

BISHOP JOHN M. SMITH'S GOLDEN JUBILEE, 50 YEARS OF PRIESTHOOD AND EXTRAORDINARY SERVICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, words are inadequate to convey my profound respect, admiration, and gratitude for Trenton Diocese Bishop Emeritus John Mortimer Smith, who celebrated his golden jubilee, an amazing 50 years as a Catholic priest, on May 22 at a mass attended by over 800 people at the St. Mary of the Assumption Cathedral in Trenton, New Jersey.

The mass, concelebrated by several bishops, including Bishop David M. O'Connell, now bishop of Trenton, and several priests, including Bishop Smith's brother Father Andrew Smith, was filled with joy and reflection, befitting acknowledgement of a great servant of God.

In his moving homily, Cardinal Theodore McCarrick noted that Bishop Smith is an "extraordinary brother and an extraordinary friend. A man filled with faith, filled with zeal—zeal for the church, zeal for the people he serves, and, in a special way as a bishop, zeal for his priests." The cardinal said we are called to "model Jesus Christ to our people and imitate Christ. Mort Smith," he continued, "has lived it well."

Cardinal McCarrick brought smiles and laughter throughout the cathedral when he said, "I'm not here to canonize Bishop Smith, although that may come," and then went on to call Bishop Smith "the world's greatest kibitzer" due to his legendary penchant for telling stories, usually long, no usually very long, and happily, usually very funny.

Once when I was about to give an address at the St. Thomas More dinner in Trenton, I turned to Bishop Smith, seated with my wife and me at a table, desperate for a joke. He gave me two, and I, courtesy of his jokes, had them rolling in the aisle. Bishop Smith's uncanny ability to infuse humor and hope-filled lightheartedness into almost all things is not only entertaining but makes presentation of the gospel to an often confused and stressed-out world more efficacious.

Bishop Smith connects amazingly well with the youth. I have witnessed it many times at schools and at the annual Catholic Men's Rally. Bishop Smith has an uncanny way of challenging everyone, especially our young people, to faithfully and courageously live the gospel. And you know, it never fails. Within a minute or two of being with Bishop Smith, you always find yourself smiling and your spirits lifted.

For the many years that I have known him, Bishop Smith not only radiates the love of Christ, but he works hard and smart. Often I don't know where he finds the time.

Ordained a priest on May 27, 1961, he has really done it all. Bishop Smith has

earned several degrees and got his doctorate from Catholic University of America in the sixties and was deployed as a pastor in the Newark Archdiocese.

Over the years, he has chaired or been the director of numerous boards, including the Institute for Continuing Theological Education, the U.S. Bishops Consultation IV, and the Archdiocesan Vocational Board. He has also served in leadership positions on the Bishops' Committee on Migration and Refugee Services and served on the board of directors for St. Vincent de Paul Seminary, Notre Dame Seminary, St. Joseph College Seminary, Catholic Relief Services, St. Francis Medical Center in Trenton, and Pontifical North American College in Rome. I would note, parenthetically, he made five humanitarian trips to Africa as part of Catholic Relief Services' mission there.

As bishop, his pastoral plan, Led by the Spirit, identified seven pastoral priorities, including dealing with charity and justice, pastoral leadership, ethnic diversity, youth and young adult ministry, faith formation, and Sunday worship. Today, all 111 parishes in the diocese of Trenton are developing action plans to implement Led by the Spirit.

Bishop Smith also created the Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry, which has formed and commissioned approximately 100 people to date. He also updated and expanded the strategic use of media to advance the gospel and the culture of life and created Realfait TV, an award-winning teen talk show. And he has boosted the Trenton diocese's online outreach to the Hispanic community to protect the sanctity of human life and to reach an even wider audience with news and commentary published in the excellent diocesan newspaper, The Monitor.

Faced with declining enrollment in the diocesan schools, largely due to escalating costs, which include some 36 elementary schools and eight high schools, Bishop Smith's "Commitment to Excellence" initiative established benchmarks to make an already effective education program even better.

Mr. Speaker, my wife, Marie, and I were among those offering prayers of thanks at Bishop Smith's jubilee mass. We rejoiced with his family and friends for his accomplishments that are without number. We rejoiced over his bold, consistent, and compassionate commitment to defending unborn children, their mothers, and the sanctity of life. We rejoiced and were inspired anew by his life well lived.

And, Mr. Speaker, we gave thanks that, while his extraordinary ministry has changed in "retirement," he is far from done.

NOT AS OWNER OR TENANT: NO MILITARY BASES IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from

California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, a year and a half ago, we were promised a new way forward in Afghanistan, a way that would include a significant military drawdown. The date for the redeployment to begin was July 1, 2011, just 2 weeks away. Then last year, the goalposts were removed and it was decided that, in fact, our troops would remain in Afghanistan through 2014.

□ 1040

But apparently that wasn't enough. Negotiations are now under way with the Karzai government—negotiations that are happening apparently in secret and without proper accountability and transparency—for the construction of military bases in Afghanistan. Officials are being very careful not to say that these bases would be permanent, but it's clear that our government could be hammering out the details of an agreement that would call for a U.S. military presence in Afghanistan for as far as the eye can see.

I can't understand the logic here, Mr. Speaker. Why can't we grasp the very idea that the longer we are perceived to be an occupying power, the more resentment we breed in Afghanistan? The longer we're there, the more we fuel the insurgency, the more we leave our troops vulnerable, the more we put our own national security in jeopardy. Erecting permanent bases would be the biggest favor we could do for the Taliban.

I salute my good friend and fellow Californian, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, for her leadership on this issue, and I would urge my colleagues to consider my legislation that would require the President to negotiate a Status of Forces Agreement that would clearly prohibit the establishment of permanent bases.

Mr. Speaker, the outgoing Defense Secretary, Mr. Gates, says we're seeking joint bases where the United States acts as a tenant as opposed to an occupying force, but I don't believe for a minute that the Taliban appreciates the subtlety of that distinction.

As long as there are boots on the ground, and not just boots but large installations with American trappings and English language street signs and so forth, the more we embolden the very radical forces we're trying to defeat.

We're going exactly the wrong direction, Mr. Speaker. At a moment when the American people are crying out for this military occupation to end, our leaders look as if they are preparing to extend it into perpetuity. At a moment when casualties are on the rise, we're preparing for a long-term presence that will further endanger, not protect, Americans.

We can't afford permanent war. It's unsustainable. We can't afford the cost in blood, treasure, lost credibility or dwindling moral authority. It's time to bring our troops and our contractors

home and leave no military footprint behind.

ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. BUERKLE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. BUERKLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the issue of elder abuse. Today is Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Hundreds of thousands of Americans each year are the victims of elder abuse. According to the National Center on Elder Abuse, this number could be as high as 1 to 2 million Americans.

Elder abuse, Mr. Speaker, is a broad term for the victimization of seniors 65 years and older. There is no one picture of what elder abuse looks like. It can be physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or exploitation.

The perpetration of elder abuse also varies—spouses, partners, caregivers in nursing homes, even neighbors. Our older elder Americans are especially vulnerable to abuse, particularly those who suffer from dementia or other mental diseases.

I find it unconscionable that the very people who fought for us in World War II and Korea, who nurtured us, who taught us, who built this society around us, would be victimized in the twilight of their lives. Our elderly citizens have given us so much, and they deserve our appreciation, our respect, and most importantly, our protection, not just for what they've contributed. Mr. Speaker, but for the ways they still enrich our society and enrich us as a people.

This August my mother, Mr. Speaker, will turn 90 years old. Three years ago, when my father died, she was lost. She was particularly vulnerable. Fortunately for my mother, she has children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren to help her and to support her. But how many other Americans, elderly folks are out there who don't have that support system, Mr. Speaker?

This is not a Democratic or a Republican issue. This is an American issue. Our seniors, our elderly, deserve our help. They deserve our protection. Please, as Americans, today is Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Let us be particularly aware of our most vulnerable, our elderly citizens.

AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of farmers and producers all across these United States, and especially in the Seventh Congressional District of Alabama. As we debate and discuss issues surrounding the Agriculture appropriations bill, let us remain mindful of the enormous impact that the agriculture sector has had on the United States and our world economy.

Agriculture employs more than 21 million American workers and accounts for 15 percent of the total U.S. workforce. In fact, in my home State of Alabama, agriculture contributes nearly \$5 billion to the State's economic sector every year. Any Agriculture appropriations bill must take into account the potential economic impact and the strengthening of the agriculture sector that is needed for the 21st century.

I understand that we are making very difficult budgetary decisions; however, I am concerned that the types of cuts proposed in this year's Agriculture appropriations bill are ill-advised and disproportionate. This bill reduces the funding for agriculture research programs, including the Agriculture Research Service and the National Institute for Food and Agriculture, by over \$354 million from last year's level.

Now, I know that that's a substantial cut in very important research that must be done, both nationally and within our individual States. In fact, the National Institute for Food and Agriculture fulfills this mission by supporting research education and extension programs at land grant universities like those in Alabama like Auburn, Tuskegee, Alabama A&M University and others. We must preserve funding for each of these critical and important investments in the future of agriculture research and food safety.

Under this Republican appropriations bill, food and nutrition programs like SNAP and child nutrition are funded at nearly \$2 billion less than the President's budget. SNAP is an important and essential program in these challenging times for low-income individuals who cannot afford to purchase food for themselves and their families. Since the program was created, SNAP has literally saved millions of lives, and currently provides essential support to over 165,000 individuals in my district alone.

The proposed funding for the Women, Infants and Children Food Assistance program, WIC as it's known, is far below what is needed to serve all those individuals who are eligible for benefits. WIC provides essential nutrition to new mothers, babies and small children under 5 that are nutritionally at risk.

Nearly 50 percent of the babies born in our country each year rely on WIC. In Alabama, WIC provides assistance to over 140,000 individuals and over 25,000 just in my district alone.

Contrary to popular belief, this program is cost-efficient, and it serves nearly 10 million people each year, costing less than \$100 per person receiving benefit. The lack of proper funding in this appropriations bill is yet another example of Republican attacks on hardworking families and children that definitely need assistance for nutrition. I cannot stand idly by and let this occur.

We must ensure that any appropriations bill provides robust and adequate

funding for these essential programs, both now and in the future. The Republican Agriculture appropriations bill reduces funding for essential rural development programs by \$337 million below last year's levels. These reductions disproportionately impact loan authority for 502 direct housing programs.

□ 1050

Without these loans, low-income rural families could not find financing options that would help them purchase homes and simply be able to live.

This bill also seeks to reduce funding for agriculture business and rural business grants by \$20 million below last year's level. In a time of economic recovery, we must continue to make strategic investments in small and rural businesses, and not make reductions.

It is important that we who know better do better. Agriculture in our global society is of the utmost importance. As our global population increases, food security and adequate food production will be necessary for our national security, economic development, and our overall survival. It is my hope that all on both sides of the aisle will pass an agriculture approps bill that is both fiscally responsible, forward-thinking, and makes economic sense.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND AMERICAN JOBS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about natural resources and whether or not they can create American jobs. The answer is yes; with oil production alone, 1.2 million jobs between the three bills that Republicans passed out of committee and off of the House floor; a total of 2 million jobs if you add in the American Energy Independence and Price Reduction Act; 2 million American jobs. Not only could we be energy independent in our great Nation, but we can put Americans back to work with 2 million jobs alone in this area.

We need to have States' rights, allowing States to explore oil exploration or natural gas or utilize all of their natural resources, whether you're in Alaska and you want to drill in ANWR, or you're the Governor of California and you want to pass Tranquillon Ridge and clean up the old oil wells off of the coast. States should have those rights to be able to do that and to be able to put their own people back to work in those States.

The President's policies on our natural resources are just flawed. My friends across the aisle continue to talk about the bills that come off of this floor, whether they create jobs or not. This is indisputable, 2 million jobs. You don't have to like these jobs, but nevertheless, they are American