

FEBRUARY 2006 NATIONAL PRAYER
BREAKFAST WITH REMARKS
FROM BONO

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 4, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to enter into the RECORD the very profound speech giving by Bono, the world-renowned musician and noted humanitarian, during the February 2006 National Prayer Breakfast.

As the lead singer and lyricist for the Irish rock band U2, Bono Hewson, better known as Bono, rose to fame as a socially-conscious songwriter who through song has taken many people on spiritual journeys while opening their eyes to the plight of the underprivileged and in some instances inspired people to change.

Beyond U2, Bono has extended himself to other projects and causes, and has emerged over the years to be a social activist, having rallied numerous actors, artists, socialites and activists on behalf of the world's poor, particularly those afflicted with the HIV virus in Africa and elsewhere throughout the world. While his international celebrity status has placed him in a position to relax and enjoy fame and wealth, he selflessly dedicates his time to improving our world as a tireless advocate for the less fortunate.

Bono has committed himself to continuing to address issues critical to future generations. He faces global crises with conviction and the hope that others will see the pain and suffering in the world and come together in unity to make the World a better place for all mankind.

Mr. Speaker: I humbly submit the remarks made by Bono as he addressed an audience that included the President of the United States, the First Lady, King Abdullah of Jordan, members of Congress and other guests during National Prayer Breakfast held in Washington, D.C. in February 2006.

BONO'S REMARKS TO THE NATIONAL PRAYER
BREAKFAST, FEBRUARY 2, 2006

INTRODUCTION OF BONO BY SENATOR NORM
COLEMAN

In my day, I have introduced the President, I once introduced Dr. Billy Graham, but as a former roadie for 60 rock bands, 10 years after, this ranks right up there as one of the high points of my introducing career. Mark [Senator Mark Pryor, Democrat/Arkansas] and I were joking, "This kind of makes us the rhetorical warm-up act for U2."

Our message today comes from a person who has gotten the attention of the world, by walking with God, talking about things that matter, letting his light shine. He's an extraordinary musician, charismatic leader, and unabashedly, uniquely himself. We have an expression that a celebrity is a person who is famous for being famous. But our speaker this morning is known around the world as a person of conscience, a person of influence, but most of all, a person of faith. His organization is called DATA—Debt, AIDS, Trade in Africa. They are working to bring people, organizations, leaders and politicians together to make a unified effort to change the future of Africa. On your tables are these white wristbands which are appropriately printed with the word "ONE." He's come to challenge us to reach across the boundaries, to care for the poor and to walk

the talk of our faith. Ladies and gentlemen: Bono.

[applause]

BONO'S ADDRESS

Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. President, First Lady, King Abdullah of Jordan, Norm [Senator Coleman], distinguished guests . . .

Please join me in praying that I don't say something we all regret.

[laughter]

That was for the FCC.

If you're wondering what I'm doing here, at a prayer breakfast, well, so am I. I'm certainly not here as a man of the cloth, unless that cloth is leather.

[laughter]

I'm certainly not here because I'm a rock star. Which leaves only one possible explanation: I've got a messianic complex.

[laughter]

It's true. [For] anyone who knows me, it's hardly a revelation.

Well, I'm the first to admit that there's something *unnatural* . . . something even *unseemly* . . . about rock stars mounting the pulpit and preaching at presidents, then disappearing to their villas in the South of France. Talk about a fish out of water. It was weird enough to have Jesse Helms come to a rock show . . . this is *really* weird.

[laughter]

Now, one of the things I love about this country is the separation of church and state. Although I have to say: in inviting me here, both church and state have been separated from something else completely: their mind. [Looks over at President Bush, who is seated to his right] Mr. President, are you sure about this?

[laughter]

It's very humbling, and I will try to keep my homily brief. But be warned—I am Irish.

[laughter]

I'd like to talk about the laws of man, here in this city where those laws are written. And I'd like to talk about higher laws. It would be great to assume that one serves the other; that the laws of man serve these higher laws . . . but of course, they don't always. And I presume that, in a way, is why you're all here.

I presume the reason for this gathering is that all of us are here—Muslims, Jews, Christians—are all searching our souls for how to better serve our family, our community, our nation, our God . . . And some of us are not very good examples, despite what Norm says. I am certainly searching. And that, I suppose, is what led me here.

Yes, it is odd, having a rock star at the breakfast—but maybe it's odder for me than for you. Because you see, I have avoided religious people most of my life. Maybe it's something to do with having a father who was a Protestant and a mother who was Catholic in a country where the line between the two was, quite literally, often a battle line. Where the line between church and state was . . . at the very least, a little blurry, and hard to see.

I remember how my mother would bring us to chapel on Sundays . . . and my father used to wait outside. One of the things that I picked up from my father and my mother was the sense that religion often gets in the way of God.

For me, at least, it got in the way. Seeing what religious people, in the name of God, did to my native land . . . and even in this country, seeing God's second-hand car salesmen on their TV cable channels, offering indulgences for cash . . . in fact, all over the world, seeing the self-righteousness roll down like a mighty stream from certain corners of the religious establishment . . .

I must confess, I changed the channel. I wanted my MTV.

So, even though I was a believer—and perhaps *because* I was a believer—I was cynical . . . not about God, but about God's politics. There you are, Jim [Wallis, author of the book *God's Politics*].

In 1997, a couple of eccentric, septuagenarian Christians—British, as it happens—went and ruined my shtick—my reproachfulness. They did it by describing the Millennium, the year 2000, as a Jubilee year, described this year as an opportunity to cancel the chronic debts of the world's poorest people. They had the audacity to renew the Lord's call—and were joined by Pope John Paul II, who, from an Irish half-Catholic's point of view, may have had a more direct line to the Almighty. But they got together to declare the year of Jubilee.

So . . . Jubilee. Why 'Jubilee'?

What was this year of Jubilee, this year of our Lord's favor?

I'd always read the Scriptures, actually, even the obscure stuff. There it was in Leviticus 25:35 . . . "If your brother becomes poor," the Scriptures say, "and cannot maintain himself . . . you shall maintain him . . . You shall not lend him your money at interest, not give him your food for profit."

This is such an important idea, Jubilee, that this is how Jesus begins his ministry. Jesus is a young man, he's met with the rabbi, he's impressed everybody, people are talking. The elders say, he's a clever guy, this Jesus, but, you know, he hasn't done much public speaking.

When he does, his first words are from Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," he says, "because He has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor." And Jesus proclaims the year of the Lord's favor, the year of Jubilee. I think that's Luke 4 [Luke 4:18].

What he was really talking about was an era of grace—we're still in it.

So fast-forward 2,000 years. That same thought, grace, is now incarnate—in a movement of all kinds of people. It wasn't a blessing club . . . it wasn't a holy huddle. These religious guys were willing to get out on the streets, get their boots dirty, wave the placards, follow their convictions with actions . . . making it really hard for people like me to keep our distance. Ruining my shtick. I almost started to like these church people.

But then, my cynicism got another helping hand.

It was what Colin Powell, a five-star general, called the greatest W.M.D. of them all: a tiny little virus called A.I.D.S. And the religious community, in large part, missed it. And the one's that didn't miss it could only see it as divine retribution for bad behavior. Even on children . . . Even if the fastest growing group of HIV infections were married, faithful women.

Ah, there they go . . . [lightly but firmly pounding on podium] "Judgmentalism is back," I thought to myself.

But in truth, I was wrong again. The church was slow but the church got busy on this the leprosy of our age. Love was on the move. Mercy was on the move. God was on the move. Moving people of all kinds to work with others they had never met, never would have cared to meet . . . We had conservative church groups hanging out with spokesmen from the gay community, all singing off the same hymn sheet on AIDS . . . See, miracles do happen. We had hip-hop stars and country stars . . . This is what happens when God gets on the move: crazy, crazy stuff happens. Popes were seen wearing sunglasses! Jesse Helms had a ghetto blaster now! Evidence of the Spirit moving. It was really . . . it was breathtaking. It literally stopped the world in its tracks.

When churches started demonstrating on debt, governments listened—and acted. When

churches starting organizing, petitioning, and even—that most unholy of acts today, God forbid, lobbying . . . on AIDS and global health, governments listened—and acted. I'm here today in all humility to say: you changed minds; you changed policy; and you changed the world. So, thank you.

[applause]

Check Judaism. Check Islam. Check pretty much anyone. I mean, God may well be with us in our mansions on the hill . . . I hope so. He may well be with us in all manner of controversial stuff . . . maybe, maybe not . . . But the one thing we can all agree, all faiths, all ideologies, is that God is with the vulnerable and the poor. God is in the slums, in the cardboard boxes where the poor play house . . . God is in the silence of a mother who has infected her child with a virus that will end both their lives . . . God is in the cries heard under the rubble of war . . . God is in the debris of wasted opportunity and lives, and God is with us if we are with them.

[applause]

"If you remove the yolk from your midst, the pointing of the finger and the speaking wickedness, and if you give yourself to the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then your light will rise in darkness and your gloom will become like midday and the Lord will continually guide you and satisfy your desire even in scorched places."

It's not a coincidence that in the Scriptures, poverty is mentioned more than 2,100 times. It's not an accident. That's a lot of air time. You know, the only time Jesus Christ is judgmental is on the subject of the poor. 'As you have done it unto the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me.' I believe that's Matthew 25:40. [Quick glance at President Bush]—see, I've been doing my homework.

[laughter]

As I say, good news to the poor.

Here's some good news—[looks at President Bush]—for you, Mr. President. After 9-11 we were told America would have no time for the World's poor. We were told America would be taken up with its own problems of safety. And it's true these are dangerous times, but America has not drawn the blinds and double-locked the doors.

In fact, you have doubled aid to Africa. You have tripled funding for global health. And Mr. President, your emergency plan for AIDS relief and support of the Global Fund—you and Congress—have put 700,000 people onto life-saving anti-retroviral drugs and provided 8 million bed nets to protect children from malaria.

[applause]

Outstanding human achievements. Counterintuitive, I think you'll admit. But Historic. You should be very, very proud.

But here's the bad news. [looks at President Bush] There is so much more to do. There is a gigantic chasm between the scale of the emergency and the scale of the response.

And finally . . . getting to higher levels, higher callings, this is not about charity in the end, is it? It's about justice . . . the good news yet to come. I just want to repeat that: This is not about charity, it's about justice.

And that's too bad. Because we're good at charity. Americans, Irish people, are good at charity. We like to give, and we give a lot, even those who can't afford it. But justice is a higher standard. Africa makes a fool of our idea of justice; it makes a farce of our idea of equality. It mocks our pieties, it doubts our concern, it questions our commitment.

6,500 Africans are still dying every day of a preventable, treatable disease, for lack of drugs we can buy at any drug store. This is not about charity, this is about justice and equality.

Because there's no way we can look at what's happening in Africa and, if we're hon-

est, conclude that deep down, we would let it happen anywhere else. If we really accepted that Africans are equal to us. I say that humbled—[looks over at Senator Barack Obama, Democrat/Illinois, who is seated to his left]—in the company of a man with an African father.

Look at what happened in South East Asia with the tsunami. 150,000 lives lost to the greatest misnomer of all misnomers, "Mother Nature." Well, in Africa, 150,000 lives are lost every month. A tsunami every month. And it's a completely avoidable catastrophe.

It's annoying but justice and equality are mates. Aren't they? Justice always wants to hang out with equality. And equality is a real pain in the ass . . . Seriously. I mean, you think of these Jewish sheep-herders going to meet with the Pharaoh, mud on their shoes, and the Pharaoh goes, "Equal?.. Equal?" And they say, "Yeah, that's what it says here in the book here—we're all made in the image of God, sir." . . .

And eventually the Pharaoh says, "Look, I can accept that. I can accept the Jews—but not the blacks . . . not the women . . . not the gays . . . not the Irish. No way."

[laughter]

So on we go with the journey of equality. On we go in the pursuit of justice.

We hear that call in the ONE Campaign, a growing movement of more than two million Americans . . . five million by the next election, I can promise you . . . united in the belief that where you live should no longer determine whether you live.

We hear that call even more powerfully today, when we mourn the loss of Coretta Scott King—mother of a movement for equality, one that changed the world but is only really getting started. Because these issues are as alive as they ever were; they just change shape and they cross the seas.

Preventing the poorest of the poor from selling their products while we sing the virtues of the free market . . . That's not charity; that's a justice issue. Holding children to ransom for the debts of their grandparents . . . That's not charity; that's a justice issue. Withholding life-saving medicines out of deference to the Office of Patents . . . Well, that's not charity; to me, that's a justice issue.

And while the law is what we say it is, God is not silent on the subject. That's why I say there is the law of the land . . . and then there's a higher standard. And we can hire experts to write them so they benefit us—these laws—so that they say it's OK to protect our agriculture but it's not OK for African farmers to protect their agriculture to earn a living.

As the laws of man are written, that's what they say. But God will not accept that. Mine won't. Will yours?

[pause]

I close this morning on . . . very thin ice, probably.

This is a dangerous idea I've put on the table: my God vs. your God, their God vs. our God . . . vs. no God. It's very easy, in these times, to see religion as a force for division rather than unity.

And this is a town—Washington—that knows something of division. But the reason I'm here, and the reason I keep coming back to Washington, is because this is a town that is proving it can come together on behalf of what the Scriptures call the least of these. . . . It's not a Republican idea. It's not a Democratic idea. It's not even, with all due respect, an American idea. Nor is it unique to any one faith.

"Do unto others as you would have them do to you." [Luke 6:30] Jesus says that.

"Righteousness is this: that one should . . . give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the

needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for the emancipation of the captives." The Koran says that [2:177].

Thus sayeth the Lord: "Bring the homeless poor into the house, when you see the naked, cover him, then your light will break out like the dawn and your recovery will speedily spring forth, then your Lord will be your rear guard." The Jewish Scripture says that. It's Isaiah 58 [verses 7-8] again.

It's a very powerful incentive: "The Lord will watch your back." Sounds like a good deal to me, especially right now. . . .

[laughter]

Right? "The Lord will watch your back." [looks over at President Bush] You like that? OK.

[applause]

A number of years ago, I met a wise man who changed my life. In countless ways, big and small, I was always seeking the Lord's blessing. I'd be saying, "Look, I've got a new song—would you look after it?" . . . "I have a family, I'm going away on tour, please look after them." . . . "I have this crazy idea—could I have a blessing on it?"

And this wise man asked me to stop. He said, "Stop asking God to bless what you're doing. Get involved in what God is doing—because it's already blessed."

[applause]

Well, let's get involved in what God is doing. God, as I said, is always with the poor. That's what God's doing. That's what he's calling us to do.

I was amazed when I first got to this country and I learned how much some churchgoers tithe. Up to ten percent of the family budget. I mean. . . . How does that compare the federal budget, the budget for the entire American family? How much of that goes to the poorest people in the world? Well, it's less than one percent of the federal budget.

Mr. President, Congress, people of faith, people of America: I want to suggest to you today that you see the flow of effective foreign assistance as tithing. . . . Which, to be truly meaningful, will mean an additional one percent of the federal budget tithed to the poor.

Now, what is that one percent that we're asking for in the ONE Campaign? It's not merely a number on a balance sheet or pulled out of the air. One percent is the girl in Africa who gets to go to school, thanks to you. One percent is the AIDS patient who gets her medicine, thanks to you. One percent is the African entrepreneur who can start a small family business, thanks to you. One percent is not redecorating presidential palaces. One percent must not be—or don't give it—money down a rat hole. This one percent is digging waterholes to provide clean water—[looks at Senator Bill Frist, Republican/Tennessee]—like I saw with Bill Frist there in . . . Uganda.

OK, that's what we're asking for.

[applause]

One percent is a new partnership with Africa, not paternalism towards Africa, a new partnership with Africa, where increased assistance flows toward improved governance and initiatives with proven track records and away from the boondoggles and white elephants that we've seen before.

America gives less than one percent now. We're asking for an extra one percent to change the world, to transform millions of lives—but not just that, and I say this to the military men now—not just transform hundreds of thousands, indeed millions of communities, but transform the way they see us, which might be smart in these dangerous times.

One percent as national security, one percent as in enlightened economic self interest, and a better safer world rolled into one. Sounds to me that in this town of deals and

compromises, one percent is the best bargain around.

Thank you very much.

[extensive applause as Bono shakes hands with President Bush and senators]

THE FOLLOWING EXCERPT FROM PRESIDENT BUSH'S SPEECH TOOK PLACE MOMENTS LATER. . .

PRESIDENT BUSH: You know, I was trying to figure out what to say about Bono. . .

[laughter]

BONO: Careful.

[laughter]

PRESIDENT BUSH: And a story jumped to mind about these really good Texas preachers. And he got going in a sermon and a fellow jumped up in the back and said, "Use me, Lord, use me." And the preacher ignored him, and finished his sermon. Next Sunday he gets up, and cranking on another sermon. And the guy jumps up and says, "Use me, Lord, use me." And after the service, he walked up to him and said, "If you're serious, I'd like for you to paint the pews." Next Sunday, he's preaching, the guy stands up and says, "Use me, Lord, use me, but only in an advisory capacity."

[laughter]

So I've gotten to know Bono . . . He's a doer. The thing about this good citizen of the world is he's used his position to get things done. You're an amazing guy, Bono. God bless you.

[applause]

INTRODUCING THE TAXPAYER PRIVACY ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 4, 2006

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. INSLEE, and Ms. BEAN in introducing the Taxpayer Privacy Act of 2006. This bill protects the privacy of millions of Americans, ensuring that taxpayers who rely on paid preparers do not have their confidential and sensitive personal information disseminated, sold or sent overseas.

The IRS is currently considering a rule that would make it easier for tax preparers to disclose the private information contained in tax returns—including name, address, Social Security number, employer, income, and charitable donations. Currently, paid preparers can only use taxpayer information to generate business within their own affiliates. The new rule would allow preparers to obtain taxpayers' approval to disclose tax information to generate outside business.

Taxpayers should not be coerced into giving up their privacy rights just to file their taxes. Our bill protects taxpayers by requiring preparers to use information only to prepare taxes—and not for any other purpose.

Reports also suggest that Ernst and Young and other large tax preparation firms are sending tax returns overseas for processing. But the IRS has no control over tax information once it's been sent to India or another country. Even the best data security systems can't protect private taxpayer information from entrepreneurial foreign businesses than can make huge profits selling U.S. taxpayer information.

Our bill strictly prohibits domestic tax preparers from sending returns overseas for processing. Preparers found to have disclosed private information to a foreign entity would be

assessed a \$1000 fine and up to one year in jail for each wrongful disclosure. The bill does not prohibit a taxpayer from choosing to have their taxes done by a preparer based overseas, it merely protects them from having their taxes shipped to a foreign country when they believe the forms are being completed by their local preparer.

This legislation is a common sense solution that protects taxpayers without burdening tax preparers. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to stand up for taxpayer privacy and support this bill.

IN HONOR OF MAYOR KENNETH JOHNSON

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 4, 2006

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Kenneth Johnson on his retirement from eight years of dedicated service as Mayor of Carthage, Missouri. Kenneth Johnson distinguished himself in Southwest Missouri by his commitment to improving the lives of the citizens in the City of Carthage.

Kenneth Johnson served in the Army of Occupation in Korea in 1946 and returned to duty as a reservist in 1950 where he attained the rank of Master Sergeant. He worked for the Missouri Department of Transportation for 42 years and retired in 1989 as a Senior Construction Inspector. After being elected to the Carthage City Council in 1990 and 1992, he was elected Mayor of Carthage in 1998 and became the first mayor in 60 years elected to a second 4-year term. Mayor Johnson's public service also included serving as President of the Park and Recreation Board from 1977 to 1983 and President of the Board of Public Works from 1983 to 1988.

I congratulate Mayor Johnson on his accomplishments during his tenure in public service and wish him the best in his retirement.

RECOGNIZING NANCY CAMPBELL ON RECEIVING CARE AWARD

HON. TOM OSBORNE

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 4, 2006

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Nancy Campbell of Lincoln, Nebraska, on receiving the Commonwealth Academy Recognition for Educators (CARE) Award. The CARE award, presented by Commonwealth Academy in Alexandria, Virginia, honors educators who have made outstanding educational contributions in their communities.

This year, Nancy Campbell was selected as one of only a few educators nationwide to receive this award for her work at the Lancaster County Youth Service and Juvenile Detention Center in Lincoln, Nebraska. Formerly of Scottsbluff, Nebraska, Nancy Campbell has been teaching for 38 years, and she has spent the past four teaching reading, basic skills and positive action in the boy's maximum security area at the Youth Service Center.

Ms. Campbell received her B.S. in Education from Appalachian State University in

Boone, North Carolina, and over her career she has taught at 12 schools in 9 States. Since one of her sons has Attention Deficit Disorder, she has a special understanding of students with learning challenges, serving as president of an Attention Deficit Disorder parents support group in Scottsbluff for 10 years.

Ms. Campbell lives in Lincoln, Nebraska, with her husband Dave. She has three sons, one of whom is adopted, and has also raised three foster children.

I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding Nancy Campbell and congratulating her on this distinguished achievement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM COLE

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 4, 2006

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, on March 30, 2006 for rollcall vote No. 80, I was unavoidably detained. If I had been present, on rollcall vote No. 80, I would have voted "no."

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CREATION OF BUST HONORING LATE CHIEF JUSTICE WILLIAM H. REHNQUIST

HON. RICHARD W. POMBO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 4, 2006

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution memorializing and honoring the late Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, William H. Rehnquist.

The resolution authorizes and directs the Curator of the United States Supreme Court to create a marble bust of the late Chief Justice and have it placed in the Supreme Court building to honor his memory and legacy to the Court and the United States.

Mr. Speaker, Chief Justice Rehnquist was first confirmed to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1971 as the new Associate Justice replacing Justice John Marshall Harlan. He then served as Associate Justice until 1986 when President Reagan nominated and the Senate confirmed him as the new Chief Justice to replace Chief Justice Warren Burger. Mr. Rehnquist presided as Chief Justice from September 1986 until September 2005 for a total of 19 years, making him the fourth-longest-serving Chief Justice in the history of the Court.

Prior to joining the Court, Mr. Rehnquist served in World War II in the United States Army. After the war ended, he attended Stanford University on the G.I. bill where he received bachelor's and master's degrees in political science and then attended Harvard University where he received a master's degree in government. He later returned to Stanford University to attend law school along with future Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. In 1951, Mr. Rehnquist went to Washington, D.C., and began what would be his long and successful career with the U.S. Supreme Court when he worked as a law clerk for Justice Robert Jackson during the Court's 1951–1952 term.