

skill sets and experience, our veterans most certainly deserve broader employment opportunities.

In response to this need for increased employment opportunities, I am honored to introduce the Veterans' Employment Act of 2004. It is my strong belief that our veterans provide some of the most valuable service both within and outside of our armed services. With support of this bill, we may further expand the employment opportunities available to our veterans and ensure the strength and reputation of America's private industries.

RECOGNIZING DR. CHARLES R. DREW, PROFESSOR OF SURGERY AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY AND PIONEER IN THE FIELD OF MEDICINE; 1904–1950

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Dr. Charles R. Drew, pioneer in the field of medicine, professor of surgery, and innovator of the modern blood bank.

Dr. Drew, born 1904 in Washington, D.C., excelled academically. He received a Bachelor of Arts from Amherst College, Medical Doctorate and Master of Surgery degrees from McGill University, and a Doctor of Science in Medicine degree from Columbia University.

Dr. Drew was an outstanding athlete, starting in football and track at Dunbar High School and Amherst College. He received the Thomas W. Ashley Memorial Trophy for being the football team's most valuable player and achieved honorable mention All-American honors in football. He became an all-time leading scorer in intercollegiate track while attending McGill Medical College.

As a surgeon and specialist in blood research, in 1940 Dr. Drew organized the massive Blood for Britain project, in which blood plasma was separated, collected, and stored to aid the wounded in World War II. The following year he became director for the national American Red Cross program for blood procurement.

Dr. Drew is credited with organizing the concept of the blood bank. Dr. Drew pioneered the use of blood plasma for transfusion due to the longer life of blood with the plasma removed. Prior to his studies, blood could only be stored for seven days. Dr. Drew developed "bloodmobile" trucks with refrigeration units to collect and carry plasma, increasing the shelf life of blood. His blood bank in the Presbyterian Hospital in New York served as one of the models for the widespread system of blood banks used by the American Red Cross today. Countless lives were saved thanks to Dr. Drew's efforts in blood research and plasma separation.

Dr. Drew served as Professor of Surgery at Howard University and Chief Surgeon of its teaching and clinical facility, Freedmen's Hospital. There he trained America's first generation of black surgeons.

Dr. Drew was inducted into the Alpha Psi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity while attending Amherst College. While on the faculty of Howard University, he collaborated in the writing and composition of the fraternity's hymn, "Omega Dear."

Dr. Drew succeeded in each phase of his life being an outstanding example of African-American achievement. He left behind a legacy of life saving techniques.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Dr. Charles R. Drew for his pioneering achievements in blood research; his commitment to Howard University, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, and his community; and for the many contributions he has made to our nation. It is truly an honor and a privilege to recognize Dr. Charles R. Drew in the United States House of Representatives on this day.

REMEMBERING THE "HELL ON WHEELS"

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, three and a half months after the D-Day invasion of June 6, 1944 and nearly 1,000 miles away from the beaches of Normandy, France, the United States 2nd Armored Division—an outfit known as "Hell on Wheels" for its nucleus of tank units, the leadership of Major General George Patton, and its elite corps of servicemen—found its way to the Netherlands city of Sittard on September 19, 1944. Here, in the southernmost province of The Netherlands, close to the Belgian and German border, the "Hell on Wheels" battalion waged war against the Nazi's that for four years had forced their fascist values upon the people of that city.

When the battle was over, America lost at least sixty-two of the bravest men ever to wear our uniform. One account of the battle's outcome went like this: "Here they (the "Hell on Wheels") received an overwhelming welcome by crowds of Dutch, euphoric citizens liberated free again after four long years of German fascist occupation, saving them from the hardships like the citizens of Amsterdam had still to endure because of shortages of food and fuel during the entire coming, unusual severe winter."

Accounts of what exactly occurred and how many servicemen died in Sittard are not entirely known. The National Personnel Records Center, which houses personal files for veterans of World War II was unable to provide more information about soldiers potentially lost during the battle in Sittard due to a fire at their St. Louis Records Center in 1973.

Still, we know that the men who died that day did not yearn to be heroes or to have a memorial dedicated in their honor. They came from all walks of life and all regions of America, including from my home state of New Jersey, to serve in the Armed Forces and defend freedom. They yearned for reaching Berlin, winning the war and enjoying their homecomings. And they dreamed of seeing their parents, wives and newborn babies.

This weekend, American families, friends and descendants of the sixty-two "Hell on Wheels" servicemen who lost their lives, as well as residents of Sittard (now known as Sittard-Geleen), past and present, will come together in Sittard-Geleen to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the city's freedom due in large part to the bravery of these sixty-two American souls who will never be forgotten.

Together, they are unveiling a fitting memorial in this Dutch city to honor the service,

bravery and sacrifice of these servicemen. One account about the new memorial said: "It will be made famous, hard stone excavated in the very heart of the Ardennes, a notorious battlefield, where such great courage and perseverance were shown that we shall never forget."

This memorial service has been a long time coming. In a joint effort, that spanned nearly a year, the U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands, Clifford Sobel, Arno Bemelmans, a local Dutchman and the Foundation Chairman for the new memorial, two Army Genealogists—Charles Gailey and Arvan Staats—we discovered in a recent Washington Post article, and myself put forth an all out effort to track down and notify as many family members related to the "Hell on Wheels" soldiers as possible about the memorial dedication. Through our efforts, we successfully reached family members for 25 of the 62 deceased servicemen.

For all, including myself, dedicating this memorial means an opportunity to pay respects to those who gave everything to defend freedom. For some, it also means the chance to possibly recognize the name of another soldier's relative they once may have heard about in a letter or telegraph home or in a journal entry recovered years later, or to remember a face, voice or even a memory from a lifetime ago.

Today, let us honor each of sixty-two servicemen from the "Hell on Wheels" battalion who lost their lives in Sittard by pledging this: Only through preserving our past can we guarantee a future where the lessons and legacy of these servicemen will be rightfully remembered.

For this to be true, I'm reminded of what the patriot Thomas Paine observed more than 220 years ago as our forefathers fought to gain their own freedom for the first time.

Paine said: "Those who expect to reap the blessing of freedom must undergo the fatigue of supporting it."

As we honor our hero soldiers this weekend in the Netherlands, we must not forget that "freedom is not free." It is worth fighting for, and those who fought must be remembered and honored forever.

In the end, the remaining servicemen from "Hell on Wheels" battalion did cross the German border to meet the enemy on their own soil. They played a crucial role in the Battle of the Bulge and finally crossed the Rhine River in 1945 to free thousands of prisoners of war and slave laborers.

History books may never report what the "Hell on Wheels" battalion accomplished in Sittard. Future generations may never know what happened in this city or at dozens, maybe even hundreds, of other battlefields like it across Europe. But for this moment, this weekend, let us all remember with a heavy heart the "Hell on Wheels 62."

TRIBUTE TO PRIVATE FIRST CLASS KEN W. LEISTEN

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to the life of an Oregon Soldier, beloved patriot, and proud son. Private First Class Ken W. Leisten was recently

killed in Taji, Iraq—far away from friends, family, and the Willamette Valley that he loved so much.

Ken was the last of the Leisten men—the pride and joy of his grandma and a large extended family that lives from California to the Midwest. Private Leisten made his community stronger because of the choices he made, the way he lived his life.

Unlike many of his comrades, Private Leisten was a full-time guardsman. He was permanently assigned to the 1st Battalion, 162nd Infantry HQ, but he volunteered to serve in Iraq with the 2nd Battalion—so someone else wouldn't have to. Typical. This decision was the rule instead of the exception for this exceptional young man.

The lasting tragedy of his noble sacrifice is that Private Leisten was exactly the kind of American that we need more of, the type of soldier—the kind of citizen—that makes us all better people.

Sacrifice—the willful regard for others at his own expense—was Ken Leisten's life philosophy; it is his legacy. In actions large and small, Private Leisten took the time to care.

A soldier in a hostile land, Ken Leisten set about making a difference by reaching out. He shared his limited water with Iraqi children in the village where he served to establish and then keep peace.

Think about it; safe drinking water in a hot, unforgiving desert. Not many people would share their canteen, but Ken did. He consciously made the effort to share what little he had with those around him—because he knew their need was greater.

Part teacher, mentor, cheerleader, and coach—Ken spent his brief life assisting his fellow soldiers learn the art of war while helping them maintain balance: responsibilities as soldiers with their needs as parents, spouses, and workers.

One thousand Americans have perished since this administration committed our time, talent, and treasure to the liberation and reconstruction of Iraq. And unfortunately it is all too easy for the incredible life and terrible death of one citizen-soldier to get lost in the numbers.

I say this because despite the noise surrounding the war, a silent truth endures: there is no more sacred or loving gift than laying down your life for the protection of another. Private Ken Leisten gave us this gift.

Let us commit ourselves to ensuring Ken Leisten's example is our example; that his sacrifice—celebrated, applied—and never, ever forgotten.

Private Ken Leisten made a difference in the lives of Iraqi children he knew he would never see again—he laid down his life so that the People of Iraq might have a chance at self governance and peace.

We, in this Chamber and beyond these marble walls, are all accountable to the spirit of Ken Leisten. We must redouble our efforts, rekindle the flame of liberty, and renew our America to earn the freedom that Private Leisten gave his life for.

INDIA SHOULD OPEN BORDER AT WAGAH FOR TRADE, TRAVEL

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, the Chief Minister of Punjab, Captain Amarinder Singh has called for an opening of the border between India and Pakistan at Wagah, about halfway between Amritsar, Punjab, and Lahore, Pakistan. Such an opening would help the farmers of Punjab to get higher prices for their produce than the less-than-subsistence prices the Indian government pays them. It would also make it much easier for Sikhs to make religious pilgrimages to the birthplace of the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak, in Nankana Sahib, which is also in Pakistan.

Chief Minister Singh is right. The border should be opened. This would be a significant step towards peace in the region. It would greatly reduce the need for India and Pakistan to expend exorbitant resources on their military rivalry. Instead, the cross-border contacts would strengthen the emerging relationship between the two countries.

Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity to call on both the governments of India and Pakistan to open this border. Let the people, money, and ideas flow freely.

By opening the border at Wagah, India would be able to begin to end its repression that has claimed the lives of over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, over 300,000 Christians since 1976, over 89,000 Kashmiri Muslims since 1988, and tens of thousands of other minority people.

This repression must end if India is to be taken seriously as a member of the international community. We should cut off India's aid and trade until such time as it respects human rights. Opening the border at Wagah would be a first step. We should also go on record in support of all people in South Asia enjoying the basic democratic right to self determination.

Mr. Speaker, I am inserting the press release from the Council of Khalistan into the RECORD at this time.

[From the Council of Khalistan]

OPEN WAGAH BORDER FOR TRADE

WASHINGTON, DC, September 10, 2004.—Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, today endorsed the demand of Captain Amarinder Singh, Chief Minister of Punjab, to open the border at Wagah, about halfway between Amritsar and Lahore. This would allow direct trade between Punjab and Pakistan.

“The distance between Amritsar and Lahore is only about 35 miles, less than the distance between Washington and Baltimore in the United States,” Dr. Aulakh said. “Why not allow trade between these neighbors?,” he asked. “Chief Minister Amarinder Singh is to be praised for asking to open this border,” said Dr. Aulakh. “His stand will help keep the fires of freedom lit in the Sikh Nation,” he added. “This is more than all his Akali and Congress predecessors have done for the people of Punjab,” Dr. Aulakh noted.

“We fully support opening this border,” he said. “This is the wise thing for Punjab and the Sikh Nation,” he added. “It is another step forward for the freedom and self-determination of the Sikh Nation. It will help secure the prosperity of the Sikhs in Punjab, Khalistan.”

“Opening trade through the border at Wagah will bring peace in the subcontinent,” said Dr. Aulakh. “This will enable the farmers of Punjab to get higher prices for their products and help Pakistan to overcome its shortages,” he said. “If India truly cares about the well-being of the people, it must open the border at Wagah immediately” Dr. Aulakh also called for bus service across the border so that visitors can more easily visit the birthplace of Guru Nanak, the first Sikh Guru, at Nankana Sahib. “We are the same people. The same language is spoken on both sides of the border. Opening this border benefits everybody and it is much better to open the border than to spend all this time and money constantly preparing for war,” he said.

Khalistan is the independent Sikh homeland declared on October 7, 1987. It has been under Indian occupation since then. When India became independent, Sikhs were equal partners in the transfer of power and were to receive their own state, but the weak and ignorant Sikh leaders of the time were tricked into staying with India on the promise that they would have “the glow of freedom” and no law affecting the Sikhs would pass without their consent. Sikhs ruled an independent and sovereign Punjab from 1710 to 1716 and again from 1765 to 1849 and were recognized by most of the countries of the world at that time. No Sikh representative has ever signed the Indian constitution. The Council of Khalistan is the government pro tempore of Khalistan, the Sikh homeland.

“If India will not open this border, it is clear that there is no place for Sikhs in India,” said Dr. Aulakh. “Sardar Atinder Pal Singh's question of 14 years ago is still the question facing the Sikh Nation: Why don't we liberate Khalistan? As Professor Darshan Singh, a former Jathedar, said, ‘If a Sikh is not for Khalistan, he is not a Sikh’,” Dr. Aulakh noted.

The Indian government has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, more than 300,000 Christians since 1948, over 89,000 Muslims in Kashmir since 1988, and tens of thousands of Tamils, Assamese, Manipuris, Dalits (the aboriginal people of the subcontinent), and others. The Indian Supreme Court called the Indian government's murders of Sikhs “worse than a genocide.” According to a report by the Movement Against State Repression (MASR), 52,268 Sikhs are being held as political prisoners in India without charge or trial. Some have been in illegal custody since 1984!

“We must move forward with the cause of Sikh freedom,” Dr. Aulakh said. “Only in a free Khalistan will the Sikh Nation prosper and get justice,” said Dr. Aulakh. “India should act like a democracy and allow a plebiscite on independence for Khalistan and all the nations of South Asia,” Dr. Aulakh said. “We must free Khalistan now.”

ASSAULT WEAPON BAN REAUTHORIZATION

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the House for five minutes.

Mr. Speaker, we are in a crisis situation in America—and here in Congress. On Monday the assault weapon ban bill expired at midnight and to date there has been no indication from this Republican controlled Congress that this important legislation will be reauthorized, let alone addressed, during this session.