

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.

"Yea" on H. Con. Res. 94—Direct Support Professional Recognition.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

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 a fine organization, the Regional Transportation District (RTD) which provides public transportation in the Denver metropolitan area. RTD provides a reliable and efficient service to the citizens of Colorado, and was recently recognized with the American Public Transportation Association's Outstanding Public Transportation System Award. For its years of excellence and reliability, and its ongoing efforts to improve its service, I am honored to pay tribute to RTD and its employees here today.

Over the years, RTD has worked hard to serve the citizens of Denver, and continues to expand throughout the metropolitan area, serving more and more people each day. Even more impressive than its growth is RTD's commitment to safety and dependability. The administration has pursued an aggressive campaign to improve the safety of the public transportation system with stellar success: the accident rate has been cut in half and is at an all-time low. RTD is also dedicated to making public transportation available to all citizens, installing wheelchair lifts on their whole fleet and providing curb-to-curb service to people unable to use lift-equipped buses.

Mr. Speaker, the Regional Transportation District is committed to providing the people of Denver with safe and reliable public transportation. The employees of RTD continue to work hard to improve the system and to meet the needs of the Denver community. I am honored to join my colleagues here today in recognizing these worthy accomplishments.

BURMA

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to express my frustration with the ongoing situation in Burma. For the past three years, the United Nations, with the full support of the United States, has attempted to spur talks between 1991 Nobel Peace Prize recipient Aung San Suu Kyi's political party the National League for Democracy, Burma's ruling military regime, and the country's ethnic groups.

Let me be blunt—that effort and the effort of the U.N. envoy designated to carry it out has failed. It has failed mainly because the regime refuses to participate in the talks. While the regime promises, as it has for the past fifteen years, to make a transition to democracy, there is absolutely zero evidence to suggest that this is true.

To make matters worse, the regime has been attacking and killing the very people they are supposed to be talking to. In May of this

year, the regime attacked and killed scores of Aung San Suu Kyi's supporters. Just last month, the regime attacked and killed members of the Karen ethnic group. And, just a few days ago, the regime opened fire on a demonstration of Buddhist monks, killing one and injuring many more.

We need to breathe new life into this United Nations process, and that will require a serious diplomatic effort. To start with, we need a new United Nations special envoy for Burma—the present envoy's efforts have failed and he as of late has done nothing more than provide political cover for the regime. Second, we need the United Nations Security Council to pass a resolution condemning Burma. Third, the State Department must unequivocally reject "roadmaps" that have been promised by the Burmese regime and their Thai counterparts.

I believe that democracy is possible in Burma, and we agree with Secretary Powell when he said that we need to rally international support to stand up to Burma's "thugs". We need to move quickly to ensure that these words are acted upon.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. FRANK W. BALLANCE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mr. BALLANCE. Mr. Speaker, due to a district commitment, I was not present for rollcall votes Nos. 597 through 601. Had I been present, I would have voted "no"; on rollcall vote no. 598, I would have voted "yes"; on rollcall vote no. 599, I would have voted "yes"; on rollcall vote no. 600, I would have voted "yes"; on rollcall vote no. 601, I would have voted "yes."

PAYING TRIBUTE TO SHINICHI
KOBAYASHI

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 to pay tribute to an extraordinary man. Earlier this year Shinichi Kobayashi traveled from his native Japan to Montrose, Colorado. He did this for one reason: to promote friendship and understanding between the children of our two nations.

A veteran educator, Shinichi has taught junior high school in Tokyo for fifteen years. He comes to the United States as part of the International Internship Program, which attempts to organize cultural exchanges in order to promote international understanding. Currently, Mr. Kobayashi is sharing the Japanese culture with students from Cottonwood Elementary School. In addition to teaching, Mr. Kobayashi has become involved in after-school activities in his local community as well. In exchange, the children have taught Shinichi about American culture and the English language, lessons Shinichi will take back with him to Tokyo.

Mr. Speaker, Shinichi Kobayashi has dedicated his time and effort to promoting mutual

understanding and goodwill between Japan and the United States. As the result of this dedication, many of Colorado's young people have had the opportunity to experience Japanese culture firsthand. For his efforts to advance understanding and promote international cooperation, I am honored to join with my colleagues in recognizing Shinichi Kobayashi here today.

HONORING THE EFFORTS OF MR.
JOSEPH SHEPP

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Joseph Shepp, who has been awarded the AARP Andrus Award for Community Service in the State of Nevada for 2003. The Andrus Award honors the outstanding volunteering efforts of AARP volunteers and members in every state.

Mr. Shepp provides yet another example of service and volunteerism to the Southern Nevada community. He has demonstrated his service to the community through his service and commitment to organizations like Seniors and Law Enforcement Together and the Senior Assisted Living Project. We in Southern Nevada are fortunate to find yet another role model in Mr. Shepp. I wish him all the best in his future endeavors and congratulate him on this well-deserved award.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, during an absence yesterday, I regrettably missed rollcall votes 602 and 603. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: Rollcall No. 602: "yea" and rollcall No. 603: "yea."

TRIBUTE TO FRANKLIN AUBREY
"FRANK" SPOONER, JR.

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, September 27, the Second Congressional District of Georgia and the entire U.S. House suffered an irreparable loss with the passing of Franklin Aubrey "Frank" Spooner, Jr., who served as a case worker in our Albany, Georgia office for the past six years.

Many people have served in this institution longer but no one could have possibly served with greater courage, commitment, or concern and compassion for the people we strive to help. Although he suffered from a life-threatening health condition when he joined our staff, and was eventually given a terminal diagnosis, Frank worked as often and as hard as he could to the end. Even when death was