

past president of the Pastors Conference of the Arkansas Board of Trustees of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina.

Dale is currently serving the community as the pastor of the 6,000-member First Baptist Church in Fort Smith. Since his tenure at the church began 10 years ago, the church has grown by 2,451 members. This number is sure to continue to grow as long as Pastor Thompson remains actively involved in his community.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for allowing me the opportunity to honor Dale Thompson. He is a committed servant and deserves our praise.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

H.R. 1343, THE LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage the Republican leadership to bring the Conyers bill, H.R. 1343, the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act, to the House floor. Congress must take action against crimes that are motivated by hate. That is why I organized these speeches today to promote H.R. 1343. I appreciate all of my colleagues who have taken their precious time to come down to the House floor to join in on this discussion.

Hate crime offenses are more serious than comparable crimes that do not involve prejudice, because they are intended to intimidate an entire group. These crimes have a particularly damaging effect on victims, their families, and the communities they are part of. Victims oftentimes feel powerless, isolated, depressed and suspicious. Fear is another pervasive victim response, fear for their personal safety and for the safety of their families.

Family members share some of the long-term effects of hate crime victims. They may feel guilty for not protecting their family member who has been victimized. Like those actually targeted by the hate crimes, families may feel isolated and helpless. Their effectiveness on the job or at home or in school is also affected. When the perpetrator is arrested and convicted, but not given a full consideration and a harsh penalty, families actually lose faith in the justice system. Light sentencing may also cause further disillusionment.

In addition to the psychological effects hate crimes have on families, Mr. Speaker, there are particular concerns

as well depending on the crime and there may be repair bills or medical bills or funeral expenses. Trials and court appearances can prolong the grieving process, as can parole hearings. If there is media coverage of a hate crime, a family may find itself dealing publicly with intensely personal issues.

Currently, the Justice Department's civil rights division lists nine killings across the country as possible hate crimes in revenge for the terrorist attacks on September 11. Many families of post-September 11 murder victims believe that police are reluctant to recognize and pursue hate crimes, which is a complaint that African American victims have made for years. These outcries from victims and their families signal that hate crimes need to be taken more seriously.

It is unbelievable that Congress has yet to pass significant legislation that will strengthen and expand hate crimes law. And it is unbelievable that when there is a bill already crafted that would elevate hate crimes law that Congress has the opportunity to debate, it has not been brought to the House floor.

Mr. Speaker, I support the Conyers Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Protection Act because it would offer real solutions by strengthening existing Federal hate crimes law. This legislation allows the United States Department of Justice to assist in local prosecutions, as well as investigate and prosecute cases in which violence occurs because of the victim's sexual orientation, disability, or gender. H.R. 1343 would also eliminate obstacles to Federal involvement in many cases of assault or murder based on race or religion.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is too important to ignore as families across our country continue to fall victim to hate crimes. We have over 200 bipartisan Members of the House of Representatives who have signed on to H.R. 1343, and we ask the leadership to bring this issue before the House to show American families that hate crimes are taken seriously.

This Congress has a responsibility to fight against hate and this bill will provide that commitment. I look forward to hearing the rest of my colleagues on this issue.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. GANSKE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GANSKE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. JONES of Ohio addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

BRINGING TO HOUSE FLOOR H.R. 1343, THE LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I will not take my 5 minutes, but I will yield the balance of the time to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY).

Mr. Speaker, the Conyers-Woolsey hate crimes bill is approaching that critical mass where we will soon have the 218 votes. This Special Order is generated to pick up the last dozen or so cosponsors that we would like to have to have the bill brought forward as quickly as possible.

The Members will recall that there has been hate crimes legislation since 1968, and what we do is take away some of the restrictions which would prevent us from bringing in Federal jurisdiction to aid local law enforcement. This bill does not supplant the law enforcement at the local level. We assist them and work in a cooperative spirit with them.

Particularly, we take away the existing Federal jurisdictional requirements that a Federal act is impeded upon as a result of the incident. For example, voting, interstate commerce, or some other Federal nexus is required to trigger the bill under its current legal status. What we do is to say for crimes of gender, sex, sexual orientation, we remove a Federal requirement because a hate crime is a hate crime whether there is a Federal nexus or not.

Many States have hate crimes legislation, except for the fact that 21 of them are admittedly very weak. Five States have none at all. What we are doing is in the wake of September 11, what we are doing is saying that there has been a dramatic increase of hate crimes activity. The lawyers on the Committee on the Judiciary have discovered with the Council for Islamic Relations that there are nearly 1,500 reported cases, frequently of people who were mistaken to be of Arab descent and were not, but they were clearly crimes that would fall into this category that we find so offensive.

So what we are saying is now is the time as we move forward in a democratic way under a semi-war circumstance that we make these final improvements to the bill, and we are hoping that it can be done as expeditiously as possible.

My thanks to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY), for her indefatigable efforts in this; and I am very proud that she is working with us.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY).

□ 1230

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for his leadership on this issue. We certainly appreciate his leadership and sponsorship of the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1343, the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act. Consideration of this bill is long overdue, and its passage is absolutely critical. I urge the House Republican leadership to allow the bill to come to the floor for a vote.

H.R. 1343 gives law enforcement officers at all levels of government the tools they need to deal with these terrible acts of hate-based violence. This legislation also sends a message to the world that crimes committed against people because of who they are or what they believe are particularly evil and particularly offensive and will not be tolerated in this country.

These types of crimes are committed not just against individuals, not just against a single person, but against society and against all Americans. These crimes are not only meant to hurt the unfortunate individual who falls victim to such acts, but they are also meant to intimidate, harass, and menace others who were not directly attacked.

A few years ago a man filled with hate shot up a Jewish community center in Los Angeles, wounding children and teachers in a place that was supposed to be a protective sanctuary for children. Following his capture the man said he had shot at those children because he wanted to send a message. He said he wanted to send a wake-up call to America to kill Jews.

By passing this bill we will be rejecting such messages and committing the full measure of our justice system to ending such hateful violence.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The gentleman's time has expired.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, may the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) exercise the time now that he had under his own name in his own right?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It would be the Chair's normal course to go to the Republican side of the aisle; but if there is no objection, the gentleman is on the list for 5 minutes.

Is there an objection to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) to have his 5 minutes right now?

There was no objection.

HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, this bill also honors the memory of James Byrd, who was horribly dragged to his death behind a pickup truck simply because his killers did not like the color of his skin. It honors Matthew Shepherd, who was beaten and tied to a fence post and left to die in near freezing weather because he was gay. It honors not only the victims of high-profile crimes, it honors the thousands of people whose lives have been scarred by similar acts of hate and violence.

Hate crimes legislation is not a partisan issue. It is not about political posturing. It is not about us versus them. This is an issue that transcends politics.

I urge the House leadership to allow a vote on this important measure, and I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 1343.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield the balance of my time to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON).

Ms. WATSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of H.R. 1343, the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act. I am so pleased to see that this issue is coming up to the forefront here nationally.

In California we worked long and hard and had a task force that looked at hate crimes up and down the State. We compiled valuable information that assists law enforcement in identifying hate crimes and enforcing the law.

The events of September 11 have continued to demonstrate the destructive power of hate to tear apart the unity of an entire Nation. In the wake of the terrorist attacks, the Arab American Anti-Discrimination Committee has investigated, documented and referred to Federal authorities over 500 instances. Moreover, the Council on American-Islamic Relations has compiled over 1,400 complaints of hate attacks directed against American Muslims. This is a 51 percent increase in reported crimes.

These instances include the murders of a Muslim Pakistani store owner in Dallas, Texas, and an Indian American gas station owner in Mesa, Arizona, where a suspect was arrested shouting, "I stand for America all the way."

The Department of Justice, however, has opened only approximately 250 investigations of hate crimes directed against institutions or people who appeared to be Arab or Middle Easterners. September 11 and the Arab American situation only represents the tip of a proverbial iceberg.

Hate crimes against any group regardless of race, color or creed should not be tolerated in our great American democratic society. As the James Byrd and the Matthew Shepherd tragedies

demonstrate, not only can the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes strain the resources of State and local law enforcement agencies, but social unrest is even more of a drain on the fabric of our society.

Current law limits Federal jurisdiction over hate crimes to federally protected activities such as voting and does not permit Federal involvement in a range of cases involving crimes motivated by bias against the victim's sexual orientation, gender or disabilities. This loophole is particularly significant given the fact that five States have no hate crime laws on the books, and another 21 States have extremely weak hate crimes laws.

H.R. 1343 will remove these hurdles so the Federal Government will no longer be handicapped in its efforts to assist in the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes.

KLAMATH BASIN TRAGEDY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, each of us remembers last summer's dramatic national headlines about the several Federal biologists who turned off 100 percent of the water to hundreds of family farmers in the Klamath Basin of northern California and southern Oregon and shut down an entire community.

This week the National Academy of Sciences, perhaps the most highly respected scientific body in this country, has concluded, quote, "There was no scientific or technical information to justify that decision." Let me repeat that statement, Mr. Speaker. There was no scientific or technical information to justify the decision that stripped 1,500 family farmers of their livelihoods, drove a community of 70,000 to the brink of economic collapse, and caused irreparable social harm and changed the lives of thousands of people forever.

All of this was done, Mr. Speaker, because the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service biologists merely theorized that withholding water deliveries would benefit the fish. There were no certain facts to back up those theories. There was no hard evidence, no historical proof, only guesswork. In fact, the historical proof told them the opposite, but they consciously chose to ignore it. And the steps they said had to be taken, the Academy's report tells us, are probably harmful.

How could the Academy have reached such a vastly different conclusion? Because, Mr. Speaker, the Klamath Basin tragedy is nothing short of scientific sabotage. The radical environmentalists have hijacked the Endangered Species Act, a well-meaning species protection measure, and are using it as a political tool, a bludgeon against rural Americans to advance a radical political agenda.