

The commitment and drive exhibited by Peggy continues to greatly benefit our community. She understands that one must remain politically active in order to bring about improvements in our society. She has been out in the trenches struggling to ensure that competent, qualified, and concerned people hold the elected positions in her community. She continues to function as an active member of the Breukelen Tenants Association.

In describing Peggy, I would have to use the words, motivated, cooperative, and charitable. The needs of other people are paramount to Peggy. I commend Peggy Rodgers and pray that she will succeed in all future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO U.S. ARMY COMMAND
SERGEANT MAJOR RONALD W.
BEDFORD—A REAL AMERICAN
HERO

HON. TERRY EVERETT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 4, 1999

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, our society has cheapened the name of heroes today by elevating millionaire movie, music and sports stars while ignoring those Americans who perform unselfish acts of courage and sacrifice. I wish to pay tribute to an American whose character and actions truly define heroism.

On September 2, the 54th anniversary of VJ-DAY, U.S. Army Command Sergeant Major Donald W. Bedford, began a 1,500 mile journey from Mobile, Alabama to Washington, DC. His trek, which takes him through six states and the District of Columbia, is remarkable because it is entirely on foot. But CSM Bedford is not walking this enormous distance to set any record. Instead, he is striding the 71-day route to bring attention to and raise funding for the construction of a national memorial to honor America's greatest generation of heroes—those who fought in World War II.

Bedford, an ex-airborne infantryman now stationed at Fort Rucker, Alabama in my congressional district, came up with the idea of the walk after learning that there was no national memorial for the 16 million Americans who served and sacrificed to liberate the world from Nazi and Japanese occupation in World War II. His efforts to help raise money for the on-going World War II Memorial fund have gained the support of the Non-Commissioned Officers Association, and the praise of former Senator Bob Dole, who chairs the World War II Memorial Committee.

CSM Bedford's journey of 2,792,000 steps will take him through 144 cities and 15 military installations before he arrives at Arlington National Cemetery on November 11. From there, he will cross Memorial Bridge, pass by the Lincoln Memorial, and then proceed to the spot on the national mall where the World War II Memorial will be built next year.

I salute CSM Bedford for his personal sacrifice and dedication to America's greatest generation and I join all Americans in welcoming him to Washington this Veterans' Day.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 4, 1999

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent Monday, November 1, 1999, and Tuesday, November 2, 1999, and as a result, missed rollcall votes 550 through 556. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote 550, "yes" on rollcall vote 551, "no" on rollcall vote 552, "yes" on rollcall vote 553, "yes" on rollcall vote 554, "yes" on rollcall vote 555, and "yes" on rollcall vote 556.

WITHDRAW COSPONSORSHIP OF
H.R. 2528

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 4, 1999

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, today I withdraw my cosponsorship of H.R. 2528. I was an original cosponsor of H.R. 2528, the Immigration Reorganization and Improvement Act of 1999, because I support any effort to jumpstart—or better put, restart—the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Chairman HAROLD ROGERS, Chairman LAMAR SMITH and Representative SILVESTRE REYES have worked diligently to fashion a restructuring bill and are doing what they believed best moves us toward that end. I had concerns about the bill when I first signed on. But I felt it was important to support efforts to restructure the INS. I had hoped H.R. 2528 would move in a direction addressing my concerns. However, at this stage I find that the current status of the bill falls short of meeting the elements necessary to make it a meaningful reform that will place the INS on solid footing to effectively address its obligations.

History has shown that the INS does not receive the resources necessary to carry out its duties in the area of services and adjudication. This is why the backlog of pending naturalization applications grew to approximately 2.0 million and currently stands at approximately 1.4 million. Far too many of those backlogged applicants waited or have been waiting over 2 years for their cases to be adjudicated. The backlog and delay in other adjudication areas—adjustments of status and the green card replacement program, for instance—are as bad if not worse than for naturalization. As such, my primary concern pertains to the financing mechanisms within the INS for the services and adjudication functions of the agency. Current law and its implementation fail to meet this challenge. And H.R. 2528 falls far short as well. So long as we continue to require fees collected from immigrants for a particular service to pay for non-fee activities, we will always run into budgetary problems and services will suffer. H.R. 2528 authorizes no funds whatsoever for backlog reduction or asylum and refugee processing. This additional strain on already stretched resources, with no additional funding, will only exacerbate the backlogs as well as undermine the United States' ability to meet the protection needs of refugees and asylum seekers.

I am also seriously concerned that H.R. 2528 does not go the necessary mile to en-

sure that these newly independent agencies of the Department of Justice's immigration until function properly under the oversight and direction of a principal executive. While autonomy for the enforcement and service agencies will allow them to perfect and specialize in their areas of responsibility, too much distance between them could foil the ability of the Department of Justice to direct, coordinate and integrate the overlap in enforcement and service functions. The latest version of H.R. 2528 improves upon the original bill by adding an Assistant Attorney General as that principal in charge. However, it maintains three separate legal and policy offices which will lead to multiple interpretations of immigration, refugee and asylum law. This structure will bear three bureaucracies instead of one and cultivate confusion among the three arms of the agency.

I am committed to continuing to work with the authors of H.R. 2528 along with the Immigration Subcommittee members and the Clinton administration to strengthen the structure of the INS so that it can finally, rightfully handle all duties under its charge. The people of America who must turn to the INS for services—and who happen to pay the taxes and fees to fund this and all other government operations—deserve no less.

TRIBUTE TO LEVI PEARSON

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 4, 1999

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, this Saturday, November 6, 1999, the South Carolina Department of Archives and History will dedicate a historic marker to honor Levi Pearson, a leader in the civil rights movement in Clarendon County, South Carolina. Mr. Pearson personified great courage, leadership and perseverance in his role as a plaintiff in *Pearson v. County Board of Education* (1948) which led to the historic May 17, 1954 Supreme Court decision outlawing separate and unequal schools. Recordings of the civil rights movement in South Carolina rank him among the state's most outstanding pioneers for equality in education. Many local and national events, news articles, books and television documentaries recognize his role in the struggle which led to the Supreme Court's decision. Simple Justice by Richard Kluger and Stepping Stones to the Supreme Court by Benjamin F. Hornsby, Jr. are two publications that depict many of the details of Mr. Pearson's trials.

For background, Mr. Speaker, I wish to enter for the record information from an article which was written as a tribute to him when he was inducted into the South Carolina Black Hall of Fame:

"An obscure country farmer, Levi Pearson never dreamed that his legal action on behalf of black children in Summerton, South Carolina would figure in the historic May 17, 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision outlawing separate and unequal schools. They are role models and an inspiration to all who value freedom and justice. As a partner, in the Clarendon County insurrection led by the Rev. Joseph Albert Delaine, Levi Pearson had unshakable faith in the victory of justice over an entrenched social order that seemed all but immovable.

Black children in Summerton attended ramshackle Scott's Branch School, while white children attended classes in a modern facility. White school board officials said white folks paid most of the taxes, so white people were therefore entitled to better schools. There were 30 school buses for whites in Clarendon County. None for Blacks. Some black youngsters had to make their way for nine miles across an arm of newly-formed Lake Marion. One child drowned as they paddled a boat. Appeals to schools officials for transportation such as that offered white failed. The school officials even refused to buy gas for an old bus the blacks bought.

Farmer Levi Pearson, father of three children at Scott's Branch School (Daisy, James, and Eloise) was persuaded to bring a suit on behalf of his son, James. A black man suing white folks * * * no such thing had happened before in the memory of blacks living in Clarendon County. Levi Pearson was an instant hero among his people. But a threat to the white establishment. His credit was cut off by every white-owned store and bank in the county. He had enough money to buy seeds for the cotton, tobacco, oats and wheat he planted, but not enough for fertilizer. He had to cut timber to sell for cash, and borrow from hard-pressed blacks to buy fertilizer. That Autumn he couldn't rent a harvester from a white farmer, so he sat and watched as his harvest of oats and beans and wheat rot in the field. Three months after he filed the lawsuit, it was thrown out because of a technicality that he paid taxes in School District Five, while his children were going to school in District 26 for the high school and District 22 for the Grammar School. Another pupil's parent, Harry Briggs, Sr., filed suit a year later. He and Pearson had to flee for their lives many times. Briggs and his family lived in Florida and New York for 20 years before returning to Summerton in the 1970's but Mr. Pearson never left. Ultimately, their case was consolidated with similar cases from three other States in an action known as *Brown vs. Board of Education*, upon which the door to equal education opportunity was opened in the Supreme Court's Decision of May 17, 1954."

Mr. Pearson never sought fame or notoriety, but stood up for what he felt was right. I am reminded of the speech the late Dr. Martin Luther King gave about the "Drum Major Instinct." A few excerpts go like this:

"* * * everybody can be great. Because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don't have to know about Plato and Aristotle to serve. You don't have to know Einstein's theory of relativity to serve. You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love. And you can be that servant.

"* * * Every now and then I guess we all think realistically about that day when we will be victimized with what is life's final common denominator—that something we call death. We all think about it. And every now and then I think about my own death, and I think about my own funeral, and I don't think of it in a morbid sense. Every now and then I ask myself, "What is it that I would want said? And I leave the word to you this morning.

"* * * If I can help somebody as I pass along, if I can cheer somebody with a word or

song, if I can show somebody he's traveling wrong, then my living will not be in vain. If I can do my duty as a Christian ought, if I can bring salvation to a world once wrought, if I can spread the message as the master taught, then my living will not be in vain.

Yes, Jesus, I want to be on your right side or your left side, not for any selfish reason. I want to be on your right or your best side, not in terms of some political kingdom or ambition, but I just want to be there in love and in justice and in truth and in commitment to others, so that we can make of this old world a new world."

Mr. Pearson, and Mr. and Mrs. Briggs are now deceased. However, Mr. Pearson's widow still vividly remembers his struggles and this historic period in our Nation's history. Mr. Pearson lived a Christian and committed life for justice and we all know that his living was not in vain. Mr. Speaker, thank you and my colleagues for joining me in honoring the Levi Pearson who increased educational opportunities for children across the country.

HONORING AMERICA'S VETERANS

HON. DONALD A. MANZULLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 5, 1999

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, one year ago I had the privilege of participating in a memorable Veterans Day program at the Alden-Hebron Elementary School in Hebron, Illinois, in the district I represent. That was a special day for me in many ways. I will never forget having the honor of presenting the Bronze Star to CPL Harold Myers, the school's custodian, for his bravery during the Battle of the Bulge. His gallantry in the service of his country was a reminder of why we commemorate Veterans Day.

It was also heartwarming to witness a new generation of young Americans coming to understand and acknowledge the sacrifices made by past generations of American veterans. As a number of students recounted brief stories about how we as a nation came to set aside November 11th as a day to recognize our veterans, I couldn't help thinking how important it is to keep the flame of patriotism burning brightly in the hearts of each new generation of Americans. They will be the ones who will carry on, and in some cases defend, the values that have made our nation great. The students of Alden-Hebron Elementary have a clearer understanding of the American spirit because they see it personified in Harold Myers, who not only serves as their school custodian, but because of his service to his country, is a genuine American hero.

Mr. Speaker, as a tribute to the American men and women who have served this country throughout our history and in recognition of the students of Alden-Hebron Elementary School, I submit for the RECORD statements made by a number of the students honoring our nation's veterans:

VETERANS DAY

In 1921, an American soldier—his name "known but to God"—was buried on a Virginia hillside overlooking the Potomac River and the city of Washington. The Arlington National Cemetery burial site of the unknown World War One soldier became a place

of honor to all American veterans. Similar ceremonies were held in England and France where an "unknown soldier" was buried in each nation's place of honor.

These ceremonies all took place on November 11 to recognize the end of World War One which ended on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918. It became known as Armistice Day. Over four and a half million Americans served in the military and over 100 thousand died in battle during this war. Today, only 3,200 veterans from that conflict are alive.

On December 7, 1941 the United States entered World War Two. 16 million men and women entered the military services during this time. Four hundred six thousand Americans died fighting in World War Two. Today over 6 million veterans from that time are still living.—Crystal Stolarik

VETERANS DAY

On November 11th 1947 in Birmingham, Alabama a Veterans Day parade was organized to honor all veterans. U.S. Representative Edward H. Rees of Kansas proposed changing Armistice Day to Veterans Day. In 1954 President Eisenhower signed a bill proclaiming November 11th as Veterans Day, and he called on all Americans to rededicate themselves to the cause of peace.

On May 30, 1958 two more unidentified Americans war dead were brought from overseas and buried in Arlington Cemetery beside their World War One comrade. One was killed in World War Two and one in the Korean War.

To honor these men symbolic to all Americans who gave their lives in battle an Army honor guard, the 3rd U.S. Infantry (The Old Guard) keeps day and night watch.—Becky Peterson

VETERANS DAY

In 1968 a law passed that changed the national commemoration of Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. Soon it became apparent that November 11th was a matter of historic and patriotic significance to a great number of our citizens. Congress returned observance of this special day back to its traditional date in 1978.

The focal point of ceremonies conducted by the Veterans Day National Committee continues to be at the Arlington National Cemetery at the Tomb of the Unknowns. The cemetery, established in 1864 is now operated by the Department of the Army.—Brianna Borman

VETERANS DAY

Tomorrow at 11 o'clock a combined color guard representing all military services honors the unknowns by Executing "Present Arms" at the Tomb. The Nation's tribute to its war dead is symbolized by the lying of a Presidential Wreath and the bugler sounding "taps". The sounding of "taps" remembers the over one million Americans killed in war and the 41 million Americans who have served in the military during times of war. They served in 11 wars from the Revolution to the Persian Gulf earning the special distinction of "Veteran".

Today there is, and perhaps there always will be, conflict in the world. But the United States enjoys peace and freedom.—Marty Ladafoged

HAROLD MYERS MILITARY SERVICE

Harold Myers was inducted into the U.S. Army on March 19, 1942 at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana. He then went to Camp Claiborne, Louisiana to train on the 30 and 50 caliber machine guns with the 82nd Infantry Division. Training for paragliders was