

TRIBUTE TO PAT ZICARELLI

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 1996

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Pat Zicarelli, who is the outgoing president of the San Fernando Valley Association of Realtors. Under Pat's aggressive leadership, the association expanded membership services, became deeply involved in community affairs, and raised significant funds for the Make-a-Wish Foundation. With his energy and enthusiasm, Pat was an excellent leader for the association. His successor will find him a tough act to follow.

Pat has a 20-year history of participation in civic, community, and business affairs, in the San Fernando Valley. Indeed, his resume is crowded with credits. To cite a few of many examples: Pat is serving a second term as president of the Tarzana Chamber of Commerce, has been an executive business fundraiser for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, has worked with local crime watch programs, and for 2 years was on the board of directors of the Miss California USA Pageant.

Not surprisingly, Pat has been the recipient of numerous awards through the years. In 1982, he was named Realtor-Associate of the Year by the San Fernando Valley Association of Realtors; in 1992 Assemblyman Richard Katz selected Pat to receive the San Fernando Valley Small Business Owner of the Year Award. Pat was also given the Outstanding Person of the Year Award by the Tarzana Chamber of Commerce.

As president of the Valley Association of Realtors, Pat championed the adaptation of new technologies. Always on top of the latest innovations, Pat improved and expanded CRIS-NET, which is widely recognized as one of the industry's most advanced real estate information systems. He has positioned the association to be a key player in the information age.

I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting Pat Zicarelli, who has just concluded a successful tenure as president of the San Fernando Valley Association of Realtors. His commitment to business and dedication to his community are an example for us all.

BUDGET IMPASSE DERAILS BENEFITS FOR RAILROAD RETIREES

HON. RON KLINK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 1996

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, Emperor Nero died while his capital, Rome, burned to the ground.

Now the Imperial Republican-controlled Congress here in Washington would rather keep the Federal Government shut down than do the people's business. Their actions are driving Federal workers and Federal contractors to the brink of financial disaster.

Besides the Federal workers and Federal suppliers, there are other victims of the Federal shutdown: the retired railroad workers and their families.

While Speaker GINGRICH and other House Republicans rang in the New Year by cele-

brating with friends and family more than 170,000 railroad retirees had their monthly pension checks severely cut.

Had the Republican leadership done its job on time, these railroad retirees would be receiving their vested dual benefits checks that average \$130 per month. That means that more than 13,000 beneficiaries in Pennsylvania and others across the Nation will receive only partial annuity checks.

For some railroad retirees their Medicare part B premiums will consume their entire benefit checks. The bill that contains the funding for these railroad retirees has not even been brought to the Senate floor.

To add insult to injury, Speaker GINGRICH has announced his intentions to recess the House until January 23. This makes no sense.

Railroad retirees spent their entire careers keeping our trains operating on time. This is no time to forget railroad retirees and their families. Keep the Congress at work and restore full benefits to these railroad retirees.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BROWN-FIELDS REDEVELOPMENT ACT

HON. WILLIAM J. COYNE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 1996

Mr. COYNE. Mr. Speaker, environmental cleanup and economic redevelopment of old, abandoned industrial sites is a critical issue for cities across America. These unproductive, often polluted sites are called brownfields.

There are over 400,000 brownfield sites scattered across the United States. Over the last decades, these brownfield sites have become not only public health and pollution problems, but also serious impediments to the economic health of the surrounding communities. Because the risk of assuming financial liability for a brownfield site is so great, potential purchasers and lenders have shied away from redevelopment of such properties. The result has been the loss of job opportunities and tax revenue in many communities, blighted neighborhoods, and the expensive, unnecessary, and wasteful construction of infrastructure like roads and sewers at new "greenfield" sites in nearby communities.

Affordable financing is one of the major stumbling blocks in the cleanup and reuse of brownfield sites. The Brownfields Redevelopment Act, which I am introducing today, seeks to address and ease the financial impediments to brownfield redevelopment through two separate provisions. First, the Brownfields Redevelopment Act would create a substantial tax incentive for private sector brownfield cleanups. In many cases, companies which are in the process of building new facilities might prefer to build these facilities on brownfield sites, where the necessary public infrastructure—roads and sewers, for example—is already in place and where a ready supply of prospective employees live nearby. However, the cost of environmental remediation and the risk of future financial liability has too often caused companies to shy away from such otherwise desirable locations. Cleaning up hazardous waste sites is an expensive, risky, and often time-consuming process. To provide an incentive for brownfield cleanup and redevelopment, the Brownfields Redevelopment Act

would create a tax credit for private sector environmental remediation.

Specifically, this bill would provide a 50-percent tax credit for environmental remediation expenses incurred in completing a cleanup plan approved by the EPA or a designated State agency. In order to target this tax credit at the most potentially productive sites, the tax credit would be restricted to those sites that meet the following four criteria: the site has had no productive use for at least 1 year; the site would be unlikely to undergo redevelopment without tax credit assistance; the site has a strong likelihood of creating jobs and expanding the tax base after redevelopment; and the planned environmental remediation and redevelopment would be completed in a reasonably short period of time. The tax credit would also be available only to "innocent owners" of polluted property. It is my hope that such a tax credit will stimulate increased brownfield cleanup and redevelopment all across the country.

If this credit is successful in encouraging brownfield cleanup and redevelopment, it will bring jobs and revitalization to thousands of communities across the country. I believe that the benefits such redevelopment would provide by revitalizing our central cities would far outweigh the cost of the credit. Moreover, the costs of allowing these sites to remain vacant and contaminated are—while less obvious—quite substantial.

The second provision of the Brownfield Redevelopment Act would modify the Internal Revenue Code's existing qualified redevelopment bond [QRB] provisions to specify that environmental remediation was an allowable use of such bonds. The interest paid on qualified redevelopment bonds—bonds which are used for financing redevelopment in designated blighted areas—is tax-exempt. As a result, municipalities that issue such bonds can pay lower interest rates when they borrow money for redevelopment projects. In effect, the Federal Government subsidizes local governments' redevelopment activities through this Tax Code provision. Although brownfield sites are clearly blighted areas, environmental remediation is not specifically identified in the Tax Code as an allowable use of qualified redevelopment Bond proceeds. To address this oversight, the Brownfields Redevelopment Act would add environmental remediation to the list of activities that qualify for the use of the proceeds from the sale of qualified redevelopment bonds. This change would allow local governments to borrow money for brownfield cleanup at slightly less than market rates.

The bill would also waive a number of existing QRB restrictions when the bonds were issued for environmental remediation activities. Most importantly, the Brownfields Redevelopment Act would waive a section of the current law that requires that designated blighted areas be at least 100 acres in size. The great majority of brownfield sites desperately in need of redevelopment are much smaller than 100 acres. Many, in fact, are only a few acres. Consequently, this and similar requirements would be modified under the Brownfields Redevelopment Act to address the special conditions that are often associated with brownfield sites.

The QRB provisions of the Brownfield Redevelopment Act would be nearly revenue-neutral. While thousands of brownfield sites would be eligible for redevelopment using tax-exempt

QRB's, the volume of qualified redevelopment bonds issued would be constrained by the existing State bond volume caps established under section 146 of the Internal Revenue Code. Local governments wishing to issue qualified redevelopment bonds for brownfield sites would have to compete with other issuers for authority to issue private activity bonds under the State volume cap.

Mr. Speaker, vacant, polluted brownfield sites have become a serious problem for our country. They have blighted many of our communities in both financial and environmental terms, and they have contributed to urban sprawl. Restoring and redeveloping our country's brownfield sites will be a difficult task—it will take the cooperation of both the public and private sectors. The financial assistance provided in this bill would be a valuable tool in the environmental and economic redevelopment of America. I urge my colleagues to join me as cosponsors of this legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 1996

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall voted Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "present" on rollcall No. 1; "no" on rollcall No. 2; "yes" on rollcall No. 3; and "no" on rollcall No. 4.

BOSNIA AND THE FUTURE OF NATO

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 1996

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, the new Secretary General of NATO, Javier Solana, wrote a piece in the Washington Post on December 24, 1995, entitled "In Bosnia, a Defining Moment." I was impressed with his analysis, particularly concerning the cooperation of 16 non-NATO nations with the 16 Members of NATO in support of the Bosnia Implementation Force. As the Secretary General states "[W]e have the opportunity not only to end the war in Bosnia but to lay the foundations for an enduring structure of peace across a now-undivided and democratic Europe."

I comment the article to the attention of my colleagues. The text follows:

[From the Washington Post; Dec. 24, 1995]

(By Javier Solana)

IN BOSNIA, A DEFINING MOMENT

Much of the debate that preceded last week's deployment of a NATO-led peace implementation force into Bosnia centered on whether the stakes involved justified sending the young men and women of this alliance into harm's way. On this point, the response of our 16 member nations has been clear: We simply had to act in order to bring the worst conflict in Europe since World War II to a definitive halt.

The alternative would not only have been to condemn the people of Bosnia to further suffering but to risk seeing the conflict spread and perhaps confront us with the need

to intervene in a shooting war on a much larger scale. Because NATO nations on both sides of the Atlantic remember all too well the price paid in 1914 and 1939 because of Western blunders and blindness, they were determined not to miss this opportunity to stop a war in the heart of Europe when it was in their power to do so.

What has received less attention in the international Force (IFOR) debate are the profound implications for NATO of this operation, which is the first ground force "out-of-area" deployment in our 46-year history. For those who until recently considered the organization a Cold War relic, the coalition that our supreme allied commander Europe, Gen. George A. Joulwan, is assembling must seem astonishing indeed.

Thus far, 16 non-NATO nations have joined the 16 allies in "Operation Joint Endeavor." These include many of our former adversaries from Central and Eastern Europe who now wish to join NATO, neutral countries such as Sweden and Finland, non-European nations such as Egypt and Pakistan and, most notably, Russia. Still other nations, such as Austria and Switzerland, have broken with tradition and taboo to cooperate with NATO to facilitate the largest and most complex movement of forces by land, sea and air in Europe in 50 years.

Clearly, something is happening in Europe today that transcends the Bosnian situation. Underlying the desire of so many nations to contribute to this NATO-led operation is a consciousness that a defining moment in the post-Cold War security order has arrived. This is not a moment or an opportunity that has come about by accident. NATO has worked quietly but intensively over the past two years to prepare the new democracies in our Partnership for Peace program for such joint operations, just as we have endeavored to build a truly cooperative relationship with the Russian Federation.

Thus in Bosnia we have an opportunity not only to end a war in the Balkans but to lay the foundations for an enduring structure of peace across a now-undivided and democratic Europe.

I am keenly aware that it is one thing to proclaim such a lofty ideal and quite another for our troops to face the grim reality of a Balkan winter under trying and dangerous circumstances. Throughout history, it has been ever thus—it has been to the lonely foot soldier to realize the visions of leaders and politicians.

But thanks to their capacity to learn from the mistakes of the first half of this century, two generations of Europeans and North Americans have not had to ask their sons and daughters to sacrifice themselves in another world war. They have not had to do so—and current and future generations will not have to do so—largely because NATO exists to keep the peace.

Now that a new NATO is moving boldly to meet the post-Cold War security challenges of a new Europe, our thoughts should go to our young soldiers of peace who will spend their Christmas truly spreading the season's message of hope to their fellow man.

H.R. 2843, VETERANS' INSURANCE REFORM ACT OF 1995

HON. BOB STUMP

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 1996

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation which will update and make changes to two of the VA insurance pro-

grams—the Servicemen's Group Life Insurance [SGLI] and the Veterans' Group Life Insurance [VGLI]. My distinguished colleagues, SONNY MONTGOMERY, TERRY EVERETT, LANE EVANS, and CHRIS SMITH, join me in introducing this bill.

The SGLI Program provides group life insurance coverage to persons on active duty in the military service, Ready Reservists, members of the uniformed services, cadets and midshipmen of the four service academies and members of the Reserve Office Training Corps. Although it is a program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, this program is actually administered by the Prudential Insurance Co.

The VGLI Program is a program of post-separation insurance which provides for the conversion of servicemen's group life insurance to a 5-year term policy. Like Servicemen's Group, Veterans' Group is supervised by the Department of Veterans Affairs but administered by the Office of Servicemen's Group Life Insurance.

This bill would make quite a few changes, including setting the automatic coverage under SGLI at \$200,000 from the current \$100,000; allowing the Secretary the authority to terminate an individual's insurance if premiums are not paid within 60 days; and renaming the Servicemen's Group Life Insurance Program to Servicemember's Group Life Insurance.

Additional provisions include merging the Retired Reserve Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance and Veterans' Group Life Insurance Programs; extending VGLI lifetime coverage to members of the Ready Reserve of a uniformed service; providing for an individual, upon separation from the military, to change to the SGLI Program or choose as commercial policy; and eliminating the 5-year VGLI renewal period.

Mr. Speaker, we already know that these are great insurance programs and are very popular with veterans and active duty personnel. The changes offered in this legislation will improve the programs for current policy holders and future participants.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

A CHAMPION OF ECONOMIC JUSTICE

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 1996

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to former Seattle Councilman Sam Smith who passed away November 16, 1995. Sam Smith was born July 21, 1922, on a farm just outside of Gibsland, LA. He entered the U.S. Army in 1942, was assigned to a post in Seattle, and achieved the rank of warrant officer. After World War II, he married his high school sweetheart, Marion, and together they raised six children. Sam earned a degree in social science from Seattle University in 1951, and a degree in economics from the University of Washington in 1952. He entered politics in 1956, and was elected to the Washington State Legislature in 1958, representing the 37th Legislative District of Washington for five terms until 1967. Sam then was elected to the Seattle City Council. He was the