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ON THE PASSING OF THREE
EXTRAORDINARY WOMEN

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 1999

Ms. PELOSI. Ms. Speaker, it sometimes happens that the unexpected juxtaposition of disparate events imposes its own logic, and the emerging pattern rivets our attention and commands our respect. So it is with the recent passing of three extraordinary women: Frances Ross, who died December 9th at 84 years of age; Helen Feinberg, who followed on February 22nd, also 84; and Vivian Hallinan, who departed March 16th after 88 years of life. Of the same generation that was tempered in the Great Depression and triumphant in World War II, all three women shared many characteristics and values. All, of course, were native or adoptive Californians. And, in the trail-blazing spirit of the Golden State, all were true pioneers in their respective fields: Ross in the treatment of the mentally ill; Feinberg in nursing and human rights; and Hallinan in a wide range of progressive causes.

All three women exhibited, early in life, the qualities we associate with leadership. They were relentless champions of social justice, peace, equality, democracy, and freedom. And in the pursuit of those values, their perseverance was legendary. Finally, and perhaps most impressive, Frances, Helen, and Vivian also shared the exquisite ability to balance an active life in the public domain with an equally impressive dedication to family and friends in the private realm.

In conclusion, Frances Ross, Helen Feinberg, and Vivian Hallinan were courageous leaders of a generation that is rapidly passing from our scene. We are losing a national treasure, and we should all pause to register our common loss. Details about the wonderful lives of these three women are included in the following tributes.

[From the San Francisco Examiner, Dec. 11, 1998]

FRANCES LILLIAN ROSS—ADVOCATE FOR
MENTALLY ILL
(By Eric Brazil)

Frances Lillian Ross, who pioneered residential treatment for the mentally ill in San Francisco, died Wednesday in San Rafael at age 83.

She had been in failing health for two months, following a stroke at her Villa Marin home.

From 1965 through 1997, Mrs. Ross was executive director of Conard House, which developed the model for treating mentally ill patients in a non-institutional setting.

"She was instrumental in establishing what community mental health looks like in this town," said Steve Fields, executive director of the Progress Foundation.

Conrad House "was very, very much on the ground floor. It was one of the first models of a halfway house, if not the first," recalled psychiatrist Dr. Price Cobbs.

Born in San Diego, Mrs. Ross attended 13 grammar schools and three high schools—including Polytechnic in San Francisco—before graduating from San Francisco State.

Even before the '30s had ended Mrs. Ross had lived an eventful life—as a "girl cashier" at the World's Fair on Treasure Island, as Northern California campaign manager for winning Democratic gubernatorial candidate Culbert Olson and in organizing relief for Spanish civil war refugees.

During the early 1940s, she was a teacher and social worker in Central Valley migrant labor camps, including Marysville-Yuba City, where she met and married her late husband, Fred Ross, a community organizer, whose career—including the discovery of farm labor leader Cesar Chavez—became legendary.

Her youngest son, Fred, now chief of staff to Rep. Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, recalled that his mother taught birth control as well as drama and other subjects to wives of farm workers. He said, "Birth control was called 'baby spacing,' then, and one of the women asked her, 'Is that to teach us how to space them closer together or farther apart?'"

On the eve of World War II, Mrs. Ross worked to get refugee Jewish physicians out of Germany, and after the war began, she operated a drill press and worked for racial integration at a Cleveland airplane parts manufacturing plant, while her husband worked with Japanese Americans who had been relocated to the Midwest from the Pacific Coast.

At age 41, Mrs. Ross returned to San Francisco State and obtained a master's degree in clinical psychology.

Her professional career was interrupted by polio, and she was unable to work for nine years.

When Mrs. Ross was hired as executive director at Conard House—she had been a rehabilitation counselor at Lighthouse for the Blind—institutionalization was virtually the only recognized form of treatment for the mentally ill.

Mrs. Ross started Conard House's co-op apartment program, which provides an extended period of recovery for clients admitted to the program's halfway house.

Katherine Erickson, owner of two retail gift shops at Pier 39, who worked for Mrs. Ross for seven years at Conard House, recalled her as "the most powerful woman I've ever worked with . . . a most extraordinary woman. She had the ability to cut through the B.S. and see what was really going on."

Mrs. Ross is survived by daughter Julia, a director of recovery systems in Larkspur; sons Robert, a high school teacher in Davis, and Fred of San Francisco; and by three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

A memorial service will be held Dec. 19—her 84th birthday—at 3 p.m. in the auditorium of Villa Marin in San Rafael, where she had resided for the past 13 years.

The family suggests that friends wishing to remember Mrs. Ross with charitable contributions direct them to the Post Polio Support Group of Sonoma County, 4672 Park Trail Drive, Santa Rosa, CA 95405; or to the Larkspur public library.

[From the Los Angeles Times, Feb. 24, 1999]

HELEN FEINBERG, 84; SOCIAL ACTIVIST,
SPANISH CIVIL WAR NURSE
(By Myrna Oliver)

Helen Freeman Feinberg, nurse and human rights advocate who aided victims of the Spanish Civil War and Ecuador border war as well as garment workers and Latino immigrants at home, has died. She was 84.

Feinberg died Monday of cancer in Newport Beach, said her daughter, Margo Feinberg.

A New Yorker trained in nursing at Brooklyn Jewish Hospital, the 22-year-old Helen Freeman had barely begun her nursing career in 1937 when a meeting on Spain's strife

convinced her to sail abroad as a member of the Medical Bureau to Aid Spanish Democracy.

One of only 50 American women involved, she worked in makeshift front-line hospitals to aid soldiers of loyalist Spain and international volunteer fighters including Americans in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. The young nurse was severely wounded during a bombing.

"We were so idealistic at the time. And we wanted everything for a better world," she recalled in 1990 after a speech to Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in New York. Feinberg served as commander of the brigade's Los Angeles post in the 1980s and 1990s.

Her injuries in Spain prevented her from serving as a military nurse in World War II. But she spent that time in Ecuador, following its border war with Peru, with the U.S. Government Emergency Rehabilitation Committee organizing clinics and hospitals and training nurses in mountain and jungle communities.

After the war, she returned to Europe with the American Joint Distribution Committee to develop clinics, organize health education programs and treat chronically ill victims of Hitler's concentration camps.

The dedicated nurse also went to Oregon with the Agricultural Workers Health Assn. as a circuit-riding public health nurse for migrant labor camps, and worked with the New York City Health Department setting up community health care clinics.

Working for the Union Health Care Center of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union in 1952, she met and married Charles Feinberg, union organizer, professor and public health administrator. After her marriage, she went into school nursing in New York and, after the Feinbergs moved to Orange County in the 1970s, with the Newport Mesa Unified School District. In Orange County, Feinberg concentrated on working with children and families of migrant workers and other immigrants. She retired only last year, at 83.

In 1985, the school district named a new facility at Whittier Elementary School in Costa Mesa, Feinberg Hall in honor of both the nurse and her husband.

Feinberg is survived by a son and daughter, union labor lawyers Michael and Margo Feinberg, and two grandsons.

A memorial service is scheduled at 2 p.m. March 6 at Pacific View Memorial Park in Corona del Mar.

The family has suggested that memorial contributions be made either to the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives, 799 Broadway, Suite 227, New York, NY 10003, or to Whittier Elementary School, 1800 N. Whittier Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627, for its library.

[From the San Francisco Examiner, Mar. 17, 1999]

PEACE ACTIVIST, MATRIARCH VIVIAN
HALLINAN

(By Seth Rosenfield)

SHE WAS ROLE MODEL FOR POLITICAL WOMEN

Vivian Hallinan, the preeminent peace activist, wife of the later legend Vincent Hallinan and matriarch of San Francisco, best known Irish political family, whose members include prominent criminal defense lawyer Patrick Hallinan and San Francisco District Attorney Terence Hallinan, has died.

Mrs. Hallinan, who was 88, died Tuesday at the Berkeley home of her son Matthew. Family members said she has been in poor health

in recent weeks and attributed her death to old age.

Over a five-decade span, Mrs. Hallinan played a prominent part in San Francisco's progressive politics with grace, beauty and courage. In 1986, when she was 77, she was tear-gassed in Chile while protesting human rights abuses.

Although Vincent Hallinan, an atheist who once sued the Catholic Church to prove the existence of God, was publicly perceived as the more radical of the pair, Vivian Hallinan fueled the family's political fire, two of her sons said.

"She was really the heart and soul of our family's political philosophy," said Patrick Hallinan, her eldest son. "My father resented the abuse of political authority, but my mother had a focus. She was a very committed radical socialist."

Mrs. Hallinan combined a dedication to her family, prowess in real estate and political passion.

U.S. Representative Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, said Tuesday that Vivian Hallinan showed women they could combine family and politics. "She was a role model for many of us," Pelosi said. "If Vincent was the lion, Vivian was the lioness."

Mrs. Hallinan was born Vivian Moore on Oct. 21, 1910, in San Francisco. Her father was Irish, her mother Italian, her family blue-collar.

Her father abandoned the family early, and she hardly knew him, said Patrick Hallinan. And though her mother was more present, Mrs. Hallinan was raised mostly by her mother's relatives.

Mrs. Hallinan attended Girls' High School, a now-defunct private Catholic school in San Francisco. She was admitted to UC-Berkeley but quit after two years to support herself by working in retail shops. Patrick Hallinan said. She never graduated.

She soon met Vincent Hallinan on a blind date. He was 13 years older and already a famous liberal lawyer.

"When I opened the door, I thought she was the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen," he once said.

They were married in 1932, an occasion reported by the late FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover as "a case of one warped personality marrying another."

The excitement began promptly. As the couple left for their honeymoon, Vincent Hallinan was jailed for contempt of court for refusing to surrender a client in a murder case. One headline read: "Hallinan goes to jail, bride goes home."

Mrs. Hallinan's striking beauty, with brunet hair and hazel eyes, was part of her persona, said Doris Brin Walker, a radical San Francisco lawyer and longtime friend of the Hallinans.

"She always looked great," Walker said, "but it was not the most important part."

The Hallinans first lived in a Nob Hill apartment on Sacramento Street. About two years later, they had the first of six sons. (Their fourth son, Michael, later died.)

During the Depression, Mrs. Hallinan began investing some of her husband's legal earnings in real estate, refurbishing abandoned buildings and eventually building the family fortune, said Terence Hallinan, her second-born.

Although Mrs. Hallinan held "socialist" views—ideas that people should be guaranteed a decent living, that there should be racial equality and an end to war—she never joined any socialist or communist party and was a life-long Democrat, said Patrick Hallinan.

She was one of San Francisco's early civil rights activities, renting and selling homes to African Americans. Her efforts earned the enmity of other real estate agents and her own neighbors, her sons said.

In 1945, the Hallinans moved to political conservative Ross in Marin County, because it had the best public schools. They bought a 22-room house with its own gym and an Olympic-size pool.

But times got hard. In 1950, Mr. Hallinan was sentenced to six months in McNeil Island prison for a contempt citation he got while successfully defending union leader Harry Bridges against charges of being a communist.

In 1952, after Mrs. Hallinan persuaded her husband to campaign for president on Henry Wallace's Progressive Party ticket, the couple were indicted for tax evasion. She was acquitted, but he was sentenced to two years in jail.

The government seized some of the family's real estate holdings, said Terence Hallinan. And Doubleday refused to print more copies of a national best-seller she had written about her family, "My Wild Irish Rogues," Patrick Hanninan said.

Hoover had branded the book as "a flagrant employment of the Communist Party line, including references to racial discrimination and vicious attacks on the U.S. government."

But Mrs. Hallinan was unfazed: She sustained the family with her real estate business and continued her jailed husband's presidential campaign on his behalf.

Mr. Hallinan was disbarred and in jail during most of the '50s, and Mrs. Hallinan remained under Hoover's scrutiny.

In 1964, she and sons Patrick and Matthew were arrested while sitting-in at San Francisco's "auto row," the car dealers that then lined Van Ness Avenue, protesting their failure to hire African Americans. She served 30 days in county jail.

She helped organize anti-Vietnam war demonstrations, leading a march of 5,000 women in Washington, D.C.

She headed the San Francisco chapter of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. "Peace was always her biggest issue," said Terence Hallinan.

In the 1980s, she opposed U.S. policy in Central America and befriended Daniel Ortega, Nicaragua's Sandinista leader. She also met with Fidel Castro.

In 1990, Mayor Art Agnos named her to The City's Human Rights Commission.

She is survived by five sons, Patrick, of Kentfield; Terrance, of San Francisco; and Matthew, an anthropologist, David, a travel consultant, and Conn, a journalism professor, all of Berkeley; 18 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

A memorial service is to be announced.

IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVERS

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 1999

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, today my colleague from Illinois, Representative PHIL CRANE, and I are introducing the IRA Charitable Rollover Incentive Act of 1999.

Our legislation would allow individuals who have reached age 59½ to donate the assets of their individual retirement account to charity without incurring income tax liability.

I am sure that over the past few years many of our colleagues have heard from charities in their district that the charity was approached by an individual who had accumulated a large IRA and wished to make a charitable donation. However, they are effectively precluded from doing so by the unique tax laws that apply to IRAs. We intend to change this.

Our legislation would allow an individual to donate his or her IRA to charity without incurring any income tax consequences. The IRA would be donated to the charity without ever taking it into income so there is no tax consequence. Similarly, because current law IRAs represent previously untaxed income, there would be no charitable deduction for the donation. IRA rollovers to qualifying charitable deferred gifts would receive similar treatment.

Mr. Speaker, this change in tax law could provide a valuable new source of philanthropy for our nation's charities. I would hope that my colleagues will join Mr. CRANE and myself in sponsoring this innovative new approach to charitable giving.

IN HONOR OF THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF SEQUOIA COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

HON. CALVIN M. DOOLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 1999

Mr. DOOLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise before my colleagues today to pay tribute to the Sequoia Community Health Foundation, which is celebrating its twentieth anniversary this year.

The Sequoia Community Health Foundation has made countless contributions to the residents of the Central Valley. Working as a primary health care provider for nearly twenty years, Sequoia Community Health Foundation has served tens of thousands of Valley families, ensuring access to basic health services including immunizations and prenatal care.

Despite a brief period of administrative difficulties, the Sequoia Community Health Foundation has emerged stronger than ever in recent years and has restored and expanded the level of services provided to Valley residents. By partnering with local schools, recreation centers and churches, Sequoia Community Health Foundation has greatly facilitated access to health services in the Valley.

Sequoia Community Health Foundation has provided more than 200,000 patient visits in the last four years, caring for 15,000 patients a year including many area farmworkers. Sequoia also serves as a vital resource for prenatal and pediatric care by performing between 60 and 90 deliveries each month and immunizing between 200 and 400 children on a monthly basis.

Clinic services have been expanded to increase hours of service, expand health education programs, and add cardiology and psychiatry specialists on site. And the clinic has been a leader in recruiting and training Hispanic residents through the Sequoia Hispanic Residency Pathway.

Through the leadership of their dedicated staff, Sante Health System and "Blue Ribbon" Board, Sequoia Community Health Foundation has maintained a high level of commitment to the Central Valley.

I commend Sequoia Community Health Foundation's dedicated employees—past and present—for their admirable service, and I hope that their fellow citizens will continue to support them with vigorous appreciation.