

Sanctuary, one of the most biologically productive underwater areas on the planet, I also honor Ed Ueber, its first manager, a man to match the bounteous and awe-inspiring resource he has protected for so many years.

IN OPPOSITION TO H.R. 163, THE
UNIVERSAL NATIONAL SERVICE
ACT

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I regret that a previous commitment prevented me from being present to vote on H.R. 163, Mr. Rangel's Universal National Service Act.

This proposal would require that all young persons in the United States, including women, perform a period of military service or a period of civilian service for the national defense and homeland security. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

Both the President and the Secretary of Defense have stated on more than one occasion that there is no need for a draft for the War on Terrorism or any likely contingency, such as Iraq. I believe the All-Volunteer Military Force has operated effectively for over thirty years. I fully agree with the Administration that there is no need for a military draft, and I do not support the Rangel bill.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL W. NYE

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

Mr. LARSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and offer my congratulations to Mr. Michael (Mike) W. Nye, Director of Investigations, Office of Inspector General of the House of Representatives, for his outstanding career and service to the House of Representatives for the past six years, and to the Federal Government for thirty-two years. Mike will be retiring from the House this month after previously serving as a judge advocate in the U.S. Air Force, from which he retired in the rank of Colonel. Prior to joining the House Office of Inspector General, he also served as Counsel to the Inspector General of the Marine Corps. During his career, he gained widespread legal experience and has provided invaluable counsel to the House Inspector General and his colleagues at the House on a wide range of legal issues.

Mike put his skills to good use at the House and his advice and counsel has been widely sought as we strive to continuously improve controls and security over the financial and administrative operations of the House. His energy and "can do" attitude were an example to all of us and his keen insights into legal matters helped assure that the Office of Inspector General's reports consistently met our needs by providing candid and reliable advice on all aspects of House operations.

Always the consummate professional, Mike will be sorely missed by all of his colleagues, but he can take pride and satisfaction in his

service to our great nation. Truly, Mike was one of those rare individuals who made a real difference by improving every organization in which he served. Once again Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Mike on his career and outstanding service to the House, and to wish him, and his lovely wife Judy, much happiness as they pursue new challenges in retirement.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 75TH AN-
NIVERSARY OF THE CALIFORNIA
HIGHWAY PATROL AND THE CHP
OF LAKE COUNTY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, we rise today to pay tribute to the California Highway Patrol (CHP) in Lake County, California.

For the past 75 years, the CHP has had the motto "Safety, Security and Service." This reflects the mission and the intent of the CHP in Lake County.

The Lake County CHP consists of 32 uniformed members and five civilians. They are commanded by Lieutenant D.R. Hayward. In addition, a Vehicle Theft Investigator, Mobile Commercial Vehicle Inspector and a Motor Carrier Specialist are permanently deployed in the Lake County region. They are responsible for traffic and general law enforcement on roadways that cover 1825 square miles.

The Lake County CHP's commitment to the citizens of Lake County includes a very successful community outreach program. This program combines a dedicated community outreach officer along with Senior Volunteers and Explorers who act as a conduit for not only the general community but the Native American communities to interact with the Department and voice their concerns.

The Lake County CHP won the 2003 California Chief's Challenge as well as recognition for the 2003 Pedestrian Safety Corridor grant which was successful in reducing fatal collisions to zero during the duration of the grant.

The commander has implemented a collective program with Caltrans to continuously identify and mitigate any safety related highway designs. This program has had a quantifiable effect on reducing collisions and increasing traffic safety within the community.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker and colleagues, it is most appropriate that we acknowledge and honor the CHP in Lake County for their service to the community. The CHP of Lake County has established a standard of dependability, bravery and hard work that should be followed in all communities.

HONORING MS. ELSA BIRCHWOOD
ON THE OCCASION OF HER RE-
TIREMENT AS DIRECTOR OF THE
CHIEF OF THE ARMY RESERVE'S
STAFF GROUP

HON. STEVE BUYER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to note the departure of a great lady and a good

friend, Ms. Elsa Birchwood, the Director of the Chief of the Army Reserve's Staff Group. For the past ten years, Ms. Birchwood served as a superb leader, counselor, mentor, and confidant not only within her own office, but also earned the respect from other components of the Department of Defense. She served with great distinction in a full military career that began with her enlistment in the Active Army, duty as a drill sergeant, and ultimately as a commissioned officer in the Active Guard and Reserve Program. Throughout this period, she proved herself to be an outstanding leader and thoroughly professional staff officer of great experience and compassion.

Ms. Birchwood's loyalty and reputation led to her return to Federal service in January 1994 as a civilian military personnel management specialist in the Office of the Chief, Army Reserve. She applied her skills to her congressional liaison activities, the White House and Executive Branch agencies. She was an invaluable point of contact for legislative matters and always made herself available to Members of Congress and their staffs. She responded rapidly to inquiries regarding Army Reserve programs and policies and individual personnel management problems. Her cooperative spirit, determination and perseverance gained her and the Department of Defense many friends and much good will.

Ms. Birchwood's reputation for candor and integrity spread throughout the Reserve community and senior leadership in the Washington area. By the time she was appointed the Director of the Chief, Army Reserve's Staff Group, she had become something of a legend and a cultural hero as an advisor to the Chiefs of the Army Reserve, other general officers, and their staffs. She was an enlightened manager, anticipating emerging issues before they impeded the agency's involvement in the Global War on Terror.

Despite myriad demands on her time, Ms. Birchwood always responded with detailed advice and refreshing candor. She mentored her subordinates and assisted in their professional development. She took personal and professional responsibility to prepare those she supervised to perform up to their potential and she never shirked that responsibility. She was at once enthusiastic and practical, offering long-range advice and suggesting specific immediate courses of action for achieving professional goals and objectives.

At the end of the day, Elsa Birchwood stands as a splendid role model for all who aspire to meaningful public service. She served her country well as a private soldier and officer, and as a distinguished civil servant. She rose to the grade of GS-15 and served with great distinction as a supervisor, mentor, counselor, and friend. Elsa never forgot that she was first a soldier. Elsa Birchwood deserves our thanks, and I salute her lifetime of service to America. We are proud of you and your legacy is now the standard. Job well done, my friend.

RECOGNIZING SPIRIT OF JACOB MOCK DOUB AND EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT "NATIONAL TAKE A KID MOUNTAIN BIKING DAY" SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED IN JACOB MOCK DOUB'S HONOR

SPEECH OF

HON. RICHARD BURR

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 5, 2004

Mr. BURR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the resolution, and do so on behalf of the 400 members of the International Mountain Bicycling Association in North Carolina, as well as the 1,500 members of affiliated cycling clubs.

It is appropriate that the House is considering this resolution today. On Saturday, I.M.B.A. brought together kids and adults across the country to hold the first "National Take A Kid Mountain Biking Day."

According to the Surgeon General, the percentage of youth that are overweight has nearly tripled in the last twenty years. Forecasts predict that the current generation of our children could actually have a shorter life expectancy than their parents. Childhood obesity is reaching epidemic proportions. Overweight adolescents have a 70% chance of becoming overweight or obese adults. NIH research indicates that the large increase in childhood obesity rates can be traced to overeating and a lack of exercise.

This resolution, Mr. Speaker, was drafted in memory of Jack Doub, an avid teenage mountain biker who had a passion for introducing others to the sport. Jack saw the need for kids to get off the couch, get outside, and get some exercise. After being introduced to mountain biking at age 11 near Grandfather Mountain, North Carolina, he won almost every cross-country race he entered for two years. Between the ages of 14 and 17, he became a top national-level downhill and slalom competitor. He actively encouraged others—particularly kids—to ride bicycles. He was a leader in every sense of the word.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

UNIVERSAL NATIONAL SERVICE
ACT OF 2003

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 163, a bill to re-instate the draft. I oppose the draft and do not want to see it brought back.

I added my name to this bill in order to promote an open, honest public discussion of the personnel crisis facing our military today, and in that sense I welcome today's vote. It is unfortunate, however, that H.R. 163 is being brought to the floor with only a few hours notice, depriving the American public of the extended exploration this problem deserves.

It is not a coincidence that today's vote is taking place as public uneasiness is rising with regard to the draft. It is obvious to everyone

that the demands of military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan are narrowing the Administration's options. Our regular divisions and brigades are stretched to the limit. The Reserve and National Guard are being drawn upon to the point where they now comprise nearly half of all U.S. troops in Iraq. Stop loss is the order of the day, holding servicemen and women in uniform past their discharge dates. We're even dipping into the Individual Ready Reserve, calling up people who have completed not only their active duty obligations, but their active reserve obligations as well. Under these circumstances, the growing suspicions of the Administration's intentions in regard to a draft are well-founded.

In fact, I have found confirmation of those suspicions. KITV television news of Honolulu reported last night on a February 11, 2003, Selective Service System document which was provided to me recently and which I have shared with several of my colleagues. Judging from its contents, it appears to be a memo prepared for a meeting between the Acting Director of the Selective Service, the Principal Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and other senior Defense and Selective Service officials. The document takes note of critical shortages of military personnel with certain skills and raises the idea of drafting them to alleviate the shortages.

Features of this "bring back the draft" memo include:

—Draft registration for women as well as men;

—Registration of all citizens and resident aliens between the ages of 18 and 34;

—Require registrants to submit periodic updates of their skills and education up to the age of 35;

—Draftees would be sent not only into the military, but also to the Department of Homeland Security, state, and municipal government agencies; and

—Suggests the House and Senate Armed Services Committees be asked to pass legislation to bring back this expanded draft.

The public deserves the chance to fully consider and discuss these radical ideas and participate meaningfully in any decision to adopt such drastic steps to address the very real personnel needs of our military forces stemming from the demands of multiple deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan, and beyond. Bringing H.R. 163 to the floor for a vote without hearings, without warning, deprives the Nation and the Congress of an opportunity for that full consideration and discussion.

Right now we have a back door draft, euphemistically called stop loss orders, that keeps troops in uniform even after their enlistments are over. At the same time, we are putting our National Guard and Reserve under intolerable strain, keeping them on active duty far longer than they or their families could have anticipated.

One of the most frustrating aspects of these problems is that they were foreseeable. General Eric Shinseki, then Army Chief of Staff, accurately predicted we would need far more troops than the Administration was willing to commit to occupy Iraq. He was publicly condemned by the Administration for telling the truth. I voted against the Iraq war because, among other reasons, it was clear the Administration was unwilling to send enough troops to pacify that country after the initial military

attack. Paul Bremer, the former chief of the Coalition Provisional Authority, just confirmed that fact in a speech yesterday.

If we are to meet this troop strength crisis, a serious and open discussion needs to take place involving the public, elected leaders, and senior national security officials. The Administration wants to operate in secret in order to hide that discussion from the public. Bringing H.R. 163 to the floor for a vote is a partial victory for public discussion, a reflection of the public's insistent concern over the issue. On the other hand, the furtive way in which it was brought to the floor is a partial victory for those who want to keep the issue in the shadows.

We have been dealing with this matter for years in the Armed Services Committee. During the 14 years that I have served on the Committee, the questions have never been as urgent as they are now:

—What happens if a quick victory in Iraq is elusive, and we remain there for years to come?

—What troop strength levels and mix of active, National Guard, and Reserves will be needed in the coming years?

—Can the all-volunteer military keep its ranks filled?

—If not, what options does the nation have?

—How can we get better pay, benefits, and quality of life improvements to attract and retain enough troops and their families?

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I work on a daily basis with my colleagues and military leaders in the search for answers. It is a long and often difficult process. Its worth is measured in improvements in the lives of our fighting men and women, their families, and our veterans.

I was proud to vote for badly needed equipment like Humvee armor protection and stronger body armor for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. I have championed better military family housing for troops based in my home state of Hawaii and around the globe. I was one of the authors of the Tricare for Life bill, which provides military retirees with the health coverage they were promised when they enlisted.

What solutions are offered by those who want to pretend we don't face a military personnel crisis? Do they support the Administration's covert moves—despite public denials—to restart the draft? What do they have to say about the stop loss orders that deny thousands of troops and their families the post-service opportunities they were led to expect? How do they propose to deal with our over-reliance on the National Guard and Reserves, which are already strained to the limit? Most importantly, will they discuss these issues fully and openly, or do they want them decided in secret?

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE FRANK
FOX

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, today in the U.S. Virgin Islands, on my island of St. Croix, residents from all walks of life will gather to remember and pay tribute to Frank J. Fox.