

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 4, 1997]

OFF THE SCREEN AGAIN

Last October the Nobel Peace Prize went to two leaders of East Timor, a distant South Pacific island where a small population has been valiantly resisting Indonesian colonization for more than two decades. The prize brought a brief flare of publicity to East Timor's just but long-neglected cause, and then—just as Indonesia's government hoped—world attention again turned elsewhere. Last week, one of the Nobel laureates, Jose Ramos-Horta, came to Washington, hoping to put East Timor back on the international agenda.

Over the years, the United States has offered little assistance. Anxious to please a Cold War ally, U.S. officials looked the other way when Indonesia occupied East Timor in 1975 and when tens of thousands there died from what the Nobel committee listed as "starvation, epidemics, war and terror." President Clinton, early in his term, seemed ready to reverse traditional U.S. policy. His administration supported a United Nations resolution criticizing Indonesia on human rights, and in 1993 Mr. Clinton raised the issue of East Timor with Indonesian President Suharto. But then Mr. Clinton decided that trade mattered above all, and the plight of East Timor again receded from U.S. policy screens.

Last week, Mr. Ramos-Horta, a kind of unofficial foreign minister, for the first time secured a meeting with senior officials in the State Department. This is a positive, if small, step forward. It should be followed by more action. Indonesia is a modernizing nation of nearly 200 million people who live on 6,000 islands. Its own interests are not served by keeping captive 600,000 Timorese living on one of those. Mr. Ramos-Horta is asking only for a plebiscite so the East Timorese can decide their own future. It's a reasonable request.

MAKE IT RIGHT WITH GULF WAR VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EWING). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997 the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to issue my personal plea for the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense to accept the fact that we have gulf war veterans and family members who are very sick and they need the best medical assistance available given without hesitation by these departments.

While the issue is very serious, we can focus our concern later about who is responsible. Ignoring these sick and disabled veterans does nothing for them not their families. More seriously, this situation erodes public faith in our Government as a whole and these departments in particular.

In the last few months, more and more information has come out about the possibility of exposure to chemical and biological weapons in the gulf region. Film footage of the destruction of vast weapons storage areas have been played on the screens of television all over America. The Department of Defense has now admitted to the potential for exposure of many thousands of

service members in the gulf at that time.

The depot at Kamishya, described to be the size of 25 B-25 hangers, was just one of what may prove to be many sites where exposure occurred. The bunkers were reportedly full of chemical and biological weapons. This information was reported to commanders in charge but orders were given nonetheless to destroy the site.

Until recently, veterans have been told that gulf war illness was a mental condition, stress, or posttraumatic stress disorder. A veteran from Whatcom County in my district back home in Washington State has had a claim pending with the Veterans Administration for over 4 years, only to be told that they need more information to be able to rate him.

Just last week he was finally given a rating of 60 percent for the gulf war illness portion of his claim, but he is one of the few that have met with much success for gulf war illness.

If you speak to the Veterans Administration about that 95 percent denial rate for veterans claiming gulf war illness, the VA will respond that the 5 percent approval rate is really a great achievement. My constituent and many others like him are waiting for the system that we are responsible to oversee to finally look at the work of the reputable researchers who believe they have identified the cause and viable treatment for many of the afflicted.

KREM television in Spokane, WA, has shown an excellent series of stories, produced and reported by Mr. Tom Grant. Mr. Grant conducted interviews with veterans and researchers from around the country that illustrate the severity of the problem and show promising results with the treatment of the drug Doxycycline. My office has a copy of this statement and would be happy to make it available to other Members.

We owe it to our veterans not to bury our heads in the sand but to look at the sources of the problem and potential solutions that fall outside the comfort paradigm of the Department of Defense. If Doxycycline has helped some of our veterans, our Government physicians need to be free to dispense it to others.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, our Government evidently has not yet learned from the post-Vietnam era of neglect and denial that we appear to be witnessing another Agent Orange like debacle, one of possibly much greater magnitude.

Now, not tomorrow, is the time to make it right with our gulf war veterans, with their wives and their children.

HUMAN CLONING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. EHLERS] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, for years the American public, and humans in general, have been fascinated with the possibility of creating human life by other than the natural means. This has given rise to stories such as Frankenstein, the attendant movies, and other horror stories related to that.

This past week fears reached a new height when we discovered that British researchers had cloned a sheep. Immediately cries arose about the dangers of doing this, the British Government has threatened to withdraw funding for that research, et cetera. I would like to address the issue of cloning in general but more specifically the issue of human cloning.

As my colleagues may be aware, I do have a scientific background, although not in the life sciences. I have to say that I am not the least surprised that we were able to clone a sheep and will not be the least surprised if someday we will be able to clone a human being. However, I strongly believe it should not be done.

We have through the years tampered with the normal reproductive process, particularly as it relates to animals. First evidence of that was artificial insemination. Today most of the mammals produced for food, for dairy production, and so forth, begin life through the process of artificial insemination. We have even proceeded beyond that through surrogate parenting, selecting not only a father of choice but also a mother of choice, using in vitro fertilization, and placing the embryo in the uterus of an animal which is very good at carrying young and giving birth to them. But now we have reached another stage where we have through cloning created one animal which is in all regards identical to the animal from which its DNA was taken.

Immediately the specter arises of doing the same for humans. I can assure you that, if we do not take steps to prevent research, in fact a human will be cloned.

Mr. Speaker, I do applaud the President for this morning issuing a moratorium on the use of Federal funds for human cloning experiments. As he says in his comments,

There is much about cloning that we still do not know. But this much we do know: any discovery that touches upon human creation is not simply a matter of scientific inquiry. It is a matter of morality and spirituality as well.

The President's view is that human cloning would give rise to deep concerns, given our most cherished concepts of faith and humanity. Each human life is unique, born of a miracle that reaches beyond laboratory science. The President believes we must respect this profound gift and resist the temptation to replicate ourselves. That is precisely the danger we face, that individuals with substantial amounts of money and very large egos would decide that they are such a great gift to humanity that in fact they should be cloned, so that there would

be many copies of them to perpetuate their image and their ideas.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear in my opposition to this possible practice that I am not a Luddite. I do not automatically react against technological and scientific advances. Obviously not, for I am a scientist and have participated in many advances. But this issue of creating human beings through the cloning process raises such fundamental issues of ethics, morality, theology, and religious belief that I believe we should not only do as the President suggests, withhold funding, but I believe we should have an outright ban on experimentation on human cloning within the United States.

Human life is sacred. The good Lord ordained a time-honored method of creating human life, commensurate with substantial responsibility on the part of the parents, the responsibility to raise a child appropriately. Creating life in the laboratory as we do with human cloning is totally inappropriate and so far removed from the process of marriage and parenting that has been instituted upon this planet that we must rebel against the very concept of human cloning. It is simply wrong to experiment with the creation of human life in this way.

There are other aspects as well. What do we do with the failed experiments, the clones that go wrong? Are we simply going to say, well, they do not really matter because they were created in the laboratory? Will we simply dispose of them as we do with laboratory animal experiments that go wrong? Obviously you cannot. We are dealing with human beings.

So because of the importance of this issue, the importance of preventing human experimentation of this sort, I will be introducing very shortly a bill that will ban the use of Federal funds for human cloning research and a second bill which will provide an outright ban on the practice of human cloning.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF MRS. BEVERLY HOOVER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. TIAHRT] is recognized during morning hour debates for 3 minutes.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Beverly Hoover of Wichita, KS.

Nominated for the Governor's Arts Award, Beverly Hoover is an arts volunteer extraordinaire. Last year the Wichita Art Museum gave her just that title, volunteer extraordinaire in honor of her 17 years of service. She became volunteer to the Wichita Art Museum in 1980, serving as a docent which she still does today. Bev was instrumental in raising funds for the Hands On Gallery in 1982. She served as president of the volunteer council, chairman of bake sales, coordinator of holiday trees, and president of the annual art

and book fair. She is currently on the board of directors of the Friends of the Wichita Art Museum, which helps support the museum endowment. She has been a member of the friends boards for 8 years.

But Bev does not limit herself to just one arts group. She is capable of serving multiple organizations at one time and has served her community tirelessly in any number of capacities for 20 years, including school coordinator for sculpture in the Wichita Elementary School Art Project when her grown children were youngsters. Bev is the quintessential volunteer, a fast-fading commodity in most communities. She serves on committees, takes leadership roles on boards, gives generously of her time and resources and is an art collector and a patron of Wichita and Kansas art.

Bev serves on the board of directors of the Metropolitan Ballet of Wichita and served as president of that organization from 1983 to 1986. In her 16 years on the board, she has sold advertising for the ballet programs, raised money for guest artists, entertained the board and guests in her home, spearheaded a fundraising drive for a new studio, helped paint and repair the studio, supervised painting and mailing of countless invitations and acted as usher to thousands of Wichita elementary school children who have come to enjoy and appreciate the ballet through Bev's efforts and those who volunteer like Bev.

As if she were not busy enough, here is a sampling of the other activities for which Bev has volunteered over the years: the Music Theater of Wichita Association, 1987 to present; Wichita/Sedgwick Historical Museum, women's support group, from 1994 to present; American Diabetes Association of Kansas; Wichita Center for the Arts—Designing Women's Support Group, from 1995 to present; the Women's Association of the Wichita Symphony from 1987 to present, where she has served in various capacities, including young people's concert chairman and in various leadership positions with the Decorators Showhouse.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me and my colleagues in Wichita Arts Enthusiasts by honoring Bev for all of her years of hard work and dedicated volunteerism.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the House stands in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 58 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We pray, gracious God, that though the journey for justice may seem arduous and the necessary tasks of life seem too burdensome, yet in Your mercy we ask for support along the way. May there be nothing that keeps us from achieving a full measure of Your blessings or overwhelms us in our tasks. Teach us to walk by Your spirit, be lifted by Your presence and ennobled by Your grace. This is our earnest prayer. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. CHABOT] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CHABOT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MORNING 1-MINUTE SPEECHES SERVE AN IMPORTANT FUNCTION

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, the bipartisan practice of beginning each legislative day with a series of 1-minute topical speeches is under attack. There is an effort in some quarters to muffle debate by pushing this segment back to the end of the day's proceedings. If that attempt succeeds, those Americans who try to follow this portion of the proceedings may be deprived of this important opportunity.

These 1-minute speeches at the start of the business each day give Members, even of low seniority, the chance to speak on issues of real concern to the Nation. I know that I hear from people all over the country responding to what has been said during these 1-minutes, and I think those people all over the country who want to follow our proceedings would be deprived, and I do not want to see that happen.

When individual Members seek to advance an agenda more far-reaching than even their leadership would propose, these 1-minutes provide a good forum for discussion. Morning 1-minutes were tolerated by Democratic leadership and they have been continued under Republican leadership. They should not be shoved to the end of the