

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SGT. DONALD WAYNE SLOVER'S SACRIFICE

HON. LINDA SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 20, 1998

Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, recently, a friend forwarded a copy of this personal letter to us. The thoughts expressed in the letter hit close to home. We hope everyone can take a moment and reflect upon Sgt. Slover's sacrifice.

DEAR AMERICA: I am writing this letter to extend thanks to all the American people who still, despite the recent headlines undermining the ethnics and morality of the military, understand that our jobs and way of life are necessary to preserve the "American" way of life. I once thought that "America" viewed us as most media portrays us; immoral, unethical, and uncivilized. My recent travels led me to conclude that the opposite is true. You, the American people, that honor and respect what we do, deserve a public "thank you."

Just a few weeks ago, a tragedy embedded itself in the tall evergreen forests at the Joint Readiness Training Center in Fort Polk, LA. As a tank slowly slalomed through the trees after sunset on January 14, 1998, the tank commander fell victim to the inherent danger of the military.

Sgt. Donald Wayne Slover passed away that night as he was guiding his tank through the thickest of trees, fog, and rain. The tank's edge clipped and uprooted a tree, which sent it crashing to the ground. The medics, arriving on site only minutes later, felt Sgt. Slover's last pulse.

As one of two military escorts, I was required to accompany the remains from the training area to the burial site, ensuring the proper and unimpaired delivery to the next of kin. The obligation required a two day journey from Fort Hood, TX, to Williamsburg, KY, via Fort Polk, LA. Loading unloading and transportation of the remains required our physical presence. This particular trip entailed a three hour van ride, a connecting flight in Atlanta in route to Knoxville, and a 1 hour drive to Williamsburg, KY.

Upon boarding initial flight out of Houston we informed the flight attendant of our duties. After explaining that it was necessary for us to depart the plane first upon landing (so as not to delay the cargo personnel unloading the casket), two gentlemen offered their seats in the first row of the plane for out last row seats.

This gesture left me speechless. I'm not so sure they even knew our purpose for having to be first off the plane, but with no questions immediately sacrificed their front row seats. After arriving in Atlanta, we were escorted by airport personnel off the plane and down to the tarmac. Standing in our dress green uniforms, we watched as the airline employees carefully unloaded the casket onto the cargo truck. The truck drove off to the departing gate and we made our way back inside the terminal. We met the cargo truck at the departure gate and again were escorted down to the tarmac to supervise the loading of our final flight. Following the

loading, we turned and headed back to the terminal. As we made that walk, I noticed that we were being watched by the crowd awaiting the outbound flight. Not thinking much about it at the time, I scurried out of the cold and awaited the boarding call.

We boarded the plane and again informed the flight attendant of our duties and departure requirements. The flight was booked, every seat filled, and she told us that she would make an announcement upon landing that we were to exit the plane first.

Having been on full flights before, I was certain that this announcement would be ignored. Passengers are normally elbow deep in the overhead compartments as soon as the wheels touch the ground. I was 100% positive I would be the last person off that flight. But I took my seat in the back of the plane, my partner 10 rows in front, and with all of my military skills tried to devise a plan that could project me to the front of that plane upon landing. I concluded that even generals would have a rough time planning such an operation.

As the plane touched down in Knoxville, the flight attendant gave the standard "keep your seat-belts fastened until the captain turns off the seat-belt sign" announcement. She then led into the fact that two military escorts were on-board and that everyone must remain in their seats until we departed the plane. The plane parked and to my astonishment, not a soul moved. I'd never witnessed such absolute silence in my life.

Many of the passengers turned their heads to the rear of the plane but not a sound was made as myself and the other escort donned our jackets, grabbed our bags, and headed down the aisle. I realized then that all eyes were on us. As we neared the exit an older gentleman leaned toward us and broke the silence with something I will never forget, "God bless you both," he said. I am, sir, most truly blessed. I have been afforded the opportunity to work alongside some of the greatest sons and daughters of our nation.

We know and understand that each day presents the possibility of injury and/or death and we take all precautions to prevent them. But we sacrifice that possibility because you depend on us. We train through the roughest of conditions, with minimum sleep and limited resources, anywhere at anytime, to ensure we are always ready. We, sir, are most honored that you entrust us to defend your country.

So I'm writing this letter to say thanks. Thank you Delta Airlines, thank you gentlemen for your seats, thank you sir for your blessings, and thank you America for your support. You see . . . we as soldiers don't expect you to understand the ways in which we live, train, and fight; we just ask for a thank you from time to time. A little appreciation from the people we're defending weighs more than a chestful of awards and medals.

Sgt. Donald Wayne Slover gave his life training to defend the very code of morality and ethics he exemplified and believed in. Sgt. Slover believed in the Army and his country. I worked alongside Sgt. Slover for over a year. He was good at his job and he loved it. He never complained and always did what was asked of him. Sgt. Slover always maintained the courage of his convictions. I hope he laid to rest knowing he was appreciated. If not, we failed as a nation and we owe it to him.

Sgt. Slover . . . thank you! You will be missed!

DANIEL ASHLEY,
1-10 CAVALRY:
READY AND FORWARD.

TRIBUTE TO ELSIE BUCHENAU

HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 20, 1998

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Elsie Buchenau for her dedicated service to the Madera County Central Committee and to the Republican Party.

Elsie Buchenau was born on October 5, 1907 in Firebaugh, California. Her family consisting of four girls and one boy, moved to a Madera vineyard in the La Vina area in 1912. She attended La Vina Grammar School, then Madera High School where she graduated in 1924. After working for a prominent attorney and a Realtor she moved to San Francisco for five years. She then married Herb Buchenau, a local cattleman and farmer, in 1937 and then moved to the Buchenau home ranch northeast of Madera, where she still lives.

Mrs. Elsie Buchenau has been active in the Republican Party for many years and served as chairperson for the Madera County Central Committee for eight years, and vice president of the California Republican Party. She has also been a member of the Madera Republican Women and a delegate and twice an alternate to the Republican National Convention.

Elsie Buchenau is also a member of the Madera County Cattleman's Association and was named Cattle woman of the Year in 1979. In 1994, Elsie Buchenau was named Farmer of the Year by the Madera District Chamber of Commerce. Mrs. Buchenau has also volunteered her time with the Madera Community Hospital League and the St. Vincent de Paul Store, which supports Catholic charities.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I pay tribute to Elsie Buchenau for her decades of service to the Republican Party, the Madera County Central Committee, and to her community. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Elsie Buchenau best wishes for the future.

WINFIELD SCOTT STRATTON: A GREAT HUMANITARIAN

HON. JOEL HEFLEY

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 20, 1998

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, July 22, 1998, will mark the 150 anniversary of the birth of Winfield Scott Stratton, a great Colorado humanitarian.

In Colorado, this date will be recognized by 25 different events celebrating his life and good deeds. It is appropriate that we commemorate the deeds of this distinguished humanitarian from Colorado Springs, Colorado.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

He reached out to his fellow man in so many ways during his lifetime. His biggest contribution and blessing was his endowment of the Myron Stratton Home. Some of his benevolent good deeds include buying the old courthouse in Colorado Springs and furnishing the county with the money to build a new courthouse on a city block that he provided. He also purchased a corner lot downtown for \$70,000 offering it to the federal government for half of its value in order to build a new post office. It was recently named the Winfield Scott Stratton Post Office by a new Congressional Act. In addition to these contributions, Stratton also built a convention hall and pavilion seating 35,000 people for the use of the city and gave five thousand dollars a year to keep it maintained. He donated supplies worth \$50,000 when the fire of 1896 in Cripple Creek Colorado left 5,000 people without shelter or goods. He also gave \$25,000 to the Colorado School of Mines to complete the "Hall of Metallurgy", recognized by Colorado's 13th General Assembly. He made gifts of \$70,000 to Colorado College and \$25,000 to the Colorado Deaf and Blind School. Stratton donated approximately \$85,000 to feed and house the homeless; made substantial contributions to churches, supported miners, laborers, laundry women and others in need.

Stratton's most lasting gift was a bequest in his handwritten will directing that his wealth be delivered to the trustees of a charitable institution for acting and maintaining a free home, "for poor persons without means of support, and who are physically unable by reason of old age, youth, sickness or other infirmity to earn a livelihood." This home is called the Myron Stratton Home in honor of his father.

After Stratton "stuck it rich" he continued to live frugally and simply by helping the poor, saying "I count my money as a gift from the father of us all, and I am responsible for its administration as a good steward." Stratton backed his philosophy with action and no other individual gave so generously to so many individuals and organizations. Stratton's benevolent gifts in today's world would be astronomical. Before he died in 1902, he gave away over \$3 million. In any time of prosperity there will be many children from broken homes who could be helped by homes like the Myron Stratton Home. Winfield Scott Stratton, was a man of vision and one of Colorado's greatest humanitarians. His good deeds continue to be a good example of our need to help one another.

ALLSTATE FOUNDATION

HON. JOHN EDWARD PORTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 20, 1998

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the ongoing efforts of the Allstate Foundation, which works in partnership with national and local nonprofit organizations in the areas of community and economic development, automobile and highway safety, and personal safety and security. Through corporate investment, marketing initiatives, and employee volunteer projects, the Allstate Foundation delivers on its commitments to build and strengthen our communities. I am proud to have Allstate headquartered in my District.

Since 1991, Allstate Foundation has been working in conjunction with the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) and the Department of Justice to help spread the message to families across the nation that identifying and practicing effective crime prevention methods is essential to their safety and welfare. In the eight-year history of this partnership, the Allstate Foundation has consistently supported the efforts of the National Crime Prevention Council by identifying and funding innovative and prevention and awareness tools. The Foundation first demonstrated its outstanding level of commitment to community safety by providing significant funding for the further enrichment and distribution of a 1993 Council auto theft prevention publication.

In 1996, Allstate helped to create the NCPC's growing presence on the world wide web, giving more people more crime prevention know-how than ever before. Today, five sites are on-line because of Allstate's contributions. These sites offer answers to basic questions about what one individual—or ten—can do to help stop crime and build better, stronger communities. The web sites engage teens, parents, teachers, law enforcement officials, grandparents, and business owners in fighting crime—giving them concrete examples of what they can do, outlining proven strategies, and informing them about training opportunities and events.

Since May 1, 1997, the National Crime Prevention Council's On-Line Resource Center has welcomed more than 100,000 visitors. Visits have skyrocketed to more than 16,000 a month, and this number is growing every day, a testament to the site's quality and effectiveness in spreading the Council's crime prevention message.

The partnership among the NCPC, the Department of Justice, and the Allstate Foundation deserves much credit for their successful on-line project. There are already plans to expand the website's content and exposure as part of a multi-million dollar public service campaign on radio and TV, and in print and on billboards across the country. The Allstate Foundation's safety team has also worked with NCPC to adapt the video, *Are You Safe: A National Test on Crime Prevention* for use by its agents as a public service to help educate individuals on personal and home security.

With further input from law enforcement, criminal justice, and private sector communities, and with Allstate's continued involvement, the web project and other National Crime Prevention Council initiatives will continue to serve as great tools for all Americans in the fight to prevent crime. I commend the Allstate Foundation for their contributions to this noble cause.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 17, 1998

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under

consideration the bill (H.R. 4194) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes:

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Chairman, my amendment is simple. It accomplishes a goal that America's veterans believe is important and that Congress should strongly support.

My amendment has been endorsed by the American Legion, AMVETS, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and the Vietnam Veterans of America.

Almost identical legislation that I introduced last year received strong bipartisan support.

As the ranking Democrat on the Veterans Affairs Committee, Subcommittee on Health, I have become very familiar with the serious problem of sexual abuse and harassment in the military.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is responsible for treating the victims of these crimes and abuses. In my oversight role on the Health Subcommittee I have had the opportunity to speak with and learn from women veterans who suffered from this abuse.

The high rate of sexual abuse in the armed services requires continued action on this issue.

In 1996, approximately 190,000 women served in our armed services.

That year, the Pentagon conducted a survey of active duty women and found that five percent of women had been the victims of sexual assault during their period of military service.

National surveys conducted by the VA indicate that approximately 20 percent of women seeking services from VA medical facilities report having experienced a rape or other form of assault on active duty while 35 to 50 percent report suffering some form of sexual harassment.

Such findings—and high profile news reports of incidents of abuse—have made clear the existence of a very serious problem in our armed forces and the need to move more aggressively to end the tragedy of sexual violence and harassment.

Rick Schultz, the executive director of the Vietnam Veterans of America, which supports this initiative, said, "in our nation's fervor to prosecute the offenders, we must not forget to attend to the needs of the victims."

This amendment puts those words into law.

This amendment also is smart policy.

The prevalence of substance abuse, homelessness, family breakdown, poverty and the receipt of public assistance is higher among women veterans who suffered from abuse during their military service than it is among the general women veterans population.

The women veterans that I have spoke with told me that the VA's program had helped them turn their lives around. Helped them get off public assistance, to treat their addictions and become active in their families and communities once again.

Sadly, the VA's sexual trauma treatment program is scheduled to expire at the end of their year.

The possible termination of this program would be tragic for the thousands of women who have benefited from the services provided by the VA.

More than 18,000 women veterans and 200 male veterans have sought and received therapeutic counseling at hundreds of VA medical facilities throughout America.