

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, November 1, 1999 I was unavoidably absent and therefore missed rollcall votes 550 through 552. Had I been present I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote 550, "yes" on rollcall vote 551, and "yes" on rollcall vote 552.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF VIRGINIA PRISCILLA WOOTEN

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor and profound sadness that I rise to pay tribute to the life of Virginia Priscilla Wooten of Jacinto City, Texas. After living a remarkably accomplished life that spanned 72 years, Mrs. Wooten passed away on July 1, 1999. She was born in Lynn, Massachusetts, on January 1, 1927.

Even as we mourn her passing, everyone who knew Virginia should take comfort in the truly incredible life she led. We extend our heart-felt sorrow to her loving husband, Hershel Wooten.

Virginia was preceded in death by parents Shirley and Dorothy Bates; sisters Shirley Barbour and Diane Bates; brothers Jack Bates, Lawrence Bates, Aubry Bates, Francis Bates, Edwin Bates and Reginald Bates.

She is survived by husband Hershel Wooten; sons Robert Wooten, Ronnie Wooten and David Wooten; daughters Linda Wooten and Carol Wooten; brother Randy Bates; sisters Irene Poole, Barbara Calef, Sally Brown, Sandra Richards, Ilene Gallo and Joan Bradley; five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

It has been said that the ultimate measure of a person's life is the extent to which they made the world a better place. If this is the measure of worth in life, Virginia Wooten's friends and family can attest to the success of the life she led.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all the Members of the House to join me in paying tribute to the life of Virginia Priscilla Wooten. She touched our lives and our hearts, and she will be greatly missed.

CONGRATULATING JAMES L. ANDERSON

HON. JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of James L. Anderson of Maine to the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Mr. Anderson is a native of Brewer, Maine, and a graduate of Brewer High School. Like so many other residents of Maine, Mr. Anderson has served countless hours as a member

of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, which was created by Congress in 1939 as a civilian, non-military division of the Coast Guard.

As one of the 35,000 men and women in the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, Mr. Anderson has helped to save lives by teaching boating safety and ensuring that our waterways are secure from hazards.

In recognition of his service, commitment and outstanding leadership skills, Mr. Anderson has been elected Commodore of the Coast Guard Auxiliary's First District, which encompasses New England. The Change of Watch ceremony officially installing him into this prestigious role will be held on January 8, 2000.

For 60 years, the Coast Guard Auxiliary has assisted the Coast Guard and the boating public. The Auxiliary's work is based on four cornerstones: courtesy vessel examinations to ensure safety; educational activities including National Safe Boating week; operations support for the Coast Guard's non-military functions; and the fellowship engendered in the Auxiliary's activities.

Mr. Speaker, I know that I speak on behalf of all Maine citizens and those members of the Auxiliary who serve with him when I salute Mr. Anderson for his service to our nation and for his election as the First District Commodore. He will help to lead the Coast Guard Auxiliary into the 21st Century, and I know that the Auxiliary, the Coast Guard and the boating public will benefit from his efforts.

I am proud of the role that Mr. Anderson will be playing, and am pleased to offer my congratulations to him today. I know that my colleagues join me in saying to Commodore Anderson, "Welcome aboard, Sir."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAX SANDLIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, due to unforeseen official business in my district, I was unable to cast my vote yesterday on H.R. 348, H.R. 2737, and H.R. 1710. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: Rollcall vote 550: Yea; Rollcall vote 551: Yea; and Rollcall vote 552: Yea.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALBERT RUSSELL WYNN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, on November 1, 1999, I missed rollcall votes 550 to 552, due to a minor illness. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall votes 550 and 551 and "no" on rollcall vote 552.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES ELLIOTT WILLIAMS, AN AMERICAN HERO

HON. FLOYD SPENCE

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a great American, Medal of

Honor Recipient James Elliott Williams, who recently passed away at the age of 68. The most decorated American serviceman of the Vietnam Conflict and the most decorated enlisted man in the history of the United States Navy, Petty Officer First Class Williams was truly an American hero.

A native South Carolinian, Elliott Williams began his twenty-year career in the Navy at the age of 16. During the Vietnam Conflict, commanding high-speed river patrol boats, known as PBRs, Elliott Williams exhibited great valor when faced with overwhelming forces. In 1966, Elliott Williams, without reinforcement, led eight men on two boats through intense enemy fire in a three hour firefight that resulted in the destruction of more than fifty-seven enemy boats, more than 1,000 enemy casualties, and the interception of classified documents. In 1967, just four months before Elliott Williams was to retire, the boat under his command and another United States boat was attacked along a branch of the Mekong River by four hundred soldiers from three North Vietnamese heavy weapons companies. While protecting the other boat, which was disabled, Elliott Williams continued to fight, even though he was wounded. The outcome of this incident was nearly forty enemy casualties and nine of their boats being destroyed.

For his service in the Vietnam Conflict, Elliott Williams received the Medal of Honor, the Navy Cross, two Silver Stars, the Navy and Marine Corps Medal, three Bronze Stars, three Purple Hearts, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. He also served in the Korean Conflict.

After retiring from the Navy, Elliott Williams became the first United States Marshal to be appointed by President Nixon, in 1969. He served in a number of positions with the United States Marshals Service before retiring. He was also a Past President of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society and a former member of the Board of Directors of the Patriots Point Development Authority, in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. Largely through the efforts of Elliott Williams, the Congressional Medal of Honor Society moved its headquarters from the *Intrepid*, in New York, to the *Yorktown*, at Patriots Point. In 1997, Navy Special Boat Unit 20, honored Elliott Williams by naming its new headquarters, in Little Creek, Virginia, for him.

Elliott Williams was a member of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Purple Heart Club, the Fleet Reserve Association, the Hammerton Masonic Lodge, and the Omar Shrine Temple. He was active in community affairs and enjoyed speaking to civic groups about his experiences during his career in the Navy.

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of knowing Elliott Williams for more than thirty years. He was a valiant warrior and a true patriot, who inspired many to do their best. He was also a wonderful husband and father. He will be greatly missed.

CONGRATULATING THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF NEPHROLOGY

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the tremendous work performed by

a group of dedicated and tireless professionals: the members of the American Society of Nephrology (ASN). Many members, including those from the 7th Congressional District of Illinois, are gathering at the ASN's 32nd Annual Meeting. I rise to congratulate the ASN for its achievements.

For some, Nephrology is not an everyday word. However, there is no doubt that we are all too familiar with terms like "diabetes" and "hypertension." These two diseases, Mr. Speaker, happen to be the leading two causes of total kidney failure, or End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD). In 1997, approximately 361,000 Americans suffered from ESRD and required life-saving dialysis or kidney transplants. While we know the terrible human suffering ESRD imposes on thousands across the country, the economic costs are staggering as well. Recent statistics show that the direct economic cost of health care for kidney failure, stemming largely from the Federal Government, is more than \$15 billion per year.

Unfortunately, ESRD represents only the tip of the iceberg. It is estimated that 12.5 million Americans have lost at least 50% of their normal kidney function. Further, it must also be mentioned that renal disease affects certain populations disproportionately. For example, African Americans, Native Americans, Latinos and people over the age of 50 are at higher risk for developing kidney disease. This must change.

There is no cure for kidney disease. But there is room for hope. Medical research offers us great promise to reduce the human suffering and enormous costs imposed by ESRD and kidney disease. As a result, I have long supported increased funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Further, in order to draw attention to important health care issues in my own district, I staged a series of town hall meetings this past summer. These meetings proved that our citizens are actively concerned about issues like health care. Furthermore, my town meetings demonstrated that we owe it to our constituents to continue to work to provide them important information because, as the saying goes, "Knowledge is power." The same is true for research.

While kidney disease does have a devastating impact on our citizens, research has found that the progression of the disease can be slowed if diagnosed and managed early. Some more good news centers on the fact that there are dedicated individuals who are focused on finding ways to beat this disease. Recently, these researchers and experts in the field of Nephrology met to discuss and identify research priorities and obstacles that could impede us from reaching our goals. These discussions were summarized and drafted in the recently released paper, "Progress and Priorities: Renal Disease Research Plan." This project, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), was made possible through the work of the American Society of Nephrology and other members of the Council of American Kidney Societies (CAKS). I urge all my colleagues to read through this seminal report and to share copies with their constituents.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for providing me this opportunity to acknowledge the work performed by the American Society of Nephrology (ASN).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RONNIE SHOWS

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Speaker, because of unanticipated delays in my flight from Jackson, Mississippi, on Monday, November 1, 1999, I was unable to cast recorded votes on rollcalls 550, 551, and 552.

Had I been present for rollcall 550, I would have voted "yea" to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 348, a bill to authorize the construction of a monument to honor those who have served the Nation's civil defense and emergency management programs.

On rollcall 551, I would have voted "yea" to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2737, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey to the State of Illinois certain Federal land associated with the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail to be used as an historic and interpretive site along the trail.

On rollcall 552, I would have voted "nay" against suspending the rules and passing H.R. 1714, a bill to facilitate the use of electronic records and signatures in interstate or foreign commerce.

BURNING POPE IN EFFIGY SHOWS INDIA'S RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn the recent act of burning the Pope in effigy by a Hindu fundamentalist group in India. My friend Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, brought this disgraceful act to my attention. It was reported in India Abroad.

An organizer of the march criticized the Delhi Archbishop for contacting the Pope about religious persecution in India. The Pope is visiting India soon and the Hindu militants demand that the Pope declare all religions the same.

This follows the rapes of four nuns in India by individuals described by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad as "patriotic youth." Hindu fundamentalists have murdered four priests. Hindu fundamentalists also killed Australian missionary Graham Staines and his two little boys by surrounding their Jeep and setting it on fire. They have burned churches, prayer halls, and Christian schools.

Sikhs, Muslims, and others have also suffered from similar treatment. They, too, have seen their religious shrines desecrated and attacked and religious leaders kidnapped, tortured, and murdered by the Indian authorities and their Hindu fundamentalist allies. These are people who espouse total Hindu domination of every facet of life in India. In this light, is it any wonder that so many of the minorities in India's multinational empire, such as Christian Nagaland, the Sikhs of Punjab, Khalistan, the Kashmiri Muslims, and so many others seek independence from India?

It is time for Congress to encourage freedom for people of the subcontinent. I submit the Council of Khalistan's press release on the burning of the Pope's effigy into the RECORD.

HINDU ACTIVISTS BURN EFFIGY OF POPE, MARCH TO PROTEST CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY THERE IS NO RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN INDIA

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 28, 1999.—Fundamentalist Hindu militants burned an effigy of Pope John Paul II on October 22 during a Goa-to-Delhi march to protest Christian religious activity in India, according to a report in the October 29 issue of India Abroad. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), a branch of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a pro-Fascist, Hindu fundamentalist organization organized the march. The ruling BJP, which leads the 24-party governing coalition in India, is the political arm of the RSS.

Marchers are protesting large-scale conversions by Christians, according to the article. They are demanding that the Pope proclaim all religions equal during his visit to India next month.

Subhash Velingkar, an organizer of the march, condemned religious conversions. In the eyes of many Hindu activists, all conversions from Hinduism are "forced" conversions. Velingkar attacked the Archbishop of Delhi, Alain de Lastic, for communicating with the Vatican about the persecution of Christians in India. "Why should people from India complain to the Vatican?" he demanded.

Recently a nun named Sister Ruby was abducted by militant Hindus and forced to drink their urine on the threat of being raped. Four other nuns were raped last year. The VHP called the nuns "antinational elements" and described the rapists as "patriotic youth." Another priest was recently murdered in India, joining four other priests who were murdered last year.

Christians have been subjected to a wave of violence since Christmas Day. Churches have been burned and schools and prayer halls have been destroyed. Missionary Graham Staines and his two sons, ages 8 and 10, were burned to death while they slept in their van by a mob of Hindus who surrounded the jeep and chanted "Victory to Lord Ram."

"We strongly condemn this march and the burning in effigy of the Pope," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, the organization leading the Sikh Nation's struggle for independence from India. "The ordeal that the Christians are enduring is reminiscent of what the Sikhs, Muslims, and other religious minorities in India go through," he said. "There is no religious freedom in India," he said. "The VHP openly proclaimed that anybody living in India should be a Hindu or subservient to the Hindus."

March organizer Velingkar said, "Christians are brothers of the same blood." Dr. Aulakh dismissed that statement. "The Hindu fundamentalists say the same things about Sikhs being brothers of Hindus," he said. "If that is the case, then why do they continue to murder Sikhs, Christians, Muslims, and others in large numbers?"

India has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, over 200,000 Christians in Nagaland since 1988, more than 65,000 Muslims in Kashmir since 1988, and tens of thousands of Assamese, Manipuris, Tamils, Dalits, and others. It continues to hold tens of thousands of members of these groups as political prisoners without charge or trial, according to a report by Amnesty International. Thousands have been illegally detained for as long as 15 years.

"Clearly there is no place for religious minorities in democratic, secular India," said Dr. Aulakh. "This only makes the case for freedom for all the minority nations of South Asia stronger," he said. "I call on President Clinton and the Pope to bring up the issues of religious freedom and self-determination on their visits to India," he said.