Latino Legends and Legacies."

For 30 years PRTT has performed productions of impeccable artistic quality in both Spanish and English. Having performed all over New York, in 22 different locations, the PRTT is a well known commodity in the Hispanic Community. The theater communicates with direct mails to 50,000 Hispanic households each year and has a live audience of 15,000 annually, of which 95 percent are Hispanic. Through their annual summer touring, they reach out to 22 different geographic communities in New York and New Jersey, and have a large network of contacts with the leadership organizations in these communities. The PRTT also received critical acclaim from the New York Times, the New Yorker, El Diario, among other major press.

Founding/Artistic Director Miriam Colon recently received the 1996 Governor's Award for the Arts on PRTT's behalf, along with such luminaries as Robert DeNiro, Leo Castelli, and Jazz legend Milt Hilton. The Award Ceremony

hosted by Governor George Pataki was aired on PBS in November. Ms. Colon is also known in the film industry with her most recent films, "Lone Star", directed by John Sayles, and "Sabrina", with Harrison Ford. Most recently she appeared on the Bill Cosby Show.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues, I would like to wish them much success with their future endeavors and look forward to celebrating another 30 years of performances.

TRAGEDY IN HAITI

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this week there was another terrible tragedy on the small island of Haiti.

An overcrowded ferry sank just offshore and hundreds of people were killed. There are conflicting reports about the number of deaths, with estimates ranging from 300 to 800. The true figure may never be known.

But what is known is that basic safety functions, which may have prevented many deaths, were ignored. Although the ferry had only been in service for 10 days, there were no lifejackets on board, doors were bolted shut, and the passenger load was above legal limits. Had any of these factors been different, hundreds of families would not be in mourning today.

I extend my most sincere condolences to the families of the deceased and all of the Haitian people. I am pleased that the U.S. Government has announced that we would provide some assistance to the families of the deceased, although there is scant solace to provide to a child whose parent is gone.

My only hope is that ferry operators, not only in Haiti, but around the world, will learn from this terrible tragedy, and observe the safety laws which are designed to prevent these kinds of tragedies.

TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH AND PATRICIA GARLOCK

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I honor two constituents and friends, Joseph and Patricia Garlock, by marking the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary, which will be celebrated this October 4. I want to send Joe and Pat my warmest congratulations on this special occasion.

I have known both Pat and Joe for a number of years, and I want to convey how much this couple has given to their family and to the Lima, OH, community. Pat and Joe are lifelong residents of Lima, having met a few years after her graduation from St. Rose High School and his graduation from St. Johns High School. They settled down to live on West High Street, where they still live today, some 43 years later.

Pat worked as a store clerk, has been a valued member of the choir at St. Charles Church for years, and is still active in volunteering her time with the Heartbeat of Lima,