

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE DANIEL LEE MARTINEZ, JR. SCOTTSDALE HEALTHCARE'S "SALUTE TO MILITARY" HONOREE

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a member of the Armed Forces from my home state of Arizona. Every month Scottsdale Healthcare honors service members that perform diligent service to this country. For the month of December, they have recognized Lieutenant Junior Grade Daniel Lee Martinez, Jr.

I commend Scottsdale Healthcare for paying tribute to such outstanding service members for their bravery and service to our country.

Lieutenant Junior Grade Martinez entered the Naval Academy in 2001 and majored in Quantitative Economics. After graduation, he earned his wings as a Naval Flight Officer from Naval Air Stations in Pensacola and Jacksonville, Florida. After being permanently stationed in Whidbey Island, Washington, Lieutenant Martinez was deployed to Iraq, where he served seven months. He then went on to serve three months in South America in support of counter narcotic operations. Currently, he is expecting another deployment to Iraq in 2009.

Throughout his brave military service, LTJG Martinez has received many awards, including a Battle "E" Ribbon, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, Rifle Marksmanship (Expert), and Pistol Marksmanship (Expert).

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing the inspiring efforts of Lieutenant Junior Grade Daniel Lee Martinez, Jr. who is serving our country and protecting the lives of his fellow servicemen in combat.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF MR. ANTONIO RUGIERO, SR.

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. McCOTTER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor and acknowledge the remarkable life and legacy of Antonio Rugiero, Sr. upon his passing at the age of 70.

Antonio was born in San Giovanni Fiore, Calabria, Italy on June 18, 1938. He attended the Peitra Fitta Monasteri in Cosenza, Italy and later completed his college business degree. In 1960, he arrived in America and two years later borrowed \$2,000 to begin his pursuit of the American dream. With his funds, a small pizzeria named Roman Village Restaurant was born. With his incredible commitment to make his business a success, Papa Rugiero created a thriving business. His sons carried on Antonio's tradition of excellent food and premier service by opening Antonio's Cucina Italiana, named after their father. Four restaurants later, it is clear that Antonio's family has created a legacy.

Antonio Rugiero, Sr. was a man deeply involved in the Detroit area community. He

never hesitated to sponsor local events, such as kid's hockey teams, baseball and football teams. Along with supporting his wonderful family, Antonio was a community leader in contributing to charitable causes including Dearborn Heights Spirit Fest, the Feast of Saint Antonio, Dine Out Detroit, Breast Cancer Awareness, Diabetes Foundation and numerous others.

On October 19, 2008, Antonio passed away. A beloved husband, father, and grandfather, he is survived by his loving wife, Enrica, four sons Patrick Attilio, Mark Luigi, Robert Attilio, and Anthony Rugiero, Jr., and ten grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, Antonio Rugiero, Sr. was a man of great respect, a successful entrepreneur, and a loving husband and father. Today, as we bid him farewell, I ask my colleagues to join me in mourning his passing and honoring his lifetime of contribution to our community.

COMMENDING PENNY HOLMES ABRAHAM

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Penny Holmes Abraham for her accomplishments and work benefitting Central Louisiana.

For the past 11 years, Mrs. Abraham has been an excellent art teacher at Alexandria Country Day School and has established an art program recognized throughout the community for its high standards and talented students.

Mrs. Abraham's efforts at Alexandria Country Day School earned a \$5,000 prize for the school in the educational competition as part of the "Heart of Spain" exhibit in Alexandria.

Her students have won numerous awards, and their works have been highlighted on book covers, presented in art exhibits, as well as featured in fundraisers for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and the American Heart Association. Mrs. Abraham and her students have also been a fundamental part of the River Oaks Art Square Van Gogh Gala by contributing hundreds of pieces of art for the auction.

Moreover, Mrs. Abraham has volunteered as the art instructor for children who are being served by the Rapides Children's Advocacy Center and has assisted them in producing art work for a CASA calendar. She created several pieces of art to be used in the show home tour for another CASA fundraiser.

Mrs. Abraham's art work has been displayed in numerous private homes and businesses throughout the area, giving her a prominent role in the professional art community in Central Louisiana.

For these endeavors, it was my honor to select Mrs. Abraham to create the 2008 White House Christmas ornament for Louisiana's 5th Congressional District. Her work, truly illustrative of the region, is displayed on this year's White House Christmas tree.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Mrs. Abraham for her aptitude and accomplishments benefitting Central Louisiana.

TRIBUTE TO SPECIAL AGENT SCOTT E. JACOBS

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Special Agent Scott E. Jacobs, who will be retiring from the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) after 28 years of dedicated service.

Throughout his expansive career, Scott has been instrumental in the successful implementation of many operations within NCIS. When he first began his career in 1981, Scott was assigned to the Naval Investigative Service, NIS, in Seattle, Washington. After his initial post, he took on an undercover bidding operation in Yokosuka, Japan when he transferred to the NIS Resident Office. He then returned to the United States, where his keen operational style garnered Scott positions within management ranks, such as staff assistant to the regional director, Far East region, 1997–1988; special agent in charge of the Regional Fraud Office in New Jersey, 1988–1992; and assistant special agent in charge of the Metropolitan Northeast Field Office in New Jersey, 1992–1995.

I came to know Scott during his time as a Department of the Navy legislative fellow. For 2 years, he worked with my staff as a Navy fellow and helped to ensure the people of New Jersey's third district were well-represented. Following a stint as executive assistant to the deputy director and deputy assistant director for economic crimes, 1996–1997, he returned to Capitol Hill to work with the Joint Economic Committee. There, he focused his efforts on the Endangered Species Act. Scott then returned to NCIS headquarters and resumed his position as deputy assistant director for economic crimes.

In 2001, Scott spent time in Seattle as a special agent-in-charge of the NCIS Northwest Field Office and spearheaded the NCIS Law Enforcement Information Exchange (LinX). This valuable data-sharing system has become one of the Nation's premier tools for law enforcement agencies. He later returned to our Nation's Capitol in 2005 upon his appointment to the Senior Executive Service as the executive assistant director for combating terrorism. Scott was also tapped to serve as the acting director of the Department of Defense Counterintelligence Field Activity (CIFA), where he managed the CIFA's transition to the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Madam Speaker, Scott's enthusiasm and abiding loyalty for the NCIS are only surpassed by his genuine desire to embrace and enhance the world around him. As he celebrates his retirement, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for his leadership, commitment, and service to our Nation.

MISSING OPPORTUNITIES ON HUMAN RIGHTS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, despite the seemingly heartfelt personal convictions of

President Bush, I believe that history will show a legacy of missed opportunities on human rights for this administration—failure to consistently apply their rhetoric; failure to be a tireless advocate for the voiceless.

"From the day of our founding, we have proclaimed that every man and woman on Earth has rights, and dignity and matchless value because they bear the image of the maker of heaven and Earth."

These rousing words were spoken by President Bush at his second inaugural address—a stirring articulation of what is at the core of this "shining city on a hill" and a reminder of the hope that is inspired by extending the promise of America's founding to all the oppressed of the world. But in order for our soaring words about freedom, liberty and democracy to ring true to the ears of countless dissidents languishing in prisons the world over, they cannot only be applied to pariah states like Burma and North Korea, but consistently in places like China, Egypt, Vietnam and Saudi Arabia where these virtues are daily under assault.

While our national interests are complex and manifold, we can be assured that it always befits a great nation to boldly stand with the forgotten, the oppressed, the silenced and the imprisoned. If not America, then who?

And yet, with the State Department, boldness was rare, and in some cases altogether absent. For more than a year during President Bush's second term the critical position of Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, the lead human rights position within the United States government, went unfilled. It bears considering what message this sent to dictators and tyrants the world over.

Personnel aside, the administration's policy in this area was unpredictable at best. I have binders of letters I sent over the last 8 years to a host of officials throughout the administration, pleading for action on human rights issues and cases. Many went unanswered and those which did garner a reply were rarely satisfactory.

In January 2001, after having returned from a trip to Central Africa which included Sudan, I wrote the administration urging the appointment of a high-level, high-profile special envoy for Sudan, who would give the same type of attention to Sudan that Senator Mitchell gave to Northern Ireland. It was the first of many letters I would write with this request including an April 2001 letter in which I joined with a bipartisan group of dozens of Congressional colleagues in again urging the administration to appoint a high-caliber special envoy to address the deteriorating situation in Southern Sudan where over 2.2 million people had died over the previous decade because of the civil war.

Eventually in September 2001, the President appointed former Senator John Danforth as special envoy and his leadership was in fact instrumental in securing the Comprehensive Peace Accord thereby bringing the 20-year civil war to end. I remain grateful for the President's leadership in helping to bring about an end to the bloodshed in this tortured country for at least a time.

But the Khartoum regime was not finished with its atrocities—they were now pursuing a campaign of terror in Darfur. I wrote President Bush in June 2004 and again in November urging him to take every means necessary to

press the United Nations to act quickly to save innocent lives in Darfur. Secretary of State Powell rightly spoke the truth, despite considerable indifference by members of the international community, in calling evil by its name and declaring the atrocities in Sudan genocide. But there was little followthrough.

In February of 2005 I again wrote the administration, this time Secretary Rice, urging appointment of a special envoy to focus on Darfur—hopeful that the model utilized in the South might bear similar fruit in Darfur.

In April of that same year, against the backdrop of genocide, the CIA flew Sudanese intelligence chief Maj. General Saleh Gosh to Washington for "consultations on the war on terror." Gosh is well-known to be an architect of the genocide. I wrote the administration protesting the visit. While I understand that in the intelligence business it is sometimes unavoidable to deal with unsavory figures, it is hard to conceive of what information he could have provided, here in our Nation's Capital, which could justify our government hosting such a person.

Several months later, in October, I wrote Secretary Rice after learning that the government of Sudan had hired Mr. Robert Cabelly, managing director, C/R International, to lobby on its behalf. It was appalling that the State Department had granted the necessary waiver to permit a genocidal government to obtain representation.

In July 2006 I again wrote the administration reiterating my request for appointment of a special envoy for Sudan to work to ensure the successful implementation of the CPA and to bring a keen focus to the genocide in Darfur. Other Members of Congress had shown their support for a special envoy by appropriating \$250,000 for this office in an Emergency Supplemental bill. With the funding available, and peace in the region hanging in the balance, I believed that a special envoy would send a clear message to Khartoum that the U.S. was committed to the success of the CPA.

At long last, in Fall 2006, the President appointed Andrew Natsios as special envoy.

An August 2008 New Republic piece had this to say about Sudan: "No genocide has ever been so thoroughly documented while it was taking place . . . In the case of the genocide in Darfur, ignorance has never been possible." In a heartbreaking account in the same piece, William Ezekiel, editor of the Khartoum Monitor, is quoted as having great hope in America's ability to rescue Sudan. In response to a question about the cause of this hope he says, "Americans? They are not angels. But they are keen enough to save the weak from the oppressors." Sadly Mr. Ezekiel's hope in this instance was misplaced.

China repeatedly undercut the United States in the U.N. Security Council, and thwarted our attempt to impose sanctions on the genocidal Sudanese government because of their own self-interest—namely energy resources. The China National Petroleum Corp, a state-held entity, has more than a 40 percent stake in Petrodar, a major Sudanese oil consortium. But China's offenses at home are even more staggering—imprisoned pastors, brutal crack-downs in Tibet, North Koreans refugees forcibly repatriated, reporters silenced—the list goes on and on.

In 2006, the administration afforded Chinese President Hu Jintao full military honors at the White House. Hu Jintao first visited Wash-

ington in May 2002 as vice president, and summarily refused to accept a letter from four members of Congress raising various human rights concerns and urging China to release political prisoners, including 25 Tibetans, who had been imprisoned during the vice president's tenure as party secretary in Tibet.

I was deeply troubled when the so-called "Butchers of Beijing" were awarded the honor of hosting the 2008 Olympic Games. I urged the president not to attend the Games, fearing that it would communicate a tacit approval of the Chinese communist government, and would dishearten the countless political dissidents and people of faith who languish behind bars.

Once it became clear that the president was set on attending the Games I maintained hope that he would mark his time in China with more than mere sporting events. He could have worshipped with the underground church. He could have given a major speech in China, like President Reagan did at the Danlov Monastery in Moscow during the height of the Cold War, publicly calling on the government to promote religious tolerance. He could have boldly laid a foundation in his words and actions, such that when the Olympic flame was extinguished in Beijing, and the eyes of the world looked elsewhere, the flickering flame of freedom would burn yet more brightly.

In fact just weeks before the Games got under way Secretary Rice was in China on official business and failed to publicly even mention the fact that several notable Chinese pastors and activists were arrested during her visit. Instead she limited her public remarks to the topic of preferred Olympic sporting events.

And now that the Games have ended, we see once again that China's repression knows no bounds. Just this week, Christianity Today reported that "Amid post-Olympic shifts in China's attitude toward the West, the government decided that sacred music should disappear" including the seasonal masterpiece Handel's Messiah.

In short, the State Department's relationship with the Chinese government did not help.

I shudder to think what the dissident, rotting in prison for 19 years now, for the "crime" of marching through Tiananmen Square with a paper maché statue of lady liberty, thought when much of the world, including the United States, spoke glowingly during the Summer Games of how far China had come? What about the peace-loving Buddhist monk who, because he expressed loyalty to the Dalai Lama, is living under house-arrest? Or the Uyghur Muslim mother who had her second child forcibly aborted? What of the Protestant house church leader who lives in fear every time he gathers his flock to disciple them or the Catholic bishop who administers holy communion under government surveillance? What message was communicated to the Falun Gong practitioner in a reeducation camp or the labor activist toiling in the logai who hears that leaders of the free world came to his country for the Olympic Games and failed to raise their plight with the man to whom their captors answer?

I have repeatedly been assured that high-ranking U.S. government officials are raising these "sensitive" matters privately when they meet with their foreign counterparts. But whispered pleas are not the same as public proclamations. Countless dissidents from Sharansky

to Solzhenitsyn can attest to this truth. Their lives in captivity did not improve because President Reagan quietly urged Gorbachev to set them free, but because he publicly shamed them.

In Egypt opposition leader Ayman Nour, who was himself inspired by President Bush's call for democracy in Egypt, challenged Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in the 2005 elections and was jailed prior to the election. His wife has tirelessly advocated for his release with inconsistent help from the U.S.

Nour's plight is indicative of a confused policy in Egypt and throughout the Middle East which gave occasional lip-service to human rights and freedom and then rarely stood with reformers who dared to answer the call.

In 2002, the administration boldly threatened to withhold additional foreign assistance to Egypt, the second largest recipient of U.S. aid since 1979, largely because of their imprisonment of pro-democracy activist Saad Ibrahim. This was the first time that any administration linked the human rights of a Middle Eastern country to its eligibility to receive foreign assistance. The efficacy of this approach was apparent when Ibrahim was eventually released.

The amount of aid we give Egypt is a powerful means of prompting political reform and protection of vulnerable minorities, like the 9 million Coptic Christians—an ancient community withering under tremendous pressure. But the visionary approach of the early days of the administration quickly faded to business as usual with the U.S. expressing only mild disapproval over Mubarak's February 2006 announcement of the delay of municipal elections and aid continuing unabated.

Vietnam is another example, like China, where trade has trumped human rights for the last 8 years. Just this summer, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung visited the U.S. but the focus of talks with the President was almost solely on economic cooperation with little to no mention of human rights abuses particularly of political dissidents and the Christian minority.

Since 2004 Vietnam had been on the Countries of Particular Concern list annually put out by the State Department which names the worst violators of religious freedom. But in 2006, on the eve of the President's visit to Hanoi, Vietnam was removed despite persistent abuse, harassment and detention for those seeking to practice their faith outside of government approved religious organizations. Shortly after the removal the government launched a crackdown. Sadly we had relinquished a major diplomatic tool for bringing about reform.

If China is any indication of the future, we would be naive to assume that more trade between our two countries will bring about political reform.

The list of missed opportunities goes on and on. The ancient community of Iraqi Christians is on the verge of extinction, Egypt's Bahais continue to be denied basic rights, the people of Tibet are helpless to do anything as their homeland is plundered, a sobering assessment on this International Human Rights Day which marks the 60th anniversary of the U.N. adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

President Reagan once said, "To prisoners of conscience throughout the world, take heart; you have not been forgotten. We, your

brothers and sisters in God, have made your cause our cause, and we vow never to relent until you have regained the freedom that is your birthright as a child of God."

A word to my Republican colleagues as our party seeks to once again find its voice in the aftermath of a difficult election year: we must return to the principles at the heart of the Republican Party—the party of Lincoln and Reagan. We must affirm that we stand for the defenseless, champion liberty, confront injustice. In the words of our own party platform let us not forget that, "the international promotion of human rights reflects our heritage, our values and our national interest."

And to my Democratic colleagues, specifically President-elect Obama, I pray that the words which rang out on the night of his historic victory will in fact be realized during his administration. He rightly spoke directly to those "huddled around radios in the forgotten corners of the globe," and told them that the "true strength of our nation comes not from the might of our arms or the scale of our wealth, but from the enduring power of our ideals: democracy, liberty, opportunity and unyielding hope." I would go a step further. America is never more strong, never more fully America, than when we are seeking to secure these ideals the world over: for the Egyptian opposition leader, the Chinese house church pastor, the Vietnamese reporter, the Darfurian refugee.

COMMENDING THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE VILLAGE OF MORGANZA

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the Centennial Anniversary of the Village of Morganza.

Named after the first American sheriff of Pointe Coupee Parish, Colonel Charles Morgan, the Village of Morganza was incorporated in 1908.

Originally from Pennsylvania, Morgan came to Pointe Coupee Parish in 1830. He was a prominent land-owner in the parish, and served in the Louisiana Legislature and represented the Mississippi River Authority.

During the Civil War, the Village of Morganza was the site of a Union Army encampment. Several battles were fought in this area throughout the war. The largest conflict in Pointe Coupee Parish occurred at nearby Stirling Plantation, on September 29, 1863.

Just before the turn of the Twentieth Century, the Morganza Post Office was organized, and the Town Hall was built in 1968.

St. Ann's Catholic Church was founded in 1916, but was so severely damaged by storms in 1934 and 1935, the structure was later destroyed. The present church building was dedicated in October 1935.

The Village of Morganza is perhaps best known for the Morganza Spillway which helps control flooding on the lower Mississippi River. It is also commonly known for featured scenes in the movie "Easy Rider" in 1968.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Centennial Anniversary of the Village of Morganza. I am proud of the

residents of this historical community for ensuring its charm and spirit is as strong today as it was 100 years prior.

HONORING JIM WITT, CITY MANAGER OF COPPELL

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Jim Witt, who is retiring after fifteen years of service as City Manager of Coppell, Texas. His dedication to the community proves that citizens can truly make a difference in the lives of others, and I am proud to honor such a distinguished leader.

Mr. Witt has played an indispensable role in the development of Coppell during his tenure. In his fifteen years of service, Coppell has increased its size by 19,000 residents, the City staff increased from 178 to 365, and the City budget grew from roughly \$15 million to approximately \$81 million.

Mr. Witt oversaw tremendous economic growth in Coppell. Many of the buildings in Coppell that stand as cornerstones of the community were only possible through the efforts of Mr. Witt. To name just a few of the buildings he has played an instrumental role with: the Justice Center, three Fire Stations, a Fire Administration building, a Service Center, the William T. Cozby Public Library, an Aquatics and Recreation Center, a Municipal Cemetery, Wagon Wheel Park, Andy Brown East and Central, MacArthur Park, over six miles of trails, Town Center Plaza, and the Community/Senior Center.

With Mr. Witt's leadership, he helped create several community-based initiatives such as Farmers Market, community gardens and the half-cent sales tax for schools.

On behalf of the 24th District of Texas, I would like to thank Mr. Witt for his tireless service to Coppell. Mr. Witt's successes have been many, and it is an honor for me to recognize him for his nearly two decades of contributions to the people of Coppell. I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing Jim Witt continued success in his future.

IN HONOR OF DR. CORNELIA N. WINNER

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize Dr. Cornelia N. "Connie" Winner. In December 2008, Dr. Winner will retire after thirty-six years of service to Delaware Technical & Community College.

Dr. Winner's involvement with the college began in 1972, when she took a position at the Wilmington Campus as an instructor in the Secretarial Technology Department. Just eight years later, Dr. Winner became Chairperson of the campus Technology Department. In 1985, she was made Assistant Dean of Instruction of the Stanton/Wilmington Campus. During the remainder of her time at Delaware Tech, Dr.