

Special Boat Unit 20, honored Elliott Williams by naming its new headquarters, in Little Creek, Virginia, for him.

Elliott Williams was a member of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Purple Heart Club, the Fleet Reserve Association, the Hammerton Masonic Lodge, and the Omar Shrine Temple. He was active in community affairs and enjoyed speaking to civic groups about his experiences during his career in the Navy.

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of knowing Elliott Williams for more than thirty years. He was a valiant warrior and a true patriot, who inspired many to do their best. He was also a wonderful husband and father. He will be greatly missed.

CONGRATULATING THE AMERICAN
SOCIETY OF NEPHROLOGY

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the tremendous work performed by a group of dedicated and tireless professionals: the members of the American Society of Nephrology (ASN). Many members, including those from the 7th Congressional District of Illinois, are gathering at the ASN's 32nd Annual Meeting. I rise to congratulate the ASN for its achievements.

For some, Nephrology is not an everyday word. However, there is no doubt that we are all too familiar with terms like "diabetes" and "hypertension." These two diseases, Mr. Speaker, happen to be the leading two causes of total kidney failure, or End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD). In 1997, approximately 361,000 Americans suffered from ESRD and required life-saving dialysis or kidney transplants. While we know the terrible human suffering ESRD imposes on thousands across the country, the economic costs are staggering as well. Recent statistics show that the direct economic cost of health care for kidney failure, stemming largely from the Federal Government, is more than \$15 billion per year.

Unfortunately, ESRD represents only the tip of the iceberg. It is estimated that 12.5 million Americans have lost at least 50% of their normal kidney function. Further, it must also be mentioned that renal disease affects certain populations disproportionately. For example, African Americans, Native Americans, Latinos and people over the age of 50 are at higher risk for developing kidney disease. This must change.

There is no cure for kidney disease. But there is room for hope. Medical research offers us great promise to reduce the human suffering and enormous costs imposed by ESRD and kidney disease. As a result, I have long supported increased funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Further, in order to draw attention to important health care issues in my own district, I staged a series of town hall meetings this past summer. These meetings proved that our citizens are actively concerned about issues like health care. Furthermore, my town meetings dem-

onstrated that we owe it to our constituents to continue to work to provide them important information because, as the saying goes, "Knowledge is power." The same is true for research.

While kidney disease does have a devastating impact on our citizens, research has found that the progression of the disease can be slowed if diagnosed and managed early. Some more good news centers on the fact that there are dedicated individuals who are focused on finding ways to beat this disease. Recently, these researchers and experts in the field of Nephrology met to discuss and identify research priorities and obstacles that could impede us from reaching our goals. These discussions were summarized and drafted in the recently released paper, "Progress and Priorities: Renal Disease Research Plan." This project, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), was made possible through the work of the American Society of Nephrology and other members of the Council of American Kidney Societies (CAKS). I urge all my colleagues to read through this seminal report and to share copies with their constituents.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for providing me this opportunity to acknowledge the work performed by the American Society of Nephrology (ASN).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RONNIE SHOWS

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Speaker, because of unanticipated delays in my flight from Jackson, Mississippi, on Monday, November 1, 1999, I was unable to cast recorded votes on rollcalls 550, 551, and 552.

Had I been present for rollcall 550, I would have voted "yea" to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 348, a bill to authorize the construction of a monument to honor those who have served the Nation's civil defense and emergency management programs.

On rollcall 551, I would have voted "yea" to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2737, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey to the State of Illinois certain Federal land associated with the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail to be used as an historic and interpretive site along the trail.

On rollcall 552, I would have voted "nay" against suspending the rules and passing H.R. 1714, a bill to facilitate the use of electronic records and signatures in interstate or foreign commerce.

BURNING POPE IN EFFIGY SHOWS
INDIA'S RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn the recent act of burning the Pope

in effigy by a Hindu fundamentalist group in India. My friend Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, brought this disgraceful act to my attention. It was reported in India Abroad.

An organizer of the march criticized the Delhi Archbishop for contacting the Pope about religious persecution in India. The Pope is visiting India soon and the Hindu militants demand that the Pope declare all religions the same.

This follows the rapes of four nuns in India by individuals described by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad as "patriotic youth." Hindu fundamentalists have murdered four priests. Hindu fundamentalists also killed Australian missionary Graham Staines and his two little boys by surrounding their Jeep and setting it on fire. They have burned churches, prayer halls, and Christian schools.

Sikhs, Muslims, and others have also suffered from similar treatment. They, too, have seen their religious shrines desecrated and attacked and religious leaders kidnapped, tortured, and murdered by the Indian authorities and their Hindu fundamentalist allies. These are people who espouse total Hindu domination of every facet of life in India. In this light, is it any wonder that so many of the minorities in India's multinational empire, such as Christian Nagaland, the Sikhs of Punjab, Khalistan, the Kashmiri Muslims, and so many others seek independence from India?

It is time for Congress to encourage freedom for people of the subcontinent. I submit the Council of Khalistan's press release on the burning of the Pope's effigy into the RECORD.

HINDU ACTIVISTS BURN EFFIGY OF POPE,
MARCH TO PROTEST CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY
THERE IS NO RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN INDIA

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 28, 1999.—Fundamentalist Hindu militants burned an effigy of Pope John Paul II on October 22 during a Goa-to-Delhi march to protest Christian religious activity in India, according to a report in the October 29 issue of India Abroad. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), a branch of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), a pro-Fascist, Hindu fundamentalist organization organized the march. The ruling BJP, which leads the 24-party governing coalition in India, is the political arm of the RSS.

Marchers are protesting large-scale conversions by Christians, according to the article. They are demanding that the Pope proclaim all religions equal during his visit to India next month.

Subhash Velingkar, an organizer of the march, condemned religious conversions. In the eyes of many Hindu activists, all conversions from Hinduism are "forced" conversions. Velingkar attacked the Archbishop of Delhi, Alain de Lastic, for communicating with the Vatican about the persecution of Christians in India. "Why should people from India complain to the Vatican?" he demanded.

Recently a nun named Sister Ruby was abducted by militant Hindus and forced to drink their urine on the threat of being raped. Four other nuns were raped last year. The VHP called the nuns "antinational elements" and described the rapists as "patriotic youth." Another priest was recently murdered in India, joining four other priests who were murdered last year.

Christians have been subjected to a wave of violence since Christmas Day. Churches have