

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, A few years ago, I learned first-hand about the importance of preventative care for cardiovascular disease. My wife, Elsie, had a heart attack. It was a very difficult time period for her, and for our family. I am pleased to report that she is in good health today. And I can still celebrate this holiday with her. Unfortunately, not many women are as lucky as my wife. Heart disease is the number one killer of American women.

In fact, cardiovascular diseases kill more females each year than the next 9 causes of death combined. The seriousness of this disease doesn't stop there. Heart disease is our nation's number one killer and leading cause of long-term disability. We need to raise awareness to fight this disease. Preventive health care is the key to lowering the number of victims of heart disease.

Risk factors of heart disease are high cholesterol, high blood pressure, tobacco, lack of activity, and obesity. The majority of these risks can be prevented. And we can only accomplish this through education to raise awareness. February is American Heart month. I ask my colleagues to take advantage of this to spread awareness about heart disease and encourage healthy life styles.

COMMENDING NATIONAL HIGHWAY
TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
REGARDING NATIONAL
CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY
WEEK

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 12, 2002

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution to commend the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for sponsoring National Child Passenger Safety Week. I also want to commend the sponsor of the legislation, Mr. CAMP, the Ranking Democratic Member of the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, Mr. BORSKI, the Chairman of the Subcommittee, Mr. PETRI, and the Chairman of the full Committee, Mr. YOUNG, for their support of the legislation.

In 2000, motor vehicle crashes killed more than 2,300 children under the age of 15 and injured another 291,000. Six out of ten children killed in these crashes were completely unrestrained. In 2000, only nine percent of all children under the age of five rode unrestrained, but they accounted for more than one half of all child occupant fatalities. This is not acceptable.

To increase seat belt use nationwide, the previous Administration established goals to reduce the number of child occupant fatalities 15 percent by 2000 and 25 percent by 2005. Education programs, such as TEA 21's Child Passenger Protection Education Grant program, and other programs, played important roles in helping the Department meet the first of these goals. In each of fiscal years 2000,

2001, and 2002, Congress provided \$7.5 million to finance the Child Passenger Protection Education Grant program in the Transportation Appropriations Act and pursuant to TEA 21. Forty-eight states, the District of Columbia, and the Territories have received grants under this program. Since 1997, the number of child fatalities resulting from traffic crashes has declined 17 percent, exceeding the previous Administration's goal of a 15 percent decline by the end of 2000. Restraint use for infants has risen to 95 percent from 85 percent in 1996, and has climbed to 91 percent for children aged one to four, up from 60 percent in 1996.

The proper use of child restraint systems can save lives, Mr. Speaker. It is essential that we continue to remind parents that all children should use restraint systems properly and to continue providing funding for grant programs to ensure that we continue to make progress in preventing deaths and injuries to children on our Nation's highways. These efforts will help us achieve our goal of a 25-percent reduction in child occupant fatalities by 2005.

Again, I want to commend the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and its Administrator, Dr. Jeff Runge, for sponsoring National Child Passenger Safety Week. I strongly support the concurrent resolution and urge its approval.

IN RECOGNITION OF FEBRUARY AS
AMERICAN HEART MONTH

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize February as the American Heart Association Month to demonstrate the seriousness of cardiovascular diseases, including heart and stroke.

Founded by six doctors in 1924, the American Heart Association is a national voluntary health agency whose mission is to reduce disability and death from cardiovascular diseases and stroke. This organization serves as a key resource of information for heart patients, advocates, and survivors. Heart disease and stroke are two of the nation's top three leading causes of death, claiming the lives of more than 960,000 Americans each year.

The American Heart Association has titled this year's theme "Be Prepared for Cardiac Emergencies. Know the signs of cardiac arrest. Call 9-1-1 immediately. Give CPR." Promoting the importance of knowing signs and symptoms of a cardiac emergency can literally be the difference between life and death. Every minute that passes without defibrillation and CPR, the chance of survival for a cardiac arrest victim decreases by 7 to 10 percent. According to the Archives of Internal Medicine, most heart attack patients wait more than two hours before seeking emergency care, initially because they do not recognize the symptoms of a heart attack. In my home state of Texas, heart disease is the leading killer, as well as nationally among women, with more than 370,000 deaths a year.

In observance of this special month, we acknowledge the researchers, physicians, health care professionals, public education professionals, and volunteers for their commitment to prevention, awareness, research, and treat-

ment of this disease. Thanks to these workers and their unwavering resolve, the American Heart Association has established a chain of survival for victims of sudden cardiac arrest. The four links in the chain of survival involve, early access to phones and emergency exits, early CPR, early defibrillation and early advanced life support. These important tools are critical in saving a person's life when they cardiac arrest.

No one understands that better than Joel Ruby, of West University in my district, who suffered his first heart attack in his early forties. He has since undergone several angioplasty surgeries and continues to battle congestive heart failure. Although he continues his ongoing battle with heart disease, Joel has also become an active board member of the Houston Chapter of the American Heart Association. Joel's involvement is a testament to his commitment and the dedication of countless others to the American Heart Association and the lives of people inspired by it.

Again, I wish the American Heart Association continued success on their "American Heart Month" and to continue their mission to reduce disability and death from cardiovascular diseases and stroke.

REMEMBER CHINA'S WORKING
CLASS

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, President Bush will be traveling to the People's Republic of China on Saturday, February 16, 2002 to meet with the leaders of that country. He will be discussing issues ranging from the war on terrorism to improving trade relations between our two nations.

I view this trip as an important and positive part of the ongoing U.S.-China dialogue. However, I believe it is imperative that we do not ignore the suffering of the working class in China. I recently read an article in the Washington Post about the Shuangfeng Textile Factory located in Dafeng, China. According to the Washington Post, corruption has engulfed the firm, leaving thousands of workers with little pay and little hope. Top executives of the firm have forced workers to buy over priced company stock and to accept pay cuts of up to 50%, which amounts to \$25 to \$40 a month. Reportedly, resistance to those demands has resulted in some employees losing their jobs.

The workers attempted to acquire the attention of local and federal officials by signing petitions and staging strikes. They sat in the factory for days and nights, not even returning home to see their loved ones. During those nights, police stormed into the factory and used force to drag them outside. The police also made dozens of arrests to try and put an end to the employee uprising. In spite of all this, the government apparently took no action to investigate the case. Eventually, the workers were defeated and had to accept the terms of management and return to their jobs with broken spirits. I hope all of my colleagues take the time to read the portion of the Washington Post article that I have submitted for the RECORD.

Instances, such as the one at the Shuangfeng Textile Factory, are cause for great concern. People in China are crying out for justice and they must not be ignored. I urge President Bush to raise this issue with the leadership of China and work with them to help improve the situation. More over, the President should press China to improve its labor, environment, and human rights record in general. It is important for us to take advantage of our dialogue with China to help put an end to the suffering of so many people.

[From the Washington Post, Jan. 21, 2002]

**"HIGH TIDE" OF LABOR UNREST IN CHINA
STRIKING WORKERS RISK ARREST TO PROTEST
PAY CUTS, CORRUPTION
(By Philip P. Pan)**

DAFENG, CHINA.—On the fourth night of the strike, management cut off the heat. The 2,000 workers occupying the Shuangfeng Textile Factory responded by huddling together and wrapping themselves in thick blankets and surplus military coats. Even as the temperature neared freezing, they refused to leave.

Not long ago, banners on the factory walls reminded workers they were "masters" of the Communist state. Now, the same workers were camped on a cold floor between rows of rusty spinning machines, nursing their grievances over boiled water and biscuits.

Mostly middle-aged women, they spoke quietly of pay cuts and worthless stock shares, of corrupt officials and missing pension funds, of being cheated in China's rough-and-tumble transition from socialism to capitalism.

They spoke, too, of the risks they were taking by fighting back.

Three times, police had tried to expel them from the factory, dragging women out by the hair, jabbing others with electric batons. Three times, the workers had managed to hold on. Now, there were rumors a military police unit had been summoned to this small city 150 miles north of Shanghai.

"We know this is dangerous," said one young woman sitting in a corner of the vast factory floor near large spools of white cotton yarn. "But it's too late to be scared now."

Then, glancing out a window, she added nervously: "The police should be here soon."

The battle in Dafeng, which began Dec. 16 and ended less than two weeks later in defeat for the workers, is part of a larger story playing out across China's fast-changing industrial landscape. Two decades after the ruling Communist Party adopted capitalist economic reforms while continuing to restrict political freedom, growing numbers of Chinese workers are risking arrest to stage strikes, sit-downs and other demonstrations.

In many ways, these protests are acts of desperation by people struggling to survive without the help of effective labor unions, courts or other institutions that provide checks and balances in a market economy.

As thousands of state factories are closed or sold, workers who once were promised lifetime job security and benefits now face mass layoffs and, sometimes, the loss of their savings to corrupt managers. Their willingness to fight back presents a thorny political problem for a party that has always staked its legitimacy on providing a better life for the working class.

It is difficult to estimate how often these protests occur, in part because local officials often try to conceal them from their superiors.

But one recent government report acknowledges the country is in the midst of a "high tide" of labor unrest, with the number of workers participating in strikes more

than doubling in the first half of the 1990s alone. Another report in an internal party publication said there were 30,000 protests of significant size in 2000, or more than 80 incidents per day.

The authorities often respond to these protests by trying to appease the workers; at other times they react with force, sending in police and jailing the most outspoken demonstrators.

"We have no idea what's going to happen next," the young woman in the factory here said that night as the strike wore on. Like many interviewed for this report, she asked not to be identified out of fear she would be arrested. "The government doesn't want to back down, and neither do we."

A SECRET BANKRUPTCY

The Shuangfeng Textile Factory lies on the outskirts of Dafeng, a quick drive from the city's glittering downtown into a dreary neighborhood of run-down buildings and dirt alleyways. Off the main roadway, past a row of ramshackle shops, a large crowd of workers gathers in front of the factory's creaky metal gate.

There is no picket line, just a group of men and women in heavy coats milling about restlessly in the middle of the road, stamping their feet to keep warm under a pale yellow street lamp. Their faces are lined from years of squinting while operating spinning machines and, more recently, from lack of sleep. Some of the workers are smoking; others have been drinking. Every time a car drives by, the crowd gets jittery.

Past the gate is the factory itself, a deteriorating complex built in 1931, before the Communist revolution. It is the city's oldest and largest textile mill, one of several in this cotton-growing region that produces yarn and cloth for the nation's garment factories.

In the mid-1990s, Beijing began pushing local officials to either get rid of small, money-losing state firms like the mill or make them profitable. What followed was a disorderly process in which the government often sold stock in factories to the workers, but retained control as the majority shareholder. China's Communist rulers had not yet embraced full privatization.

"Some people invested willingly. Others didn't think it was a good idea. But in the end, we all handed over the money," said one worker in the spinning division. "If we didn't give them the money, we would lose our jobs."

Last November, the company suddenly and secretly filed for bankruptcy. The factory boss and several other managers emerged as the firm's new owners. The workers discovered what had happened only weeks later, when a local newspaper published a short item about the transaction.

They immediately suspected they had been victim of a "fake bankruptcy," a common phenomenon in China in which corrupt managers hide a factory's assets, declare bankruptcy and then purchase the firm themselves at a reduced price, often with money they have embezzled.

The man who gained the most in the bankruptcy was Shi Yongsheng, the mill's manager and now its largest shareholder, according to workers and local officials. Shi was appointed to run the mill only three years ago after a career managing several smaller state factories in Dafeng, including a tannery and a fur plant.

Residents describe him as a close friend of one of the city's deputy party secretaries. Workers said he bragged to other managers about his plan to slash salaries. Shi did not return telephone calls, and a government spokesman said Shi was too busy to speak to reporters.

But a company document obtained by workers showed that the factory owed them

\$14 million, including \$2 million for the shares they had purchased and \$3 million they had paid toward their pensions. In addition, the document said, the government had provided the factory with nearly \$8 million to help it cover its debts to workers and provide those laid off with welfare payments.

A government official in Dafeng confirmed the figures were accurate. Where all that money went, though, remains a mystery.

"What happened to our money? How did we go bankrupt?" asked one longtime employee, who asked that he be identified only by his surname, Zhang. "We had a lot of questions. No one gave us any answers."

STRIKE WITHOUT SLOGANS

Instead of an explanation, the workers got a pay cut. On Dec 13, managers began calling in employees and demanding they sign new contracts slashing their salaries by half, to between \$25 and \$40 a month.

The workers revolted. In a meeting, an employee tore up the contract in front of her supervisors, workers said. In another, a worker denounced factory managers, saying, "Officials live off the labor of the workers!"

With resistance rising, the company tried to make an example of two outspoken employees in the spinning division, young mothers named Chen Feng and Liu Landing. On the morning of Dec. 16, the factory hung a large poster on the front gate declaring that "the two comrades have separated from their posts and from the factory."

"I had worked in the mill for seven or eight years, and I have an 11-year-old child to support," said Chen, 29, by telephone several weeks later. "So, of course, I was depressed." Chen declined to discuss why she was fired, but she confirmed what happened next: "The workers went on strike, and they asked the company to let me go back to work."

A strike is a sensitive undertaking in China. The Communist Party has always portrayed itself as a workers' party, and it still teaches schoolchildren how Mao Zedong launched his career by organizing strikes among miners and railway workers. But the government has also absorbed the lesson of how strikes helped bring down Communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

**HONORING DAN TIDWELL AND
JAMIE MIZE**

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dan Tidwell and Jamie Mize. On February 16, 2002, Diverse Works Artspace, will host its Illumination Gala which will honor Dan and Jamie as two of Houston's most enlightened contemporary art champions. Diverse Works Artspace is a non-profit art center dedicated to presenting new visual, performing, and literary art. Known for its ground-breaking artistic education programs, Diverse Works is one of the most prominent contemporary art centers in the United States. Diverse Works serves as a venue for artistic exploration and audience development.

Dan Tidwell and Jamie Mize are longtime businessmen and philanthropists who pioneered the revitalization of Houston's Historic Downtown District. In 1978, Dan and Jamie opened their first restaurant, Treebeards, in Houston's historic Market Square as a tiny establishment hosting only 30 guests. Today,