

HONORING MIKE COUCH FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SANTA BARBARA SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE ENTIRE SANTA BARBARA COMMUNITY

### HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 17, 2004

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to a very special person in the Santa Barbara community, Mike Couch, as he retires from the Santa Barbara School District after thirty-seven years. Mike Couch is more than a teacher, an advisor, a Principal or an Assistant Superintendent. He is a pillar of the Santa Barbara education community, a colleague and a friend.

Mike Couch began with the Santa Barbara School District as a social studies teacher at Santa Barbara High School, moving to Assistant Principal in 1989. In fact, while he was at Santa Barbara High, he was my daughter Laura's student government advisor. In talking to her about his retirement, she mentioned how she remembers fondly how "he monitored our elections, taught us parliamentary procedure and allowed us to be involved in the policies which governed the student life and Santa Barbara High School. Most importantly, he took us seriously; he fostered a commitment within me to be an active participant in the way our school was run which resulted in a longstanding engagement in political life beyond high school." Due in part to this mentoring, Laura has served in the White House, worked for a University and now is working on a Presidential campaign.

Mike Couch later moved on to be Principal of Dos Pueblos High School and then to serve as Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education for the Santa Barbara High School District. He taught for 22 years, first as an economics teacher when 30 students signed up for the newly offered class and there was nobody to teach it. His willingness to step into this assignment as a new teacher is indicative of the type of person that Mike Couch is. He is willing and able to step in and serve the school community and indeed the Santa Barbara community as a whole, in any role that is asked of him.

I am honored to have worked with Mike Couch over the years, and am so pleased by the positive affect that he has had not only on my daughter Laura, but also on so many students whose lives he has touched. I commend Mike Couch for his years and service and wish him well in his much-deserved retirement.

DARFUR: THE CRISIS CONTINUES

### HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 17, 2004

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit for the RECORD three recent articles regarding the ongoing crisis in Darfur, Sudan. I will continue to submit these accounts until the world takes notice. I will not let the world say "we did not know."

[From the BBC News]

#### SUDANESE CHILDREN DYING OF HUNGER

*Hundreds of children have started to starve to death in Sudan's war-torn western province of Darfur*

The BBC's Hilary Andersson saw the burial of two-year-old Ikram and says 400 other children in the same camp in Kalma were unable to keep food down.

Their families have fled attacks by pro-government Arab militias, accused of forcing black Africans off the land.

Last week, a senior aid worker said 300,000 people would starve in Darfur, even if help is sent immediately.

Some 10,000 have died in Darfur, since a rebellion broke out last year and one million have fled their homes.

The rains have already begun to fall, which will soon make Darfur, an area the size of France, virtually impassable, our correspondent says.

*'Too little'*

Speaking after his return from the area, UK Secretary for International Development Hilary Benn said Darfur was undoubtedly the largest humanitarian crisis in the world and more aid agencies were needed there.

"We are in a race against time in Darfur," he told MPs.

He admitted that the international response to the crisis had been too little, too late but said the UK was committed to doing all that it could.

"I have also been concerned about the adequacy and speed of the UN's response, although this should now change."

Our reporter in Darfur says that while Ikram died, another boy on the same mat, Joseph, could not be coaxed to eat.

His mother could do nothing but watch.

The mother of nine-month-old Adam says that she walked without food for 10 days to reach the camp. "The militias burnt our village . . . They were burning the children," she said.

Our correspondent says village after village in Darfur has been burnt, while food is running out in all the camps, where people have sought refuge.

#### Air-strikes

"If we get relief in, we could lose a third of a million. If we do not, it could be a million," Andrew Natsios, head of the U.S. Agency for International Development told a UN donor conference last week.

The figures were based on mortality and malnutrition rates, he said.

The government and two rebel groups have signed a ceasefire but the rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) has accused the army and its militia allies of attacking them near the border with Chad earlier this week.

Jem official Abu Bakr Hamid al-Nur told Reuters news agency that the government had used an Antonov aircraft and helicopters to bomb the rebel positions.

[From the BBC NEWS]

#### SUDANESE TELL OF MASS RAPE

(By Alexis Masciarelli and Ilona Eveleens Darfur)

*The pro-government Janjaweed Arab militia has been accused of using systematic rape, as well as killing and destroying the villages of black Africans, in the conflict in Sudan's western Darfur region.*

Behind the closed door of a classroom, in the school compound where she has been living for the last two months, 35 year-old rape-victim Khadija, spoke of her ordeal.

"The Janjaweed arrived one evening in February in our village near Kaileck, they had guns," she says in a quiet voice.

"They followed us when we tried to escape. The group of people I was with was forced

back to Kaileck. They had surrounded the whole town."

"They separated men and women. Then the Janjaweed selected the prettiest women."

"Four men raped me for 10 days."

"Every day, women were picked up, taken to the bush where they were raped and brought back to Kaileck. The next day it would start again."

#### Hostage population

Khadija is one of some 40,000 people to have found shelter in the town of Kass, in the south of Darfur.

In the past 16 months, the conflict opposing the Sudan government and its militia allies to the rebels of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), has killed at least 10,000 people and displaced more than one million across the large western Sudanese region.

"Rape appears to be a feature of most attacks in Fur, Masalit, and Zaghawa areas of Darfur," says the latest Human Rights Watch report on the Darfur conflict.

"The extent of the rape is difficult to determine since women are reluctant to talk about it and men, although willing to report it, speak only in generalities."

Many witnesses say the population of Kaileck was held hostage by the Janjaweed for two months, despite repeated appeals to the commissioner of Kass.

Men were also picked up daily and killed.

The accounts are difficult to verify, but accord with the findings of human rights workers in recent months.

Kaileck is now an empty desolated town, with every single house and hut burnt or destroyed.

#### Ethnic choice

"It is very difficult for me as I am a Fur woman and these are Arab men", says Khadija, covering herself with an orange scarf.

"These are my only clothes. My sister gave them to me, because the Janjaweed abandoned me naked."

"Now I am three-months pregnant. It will be a child from the Janjaweed. But I won't reject this baby. He will be my baby."

"When he grows up, he will decide whether he wants to be a Fur or an Arab. If he chooses to be an Arab, he could go with them. If he decides to be a Fur, he will be welcome to stay with us."

In the same classroom, a much younger woman listens.

Fifteen-year-old Aziza says she was also raped by the Janjaweed back in February.

"When Kaileck was attacked, I fled towards the mountains, but five horsemen caught me and took me far away in a field," she says.

"All five of them raped me twice. They kept me for 10 days. They whipped me."

"I could not say anything because they were armed. All I could do was to cry."

"They tied up my arms and my legs and would only release me when they raped me. They called me Abeid (slave in Arabic)."

"Eventually they abandoned me. Someone told my mother where I was and she came to take me back. I could not walk by myself."

#### Pain

But the ordeal did not stop then.

"When I arrived in Kaileck, I learnt that the Janjaweed had killed my father."

"I am still in pain and I can't really control myself. But I have not seen any doctor."

In Kass, like many other towns and camps in Darfur, women are still at the risk of being raped when they go out to gather firewood or fetch water.

Their best protection, they say, does not come from the army or local police force, but by going in large groups which are more able to defend themselves.

[From the Washington Post, Jun. 13, 2004]

U.N.: SUDAN FORCES, MILITIAS EXECUTE  
CIVILIANS  
(Nima Elbagir)

KHARTOUM, JUNE 13—A senior U.N. official said on Sunday she had "credible information" that Sudanese forces and government-backed militias had carried out summary executions of civilians in west Sudan.

Asma Jahangir, the U.N. special rapporteur on executions, also said after visiting conflict-stricken Darfur that members of the militia, which locals accuse of looting and killing villagers, were being integrated into the armed forces.

Independent rights groups have already accused the government and militia, known as janjaweed, of carrying out mass executions in the region where rebels launched an armed uprising in February 2003.

Fighting in the remote area has affected two million people and driven 158,000 people across the border into Chad, creating what the United Nations has said is one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

"I received numerous accounts of the extrajudicial and summary executions carried out by government-backed militias and by the security forces themselves," Jahangir told reporters.

"According to credible information, members of the armed forces, the Popular Defense Forces and various groups of government-sponsored militias attacked villagers and summarily executed civilians," she said in Khartoum.

Rights groups have accused the government of arming the Arab janjaweed to drive out African villagers from their homes, in what U.N. officials have said is a campaign of ethnic cleansing. The government calls the janjaweed outlaws and denies any link.

"According to the information I collected, many of the militias are being integrated into the regular armed or the Popular Defence Forces. There is no ambiguity that there is a link between some of the militias and government forces," Jahangir said.

But she said some criminal elements had taken advantage of the conflict.

Jahangir also travelled around other areas of Sudan, including Malakal in the south. The Sudanese government is close to reaching a final peace deal with southern rebels to end a separate 21-year-old conflict in that region.

"In my report, I will forcefully stress the question of accountability as a fundamental principle in addressing violations of human rights . . . The government of the Sudan must make every effort to end the culture of impunity," she said.

**PAUL A. THEIS DIES: COMBAT  
PILOT, AIDE TO PRESIDENT  
FORD, GOP STALWART, AUTHOR,  
JOURNALIST AND PATRIOT**

**HON. SHERWOOD BOEHLERT**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 17, 2004

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise my colleagues of the death of Paul A. Theis. He was one of our stalwarts, having served for many years as Director of Public Relations for the Republican Congressional Campaign Committee. President Ford held him in such high regard that he tapped him to become his Executive Editor, heading up the highly important speechwriting operation in the White House. In addition, Paul served in the

Agriculture Department as Deputy Undersecretary for Congressional and Public Affairs.

Paul Theis was many things, but above all a patriot and a gentleman as his legion of friends can attest. I count myself among them as we grieve the passing of this man of many parts. He was a novelist and completed "Devil in the House," a story based on the House of Representatives, just a few months before he died. He also coauthored "All About Politics," a non-fiction book published in 1972. Before that he served in the House as Administrative Assistant to the Hon. Oliver Bolton, Republican of Ohio. Earlier he had been a reporter for Newsweek magazine, covering the McCarthy hearings, and Army Times. During World War II he flew combat missions out of Italy as a B-17 bomber pilot earning the Air Medal and six battle stars. As a member of the Air Force Reserve after the war, he ultimately attained the rank of Major. For his military service, Paul was interred with full honors on April 20, 2003 at Arlington National Cemetery.

My condolences have been extended to his wife, Nancy, and his son, Mitchell, as they were by telephone by President Gerald R. Ford and President George W. Bush. He was a wonderful man and I was proud to have known him and to have been associated with him. I and countless others who knew him and loved him will sorely miss him. May he rest in peace.

Mr. Speaker, I enclose herewith the text of the eulogy given by Paul's son, Mitchell, at his funeral mass, and the text of the obituaries from the Washington Times and the Washington Post.

EULOGY FOR PAUL A. THEIS

(BY MITCHELL A. THEIS)

Reverend Fathers, thank you for celebrating this beautiful Mass of Christian Burial for my father, Paul Theis. Thank you for being such good priests and for being such an important part of our family's life.

I thank all of you here who came to honor my dad by your presence. My mother and I are deeply touched by your outpouring of sympathy and words of love for my father.

A couple of nights ago, mom and I were in the kitchen remembering some of our happiest times together with my father and some of his wonderful mannerisms and beliefs. We couldn't stop laughing as we recalled how he believed that three scoops of ice cream was "healthy" if you sprinkled wheat germ over it. Or how he always managed to wear one of his tattered old trench coats from his journalism days even though mom bought him a cashmere coat from Neiman Marcus and I got him one from Saks Fifth Avenue.

We recalled, too, his old Rolodex that he started over 60 years ago. Here it is! It looks like an organizational system used by a small business. It's so filled with cards that you can barely turn it. Believe me, my dad has a card on you or can locate a card that will help him find you within minutes.

He started writing cards on his friends that he grew up with back in the farming community of Carey, Ohio. His mom and dad ran a melon and wheat farm. And after the Depression they bought a furniture store.

His next set of cards was of his friends, like George Barsa, Frank Keenan and Bob Walsh; he had met them at Notre Dame University. Dad always was a Notre Dame Man and has stayed in touch with all of his college buddies. He just attended his 55th alumni reunion.

The next group of names that Dad wrote out for the Rolodex were those of his B-17

crew from World War II. The members of the crew were all barely 20 and they called Jerry Moran, the crew chief, "Pops" because he was 26 years old. If you heard Forrest Tolson tell their war stories, he'd have you believe that it was their crew alone that won the war. Believe me, Paul Theis, the old combat bomber pilot will be watching the WWII Monument dedication on the Mall this coming Memorial Day from a great vantage point! I salute the crew!

After the War, dad finished his BA at Notre Dame and his BS in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. He got a job as a journalist at the Army Times and then at Newsweek covering the McCarthy hearings. These writing skills helped him get a job on Capitol Hill working as an Administrative Assistant for Congressman Oliver Bolton. Gene Cowen was the AA for Ollie's mother, Francis Bolton. They were the only mother-son Congressional team.

This was in the early 50's and many of you here recall the simpler days of handshakes and civility. This was the time that Sid Yudin started Roll Call and dad helped start the Inner Circle, a group of Administrative Assistants that met for background briefings with VIP's of the day. Unfortunately/fortunately, dad's boss had a heart attack and did not run for re-election, so he became the Public Relations Director for the National Republican Congressional Campaign Committee, writing speeches for congressmen and women. This is where he added hundreds of cards to his Rolodex. It was a perfect job for him and he stayed there for 16 years.

It was during this time where he met the woman who would sweet him off his feet. It was the end of him. His bachelor days were over.

It was following that blessed event that President Nixon resigned and President Ford asked him to be his Executive Editor—handling: Speechwriting, Messages, Correspondence and Research. There dad worked closely with Bob Hartman, Bob Orben, Milt Friedman, Jack Calkins and all the members of President Ford's team. On Monday, former President Ford called mom and me. We told him that we were certain a number of his old friends and supporters would be here at the funeral. He wanted everyone to know that he was here in spirit. Dad was always honored to work for such a fine man.

From the White House dad was appointed the Director of Congressional Relations for the Secretary of Agriculture, Jack Knebel. Dad and mom were to travel with Jack and his wife, Zee, to a number of foreign countries for the USDA.

Dad then moved on to the House Agriculture Committee where he and Tom Adams wrote the Ag Bad Newsletter.

In 1981, dad started Headliner Editorial Services and worked for clients from his home office. Mom left school teaching and was working at the White House so I grew up coming home from school and being greeted by my father.

He was always a master listener—calm, cool, collected and funny. One of my favorite examples of his type of humor occurred on the day that we had to put our dog, Badger, to sleep. On the way back home from the vets, dad turned to mom and me and said, "What are we going to tell the cat?"

Over the years, Mom and Dad, AKA "The Cheerleader" and "The Sage," created an extended family that supports and sustains our world. Together, we affirm what is sacred, laugh at life's absurdities and discuss and debate the hot topics of our times. We are blessed beyond belief by such dear, dear family friends.

If you are a member of the Golden Owls, the select group in the National Press Club