

was, Americans of good conscience rose to the challenge and implemented laws to ensure equal treatment under the law. We have a long way to go, but we have come a long way.

This Administration owed it to all Americans to deliver the message of possibility to the world. Yet, unfortunately, this administration approached this conference with little interest and a miniscule commitment to engagement. Representatives of this Administration stymied the preparation that began during the previous Administration. Therefore, its withdrawal from the conference was not a surprise.

And while the actions in Durban were not surprising, hope that the refusal to discuss differences does not become the trademark of this Administration and mar its ability to engage in constructive dialogue about civil and human rights in this country. The withdrawal from Durban, combined with the lack of a domestic civil rights policy, an unwillingness to proceed with much-needed election reform and the glaring refusal to end racial profiling, leads me to doubt this Administration's ability to candidly and fairly address issues of race and diversity within this country.

Mr. Speaker, racism in real. Discrimination is real. The argument for reparations should be openly discussed and seriously debated in this country. America must face its current racial reality and reconcile with its inglorious racial past. I suggest that Members of this House begin our national healing by passing a resolution which offers an acknowledgement of the sufferings caused by slavery and an official apology for governmental actions which perpetrated their condition. If we, as Representatives of the United States Government, cannot apologize for this sorry and unfortunate history, our future will be forever marred and our enemies will be able to say that the United States left Durban because it did not want to address its own history.

I call upon the Congress and the President to show the leadership necessary to begin healing within our country.

A COMMANDING ROLE FOR JAMES
N. GOLDSMITH

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 6, 2001

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate an ally of veterans everywhere and my close friend, James N. Goldsmith, upon his election as Commander-in-Chief for the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. It is with particular pride that I note that Commander Goldsmith is a resident of Lapeer, Michigan.

Jim Goldsmith's election to head the VFW is a tribute to his many years of dutiful attention to the needs of veterans and the faith that his fellow veterans have placed in him for continued service and fidelity to their health and welfare. A decorated U.S. Army veteran who served in Vietnam, Jim has a deep and personal understanding of the obligation all citizens owe to the men and women who served this country during times of conflict on foreign soil and to those on active duty today.

Upon returning from Vietnam in 1967, Jim joined VFW Post 5666 in Flushing, Michigan, and he's been fighting on behalf of veterans ever since. A Life Member of VFW Post 4139 in Lapeer, Jim has held many posts in the local, state and national organization and he has received numerous awards. In 1978, Jim was selected as Michigan's "Young Veteran of the Year," and, in 1980, he became the first Vietnam veteran to win election as Department Junior Vice Commander.

Jim has traveled the world to learn the concerns of active duty service members and reservists. Adhering to a soldier's code never to leave a buddy behind, Jim has remained committed to accounting for missing American service members. He has made two trips to Southeast Asia in efforts to recover the remains of those still missing. He also has been a strong advocate for addressing veterans' medical needs and has made diabetes research a top priority.

Never willing to accept full credit for his good deeds, Jim points to each of the 2.7 million members of the VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary as key to his efforts. He also singles out his sons, Jim and Jeff, for enabling him to serve their needs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing gratitude to Commander-in-Chief Goldsmith for his valiant, enthusiastic and ongoing work for veterans. I am confident that Jim will continue to find new and better avenues to assist the men and women who have put their lives on the line in defense of our great Nation.

RECOGNITION OF 75TH ANNIVERSARY
OF SYRACUSE'S ST.
BRIGID AND ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 6, 2001

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 75th anniversary of St. Brigid and St. Joseph Church in Syracuse, New York. Its congregation is gathering to recognize this important milestone during a memorial mass and celebration on Sunday, September 16, 2001.

Established on May 26, 1926, and incorporated on August 9, 1926, St. Brigid's was formed from a portion of the rapidly growing St. Patrick's Parish on Tipperary Hill. While masses were first celebrated within St. Patrick's School by St. Brigid's founding pastor—Rev. William H. McCormick, the parish's first sanctuary was constructed the following year at the corner of Willis Avenue and Herkimer Street at a cost of \$165,000. The church's cornerstone was laid on June 15, 1927 with its first mass on August 21st. St. Brigid's School opened on September 6th of that year under the direction of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet.

Since that time, the parish has grown considerably. Under the leadership of its second pastor—Rev. William J. Brennan, the parish's debt was retired. Construction of a larger sanctuary began in 1955 with a Dedication

Day Mass celebrated in the new church on November 6, 1956. Rev. J. James Bannon was pastor at that time. In 1964, St. Brigid's merged with St. Joseph's French Church to become St. Brigid and St. Joseph's Parish. Rev. David J. Norcott became the combined church's first pastor followed by Rev. James A. McCloskey.

The parish is served today by Rev. Laurence W. Kennedy, Pastor, Mr. Leonard S. Monnat, Deacon, and Sister Theresa Brown, CSJ, Director of Human Development and Parish Minister. Approximately 510 families are served by St. Brigid and St. Joseph's Church. The parish continues to be a strong steward of Christian values and community outreach, ministering to the people of Syracuse's Westside.

On the occasion of its 75th anniversary, it is my honor to recognize the people of St. Brigid and St. Joseph's Church and to extend best wishes for many more successful years of faith-based ministry to follow.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION
TO PROTECT THE PRIVACY
RIGHTS OF OUR NATION'S UNIFORMED
SERVICEMEMBERS

HON. RICK BOUCHER

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 6, 2001

Mr. BOUCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with my colleagues Mr. SHAYS and Mr. WAXMAN, in introducing legislation to protect the privacy rights of our nation's uniformed servicemembers.

If enacted into law, the legislation we have put forward will clarify that the same right of privacy guaranteed to all other individuals under the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act shall apply to members of the uniformed services.

The Privacy Act was established in 1974 to ensure that the information the Federal Government collected as part of the operations and practices of agencies is protected, and the agencies observe and safeguard the right to personal privacy.

The need for this legislation arises from a September 2000 federal district court ruling which stated that military servicemembers cannot sue for damages when records containing information about them, which under the terms of the Privacy Act may not be released, are released by the government in violation of the Privacy Act. The Court based its ruling on the Feres doctrine, a 51 year old judge-made doctrine which states that servicemembers cannot bring civil actions against the government for acts incident to service because they have benefits available through their military health and other programs. As a result of this ruling, there is no effective way to prevent the unauthorized release of sensitive military personnel records and no way to compensate servicemembers for damages arising from acts by government agencies that are in violation of the Privacy Act.

Congress enacted the Privacy Act with an unambiguous intent to make government responsible for the damages it causes when the