

On H.R. 4810, (Rollcall No. 466), the veto override of the Marriage Penalty Act, introduced by the gentleman from Texas, Mr. ARCHER, I would have voted "nay."

On H.R. 4986 (Rollcall No. 467), Foreign Sales Corporation Repeal and Extraterritorial Income Exclusion Act of 2000, introduced by the gentleman from Texas, Mr. ARCHER, I would have voted "nay."

On H. Con. Res. 327 (Rollcall No. 469), honoring the service and sacrifice during periods of war by members of the U.S. Merchant Marine, introduced by the gentleman from California, Mr. KUYKENDALL, I would have voted "yea."

On H.R. 4205 (Rollcall No. 470), instructions to conferees on the Department of Defense authorization bill, offered by the gentleman from South Carolina, Mr. GRAHAM, I would have voted "nay."

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 4205, FLOYD D. SPENCE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2001

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees on H.R. 4205.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. CONYERS moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 4205 be instructed to agree to the provisions contained in title XV of the Senate amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) each will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

□ 1445

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), the minority leader of the House, to begin the debate on the motion to instruct on this most important vote on civil rights in this session of Congress.

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Conyers motion, a motion that is in keeping with the best of our national traditions.

First, let me say that I am very glad that we are finally at long last having this debate, a debate that allows us to express our feelings, our passion on one of our most important and greatest priorities.

Yesterday, I stood outside of this marvelous building on the lawn just a few feet from our rotunda, and I listened to Judy Shepherd talk about the murder of her son Matthew. Judy Shepherd talked about the pain of losing a child to senseless violence and about the ugly, horrible crimes that are committed against people simply because of who they are.

Matthew's mother called on our Congress to act. She called on all of us here to take a stand against hate, to renew a few simple principles into our laws, principles that say so much about who we are and what we believe.

This bill is critical in so many ways. It gives law enforcement officers at all levels of government the tools they need to deal with horrible acts of hate-based violence.

It sends a message to the world that crimes committed against people because of who they are, that these crimes are particularly evil, particularly offensive. It says that these crimes are committed, not just against individuals, not just against a single person, but against our very society, against America.

These crimes strike fear into the hearts of others because they are meant to intimidate, to harass, to menace. When an angry man, a troubled man shot up a Jewish community center in Los Angeles, wounding teachers and students in a place that was supposed to be a sanctuary of protection, the man said that he had shot at these children because he wanted to send a message. He wanted to send a wake-up call to America to kill Jews.

Today, with this bill, we reject that message in the most powerful, most forceful way that we can. Today, we as a society can say that we will do everything we can to protect people from these heinous acts, that we will not rest until America is free of this violence.

This bill honors the victims of hate crimes, and it recalls their memory. It honors the memory of James Byrd who was dragged to death behind the pickup truck because the killers did not like the color of his skin. It honors Matthew Shepherd who was beaten with the butt of a gun and tied to a fence post and left to die in freezing weather because he was gay. It honors Ricky Byrdson, a former basketball coach at my alma mater, Northwestern, who was gunned down on the street because he was black. It honors not only those victims, not just the high profile crimes, it honors all the people whose lives have been scarred by these acts, the victims who do not always make the headlines.

The hate crimes that we do not hear about deserve our strong response today. So today, let us take a stand against violence. We are voting to dedicate our national resource, to bring the strongest laws that we have to bear against the most sinister thing that we know. The Conyers motion is the only motion that will strengthen our existing laws, that will strike a real blow against hate.

Let me say this is a bipartisan effort. There is nothing partisan in this effort today. Republicans and Democrats are joining together. This issue transcends politics. It challenges us to look into

ourselves, to search our humanity and pass a law that I guarantee my colleagues will go down in the history books.

Virtually every major accomplishment that we pass ever in the history of this body has been bipartisan. This law, like the Civil Rights Act of 1965, will be a bipartisan blow against hate and violence.

This is a great country. We are so wealthy. But our greatest moments are not when we produce material wealth. Our greatest moments are when we as a people manage in the face of horrible tragedy to rise up to come together to take a simple stand for basic decency.

Give us this motion. Give us this law. Bring America up, rising up against hatred and against violence.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR), the minority whip of the House.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for his leadership and others for their leadership on this. I commend the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), our leader, for his statement.

This motion and this proposition received a strong bipartisan vote in the United States Senate. It is time that it received the same kind of bipartisan support in this House.

Now, we understand that no act of Congress can ever outlaw bigoted thoughts. But we also understand that, when hateful thoughts turn into hateful deeds, the Congress must act and act decisively. That is why this legislation is so necessary.

Today, even though the rate of most violent crimes is decreasing, the number of hate crimes is still alarmingly high. The FBI reported that, over the course of 1 year alone, in 1997, more than 8,000 hate crimes were reported in this country. We have just heard examples of them from our leader.

We have seen houses of worship burn, small children attacked, men and women murdered, murdered for their religion, murdered because of their ethnicity, murdered because of their gender, murdered for a whole host of reasons. For every act we hear about, every assault that is reported, there are many that pass unnoticed.

In fact, in my congressional district, just this last week, I learned of a man who was beaten so severely in an attack that he lost seven of his teeth and was hospitalized as a result of the beating. The reason was the fact that he was gay.

But despite their frequency and the fact that these crimes are intended to terrorize millions of Americans, too many in the law enforcement field lack the legal authority it takes to investigate and to prosecute them. That is why this legislation is important. That is what this legislation does. It corrects that inadequacy.