

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO DESIGNATE THE UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE IN WASHINGTON, DC, AS THE "E. BARRETT PRETTYMAN UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE"

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 6, 1996*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce a bill to name the U.S. district courts and circuit court of appeals building for the District of Columbia Circuit after the late chief judge E. Barrett Prettyman. I am very pleased that the Chair of the District of Columbia Subcommittee is an original cosponsor. Senator JOHN WARNER has introduced an identical bill in the Senate.

Judge Prettyman was born in Virginia, where he graduated from Randolph-Macon College in Ashland. He then graduated from Georgetown University School of Law.

Judge Prettyman served on the Federal bench for 26 years. He was the chief judge of the U.S. Circuit Court from 1953 to 1960. He was widely regarded as one of America's leading legal scholars and a pioneer for judicial reform. He sought the advice of his colleagues to better understand the issues to help improve the efficiency of the judiciary. He also testified many times before Congress as a strong advocate for increasing the number of judges on the District's juvenile court.

As a jurist, Judge Prettyman was known for his centrist positions and his thorough opinions. His most notable opinion concluded that the State Department had the authority to bar U.S. citizens from entering certain areas of the world. He wrote: "While travel is a right, it can be restrained like any other right." The Supreme Court ultimately upheld the decision.

Judge Prettyman also championed the cause of the indigent. At Georgetown University, he established a program where lawyers were trained to better assist indigent defendants.

Naming the courts after Judge Prettyman would be a fitting tribute to an outstanding jurist and legal scholar. I strongly urge my colleagues to support this measure.

GIVING CREDIT FOR THE MISSING SERVICE PERSONNEL ACT OF 1995

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 6, 1996*

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, February 10, in signing the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1996, the President signed into law the Missing Service Personnel Act of 1995, which had been incorporated into the authorization bill. The passage of the provisions of the Missing Service Personnel Act is a significant milestone for veterans and for the families of our MIA's, and I rise today to give credit to some of the people, including some of my fellow Vermonters, who worked hard for the passage of these provisions.

Their dedication, commitment, and persistence in the face of overwhelming odds has fi-

nally brought to fruition a matter that has been their primary concern for over 13 years. And I am very proud that my fellow Vermonters have played such a significant role in this effort.

I cosponsored the Missing Service Personnel Act of 1995 after being convinced by Patricia Sheerin, Don Amorosi, Sean McGuirl, Walt Handy, and Al Diaceticis of the desperate need for this law. The act is the culmination of years of effort on the part of my fellow Vermonters—Tom Cook, Bob Jones, and Brian Lindner, the president, vice president, and chief of research, respectively, of the Northeast POW/MIA Network; and Jim Howley—and the veterans organizations who have supported it, including Vietnam Veterans of America, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Disabled American Veterans. Most notable were the contributions of the family members of the missing and prisoners: Tom Cook, Sharon Roraback, and Sarah Pendris.

Were it not for a special conference held in 1993 by the Northeast POW/MIA Network, we would not today have a law to protect missing service persons, to protect their families from exploitation, and to grant basic human rights to the missing as well as their families. Under the guidance of a former POW, Lt. Col. Orson Swindle, participants in that conference were able to clarify the goals of the proposed Missing Service Personnel Act as originally authored by John Holland. Mr. Swindle pointed a new direction: That while we cannot solve all the problems of the past, we can protect missing service persons in the future, based on what we have learned from past mistakes.

Through her courage and intuition, Vermonter Patricia Sheerin, policy analyst for the Northeast POW/MIA Network, convinced the National Vietnam Veterans Coalition to support the legislation and work for its passage. She also formed a plan and policy uniting veterans organizations and veterans advocates with the sole purpose of correcting and updating the outdated Missing Service Persons Act of 1942.

Crucial to passage of this new law was the support of citizens who were informed about its benefits. Joe and Paula Donaldson of Fair Haven, VT, deserve credit for organizing a weekly vigil as part of this educational effort. Nationwide distribution of information on the progress of the legislation, a responsibility of Bob Necci, helped pave the way to passage of this important act. Education is often the key to success, and such was the case with the Missing Service Personnel Act of 1995.

I commend the supporters of this bill for their loyalty and devotion to the men and women who wear the uniform of the U.S. Armed Forces. These Vietnam veterans and family members of those missing and captured in Vietnam have left a legacy of justice and fair treatment for future soldiers who become missing while fighting to defend our country and our freedom.

THE ABORTION PROVISION IN THE TELECOMMUNICATION BILL

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 6, 1996*

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the telecommunications bill has been signed into

law. It is a bill that I supported and I am pleased to see this important legislation become law.

However, I am outraged at the way in which this extreme Republican leadership snuck a little-known provision into the conference report. In the attempt to eliminate "obscene" material from the Internet, this provision included an old, outdated definition of the word "obscene." Known as the Comstock Act, it included as part of the definition of obscene materials "any drug, medicine, article, or thing \* \* \* intended for producing abortion." This obscure, never enforced law dates back to the early 1900's and is clearly an unconstitutional violation of free speech. If enforced, this outdated law would prohibit the discussion of abortion over the telephone, on the computer, or through the mail.

The new telecommunication law makes it a felony, punishable by 5 years for the first offense and 10 years for each subsequent offense, for anyone to discuss abortion on the Internet. I believe that it would be unconstitutional to ban citizens from speaking freely on the issue of abortion.

Women's rights have continually been challenged by this Congress. This is just the latest attempt to silence those who advocate a woman's right to choose. I believe that Congress should act immediately to ensure that free speech is not violated by this law.

I lived through the era before Roe versus Wade. I know what poor women went through in the back alleys when abortion was not legal. Any attempt to restrict this medical procedure is just one more way this Congress is throwing away a woman's right to choose.

Mr. Speaker, it is outrageous that this extreme anti-choice movement would use the new telecommunications law to threaten a person's rights to discuss abortion. Choosing abortion is the most heartwrenching and personal decision a woman may ever make. But it is a decision that should be made between a woman, her doctor, her family, and her spiritual conscience. This Congress should not be meddling with our ability to freely discuss a woman's most personal medical decision.

INTRODUCTION OF THE INFECTIOUS AGENTS CONTROL ACT OF 1996

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 6, 1996*

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I am introducing today the Infectious Agents Control Act of 1996, which will address the need to keep infectious agents that could pose a serious threat to the public health and safety out of the hands of dangerous people while ensuring that these substances remain available to scientists with a legitimate research need for them.

By now, most of Members of this body have probably read news reports about Larry Wayne Harris, the Ohio white-supremacist who ordered bubonic plague through the mail last summer. It is frightening to think that just about anybody with a 32-cent stamp and a little chutzpah could get a hold of any number of potentially dangerous infectious substances. The Ohio case may be an isolated incident or