

After narrowly missing Lopez, Reyes turned to the right and was driving across Orchard. The vehicle he was driving headed toward a car stopped at the intersection. Lopez dropped his mail and dashed across the street to save the boy. He reached through the window and turned the wheel just before impact.

The car side-swiped the other car in the intersection, and was headed towards another vehicle when Lopez leaped back through the window and yanked on the emergency brake. He stopped the car just in time as it gently hit the next in line and came to a stop. Lopez estimated the boy had been idling along at about 5 mph to 10 mph.

The boy was taken to the hospital minutes later with minor injuries to his face. Lopez injured his ribs when diving through the window, but the injury was not serious . . .

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, Salvador risked his health to save the life of this young boy. He has made us all—particularly his wife Gloria, his children Yma, Sergio, Isabelle, and Mario, and his co-workers at the Post Office—very proud.

AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON 77

HON. BOB BARR

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2001

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, during times of peace, there are unfortunately many who take our nation's armed forces for granted. In the process, not only do they forget the time-tested wisdom that preparing for war is the best way to avoid it, they also forget the contributions that military units make to the functioning of our republic.

One would be hard pressed to find a better example of this principle in action than Airborne Early Warning Squadron 77, or VAW-77.

VAW-77 performs a vital role in our defense structure, by providing the most valuable of all defense commodities: information. Its E-2C Hawkeye aircraft collect and synthesize the information our fighter and attack aircraft depend on to perform their roles. By performing this function, VAW-77's "Nightwolves" serve as the eyes and ears for surface ships and naval aviators during engagements and exercises.

Fortunately for our families, schools, and neighborhoods, the work of the Nightwolves goes beyond simply deterring America's military enemies from attacking our shores and national interests. During its five year existence, the squadron has deployed to the Caribbean ten times.

These deployments have resulted in the confiscation and destruction of several metric tons of cocaine and marijuana. These are drugs that will not be reaching America's streets due directly to the efforts of VAW-77.

We owe the men and women of VAW-77 a great debt for their service in this area, and I encourage others to join in thanking them for their dedication and success.

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF MIKE HARSHBARGER

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2001

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Chief Mike Harshbarger who has retired from the Bourbonnais Fire Protection District after more than 31 years of service. Chief Harshbarger started with the Bourbonnais Fire Protection District on December 29, 1969 and retired on January 1, 2001.

Much has changed in firefighting since Chief Harshbarger started. Firefighting has become more complex and technical. Training levels have escalated and technology keeps changing. When the Chief first started, all he needed was a coat, gloves, and a pair of boots. Today, training is needed to deal with many modern hazards.

Chief Harshbarger has always subscribed to free thinking and is willing to listen to new ideas and suggestions. The Chief ran the fire department with the same philosophy as he ran his business, "Our customers, the people of the district, are first and foremost."

Chief Harshbarger rose to national recognition for his performance as head of the Amtrak rail crossing disaster scene on March 15, 1999. His work was chronicled in the August 2000, Readers Digest.

Chief Harshbarger lives in Bourbonnais Township with his wife Ellie. The Chief is the second generation in his family to serve with the fire department. His father, Lyle, was a long-time member of the fire department. On October 12, 2000, the Kankakee Elks Lodge #627 named the Chief "Citizen of the Year". No one in the 100 years of the Lodge has ever received this award.

Mr. Speaker, I urge this body to identify and recognize other institutions in their own districts whose actions have so greatly benefitted and strengthened America's communities.

IN HONOR OF DAVID OCEGUEDA BRACKER

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2001

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to David Ocegueda Bracker as he retires from his position as the Executive Director of a non-profit group in my district, Arriba Juntos. For the past three and a half years, David has led this agency through a time of transition and expansion. During his tenure with Arriba Juntos, he has helped low-income residents of San Francisco receive the training they need to find employment or to advance their careers. His inspirational leadership has had a profound effect on our city.

David has dedicated his entire professional life to public service. After receiving his Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Social work from San Francisco State University, David began his career by working for four years at the organization from which he is now retiring, Arriba Juntos. As a Project Manager for the Model Cities program, he implemented an employment training program and directed other social services programs.

After a brief stint as Associate Director of the Mission Neighborhood Health Center, he joined the U.S. Department of the Interior as an Area Director. In this capacity, he founded and led an employment training program in the Western U.S. that became nationally known and emulated for its effectiveness.

In 1980, he began working for the University of California, San Francisco. First in the Office of the Public Programs, then in the Chancellor's Cultural Diversity Task Force, and then in the Office of the Vice Chancellor, David spent twelve years with U.C.S.F. While there, he raised support for their health programs and represented U.C.S.F. in the health care community; he helped to design and implement U.C.S.F.'s plan to achieve full diversity on campus; and he secured corporate and foundation support for many projects, including a joint gerontological research project with Mount Zion Medical Center, a pediatric crack cocaine project, a campus capital improvement project, and the 1990 International Conference on AIDS.

After leaving U.C.S.F., he spent four years as the Executive Director of the Hearing Society for the Bay Area before becoming the Executive Director of Arriba Juntos. At Arriba Juntos he has presided over a time of great transition as the agency has adapted to respond to the nation's Welfare Reform effort. Where many have been content to reduce the Welfare Reform effort. Where many have been content to reduce the welfare rolls, David has fought to ensure meaningful employment for those losing benefits. He has been concerned not with saving money but with saving lives. David's concern for those around him and his emphasis on helping people better their own lives have earned him the respect and appreciation of the community.

It has been my distinct pleasure to know and to work with David Bracker. He is a caring and able man whose many talents will be missed at Arriba Juntos. I know, however, that he will continue to serve our community in new and creative ways.

I join Arriba Juntos in thanking David for his time there as Executive Director, and wish him, his wife Kathy, and his daughter Megan all the best in their future pursuits.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 8, 2001

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3, because I believe the product is fiscally irresponsible and the process rushed to the point where we are voting on 10-year tax cuts before we even have a 1-year budget in place. Congress is now making budget and tax decisions that will directly affect our families and our nation for the next 10 years and beyond. It is crucial that we make informed, fiscally responsible decisions on the budget and taxes, because the choices we make today could lock in our national priorities for the future.

I will support fiscally responsible tax cuts this year including reducing the estate tax and the marriage penalty as well as expanding

child tax credits. I believe we must also fulfill the moral obligation we have to our children to reduce our \$5.7 trillion national debt and a responsibility to protect Social Security and Medicare for our seniors. The question is not whether Congress will pass a tax cut this year—we will. The question is how large is the tax cut and will it be fiscally responsible and fair to all families, including middle and low-income working families?

These are difficult questions that must be answered satisfactorily before tax cuts are approved. Perhaps if these questions were asked and answered back in the 1980s, our country could have avoided the huge budget deficits that contributed to the \$5.7 trillion national debt.

In 1981, President Reagan and Republicans and Democrats in Congress passed a huge tax cut into law. They predicted the then \$55 billion a year deficits would become a surplus in 1984, 3 years later. What actually happened is that instead of having a surplus in 1984, the federal deficit exploded to \$185 billion.

As a consequence of that tax cut, the national debt tripled in the 1980s—and now stands at \$5.7 trillion. Last year Americans paid \$223 billion in taxes, just to pay the interest on the national debt. On average, that would approximately be \$800 in taxes for every man, woman and child in America.

Marvin Leath, my predecessor, said that the 1981 tax vote was his “worst vote” in 12 years of Congress. In 1990, President George Bush chose to reverse his previous pledge to oppose new taxes. Why? By 1990, the federal deficit had skyrocketed to \$220 billion each year, with no end in sight.

President Bush, Republicans, and Democrats passed a tax increase in 1990 and it cost President Bush dearly, but not as much as the budget deficit would cost average Americans. By 1993, projections were that deficits would further explode to over \$300 billion each year. Another tax increase in 1993 plus tough budget rules resulted in deficit reductions that lowered interest rates.

Those lower interest rates made it cheaper to buy a house or car or build a business. That, plus the new high tech economy that increased productivity of American workers, resulted in the longest sustained economic growth period in American history.

And, after 29 straight years of deficits, in 1997, we had the first balanced budget since Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon in 1969. So, we spent the 1990s stopping the deficit binge of the 1980s, but where does that leave us now?

The Congressional Budget Office and other government economists predict we will have a \$5.6 trillion federal surplus over the next 10 years. (FY 02–FY 11). The promise of surplus has led President George W. Bush to propose a 10-year, \$2.4 trillion tax cut. But do we really have the money needed to provide this tax cut, pay down the debt and protect Social Security and Medicare? Before we take the step of spending a surplus we may not have, let me ask you two questions. One, is there anyone in this chamber that would bet his or her family’s entire net worth on the belief that a federal government economist’s 10-year projections on the American economy will be 100 percent correct? Two, just how real is the \$5.6 trillion surplus projected by 2011?

The projected surplus is \$2.2 billion once you subtract the \$3.4 trillion held in the Social

Security, Medicare, and other trust funds that Congress has pledged not to touch. The proposed tax plan costs \$2.4 trillion once you add the additional interest costs, tax break extensions, and the retroactive tax cuts. Over 10 years the country will be looking at a \$200 billion budget deficit and that’s before other priorities are paid for. The tax cut plan assumes an overly optimistic 3 percent annual economic growth rate over the next 10 years. If the growth rate is off by just 4/10 of 1 percent, then the surplus will be reduced by \$1 trillion over 10 years. From 1974 to 1995 the economy grew an average of only 1.5 percent annually—half the rate assumed in the tax cut plan.

What if we proceed and cut taxes at this level and the economists are wrong? First, we’ll see a return to budget deficits and interest rates will go up making it more expensive for families to make large purchases such as buying a home or starting a business. A larger national debt means more taxes to pay interest on the debt and less money to provide for priorities such as national defense and veterans, education, prescription drugs and protection Social Security and Medicare. Finally, the true cost of these tax cuts hits just as baby boomers are retiring and the Social Security and Medicare trust funds are running at a deficit.

We have more options than the House leadership would have us believe. The first option is the one we are looking at now: passing a \$2.4 trillion, 10-year tax cut and hoping the rosy economic forecasts are correct and that spending cuts can be made.

The second option is to pass a smaller tax cut now, make spending cuts and then see if the surplus is real. Once the surplus is guaranteed, then it will be time to pass more tax cuts.

I will be guided by several principles on the tax cut question. I will do what I believe is right, not just politically popular at the moment. I will listen to the citizens of Central Texas before making a final decision. I will try to look at the numbers honestly—without the hype and false promises.

I will support fiscally responsible tax cuts this year, but we also have a moral obligation to our children to reduce our \$5.7 trillion national debt and a responsibility to protect Social Security and Medicare for our seniors.

FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2001

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend to my colleagues the following articles by Joan Ryan of the San Francisco Chronicle and Patty Fisher of the San Jose Mercury News. I found these articles to be thoughtful examinations of the complex question of federal support for faith-based groups.

[From the San Francisco Chronicle]

WITH A HAND ON THE BIBLE

(By Joan Ryan)

Even as a Christian I felt uneasy when George W. Bush said during his campaign that Jesus was the most influential philosopher on his political beliefs.

The feeling returned during Bush’s inauguration when he again wandered, either carelessly or purposefully, into the dangerous ground between church and state.

Inaugurations traditionally mention God in the context of a higher power recognized by most of the world’s religions. But Bush’s hand-picked pastors mentioned Jesus in both the invocation and prayer. One pastor punctuated the point with the unequivocal proclamation, “Jesus the Christ (is) the name that’s above all other names.”

Now comes news that Bush wants to disburse billions in public funds to religious groups that provide social services. The groups would compete for the money, and Bush’s new “Office of Faith-Based and Community-Based Initiatives” would choose the recipients. All religions would be eligible, Bush said.

Everyone who believes that certain religious groups will be getting significantly more of this money than others, say, “Amen.”

Bush has already shown that he won’t fund groups that don’t adhere to his particular set of moral beliefs. In his first full workday as president, he announced he was yanking funds to overseas organizations that use their own money to provide abortions or abortion counseling. These organizations were not breaking the laws of their countries or of ours. Bush’s decision was based solely on his own particular brand of morality.

And Bush’s call for a review of the FDA’s approval of the abortion pill, RU-486, was not based on science or health but, again, his own brand of morality.

This is the problem with blurring the line between church and state, as Bush is doing. We begin to create a de facto national religion based on the values of those in power. These values might be perfectly respectable ones. They might even have the power to transform lives, as Bush’s religious program in a Texas prison has. (Compared to non-participating inmates, inmates in the two-year indoctrination in biblical teachings and Christian behavior have shown a drastically lower recidivism rate once released from prison.)

It’s difficult to argue that the world wouldn’t be a better place if everyone adhered to so-called Christian values.

But who should interpret how those values will be applied to public policy? Ralph Reed? Jesse Jackson? The pope? All adhere to the same Bible, but each man’s vision of government based on the book’s teachings would be vastly different—and would feel like a tyranny to those who disagreed.

The infusion of religion into government is at the very heart of the revolution that created America. The colonists rebelled not only against the Church of England but also against the Puritanism and Calvinism that forced the citizenry to conform to particular religious views of face the government’s wrath.

What Bush risks doing is establishing the legitimacy of one religion over all others, and this is just what our founding fathers didn’t want. Yet there hasn’t been much of an outcry. Perhaps people figure it’s better to have a president who thinks he’s the national deacon than one who thought he was the national Don Juan.

All would agree that the president should be guided by high morals. And one would hope that, if he is deeply religious, he could harness the power of his faith for the public good. But when Bush laid his hand on the Bible two Sundays ago, he didn’t promise to uphold the teachings of Jesus.

He promised to uphold the Constitution of the United States.