

Born Karol Jozef Wojtyla, Jr. in 1920, Pope John Paul II was the second son of Karol Wojtyla, Sr. and Emilia Kaczorowska Wojtyla. Karol, Sr. was a retired officer for the Polish Army as well as a tailor, and Emilia was a schoolteacher. Pope John Paul II repeatedly demonstrated his unique ability to form friendships that crossed the social norms of the time. Although his hometown of Wadowice, Poland was wrought with anti-Semitism, Pope John Paul II and his family did not share in that hatred. At an early age, His Holiness befriended several members of the Jewish community and learned the importance of compassion and understanding. He later became the first Pope to visit a synagogue and the first to visit a memorial in nearby Auschwitz honoring victims of the Holocaust.

Shortly after his father's death in 1941, Pope John Paul II attended an underground seminary in Krakow, where he was eventually ordained in 1946. He served as a chaplain to university students at St. Florian's Church in Krakow until the communist government abolished the theology department in 1954. He continued his studies at the Seminary of Krakow and was hired as a professor at the Catholic University of Lublin, where he founded and operated a facility to assist families with marital problems, ranging from family planning to alcoholism and physical abuse. In 1956, Pope John Paul II was appointed to the Chair of Ethics at Catholic University, and in 1958 he was named the auxiliary bishop of Krakow. He was instrumental to the Vatican Council II deliberations in 1962, which encouraged diversity in language and practice of the Catholic faith in order to facilitate the inclusion of laymen in worship while also condemning anti-Semitism around the world. His respect throughout the Catholic community led to his election as Pope after the death of Pope John Paul I in September 1978, making him the first Slavic Pope in history.

Less than a year after being named Pope, John Paul II returned to his native Poland and spoke out in favor of the Polish Solidarity movement and against communism. His insistence that no system of government override religious beliefs gave hope to people of faith throughout the former Soviet Union that reforms would take place. The courage and determination that he displayed in opposition to a world power reflected the strength of his convictions and his willingness to stand up to an institutional force that challenged the beliefs of the church. Pope John Paul II repeated this theme when he visited Cuba in January 2003, stating that a government does not have the authority to legislate religious beliefs.

Mr. Speaker, during his 25 years as pontiff, Pope John Paul II has spread the Catholic faith with visits to over 115 countries. His gift for uniting those of different beliefs earned him Man of the Year honors from Time Magazine in 1994, and his popularity among both Catholics and non-Catholics around the world is a testament to his genuine love for humanity. As a graduate of St. Mark's Catholic School in Gary, Indiana, I am well aware of the significant role that he has played in leading the Catholic Church into the 21st century. His teaching of tolerance and love for thy neighbor has made him worthy of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and that is why I intend to support H. Con. Res. 313.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to join my friend from Wisconsin in urging the

President to present the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Pope John Paul II, who has marked his Silver Jubilee as the spiritual leader of more than one billion Catholics around the world.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is considered the highest civilian award of the United States Government. It was established to recognize persons who have made especially meritorious contributions to the security or national interests of the United States; to world peace; or to cultural or other significant public or private endeavors. Recipients have included educators, diplomats, authors, scientists and religious leaders.

By bestowing this great honor upon Pope John Paul II, we recognize His Holiness' lifetime dedication to peace, hope, freedom, unity and dignity. No one is more deserving of this award of special distinction which symbolizes the lasting admiration of the American people for the Pope's many efforts.

This man was formed at a remarkable time in human history. He knew the persecution of oppression and witnessed the false ideologies of the 20th Century. He studied for the priesthood in secrecy and lived through the Nazi occupation and Communist subjugation of his native Poland. He was a philosopher, theologian and pastor. He was instrumental in the demise of the Communist regime in Poland, and he played an important role in the collapse of Communism throughout central and eastern Europe, which ended the Cold War.

The Holy Father has continued to promote freedom and peace throughout the world during his pontificate. He has truly internationalized the Catholic Church, and yet he has also reached out in an unprecedented way to peoples of other beliefs and religions all over the world through his promotion of greater understanding, healing, and harmony between religions. His Holiness has particularly promoted unity among Christian churches, reconciliation with the Jewish people, and dialogue with Islam. The Holy Father was the first Pope to visit a synagogue, as well as the first to visit a mosque.

I consider it an honor to be able to ask my Congressional colleagues to join me in paying tribute to this devoted spiritual leader and to celebrate with the Holy Father this Jubilee by urging the President to bestow the Medal of Freedom upon His Holiness, Pope John Paul II.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEARCE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 313.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NEW BRIDGE LANDING POST OFFICE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2130) to redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 650 Kinderkamack Road in

River Edge, New Jersey, as the "New Bridge Landing Post Office," as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2130

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. NEW BRIDGE LANDING POST OFFICE.

(a) REDESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 121 Kinderkamack Road in River Edge, New Jersey, and known as the North Hackensack Station Post Office, shall be known and designated as the "New Bridge Landing Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the New Bridge Landing Post Office.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

"These are the times that try men's souls." Mr. Speaker, political theorist Thomas Paine uttered these famous words during the cold of November 1776. When the American Revolution commenced, the colonial freedom fighters battled the mighty British forces while barefoot and often wearing little more than blankets and torn clothing. The early days of the war featured humiliating, devastating losses for the overwhelmed Colonial Army.

On November 20, 1776, General George Washington led his troops in a retreat over the Hackensack River across the New Bridge Landing. Once they reached safety, General Washington and his men set up the first headquarters of the new Continental Army at New Bridge. Thomas Paine was inspired to write the first essays of the American Crisis near the New Bridge landing site, intended to rally Americans during the first days of our Nation. The New Bridge landing provided General Washington's troops with an important chance to regroup. This gave Americans a small boost that led to the unlikely defeat of the Royal British Army and the independence for the brand new United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation, H.R. 2130, introduced by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) renames a post office in River Edge, New Jersey, as the New Bridge Landing Post Office

Building. This designation, on this historic site, will serve as an appropriate reminder of the struggle that Americans endured during the Revolutionary War.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the gentleman from New Jersey for this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleague in consideration of H.R. 2130, legislation naming a postal facility as the New Bridge Landing. H.R. 2130, which was introduced by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) on May 15, 2003, was unanimously approved by the Committee on Government Reform on November 6, 2003. This measure has the support and cosponsorship of the entire New Jersey congressional delegation.

According to preservation New Jersey, New Bridge Landing has great historical significance. The Landing, an inland port situated on a strategic site, was an important shipping point for hundreds of years and was the scene of many fights during the Revolutionary War. Other historic structures that helped make up New Bridge Landing are the Steuben House, a stone Dutch mansion built in 1750; a 19th century swinging bridge; a tidal mill site; and the site of New Bridge Landing, a river embarkation point. Three other buildings were moved to the site to save them from demolition: The Demerest House, the Westervelt Barn and the Campbell-Christie House.

According to the Bergen County Historical Society, throughout the war the New Bridge was considered an important, strategic route, guarded by troops from both sides at different times. George Washington's retreat across this bridge on November 20, 1776, saved his troops from entrapment by advancing troops.

Mr. Speaker, given the historic nature of New Bridge Landing, it seems quite appropriate to redesignate this postal facility in River Edge, New Jersey. I urge swift passage of this bill.

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2130, a bill to redesignate the United States Postal Service facility at 650 Kinderkamack Road in River Edge, NJ, as the New Bridge Landing Post Office.

As a life-long resident of New Jersey, a history buff, and the Congressman who formerly represented the Borough of River Edge for my first 6 years in Congress, I am delighted to be a cosponsor of legislation that will highlight the unique, strategic role that New Jersey, and specifically River Edge, played in the birth of our Nation and the Continental Army's success in the Revolutionary War. Renaming the River Edge postal facility—located just two blocks away from Historic New Bridge Landing—will help ensure that future generations will have a window into New Jersey's colonial life that was home to more Revolutionary War engagements than any other of the 13 original colonies.

New Bridge Landing has played a pivotal role in the development of River Edge since Native Americans first inhabited the area. During the Revolutionary War, GEN George Washington retreated from historic Fort Lee across New Bridge Landing, leading the unprecedented march of a ragtag band of volunteer soldiers and a committed people in pursuit of the timeless ideals of liberty, freedom, and equality that our Nation enjoys today. Its proximity to the Hackensack River later made it a hub for industrial development; it was used as both a tidal mill and bustling shipping point for iron.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and gratitude for those revolutionary fighters that I ask all my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 2130, so that future generations of New Jerseyans will remember what those heroic patriots accomplished at New Bridge Landing so long ago.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe I am going to have any additional requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers and I support H.R. 2130. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2130, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 121 Kinderkamack Road in River Edge, New Jersey, as the 'New Bridge Landing Post Office'."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SENATOR JAMES B. PEARSON POST OFFICE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 1718) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3710 West 73rd Terrace in Prairie Village, Kansas, as the "Senator James B. Pearson Post Office".

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 1718

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SENATOR JAMES B. PEARSON POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3710 West 73rd Terrace in Prairie Village, Kansas, shall be known and designated as the "Senator James B. Pearson Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the Senator James B. Pearson Post Office.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the

gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us today offered by the distinguished Senator from Kansas, Senator PAT ROBERTS, names this Prairie Village, Kansas, postal facility as the Senator James B. Pearson Post Office.

Senator James Pearson was born in Nashville, Tennessee, on May 7, 1920. At a young age, he moved with his family to Virginia and went on to attend Duke University. He bravely served as a pilot in the Naval Air Transport in 1943 during World War II. He was honorably discharged as a Lieutenant and returned home to graduate from the University of Virginia Law School in 1950.

Pearson moved back to Kansas and became a practicing lawyer in the town of Mission in 1950. Two years later, he became the assistant county attorney of Johnson County, and in two more years, in 1954, the county probate judge.

Pearson threw his hat into the political ring for the first time in 1956 when he earned a seat in the Kansas State Senate. On January 31, 1962, he was appointed to the United States Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Senator Andrew Schoepfel. He was elected for the first time in a special election in November of that year and earned reelection in both 1966 and 1972, retiring in 1978. Senator James Pearson served his home State of Kansas and indeed the entire Nation with distinction, and he highly deserves the commemoration provided by this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, Senator James B. Pearson continues to live here in Washington, D.C., and outside Baldwin City, Kansas, and we wish him well.

In addition to the Senator from Kansas, I want to recognize the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) who introduced the companion legislation here in the House, H.R. 3255, and I know both gentlemen worked together to ensure that James B. Pearson would be honored with this post office.

I am pleased that Senate bill 1718 will soon be on the President's desk for his signature.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.