

where he is now retiring from after 34 years of excellent service. He became Director of the Department in 1989.

Bill has achieved many successes during his time as Director—not only for the Riverside County Department of Veterans but for the entire community of Riverside. He founded the Interagency Coalition on Homeless Veterans and hosted ten annual Homeless Veterans Care Fairs to publicize the plight of homelessness. Bill remains active as an advocate for homeless veterans, serving on the City's Homeless Task Force, the FEMA Local Board, and advocating with the JPA at March Air Force Base for a permanent facility for U.S. vets, and homeless veterans service provider. Bill also founded the Riverside National Cemetery's (RNC) Memorial Honor Detail, an all-volunteer organization providing military honors for veteran burials at RNC. Bill founded Vets Express, a free transportation service for veterans traveling from Blythe and the Coachella Valley to the VA Medical Center in Loma Linda. He worked to name a stretch of I-10 the Veterans' Memorial Freeway and successfully advocated for the placement of three VA Outpatient Clinics in Riverside County. Bill also founded the Annual Salute to Veterans' Parade in the City of Riverside.

Bill has worked on several memorials and monuments task forces, including the Villegas Memorial, the Riverside County Wall of Honor, the Riverside County Veterans' Memorial, and the monuments and memorials at the Riverside National Cemetery. As a member of the Veterans' Advisory Committee, he instituted the annual David Goldware Friend of the Veteran Award, the Legislative Breakfast series, and regular county-wide veterans' benefits workshops. Bill has advocated for and staged events at RNC as a way of introducing RNC to more Inland Empire residents.

Bill has also served on the GoRiverside Committee to promote the use of public transportation and he conducted the first county and state veterans' needs surveys, published the results with the help of the San Bernardino Veteran Service Officer, and distributed the surveys statewide to elected officials and veterans advocates and leaders. Bill continues to serve on the Evergreen Memorial Cemetery Committee to assist in restoration of this historic landmark in the city of Riverside and has served two four-year terms on the city of Riverside's Planning Commission.

Bill Densmore's tireless passion for veterans and community service has contributed immensely to the betterment of the community of Riverside, California. Bill has been the heart and soul of our veterans community events and I am proud to call him a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many community members are grateful for his service and salute him as he retires.

SALUTING MAYOR DENNIS  
TRUDEAU AS HE PREPARES TO  
RETIRE

### HON. PAUL C. BROUN

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Speaker, today I wish to honor and pay tribute to a faithful public servant in my 10th Congressional District of Georgia.

Dennis Trudeau has served Grovetown as mayor for over 20 years, but his service for the greater good has been a lifelong pursuit. Mayor Trudeau is a patriot who served his community, his country, and his world with distinction.

Before taking that first oath of office in 1988, he served his resident country of Canada with distinction in uniform. Trudeau grew up in Canada and enlisted in the Canadian Army as soon as he came of age. He was one of the thousand of brave men who stormed the beaches of Normandy and was even taken as a prisoner of war. Mayor Trudeau later joined the United States Army in July of 1946 and after retiring from active duty in July of 1967 worked with the U.S. Army Signal School until 1984. He is a man of courage, dedication, and strength.

It is obvious the people of Grovetown believed in Mayor Trudeau or they would not have re-elected him time and time again. In a newspaper editorial one resident wrote, "He has lent dignity and restored a sense of pride to the residents of Grovetown." As the U.S. Congressman of Georgia's Tenth District, I consider it an honor to represent this fine leader and his dear town in Washington, DC.

Mr. Trudeau, we salute you and your service and wish you the best as you embark on the next phase of your life.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. JIM MATHESON

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. MATHESON. Madam Speaker, I missed votes on December 11th and December 12th 2007 in order to attend the funeral of a close family member, which was held in Utah.

Had I been present and voting, I would have voted as follows: On rollcall vote No. 1142, "aye," on rollcall vote No. 1143, "aye," on rollcall vote No. 1144, "aye," on rollcall vote No. 1145, "aye," on rollcall vote No. 1146, "aye," on rollcall vote No. 1147, "aye," on rollcall vote No. 1148, "aye," on rollcall vote No. 1149, "aye," on rollcall vote No. 1150, "aye," on rollcall vote No. 1151, "aye," on rollcall vote No. 1152, "aye," on rollcall vote No. 1153, "aye," on rollcall vote No. 1154, "aye," on rollcall vote No. 1155, "aye."

TRIBUTE TO JOYCE HAMLETT: A  
WOMAN CONTINUING TO BLAZE  
NEW TRAILS AS KEEPER OF THE  
MACE

### HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker and Members of Congress, as a Member of Congress, I am moved by Ms. Joyce Hamlett's trust in patience, trust in truth and trust that God has planned a great path for her life. I rise to ask you to join me in recognizing the excellent service and continued professional success of Ms. Joyce Hamlett, newly appointed Assistant Sergeant of Arms for the U.S. House of Representatives.

Congressional business begins when the Mace is set, and ends when it is lifted. There is one woman with the great responsibility to ensure that the Mace is available for this historical purpose. And, in times of emergency, one woman guards the Mace and preserves its protection.

Ms. Joyce Hamlett is the first African American woman to serve as the Keeper of the Mace. Her moral upbringing prepared her for this honorable position. Ms. Hamlett was raised by her grandfather in a church community that fostered the importance of honesty and faith. Indeed, Ms. Hamlett's strong heritage has served as the guiding force throughout her career on Capitol Hill.

In the early 1980s, Ms. Hamlett departed Broadway, North Carolina and began her successful professional journey alongside her mother, Betty Pearson, at the Capitol Café. Within five years, Ms. Hamlett rose to cook for lawmakers upstairs in the Capitol Hill restaurant.

Her respectable interaction with lawmakers continued when she went on to serve as elevator operator under the Architect of the Capitol. During that time, she formed long-lasting friendships with many Members of Congress.

In the early 1990s, Ms. Hamlett interviewed for the position of chamber security, and soon after began to firmly enforce House rules on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. As chamber security, she was well-known as one who worked hard to safeguard the principles and rich tradition of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Because of her excellent service, Ms. Hamlett was promoted to her current position as Keeper of the Mace. Ms. Hamlett is not only Keeper of the Mace, but she is also keeper of a strong moral foundation and keeper of the wisdom and principle represented by the Mace's solid-silver eagle.

Madam Speaker and Members of Congress, I congratulate Ms. Joyce Hamlett, a woman that continues to blaze new trails with distinction as Assistant Sergeant of Arms for the U.S. House of Representatives.

THE ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA

### HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my concerns about the economic relationship between the U.S. and Russia, and to once again call on the Bush Administration to exert pressure on Russia to ratify its Bilateral Investment Treaty with the U.S.

In October I chaired a hearing in the Domestic and International Monetary Policy, Trade and Technology Subcommittee on the U.S.-Russia economic relationship as it relates to the financial losses U.S. shareholders suffered as a result of the dissolution of the Yukos Oil Company. During the 1990s, Yukos was not only the largest private company in Russia, it was also a model of corporate governance that set an early example for other Russian companies entering the global market. Its chairman, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, was

well known in the U.S. and Europe for his leadership in helping Russia make the transition to a market economy.

But the Yukos Company's vast energy resources and Mr. Khodorkovsky's Western leanings proved too much for Kremlin operatives eager to assert state control over the energy sector and discipline Russian businessmen who supported opposition parties.

In what was widely reported by major news publications at the time, Russian authorities used arbitrary and possibly extralegal means to dismantle Yukos and redistribute \$100 billion of its assets to state companies overseen by the Kremlin. At the end of the day, American investors in Yukos lost somewhere between \$7 and \$12 billion and Mr. Khodorkovsky, convicted on trumped up tax charges, was condemned to a penal colony.

Quite simply, U.S. and other would-be foreign investors need to know whether the rule of law will be upheld in Russia. And the Bush Administration needs to be motivated to start asking the Kremlin some tough questions when it comes to protecting the interests of U.S. investors.

From a Russian perspective, instances like the Yukos situation will create an uncertainty among potential investors, which could result in a substantial loss of investment and impede Russia's integration into the global economy.

In a December 12, 2007, article in the Washington Post, Dr. Anders Aslund of the Peterson Institute for International Economics writes that the Yukos incident, "unleashed a great wave of renationalization in the post-communist world," and that the men in the Kremlin are, "taking over one big, well-run private company after another, turning them into less efficient state-owned firms."

In support of his assertions, Dr. Aslund mentions Leonid Reiman, a former KGB official, who is now Russia's Minister of Communications, while still controlling \$8 billion in personal telecommunications assets.

The United States and Russia signed a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) in 1992 but the treaty has not been ratified by Russia. Ratification of the BIT would provide protection for U.S. investors against the types of actions taken by the Russian government in the Yukos case.

The failure of Russia to ratify the BIT, has been a key weakness in the U.S.-Russia economic relationship. Compared to investors from many other nations, U.S. investors are at a disadvantage. For example, 38 countries—including France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Spain and the U.K.—have concluded bilateral investment treaties with Russia that have also been ratified. The presence of these treaties allows Yukos shareholders from these countries to sue the Russian government, but that option is not available to U.S. shareholders.

I want to again call on the Bush Administration to persuade Russia to ratify the BIT. By ratifying the BIT, President Putin would send a strong message to U.S. investors that investing in projects in Russia is safe, and that the Yukos situation is the exception, not the rule.

Madam Speaker, I recommend to my colleagues Dr. Aslund's article in the Washington Post of December 12, 2007, and I request that the article be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

#### RUSSIA'S NEW OLIGARCHY

FOR PUTIN AND FRIENDS, A GUSHER OF QUESTIONABLE DEALS  
(By Antlers Aslund)

The news that Dmitry Medvedev, Vladimir Putin's nominee to succeed him as president, wants Putin to become prime minister of Russia next year opens one option for Putin to retain power after his term ends. Putin has little choice but to stay in power as long as he can.

A year ago, a famous Russian journalist asked me: Is it true that Putin has a net fortune of \$35 to 40 billion?" (This journalist, of course, has long been excluded from Kremlin-controlled media.)

This fall, the respected Polish magazine *Wprost* published its annual response to *Forbes*, its list of the richest people in Eastern Europe. Besides the well-known business executives, there is Gennady Timchenko, a little-known character with a purported fortune of \$20 billion. A small oil trader who resides in Geneva, Timchenko is from St. Petersburg, where he belongs to the same luxurious dacha collective as Putin.

I first heard of Timchenko in February 2004. Ivan Rybkin, a Russian politician who audaciously opposed Putin in the presidential election that year, claimed that Putin was "one of Russia's biggest oligarchs" and that he operated through three middlemen, including Timchenko. Rybkin charged that the Putin-Timchenko group was gobbling up the embattled oil giant Yukos. He swiftly disappeared under mysterious circumstances and after he re-emerged, was forced to suspend his campaign.

Indeed, the privately owned Yukos oil company has been devoured by the state-dominated Rosneft, whose chairman is Igor Sechin, Point's closest adviser and collaborator. The confiscation, which began in 2003, was publicly justified with not-very-credible citations of tax violations. Rosneft's gain was probably about \$100 billion in Yukos assets. U.S. investors in Yukos have lost at least \$7 billion; some claim the figure is as much as \$12 billion. In October, the House Financial Services Committee's subcommittee on domestic and international monetary policy held a hearing on this, at which I testified.

The Bush administration, however, has not protested this outrageous confiscation of private American property. Then-Secretary of State Colin Powell expressed strong support for Putin in October 2004: "The Russian people came out of the post-Soviet Union era in a state of total chaos—a great deal of freedom, but it was freedom to steal from the state and President Putin took over and restored a sense of order in the country and moved in a democratic way." Putin appreciated—and might have been encouraged by—these words. Two months later, Yukos's main oil field was sold to Rosneft in an auction that Putin's economic adviser, Andrei Illarionov, called "the scam of the year" (for which he was sacked). U.S. shareholders in Yukos have come to realize that the United States has no single valid agreement that safeguards their property rights; European investors, though, can sue the Russian state under three treaties.

The Yukos confiscation has not cost Putin anything. In fact, he unleashed a great wave of renationalization in the post-communist world. His chums from St. Petersburg are taking over one big, well-run private company after another, turning them into less efficient state-owned firms. One of Putin's close friends from the KGB, Leonid Reiman, is his minister of communications. Last year, an independent arbitration court in Zurich ruled that Reiman, despite his denials,

was the real owner of Russian telecommunications assets currently valued at on less than \$6 billion. Reiman has amassed this extraordinary fortune as a state official, partly through beneficial privatizations, partly through privileged licenses issued to his companies. A government with any standards would fire such an official, but Putin suppressed this negative information within Russia and kept Reiman on, showing that he accepts corruption.

The Russian daily *Kommersant* published a long interview with Russian businessman Oleg Shvartsman on the eve of the recent Duma elections. Sensationally, he described how he raided private enterprises to the benefit of KGB officials described his activity as "velvet reprivatization." Kremlin spokesmen have denied the report.

Even more striking was an interview last month with the Kremlin-connected Russian political observer Stanislav Belkovsky in the German daily *Die Welt*. Belkovsky, who initiated the Kremlin attack on Yukos, claimed that Putin controlled specific shares of three companies (Surgutneftegaz; Gazprom; and Gunvor. Timchenko's company) worth some \$40 billion. Putin has not commented on this allegation.

According to Transparency International, Russia is growing more corrupt even as most other post-communist countries are controlling their corruption. The fundamental dilemma for Russia, and Putin, is that a system so corrupt cannot be very stable. It's less clear why President Bush does not call Putin out on this or even defend the interests of U.S. citizens and corporations.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE BEST BUDDIES EMPOWERMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES ACT OF 2007

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. BLUNT. Madam Speaker, I am pleased today to join my colleague from Maryland, the House majority leader, to introduce the Best Buddies Empowerment for People with Intellectual Disabilities Act of 2007. As Mr. HOYER will attest, this is not the first time we have come together in a meaningful way in this important area—and we were both proud when the Special Olympics Sport and Empowerment Act of 2004 became law in the 108th Congress.

It's estimated that between 7 and 8 million Americans live with intellectual disabilities, impacting nearly 1 out of every 10 families. For these individuals, life is not always welcoming—and very rarely is it easy. People with intellectual disabilities are often excluded from society—whether at school, in the workplace or in their communities—simply because of their differences. So I was glad to learn of a program called Best Buddies. This organization, founded in 1989 by Anthony Kennedy Shriver, helps integrate people with intellectual disabilities into mainstream society, end their social isolation, and embark upon productive, fulfilling lives. The Best Buddies program works with volunteers to establish meaningful friendships with their non-disabled peers in order to help increase the self-esteem, confidence, and abilities of people with and without intellectual disabilities. This is a program that has enhanced the lives of actual people