

of meeting students who are in Washington for an intensive course of study about the federal government. Annually, I personally meet with students and teachers from Guam who are participants in Close Up's civic education program that is specially designed for Pacific Islands students and educators. As an educator by profession, I have been personally impressed with Close Up's Island-based activities, including their development of island-specific curricular materials, teacher training seminars and programs related to teaching young people about the merits of community service.

Mr. Babauta, when back home in Rota and Saipan has encouraged students and teachers to participate in the program. He has used his position and contacts to assist educators and schools to raise funds that would allow students to participate in the Close Up program, including taking advantage of local media outlets to promote the program. Mr. Babauta even assists students and teachers with the process for obtaining passports and other travel documents that will allow them to travel to Washington for the Close Up program. All of these activities speak to his deep belief in the importance of civic education to CNMI students, including the need for them to explore the historic ties between the United States and the Pacific Islands. Equally important, Mr. Babauta's support for the Close Up program signals his conviction that for the CNMI and other Pacific Islands to secure a future of engaged citizenry committed to democratic government, it is important that they be educated in how democracy is reliant upon the involvement and input of the people.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank Mr. Babauta for his work with Close Up Pacific Islands program. His efforts over the years demonstrate his commitment to the welfare of the young people of the Pacific, and his conviction that educating young people about democracy, the importance of community service, and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship is indispensable for the future of the CNMI and other Pacific Islands.

HONORING MRS. GERRY GEIFMAN,  
RECIPIENT OF THE STATE OF  
ISRAEL BONDS' JERUSALEM  
MEDAL

### HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 24, 2001*

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to congratulate one of my constituents, Mrs. Gerry Geifman, who will be honored tonight by the State of Israel Bonds at the Quad City Israel Independence Dinner.

At the dinner, Mrs. Geifman will receive the Jerusalem Medal. The award is given to those who have a distinguished history of efforts on behalf of Israel, the Jewish people and the community.

Considering her deep involvement in issues involving the Quad Cities and the local Jewish community, it is easy to see why she is being so honored. Her charitable works are numerous including: serving as past president of Hadassah, the Tri-City Jewish Center Sisterhood,

and B'nai B'rith. She also serves on the boards of the Jewish Federation, Tri-City Jewish center, and the Rock Island YWCA. She has also dedicated much of her time to the Davenport Museum of Art, Friends of Art, the Geifman Endowment Sponsorship of Augustana College, Audubon School, Washington Junior High School, Rock Island High school PTA among others.

It is unfortunate that Mrs. Geifman's late husband is not alive to see her receive this important honor. The charitable and volunteer work they performed together over the years was an inspiration to our community. Her continued efforts have served as a true example of the value of leadership and the spirit of volunteer work.

Again, I commend her for her work and this well-deserved recognition of years of service to our local Jewish community and the Quad Cities.

### SENSE OF CONGRESS RESOLUTION

#### HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 24, 2001*

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a Sense of Congress resolution that the Constitution of the United States allows for a prohibition against acts of desecration of the flag of the United States.

I do so because I believe that nothing could be more important to most Americans than to preserve and honor our Nation's flag.

In the past, those who have been prosecuted for flag burning have not been prosecuted for what they said, but for the method they chose to express themselves. Justice Stevens wrote that the government has a legitimate interest in preserving the flag, similar to the government's interest in protecting the Lincoln Memorial from acts of vandalism.

Some say our flag is just a piece of cloth. Well, that's like saying America is just a piece of land, that Florida's just another state. No, there's something special about it. It's our flag. It represents us—you, me, our families, our friends, our heritage and our future. It represents our memories and our dreams.

To desecrate the American flag is to desecrate the memory of the thousands of Americans who have sacrificed their lives to keep that banner flying, intact. It is to desecrate everything this country stands for.

Yes, Congress must be extremely careful when dealing with proposals that would amend the Constitution, particularly the First Amendment. American citizens must have the opportunity to voice discontent, however, that freedom of expression is not absolute.

Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens claims that the act of flag-burning has nothing to do with disagreeable ideas, but rather involves conduct that diminishes the value of an important national asset. The act of flag-burning is meant to provoke and arouse, not to reason. Flag-burning is simply an act of cultural and patriotic destruction.

My Sense of Congress resolution reaffirms that Congress should have the power, but doesn't have the power until the constitutional amendment is ratified by the states.

### ON THE DELEGATION OF U.S. CATHOLIC BISHOPS TO SUDAN MARCH 24-APRIL 6

#### HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 24, 2001*

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to share with you the findings of the U.S. Catholic Bishop's Conference who recently led a delegation to the country of Sudan.

Since 1983, the government of Sudan has been waging a brutal war against factions in the south who are fighting for self determination and religious freedom. More people have died in Sudan than in Kosovo, Bosnia, Rwanda and Somalia combined. Most of the dead are civilians—women and children—who died from starvation and disease. Over 2 million people have died. The Committee on Conscience of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has issued a genocide warning for Sudan.

Because of the large-scale death and destruction, the findings arising from the U.S. Catholic Bishops' delegation is noteworthy and timely.

The dire situation in Sudan calls for a high profile, high level special envoy to bring peace and to stop the atrocities. It is my fervent hope that the Bush administration will appoint such an envoy without delay.

### DELEGATION OF U.S. CATHOLIC BISHOPS TO SUDAN—MARCH 24-APRIL 6

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the trip were three-fold: to show solidarity with the Catholic Church in Sudan; to conduct a fact-finding mission to the North and South; and to increase efforts toward advocacy in the U.S. to help promote a just and lasting peace.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The delegation was comprised of three bishops: Bishop John Ricard, Bishop of Pensacola-Tallahassee, president and chairman of the board of Catholic Relief Services, and member of the Committee on International Policy; Bishop Nicolas DiMarzio, Bishop of Camden, New Jersey and chairman of the Committee on Refugees and Migration; Bishop Edward Braxton, Bishop of Lake Charles, Louisiana and member of the Committee on International Policy; Staff from Catholic Relief services and the United States Catholic Conference committees on Migration and Refugees and International Policy.

The delegation went to: Khartoum, and its outlying areas; Rumbeck; Narus; Nimule; Yambio; and Kauda in the Nuba Mountains.

During the visit, the delegation met with: Northern and Southern leaders of the Catholic church and the New Sudan Council of Churches; Government ministers in Khartoum including the first vice-president, and the former Minister of State, the State Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the State Minister of Engineering, and the Minister of Religious Affairs; SPLM/A officials, including governors, military commanders and other senior officials. The delegation met with other civil society groups in both North and South.

The Bishops raised issues of: peace; religious freedom; human rights; plight of displaced persons and refugees; slavery and abduction; bombing and terrorization of civilian populations.