

On July 21st, the government of Iran executed Mr. Ruhollah Rowhani, a Baha'i man, after having charged him with apostasy—specifically, converting a Muslim to the Baha'i faith. Mr. Rowhani, who had been held incommunicado for ten months, was evidently not accorded basic legal protections such as access to an attorney. His family learned of his execution only after it had taken place and they were notified they had one hour to prepare for his burial.

Since 1979, over 200 Baha'is—mostly elected community leaders—have been executed in Iran, solely on account of their religion. For the past six years, however, none had been executed and the number of Baha'is in custody had been rapidly declining. This apparent lessening of overt persecution, coupled with the new leadership in Iran, had raised hopes that a change in attitude towards the Baha'i and other minority religions might be forthcoming. The execution of Mr. Rowhani dashed those hopes. Currently, 15 Baha'is are being held by the Iranian authorities—four of whom are on death row.

In the days since the killing, the international community has joined forces to condemn this shameful execution and petition for the humane treatment of those Baha'is facing possible death at the hands of the Iranian government. President Clinton and State Department Spokesperson James Rubin have issued strong statements condemning the killing. The German, Australian and Canadian foreign ministries have issued strong denunciations and Representatives of the European Union have made their disapproval and concern known to the Iranian government in very clear terms. The Office of the UN Commissioner for Human Rights has urgently appealed to the Iranian government on behalf of the detained individuals.

For its part, the Iranian judiciary—which is controlled by Khomeini and the hardliners—responded by initially denying the charges were ever filed, denying the execution ever took place, and, incredibly, denying that a man named Ruhollah Rowhani ever existed. The Foreign Ministry later acknowledged that the execution had taken place.

Mr. Speaker, it is tremendously disappointing that the hardline elements of the Iranian government have resumed their assault on the Baha'i community. The hardline leadership continues to deviate far from the norms of civilized behavior by executing a man for nothing more than his faith. I believe that the execution of this innocent man marks a new phase in the ongoing power struggle in Iran between the hardliners and the more moderate elements. Given the fact that the hardliners control the judiciary, it is not insignificant that this execution happened close in time to the conviction of the mayor of Tehran, an ally of President Khatami, and a long-scheduled visit by the European Union troika to discuss normalization of relations. I believe that the Baha'is and others who are at odds with the hardliners will continue to be used as pawns to weaken President Khatami's hand in this power struggle. I urge the hardline elements of Iranian government in the strongest possible terms not to compound this grievous situation by harming the other Baha'is in custody. I also call on President Khatami to give substance to his statements about religious freedom and the rule of law by taking a strong stand against the reactionary clerics who want to

keep Iran isolated from the international community and the modern world.

STATEMENT ON INTRODUCTION OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS DELEGATE ACT

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 6, 1998

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the Northern Marianas Delegate Act, to provide for a non-voting Delegate to the House of Representatives to represent the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is the newest and only American territory acquired by the United States in this century. The composition of the CNMI includes the principal islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota as well as other northern islands in the Mariana Island chain. Guam is also located in the Marianas chain and sits as CNMI's closest neighbor in the Pacific and sister American territory. It is befitting that the people of Guam have the honor today to share in the introduction of this bill for our neighbors, and for our brothers and sisters of Chamorro heritage in the Northern Marianas who share Guam's indigenous identity.

The Northern Mariana Islands began its relationship with the United States more than fifty years ago. On the beaches of Saipan and Tinian, American Forces expelled a colonial power that had acquired these islands as part of its larger Pacific empire. In the following years, the seeds of American democracy sprouted a young vibrant American community eager to venture their own path. In 1976, the Northern Mariana Islands entered into a commonwealth arrangement with its American liberators and have since made great strides in developing its unique island community and economy.

This legislation is consistent with recommendations of the Commission of Federal Laws appointed by Presidents Reagan, which recommended a CNMI Delegate in 1985. The Commission outlined three reasons for this recommendation: Fairness, Democratic principles and Practical utility.

Today the American citizens who live in the Northern Marianas contribute and participate in the life of our nation in all the same ways that every other American citizen does in his own community. They pay taxes, serve in the military and work hard for the progress of their communities.

America's experiment with democracy continues to evolve and develop. We seek and pursue a more perfect union. We are a proud nation of free citizens that enjoy elected representation in the federal government. It is unfortunate that our current system dictates that Americans in the fifty states enjoy perfect representation in the forms of Congressional representatives and U.S. Senators, representation of our citizens in the territories and the District of Columbia are by Delegates and a Resident Commissioner who cannot vote on the floor of this House and then there are those American citizens in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands who receive no representation at all.

Citizens of American territories are a unique group. Our constituents are grateful Americans and the citizenry are perhaps more loyal than any other in any state. Per capita, we have more men and women serving in the armed services and protecting our country and our way of life. With fervor, we engage ourselves in the political process. At elections, our voter participation far exceeds the national average. Our citizens are excited about freedom and we work to preserve democratic ideals and strive for equality of opportunities.

It is no different for my Pacific brethren to the North of Guam. They too are committed to the ideals of American democracy and have a long history of developing their island within the American political framework. They chose to have a close and permanent relationship with the United States through a commonwealth arrangement. However, when the CNMI signed a covenant with the U.S., they were denied representation in Congress. Their current non-representation in the U.S. House of Representatives is the least perfect representation of any citizen on American soil. The dedication and loyalty of our American citizens in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands should not be overlooked. They deserve representation in the U.S. House of Representatives. It is an injustice that the American citizens in the CNMI are the only U.S. citizens without representation in the U.S. Congress.

Without appropriate representation, miscommunications and problems arise because there is no one among our membership who stands up to speak for the Americans in the CNMI. There is no one amongst us willing to make the political investment to advocate on behalf of the CNMI on a daily basis. A Delegate for the CNMI will advance their cause and can work to resolve situations and concerns before they snowball into larger issues.

There are those amongst us who may argue that representation is contingent on tax contribution to the Treasury. I do not recall that a deposit into the treasury is a condition for your rights as a citizen.

There are those who will resist entertaining this issue because there are problems in the CNMI that have made its way to the surface and have received national and international attention. They will argue that the CNMI Delegate Act should not be addressed until the concerns are resolved. I disagree.

I believe that the best way to resolve these problems is to throw open the doors of the House and invite a representative of the CNMI to the table of public discussion. Even criminals have the right to representation in a court of law.

Whether a state or a territory, we all have our problems with the federal government. At times, it's on an individual basis with an agency over a Social Security check or a Medicaid payment. Other times it is contradiction between state and federal viewpoints. In one way or the other, as Representatives in the U.S. Congress we become involved or can involve ourselves in the process. It's an advantage for our electorate and a right of American citizenship. We should not leave other citizens behind or alienate them from this process. Perpetual denial of a Delegate for the CNMI is a denial of the basic right to represent oneself in the formation of public policy.

Participation must be extended to all citizens. Our American citizenship has as its

foundation a promise of fair and equal treatment by our government and that promise extends into the halls of Congress where fair and equal treatment demands that the Northern Marianas be represented by a Delegate.

The bill I introduce today mirrors the legislation which granted Guam and the United States Virgin Islands representation in 1972 and the legislation which granted American Samoa representation in 1980. The Northern Marianas will join the ranks of Delegates representing these islands, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia, and the Northern Marianas will add its voice to those who represent American citizens who do not reside in the fifty states, but who reside in a diverse group of American communities on American soil.

As a Delegate, I know the difficulties attached to the kind of office I hold. There are real limitations to what I can do here. But I have the freedom to speak, to argue, to introduce legislation, to participate in debate, to make friends for the people who sent me here. The fate of my island rises and falls with my ability to represent my constituents. How unfair, how unkind, how un-American it is to keep any American from having the same privilege.

I hope that the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate will act on this legislation and I urge my colleagues to co-sponsor the Northern Marianas Delegate Act.

For the record, I am attaching a statement from CNMI Resident Representative Juan Babauta.

THE NORTHERN MARIANAS DELEGATE ACT,
AUGUST 6, 1998

Statement of the Honorable Juan N. Babauta, Resident Representative to the United States, from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

The people of the Northern Marianas voted overwhelmingly in 1975 to join the United States of America. After three centuries of colonial rule we longed to be citizens of a democratic republic, free to participate in our own governance.

Twenty-three years later, we still wait, governed from afar, the only people within the United States without a voice in Congress.

In negotiating our entry into the American political system we were advised that our small population (about 14,000 in the early 1970s) did not warrant representation in Congress. We accepted that explanation knowing that Congress had recently provided representation in the House of Representatives for Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia and confident that once we, too, became United States citizens we would be accorded representation in our national government.

When, in 1978, Congress provided representation for the US nationals of American Samoa, a population of approximately 27,000, we in the Northern Marianas were further encouraged to believe that as a growing population of US citizens, we, too, would soon have a voice in shaping the laws which now governed us.

Our hopes rose again in 1986 when the Commission on Federal Laws appointed by President Ronald Reagan recommended to Congress that the people of the Northern Marianas be provided a Delegate in the US House of Representatives. The Reagan Commission reasoned that:

Every other area within the American political system with a permanent population is represented in Congress;

Northern Marianas representation in Congress is in keeping with American traditions

of participatory democracy and would dispel any lingering taint of American colonialism over the islands; and

A Northern Marianas Delegate would effectively represent the needs and interests of the islands, relieving other Members of this responsibility.

Although legislation was introduced supporting the Reagan Commission recommendation, the House took no action on it.

When, in 1989, I first ran for the office of Resident Representative to the United States from the Northern Mariana Islands, I pledged to make representation in Congress a priority. Despite joint resolutions from the Northern Marianas Legislature and the support of Governor Lorenzo I. DeLeon Guerrero, it was not until 1994 that a bill, HR 4927, was finally introduced. It was Robert Underwood, joined by co-sponsors Mr. Murphy, Mr. Flaeomavaega, Ms. Norton, Mr. Romero-Barceló, and Mr. de Lugo, who made that important first step on our behalf.

Their effort was followed in 1996 by the introduction of legislation by Mr. Gallegly, co-sponsored by Chairman Young, Mr. Faleomavaega, Mr. Underwood, Mr. Abercrombie, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Romero-Barceló, Mr. Frazer, Mr. Kim, and Mr. Rahall. The Northern Marianas Delegate bill was reported favorably by the Resources Committee. Opponents, however, were able to discourage floor consideration of the measure in the waning days of the 104th Congress.

In opposition to the Gallegly/Young bills, both in committee and after the bill was reported favorably, it was argued that, although the people of the Northern Marianas are US citizens, they have no inherent "right" to participate in our Nation's governance. This argument is technically correct. The Constitution makes no provision for representation in Congress for US citizens not residents of the several States. However, since the very first days of our Republic, this Congress has acknowledged that US citizens, even outside the States, should in justice have a voice in Congress. And, over the last two hundred years, Congress has so provided, giving representation in the US House to Tennessee, Oklahoma, and Michigan—together some 30 territories ranging in population from 5,000 to 250,000.

At times, though, Congress has delayed in granting this representation—in the case of Alaska because of its remoteness and its population's racial and ethnic composition. But we live in modern times, when concerns about distance and homogeneity have been superseded by technology and a more enlightened sense of justice and civil rights.

It was further argued that representation in Congress is a "privilege" and that the people of the Northern Marianas are unworthy—because of the abuse of foreign laborers which has occurred in the islands—to have the same privileges as other people living in the United States. But the privilege—if privilege it be—has been denied the people of the Northern Marianas for twenty-three years, since long before the issue of foreign labor abuse arose.

In approving the Covenant of political union with the United States, the people of the Northern Marianas elected to live under federal law. We do not fear it. We seek its protection for ourselves and for all persons living in the Northern Marianas. What we want is to have a voice in making those federal laws which govern us.

The Supreme Court of the United States opined in 1964. "[n]o right is more precious in a free country than that of having a voice in the election of those who make the laws under which, as good citizens, we must live." It is with respect for that fundamental prin-

ciple that we ask for passage of the Northern Marianas Delegate Act.

HONORING GREG GOODMAN FOR
HIS PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 6, 1998

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Greg Goodman, a valued constituent of the Fifth Congressional District of Tennessee.

Greg Goodman has taken top origination honors for the State of Tennessee for the third year in a row. Greg is a vice president of Sun Trust Bank in Nashville and has been with the bank since graduating from David Lipscomb College in 1991.

Greg has closed over \$240 million in residential loans since 1991. Greg is not only number one in the State of Tennessee, but also has the honor of being one of the top originators in the southeastern United States. Greg has completed Course I at the School of Mortgage Banking at Charleston University and is one of the top marketers in the United States.

Greg's secret is based on the utilization and building of relationships. In his words: "My commitment starts with relationships. Relationship selling is focused on the customer. Exceeding expectations is the single most powerful way our team has of building credibility." Greg is a strong advocate of under-promising and over-delivering.

Greg is an active social person, married to the former Alethea Barker, a member of the Church of Christ, and he celebrates his 30th birthday on August 14, 1998. Greg is destined to continue breaking records in selling. I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

HEFLEY AMENDMENT

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 6, 1998

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, last night I voted against the Hefley Amendment. As Ranking member of the Subcommittee on Civil Service, I strongly opposed the Hefley amendment because I believe that no employee, federal or otherwise, should be subjected to employment discrimination.

Executive Order 13087, signed by President Clinton on May 28th, creates no new rights, it merely codifies existing non-discrimination policies already in force in every Federal department and agency throughout the executive branch. The Executive Order simply says that supervisors in the Federal government may not consider race, religion, gender or sexual orientation, in hiring, firing or promotion decisions. It states a fair and reasonable policy with which no true believer in our nation's founding principle of equal justice under law could disagree.

The Hefley Amendment would prohibit the expenditure of funds to implement the Executive Order. By doing so, it sends the wrong