

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, while recent weeks have brought about serious challenges here at home, we must not allow them to distract our thoughts and prayers from the brave men and women fighting the war on terrorism around the world. These men and women are proudly serving our country, and are facing challenges far greater than most of us could ever imagine.

I rise today to pay tribute to Sergeant Scott B. Stream, 39. Sergeant Stream was killed on February 24, 2009, in Kandahar, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

I had the honor of attending the funeral for Sergeant Stream. As I walked in, they handed me a program of events for the funeral. Inside was an insert of an e-mail that Sergeant Stream had sent home to his family on December 31, 2008.

As I sat there, waiting for the funeral to begin, I read it over and over, and I decided that I needed to share this with our grateful Nation because it says a lot about Sergeant Stream. Also, I think it says a lot about the men and women we have serving us overseas. I would like to read this e-mail and enter it into the RECORD.

This is Sergeant Stream's e-mail:

"When I think about what surrounds me—the institutional corruption, the random violence, the fear and desperation—I feel the reasons why I'm here more and more sharply.

"As we grow in our soldier skills, surviving by finding the hidden dangers, seeing the secret motives in the shifting politics, we grow a set of skills that is unique and powerful in this situation.

"We also see what you cannot see in the States. You are surrounded by the love of Christ and faith in freedom and humanity. Like a fish, you think water is a 'puff of air' because it is always there. You do not notice it. We who are out of water look back and see the world we love surrounded by enemies, poison and envy, that wants to fall on you like a storm of ruin. We who joined with vague notions of protecting our country see how desperate the peril, how hungry the enemy and how frail the security we have for you.

"The more I love and long for home the more right I feel here on the front lines standing between you and the seething madness that wants to suck the life and love out of our land. Does that mean I cannot go home? I hope not, because I want this just to be the postponement of the joy of life, not the sacrifice of mine. If it costs me my life to protect our land and people then that is a small thing. I just hope that fate lets me return to the promised land and remind people just how great our land is.

"War is a young man's game, and I am getting an old man's head. It's a strange thing. I just hope that I am not changed so that I cannot take joy in the land inside the wire when I make it home. I want to be with you all again

and let my gun sit in the rack and float on my back in a tube down a lazy river."

Sergeant Stream didn't make it home, but he left behind a family. And I would like to read their names and let him know that we're all praying for him: His wife Rasa, his daughters Megan and Laura, his parents Sherman and Gayle Stream, his siblings and their mates, Shawn and Michelle Stream, and Shannon and Michael Pape and his grandmother Vera.

When I read that e-mail, it so reminded me of the dedication and the love that these young men and women had for this country. Their willingness to fight, their willingness to sacrifice. And what struck me the most he says, "If this cost me my life, that is a small gift." That is someone of maturity. That is someone of patriotism. And that is a hero.

□ 1830

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ELMO D. ROEBUCK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, this week in my district, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the people are gathering to bid farewell to one of our native sons, the honorable Elmo D. Roebuck. After having lived a life of public service, community activism, and cultural promotion, Roebuck passed away last week at the age of 74.

A political mover and shaker, Roebuck was one of the men who led and molded the U.S. Virgin Islands in its formative years. He, along with others, was responsible for the early successes of the territory on its road to self-governance. He was a mentor, a strategist, and a fervent fighter for the cause of the people of the Virgin Islands.

He was born in 1934 to Ector and Nathalia Roebuck and graduated valedictorian of the class of 1952 at the Charlotte Amalie High School in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands. In 1956, he graduated from what is now Hampton University in Virginia with a bachelor of arts degree in business administration. Returning to the Virgin Islands, Roebuck taught at the Charlotte Amalie High School and held several government posts before becoming the youngest Virgin Islander to hold a Cabinet-level post in 1964, when he was named by the late Governor Ralph Paiewonsky to head the Department of Housing and Community Renewal.

He later joined the Unity Party and then became one of the organizers of

the new Democratic Party of the Virgin Islands in the 1970s, running as a candidate for Lieutenant Governor with the late Alexander Farrelly. The team lost that election, but he entered politics once again in 1972, becoming the highest vote-getter in the St. Thomas-St. John district in the race for a seat in the Virgin Islands Legislature.

Roebuck went on to serve six consecutive terms in that body, becoming chair of the finance committee in the 10th and 14th legislatures, and the President of that body in the 11th, 12th and 15th legislatures.

Mr. Roebuck is most remembered for his leadership in transforming housing in the territory. As commissioner of Housing Community Renewal, he was responsible for the formulation of an aggressive plan that provided a safe, decent home for every Virgin Islander. He oversaw the clearance of blighted, slum areas and the creation of modern neighborhoods across the Virgin Islands.

In 2005 in an interview with the online newspaper the VI Source, Mr. Roebuck recounted that his biggest accomplishment was the "shepherding through of the Coastal Zone Management Commission," the body that oversees the development and preservation of one of the Virgin Islands most treasured resources, its coastal areas.

During his tenure in the VI Legislature, he was responsible for the creation of the Post Audit Division, which improved that body's ability to track government finances and advise senators on critical issues before that body.

Roebuck was also a Virgin Islands tradition bearer. Having learned the art of telling folktales with music and humor from his father Ector, he would share them with schoolchildren and anyone who wanted to enjoy the rich history and culture of the Virgin Islands people.

Mr. Speaker, the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands are saddened by the loss of Elmo Roebuck, whose community spirit was well noted in his legislative and administrative accomplishments; his service to his church and service organizations; and his sharing of Virgin Islands stories with young and old.

During his lifetime, he was knighted by the Queen of Denmark and honored by the Virgin Islands Legislature in 2003. This week he is being remembered for his cultural contributions with a storytelling wake at the Virgin Islands Legislature, and on Thursday, he will be laid to rest in a final goodbye by the people who served and loved him well.

I would like to express my condolences to his wife and his children and grandchildren. May they be comforted at this difficult time with the knowledge that his life was a life well lived.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.