

RECOGNIZING CHRISTOPHER
DODSON FOR ACHIEVING THE
RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Christopher Dodson, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 376, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Chris has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the years Chris has been involved with scouting, he has held numerous leadership positions, serving as Chaplain's Aide, Librarian, Patrol Leader, and Senior Patrol Leader. Chris is also a Brotherhood Member in the Order of the Arrow and a Tom-tom Beater in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. Chris served on staff at H. Roe Bartle Scout Reservation during the summer of 2003, and has earned a total of 33 merit badges.

For his Eagle Scout project, Chris lead a group of Boy Scouts on a work project at the New Hope Retreat Center in Holt, Missouri. For the project, they built two fences around dumpsters, cleared land around the entrance to the camp, leveled out the area, and replanted flowers and shrubs.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Christopher Dodson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

UNWELCOME TRUTHS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned about the current human rights situation in North Korea and that nation's pursuit of a nuclear weapons program. The leadership of the North Korean government has proven to be volatile and unpredictable with a tight rein on a very closed, repressed society.

Thousands of American soldiers are stationed in South Korea to ease the tensions between North and South Korea.

The North Korean government is one of the worst abusers of human rights in the world, and 1.5 million North Koreans have already died of starvation. The international community must pressure North Korea to reach an agreement to end its quest for nuclear weapons. A country that suppresses its people and poses a threat to its neighbors cannot be allowed to possess nuclear weapons.

I submit for the RECORD a recent Wall Street Journal article detailing a proposal from Hwang Jang Yop, North Korea's highest-ranking defector. Hwang's proposal for peace and security focuses on regime change and a larger international focus on the human rights situation.

[From the Wall Street Journal, Oct. 28, 2003]

UNWELCOME TRUTHS

(By Melanie Kirkpatrick)

SEOUL—North Korea's highest-ranking defector arrived safely in Washington yesterday

despite North Korea's threat to "shoot his plane out of the sky" if he dared to visit the U.S.

This is the first trip to the U.S. for Hwang Jang Yop, the former head of North Korea's Workers Party and president of Kim Il Sung University who defected to the South in 1997. He brings with him a two-prong proposal for what he calls the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula: regime change and greater international focus on the human-rights abuses of the North. In an interview here on the eve of his departure, Mr. Hwang said: "I want to emphasize the importance of eliminating the Kim Jong Il regime." How to do that? "The U.S. should put the issue of human rights at the top of its agenda in its dialogue" with North Korea.

Mr. Hwang is an unlikely champion of human rights in North Korea. Now 80 years old, he spent his career in the service of the brutal regime he now denounces. He was the North's ideologue-in-chief—founder and leading proponent of the "juche" ideology of self-reliance that Kim Il Sung, father of current leader Kim Jong Il, used to justify his totalitarian rule. The old Stalinist now says both Kims distorted his philosophy, which is really about "democracy."

One would think that the one place in the world where the campaign to free the North Korean people would be taken most seriously would be South Korea, where Mr. Hwang lived under virtual house arrest until recently. Think again.

Most Koreans are well informed about the brutal realities of life in the North but prefer to look the other way. It's much pleasanter to contemplate reunification fantasies such as the one portrayed in a recent hit movie about a cross-border romance between a South Korean woman and a North Korean soldier. Last week's chilling report on the North Korean gulags made it into some South Korean papers but wasn't front-page news. Students demonstrated against Mr. Hwang's U.S. visit last week, protesting his anti-North Korea message.

If the South Korean people seem indifferent to the plight of their brothers and sisters in the North, it's in large part because their political leaders remain silent. President Roh Moo Hyun was a human-rights lawyer before taking office earlier this year but human rights north of the DMZ is way down on his priority list. To his credit, Mr. Roh is allowing Mr. Hwang to visit the U.S.—something his predecessor, Kim Dae Jung (another human-rights activist who lost his voice when it came to the human-rights horrors in the North) refused to permit for fear of angering Kim Jong Il.

The official refusal to speak out about the human-rights abuses of Kim Jong Il's regime was on full display last week during an interview with the South's minister of unification, whom I met on the day the gulag report was released. For North Koreans, Minister Jeong Se Hyun said, "political freedom is a luxury, like pearls for a pig. The improvement of economic conditions for the North Korean people is the most important issue right now."

"Once the economic situation is improved," he said, then North Korea can focus on human rights. As for linking any deal with the North to progress on human rights: "I don't think it would be wise or effective if we try to negotiate the human rights condition or to pursue our policies with human rights as a condition," Mr. Jeong said. In other words: Whatever you do, don't annoy Kim Jong Il.

South Korea's constitution requires it to welcome any North Korean who wants to come to the South. Yet in the 50 years since the end of the Korean War, the South has accepted fewer than 3,000 refugees. Most have

come in the past two years, thanks in large part to the efforts of several private groups dedicated to helping North Koreans find refuge in the South.

The rescuers, many of whom are Christian, differ among themselves over how best to help. One faction prefers to work out of the public eye. Another faction pursues high-profile tactics such as helping asylum-seekers flood embassies in China. Its aim is to draw international attention to the plight of the quarter-million or more North Korean refugees hiding in China.

There's another aspect too—money. "I don't mean to sound mercenary," says Tim Peters, an American missionary here. "But in some respects running into a consulate in China is cost effective." Smuggling a refugee out through Mongolia or Vietnam costs \$1,000 to \$3,000 per person, he says. Mr. Peters adds that money also talks in North Korea's gulags. "It's easier to spring someone from a North Korean prison than from a Chinese prison," he says.

The high-profile tactics are taking their toll on rescuers' ability to help the North Korean refugees in China. Police security around embassies and consulates is tighter than ever. In the past five or six months, the highly effective Chinese intelligence service appears to have replaced provincial police in tracking down refugees. This is one reason, rescuers believe, for the failure of a plan earlier this year to smuggle out two boatloads of refugees from a northern Chinese port.

It is also becoming more treacherous along China's border with North Korea, where two million ethnic Koreans have long helped feed, house and hide those fleeing North Korea. Last month China sent 150,000 soldiers to replace the border guards, a measure viewed in the rescuer community as a crack-down on border crossings.

The four or five South Koreans in jail in China for helping refugees have received little help from their government. In contrast, Japan aggressively sought—and got—the release of two of its citizens arrested in China for helping refugees. It's a powerful deterrent for South Koreans who want to help to realize that their government won't come to their aid if they are arrested.

In Seoul, a few opposition politicians are finally beginning to turn their attention to human rights in the North. Park Jin, spokesman of the Grand National Party, which holds a majority in the National Assembly, faults the Roh government for "avoiding the issue." His party urges the government to do two things: press China to let the United Nations have access to the refugees and prepare South Korea for a possible flood of refugees. "We have an obligation to help," he says.

Another eloquent voice is Kim Suk Woo, former vice minister of unification and now in the powerful post of chief of staff to the speaker of the National Assembly. "As Koreans, we have a duty to support the refugees. As human beings we have a duty to support them," says Mr. Kim. "This kind of exodus could be a catalyst for the collapse of Kim Jong Il's regime."

The Roh administration "is careful not to provoke North Korea," he says. He is particularly scornful of Seoul's refusal last April to support a U.N. resolution condemning the North's human-rights abuses. And he criticizes the decision by the government of Kim Dae Jung—continued by the Roh government—to halt the South's air drops of radios into the North. All radios in North Korea must be registered with the authorities and permanently tuned to government stations. A South Korean radio is a listening post on freedom.

There's a debate in Seoul over Mr. Hwang's motives in calling attention to the North's

human-rights abuses. Some believe him to be sincere; others say he is looking for publicity. But still others suggest the defector could be driven by guilt over what happened after he left Pyongyang. Information doesn't readily make its way out of North Korea. But when it's useful to his purposes, Kim Jong Il makes sure certain news is delivered.

And so the word has filtered back to Mr. Hwang in Seoul about the fate of the family he had left behind. His wife committed suicide. So too, the reports say, did one of his daughters. She is said to have jumped off a bridge to her death while being taken to a prison camp. Two other daughters and a son are lost in the gulag.

This is the reality of life in North Korea—and the truth that Mr. Hwang will be telling in Washington this week.

BURMA

HON. MARK E. SOUDER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the continuing and deeply troubling situation in Burma. Last week over 900 Buddhist monks marched through the streets of Mandalay. The military thugs ruling Burma responded by shooting, beating, and smoke bombing the demonstrators.

Unfortunately, news of this latest affront to peace and democracy has not reached a wide audience. With limited exception, the plight of the people of Burma and its duly elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi are never reported in the press.

There is no doubt as to the ruthlessness and brutality of the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). The evil dictators continue to rape, enslave, imprison, and murder innocent civilians from every ethnic group. Despite talk about democracy and road maps toward peace and civilian rule, we have seen no tangible and positive steps in that direction. Their actions betray their real motives and goals.

For the past few years, the United Nations has undertaken a process of trying to convince Burma's military regime to engage in a dialogue with the legitimate leaders of Burma. We must recognize that the United Nations process, as it has played out, has failed. The efforts at gently persuading the Burmese regime to move in a positive direction while simultaneously warding off international pressure have been fruitless.

The United Nations must re-evaluate its policies and Burmese strategy. U.N. pronouncements on Burma have not told the world of the full situation in Burma. They have not condemned the military for its actions. We need to find a new U.N. envoy to Burma and give this person the authority to rally international pressure against Burma's military regime.

Although the United States and a number of other nations have increased the pressure on the SPDC, we must encourage other nations, particularly Burma's neighbors, to end their support of the current regime.

India must be made aware that \$57 million lines of credit to the regime and doubling Indo-Burmese trade do not help promote democracy and human rights in Burma.

Thailand must be told that increasing cross border contacts with the Burmese government

will not bring democracy to Burma, stem the flow of refugees across the border, nor end the trade in illegal narcotics currently being supported by the Burmese military.

Freedom will come to Burma. The United States must assist the Burmese forces for freedom and democracy. We must do so sooner, not later.

FINANCIAL PLANNING WEEK RESOLUTION

HON. TODD RUSSELL PLATTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, I introduced House Concurrent Resolution 176 to reaffirm the value of sound financial planning in achieving life's goals and to recognize the dedication of American families and financial planning professionals for their adherence to the financial planning process.

Across our Nation, financial planning helps American families manage higher education costs, purchase homes for the first time, and achieve short and long-term financial objectives. Sound financial planning empowers American workers and their families to successfully overcome unexpected financial challenges, preserve personal wealth, and to improve their overall quality of life. As my colleagues and I debate national economic policy in the United States Congress, it is equally important to emphasize the benefits of sound financial planning to the American family.

I would like to commend the Financial Planning Association and its members in South Central Pennsylvania and across our Nation for their work in increasing public awareness about the importance of sound financial planning.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to join me in supporting the financial planning profession and all American families striving to realize the American dream by passing this important resolution and promoting the week of October 6, 2003 as Financial Planning Week.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, on November 4, I was not able to vote on rollcall votes Nos. 602 and 603. I was unavoidably detained in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall 602 and "aye" on rollcall 603.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ETHEL RICE

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before this body of Congress and this nation today to pay tribute to an outstanding citizen from my district. Ethel Rice of Gunnison, Colorado has

provided years of selfless and committed service to Western State College. For her dedication and tremendous generosity, I am honored to pay tribute to Ethel's accomplishments here today.

Ethel served as Western State's librarian for thirty-six years, and helped to ensure that the library ran smoothly. She aided the students, faculty, and guests of Western State in getting the information they needed. In addition to being a librarian, Ethel is a self-made millionaire and philanthropist who has invested her money for years to accumulate a sizable savings. Several years ago, an anonymous donor gave \$1 million to the college. Ethel only recently, and reluctantly, announced that she was the one responsible for this extremely charitable donation. Ethel's tremendous generosity has created two scholarships and helped many Western State students with their education. Her altruistic spirit has even inspired others to make similar donations to the college.

Mr. Speaker, Ethel Rice's generosity and commitment to her community are an inspiration to us all. She has given more than money; she has given hope for generations to come. While Ethel has retired from her position at Western State College, she remains active in the community, and her influence is sure to be felt for many years to come. I am honored to join with my colleagues in recognizing the generosity of Ethel Rice here today.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL PARKS AMERICA TOUR VOLUNTEER DAY

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the volunteers and organizers of the National Park America Tour. This outstanding event is bringing together community leaders and volunteers to clean and improve our Nation's parks and natural treasures. In my own community, the National Parks America Tour will work to improve Lake Mead on November 8, 2003. Lake Mead is one of the foremost recreational sites in our country, as well as the primary source of water and power for Southern Nevada and much of the Southwestern United States. I am proud to represent Lake Mead and bring attention to its unique value and needs. I salute all of the participants in the National Parks America Tour and its sponsors, Wal-Mart and Unilever. Working together, we can preserve and enhance Lake Mead for the community, tourists, and for future generations.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mr. ENGLISH. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be present for rollcall votes 602 and 603 on November 4, 2003. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner:

"Yea" on H. Con. Res. 176—Supporting Financial Planning Week.