

MEREDITH MILLER

• Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I would like to articulate my deep sorrow as this week marks the anniversary of the senseless murder of Meredith Miller.

Meredith, a native of Tampa, FL, graduated with honors from Princeton University where she majored in political science. After her graduation she came to Washington to further her studies at George Washington University and to work on the issues pertaining to women. On October 17, 1994, after returning from a study group, Meredith became the victim of a carjacking.

The dream that Meredith held so dearly was to make a difference in the lives of others. Her fellow students at George Washington University would like Meredith's parents in Tampa to know that Meredith did make a difference in the lives of those fortunate enough to have known her and that their thoughts and prayers are with them today and always. Her friends miss her and learned much from her special outlook on life. She will always remain a vital part of their lives, in spirit.

Mr. President, today let us not forget the contributions Meredith Miller made in her short time here with us, and let us be diligent in our efforts to find a solution to the ever-growing number of senseless violent crimes.●

ROGER WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEMORIAL CELEBRATES 30TH ANNIVERSARY

• Mr. PELL. Mr. President, I rise to share with my colleagues the happy news that the Roger Williams National Memorial is celebrating the 30th anniversary of its authorization.

I want to take this chance to tell you about Roger Williams, a Founding Father that you will not encounter here, except in the rotunda of the Capitol. He was the founder of Rhode Island and a champion of Democracy and religious liberty.

There is no national memorial to Roger Williams here, unlike the monuments to other national heroes like Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln. Our national memorial is in Rhode Island, where he lived and left us a philosophical legacy of incomparable worth.

Roger Williams was banished for his beliefs from the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1635, but survived both banishment and subsequent efforts to take over the settlement he named Providence.

"The air of the country is sharp," Roger Williams said of Providence, "the rocks many, the trees innumerable, the grass little, the winter cold, the summer hot, the gnats in summer biting, the wolves at night howling."

Thirteen householders in the population of 32 in the first year formed the first genuine democracy—also the first church-divorced and conscience-free community—in modern history.

I cannot emphasize enough how unique and utopian the vision of Roger

Williams was in the midst of the 17th century. He was almost alone in believing that all citizens should be free to worship as their conscience dictated.

Roger Williams was a determined and dedicated man. In 1672, when he was nearly 70, he rowed all day to reach Newport for a 4-day debate with three Quaker orators. Both his settlement and his ideas have survived and prospered.

For most of his life, Roger Williams was a deeply religious man. Even without a church to call his own, his ideas flourished in Providence and remain alive today.

Documents, such as our Bill of Rights and Declaration of Independence can be traced directly back to the hardfought freedoms earned by Roger Williams and his followers.

I encourage my colleagues to visit the statue of Roger Williams in the Rotunda of the Capitol. When you do, remember that even the principles of democracy and religious liberty did not come easily. Roger Williams gave them form and substance more than 350 years ago.

These principles also founded the basis of our belief that all people are created with equal rights and should not be denied opportunities to succeed because of their race, gender, or religion.

I sponsored the Senate legislation that authorized the creation of the Roger Williams National Memorial and I have watched it take shape on the site of his original settlement in Providence, RI.

This anniversary comes at an important time. One purpose of the memorial is to emphasize the linked principles of tolerance and freedom. As recent events have demonstrated, we need to focus on these principles.

I am delighted to share with my colleagues today the news that the National Park Service is planning new initiatives to strengthen the impact of the Roger Williams National Memorial and its vital message.

If you have any doubts about the significance of Roger Williams in our history, consider how his philosophy has resonated through our other Founding Fathers and found its way into our most sacred documents.

Just a few examples, culled from his writings, should help to sound his call for freedom:

"The sovereign, original, and foundation of civil power lies in the People."—The Bloody Tenent of Persecution for Conscience Discussed (1644).

"The civil state is humbly to be implored to provide in their high wisdom for security of all the respective consciences."—The Hiring Ministry None of Christs

"No person in this colony shall be molested or questioned for the matters of his conscience to God, so he be loyal and keep the civil peace."—Letter to Major John Mason (1670)

"And having in a sence of God's merciful providence unto me in my

distresse called the place Providence, I desired it might be a shelter for persons distressed for conscience."—Early Records of Providence

We owe a tremendous debt to Roger Williams as the first champion of true religious freedom and for translating principles of democracy and tolerance from concepts into substance.●

SPECIAL INTERESTS HIT STUDENT LOANS

• Mr. SIMON. Mr. President, Roger Flaherty, now an editor at the Chicago Sun-Times, has followed the Federal student loan program for a number of years. I would urge my colleagues to consider what he has to say about the role of special interests in the current budget debate.

I ask that an article that appeared in the Chicago Sun-Times on September 27, 1995, be printed in the RECORD.

The article follows:

[From the Chicago Sun-Times, Sept. 27, 1995]

SPECIAL INTERESTS HIT DIRECT LOAN PROGRAM HEAD-ON

(By Roger Flaherty)

When I was younger, I walked side by side one day with Wilbur Mills, the Arkansas Democrat then always described as "chairman of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee," asking about tax reform. In a moment of candor, he said, "If you want to reform the tax system, you've got to end all deductions."

Why not do it? I asked. Mills responded with a dismissive look—sort of sneer and condescension—and turned to another reporter. So I learned that Washington people don't do as they think or say. We should keep that in mind as the Congress plows into a fall agenda that promises more moves to "get government off our backs."

Like tax deductions, government-run programs are bad until they are good for you or your friends. You usually hear this truism about defense contracts and farm subsidies.

But there's one I've observed closely in recent years—the student loan program. Several years ago, along with Sun-Times reporter Leon Pitt, I uncovered enormous abuses by for-profit trade schools that were using student loans like government vouchers they could squander any way they chose. They enrolled students into programs they were unable to complete or that were so poor in quality as to be useless. When students dropped out, within hours sometimes, the schools kept the loan money in violation of the law. The United States was being defrauded of billions of dollars.

But when reformers tried to tighten loan rules, school industry lobbyists fought them, arguing the reforms were an assault on free enterprise. It was a strange argument, considering that these schools generally received more than 90 percent of their income from government loans and grants.

Well, that odd assertion is again being made in Congress, where conservative Republicans under the guise of getting government off our backs are attacking the direct student loan program. The program, which is scheduled to be phased in over several years, operates successfully at several Illinois institutions, including the University of Illinois. The program allows loans to be made directly from the federal treasury through college financial aid offices.

This is bad, congressional opponents say, because it furthers big government and hurts