

families share their final days at home in peace, comfort and dignity. These hospice caregivers help patients, as well as their family members, with one of the toughest transitions in life. The hospice program, primarily based in the home, treats the person, not the disease; focuses on the family, not the individual; and emphasizes the quality of life. Hospice care ensures that the patient's life is as fulfilling and satisfying as possible, right up to the last moment.

Last November, I was pleased to be personally invited by my friend Ron Wolf, to visit Bay Medical Center and participate in a breakfast honoring the many volunteers who give of their time to help North Florida's terminally ill patients and their families. Volunteers are the backbone of hospice care, and the multitude of volunteer positions available in hospice care serve as an opportunity for community members, old and young, to get involved in a service organization that provides critical care to those in need.

Hospice care has played an important role in my life. Two years ago, I lost my father to cancer. I do not know what my mother and my family would have done without the care that our area hospice provided. The hospice allowed my father to die at home, in dignity, surrounded by the people who loved him. I want to thank the caregivers who helped my family through a very difficult time. My family and I will never forget their commitment and compassion.

HONORING DR. KENNETH  
GERHART MATHIS, M.D.

**HON. KEN BENTSEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 11, 1998*

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the memory of an extraordinary man, Dr. Kenneth Gerhart Mathis of Pasadena, TX, who passed away on Sunday, February 1, 1998. His passing is a tremendous loss for his family and all the citizens of Pasadena who knew this fine physician and civic leader.

"Dr. Ken," as he was known, graduated summa cum laude from Texas Christian University in 1952, the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in 1955, and Bates School of Law, where he won the Fred Parks Award in 1977.

Dr. Mathis is best known for his radio show, KTRH's "Ask the Doctor," which aired from the mid-80's to October of 1990. His kind and gentle manner was evident on and off the air in his counsel to his many patients. He was well-read and well-rounded and his colleagues noted his phenomenal ability to communicate with his patients. He was a popular guest speaker and often lectured nationwide on many medical and legal topics.

It was always clear that what mattered most to Dr. Ken Mathis was the well-being of his patients. In an era when the practice of medicine is rapidly changing, he reminded many of an old-fashioned country doctor. He was always available to patients who needed him and often opened his clinic on weekends. Patients could go to his clinic rather than endure the uncertainty of waiting or the trauma of the emergency room. His patients respected him for his compassion and capability and trusted him for his knowledge and expertise.

Dr. Mathis was deeply committed to his country and the City of Pasadena. He served as a qualified flight surgeon for the U.S. Air Force in France from 1957–1959 with the 50th TAC Wing F–100 Jet Fighter Bombers. His civic activities included service as a board member of the Southwest Diabetic Foundation and the American Heart Association, and he received the Paul Harris Award from the Pasadena Rotary Club. He traveled widely and spread the word about Pasadena wherever he went. His many interests included the Shriners, trains, classic cars, boats, and of course Dutch Masters cigars.

Whatever he did, Dr. Mathis' intelligence, compassion, and integrity served him and all those he encountered well. He brought a tireless energy, an unflagging drive, and a passionate caring to each of his endeavors.

Dr. Mathis was more than just a great physician; he was also a great Texan, a dedicated citizen, devoted husband, father and grandfather. We offer our sincere condolences to his wife Gay, his children and grandchildren, and his entire family. We feel their loss as our entire community mourns the passing of Dr. Kenneth Mathis.

SISTER RITA STEINHAGEN

**HON. BRUCE F. VENTO**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 11, 1998*

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring the plight of Sister Rita Steinhagen to the attention of my Colleagues. Sister Rita, who has been serving the poor and the impoverished in Minnesota for decades, was among 22 people found guilty January 21, 1998 in a Federal court in Georgia of trespassing at the U.S. Army's School of the Americas (SOA) at Fort Benning, Georgia. The court sentenced her to six months in prison, and fined her \$3,000. (A substantial amount for someone living effectively with a vow of poverty for 47 years.)

The horrific history of the SOA today is in focus. The SOA was established in 1946 to train military officers from Latin American countries. To date, nearly 60,000 military personnel from various Latin American countries have attended the SOA. Unfortunately, upon returning to their home countries, many graduates have instigated challenges to self-determination and participated in the overthrow of democratically elected governments and have been implicated in the broad abuses of human rights. It is apparent that the SOA did not teach its students proper and ethical conduct, rather perverse lessons were learned, and historically have been used to abuse the people of Central and South America.

Recently declassified documents have revealed the profoundly anti-democratic methods used to train Latin American militaries at the SOA. The Pentagon has released seven training manuals demonstrating that as recently as 1992, the SOA was distributing materials which instructed the student trainees in execution, extortion, and torture.

Sister Rita Steinhagen recalled the murders and rape by soldiers initiated and led by the graduates of the SOA that have never been punished. It is indeed ironic that people such as Sister Rita can be sent to prison for having

the audacity to repeatedly and peacefully protest the SOA while the SOA's graduates outrageous conduct remains unpunished.

Sister Rita Steinhagen is a non-threatening woman. A dedicated Sister who is respected and admired by her colleagues and friends. Upon returning from her startling court sentence in Georgia, she was greeted by friends and supporters at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport clapping and singing, "When the Saints Go Marching In."

Sister Rita's life has been illuminated by a commitment to social justice. Her experiences express no threat to society or harm to any person. Rita Steinhagen grew up in Walker, Minnesota, where like many heartland Minnesotans, she enjoyed outdoor recreation and is a passionate fishing activist to this day. At the age of 23, she became a Sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet. She quickly acquired recognition as a Sister of St. Joseph, because of her outstanding service in health and social work.

Over these 47 years, Sister Rita has worked as a medical technologist. Her career is highlighted by founding the Bridge, a shelter for runaway youth, and The Free Store. More recently, she has been working with torture victims at the Center for Victims of Torture in Minneapolis, and of course her social conscience and active protests of such institutions as the SOA.

All of her devoted life, she has stood as an advocate for peace and human rights. She has frequently toured several Latin American countries and has personally experienced the graphic vista of horror. It was during these journeys that first led her to her involvement and protests with the School of the Americas.

Over 600 arrests occurred on Sunday, November 16, 1997. Over 2000 people gathered at the main gate of Fort Benning, Georgia for a prayer vigil and memorial service marking the eighth anniversary of the massacre of six Jesuit priests and two women in El Salvador in 1989 by graduates of the U.S. Army School of Americas. Over 60 people from Minnesota were among those arrested. These arrests at the SOA are the largest number of nonviolent civil disobedience arrests at one time in the U.S. in over a decade.

Mr. Speaker, this peaceful Minnesota woman who has devoted her life to alleviating social injustice, stated to the federal court judge on the day of her sentence:

"Your Honor, I'm 70 years old today, and I've never been in prison, and I'm scared. I tell you, when decent people get put in jail for peaceful demonstration, I'm more scared of what's going on in our country than I am of going to prison."

Mr. Speaker, Sister Rita's words clearly demonstrate the irony of this case. We as members of Congress, have a responsibility to uphold the law and ideals of social justice. We must honor and respect the men and woman who have sacrificed their lives for the well being of others and those willing to raise their voices to the contradiction within our system. Justice will not be served by the imprisonment of Sister Rita Steinhagen. The core values of our society have been ill served by the tragic consequence of the SOA operation.

Enclosed for member's review is a recent Minnesota newspaper article concerning Sister Rita and the incident.

SISTER RITA GETS 6-MONTH SENTENCE—DO-GOODER NUN AWAITS JAIL FOR PROTEST AT FORT BENNING

Doug Grow

Sometime in the next few weeks, we are supposed to believe the country will become a safer place because a 70-year-old woman, Sister Rita Steinhagen, will be whisked off our streets and hauled to a federal penitentiary to serve a six-month sentence.

Sister Rita, who has been serving the poor and downtrodden in Minneapolis for only a few decades, was among 22 people found guilty Wednesday in a federal court in Georgia of trespassing at the U.S. Army's School of the Americas at Fort Benning in Georgia. She not only was hit with the hard time, but with a \$3,000 fine as well—a hefty sum when you've been living with a vow of poverty for 47 years.

Sister Rita was surprised by the sentence. "What did you expect?" I asked.

"I didn't expect six months," she said.

"When you do the crime, you're going to get the time," I said.

But Sister Rita says that's not true. She talked of how people, allegedly taught at the School of the Americas, have murdered and raped in Latin American countries and never served any time at all. Sister Rita and others of her ilk keep thinking that if U.S. citizens ever understand that their tax money is being spent to train despots, rapists and murderers, they will be outraged and demand policy changes.

To date, it's not working out that way. So far, what's happening is that people such as Sister Rita are being sent to prison for having the audacity to peacefully protest and the rest of us are yawning. Anyway, the reason Sister Rita and the others got hit with the prison sentences for their misdemeanor offenses in November is that they were repeat offenders at Fort Benning.

So, who is Rita the Repeater?

For starters, she really doesn't look like a threat. She has white hair, a quick smile and a delightful sense of humor. For example, when she got off the plane at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Thursday night after being sentenced in Georgia, she was greeted by friends and supporters clapping and singing, "When the Saints Go Marching In."

Sister Rita's response to the greeting?

"I said: 'This is peculiar. I got six months in jail, and everybody's clapping.'"

There's little in her biography to suggest that she's a threat. She grew up in Walker, Minn., learning to fish. (Her single most prized possession is her fishing rod, which she uses whenever she can.) She didn't even plan to become a nun. At 23, she went to visit a friend who was becoming a nun and discovered she felt comfortable.

"Do you think I belong here?" she asked one of the sisters.

"I certainly do," was the response.

And so it was done. Rita Steinhagen was on her way to becoming a Sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet. Sister Ann Walton, who is among the order's leadership team, said Sister Rita has represented the soul of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

"She is one of our finest," Sister Ann said. "She's in the pattern of the women [sisters] in the French Revolution who were imprisoned for their beliefs. She's in a very long line of people who have given of themselves."

Over the years, Sister Rita has worked as a medical technologist. In her career, she has founded a place called The Bridge, a shelter for runaway youth, and The Free Store. (The Free Store, founded by Sister Rita in 1968, still exists, though it no longer is affiliated with the Sisters of St. Joseph.) Of late, she

has been working with torture victims at the Center for Victims of Torture in Minneapolis.

Through the years, she has been arrested at several Twin Cities protests but never served jail time. She also has made frequent work-related trips to Latin American countries and has been horrified at what she has seen and heard. It was the Latin American journeys that led her to the protest at the School of the Americas.

This Minnesota woman who has devoted her life to quietly doing good, didn't accept her sentence in silence.

"I told the judge: 'Your honor, I'm 70 years old today, and I've never been in prison, and I'm scared. I tell you, when decent people get put in jail for six months for peaceful demonstration, I'm more scared of what's going on in our country than I am of going to prison.'"

The response of Judge Robert Elliot?

"He didn't say anything," she said. "He couldn't care less."

Now, she's back in Minnesota waiting for the letter that will inform her where she's supposed to go to serve her sentence.

"There's no room," she said of the delayed sentence. "Isn't that something. You have to wait in line to go to prison."

This weekend, she planned to do her waiting by going ice-fishing in northern Minnesota. Rita the Repeater is going fishing because she needs the solitude—but beyond that, she'll be in prison when the spring opener rolls around.

## PROHIBITION ON FEDERALLY SPONSORED NATIONAL TESTING

SPEECH OF

**HON. PATSY T. MINK**

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 5, 1998*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2846) to prohibit spending Federal education funds on national testing without explicit and specific legislation:

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Chairman, today I will vote against H.R. 2846, which seeks to prohibit the implementation of the national tests proposed by President Clinton.

The debate on national testing is not a new one. I remember these debates from the 60's and 70's and even more recently in the early 1990's. I opposed national testing then and I oppose it now.

My vote today does not reflect a change in my position on this issue, it is simply a statement that this bill is not needed at this time. We know there is a wide difference of opinion on national testing and it does always fall along party lines. In fact, the last major debate on national testing in the Congress was in 1991 and 1992 over a Bush Administration initiative to implement a much broader national testing system than what is being proposed by President Clinton.

When President Clinton offered his proposal for a national Reading test for the 4th grade and a national Math test in the 8th grade, we again embarked on this familiar debate.

With very passionate arguments on each side of this issue, the Congress—Members of the House and Senate—worked very hard last year to craft a compromise in the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill. While not per-

fect, as most compromises are not, it was something that Members with very different views could agree on.

The compromise allows only the development of test, not the implementation or the distribution. It transfers the responsibility of overseeing the tests to the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), the same organization that conducts the well-respected NAEP (National Assessment of Education Progress) test.

The bill before us today flies in the face of that compromise. It adds no constructive element to the debate that continues on whether we should move forward on a national test and whether the Congress is ready to authorize such a measure. It seems more a political maneuver to focus on areas of disagreement, rather than to move forward on the many items of mutual agreement in an education agenda for this country.

This year the Congress must consider the reauthorization of NAGB and NAEP. It seems to me a more constructive approach would be to consider in the context of this reauthorization whether to authorize a national testing system. The compromise forged in the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill will stand while the Congress works on the NAGB and NAEP legislation. Why we need to take up this legislation at this time, only a few legislative days since the passage of the Labor-HHS-Education compromise is puzzling.

Therefore, I will vote against this bill today. It is not constructive and it does nothing to further the debate on national testing in this country.

## CONCERNING ATTORNEYS' FEES, COSTS, AND SANCTIONS PAYABLE BY THE WHITE HOUSE HEALTH CARE TASK FORCE

SPEECH OF

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 4, 1998*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 107) expressing the sense of the Congress that the award of attorneys' fees, costs, and sanctions of \$285,864.78 ordered by United States District Judge Royce C. Lamberth on December 18, 1997, should not be paid with taxpayer funds:

Mr. STARK. Mr. Chairman, February 4, the House wasted an afternoon debating a totally meaningless "sense of the Congress" that the taxpayer "should" not have to pay about \$300,000 in lawyers' fees for a group which had sued the White House over the make-up and secrecy of the long-defunct Health Care Task Force.

It was pure partisan bashing of the Clinton's health reform efforts. I repeatedly offered a unanimous consent amendment (the parliamentary rules of germaneness prevented a regular amendment) to make the Resolution real: to save the taxpayers from paying this fine. Repeatedly the Republicans rejected the offer to do what they claimed their Resolution was "trying" to do.

All in all, their position on this Resolution was the most transparent political nonsense that the Congress has seen in years.