

April 13, 2000

COMMEMORATING THE ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRAGIC ACCIDENT AT THE NAVAL BOMBING RANGE IN VIEQUES

**HON. CARLOS A. ROMERO-BARCELÓ**

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 13, 2000

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, almost one year ago on April 19, a tragic accident at the Vieques bombing range claimed the life of a civilian employee of the Navy, David Sanes Rodríguez. That tragedy brought to the forefront longstanding concerns for the safety, health and welfare of the 9,300 Americans citizens that reside in Vieques and has been the catalyst for discussions nationwide.

On January 31st, 2000, the Department of the Navy, the Administration and the Governor of Puerto Rico reached an agreement on the future of the range which formed the basis for the Presidential Directives. To underscore their support for the agreement, the Secretary of the Navy, with the approval of the Secretary of Defense, presented to the Congress legislative initiatives that will, first, transfer the Navy land on the western end of Vieques to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and, second, seek approval for the transfer of \$40 million dollars for economic incentives.

With these initiatives, Congress has the opportunity to ensure that national security and military readiness requirements are balanced with the rights, health, safety, and welfare of the American citizens of Vieques, while taking into account their contributions to the national defense.

As the sole elected representative of the four million American residents in Puerto Rico I support the agreement and am joined by Puerto Rico's Legislature, Mayor of Vieques, Governor Rosselló and former Governors Ferré and Hernández Colón.

The past year has been a critical time for all of us and it is my hope, that as we mark this significant anniversary, we can move forward together.

TAX LIMITATION CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

**HON. CASS BALLENGER**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 13, 2000

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be a cosponsor of the Tax Limitation Amendment 2000 (H.J. Res. 94), introduced by our Republican colleague Representative PETE SESSIONS (R-TX). I firmly believe that we need this amendment to insure that, in virtually every circumstance, a tax increase would require a two-thirds vote in both houses of Congress for final adoption. While this is not a new idea, I believe it is a proposal which deserves our attention and that of the American taxpayers again this year.

Despite the best efforts of the Republican-led 106th Congress to reduce taxes and make the federal tax code fairer for America's hard-working citizens, we cannot count on future

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

Congresses to share our enthusiasm for these reforms—reforms which are strengthening individual citizens' economic opportunities and fueling our nation's record economic growth. We proposed a tax limitation amendment in the fall of 1994 as one component of the Republican's Contract with America, a list of legislative objectives which has guided our policy agenda since the Republican takeover of the House and Senate in 1995. The enactment of H.J. Res. 94 would represent an insurance policy which this Congress should leave as a part of our legacy to our citizens.

H.J. Res. 94 not only seeks to make Congress more fiscally responsible, but it would instill greater public confidence in the tax system. This result has been endorsed by the National Commission on Economic Growth, chaired by former House Member and Republican Vice Presidential nominee Jack Kemp. The amendment would block future major tax increases which resemble President Clinton's 1993 tax increases for example, a bill which cleared the House by only one extra vote and clearly lacked strong bipartisan support. President Clinton's tax hikes are haunting many Americans today, in particular elderly Americans in my congressional district.

The bottom line is that the same super-majority requirement which is applied to major decisions like amending the Constitution and impeaching the President ought to be required for legislation which would take more money out of our constituents' monthly budgets.

HONORING MAJOR BURKS A. VIA,  
USMC

**HON. CHRISTOPHER COX**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 13, 2000

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, on April 28, 2000, Marine Corps Major Burks A. Via will be laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery. Major Via was a constituent; and the El Toro Marine Corps Air Station, where he was based for many years during his quarter century of military service, is of special significance to Orange County, CA. It is my honor to bring Major Burks' record to the attention of the 106th Congress as the nation prepares to honor him at Arlington.

Burks Via was born in Roanoke, VA, June 7, 1917. He joined the Marine Corps on his birthday in 1938. After the Royal Canadian Air Force trained him as a pilot, he flew missions in the South Pacific—207 from American Samoa and 40 from Munda, Bougainville, and Guadalcanal.

Via piloted the first Marine Corps aircraft to land in Hong Kong after end of World War II. As the United States worked for post-war peace and stability in Asia, he served with the First Marine Air Wing in Tsingato, China. When Chinese Communist forces grew stronger, and turned their gun sights to U.S. Marines, he flew the final missions out of Chengchun, Mukden, and Peiping. His service record with the Fleet Marine Force, Western Pacific, from June 1948 to January 1949, includes salutations for "extensive behind the lines intelligence missions" against the Communist forces.

5855

In 1949, he was transferred to Cherry Point, NC, the long-time East Coast counterpart to the El Toro Marine Corps Air Station. After duty at the Naval Air Station at Anacostia, where he was promoted to Major, he began a tour in 1953 that took him to El Toro, Hawaii, Japan, and Korea, flying 566 missions. Starting in 1955, Major Via took charge of transport missions for senior U.S. and NATO military officials and diplomats around the world. As Marine Colonel William L. Beach noted in his eulogy on December 17, 1999, Major Via was considered the best VP pilot in the Marine Corps and the Navy. In fact, when President Johnson flew to California to dedicate the University of California at Irvine in 1964, the Marine Corps pilot was asked to back up the President's Air Force One pilot. That same year, Major Burks retired, having logged 14,000 flight hours.

Major Burks served not only his nation, but also his family, and his community. His wife, Shirley, five children, and seven grandchildren, survived him. Orange County will miss him. At Arlington, the nation will honor him. His contributions to freedom in Asia, in Europe, and around the world, and his service to the Marine Corps and the nation, merit our appreciation and our gratitude in Congress.

REMEMBERING THE LATE HONORABLE EDWARD J. SCHWARTZ

**HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 13, 2000

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I honor the late Judge Edward J. Schwartz, who in his life brought honor to his country through distinguished public service in the U.S. Navy and as a judge for the United States District Court for the Southern District of California.

Judge Schwartz graduated from San Francisco Law School and practiced for one year before joining the Navy in 1942. He fought in both the Pacific and European Theaters of war and was released as a Lieutenant Commander in 1945. He was appointed to the bench by President Lyndon Johnson in 1968 and became chief judge in 1969 where he presided over one of the busiest caseloads in the country.

Judge Schwartz possessed the ideal qualities of a judge—wisdom, intellectual curiosity, an incisive mind, integrity, common sense, and a full measure of compassion. His career marks a time of great change in San Diego, from its past as a quiet Navy town, to its present as a dynamic multicultural high-tech community.

He is survived by his wife, Martha Monagan-Hart, his three children, and three grandchildren. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family of the late Judge Edward J. Schwartz. He will truly be missed.