June 20, 2000

DR. STUART HEYDT HONORED FOR SERVICE TO GEISINGER

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI
OF PENNSYLVANIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, June 20, 2000

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Stuart Heydt, who will retire June 30 after 10 years as president and chief executive officer of the Geisinger Health system, which is based in Danville, Pennsylvania. He will be honored at a dinner on June 22.

Dr. Heydt has led the health system during an eventful decade for both Geisinger and health care nationwide. We are all familiar with the changes in health care, such as the rise of managed care and new technologies and treatments. Geisinger itself has undergone tremendous change during this time and appears to be well-positioned for a bright future.

In all my dealings with Stu, I have found him to be a man of the highest integrity, who always made the welfare of his patients his top priority. I consider him to be a friend and a great asset to Pennsylvania.

Dr. Heydt is a maxillofacial surgeon and 27-year employee of Geisinger. He is a native of New Jersey who served active duty in the Navy from 1965 to 1967, followed by five years in the active reserves and an honorable discharge. He received his education at Dartmouth College, Fairleigh Dickinson University and the University of Nebraska. Geisinger hired him in 1973 as director of oral and maxillofacial surgery and since that time, he rose through the ranks to lead this institution that provides quality medical care to people in 31 Pennsylvania counties.

His numerous community activities include serving as president of the Columbia-Montour Boy Scouts Council and on the boards of the Penn Mountains Boy Scouts Council, United Way of the Wyoming Valley, Greater Wilkes-Barre Partnership, Family Service Association of the Wyoming Valley and Bucknell and Wilkes Universities.

Dr. Heydt's awards include the William H. Spurgeon III Award and Distinguished Citizenship in the Community Award from the Boy Scouts of America, the Distinguished Leadership Award from the National Association for Community Leadership and the Distinguished Fellow Award from the American College of Physician Executives.

He resides in Hershey, Pennsylvania, with his wife, the former Judith Ann Fornoff. They are the parents of three grown children.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the Central and Northeastern Pennsylvania community in honoring Dr. Heydt on the occasion of his retirement. I send my best wishes and my thanks for his hard work.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

GEORGES TIMES BY ROBERT SCHEER

The answer of those countless generations of Americans who've repeated the words in the hymn, “All We Are Saying Is Give Peace a Chance,” as John Lennon might say, “imagine . . .”

{From the Los Angeles Times, June 20, 2000}

‘GIVE PEACE A CHANCE’—WHILE THE FOOLS FIGHT ON

(By Robert Scheer)

When it comes to world politics, the best Beatles was ringo. When the news came in from Pyongyang, I couldn’t get the image out of my mind of him at some long ago peace rally singing, “All we are saying is give peace a chance.” Not that it didn’t seem at times corny and futile trying to keep those little candles from blowing out, but the world peace he was pushing now does, last, seem to be the happening thing.

What further evidence do we need than that picture of the two Kims from Korea, North and South, holding hands and singing a song of peace? Or the Yoko Ono song that Yoko Ono could’ve written the script. Mark the moment; it represents the triumph of Lennonism. John that is, not Vladimir.

The threat by one of the two Koreas, divided by the most heavily fortified military barrier left in the world, can come to terms, what warring parties can’t? The message is clear: The threat from this and other “rogue nations” can be met far more cheaply with talk, trade and aid than with a $60-billion missile defense systems and other warrior fantasies.

It is time to pay homage to that much maligned arm of pacifists like Dorothy Day, A.J. Muste, David Delinger, Bertrand Russell, Benjamin Spock, Linus Pauling and Martin Luther King, Jr. Merely for insisting that we have a common humanity that can redeem our enemies, they were scorched as dupes and even regarded as traitors.

Some hard-liners thought that as well of Richard M. Nixon when he journeyed to Red China to make peace with the devil that he had done so much to damn. But it came Gorbachev and Reagan burying the hatchet that their military advisors preferred be honed. Today, Pete Peterson, a former prisoner of war, sits as the U.S. ambassador in Hanoi, where the prison in which he was held has been turned into a tourist hotel. Soon, we may even have the courage to recognize that the “threat” from Cuba has never been more than a cruel joke.

But the lesson that peace is practical has been extended to conflicts beyond the Cold War. The mayhem inspired by those drunk on the potency of their purifying religious, ethnic and nationalist visions continues, but they can smell the odor of their own defeat. The fools fight on in places like Sierra Leone, but the smartest among the world’s militant revolutionaries have already abandoned violence for peace.

The PLO and HAMAS are now partners in peace with their sworn enemies, for whom another president—Bill Clinton—deserves much credit. Iran has elected a majority of moderates to its parliament; Syria will have a modern new leader who may at last respond positively to the risks that Israel has taken for peace in withdrawing from southern Lebanon, but the smartest among the world’s militant revolutionaries have already abandoned violence for peace.

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DEATH PENALTY MISINFORMATION

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, June 20, 2000

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I submit a Wall Street Journal opinion piece titled “We’re Not Executing the Innocent” for insertion into the RECORD.

There is a lot of misinformation being circulated about the death penalty and Professor Cassell does a good job of setting the record straight.

WE’RE NOT EXECUTING THE INNOCENT

(By Paul G. Cassell)

On Monday avowed opponents of the death penalty caught the attention of Al Gore among others when they released a report purporting to demonstrate that the nation’s capital punishment system is “collapsing under the weight of its own mistakes.” Contrary to the headlines written by some gullible editors, however, the report proves nothing of the sort.

At one level, the report is a dog-bites-man story. It is well known that the Supreme Court has mandated a system of super due process for the death penalty, but the obvious consequence of this extraordinary caution is that capital sentences are more likely to be reversed than lesser sentences are. The widely trumpeted statistic in the report—the 88% “error rate” in capital cases—might accordingly be viewed as a reassuring sign of the
DECEPTIVE FACTOIDS

The 68% factoid, however, is quite deceptive. For starters, it has nothing to do with “wrong man” mistakes—that is, cases in which an innocent person is convicted for a murder he did not commit. Indeed, interviews from the media coverage was the most critical statistic: After reviewing 23 years of capital sentences, the study’s authors (like other researchers) were unable to find a single case in which an innocent person was executed. Thus, the most important error rate—the rate of mistaken executions—is zero.

What, then, does the 68% “error rate” mean? It turns out to include any reversal of a capital sentence at any stage by a appellate court—even if those courts ultimately uphold the capital sentence. If an appellate court asks for additional findings from the trial court, the trial court complies, and the appellate court then affirms the capital sentence, the report finds no extraordinary due process but a mistake. Under such curious circumstances, on January 12, 2000 the Florida Supreme Court reversed 64 Floridians postconviction cases as involving “serious errors,” even though more than one-third of these cases ultimately resulted in a reimposed death sentence. Despite the fact that not one of the Florida cases did a court ultimately overturn the murder conviction.

To add to this legerdemain, the study skews its sample of cases that are several decades old. The report skips the most recent five years of cases, with the study period ostensibly covering 1973 to 1998. Even within that period, the report includes only cases that have been completely reviewed by state appellate courts. Escaping pending cases knocks out one-fifth of the cases originally decided within that period, leaving a residual skewed toward the 1980s and even the 1970s.

During that period, the Supreme Court handed down a welter of decisions setting constitutional procedures for capital cases. In 1972 the court struck down all capital sentences involving too much discretion. When California, New York, North Carolina and other states responded with mandatory capital-punishment statutes, the court struck these down too rigid. The several hundred capital sentences invalidated as a result of these two cases inflate the report’s error totals. These decades-old reversals have no relevance to contemporary death-penalty issues. Studies decades in the making, the report finds not extraordinary due process but a mistake.

The report continues what has thus far been a glaringly one-sided national discussion of the risk of error in capital cases. As astonishing, this debate has arisen when, contrary to urban legend, there is no credible example of any innocent person executed in this country under the modern death-penalty system. On the other hand, innocent people undoubtedly have died because of our mistakes in failing to execute.

REAL MISTAKES

Colleen Reed, among many others, deserves to be remembered in any discussion of our mistakes. She was kidnapped, raped, tormented, and finally murdered by Kenneth McDuff during the Christmas holidays in 1991. She would be alive today if McDuff had not narrowly escaped execution three times for two 1966 murders. His life was spared when the Supreme Court set aside death penalties in 1972, and he was paroled in 1989 because of prison overcrowding in Texas. After McDuff’s release, Reed and at least eight other women died at his hands. Gov. George W. Bush approved McDuff’s execution in 1996. While no study has precisely quantified the risk from mistakenly failing to execute justly convicted murderers, it is undisputed that we extend extraordinary generosity to murderers. According to the National Center for Policy Analysis, the average sentence for murder and non-negligent manslaughter is 20.3 years. The Bureau of Justice Statistics has found that of 52,000 inmates serving time for homicide, more than 800 had previously been convicted of murder. That sounds like a system collapsing under the weight of its own mistakes—and innocent people dying as a result.

TRIBUTE TO JEAN STRAUSS,

WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2000

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding member of my staff and citizen of the Southwest Chicagoland community. Jean Strauss was selected as Woman of the Year by St. Jane de Chantal Parish Ladies Guild in Garfield Ridge. On June 10th, 2000, Jean was honored at the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women (CCW) Vicerariate Women of the Year Lunch, held at the Lexington House in Hickory Hills, Illinois. It gives me great pleasure to inform my colleagues of the great work that Jean performed to deserve this honor. I think that all will agree that she represents the volunteer spirit that has not only helped to make Southwest Chicagoland an exceptional place to live, but our entire nation as well.

Jean Strauss has been a member of St. Jane de Chantal Parish for several years. Besides regularly attending mass, she has held numerous offices and served on various committees. Those who know Jean best say that she volunteers for "almost everything." Specific examples of her philanthropy include volunteering for the American Cancer Society and Kiwanis.

As I mentioned previously, Jean is a valued member of my staff. For four years, she has worked at the 23rd Ward Office in Chicago for Alderman Mike Zalewski, Illinois State Senator Bob Molaro, and myself. In this capacity, she performs numerous important tasks for the 23rd Ward. For example, as a fluent speaker of Polish, Jean helps those in the 23rd Ward who are learning the English language. In addition, Jean is a local dining establishment, or perhaps pushing her luck at a “gaming” enterprise.

Again, I am pleased to congratulate Jean Strauss before my colleagues today. Mr. Speaker, I sincerely hope that Jean will enjoy many more years of service to the Southwest Chicagoland community, and I thank her for many contributions.

THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FUTURE OF AFRICAN NATIONS

HON. EARL F. HILLIARD

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2000

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in response to the tragic events in African countries such as Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo. I rise, however, Mr. Speaker to highlight a different image of African life—an image I have witnessed firsthand.

All too frequently the only impression of Africa made upon the American public is that of carnage, corruption, and catastrophe, as reported by our country’s television and print media. While I recognize that these problems are real and continue to present serious challenges to the social, political, and economic development of African countries, I wanted to highlight some of the success stories from the Continent.

There is a new generation of leaders who hope to make Africa a continent of flourishing democracies. While the Trade and Development Act of 2000, originally the African Growth and Opportunity Act, is a necessary first step in committing ourselves to African success; it by no means signals the end of our walk with