

valued tradition in the South Bay, one that will continue for years to come.

I congratulate Torrance Mayor Dee Hardison on the success this year's parade. I also commend the citizens of Torrance for they are the ones who have helped keep this tradition alive. We live in a great country. It is our Armed Forces who are responsible for protecting and defending our freedom throughout the world.

COMMENDING ISRAEL'S REDE-
PLOYMENT FROM SOUTHERN
LEBANON

SPEECH OF

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2000

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I want to join my colleagues in commending Israel for its courageous withdrawal from Lebanon. The Israeli action sends a strong signal that Israel is very serious about pursuing a comprehensive peace with all its neighbors. At the same time, it is critical for this Congress to demand a cessation of all terrorist activities in southern Lebanon and to strongly encourage the government of Syria to remove its troops from Lebanon as well.

GRANTING PERMANENT NORMAL
TRADE RELATIONS TO CHINA

HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I was pleased with the passage of yesterday's legislation to grant Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) to China. Passage of PNTR is the first step in reforming China and advancing religious freedom and human rights for the Chinese people. Of course, change will not occur overnight in China. However, it will occur gradually through policies of normal trade, exchange and engagement, through peoples of faith, scholars, the workforce, and businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit for the RECORD a powerful statement signed by a broad spectrum of religious leaders in support of PNTR. These individuals and their organizations have worked, and will continue to work, for the advancement of religious liberty and human rights.

STATEMENT BY RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN SUPPORT OF PERMANENT NORMAL TRADE RELATIONS WITH CHINA (EXPANDED LIST OF SIGNATORIES)

MAY 23, 2000.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: Soon you will be asked to vote on an issue that will set the course for U.S.-China relations for years to come: enacting Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) with China. Your vote will also have an impact on how human rights and religious freedom will advance for the people of China in the years ahead. We are writing to urge you to vote for PNTR for China because we believe that this is the best way to advance these concerns over the long term.

We share your concern for advancing human rights and religious freedom for the

people of China. The findings of the recent report from the U.S. International Religious Freedom Committee are disturbing to us. Clearly, the Chinese government still has a long way to go.

The question for us all is: What can the U.S. government do that will best advance human rights and religious freedom for the people of China? Are conditions more likely to improve through isolation and containment or through opening trade, investment, and exchange between peoples?

Let us look first at what has already occurred within China over the past twenty years. The gradual opening of trade, investment, travel, and exchange between China and the rest of the world has led to significant, positive changes for human rights and religious freedom in China. We observe the following:

The number of international religious missions operating openly in China has grown rapidly in recent years. Today these groups provide educational, humanitarian, medical, and development assistance in communities across China.

Despite continued, documented acts of government oppression, people in China nonetheless can worship, participate in communities of faith, and move about the country much more freely today than was even imaginable twenty years ago.

Today, people can communicate with each other and the outside world much more easily and with much less governmental interference through the tools of business and trade: telephones, cell phones, faxes, and e-mail.

On balance, foreign investment has introduced positive new labor practices into the Chinese workplace, stimulating growing aspirations for labor and human rights among Chinese workers.

These positive developments have come about gradually in large part as a result of economic reforms by the Chinese government and the accompanying normalization of trade, investment, and exchange with the outside world. The developing relationships between Chinese government officials, business managers, workers, professors, students, and people of faith and their foreign counterparts are reflected in the development of new laws, government policies, business and labor practices, personal freedom, and spiritual seeking. Further, the Chinese government is much more likely to develop the rule of law and observe international norms of behavior if it is recognized by the U.S. government as an equal, responsible partner within the community of nations.

The U.S. government and governments around the world have a continuing, important role to play in challenging one another through international forums to fully observe standards for human rights and religious freedom. However, we do not believe that the annual debate in the U.S. Congress, linking justifiable concern for human rights and religious freedom in China to the threat of unilateral U.S. trade sanctions, has been productive toward that end.

Change will not occur overnight in China. Nor can it be imposed from outside. Rather, change will occur gradually, and it will be inspired and shaped by the aspirations, culture, and history of the Chinese people. We on the outside can help advance religious freedom and human rights best through policies of normal trade, exchange and engagement for the mutual benefit of peoples of faith, scholars, workers, and businesses. Enacting permanent normal trade relations with China is the next, most important legislative step that Congress can take to help in this process.

Sincerely,

Dr. Donald Argue, (Former President, National Association of Evangelicals, rep-

resenting 27 million Christians in the United States of America); John A. Buehrens, (Unitarian Universalist Association); Bruce Birchard, (Friends General Conference); Myrrl Byler, (China Education Exchange, Mennonite Church); Reverend Richard W. Cain, ((Emeritus) President, Claremont School of Theology); Ralph Covell, (Senior Professor of World Christianity, Denver Seminary); Charles A. Davis, PhD, (The Evangelical Alliance Missions); Father Robert F. Drinan, (Professor, Georgetown University Law Center; Member of Congress, 1971-1981); Samuel E. Ericsson, (President, Advocates International, a faith-based global network of lawyers, judges, clergy, and national leaders reaching over 100 nations for justice, reconciliation, and ethics with offices on five continents); Nancy Finneran, (Sisters of Loretto Community); Brent Fulton, (President, ChinaSource, a non-profit, Christian Evangelical organization connecting knowledge and leaders in service to China); Dr. Richard L. Hamm, (Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)); Kevin M. Hardin, (University Language Services); J. Daniel Harrison, (President, Leadership Development International); Bob Heimbürger, (Professor (Ret.) Indiana University); Rev. Earnest W. Hummer, (President, China Outreach Ministries); John Jamison, (Intercultural Exchange Network); Rodolf Mak, Ph.D., (Director of Chinese Church Mobilization, OMF International); Jim Nickel, (ChinaSource, a non-profit, Christian Evangelical organization connecting knowledge and leaders in serve to China); Don Reeves, (General Secretary (Interim) American Friends Service Committee); Rabbi Arthur Schneier, D.D., (President, Appeal of Conscience Foundation); Phil Schwab, (ChinaTeam International Services, Ltd.); Dr. Stephen Steele, (Dawn Ministries); Rev. Daniel B. Su, (Special Assistant to the President, China Outreach Ministries); Bishop Melvin G. Talbert, (The United Methodist Church); Dr. James H. Taylor III, (President, MSI Professional Services International); Finn Torjessen, (Executive Director, Evergreen Family Friendship Service, a Christian, non-profit benefit organization working in China); Joe Volk, (Executive Secretary, Friends Committee on National Legislation); Rev. Dr. Daniel E. Weiss, (American Baptist Churches, USA); Dr. Hans M. Wilhelm, (China Partner, an organization serving Church of China by training emerging young leaders); Rev. Dr. Andrew Young, (President, National Council of Churches, former ambassador to the United Nations and member of Congress); Danny Yu, (Christian Leadership Exchange).

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL
BARRY BATES

HON. MARTIN FROST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding Army leader in my District, Major General Barry Bates, as he relinquishes command of the Army & Air Force Exchanges Service, headquartered in Dallas, Texas.

Under his strong visionary leadership, AAFES has served the military community better than at any time in its history. General Bates exercised astute management which led to annual sales of \$7.3 billion and earnings of over \$351 million. This produced the highest per capita dividend (\$284 per service member) for Morale, Welfare & Recreation programs of

our Armed Services. He improved the overseas school feeding program, the military family program, and encouraged youth by establishing a coupon program and Savings Bond drawing to recognize those achieving good grades.

General Bates has expanded business partnerships, improved cooperation among DOD resale activities, and partnered with other services to develop exchange-wide credit card services. He has also advanced AAFES significantly in the application of technology. Internet sales have grown by leaps and bounds to \$24.2 million in 1999. AAFES' Information Systems Directorate has won 13 major national awards and opened a state of the art Enterprise Technology Center.

General Bates has made customer service a priority, positioning AAFES as a "customer driven company." At the same time, he has focused on developing, training and caring for AAFES employees. The results tell the story: customer service has improved 25%, and associate satisfaction has increased by 14%.

I've been impressed with the work of General Bates on two vastly different fronts. On a recent trip to Bosnia I shopped at a great PX at Eagle Base in Tuzla. This kind of operation is what AAFES has become known for—they go wherever our soldiers go. General Bates has inspired his team to provide great service on all the U.S. contingency missions. His commitment to be there for the troops was most evident when AAFES established a presence in Albania just five days after our forces arrived there.

At the request of AAFES retirees, I worked personally with General Bates to guarantee the security of the AAFES retirement plan. He was courageous and unyielding in his fight to ensure that the retirement plan was protected for all AAFES retirees and associates.

General Bates has positioned AAFES solidly for the future. His extraordinary leadership and business acumen have set a standard in Texas for quality operations that will ensure quality morale, welfare, and recreation programs for our Army and Air Force for years to come.

A soldier's soldier, General Bates is now returning to Korea to command Army troops in that volatile part of the world. On the occasion of his departure, I want to thank him for helping Congress take care of the troops and their families, for caring for many of my constituents—the wonderful employees of AAFES, and for serving his Army so effectively as the Commander of AAFES. I ask all Members to join me in wishing General Bates success in his new position.

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF MICHAEL R.
OBLEMAN

HON. JOHN M. McHUGH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Speaker, on 9 February, 2000 Chief Master Sergeant Michael R. Obleman retired as the Chief of the Munitions Element for the 174th Fighter Wing, Hancock Field, New York Air National Guard in Syracuse NY. He assumed leadership of the Munitions Element as a Master Sergeant in January of 1982. Previously he worked as a Supervisor for the Weapons Loading Section.

Chief Obleman was born on 1 April, 1948 in Pulaski, New York where he still resides. He graduated from North Syracuse Central High School in June of 1967. In August 1967 he joined the United States Marine Corp where he was an Aviation Ordnance Man. He served in Vietnam from 18 June, 1969 through 9 June, 1970. He was discharged from the Marines in August of 1971. In the Marine Corp he attained the rank of E-5. In the Marines he received the following awards and decorations: National Defense Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross w/palm, the Vietnamese Service Medal with 1 device, the Purple heart, the Good Conduct Medal and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with device.

After his discharge from the Marines he worked a civilian job at Rumsey Distributing from October 1971 to December of 1974. In April 1973 he joined the 174th Fighter Wing as a traditional guardsman. On 22 December, 1974 he became a full time technician in the Weapons Loading Section. He worked in Weapons Loading until June of 1982 when he assumed leadership of the Munitions element as a Master Sergeant. He achieved the rank of Senior Master Sergeant on 15 November, 1987. On 31 August, 1990 he was awarded the rank of Chief Master Sergeant.

As Chief of the Munitions element he recognized that the current procedure for uploading 30-millimeter ammo onto the A-10 aircraft could be accomplished in a safer and more efficient manner. He initiated a design change to the GFU-7 loading system for use with the 30-millimeter GPU-5 gun pods. This design change allowed the GPU-5 gun pod to be loaded in the Munitions Storage Area instead of the flight line resulting in less people and aircraft being exposed to a potentially dangerous explosive operation. High levels of Command visited the 174th Fighter Wing to observe the new method he developed. The GPU-5 30-millimeter gun pod was combat tested during Operation Desert Storm.

Under his leadership the Munitions Element received excellent ratings on all major inspections. Chief Obleman was instrumental in the planning of the initial setup and the successful ongoing operation of the Forward Operating Location at Wheeler-Sack Air Field for the A-10 and F-16 aircraft, part of the only live fire range in the Northeast.

Chief Master Sergeant Michael R. Obleman has 32 years, 6 months and 1 day of dedicated military service. Four years of this service was with the Marines and the remainder of service was with the 174th Fighter Wing, Hancock Field. His Air Force Awards and Decorations include the Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Medal with 6 devices, the Air Force Longevity Service Award with 6 devices, the National Defense Service Medal with 1 device, the South West Asia Service Medal with 2 devices, the Armed Forces Reserve Medal with 1 Device, the Kuwait Liberation Medal Saudi Arabia, the Kuwait Liberation Medal Kuwait, the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with 4 devices and the Meritorious Service Medal.

Chief Obleman married Nancy Condon on 10 May, 1969. He has three children Michael, Lorianne, and John. Lorianne is married to Trevor Quig, and are the parents of his granddaughter, Adrianna.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MINE PRESERVATIONIST BURTON BOYUM

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding volunteer for his work in preserving the grand history of mining in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Burton Boyum is a shining example of how giving to one's community brightens the lot for many. Mr. Boyum has selflessly given his time and served in various capacities designed to better the lives of residents and improve their understanding of the area's economic and cultural history.

For decades, the Upper Peninsula was dotted with mines that drew iron ore and copper from the tree-covered hills. The resources, however, were exhausted and now the area is witness to little mining. All that remains of this former economic mainstay, which provided thousands of jobs to hardworking citizens, are the stories of former miners and some dilapidated structures. Gratefully, communities in the Upper Peninsula have been graced by the energy and dedication of Burton Boyum. He has been determined to preserve the historic structures of Michigan's mining past and retain the anecdotes that illustrated miners' lives.

Following his graduation from the University of Minnesota in 1941, Mr. Boyum moved to the Upper Peninsula, where he worked as a Mining Engineer for Cleveland Cliffs International until his retirement in 1984. During that period and beyond, Mr. Boyum worked diligently to capture the history of mining. In 1961, he founded the Quincy Mine Hoist Association, a non-profit organization, and served as President of the Board of Directors from 1973 to 1998. Most notably, in 1998, the Quincy Mine Hoist Association honored this distinguished community member by creating the Burton H. Boyum Award.

Mr. Boyum has contributed to the community in many other laudable ways. He served as a member of the Marquette County Historical Society, where he wrote and published two books: *Saga of Iron Mining in Michigan's Upper Peninsula* and *The Mather Mine*. He worked tirelessly to create the United States National Ski Hall of Fame in Ishpeming, Michigan, which is housed in an award-winning structure that beautifully enhances the interpretation of skiing in our country. Finally, Mr. Boyum played a large role in creating the Great Lakes Olympic Education Training Center, which trains athletes for various events in the world's athletic showcase. I have worked on matters concerning the National Ski Hall of Fame and the Great Lakes Olympic Education Training Center and can appreciate the initiative and devotion displayed by Mr. Boyum toward both creating and strengthening these facilities.

Although Mr. Boyum recently suffered a stroke, I am sure that his passion for civic involvement and his appreciation for mining history in the Upper Peninsula will remain steadfast. I ask you Mr. Speaker to join me in this salute to Burton Boyum.