

RECOGNIZE THE PLIGHT OF SHAD
VETERANS: IT'S ABOUT TIME!

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2005

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I urge support for H.R. 4259, the "Veterans Right to Know Act", recently introduced by my colleague, Congressman MIKE THOMPSON. This bill requires an investigation into chemical and biological weapons tests, especially those carried out from 1962–1974 on our nation's servicemembers.

In this time of war, it is prudent that we double our efforts to ensure that the nation is willing and able to protect our troops deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. To that end, it is imperative that we learn from the past—and one of the great lessons to be learned is that of Project 112 and SHAD.

Project 112 was a Department of Defense program of weapons testing and SHAD (Shipboard Hazard and Defense) was a part of the larger Project 112. SHAD involved a series of tests that were conducted to determine the vulnerability of U.S. warships to attacks with chemical and biological agents. Although service members were not test subjects, they were on board the ships during the tests.

So far, almost 6000 unknowing military personnel have been identified as having been involved in Project 112, exposed to Vx Nerve Gas, Sarin Nerve Gas, E. coli and other toxins and carcinogens. The illnesses occurring at too early ages among many of these veterans seem to be more than a coincidence.

I want to commend our veterans for their diligence in bringing this matter to the forefront. Once again, it is our veterans who had to advocate on their own behalf to get the government to release information about harmful exposures so they could better understand their health issues and illnesses. The Department of Defense denied the tests up until 2002.

We have learned a lot since 2002 when these tests became public knowledge, but there is still much to learn. That is why this bill, H.R. 4259, is so important. We need an independent effort to diligently pursue all avenues to discover every veteran who was affected by this testing and to provide each one with appropriate treatment and benefits. In addition, we need to ensure that steps are taken to prevent and improve the documentation of potentially harmful exposures during the current wars. The lives of our veterans depend on our diligence.

H.R. 4259 is endorsed by the Vietnam Veterans of America, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the Military Officers Association of America, the Paralyzed Veterans of America and the Blinded Veterans Association. Won't you join them? Please let Congressman THOMPSON know that you want to co-sponsor H.R. 4259!

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION
OF H.R. 4340, UNITED STATES-
BAHRAIN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT
IMPLEMENTATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4340, the United States-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act. Overall I believe the agreement contains numerous important benefits for the people of both the United States and Bahrain.

The agreement would allow 100 percent of American-made industrial and consumer goods and virtually all agricultural products to enter Bahrain duty free. The agreement would also expand access for the United States to many of the financial and service sectors in Bahrain along with strengthening intellectual property protections. This improved commercial relationship between our countries will benefit many sectors of the American economy, including agriculture, banking and securities, and high technology.

I have supported a number of trade agreements to expand access to foreign markets for exports as part of a long-term strategy to strengthen the American economy. While expanding markets for American businesses and farmers is critical, I believe it needs to be done responsibly, accounting for the treatment and protection of workers and the environment. This agreement makes efforts to do so.

Regarding the agreement's labor provisions, I am concerned that Bahrain is not in complete compliance with International Labor Organization, (ILO), core labor standards. But it is my understanding that Bahrain has committed in an exchange of letters—which will be included with the trade agreement—to modify domestic laws to comply with key labor standards. I commend the Kingdom of Bahrain for its commitment to modify its domestic laws, and I urge the Administration and the United States Trade Representative, (USTR), to monitor progress in this regard.

In the future, I think the administration and the USTR would be well served by including labor provisions, such as those included in the United States-Jordan Free Trade Agreement, in the body of future trade agreements and by making them subject to sanctions via dispute resolution procedures. The dispute resolution procedures fall short in the case of the Bahrain FTA. It is important that the United States takes step to ensure our trading partners provide workers with basic labor rights. By including such requirements we dedicate ourselves to this goal.

While this agreement is largely about the liberalized exchange of goods and services, it is also about building a stronger relationship with a strategic country in the Middle East.

Opening up commerce between the U.S. and Bahrain can help us gain Bahrain's support for initiatives in other areas, such as resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict and restoring security to Iraq. In that connection, it is important to note that Bahrain is not observing the Arab League boycott of Israel. I welcome the U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement and urge its support.

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN SAMUEL C.
FLYNN

HON. MIKE MCINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2005

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a true gentleman, wonderful husband and father, and extraordinary leader in our Armed Forces, CAPT Samuel C. Flynn, Jr. Sam passed away after a long illness on December 4, 2005, but his legacy and contributions will live on in the hearts and minds of many for generations to come, and we are forever grateful for his service to our country.

Born and raised in Lake Waccamaw, N.C., Captain Flynn embodied the true spirit of a dedicated and determined leader. He graduated from Hallsboro High School as Valedictorian of the class of 1951, where he earned varsity letters in football, basketball and baseball. In 1955, he graduated from Wake Forest College with a Bachelor of Science degree.

After college, Captain Flynn entered the U.S. Navy and received his Navy Wings of Gold and designation as a Naval Aviator in June 1958. Throughout his 31 years of service, he proudly served as a fighter pilot and Landing Signal Officer, and assumed command of Fighter Squadron 31, Carrier Air Wing TWO, Fighter Wing ONE, and NAS Kingsville, Texas. With Fighter Squadron 31, Captain Flynn embarked on his third Southeast Asia tour, and on June 21, 1972, he and his Radar Intercept Officer downed a MIG-21 over North Vietnam, making the first MIG kill of the war for Fighting 31, SARATOGA, and Attack Carrier Air Wing 3. He flew over 250 combat missions in the F-4 Phantom and logged a total of 1,175 aircraft carrier arrested landings. Not only did Captain Flynn serve his city, state, and nation with distinction, dedication, and determination, he also understood the price of freedom and risked his life so others could rest peacefully each night.

Captain Flynn is a highly decorated sailor, receiving the Silver Star, 5 Distinguished Flying Crosses, and 3 Meritorious Service medals. He also received 22 Strike Flight Air Medals, 2 individual awards of the Air Medal, 3 Commendation Medals (with combat "V"), and numerous other awards and ribbons.

Captain Flynn loved his family and was predeceased by his first wife, Shirley Ownby Flynn, and is survived by his present wife, Melynda McIntyre Flynn; his son, Samuel C. Flynn, III of San Diego, CA; his daughter, Elizabeth Flynn Pforr, her husband Paul and their children Kyle and Alexandria Pforr, of Alexandria, VA; his brother, James "Jimmy" L. Flynn, his wife Nancy, of Wilmington, NC; as well as his brother-in-law, David Ownby and his wife Jean, of Cumberland, VA.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower once said, "If we make ourselves worthy of America's ideals, if we do not forget that our Nation was founded on the premise that all men are creatures of God's making, the world will come to know that it is free men who carry forward the true promise of human progress and dignity." Indeed, Sam Flynn's life was the embodiment of this. He was a man who was known by persons of all races, ages, and religions for both his kind deeds and his loving, unselfish heart.

Mr. Speaker, dedicated service to others combined with dynamic leadership has been

the embodiment of Captain Flynn's life. May we all use his wisdom, selflessness, and integrity as a beacon of direction and a source of true enlightenment for many, many years to come. Indeed, may God bless to all of our memories the tremendous life and legacy of Captain Samuel C. Flynn, Jr.

CONGRATULATING MICHELLE
CUNNINGHAM

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2005

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Michelle Cunningham for receiving an Outstanding Community Service Award from the 16th Annual University of North Texas Latinos in the 21st Century Conference. Ms. Cunningham was selected as an individual whose contributions foster and enhance education for Hispanic students and promotes community values.

The Latinos in the 21st Century Conference was held on October 14, 2006 at UNT. The theme was "Reaching La Raza: Catering to the Future." The conference promotes higher education among Latinos/Hispanics/Chicanos in the North Texas region and discusses issues relevant to this growing population. The UNT Division of Equity and Diversity who works to develop a supportive environment for a culturally diverse faculty, staff, and student body at the University of North Texas sponsored the conference.

Michelle Cunningham is the Community & International Relations Coordinator for the City of Denton Economic Development. She has been employed with the City for seven years. Factors leading to Ms. Cunningham's selection included her long-term support of educational outreach initiatives sponsored by the UNT Center for Outreach and Community Involvement, her vocal advocacy for educating Denton's underrepresented students, and her mentorship and leadership of Hispanic students and families. The Denton LULAC Council has also recognized her initiatives and she was a nominee for the Dallas region LULAC woman of the year.

I extend my sincere congratulations to Ms. Michelle Cunningham on receiving this award and commend her dedication and desire to help her community.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENT
OF ACTON ARCHIE

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2005

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, recently I had the honor to meet an amazing young man from North Carolina, his name is Acton Archie. I wanted the opportunity to not only congratulate Archie, but to tell you about his life.

Too often we hear about the bad choices young people make and the decisions that lead them down a path to nowhere. Fortunately, Acton Archie made the right decisions, despite unimaginable obstacles, which has led him down the right path.

Growing up in Charlotte, Acton moved from one public housing development to another, he moved 12 times in 12 years. His father was murdered when he was just a child and his mother struggled with drug addiction. By 9th grade, Acton rarely attended school; he was surrounded by crime and drugs. He was on the verge of dropping out of school altogether when he was introduced to Communities in School, a program that helps young people successfully learn, stay in school, and prepare for life. Acton credits his grandmother, his strong faith in God and Communities in Schools for literally saving his life.

Acton not only finished high school, he graduated with a 3.8 GPA. He then went on to attend North Carolina State University where he recently graduated with a degree in Business Management. He will soon begin a career as a business analyst with the world's largest privately held software company.

Ten years ago, if someone would have told Acton that he would achieve so much, I doubt he would have believed them, but the wonderful thing is that he has achieved so much. I am certain even greater things are yet to come for this young man.

I would like to congratulate Acton Archie for his achievements, but I also want to congratulate Acton for the tremendous courage he has shown in overcoming barriers in his life. This young man is truly an inspiration to me, and I know he is an even greater inspiration to young kids who feel trapped by their situation in life.

May God Bless Acton Archie and all who continue to overcome roadblocks in their lives to achieve what might have been seen at one time as the "Impossible Dream."

Thank you, Acton Archie.

HONORING RICHARD GORDON ON
HIS RETIREMENT

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2005

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rev. Richard Gordon for his 43 years of service to First Baptist Church in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Since he became involved with First Baptist in 1962, Rev. Gordon has helped the church grow as Rutherford County has grown. After four decades as pastor of First Baptist, Rev. Gordon is now teaching the children and grandchildren of some of the first people he taught there. But Rev. Gordon will give his last sermon to the congregation on Christmas Day.

Rev. Gordon's compassion extends beyond the church and into the community. He serves on the Murfreesboro Affordable Housing Advisory Board and Rutherford County Guidance Center Board. In addition, he has been involved with many national organizations, such as the NAACP, the United Ministerial Alliance and the National Baptist Congress.

In 1967, I attended one of Rev. Gordon's services for the first time. I know firsthand that his leadership and dedication will be deeply missed by his congregation. I also have a feeling that his service to the community will not end with his retirement. As Rev. Gordon says, "You don't retire from the ministry."

I commend Rev. Gordon for his 43 years with First Baptist Church. And I wish him all the best in his retirement.

FREEDOM FOR ANTONIO AUGUSTO
VILLAREAL ACOSTA

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2005

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Antonio Augusto Villareal Acosta, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Villareal Acosta is an economist and bookkeeper under a regime that bans truth and facts. As a student of truth, Mr. Villareal Acosta quickly joined the courageous opposition to demand human rights, democracy, and freedom from tyranny. Because he believes in freedom and because he actively and peacefully advocates for liberty, Mr. Villareal Acosta has been targeted by the despotic regime.

In March 2003, as part of the tyrant's heinous island wide crackdown on peaceful, pro-democracy activists, Mr. Villareal Acosta was arrested by the regime. In a sham trial, he was sentenced to 15 years in the totalitarian gulag.

Mr. Villareal Acosta is languishing in the revolting, hellish gulag. However, being confined in these inhuman conditions has not stopped him from continuing to demand freedom and justice for the people of Cuba and his fellow political prisoners. Amnesty International reports that Mr. Villareal Acosta has participated in hunger strikes while imprisoned in Castro's dungeon. He has undertaken these strikes to bring attention to the repulsive squalor of the gulag, the lack of medical attention, and the barbaric punishment cells; all of his actions have been in defiance of the machinery of repression that has unjustly confined him in these repugnant conditions.

Mr. Speaker, it remains categorically unacceptable that men and women who demand freedom from tyranny are locked in the dungeons of tyrannical monsters. Here, under the dome that represents freedom and democracy, we must continue to demand the liberation of all who suffer in the darkness of totalitarianism.

Let me be clear, the willful ignorance of Cuba's suffering under the Castro regime by much of the world's press and most of the international community, amounts to abetting the Castro dictatorship. Let us never forget, and always support, those who are struggling to liberate their people from the grip of tyranny. My Colleagues, we must demand the immediate and unconditional release of Antonio Augusto Villareal Acosta and every prisoner of conscience locked in Castro's totalitarian gulag.

HONORING COACH BARRY
ALVAREZ

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2005

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the coach of the University of Wisconsin football team who retires this year, Coach Barry Alvarez. In Barry Alvarez's 16 years as coach, the Wisconsin Badgers have gone from a 1-10 record in 1990 to three-time winners of