

waiting in line," said Mr. Kennedy, who stepped down this fall after 19 years in the post. "I admired his spunk."

SUNY Potsdam also had cause to mourn the former congressman, and to celebrate his accomplishments. Mr. Martin's papers are held in the college archives, "so that all can remember and learn from his life's work," SUNY Potsdam President John F. Schwaller said.

Times staff writer Brian Kelly contributed to this report.

HONORING MICHAEL T. SUMIDA

HON. STEVE AUSTRIA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. AUSTRIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and honor Michael T. Sumida, recent recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal.

It is an honor to join the people of Ohio's Seventh Congressional District in recognizing Mr. Michael Sumida, whose patriotic work as a Japanese interpreter provided our military with invaluable intelligence and helped bring an end to World War II. As a Japanese American living in Hawaii, Mr. Sumida courageously volunteered his talents to assist the United States military in defeating the Japanese. In the face of racism, Mr. Sumida excelled in acquiring critical enemy intelligence by questioning Japanese prisoners. During his interrogations, Mr. Sumida uncovered the location of enemy troops as well as their plans for attack. The work accomplished by American interpreters was such a valuable asset to military intelligence during World War II that President Truman credited them with ending the war two years prior to the expected end date.

Mr. Sumida currently resides in my hometown of Beavercreek, OH with his wife, Patricia Sumida. It is with great pride along with Ohio's Seventh Congressional district that I honor Michael T. Sumida for his service to our nation.

BUCK RAMBO INDUCTED INTO THE SOUTHERN GOSPEL MUSIC ASSOCIATION'S HALL OF FAME

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, music is in the very fiber of our being, and we are proud to continually showcase the sounds that call Tennessee "home." I rise today to honor one of Tennessee's great sounds as he is inducted into the Southern Gospel Music Association's Hall of Fame.

Buck Rambo started a Gospel singing group in 1960 and quickly set the world ablaze with great harmonies. It would become The Singing Rambos and the group would release over 70

projects, making them a household name in America, Central America, the Bahamas, and Europe. Adding to their bright career, Buck led the group to television where they were central to the early beginnings of many faith-based stations. The Singing Rambos entertained troops at Strategic Air Command Bases, in Vietnam, and in several European military posts. Having hung up his travel hat, Buck now leads a life of service to his faith, his family, and his community.

The very rhythm of our culture, Gospel music lifts and carries us through our darkest moments to our brightest days. The sounds of The Singing Rambos are deeper than the notes on a page: they are hummed into our souls. I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating Buck Rambo on his induction to the Southern Gospel Music Association's Hall of Fame.

SPEECH ON DETERIORATING SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST PARTICULARLY FOR RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share a speech I recently gave on the deteriorating situation in the Middle East particularly for religious minorities. Increasing violence, targeted attacks and heightened discrimination against Christians and other religious minorities in Iraq and Egypt, combined with longstanding abuses in Afghanistan and Pakistan, are among the many reasons why I introduced H.R. 440, bipartisan legislation that would require the State Department to appoint a special envoy to advocate for religious minorities.

More than a year has passed since the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed this legislation yet, today, both this bill and its Senate companion, S. 1245 are both languishing in the Senate. This is deeply disappointing. Even more disappointing is the fact that the State Department has urged Senator JIM WEBB to oppose this bipartisan legislation and put a hold on it in the Senate.

Time is running out—both in terms of the legislative calendar for this year and in terms of the survival of these communities. Will a special envoy guarantee these communities' protection in the lands they have inhabited for centuries? No one can predict for sure. But I am certain that to do nothing is not an option—lest on the State Department's and Congress' watch we witness a Middle East empty of faith communities, foremost among them the beleaguered Christian community.

Here is the text of my recent speech:

Just one year ago my good friend, the late Chuck Colson was given [the Edwin Meese Award for Religious Liberty] award for his tireless efforts to promote religious liberty and human dignity. His prophetic voice is sorely missed during these trying times for our country. For these are indeed trying

times—times that demand men and women of faith to steel themselves for the challenges ahead. Are we prepared to do so?

I take inspiration from the German Lutheran pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer who, faced with the tyranny and horror of Nazism gave his very life. And the British parliamentarian William Wilberforce, who labored for decades, against seemingly insurmountable odds, to abolish the slave trade in England—ultimately inspiring abolitionist efforts in America. These are just some of the giants on whose shoulders we stand.

Ecclesiastes 4:1 says, "I saw the tears of the oppressed, and they have no comforter; power was on the side of the oppressor." Oppression has marked the church since its birth. Consider the chilling words of Roman historian Tacitus regarding the early church:

"Besides being put to death they were made to serve as objects of amusement; they were clad in the hides of beasts and torn to death by dogs; others were crucified, others set on fire to serve to illuminate the night when daylight failed— . . ."

Are such trials reserved for the history books? Hardly. Every day, around the world, men and women of faith are imprisoned, beaten, detained, tortured and even killed. And yet such stories receive scant attention in the mainstream media—and perhaps more strikingly, are rarely spoken of from our pulpits. The book of Hebrews enjoins us to "Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering." Do we suffer with our brethren? Have we in the West ceased to be salt and light? Has our comfort led to complacency? Consider that on our watch a historic exodus of Christians from the Middle East is underway—an exodus fueled by persecution.

A phrase not often heard outside the majority Muslim world is "First the Saturday people, then the Sunday people." The "Saturday people" are of course the Jews. Their once vibrant communities in countries throughout the region are now decimated. In 1948 there were roughly 150,000 Jews in Iraq—today less than 10 remain. In Egypt, there were once as many as 80,000 Jews and now less than 100 remain.

It appears a similar fate could befall the ancient Christian community in these same lands. Iraq's Christian population has fallen from as many as 1.4 million in 2003 to between 500,000 and 700,000. Churches have been targeted, believers kidnapped for ransom, families threatened with violence if they stay. This reality is all the more sobering considering Iraq's significance in Christendom. With the exception of Israel, the Bible contains more references to the cities, regions and nations of ancient Iraq than any other country. The patriarch Abraham came from a city in Iraq called Ur. Isaac's bride, Rebekah, came from northwest Iraq. Jacob spent 20 years in Iraq and his sons (the 12 tribes of Israel) were born in northwest Iraq. A remarkable spiritual revival as told in the book of Jonah occurred in Nineveh. The events of the book of Esther took place in Iraq as did the account of Daniel in the Lion's Den. Furthermore, many of Iraq's Christians still speak Aramaic the language of Jesus.

In Egypt with the ascent of the Muslim Brotherhood, Coptic Christians,