

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN MEMORY OF MR. JAMES  
DEVIVO

HON. SAM GEJDENSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 7, 1996

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember my dear friend, Mr. James DeVivo, who passed away unexpectedly early this morning. Jim was a special person who had an unwavering commitment to his hometown of Willimantic, CT. Jim will be sorely missed by everyone in the community and many others across Connecticut.

Jim DeVivo was born in Willimantic on May 28, 1937 and lived there all his life. He attended local schools, operated a business in town, and played an important role in every facet of the community. Jim expanded a small family-run waste disposal business into a major recycling center serving customers across my State. He provided invaluable employment opportunities to people in a town that has been struggling to overcome the demise of the textile industry which fueled its economy for 150 years. Jim served as a member of the board of education and maintained a strong commitment to education throughout his life. He also had a deep commitment to his faith. On January 7, 1996, Jim and his wife, Mary Lou, were ordained lay ministers during a ceremony at St. Patrick's Cathedral in Norwich.

Jim was an eternal optimist who believed anything was possible with hard work and a little luck. Over the past few months, he was consumed with his latest project. He had purchased an old post office in downtown Willimantic and was in the process of rehabilitating it. He planned to turn it into a museum and coffee shop. Jim had a special talent for accomplishing what others deemed impossible.

I have many fond memories of Jim. Most center on our times together in Connecticut. He also came to visit me in Washington on several occasions, most recently, last summer for the dedication of the Korean War Memorial. On one visit, I took him and another friend—Ralph Fargo—to the White House. Following our tour, I got separated from Jim and Ralph. After searching for several minutes, I found them behind the mansion inspecting its trash removal system under the watchful eye of Secret Service cameras. Regardless of where he was, Jim was constantly looking for innovative ways to improve his business. If the President had a good recycling system, Jim wanted to know about it.

My heart goes out to Jim's family—his wife Mary Lou, and children, Tom, Tim, John, Bridget, and Gina. Jim cared about his family more than anything else in the world. He strengthened his business and worked on behalf of the community to guarantee a better future for those he loved most. A few years ago, the third generation of the DeVivo family took over the family business as Jim turned over the reins to his sons.

Mr. Speaker, Jim DeVivo was a very rare man. Countless Americans are good businessmen and millions more are good fathers. Jim was both. While many people espouse lofty principles about how we should lead our lives, they often fail to practice what they preach. Jim followed those principles each and every day. Jim was a charitable man who supported the largest organizations, but never forgot an individual who might have fallen on hard times. When someone needed a job, Jim always found one.

I would like to share one more story which demonstrates just how extraordinary Jim was. He hired many Spanish-speaking residents to work in his facility. Unlike so many other employers, he genuinely cared about each and every employee. Jim wanted them to be able to become successful members of society. He recognized this goal would be aided if they improved their fluency in English. As a result, Jim provided language instruction to his employees right at his plant. He wasn't required to do this and it didn't make his business any more profitable. He did it because he knew it was the right thing to do. He did it because he truly believed America was the land of opportunity where everyone can succeed with a little help.

In political life, we have more acquaintances than friends. I am proud to say Jim DeVivo has been my friend for two decades. I will miss Jim very much. He had the qualities which have made America great—dedication to family, community, and faith, commitment to hard work and limitless optimism about the future. Jim made life better for generations of residents of Willimantic. He will be sorely missed by all of us who loved him.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE'S REMARKS AT THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL OF HONOR PRESENTATION TO DR. BILLY GRAHAM

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 7, 1996

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, last week, the Reverend Dr. Billy Graham and his wife Ruth were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor here in the Capitol Rotunda. I was delighted to be in attendance at this wonderful and historic event, honoring an extraordinary man who has been of invaluable counsel and a great inspiration to Americans from the White House to the halls of Congress, from Main Street to Wall Street.

At this occasion, remarkable in its universal attendance among Democrats and Republicans, Christians and members of other faiths, world leaders and ordinary families, Vice President AL GORE's remarks were particularly striking in their poignant description of what the Reverend Billy Graham has contributed with his ministry around the world. Vice Presi-

dent GORE, in his short remarks, sums up the warmth and wisdom that Reverend Graham has to impart upon those fortunate enough to have known him. I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating Reverend Graham and to read Vice President GORE's heartfelt remarks.

CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL OF HONOR  
PRESENTATION TO DR. BILLY GRAHAM

(By Vice President Al Gore)

Dr. and Mrs. Graham, Mr. Speaker, Senator Dole, members of the House and Senate gathered here, members of the Graham family, friends of Dr. and Mrs. Graham, spiritual leaders of all faiths from across our nation who are attending this event, and ladies and gentlemen.

This afternoon we pause from the business of Congress to honor a servant of God. Billy Graham and Ruth Graham have been friends to me and my family for many years. I, too, had the pleasure, Senator Dole, of visiting with Dr. and Mrs. Graham at that beautiful mountaintop log cabin at Montreal. We've had an occasion to visit many times, and it has always been a blessing for me and for my family.

You have touched the hearts of the American family. Over the last half century, few individuals have left such a lasting imprint on our national life.

Every American president since World War II has sought Billy Graham's counsel. Republicans and Democrats alike have relied on his moral sense and used his wisdom as a compass to help guide the ship of state.

From his first discussion with President Truman in 1948, to his tea with President Clinton just yesterday, Billy Graham has been a welcome presence in the White House. He has also met with leaders of other nations around the world.

Sometimes his visits have been controversial. Senator Dole mentioned a couple of those visits. I remember, as some of you do, the wonderful statement made by Senator Sam Nunn, who is here, at the national prayer breakfast this year, when he talked about a controversial trip Dr. Graham made to the Soviet Union. And when he returned, he was bitterly criticized in a newspaper column in which it was written that he had set back the cause of Christianity by 50 years. To which Dr. Graham responded, I'm so ashamed. I was trying to set it back 2,000 years.

But although he moves easily among presidents, and kings and heads of state, I've always sensed that Billy and Ruth Graham are most at home with ordinary mothers and fathers; and families throughout this nation admire them greatly.

This man, who once dreamed of swinging a bat in baseball's major leagues has filled stadiums from New York in Nairobi, from Tulsa to Tokyo, preaching the Gospel and sounding the cry for human rights, enlightened race relations and the dignity of freedom. Yet, he remains humble, even with this power to muster great throngs of people.

He once told an interviewer and I quote, "The great crowds are meaningless. The thing that counts is what happens in the hearts of men and women. What good my ministry has done I'll never know until I get to Heaven."

Well, Dr. Graham, most Americans would probably say, if any of us are judged worthy by our maker, you and Ruth are going to

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