

stand right now once spoke Franklin Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan, Douglas MacArthur and Winston Churchill. Yet, in their long and illustrious lives, not one could claim to have sacrificed more for his country than these young men like Victor Dew.

Lincoln was right that no meager words of ours can add or detract from their deeds. But Shakespeare was also right that their story should the good man teach his son.

For that reason, I am proud to join a unanimous delegation from California in proposing that the post office in the town where Victor Dew lived and loved and returned as a fallen hero be named in his honor.

IN HONOR OF GAIL ACHTERMAN

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Oregon lost an amazing pioneer with the death of Gail Achterman last weekend. At the moment Gail was drawing her last breath, this remarkable woman's husband, Chuck McGinnis, was telling me the story of how she had won his heart as he listened to her give a lecture on the Taylor Grazing Act.

That tells you all you need to know, actually, about both of them: that her lecture on an obscure Federal law could spark a whirlwind romance and a marriage of over 30 years. That is part of what made Gail such a remarkable woman. A three-sport letterwoman at Stanford University—in basketball, track, and swimming. An accomplished lawyer, public policy analyst, civic volunteer par excellence, and more.

Each of the many roles she played during her too-short life but stellar four-decade career were characterized by her insight, drive, comprehensive view of the world, and commitment to excellence. She was a pioneer in every sense of the word—from big-time women's athletics to being the first woman to chair Oregon's transportation commission. She was not just breaking ground for women but being a leader and a role model for anyone who wanted to both excel and make a difference.

Oregon was fortunate to have her as one of America's finest natural resources lawyers, practicing in Portland at one of the State's largest law firms, Stoel Rives. She rose to become a partner in the firm, leaving for 4 years to become the Governor's senior adviser on natural resources and helping to navigate some of Oregon's most difficult challenges in the 1980s.

□ 1020

What for most people would have been at the very height of her career, she left the law firm to retire to lead the Deschutes River Conservancy in central Oregon and then in 2003 to become director of the Institute of Natural Resources at Oregon State University.

During all of this time, she was involved in civic affairs and professional activities too numerous to mention, giving speeches, lectures, consulting with people throughout her beloved Pacific Northwest and around America.

During the last 10 years, she served on Oregon's transportation commission, the last term as its chair where she guided some of the most innovative approaches in the Nation to our transportation infrastructure challenges. Her work and leadership helped spark Oregon's economy and community revitalization.

She also won environmental and civic awards. The last I witnessed was a few months ago from the pedestrian community because of her leadership and understanding of a transportation system that worked for everybody: truckers, railroad, bikes, and pedestrians.

She was part of our celebration last summer of the 25th anniversary of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Act in recognition of the role she helped play in drafting Senator Mark Hatfield's legislation that led to the protection of this priceless national treasure.

At the time of her passing, Gail had been focusing her attention on the future of the Willamette River Valley and the need for a comprehensive approach to its needs and opportunities.

Even in her last month, Gail's vision and commitment and insight were focused on the big picture. But everything about Gail seemed to be big picture and larger than life, whether rowing on the river, cross-country skiing, in the gym exercising, or presiding over a public hearing. Passion, focus, commitment, and the joy of getting a job done well were her signature characteristics. It was always part of that bigger picture, especially of land use and transportation, and water for our future.

She epitomized the strength of Oregon public policy, understanding how the pieces fit together and then translating that knowledge to others in a very understated, but powerful, way and ultimately helping find its way into public policy and action.

She was an extraordinary daughter of Oregon. She will be missed by all who knew her and appreciated her for the difference she made for generations to come.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, today I've heard Ms. WOOLSEY and Mr. MCCLINTOCK talk about the war in Afghanistan, and it kind of reminds me this morning about 8 o'clock I did a call-in show down in my district, Jacksonville, North Carolina, the home of Camp Lejeune Marine base.

The topic of the call-in show was proposed budget cuts to our military. The

emcee of the show said to me: I'm coming around to your thinking. It is time to get out of Afghanistan. We are spending \$10 billion a month in Afghanistan. Let's say that we start bringing them home this year in 2012, at least start the process of bringing them home. The host said: I guess if we did that, we would save at least probably \$240 billion in a 2-year period of time. If they are proposing cuts of \$490 billion in next year's budget for the Department of Defense and we save \$240 billion, then we are almost cutting in half what we are going to require of the military. I said, You're exactly right.

Not only did I hear this from a talk-show host, but I hear it throughout the eastern part of the State that I have the privilege to represent.

I hope that Mr. Panetta, who I have a lot of respect for, will keep to that 2013 timeframe. I share with Ms. WOOLSEY that I don't trust it, and it has nothing to do with the person. I want to make that clear. He is an honorable man, but there are too many factors that are planned into this issue of staying in Afghanistan. There are too many people that sadly are making money on war. I won't get into that because I don't have enough time.

As the host said to me today, if we would just spend money on the defense of America instead of building empires around the world, we probably would save a lot of money and we would have a strong defense, which we need.

That brings me to this poster. I have a book called "The Three Trillion Dollar War" that was written by a Nobel Prize winner in economics named Dr. Joe Stiglitz. His coauthor Linda Bilmes is an economics professor at Harvard. They testified a year ago before the Veterans Health Committee. I do not serve on that committee, but Mr. FILNER at the time was chairman. Now Mr. MILLER is chairman because Republicans are in the majority.

As they finished their discussion, they were saying that if they wrote the book today—this was written 5 years ago—the title would go from the "The Three Trillion Dollar War" to "The Five Trillion Dollar War." That is what it is going to cost to take care of our young men and women.

The poster to my left is a young Army sergeant, who has lost both legs and an arm, with his wife going into a new apartment. I have seen four young men at Walter Reed that have no parts below their waist and they are living. God bless them, and I hope they have a good life. I don't know. I cannot make that judgment. I know one thing: Uncle Sam, you're going to have to spend a lot of money to take care of those young men because they earned it. They earned it because of our failed policies in Iraq and Afghanistan.

It is my hope that sometime this spring, in a bipartisan way, we will have an amendment on the floor that the House will pass and it will say: you need to start bringing our troops home beginning the end of 2012 because the process will take a long time.

In closing, as I always do, I have signed over 10,000 letters to families who have lost loved ones in Afghanistan and Iraq because I was not strong enough to vote my conscience on the request by the Bush administration to go into Iraq. I have asked God to forgive me by signing these letters, and I think He has forgiven me.

God, please continue to bless our men and women in uniform. God, continue to bless the families of our men and women in uniform. God, in Your loving arms hold the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. God, please bless the House and Senate, that we will do what is right in Your eyes for this country. God, please continue to bless the leader of our country. Let him know that he is doing what is right in Your eyes. Three times I ask God, please, God, please, God, please continue to bless America.

FAST AND FURIOUS AND JUSTICE DEPARTMENT STONEWALLING

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, when most people think of smuggling, they envision outlaws recklessly sneaking guns, contraband, and money to other outlaws.

Most people would never imagine that the government of the greatest Nation in the world would be engaged in helping a criminal smuggling operation by sending guns and money to narcoterrorists south of our border.

No, this isn't a Hollywood movie. Unfortunately, this has become a reality in Washington, D.C.

□ 1030

The Justice Department, with the aid of the ATF, facilitated the smuggling of over 2,000 weapons to the drug cartels south of the border—the national enemy in Mexico. Reports indicate those weapons were used to kill at least 200 Mexican nationals and two U.S. law enforcement agents.

The Justice Department appears to have gone wild. Instead of enforcing the law, rogue operatives in the Department of Justice seemed to be recklessly encouraging violations of law. Who's responsible for this conduct?

Over a year has gone by since the murder of Brian Terry, border agent, and we still don't know who was in charge. Brian Terry was murdered by one of those Fast and Furious guns. The Attorney General said he was unaware of Fast and Furious. He claims that he either didn't get the memo, or maybe he didn't read the memo.

Well, according to the latest of group of emails sent over to Congress, he did get the email. According to emails sent to Congress Friday night, Arizona U.S. Attorney Dennis Burke notified Eric Holder's deputy chief of staff—via email—about Brian Terry's murder hours after it happened. Later that

day, he notified the Department of Justice that the murder weapon was from Fast and Furious. Imagine that. Holder's staff member implied that he alerted the Attorney General.

So who knew what and when? The Attorney General apparently knew not days or months but hours after that murder occurred. Did he, the Attorney General, know about this operation? Did he approve it? In any event, the Attorney General should resign because it all happened under his watch. He is the one in charge of the Justice Department.

When he appeared before the House Judiciary Committee in December, the Attorney General also told me that he did not know who in his department was responsible for making the decision of Operation Fast and Furious. So is the Attorney General now claiming there is a rogue operation of moles in the Department of Justice that authorized and carried out these smuggling missions? We want to find out.

To coin a phrase from then Senator Hillary Clinton on another subject, the fact that he did not know about this massive operation requires a "willing suspension of disbelief."

The Attorney General is the chief lawyer and law enforcement officer in the country. Whoever did know about this and approved it may have violated U.S. or international law. They need to be held accountable even if it means somebody goes to jail. But that is not the case.

The rogue criminals responsible for carrying out Fast and Furious still work in the Justice Department. These individuals have not been fired or criminally prosecuted for their reckless actions. Some have actually been promoted or transferred. It all looks like an organized, deceitful attempt to hide the stench of Fast and Furious from the American people.

Apparently, the Department of Justice believes in order to catch a criminal, you have to be like a criminal. We need an independent special counsel appointed by the President to investigate the Justice Department and the ATF.

The Department of Justice cannot be trusted to investigate themselves because the agency has lost credibility on this issue. The DOJ has stonewalled providing information to Congress. If the DOJ has nothing to hide, why do they keep hiding information from us? The Justice Department has to be removed from investigating Fast and Furious. Otherwise, Mr. Speaker, this would look like a bunch of burglars sitting on a jury trying a burglary case. That would sort of look bad; wouldn't it?

People died in this reckless, misguided operation. We owe it to the American people and the people of Mexico to get to the bottom of this.

In many States when a person commits an offense, if he recklessly causes the death of an individual, the definition of that offense is called man-

slaughter. Even Washington insiders responsible for Fast and Furious cannot hide from the long arm of American justice because, Mr. Speaker, justice is what we do in this country.

And that's just the way it is.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS UNDER ATTACK

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

Mr. SCHILLING. As we all know, Mr. Speaker, last week was the March for Life here in Washington. Now, as a father of 10, life is a big issue in my house. It's a big issue in other homes and businesses throughout the United States. Thousands of Americans, including some residents of my district, traveled from all corners of the country last week to express their support for the right to life for each human being, to express the desire and passion they have for the born and the unborn.

Just a couple of days later, on Sunday morning, once we had all returned to Illinois, my family and I headed off to church, as we normally do. We sat in the pew and listened to the priest's homily. He read us a letter written by the Bishop of the Diocese of Peoria:

"In the history of the United States, Friday, January 20, 2012, will certainly stand out as a moment of enormous peril for religious liberty," the letter reads, referring to the date the Department of Health and Human Services announced that religious organizations will be forced to provide employees with insurance programs that provide abortifacients, contraceptive services, and sterilization.

The letter continues:

"If these regulations are put into effect, they could close down every Catholic school, hospital, and other public ministries of our church, which is perhaps their underlying intention. What is perfectly clear is that this is a bigoted and blatant attack on the First Amendment rights of every Catholic believer. Under no circumstances, however, will our church ever abandon our unshakable commitment to the gospel of life."

I later learned that this was one of more than 120 letters that bishops had read from the pulpit at masses across the United States.

The letter written by the Bishop of Marquette reads:

"The Federal Government, which claims to be 'of, by, and for the people,' has just dealt a heavy blow to almost a quarter of those people—the Catholic population—and to the millions more who are served by the Catholic faithful."

It later says:

"Our parents and grandparents did not come to these shores to help build America's cities and towns, its infrastructure and institutions, its enterprise and culture only to have their posterity stripped of their God-given rights."