

June 22, 1999

RECOGNIZING SANDRA SOPAK

HON. AMO HOUGHTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 22, 1999

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize a constituent of mine, Sandra Sopak. Sandy is the County Clerk for Chautauqua County, New York and recently won the National Genealogical Society's Award of Merit. It reads:

Sandra Sopak receives the NGS Award of Merit for her willingness to cooperate with the Chautauqua County Genealogical Society in order to make records more available to the public. Her latest efforts include arranging to have photocopies made of all county tax lists, many of which date from 1850 and before, so the Society's publications committee can extract, index, and ultimately publish this valuable historical information. The Society, in turn, donated a set of their genealogical indexes to aid the county clerk when she is asked for vital record information. This is a fine example of record-keepers and record-seekers working together for the benefit of both.

This is the first time that this award has been given to a County Clerk—and a popular County Clerk at that. Sandy was elected in 1993, and was re-elected in 1997 overwhelmingly. In praise of her contribution, a friend and coworker of Sandra writes, "She is a thoughtful leader within Chautauqua County government, a former town supervisor, a former hospital nurse, as well as a dedicated mother and wife. Her example should be recognized by Americans from not only New York but from all across America."

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to spread that recognition across America. Thank you, Sandy, for your hard work.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL PASCHELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 22, 1999

Mr. PASCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I was granted a leave of absence for Friday, June 18, 1999 after 12 noon. At that time, I received word of a family emergency at home in New Jersey and immediately left Washington D.C. Following are the votes I missed and how I would have voted:

Representatives Sessions and Frost amendment (No. 8) to H.R. 2122, the Mandatory Gun Show Background Check Act: On rollcall No. 239, I would have voted "nay".

Representative Goode Amendment (No. 9) to H.R. 2122, the Mandatory Gun Show Background Check Act: On rollcall No. 240, I would have voted "nay".

Representative Hunter Amendment (No. 10) to H.R. 2111, the Mandatory Gun Show Background Check Act: On rollcall No. 241, I would have voted "nay".

Representative Rogan Amendment (No. 11) to H.R. 2122, the Mandatory Gun Show Background Check Act: On rollcall No. 242, I would have voted "yea".

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

Representatives Conyers and Campbell Amendment (No. 12) to H.R. 2122, the Mandatory Gun Show Background Act: On rollcall No. 243, I would have voted "yea".

On Passage of H.R. 2122: On rollcall vote No. 244, I would have voted "nay".

COMMENDING TAIWANESE AMERICANS

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 22, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, last month I joined people throughout Colorado and across the nation in celebrating Pacific American Heritage Month. The Pacific American community represents an important foundation of America's future and I commend their proud celebration of heritage and community.

Taiwanese American Heritage Week of Pacific American Heritage Month celebrates the unique and diverse contributions of the more than 500,000 Taiwanese Americans in the United States. This portion of the population has made countless significant achievements in this country and their accomplishments can be found in every facet of American life. For instance, Taiwanese Americans have succeeded as successful and notable artists, Nobel Laureate scientists, researchers, human rights activists, and business leaders.

In addition to recognizing these contributions, this is an excellent opportunity to celebrate the success of democracy on the island of Taiwan. Since 1987, the Taiwanese people have possessed the rights to select their own leaders, practice the religion of their choice, and express their thoughts openly and freely. Taiwan is a vibrant and democratic participant in the family of nations.

Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, Taiwanese American Heritage Week recognizes the long-standing friendship between the United States and Taiwan. Earlier this year, I joined my Congressional colleagues in proudly celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the signing of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) into law. The TRA is an important reminder of the strong bond of friendship between our two nations.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the great accomplishments and contributions of the Taiwanese American community.

MANDATORY GUN SHOW BACKGROUND CHECK ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 17, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2122) to require background checks at gun shows, and for other purposes:

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong opposition to this amendment. Many of us here in Congress are working to

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keep guns out of the hands of criminals. But if this amendment is approved, it will do just the opposite because it will give law enforcement officials less time to complete background checks at gun shows. It is a step backward.

This amendment is ineffective and is riddled with loopholes. It would weaken existing laws and put the safety of law enforcement officials and every person in this nation at risk. It is no coincidence that the gun lobby supports this measure.

It would be a sad commentary on the state of Congress if the gun lobby is successful in strong-arming members of Congress to support this measure. Should this amendment pass, American families will soon find out that the gun lobby, with its deep pockets, calls the shots in the U.S. House of Representatives.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment and support the McCarthy/Roukema/Blagojevich amendment and other measures that will be offered during this debate. We must put the safety and security of our children ahead of the interests of the gun lobby.

These measures include the sale of child-safety locks with each handgun, instant background checks at gun shows, and the importation ban of ammunition magazines with a capacity of ten or more rounds of ammunition.

This is what a majority of our constituents want and it is the duty of Congress to respond to their outcry.

THE STANLEY CUP CHAMPION DALLAS STARS

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 22, 1999

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, instead of being relegated to a long and cold life in Buffalo, the Stanley Cup will be deep in the warm heart of Texas, specifically the great city of Dallas.

We have the Dallas Stars to thank for bringing the cup to us after coming close to winning the cup in the semifinals last year. However, we cannot say we thank our lucky stars, for they defeated Buffalo with skill, determination and hard work. That was not luck.

This determination was exemplified by the play of Dallas Stars goaltender Eddie Belfour, who made 53 saves in the winning game of the Stanley Cup series.

The result of their defeating the Buffalo Sabers means more than a Stanley Cup coming to the best city in the world. The victory by the Dallas Stars has made a proud city even more proud.

Mr. Speaker, this was evident yesterday morning in Dallas as thousands of her citizens and Stars fans joined the team in downtown Dallas to honor our Stanley Cup champions.

Mr. Speaker, the Stars truly shine bright "deep in the heart of Texas." Green and black are the colors of the National Hockey League and, I will wager that next year, they will shine even brighter.

Mr. Speaker, what makes this victory even sweeter is the fact that for 3 years, the Stars have won the President's trophy that goes to

the team with the best record in the National Hockey League. At the same time, the Stanley Cup was out of the reach of such a deserving team during those years.

Mr. Speaker, I join the constituents of the 30th Congressional District and the residents of Dallas who are Stars fans in congratulating the 1999 Stanley Cup Champions, the Dallas Stars. Thank you for bringing the cup home to our proud city.

HUNGER RELIEF IS CONFLICT
PREVENTION

HON. TONY P. HALL

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 22, 1999

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call my colleagues' attention to an OpEd by President Jimmy Carter ("First Step Toward Peace is Eradicating Hunger," International Herald Tribune, June 17, 1999). I ask that the text of this article be entered into the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to heed its wise message: that where there is mass hunger and poverty there is fertile ground for tyranny, civil strife, internal displacement, and social upheaval. Our own economic and security interests are threatened by the fact that one-fifth of the world's people lives in extreme poverty, struggling to survive on incomes equivalent to less than a dollar a day. And we know that an ounce of crisis prevention through well-spent poverty relief is worth of pound of cure, in the form of massive humanitarian operations, military intervention, and post-war reconstruction. A study by the Congressional Budget Office itself found a "striking correlation between economic malaise on the one hand, and domestic unrest on the other."

For impoverished countries that are serious about raising standards of living, there can be no substitute for good governance and sound economic policies. But even the best trade and investment-led strategies will fail if they leave the poor behind. And, as President Carter points out, agriculture is the economic backbone of most of the world's poorest countries, and the primary source of livelihoods for the poor, rural majority.

The United States took a significant step in the right direction last year by passing and enacting into law the "Africa Seeds of Hope Act," (H.R. 4283, now Public Law: 105-385). This measure was designed to better focus existing programs of assistance to Africa on the needs of rural producers who represent a majority of Africans, yet have the lowest incomes and suffer from the worst food shortages in the world. By focusing resources on farmers, the measure works to ensure the long-term political stability and economic growth of the world's most famine-prone region. Congress should closely follow its implementation, but next steps must include payment of arrears to the United Nations, passage of debt relief legislation, and a reversal in the decline of our foreign aid budget. These are our cheapest and surest lines of defense against costly and destabilizing wars and crippling constraints to our own economic growth and expansion.

[From the Paris International Herald
Tribune, June 17, 1999]
FIRST STEP TOWARD PEACE IS ERADICATING
HUNGER

(By Jimmy Carter)

WASHINGTON—When the Cold War ended 10 years ago, we expected an era of peace. What we got instead was a decade of war.

The conflict in Kosovo is only the latest to embroil the international community. Conflicts have raged in Latin America, Europe, Africa and Asia in the 1990s, often involving the entire international community in costly relief operations and peacekeeping missions, frequently under hostile conditions. These conflicts—mostly civil wars—have been extraordinarily brutal, with most victims being children, women and the elderly.

Why has peace been so elusive? A recent report sponsored by Future Harvest and generated by the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo examines conflicts around the world and finds that—unlike that in Kosovo—most of today's wars are fueled by poverty, not by ideology.

The devastation occurs primarily in countries whose economies depend on agriculture but lack the means to make their farmland productive. These are developing countries such as Sudan, Congo, Colombia, Liberia, Peru, Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka—places with poor rural areas where malnutrition and hunger are widespread. The report found that poorly functioning agriculture in these countries heightens poverty, which in turn sparks conflict.

This suggests an obvious but often overlooked path to peace: Raise the standard of living of the millions of rural people who live in poverty by increasing agricultural productivity. Not only does agriculture put food on the table, but it also provides jobs, both on and off the farm, that raise incomes. Thriving agriculture is the engine that fuels broader economic growth and development, thus paving the way for prosperity and peace.

The economies of Europe, the United States, Canada and Japan were built on strong agriculture. But many developing countries have shifted their priorities away from farming in favor of urbanization, or they have reduced investments in agriculture because of budget shortages. At the same time, industrialized countries continue to cut their foreign aid budgets, which fund vital scientific research and extension work to improve farming in developing countries.

Unfortunately, much of the farming technology developed in industrialized nations does not transfer to the climates and soils of developing nations. It is not a priority for agricultural giants in affluent nations to focus on the poor regions of the world or to share basic research advances with scientists from poor nations.

This neglect should end. Leaders of developing nations must make food security a priority. In the name of peace, it is critical that both developed and developing countries support cultural research and improved farming practices, particularly in nations often hit with drought and famine.

For example, the report finds that India, one of the world's largest and poorest nations, has managed to escape widespread violence in large measure because the Indian government made food security a priority.

Beginning in the 1960s, farmers in India were given the means to increase their agricultural output with technology packages that included improved seeds, fertilizers, irrigation and training. Today India no longer experiences famines as it did in the first half

of this century. India's food security contributes to its relative political stability.

While food is taken for granted in industrialized countries, many parts of the world—sub-Saharan Africa and large parts of Asia, for example—suffer serious food shortages. Today, per capita food production in sub-Saharan Africa is less than it was at the end of the 1950s. The report concludes that new wars will erupt if the underlying conditions that cause them are not improved.

The message is clear: There can be no peace until people have enough to eat. Hungry people are not peaceful people. The Future Harvest report is a reminder that investments in agricultural research today can cultivate peace tomorrow.

Former President Carter is chairman of the nonprofit Carter Center, which seeks to advance peace and health around the world. He contributed this comment to the International Herald Tribune.

OUTSTANDING YOUNG KENTUCKIANS FROM OHIO COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL IN HARTFORD, KENTUCKY, WIN THE "WE THE PEOPLE . . . THE CITIZEN AND THE CONSTITUTION"

HON. ED WHITFIELD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 22, 1999

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to recognize 15 talented and patriotic young scholars from my district who competed in the national finals of the "We the People . . . The Citizen and the Constitution" competition earlier this month.

I am pleased to recognize the class from Ohio County High School in Hartford, Kentucky who represented our Commonwealth in this national competition including teams from every state and the District of Columbia. These outstanding young Kentuckians are: Kyle Autry, Josh Benton, Hollie Bratcher, Jacqueline Bryant, Keara Daughtery, Jarrod Frizzell, Hillary Grant, Ashley Hale, Emily Harris, Erika Hawley, Michelle Jarvis, Nakayah Myers, Meredith Shrewsbury and Alex Taylor. They are coached by John Stofer, a teacher at Ohio County High School.

"We the People . . . The Citizen and the Constitution" is the nation's most extensive program dedicated to educating young people about our Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The three-day national competition simulates a Congressional hearing in which students defend positions on historical and contemporary constitutional issues. This format provides students an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles while providing teachers with an excellent means of assessing performance.

This year's competition involved 1,500 schools and provided literature and course-related materials on the history and principles of constitutional democracy in the United States to more than 75,000 teachers and 24 million students.

High school competition begins at the congressional district level with teams from each school vying for the district championship. District winners go on to compete at a statewide