

6-18-1937

Speech of Charles H. Leavy in U.S. House of Representatives, June 18, 1937

Charles H. Leavy

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.whitworth.edu/fathers-day-correspondence>

Recommended Citation

Leavy, Charles H. , "Speech of Charles H. Leavy in U.S. House of Representatives, June 18, 1937" Whitworth University (1937). *Correspondence and Documents*. Paper 60.
<https://digitalcommons.whitworth.edu/fathers-day-correspondence/60>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Father's Day / Sonora Dodd Collection at Whitworth University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Correspondence and Documents by an authorized administrator of Whitworth University.

(Not printed at Government expense)

THE ORIGIN OF FATHER'S DAY

A PLEA FOR CONGRESSIONAL RECOGNITION OF A
WORTHY TRADITION

SPEECH

OF

HON. CHARLES H. LEAVY

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

June 18, 1937

Mr. LEAVY. Mr. Speaker, this Congress has, by a joint resolution heretofore enacted, set aside a certain Sunday in each year to be known as Mother's Day. There are millions of American sons and daughters who likewise feel that a certain day should be set aside for Father's Day.

In 1910, through the efforts, energy, and tireless activity of Mrs. John Bruce Dodd, a constituent of mine, of Spokane, Wash., many city, county, and State officials recognized the significance and importance of having a day on which, throughout the Nation, tribute would be paid to the fathers of America. Now, by common consent, the third Sunday in June is recognized as Father's Day. In order that the people of America may know and in order that proper recognition may be given to Mrs. Dodd for what she and her associates did to bring about a recognition of this day, I am making this brief statement. I do it, too, in the hope that shortly there will be enacted by joint resolution of the Congress of the United States, a formal designation of the third Sunday in June of each year when America will pause long enough to pay homage and respect to the fathers of America.

I desire to make as a part of my remarks the brief resolution recently adopted by the International Father's Day Association of Spokane, Wash., and the American Legion Auxiliary, Unit No. 9, of Spokane, Wash. This resolution has been forwarded to me by Mrs. T. H. Petersen and Mrs. Emilie Pearson, both of Spokane, Wash., who are the legislative chairmen of their respective organizations, and it is as follows:

Joint resolution designating the third Sunday of June as Father's Day, and for other purposes

Whereas by joint resolution the Congress of the United States has designated and set aside a certain Sunday of each year to be known as Mother's Day; and

Whereas Father's Day was founded in Spokane, Wash., in the year 1910 by formal petition presented by Mrs. John Bruce Dodd and endorsed and sponsored by many State, county, and city officials, besides numerous civic and patriotic organizations; and

Whereas this day, founded and promoted in the city of Spokane by Mrs. Dodd and her associates, has become national through popular acclaim; and

Whereas there is a spirit of restlessness among the young people of the land, and the example and the memory of the American father, both in civic life and in the home, are the highest value in the training of American youth; and

Whereas the formation of sturdy American character, the emulation of and the respect for the ideals of our fathers are imperative to direct interests of our Government; and

Whereas the third Sunday of June, now known as Father's Day, a day designated by its founder to point out the father's place in the home, the training of children, the safeguarding of the family fireside, the protection of womanhood and childhood, whether its meaning is regarded in the light of religion or of patriotism, its value is so apparent as to need no argument in behalf of such a day; and

Whereas be it

Resolved by the commissioners of the city of Spokane, in the State of Washington, assembled, That the mayor of Spokane is hereby authorized and directed to issue a proclamation calling upon the city officials to display the flag of the United States on all civic buildings, and that the people of the city be urged to display the flag at their homes or other suitable places; also that the rose, the flower designated in the original Father's Day petition, be worn in honor of fatherhood; and that such acts of affection and reverence as may be impelled by the devotion of the individual be participated in as an expression of gratitude and loyalty to father and as an emphasis upon the sacred significance of Father's Day.

I consider it an honor and a distinction to represent the congressional district where this splendid idea had its origin, and it is a pleasure in this manner to call the Nation's attention to that fact and to recognize Mrs. Dodd and her associates, not alone for bringing the idea into being but, in addition, for keeping it alive throughout the years and making it a factor in our national life.

The inspiration that gave rise to this day in the mind and heart of Mrs. Dodd is best expressed in the words of one of her friends, which are:

Thirty-seven years ago, in the Big Bend hills of the State of Washington, the day had its nativity in a lonely farm dwelling. There sorrow ministered amid the moaning of the March winds.

A father sat with bowed head in his aloneness. About him clung his weeping children. The winds outside threw great scarves of powdered snow against the windowpanes, when suddenly the last-born tore himself from the group and rushed out into the storm, calling for his mother. Yet even his baby voice could not penetrate the great silence that held his mother.

Hurriedly the father gathered him back to his protection, and for more than two decades William Jackson Smart, alone, kept paternal vigilance over his motherless children.

This poignant experience in the life of Mrs. John Bruce Dodd, of Spokane, Wash., who was then Sonora Louise Smart, was the inspiration for Father's Day, which materialized through the devotion of this father and the father of her own son, John Bruce, Jr., born in 1909. Through the observance of the love and the sacrifice of fathers about her everywhere, her idea of Father's Day crystallized in 1910 through a formal Father's Day petition asking recognition of fatherhood.

6631—14174

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES U. S.

PART OF CONG. RECORD—FREE

THE ORIGIN OF FATHER'S DAY

A PLEA FOR CONGRESSIONAL
RECOGNITION

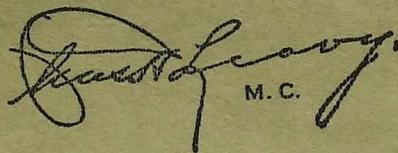
SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES H. LEAVY
of Washington

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

June 18, 1937

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE


M. C.

WASHINGTON

