

has provided invaluable assistance to Members and their staffs while planning, coordinating and accompanying Senate delegations traveling worldwide to over sixty countries. His substantive knowledge of the key issues, keen legislative insight, and ability to effectively advise senior members of the Army leadership directly contributed to the successful representation of the Army's interests before Congress.

Throughout his career, Colonel Randy Bookout has demonstrated his profound commitment to our Nation, his selfless service to the Army, a deep concern for soldiers and their families, and a commitment to excellence. Colonel Bookout is a consummate professional whose performance, in over 27 years of service, has personified those traits of courage, competency and integrity that our Nation has come to expect from its professional Army officers.

Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Colonel Bookout for his honorable service to the U.S. Army and the people of the United States. We wish him and his family Godspeed and all the best in the future.●

CELEBRATING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF KAHAL KADOSH BETH ELOHIM

● Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, it is a pleasure for me to recognize today the congregation of Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim in Charleston, S.C. as it celebrates its 250th anniversary on October 23 1999.

Beth Elohim is the fourth oldest Jewish congregation in the United States. The congregation still worships in a synagogue built in 1840–41 in the Greek Revival style, making it the oldest synagogue in continuous use in the United States. In 1980, the building was designated a National Historic Landmark.

Jewish settlers arrived in Charleston as early as 1695 and by 1749 were numerous enough to organize the present congregation of Beth Elohim, then known as Holy Congregational House of God. These settlers were attracted by South Carolina's civil and religious liberty as well as the economic opportunities the colony offered. In 1792, construction of the synagogue began. The structure stood until being destroyed in the Charleston fire of 1838. The visiting General Marquis de Lafayette observed the original building to be "spacious and elegant."

Beth Elohim also holds the distinction of being the cradle of Reform Judaism in the United States. In 1824, a group of progressive members of the congregation petitioned for a shortened Hebrew ritual, English translation of prayers and a sermon in English. Their petition being denied, they decided to organize The Reformed Society of Israelites. It was a short-lived society, but when the members returned to the congregation at Beth Elohim, their

practices and principles influenced the worship service there and today still form the basis of Reform Judaism. During the construction of the new temple in 1840, an organ was installed, encased in mahogany to complement the building's interior. Said to have 700 pipes and costing \$2,500, the organ provided the first instrumental music used in worship in any synagogue in America.

Many members of K.K. Beth Elohim have been distinguished city, state and national leaders, including early congregant Moses Lindo, who before the Revolution helped to develop the cultivation of indigo. Joseph Levy, veteran of the Cherokee War of 1760–61, was probably the first Jewish military officer in America. Almost two dozen men of Beth Elohim served in the American Revolution, most notably Francis Salvador who, as a delegate to the South Carolina Provincial Congresses of 1775–1776, was one of the first Jews to serve in the American legislature. The blind poet Penina Moise was a famous early superintendent of the Jewish Sunday School at Beth Elohim.

Today, Beth Elohim is led by Rabbi Anthony David Holz and Rabbi Emeritus William A. Rosenthal. The congregation continues to function as a vital part of the Charleston community and deserves many congratulations on reaching this milestone—250 years of rich history.●

BILL WOLFF

● Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the efforts of a group of farmers in eastern Montana who pulled together following a tragic accident to help the Family of Bill Wolff harvest their crops.

Sadly, the Wolff family suffered a terrible loss on September 10, when a farming accident claimed Bill's life. In the midst of this tragedy, Bill's neighbor's gathered in an impressive effort to help the Wolff family harvest their grain.

In all more than 20 trucks and 12 combines arrived in Glendive to assist in the harvest. Working simultaneously, the combines were able to cut 135 acres per hour and bring in the harvest for the Wolff family.

Jim Wolff, one of Bill's nephews said, "After experiencing the great teamwork here today, it's going to be difficult to go home and finish my own harvest by myself." In addition, many neighbors mirrored Jim's sentiment and expressed a sense of privilege that they were able to join with the Wolff family during their time of need.

Montanans are truly a special breed of people—always quick to lend a hand to others. It says so much that these people took time away from their own extremely hectic harvest schedules to help the Wolffs, and I commend them for it. Their selflessness serves as an example of us all.

I also extend my most sincere sympathies to the Wolf family. As evidenced by the outpouring of support

from his neighbors. Bill was a man who was loved by a great many people and his loss will be shared by them also.●

INSTALLATION OF WILLIAM GORDON

● Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, on Sunday William C. Gordon was installed as the 16th President of the University of New Mexico.

A psychologist by training, Dr. Gordon came to New Mexico by way of Wake Forest University, and Rutgers, where he earned his Ph.D. He taught at the State University of New York before moving to Albuquerque more than twenty years ago. Serving as a Professor of Psychology, then as chairman of the department, he became Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. From there he became the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and then assumed the job of interim president. It was during that period, and after a national search had been conducted, that he himself was named President in March of this year.

Distinguished and well respected, Dr. Gordon has worked diligently throughout his administrative career to improve the university not only for the students and faculty, but for the staff and the wider community. He has sought to improve both the education people are getting, and the way they are getting it. The University of New Mexico is our state's largest institution of higher learning. The potential this represents is not lost on Dr. Gordon, and we look to him for leadership well into the 21st century.●

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT MAJOR GORDON R. TAFT, UNITED STATES ARMY

● Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Sergeant Major Gordon R. "Randy" Taft, United States Army, a native of Decatur, Alabama, who is retiring this month from active duty after twenty-six years of distinguished service to the country. Sergeant Major Taft, who currently serves as the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Director of the Defense Logistics Agency in Fort Belvoir, Virginia, has devoted his professional life to supporting the personal, administrative, and logistics needs of military men and women assigned around the world in defense of our freedom. His accomplishments are many and his reputation for leading and developing young soldiers is legendary. Randy Taft's selfless contributions to the National Defense will be missed, so as he transitions to new opportunities, I want to say thanks to him on behalf of a grateful Nation.

Sergeant Major Taft's numerous military awards and decorations reflect the tremendous impact he has had on the lives of America's fighting men and women. His decorations include the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, and the Humanitarian Service