

TRIBUTE TO BOB PALMER, DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR OF THE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 24, 2004

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my deep appreciation for the distinguished and colorful career of Dr. Robert E. Palmer. At the end of this Congress, Bob will retire, having served on the Committee on Science for 25 years. He is retiring as the Democratic Staff Director of the Committee on Science—having served in that position for longer than any other person in the history of the Committee.

Bob began his career with the Committee in the late 1970s as a Congressional Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Rather than return to academia as a research marine biologist—his field of training—Bob elected to stay on the Science Committee staff. For a quarter century, Bob has been a central participant in science and technology policy. Though he has worked largely in the background, he has made significant contributions to our Nation's well-being.

Bob was not a typical scientist. As an undergraduate, he studied psychology at Harvard and served as a Vista Volunteer. He supported himself in such varied ways as moving furniture, playing music and even working as a private detective. He left Massachusetts for the University of Delaware, where he earned a Ph.D. in marine biology. It was after he had completed his graduate work that he started on the Committee as a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) expert. Among his first critical assignments was to help negotiate the transition of LANDSAT from a government program to an operational satellite system in the private sector. This was followed by a leadership role on the Global Change Research Act. That initiative has led to the research that underpins much of our knowledge of global climate change today. He also set up a key hearing on the Search and Rescue Satellite Program that prevented that important international program from being canceled.

In the mid-1980s Dr. Palmer was promoted to Committee management. He first served as the staff Director of the Subcommittee on International Scientific Cooperation and then the Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight. He played a major role in the staff investigation of the Challenger accident, including studying issues around the fatal decision to launch.

On the I & O Subcommittee he led the investigation into problems with the NOAA-NASA weather satellite program. Without his work, it is likely that the country would have suffered some break in the gathering of real-time, high-quality data regarding emerging dangerous weather patterns. Such a break in coverage would have meant lost lives and increased property damage. Subsequent investigative work by Bob led to the resignation and later indictment and conviction of an Inspector General at an agency in the Committee's jurisdiction. His early work as a private detective ended up serving him well in his role on the Committee.

These are just a few specific examples of Bob's role in the work of the Committee. But he has helped draft numerous pieces of legislation, worked to investigate misconduct, served in many conferences with the Senate as the lead Democratic staffer and worked with Administration figures—regardless of party—to try to insure that policies and programs reflected the intent of Congress. His intelligence, energy, experience and humor have allowed him to accomplish much.

When Dr. Radford Byerly moved to Colorado in 1993, then Science Committee Chairman George Brown choose Dr. Palmer as the natural person to replace Byerly as the staff director of the full Committee on Science, Space and Technology. Bob has continued as the Democratic staff director of the committee for over a decade, serving under three senior Democratic Members from across the political spectrum. Bob has served each with talent and professionalism and all the Members of the Committee hold him in the highest regard.

Unfortunately for the Committee and the Congress, Bob's wife Mary, an accomplished researcher and teacher, has received an academic appointment from the University of Florida. So she is leaving the University of Maryland for Gainesville and Bob will follow her there. In his typically good-natured way, he says that she followed him to Washington 25 years ago and has stayed here for his career advantage; it is his turn to relocate to support her career. We wish you both well in the future. You have served the Committee, the Congress and the country with great distinction.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4818,
CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, November 20, 2004

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend the conferees for including economic development funding for the Pribilof Islands. The economies of these Island communities have been struggling in the face of the ban on the fur seal harvest and the collapse of the crab and other fisheries in the area. The funding in this appropriations bill is a key step in helping the Aleut population of the Islands to develop a diversified, sustainable economy.

For over 100 years, the Federal Government controlled the Natives' fur seal harvest on the Islands, as well as their social and municipal services. In the 1980s the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Congress embarked on a plan for transition of the Islands to independence and economic self-sufficiency. One of the most important aspects of the plan was that the Federal Government would transfer control of the fur seal harvests to the Natives and permit the Natives to keep the income from the harvests. Unfortunately, one year after the plan was developed, the Government banned fur seal harvesting on environmental grounds and removed a critical source of regular income from the community.

Four years ago, the Congress enacted the Pribilof Island Transition Act, which I authored.

I worked closely with my Alaska colleagues in the other body in crafting that legislation and shepherding it through the legislative process. The Act was aimed at compensating for the loss of the fur seal industry and for the delays in implementation of two other key objectives of the transition plan: construction of usable harbors and transfer of lands from NOAA to Island entities. The Transition Act authorized \$28 million for economic development over a period of five years. This is the first year that funds have been appropriated for this purpose, and it comes at a crucial time.

It is my hope that additional funding for Pribilof Island economic development will be forthcoming in the years ahead.

THERE IS NO THERE THERE

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 24, 2004

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, the recent resignation—apparently encouraged by the President—of Secretary of State Powell has stripped one of the important facades behind which the reality of the Bush foreign policy has been hidden. It is deeply regrettable that the President and the Secretary of State worked together to keep this façade in place until now, because the fact that the Secretary of State would be leaving is the sort of information that would have been relevant to the voters on Election Day. There is no clear evidence that Secretary Powell had any great influence on the Administration's foreign policy, but his having been around did I think help the Administration in its effort to appear more reasonable in its foreign policy than it has been.

But Secretary Powell's leaving is not the only recent example we have of a facade being lifted from this Administration's record in international affairs. In the Washington Post Monday, November 15, Fred Hiatt points out another great gap between the reality of the President's foreign policy and the way in which the Administration has described it—the issue of the promotion of democracy as a goal of American foreign policy.

As Mr. Hiatt notes, when JOHN KERRY “made clear that promoting democracy abroad would not be a priority of his presidency,” this quote “allowed George W. Bush to claim the high moral ground of foreign policy.” As Mr. Hiatt notes, the President asserted at his nominating convention in 2004, “I believe in the transformational power of liberty . . . the wisest use of American strength is to advance freedom.”

But as he points out, this high-minded statement of purpose bears very little relation to the Bush foreign policy in reality.

Mr. Hiatt clearly documents the President's high tolerance for wholly undemocratic actions by foreign nations as long as they are compliant with American foreign policy in other regards. Indeed, as he notes, the only two examples that can be cited by the President's defenders in which the goal of promoting democracy has played a role are Afghanistan and Iraq. And these examples in no way bear out the claim that the President has made the advancement of democracy a central part of his foreign policy—or even a peripheral one.

In Iraq, the President advanced the notion of promoting democracy to explain his decision to go to war only after his preferred political explanations—the tie between Iraq and September 11th and the presence of weapons of mass destruction—were rebutted. Democracy here was a rationalization constructed to justify a policy that clearly had other goals, and then only after alternative explanations were refuted.

It is true that the results of the American intervention in Afghanistan will certainly be a far more democratic Afghanistan, and I welcome that. But here too it should be noted that the President's approach was to first ask the repressive and brutal Taliban to surrender Osama bin Laden to us, and only after that government refused to do that did we invade. Democracy in Afghanistan will be a happy by-product of our war, but it was not the motivating factor.

Beyond that, as Mr. Hiatt makes clear, there is not an area in the world in which promotion of democracy has been an important part of the Bush foreign policy. To quote Mr. Hiatt, "in Bush's first term, democracy promotion seemed to be the policy mostly when it was convenient . . ."

I agree with Mr. Hiatt that it is not axiomatic that the promotion of democracy should be the single or even the most important goal of American foreign policy in every instance. But what is—or at least ought to be—clear is that a President should not claim a moral basis for his foreign policy which in no way corresponds to reality.

Mr. Speaker, with Colin Powell no longer serving as a diversion without real policy influence, and with the experience we have had with the Administration's inaccurate claims about weapons of mass destruction, I hope that the Administration's actual foreign policy will receive a good deal more scrutiny than it has in the past. Mr. Hiatt's column is a good beginning in that effort. I ask that it be printed here.

[From the Washington Post, Nov. 15, 2004]

A FOREIGN POLICY TO MATCH BUSH'S
RHETORIC?

(By Fred Hiatt)

In an interview last spring, Sen. John F. Kerry made clear that promoting democracy abroad would not be a priority of his presidency. Of course he believed in freedom and human rights, but in every country there seemed to be a goal that would rank higher for him in importance: securing nuclear materials in Russia, fighting terrorism alongside Saudi Arabia, pursuing Middle East peace with Egypt, controlling Pakistan's nuclear program, integrating China into the world economy.

Kerry's ostensibly pragmatic approach alarmed some idealists in his own party and allowed George W. Bush to claim the high moral ground of foreign policy. "I believe in the transformational power of liberty," Bush declared as he accepted his party's nomination for the second time. "The wisest use of American strength is to advance freedom."

But here's the irony: Kerry's recital of priorities around the world was a pretty fair description of Bush's first-term record. An interesting second-term question will be whether the president reshapes his policy to match his rhetoric: whether he really believes that democracy abroad is in the U.S. national interest. There are, after all, plenty of smart foreign policy experts who doubt that proposition.

In 2000 Bush did not campaign on a liberty platform, and even after his oratory began to

soar, his policies didn't change much. In Afghanistan and Iraq, democracy evolved gradually into a central goal of post-invasion U.S. policy. But in the rest of the world there seemed—just as for Kerry—to be higher priorities.

The administration counted its management of relations with China and Russia as a major first-term success, for example, marked by stability and cooperation in fighting terrorism. The fact that China was chewing away on Hong Kong's freedoms, and continuing to lock up its own dissidents, journalists and priests, didn't get in the way. The stunning rollback of freedoms in Russia didn't seem to bother Bush either.

Smaller countries offered a similar picture. Bush welcomed Thailand's autocratic leader as a comrade in the war on terrorism even as democracy there eroded. Under congressional pressure, the administration rapped the knuckles of Uzbekistan's torturers, but not so hard as to interfere with a budding military relationship. Azerbaijan's longtime communist strongman bequeathed power to his ill-prepared son, but that was okay; Azerbaijan is rich in oil and gas. Pakistan's strongman broke repeated promises to return his country to civilian rule, but he was too valuable an ally against al Qaeda for the administration to object. And so on, around the world.

The choices Bush made weren't evil, and they didn't mean that, all things being equal, he wouldn't prefer to encourage democracy. The United States was attacked, and it needed basing rights in Uzbekistan to retaliate. Its economy needs Azeri oil, and Venezuelan oil, and all kinds of other undemocratic oil. The alternative to the general running Pakistan might be a lot worse—a fundamentalist Islamic regime with nuclear weapons, for instance.

So there were strong arguments for maintaining good relations with all of these autocrats. But that's the point; there will always be countervailing arguments. If you think democracy is just a secondary, wouldn't-it-be-nice objective—if you don't think raw national interest is served by spreading freedom abroad—liberty will always rank below some mother, legitimate priority.

You might understand if Bush felt that way. After all, it was democratically elected leaders in France and Germany who caused him the most first-term heartburn. Many experienced diplomats, including senior officials of the Bush administration, believe it's more important to appeal to the national interest of a Russia or an Egypt than to worry about how those nations are governed.

But Bush says he is convinced of the opposite view: that America will actually be safer if more countries become democratic. "As freedom advances, heart by heart, and nation by nation, America will be more secure and the world more peaceful," he argued in that same convention address.

Such a belief translated into policy would not mean that liberty would automatically and always take precedence over basing rights, counterterrorism cooperation or smooth trade relations. But in Bush's first term, democracy promotion seemed to be the policy mostly when it was convenient: in Palestine, where it allowed him to avoid confrontation with Israel's leader; in Cuba, where it allowed him to win votes in Florida. If you see him in the next four years risking other U.S. interests to champion liberty where it is not so convenient, then you will know he meant what he said on the campaign trail.

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH,
NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS

HON. JUDY BIGGERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 24, 2004

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the members of Zion Lutheran Church in Naperville, Illinois on the 150th anniversary of the founding of their outstanding institution.

Established in the difficult years leading up to the Civil War, Zion Lutheran Church has well withstood the test of time. Through the Great Depression, a closed school, a devastating fire, and other trials, the dedication and determination of its members have triumphed. Generation after generation, they have shown their unwavering commitment to faith, family and community.

The countless and varied contributions of the members of Zion Lutheran have played a vital role in making the Village of Naperville, Illinois a great place to live and raise families. Over the past century and a half, their selfless community service has touched the lives of so many, especially children.

Zion Lutheran Church is more than just a place of worship. It is a community with a strong tradition of service, faith, and values.

Today, we all share in their joy as they celebrate 150 wonderful years. The world is a better place because of the people of Zion Lutheran Church, and the residents of Naperville and the 13th Congressional District are fortunate to count them as our friends and neighbors.

I am happy to wish Zion Lutheran Church all the best for continued success in their good work. May the next 150 years be as great a blessing as the first.

HONORING LANCE CPL JOSEPH
WELKE

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 24, 2004

Ms. HERSETH. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to honor the life of Lance Cpl. Joseph Welke who died November 20, 2004 from wounds suffered while serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom during the battle for Fallujah.

Joseph, who was a Greater Dakota All-Conference football player, graduated from Stevens High School in Rapid City, South Dakota in 2003. He enlisted in the Marines soon after graduation, and was assigned to the Marine Corps base camp in Pendleton, California. He was a member of the 1st Marine Division, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force and was deployed to Iraq this past June.

Joseph dreamed of playing college football, but put those plans on hold to join the Marines and serve his country. He is described as an individual who was self-motivated and liked by everyone who knew him. Joseph's family believes his smile said it all. His mother explained that her son seldom got punished, even when he did something wrong, just because of his smile. He was committed to and gave one hundred percent to everything he