

and they did take part in the October 10 parliamentary election. But once again, a major opposition figure was not able to participate, and OSCE/ODIHR monitors, citing many shortcomings, have criticized the election as flawed. In general, the ability of opposition and society to influence policymaking is marginal at best. At the same time, independent and opposition media have been bought, coopted or intimidated out of existence or into cooperation with the authorities, and those few that remain are under severe pressure.

Tajikistan suffered a devastating civil war in the early 1990's. In 1997, war-weariness and a military stalemate led the disputants to a peace accord and a power-sharing agreement. But though the arrangement had promise, it now seems to be falling apart, as opposition contenders for the presidency have been excluded from the race and the major opposition organization has decided to suspend participation in the work of the National Reconciliation Commission.

Mr. Speaker, along with large-scale ethnic conflicts like Kosovo or Bosnia, and unresolved low-level conflicts like Nagorno-Karabakh and Abkhazia, I believe the systemic flouting of OSCE commitments on democratization and human rights in Central Asia is the single greatest problem facing the OSCE. For that reason, I am introducing this resolution expressing concern about the general trends in the region, to show Central Asian presidents that we are not taken in by their facade, and to encourage the disheartened people of Central Asia that the United States stands for democracy. The resolution calls on Central Asian countries to come into compliance with OSCE commitments on democracy and human rights, and encourages the Administration to raise with other OSCE states the implications for OSCE participation of countries that engage in gross and uncorrected violation of freely accepted commitments on human rights.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me, Mr. HOYER, and Mr. FORBES in this effort and we welcome their support.

IN HONOR OF SONIA DANIELS
EDWARDS, M.A., C.C.C.S.L.P.

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate Sonia Daniels Edwards, M.A., C.C.C.S.L.P., who has been named "Teacher of the Year for Fountain Valley." Mrs. Edwards has been awarded the title, "Teacher of the Year" for her outstanding contributions to education. She is the first speech and language pathologist selected for this prestigious award.

As a speech and language therapist, Sonia Edwards is always at the cutting edge of new research and developments in speech and language. Her ability to diagnose and develop individualized programs for students has resulted in the identification and solution to problems that were interfering with the individual students ability to learn. Mrs. Edwards ability to solve these learning "mysteries" gained her the confidence and admiration of her fellow professionals.

Mrs. Edwards speciality is autism. During the past two years, she has served as the dis-

trict's Autism Coordinator, training staff, setting up home programs, and continuing to provide solutions to many of these baffling learning disorders.

Mrs. Edwards has been known to spend many long hours on the job. She is a dedicated teacher who always has the time to talk with parents regarding their child's special needs. As an educator, she rises to new challenges and tackles the most complex situations. The word "no" is not in her vocabulary.

Respected and admired by her peers, parents and students, Sonia Edwards, is a role model for all of those who know her.

Colleagues, please join me today as I recognize and pay tribute to a gifted and talented teacher, Sonia Daniels Edwards.

IN HONOR OF THE HISPANIC SUMMER PROGRAM ON ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY AND DR. JUSTO GONZALEZ FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ORGANIZATION

HON. ROBERT MENEDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Mr. MENEDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Hispanic Summer Program on its 10th Anniversary, and to recognize its Director, Dr. Justo Luis Gonzalez, for his dedication and leadership in the organization.

Born in Havana, Cuba, in 1937, Dr. Gonzalez has embodied the spiritual values of community, dignity, and ministry throughout his life. His significant contribution to theological education over the past twenty-two years has helped build a worldwide ecumenical network that serves as a model for academic globalization.

Upon completion of college studies in Cuba, Dr. Gonzalez studied at Yale University and received three graduate degrees there, including a doctorate. He was ordained as a Methodist Minister and, in 1969, he became an American citizen.

Dr. Gonzalez has educated students as a professor at the Evangelical Seminary in Puerto Rico and at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University. He is the author of more than sixty books and hundreds of articles, which can be found in the Spanish, English, Chinese, Russian, and Korean communities.

Currently, Dr. Gonzalez is committed to theological education in a variety of ways, including serving as editor of "Apuntes", a journal of Hispanic theology published in the United States.

For his remarkable commitment to theological education, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. Justo and the Hispanic Summer Program on its 10th Anniversary.

CONGRATULATING SOUTHAMPTON ELKS ON THEIR 70TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of

Southampton Elks Lodge 1574. Its long and rich history dates back to December 7, 1929, when 90 candidates were initiated by the Officers of Patchogue Lodge 1323. The fraternal organization was founded on the principles of improving the quality of life on Eastern Long Island and strengthening ties within the community. They have been fulfilling that pledge ever since. On July 10, 1930, the Southampton Lodge was awarded their Grand Lodge Charter.

Elks in Suffolk County have long been known for their dedication in assisting and comforting the veterans of our wars, especially those who are disabled or in distress. The Southampton Elks are very proud of the symbol for which they fought—our national flag. They not only promote and defend the flag but also see it as a symbol of charity. Furthermore, the efforts of the Elks to involve youth in the lives of our veterans should serve as a model for community building in this country.

We cannot overlook the close attention they pay to the individual members of society who are in dire need of assistance. In the past, they have donated such items as specially-designed bicycles, wheelchairs and other items needed by the physically-challenged, helped local families pay for medical treatments, and assisted those whose homes have been lost to fire.

I am especially proud of their local assistance when disaster strikes. During emergency situations, Southampton Elks have always been, and I'm sure always will be, prepared to assist by donating funds, volunteering their time, or doing whatever else is needed during times of difficulty.

Once again, I commend Southampton Elks Lodge 1574. Their unselfish, voluntary efforts and generosity are a credit to the communities they serve. They are an asset to Long Island, and I have no doubt that they will continue their good works and service strongly into the new millennium.

UNITED STATES JAYCEES RESOLVE SOCIAL SECURITY NEEDS REFORM

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, the United States Jaycees, numbering 115,000 individual members, recently adopted a resolution entitled, "Legislation to Ensure the Future Economic Solvency of the Social Security System."

The Jaycees, whose vision is to "become the organization of choice for young people, providing direction and leadership to our communities and nation," conducted more than 75 Social Security town hall meetings across America, reporting that 79% of the surveyed participants think it needs radical or major reform. When asked if there should be implementation of a program that allows individuals to place their Social Security contributions from their current wages in their own personal retirement account and require(s) them to maintain that account for retirement only, 77% either strongly favored or favored that idea.

This resolution's recommendations include reforming Social Security, the need for personal retirement accounts and for directing

part of the budget surplus to the solvency of Social Security. It was delivered to me by Penni Zelinkoff, president of the Colorado Jaycees and incoming vice president of the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce; and Tana Bewly, incoming president of the Colorado Jaycees. I believe the resolution is of vital interest to my constituents and the United States Congress. Therefore, I hereby submit for the RECORD, the full text of the United States Jaycees' recommendations for Social Security's continued solvency.

RESOLUTION—CALL FOR LEGISLATION TO ENSURE THE FUTURE ECONOMIC SOLVENCY OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM

Whereas, the membership of The United States Junior Chamber of Commerce, as well as most America is concerned about the economic future of Social Security System; and

Whereas, payroll deductions will have to be dramatically increased or benefits significantly decreased unless Social Security is reformed; and

Whereas, we need to meet our Social Security promises to existing and future retirees; and

Whereas, the number of retirees will almost double by the year 2030; and

Whereas, The United States Junior Chamber of Commerce has conducted surveys at seventy-five Social Security Town Hall Meetings in forty different states; and

Whereas, The United States Junior Chamber of Commerce has testified before Congress to address these concerns; and

Whereas, as a result of The United States Junior Chamber of Commerce's Social Security Town Hall Report, an overwhelming majority approved the establishment of individual retirement accounts; and

Whereas, The U.S. Congress has introduced legislation for the establishment and maintenance of individual retirement accounts; and

Whereas, The United States Junior Chamber of Commerce has invested considerable time and resources in the solvency of the Social Security system; and

Whereas, The United States Junior Chamber of Commerce sees the need to get the average young American involved in the interest of their government; and

Whereas, The United States Junior Chamber of Commerce should actively promote getting out the vote to secure these aims.

Now, therefore, be it *resolved*, That the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors:

Recognizes that Social Security is in need of immediate revisions;

Recognizes that the future of Social Security is a vital concern for young people and future generations in the United States;

Recognizes the need for capitalization of the Social Security system;

Recognizes the need for personal retirement accounts;

Recognizes that a percentage of budget surpluses should go towards the solvency of Social Security;

Recognizes a need for a national "Get Out the Vote" campaign;

Gives authority to the USJCC staff to pursue a course to reform Social Security in local Junior Chamber communities and at the national level and organize a "Get Out the Vote" campaign.

Mr. Speaker, as a proud former Jaycee, I thank the organization for its most thorough examination of the Social Security System and recommendations for its reform.

WHEN WILL CROATIA BECOME A DEMOCRACY?

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, in the decade since multi-party elections first began to be held in what were the one-party states of East-Central Europe, the political leaders and societies of many of these states have committed themselves to building democratic institutions, respecting the rule of law and tolerating social diversity. Some have done well; others have not. One country which should have done well, but so far has not, is Croatia. I ask, "Why?"

Many will assert, with considerable credibility, that Croatia faced until 1995 the added burdens of Yugoslavia's violent demise, bringing months of conflict in 1991, and the occupation of considerable territory by Serb militants. We should not minimize the sense of victimization felt by the people of Croatia at that time. Indeed, I was in Vukovar in 1991, when it was still under siege, and personally saw the awful things that were happening to the people there. Similarly, we cannot ignore the effect in Croatia of the continued presence of Croats from Bosnia-Herzegovina who still cannot safely return to their homes in what is now the entity of Republika Srpska.

However much one may want to give Croatia the benefit of the doubt, in the eight years since the tragic events following the assertion of statehood, and four years since the occupied territories were either retaken or set for subsequent reintegration, Croatia has become accustomed to its newfound independence. Its people have increasingly seemed desirous of becoming a more united part of European affairs, including through the development of ties with the European Union and NATO. They are part of a sophisticated, well-educated society, feel more secure within their borders, and want greater freedom and prosperity for themselves and their children. Analysts have, for at least two years, viewed the country as being in a stage of real transition. Unfortunately, as this transition moves forward, it meets greater resistance from those who have become entrenched in, and enriched by, the power they hold. This resistance manifests itself in two ways, the gross manipulation of the political system to the advantage of the ruling party, and the continued reliance on nationalist passions.

Regarding political manipulations, elections must be held within the next three months, yet there is no date, no new election law that provides a free and fair standard, no loosening of the grip on the media. More specifically, there continues to be a so-called "diaspora" representation, which effectively is the same as giving almost ten percent of parliamentary seats to the ruling party up front. Moreover, for some time the authorities considered scheduling the elections within a few days of Christmas, a rather blatant attempt to manipulate popular sentiment and voter turnout.

The ruling party is maintaining its control over Croatia's broadcast media. Defamation laws have resulted in hundreds of prosecutions, both criminal and civil, of journalists and

publishers for critical comments deemed "criminal" for allegedly insulting the honor or dignity of high officials. In Croatia, it seems that alleged criminal activity by officials uncovered by independent journalists can be protected under a broad definition of "state secrets."

On the nationalist front, Serbs (who once represented over ten percent of Croatia's population) still have difficulty returning home—many fled in 1991 and 1995—and those who have returned face difficulties in getting their property back or obtaining government assistance. Statements by officials often create an environment which make individuals believe they can get away with more direct, physical harassment of the Serbs. While many Serbs may not be able even to participate in the voting for the upcoming elections, Croatian authorities are considering the reduction from three seats to one seat for Serb representation in the Croatian Parliament, or Sabor. Meanwhile, the "diaspora" vote sways the loyalties of Bosnia's indigenous Croat population, and Croatian President Tudjman recently resurrected notions of a Croat entity in Bosnia-Herzegovina. While Croatia's citizenship law still makes it difficult for members of the Serb and sometimes other minority communities to get citizenship, voting rights are extended to ethnic Croats abroad on the discredited basis of blood ties alone.

Tudjman further claimed this last week that Croatian generals cannot be held accountable for the commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity. His resistance to cooperation with the International Tribunal in The Hague is reprehensible, and, if it continues, warrants a strong response by this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, Croatian courts recently convicted Dinko Sakic, a commander of the Jasenovac concentration camp in Croatia during World War II. The trial and its outcome say something positive not only about Croatia's courts; the attention in Croatia given to this case indicates an ability to acknowledge a horrible period in the past. More broadly, Croats realize they must seek justice for the past and move forward so that they do not sink their personal futures in the pit of extreme nationalist aspirations.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, the leaders of Croatia today will come to their senses, and abide by the wish of the people to live in full freedom, true justice and greater prosperity. Signs of this would be: (1) holding an election which, from the campaign period to the vote count, is free and fair according to both international observers and domestic ones who should be permitted to observe; (2) cessation of the relegation of ethnic Serbs to the status of second-class citizens whose presence, at best, will be tolerated; and (3) surrendering to The Hague all indicted persons, including Mladen Naletilic (aka "Tuta") now that Croatia's own courts have cleared the way, and the information and documents which the Tribunal may request.

Only with progress in these areas can Croatia take its proper place in Europe and the world. Mr. Speaker, I ask Croatia's leaders, when that will be?