

A TRIBUTE TO R. GRAYDON BRIGGS OF GRAND LEDGE, MICHIGAN

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 1998

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to R. Graydon Briggs of Grand Ledge, Michigan for his outstanding service to public safety.

Fire controlled is one of the man's greatest friends; unchecked, it is our deadly enemy. Each year, millions of fires kill thousands of Americans and destroy billions of dollars of property. Daily, across this nation, fire fighters risk their lives to protect us, our homes, our businesses, and our belongings. Graydon Briggs is one such man. After serving his country bravely during the Korean conflict, Mr. Briggs returned home to Michigan and began a career of service that spanned four decades. For 37-years, Mr. Briggs served his community as a firefighter protecting lives and property of Grand Ledge residents and the neighboring townships of Eagle, Oneida, and Wauertown.

His leadership abilities and organizational skills caused him to be appointed to the rank of Fire Chief. He discharged this office with integrity for 31 consecutive years. Chief Briggs had the unique ability to cohesively unite both paid and volunteer firefighters under his command. Under his dedicated leadership Grand Ledge saw many improvements in their fire department. They received their first aerial ladder truck, something uncommon to smaller rural communities. A new rescue truck with the "jaws of life" tool was added. The city's first water rescue boat was placed in service. New pumper and tankers were added. These improvements helped lower fire insurance rates for Grand Ledge.

Chief Briggs was honored in 1971 when he performed rescue breathing on a young girl rescued from an apartment fire in which she was trapped. Her life was saved by this compassionate effort by Chief Briggs.

In addition to firefighting skills and administrative capabilities, Chief Briggs became a superlative instructor. He organized and conducted numerous fire training schools and taught his art to hundreds of new firefighters. He has committed his life to the service of others.

As a Member of the Congress of the United States of America, I am pleased to rise today to recognize his accomplishments and join with his many friends and admirers in extending my highest praise and warmest wishes for many happy years to come as he enters his retirement.

PERSECUTION OF BAHAI
CONTINUES IN IRAN

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 1998

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, President Khatami of Iran recently addressed the American people in a televised interview in which he stated that "religiosity liberty and justice"

were the "aspirations of the Islamic Revolution." In this regard President Khatami indicated that the Iranian and American people cherished similar ideals.

Despite these hopeful statements, however, the members of the Baha'i faith in Iran still are subject to systematic persecution aimed at the destruction of this community in its own homeland. Although the number of executions of members of the Baha'i faith are down from the level of killing that occurred during the earlier phases of the Iranian revolution—two were killed during 1997 for apostasy, and the number of Baha'i in prison has fallen from 750 in 1986 to 21 at present, individual members of this faith are still subject to harassment or arrest due to their religious beliefs.

Of most concern are the state enforced measures designed to deny the ability of the Baha'i community to sustain itself. Baha'is are forbidden to elect leaders, organize schools or conduct religious activities. Elected assemblies which, since the Baha'i have no clergy, serve to govern the community were disbanded by Iranian government order in 1983. All community properties, including cemeteries, and other holy places were confiscated soon after the 1979 revolution, and none have been returned.

Baha'is are denied jobs and pensions on the basis of their faith, and Baha'i students are prevented from attending universities which, in turn denies the opportunity for economic advancement and further impoverishes the community. Members of the Baha'i faith have no legal standing and have no recourse to enforce their civil and economic rights within the Iranian judicial system.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that if we want to truly test the sincerity of President Khatami's recent offer to open a dialog with the American people we should ask his government to end the repression of the Baha'i and other religious minorities in Iran. Our government should use its voice and vote in the upcoming meeting of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva to press the Iranian authorities to prove to the international community that Iranian society really does cherish religiosity, liberty and justice by ending the systematic persecution of the Baha'i and all of its religious minorities.

PRESERVING HISTORICALLY
BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 1998

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I introduced H.R. 3266, legislation which will be of great benefit to our nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and will help preserve a vital cultural link for this country. I am very proud that each member of the Congressional Black Caucus has joined with me in co-sponsoring this bill.

Our bill will amend the Omnibus Parks and Public Land Management Act of 1996 to provide additional funding for the preservation and restoration of historic buildings and structures at HBCUs. There is currently an authorization of \$29 million for this activity, but much more is needed.

Last year I sought a General Accounting Office (GAO) study to determine exactly the amount needed to preserve these treasures. The Congressional Black Caucus requested the GAO to conduct this survey, and after a year long undertaking, this comprehensive report was given to me on February 6th.

Every HBCU responded to the GAO survey. The report documents 712 historic properties owned by these institutions, and projects a cost of \$755 million to renovate and preserve these sites. The current authorization requires a dollar for dollar match from the schools, and the legislation I introduced will expand the authorized program by \$377.5 million. This authorization, Mr. Speaker, requires a dollar for dollar match by the school.

Mr. Speaker, once we lose a site of historic significance, it is gone forever. The extent of the threat these sites face is exemplified by their recent nomination to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Eleven Most Endangered List. The schools which will benefit from this legislation are much more than academic institutions. For many Americans these HBCUs represent the very core of their communities, and were a source of refuge, shelter, and inspiration during the dark days of segregation. Indeed, the nomination to the Eleven Most Endangered List states in part, "During the Civil Rights Movement, HBCUs were as important as churches in the black community."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to join with me in this struggle to save a significant part of our heritage.

"WHAT NEXT IN IRAQ?"

HON. ROBERT WEXLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 1998

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, Saddam Hussein is the same brutal dictator today that he was when he gassed his own people with chemical weapons, starved them to death and machine-gunned them in mass graves. The only difference is that today he has been given a new lease on life by the United Nations. Don't get me wrong. I respect the negotiation effort by United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan in Iraq. He deserves the world's gratitude for avoiding war—for the time being.

Annan's new agreement with Iraq, however, will not end the long term conflict between Iraq and the world community, and may ultimately create more problems than it resolves. One element of the agreement calls for a "Special Group" of senior diplomats and U.N. inspection experts to inspect the eight Presidential Sites in Iraq. With the inclusion of diplomats and politicians in the inspection effort, secrecy and surprise inspections will be compromised, and U.N. efforts to discover and eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction will be severely handicapped.

All of a sudden, international politics and the greed of countries like France and Russia for big profits in trade with Iraq are paramount to a successful U.N. effort to inspect and destroy dangerous weapons.

By conceding in the U.N.-Iraq Agreement to bring the issue of lifting sanctions against Iraq to the Security Council, presumably before all

inspections are completed and weapons destroyed, the world has handed Saddam Hussein a significant political victory. In fact, it would be a serious mistake to ease economic sanctions against Iraq. President Clinton correctly stated in his Pentagon speech that sanctions have already cost Hussein \$110 billion, and the President aptly wondered how much stronger Hussein's armed forces would be today without sanctions.

Bellyaching about the U.N.-Iraq Agreement, however, does not serve American interests well. Equally shortsighted is the effort to gear up for some future invasion of Iraq while our stated objective remains limited to the "substantial reduction" of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction capability. What the United States must do is commit herself to help the Iraqi people liberate their nation from Hussein's dictatorial reign.

The Clinton Administration has incorrectly concluded that the only way to overthrow Hussein is with a massive ground invasion. This assessment grossly overestimates Iraq's military strength. The weaknesses of Iraq's forces were exposed during the Gulf War in 1991, and the Iraqi military is significantly weaker now, in great part because of the cumulative effect of years of sanctions. On the other hand, American intelligence and military preparedness to successfully strike Iraq are significantly stronger.

Several Middle East experts, including Ambassador Paul Wolfowitz, Dean of International Studies at Johns Hopkins, have questioned the notion that only a comprehensive ground invasion by the U.S. can bring down Saddam Hussein. I am convinced that if we take the following steps, in addition to preparing for military action when the next inevitable crisis with Saddam Hussein occurs, we will help to facilitate democracy in Iraq and rid the world of a rogue dictator:

1. Challenge the claim of Saddam Hussein as the legitimate ruler of Iraq. No doubt this goal was made more difficult by the credibility Hussein has garnered through his new international agreement.

2. Make clear the intention of the United States to recognize a provisional government—a Free Iraq—and start with the Iraqi National Congress.

3. Find a mechanism to make the frozen assets of Iraq in the U.S. and elsewhere available to the anti-Hussein forces. The U.S. and U.K. alone have over \$1.6 billion in frozen assets which should be used to finance democratic forces in Iraq.

4. Lift economic sanctions from regions in Iraq that are wrested from Saddam Hussein's control, and make oil resources available to the anti-Hussein forces for humanitarian needs and economic development.

5. Provide weapons and logistical support to the resistance, as well as air cover for liberated areas within the Southern and Northern no-fly zones.

Saddam Hussein remains nothing less than an international war criminal who should stand trial for his crimes against humanity. He has broken every agreement he has made with the United States and the world community since the Gulf War. He will no doubt once again subvert this agreement, and when he does, we must be prepared to initiate military air strikes immediately aimed specifically at destroying Saddam's personal power infrastructure, including his communications network and the Republican guard.

Seven years after the Gulf War, Saddam Hussein is still a menace to his own people and to world peace. Only by assisting the Iraqi people to liberate themselves will we prevent Hussein from becoming an even more serious threat seven years from now.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 1998

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on 2–25–98 as I was in Central Florida with the President visiting the victims of the horrible tornadoes which struck our community.

Mr. Speaker on Roll Call #19 (the Nadler amendment to HR 1544) I would have voted no.

Mr. Speaker on Roll Call #20 (the Conyers amendment to HR 2181) I would have voted no.

Mr. Speaker on Roll Call #21 (Passage of the Witness Protection and Interstate Relocation Act) I would have voted yes.

Mr. Speaker on Roll Call #22 (the Jackson-Lee (TX) amendment to HR 1544) I would have voted no.

Mr. Speaker on Roll Call #23 (the Jackson-Lee (TX) amendment to HR 1544) I would have voted no.

Mr. Speaker on Roll Call #24 (Passage of HR 1544, Federal Agency Compliance Act) I would have voted yes.

INTRODUCTION OF THE INVESTMENT IN CHILDREN ACT

HON. BARBARA B. KENNELLY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 1998

Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, if there was any doubt about the need to make day care safer and more affordable, it should be erased by one clear statistic: 60 percent of mothers with children under the age of six are now in the workforce; a rate 5 times higher than 50 years ago. Of course, some might say these parents are making the wrong "choice" by going to work. But the fact is that many parents don't have a choice. Single mothers obviously have to work to support their children and an increasing number of married couples also both have to work to make ends meet. Rather than ignoring this economic reality, or questioning the role of women in the workforce, we should help these hard-working families find affordable, quality child care.

However, this does not mean we cannot also help families with a parent who stays at home to care for a young child. The debate, after all, is about caring for children, regardless of whether they are in day care or at home.

I am therefore introducing legislation today that focuses on improving child care in six critical areas. The Investment in Children Act would: (1) make day care more affordable for middle-income families by reducing their taxes; (2) provide tax relief to families with a

parent who stays at home to care for a young child; (3) help low-income working families receive day care through the current child care block grant; (4) improve child care quality and safety; (5) encourage businesses to provide child care to their employees; and (6) increase the availability of after-school care.

In my home state of Connecticut, day care costs for young children average about \$7000 a year; presenting a major financial barrier for many families. To help these families pay for quality child care, my legislation would increase the current Dependent Care Tax Credit (DCTC) for every family earning less than \$60,000. This tax cut will help hard-working, middle-income families in Connecticut and throughout the nation afford quality day care for their children. For example, a dual-income family earning \$40,000 a year with two children in routine day care would have their taxes cut by almost \$2000; double the amount of tax relief now provided by the Dependent Care Tax Credit.

The Investment in Children Act would also help those families with a parent who cares for their young children at home. The legislation would allow families with a child under the age of 4 who do not receive the Dependent Care Tax Credit to file for an expanded Child Tax Credit. This credit would be equivalent to the current \$500 Child Tax Credit plus an additional amount equal to the average increase in tax relief provided to two-worker families through the expansion of the DCTC. The provision ensures the same amount of new tax relief for one-worker families caring for a young child at home and two-worker families with a child in day care.

While a tax credit may help many middle-income Americans better afford day care, it may not help low-income working families with limited tax liability. To ensure these families also have access to quality child care, the Investment in Children Act would increase the current Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) by \$8 billion over the next 5 years. States would be required to use no less than 70 percent of this new funding to provide subsidies and other assistance to low-income, working families who need child care. While states can already access the CCDBG to help the working poor, most of the funding is dedicated now to welfare families, leaving too little help for those working in low-wage jobs and still trying to afford quality child care.

When they cannot remain at home with their children, every parent has two basic expectations of any child care arrangement: it should be safe and it should provide a stimulating and nurturing environment. To make this expectation a reality, the Investment in Children Act would spend \$3 billion over the next five years to help states check the safety of day care facilities and to improve the quality of child care programs. For example, the funds could be used by the states to: increase unannounced safety inspections of child care facilities; improve and expand training of child care providers; promote early learning programs; and reduce staff-to-child ratios.

One way to increase the availability of quality day care programs is to encourage businesses to provide on-site day care for their employees' children or to contract with existing child care providers. This legislation therefore includes the Administration's proposal to provide a 25% tax credit (up to \$150,000) for