

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE LIFE OF TED SMITH

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. Ted Smith, a life-long resident of Chautauqua County and a truly remarkable man.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO TED SMITH

(By Manley J. Anderson)

Two well-known local public figures have shared their thoughts about R. Theodore "Ted" Smith who was an integral part of their lives for several years. Those paying remembrance and tribute to their late, long-time colleague are Joseph Gerace Sr., New York State Supreme Court Justice now serving as a judicial hearing officer; and Dr. Gregory T. DeCinque, Jamestown Community College president speaking for the area's academic community.

Gerace said he and Smith campaigned together years ago for the Chautauqua County Legislature, representing the Busti/North Harmony area. "Ted in just about every respect was one of the most outstanding people I've ever met," the jurist said. "He was the kind of public official we wish we had in all positions: honest, straightforward and caring about the community."

"He was Mr. Environment," Gerace said, "and I feel we may still be waiting for the sewer districts except for Ted Smith, who also was known as Mr. Integrity. We campaigned together for the Chautauqua County Legislature, knocking on doors, and Ted took on a county-wide assignment with the landfill, closing open dumps and developing a solid waste plan that was the envy of the area and so effective the private sector wanted to buy it."

The jurist closed with, "He was an all-around guy with a great sense of humor. He was truly the Mark Twain of our era and he always used humor to make the best of a situation." "It is with deep sadness that I share with you that Ted Smith passed away late yesterday (Thursday) at Hamot Medical Center as the result of a heart attack he suffered Sunday evening," DeCinque said.

"Ted was among the early faculty who established JCC as the premiere community college in New York," he said. "Whether as a faculty member, founding dean of the Cattaraugus County Campus, dean of academic affairs, or retiree, Ted's contributions to JCC are legend."

DeCinque continued with, "Ted led JCC through the development phase of many academic programs as well as the growth of our Cattaraugus County Campus, our outreach into Pennsylvania, and our Dunkirk center."

The academician pointed out, "Ted was recognized with the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1975 and the JCC Foundation's John D. Hamilton Award in 2001. He is among the select few to receive these highest honors associated with the college."

DeCinque went on with, "Ted was highly regarded throughout the state both as an educator and a political leader. His service on the Chautauqua County Legislature led to

many improvements within the county, and I know he will be remembered as one of the best legislators we have had in Chautauqua County."

He continued with, "Following Ted's retirement, he returned to the classroom and continued his love affair with teaching. I had the privilege of participating in many of Ted's Student Success Seminars where I witnessed the relationship he was able to develop with students. In addition to teaching in his retirement, Ted carries out a number of research assignments for us that resulted in establishment of several of our newest academic programs including professional piloting, occupational therapy, and dental hygiene."

DeCinque said, "On a personal note, Ted was always there to provide me with insight and wisdom, and he often would send me short notes from Busti or Florida that were always on target and helpful. I will miss that guidance." The college leader said, "JCC and our larger community have lost a dear friend and colleague, and our heartfelt sympathy goes out to Pat and the entire Smith family." He closed with, "Information on services for Ted will be shared with you as it becomes available."

Ted was a man who fully understood how to live to its fullest and that, Mr. Speaker, is why I rise to honor him today.

IN MEMORY OF CPT SANDOR L. GORDON

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, with the death of CPT Sandor Lebron Gordon in a tragic car accident on Sunday, November 27, 2005, our State lost a true South Carolina hero.

Captain Gordon led a selfless life, demonstrated by his commitment to his family and his country. The son of Reverend and Mrs. Sammie L. Gordon of Orangeburg, SC, Gordon grew up in a home where love, hard work and concern for others were cherished and honored. It was these characteristics that made him successful in life.

As a husband, his wife and college sweetheart, the former Angela Nicole Strong called him her "very best friend." His son James praised his father for the love and concern he gave him and his little brother Simeon. My son Alan and the men of the 3d of the 178th Field Artillery Battalion who served with Captain Gordon in Iraq said of him "Sandor always had a smile to share, an ear to listen, and a hand to shake. He was a selfless humanitarian who volunteered to leave the safety of his base to take school supplies, clothes, food and water to the neediest Iraqi children living nearby."

Captain Gordon was a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated, the NAACP, and was voted "Top 20 under 40 Midlands Successful Businessmen" for the year 2005. A

respected small businessman, Captain Gordon made the financial sacrifice to answer his Nation's call to duty in December 2003, and upon returning from Iraq a year later was awarded the prestigious Bronze Star Medal.

His family, friends, and the Iraqi children he lovingly helped will remember Captain Gordon for his selfless dedication to them, our country, and a free Iraq. He is deeply missed by all who knew him.

The Wilson family extends its deepest sympathy to the Gordon family.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN BURMA: WHERE ARE WE NOW AND WHAT DO WE DO NEXT?

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, February 7, I chaired a hearing on the current human rights situation in Burma, and what the U.S. and the international community can and must do to improve that situation.

After 40 years of brutal military dictatorships, the human rights situation in Burma is frightening. That nation's current military junta, in power for over 17 years, is an abysmal failure on every conceivable level.

It has ruined a beautiful and naturally rich land. According to the State Department's most recent Human Rights Country Report:

More than 4 decades of economic mismanagement and endemic corruption have resulted in widespread poverty, poor health care, declining education levels, poor infrastructure, and continuously deteriorating economic conditions. During the year, poor economic policymaking, lingering consequences of the 2003 private banking sector collapse, and the economic consequences of international sanctions further weakened the economy. The estimated annual per capita income was approximately \$225. Most of the population of more than 50 million live in rural areas at subsistence levels.

The Heritage Foundation ranked Iran and North Korea as the only countries with more restrictive economies than that of Burma.

But economic misery is probably the least of the problems faced by Burma's long-suffering people.

Citizens still did not have the right to criticize or change their government . . . Security forces continued to carry out extrajudicial killings. Disappearances continued, and security forces raped, tortured, beat, and otherwise abused prisoners and detainees. Citizens were subjected to arbitrary arrest without appeal.—2004 STATE DEPARTMENT HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT.

There are more than 1,100 political prisoners in Burma, who are abused and tortured. Seven are reported to have died in custody last year, and just last month a 38-year-old democratic activist died in custody due to inadequate medical attention.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Over 15 years ago the National League for Democracy, led by Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi and other democratic forces, won an overwhelming victory in free elections, 82 percent. The junta refused to accept the results or to call Parliament into session. Instead it imprisoned many activists, including Aung San Suu Kyi, who has spent 10 years under house arrest. Her current house arrest is tantamount to solitary confinement. She has been cruelly kept away from her children, and her husband, who died abroad. For 15 years the junta has cynically proclaimed its intention to draft a new constitution via a national convention, with no participation by the people's democratic representatives. That national convention has again been adjourned, with no constitution, and no freedom, in sight.

Since 1999, the U.S. Secretary of State has designated Burma as a "Country of Particular Concern" under the International Religious Freedom Act for particularly severe violations of religious freedom.

According to the U.S. Department of State, Burma continues to be a Tier 3 Country for human trafficking, and "the junta's policy of using forced labor is a driving factor behind Burma's large trafficking problem." The ILO has condemned Burma's use of forced labor, and the ILO representative in Burma has received death threats. Burma has threatened to quit the ILO. Burma regularly prosecutes those who complain about forced labor. Last October, Burma sentenced a 34-year-old woman to 20 months in prison for "criminal intimidation" of local officials. Her offense? She had the temerity to initiate the first successful prosecution for use of forced labor in Burma. She had lodged a complaint in 2004 against local government officials over their use of forced labor on a road construction project. She exercised her right to do this under new regulations introduced by the government to appease the International Labor Organization, ILO. She is now in prison, and her appeal was summarily denied.

Burma is high on the list of uncooperative drug-producing or transiting countries, and there is evidence of military and government involvement in the narcotics traffic. Burma produces about 80 percent of Southeast Asia's heroin, and is one of the largest producers of methamphetamines in the world. It exports its illicit narcotics throughout China and Southeast and Central Asia.

And as Burma's heroin circulates through Asia, so does HIV/AIDS, which Burma refuses to take seriously as a domestic problem, although the U.N. estimated in 1999 that over half a million adults had HIV. According to one estimate, Burma spent only \$22,000 in 2004 to help AIDS victims. In 2005, the regime tightened restrictions on NGOs and U.N. agency staff providing humanitarian assistance in Burma. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria announced in August that it was terminating its \$98 million program on the ground that "its grants to the country cannot be managed in a way that ensures effective program implementation." The French contingent of medical aid group Medecin Sans Frontieres reportedly plans to withdraw from Burma because of restrictions imposed on access to villagers.

The military's self-justification for its decades of arbitrary rule is to protect Burma from "instability." Yet for 40 years it has waged endless war on the nation's ethnic minorities,

killing tens of thousands, driving hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of others into exile as refugees or within Burma as displaced persons. It has destroyed over 2,500 villages, and uses rape as an instrument of policy. And to wage these wars, it has resorted to conscription of children: more than 70,000 child soldiers may be serving, in horrible circumstances, in Burma's bloated army.

The U.N. Special Rapporteur for Human Rights, Sergio Pinheiro, has not been allowed into Burma for 2 years. In January 2006, U.N. Special Envoy to Burma Razali Ismail resigned his post after nearly 5 years, since the junta has not allowed him into the country for 2 years.

With such a record, it is no wonder that the U.S. has a wide array of sanctions in place against Burma, many of which must be renewed this year. And many wonder, can any progress be made? Yet in the midst of so much darkness, there has been light this year.

In September 2005, Nobel Laureates Archbishop Desmond Tutu and former Czech President Vaclav Havel released a major report documenting Burma's human rights problems as a threat to regional peace and security.

In December, with the strong support of the United States, U.N. Undersecretary for Political Affairs Ibrahim Gambari, in the unusual but significant presence of Secretary General Kofi Annan, personally gave the Security Council its first-ever briefing on the situation in Burma, a possible first step towards tougher international action. He went on record that the Burmese junta imprisons dissidents, ignores basic human rights, and is steering the country "towards a humanitarian crisis."

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ASEAN, which Burma joined in 1997, has finally moved from a posture of "constructive engagement," without sanctions or diplomatic pressure, to a more proactive approach to promote change.

But most of all, we owe this progress to this administration. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill, and even more importantly, President George Bush, have been relentless in making the world face up to the appalling disaster in Burma. We have just begun, and we have a long way to go, but we in Congress are determined to support these efforts to bring peace and freedom to the heroic Burmese people, who, in the face of so much persecution and suffering, still persist in their resolute struggle for justice.

The next logical step to take is for the U.S., which is currently President of the Security Council, to introduce a Security Council Resolution calling on Burma, in the strongest possible terms: to release Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners; implement a program for national reconciliation that includes the National League for Democracy; and grant immediate and unhindered access to all parts of Burma for U.N. relief agencies and other international humanitarian organizations.

Such a resolution should include a timeline for compliance and punitive sanctions if the SPDC fails to comply.

We heard testimony from Assistant Secretary of State Barry Lowenkron, of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. It was Mr. Lowenkron's first time before this House, and we look forward to a very fruitful collaboration on the vital issues he promotes.

His Bureau has kept attention focused on Burma when most have forgotten it. We also heard testimony from Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill, who is the chief executor of our President's policy to change Burma. Additional witnesses included: Mr. Bo Kyi, of the Assistance Association of Political Prisoners, a former political prisoner himself, who described his own torments, and the ongoing struggles of democracy activists in Burma and in exile; Naw Win Yee, a leading member of the Shan Women's Action Network, an organization comprised of refugee women living in Thailand that works for human rights, freedom and democracy in Burma and also works to elevate the roles of women in Burmese politics and society. SWAN produced a ground breaking report on the military regime's use of rape as a weapon of war in Burma that was subsequently corroborated by the U.S. State Department; Mr. Tom Malinowski, the Washington Advocacy Director for Human Rights Watch, who urged the U.S. to keep the pressure on the Burmese regime; and Ms. Anastasia Brown, the Director of Refugee Programs, Migration and Refugee Services for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, USCCB, who had just returned from a visit to the Burmese refugee camps in Thailand, and made an urgent and eloquent plea for quick action to resolve the problems of the resettlement of Burmese refugees. All the witnesses provided strong confirmation that Congress needs to stay closely involved in the ongoing human rights tragedy in Burma.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF ELI SEGAL

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of my dear friend Eli Segal. I offer my sincerest condolences to his wife of 40 years, Phyllis, his brother, Alan, and his children, Mora and Jonathan. We have lost a tremendous political mind, tireless social advocate, a loving husband and father, and a selfless friend who, as President and Senator CLINTON said, "lived his life as a man for others."

Eli was born in Brooklyn in 1942, headed to Massachusetts for undergraduate work at Brandeis University, and graduated from the University of Michigan's law school in 1967, making an impact at each stop along the way. Washington, DC, though, is where Eli's footprint is most clearly visible.

Eli's work as a campaign strategist is well documented, from his time on the late Eugene McCarthy's staff in 1968 through his work for General Wesley Clark during the 2004 election. It was during George McGovern's campaign, though, that Eli hired a young man named William Clinton to run the campaign's Texas operations, and I am extraordinarily thankful that Eli made that decision. If not for that particular hire, I probably would not have had the chance to work so closely with Eli during the Clinton administration, and I would not be fortunate enough to count myself as one of the thousands of people whose lives were touched by Eli. Then again, if President Clinton had not hired Eli to help run his campaign