

YOM HASHOAH; REMEMBERING
THE HOLOCAUST

HON. WALTER H. CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 1, 1997

Mr. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, this Sunday, May 4 is Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day. This solemn day caps off a week in which memorial events have been held in every corner of our Nation, including the city of Santa Barbara, which I am proud to represent.

Some may ask why, more than half a century after the Holocaust, we need to continue these commemorations? My response is that it is our sacred duty. Fifty years after World War II, or 500 years later, it will be incumbent upon us to do all that we can to learn the lessons of this terrible era and teach them to future generations so that such a catastrophe will never befall the Jewish people—or any people—again.

Nothing we can ever do will bring the 6 million who were murdered back to life. Nothing we can do or say will ever heal the searing wounds of those who survived. For them, the numbers burned into their arms and their other physical and emotional scars are a daily painful reminder of their suffering. But we can endow the sacrifices of the victims, living and dead, with everlasting significance if we undertake remembrance events in our community.

In my district, I was honored to participate in the opening of a remarkable exhibition in Santa Barbara featuring the art and sculpture of Theresienstadt. This breathtaking exhibit is sponsored by the Hillel Foundation of UCSB, the Jewish Community Relations Committee of the Santa Barbara Jewish Federation, the Santa Barbara County Arts Commission, the College of Creative Studies at UCSB, and the Austrian Cultural Institute of New York.

This event was particularly enlightening because it reminds us of the remarkable power of the visual arts to teach, to inspire, to move us.

I've joined my friends and neighbors in Santa Barbara at Yom Hashoah commemorations for many years, but this time was the first that I stood before them as their Congressman, with new obligations and new opportunities.

As a Congressman, I will be able to represent my community at the annual Yom Hashoah event in the Rotunda of our Nation's Capital on May 8.

As a Congressman, I saw the need to respond to the unwise and outrageous comments of one of my colleagues who criticized the airing of "Schindler's List" as "polluting the minds of our children" by organizing my own letter, signed by 40 Members, in support of this historic broadcast.

As a Congressman, I will proudly support the continuing Federal funding of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, which has helped fulfill our obligation to teach the lessons of the Holocaust to millions.

As a Congressman, I am supporting legislation to unlock, once and for all, the secret files on Nazi war criminals still being shielded by certain agencies of the U.S. Government because of outdated cold war national security concerns.

And as a Congressman, and particularly as a member of the Committee on International

Relations, I will vote and speak up for continued U.S. assistance for the Jewish State, Israel, a state literally created out of the ashes of the Holocaust. Whatever the ups and downs of its internal political machinations, it is a moral, strategic and diplomatic imperative for the U.S. to support Israel and advance the cause of peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Speaker, before I came to Congress, I was a professor of religion. For many years, I taught my students the extraordinary book "Night" by Elie Wiesel, America's voice of conscience. Among Professor Weisel's most incisive observations is that when an event, like the Holocaust is unspeakable, it takes a while to learn the right words.

We will never learn all the right words to describe and explain the Holocaust. Yet by taking time each year to remember the dead, honor the living, and absorb the lessons of the Nazi era, will we add meaning to our own lives and those of future generations.

TRIBUTE TO GENE RAGAN: MAN
OF THE YEAR IN ALABAMA AG-
RICULTURE

HON. TERRY EVERETT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 1, 1997

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to an outstanding figure in southern agriculture and a dear friend, Gene Ragan. Progressive Farmer magazine has recently selected Gene as its Man of the Year in Alabama agriculture. This is a prestigious honor only bestowed to agriculture's best and I can think of no one more suited to receive it than Gene.

Gene Ragan is an institution in the southern farming community, regularly hosting what many believe to be the Nation's longest running local television farm show. For viewers of WTVY-TV 4 in Dothan, AL, Gene has been a friend and an agriculture advocate for 38 years on his "Noon Farm Report." As Progressive Farmer notes: "Ragan has served with distinction as the voice of agriculture for many who no longer have day-to-day ties to farming." His audience today is considerably more urban than in 1959.

Gene's ties to agriculture actually extended back 50 years, beginning his career as an extension agent in Grady County, GA, in 1946. In addition to farm broadcasting, Gene Ragan has ably served as farm consultant to Southtrust Bank in Dothan, and has used his expertise to organize the annual agriculture leadership conference which draws hundreds from across the Southeast.

A friend and ambassador for the family farm, Gene Ragan is a genuine lover of the land and this country. No one I know is a more credible advocate for environmental stewardship than Gene Ragan. His efforts on behalf of land grant colleges and research programs are also well known.

Always looking to the future, Gene is a consistent supporter of youth in agriculture, namely 4-H and FAA programs in the Tristate region of southeast Alabama, southwest Georgia, and northwest Florida.

I am personally indebted to and will never forget the help that Gene Ragan gave this young newspaper reporter many years ago.

Gene Ragan is agriculture in the Wiregrass, and I congratulate him on his award and his continuing remarkable career in service to the farmer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF PRESIDENT
CLINTON'S "AMERICA READS
CHALLENGE ACT OF 1997"

HON. WILLIAM (BILL) CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 1, 1997

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the America Reads Challenge Act of 1997, on behalf of President Clinton. This Act will help mobilize trained volunteers reading tutors and skilled reading specialists to ensure that every student can read by the end of the 3d grade. Over 5 years, the bill commits over \$2.75 billion to local communities for after-school, summer, and weekend tutoring in reading.

Specifically, this Act would fund 25,000 reading specialists and tutor coordinators to mobilize one million volunteer reading tutors. The program will serve areas with a high number or percentage of low income families, or areas with the greatest need for reading assistance. The program will be coordinated with existing early childhood and family literacy programs, such as Even Start and Head Start.

The program is designed to build on and support in-school reading programs, with a special emphasis on strong parental involvement. The bill provides for the Parents as First Teachers Challenge Grants that would provide \$300 million to help parents help their children read well.

It is well documented that children who cannot read well by the end of third grade are more likely to drop out, and are less likely to succeed in school. Some 40 percent of our fourth graders scored below the basic level on recent national tests. The America Reads Challenge Act of 1997 will allow communities to create well-designed tutoring programs that will significantly improve student reading skills.

H.R. 1515 EPHIC LEGISLATION TO
MAKE HEALTH INSURANCE AF-
FORDABLE FOR SMALL BUSI-
NESS WORKERS AND THEIR
SPOUSES AND CHILDREN

HON. HARRIS W. FAWELL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday May 1, 1997

Mr. FAWELL. Mr. Speaker, WILLIAM F. GOODLING, Majority Leader RICHARD K. ARMEY, Representative J. DENNIS HASTERT, Representative SUSAN MOLINARI, Representative JAMES A. LEACH, Representative OWEN PICKETT, Representative JAMES P. MORAN, Representative WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI, Representative GLENN POSHARD, JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR., and Representative GARY A. CONDIT, are among the 113 cosponsors who are joining me today in introducing the Expanded Portability and Health Insurance Coverage Act [EPHIC].

Similar legislation is also being introduced in the Senate by TIM HUTCHINSON, and others.