

these educators are true professionals committed to their task while facing the difficult challenges of today's world.

I commend the teachers of my district for their dedication and perseverance in inspiring our nation's youth to achieve their goals and dreams. I ask everyone to join me.

RECOGNITION OF COL. RUSSELL B. HALL'S 26 YEARS OF SERVICE IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2001

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel Russell B. Hall's twenty-six years of service in the United States Army. Col. Hall will be retiring this year and his extensive experience will be hard to replace. He currently serves as the Chief of the Resources Integration Office in the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installations Management. Col. Hall also serves as the Executive of the Installation Program and Evaluation Group for the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management.

Colonel Russell B. Hall was born in Roswell, New Mexico on January 19, 1953. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Biology from Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas and a Master's Degree in Operations Research from George Mason University. Colonel Hall was a Distinguished Military Graduate and received a Regular Army commission from the Reserve Officer Training Corps. His military education includes the Artillery Basic and Advance Courses, and the Command and General Staff College.

He has held a wide variety of key command and staff positions before his current assignment as the Chief of the Resource Integration Office and Executive of the Installation Program Evaluation Group for the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management. Other key assignments include duty as the Secretary of the General Staff of the 1st Cavalry Division; Executive Officer of the 3rd Battalion 82nd Field Artillery; Brigade Fire Support Officer, 2nd Brigade (Blackjack), Fort Hood, Texas, and Charlie Battery Commander 1st Battalion 77th Field Artillery, Executive Officer of the Training and Doctrine (TRADOC) Operations and Analysis Center, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He has served as the Commander of the 409th Base Support Battalion, Grafenwoehr and Vilseck, Germany. After command, Col. Hall completed his tour as the Deputy Director of Training in the Directorate of Training, USAREUR DCSOPS and Seventh Army Training Command.

Col. Hall's awards and decorations include: The Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Commendation Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, the Saudi-Kuwait Liberation Medal, the Southwest Asia Medal with three Bronze Stars, the Army Service Ribbon and the Overseas Ribbon. He also wears Master Parachutist wings and the Ranger Tab.

Colonel Hall is married to the former Alexia Rowe of Tulsa, Oklahoma. They have one child, a daughter, Rachel.

Our nation owes a large debt to Col. Hall for his service and wishes him good luck with his future endeavors.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO FIVE OUTSTANDING WORCESTER COMMUNITY LEADERS

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2001

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to five outstanding individuals in Worcester, Massachusetts. These community leaders have been selected to receive awards from the Worcester Democratic City Committee at their annual JFK Dinner on Saturday, May 12.

Julie Komenos is receiving the John F. Kennedy Female Democrat of the Year Award. Julie was born and has lived in Worcester her entire life. She makes her home with her husband of 28 years, Michael and her two sons Michael 3rd and Kristopher. Julie is best known for her work at Abby's House, where she started the Day-Center Program, served on the Board of Directors as a member for 2 years, and served as President of the Board for 5 years. She is presently on staff at Abby's House. Women's issues are her passion. Working at Abby's House gives Julie the opportunity to work on the front lines with women and their struggles.

Gary Vecchio will receive the John F. Kennedy Male Democrat of the Year Award. Gary has earned this honor as a result of his extensive and varied service to the Worcester Democratic Party and the city as a whole. Gary's political activism began in 1977 with his first election as a delegate to the Massachusetts Democratic State Convention. Gary has also served on the Worcester Area Leadership Association, the Eastside Community Development Corporation, the Worcester Citizens Advisory Council, and as chairman of the Shrewsbury Street Advisory Committee. In 1996, Gary received citations from the Massachusetts House of Representatives, the State Senate, and the Governor's Council for his work as President of Worcester State Hospital's Board of Trustees.

Paul Pezzella is being honored with the Robert F. Kennedy Lifetime Achievement Award. Paul is a partner of A.D.S. Ventures, Inc. Paul has over 20 years experience in government affairs and national, state and local electoral politics. He has worked with former State Senator Gerard D'Amico, Governor Michael Dukakis and many many others. In 1985, Paul was elected to the first-ever Worcester Charter Commission. He was the architect of the Elections Commission and led the fight to eliminate the at-large nine member Council and replace it with more district representation. Paul has recently been nominated as an Incorporator for the Greater Worcester Community Foundation.

Leonard Ciuffredo will receive the Edward M. Kennedy Labor Award. Lenny is a lifelong resident of Worcester's East Side and learned very early on about the values and ideals of working men and women. Lenny has been active in a large number of community affairs, and has especially enjoyed working with young people and encouraging them to get involved in the political process. In addition to his labor activities, Lenny has served on the Board of Directors for the United Way of Central Massachusetts, the Brown Square Crime Watch Group and as a member of Our Lady

of Mt. Carmel Parish. Lenny and his wife Juliann have two children, Bianca and Geena-Maria.

Stacey DeBoise Luster will receive the Barbara Jordan Award, named for the late Congresswoman from Texas. Stacey was recently appointed Director of Human Resources for the Worcester Public Schools Manager. Previously, she was the first woman of color to be elected to the Worcester City Council. Stacey also served as the Assistant to the President for Affirmative Action and Minority Affairs at Quinsigamond Community College. Stacey is a member of the Board of Directors of the Greater Worcester Community Foundation and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Worcester Art Museum. Recently, she was named one of "40 under 40" by the Worcester Business Journal.

Mr. Speaker, I commend all of these outstanding citizens for their dedication to making the Worcester area a better place for all its families, and I congratulate them for these well-deserved accolades. I know all of my colleagues join me in paying tribute to 5 fine examples of community involvement.

A TRIBUTE TO BILL GEORGE UPON HIS RETIREMENT AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF MEDTRONIC

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2001

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Bill George, who recently retired as the Chief Executive Officer of Medtronic, Inc.

Medtronic is one of the leading medical technology companies in the world. This is due in large part to the leadership of Bill George, its COO since 1989 and CEO since 1991. During his tenure, Bill George built Medtronic into a company that employs 25,000 people in 120 countries, with revenues of more than \$5 billion.

But Bill is more than a successful businessman. He is a policy visionary who believes in patient centered care, which is enabled by medical technology. I want to single out the Patient Summit he hosted in Washington, D.C. last year, which encouraged a dialogue between patients, policymakers and advocacy groups about the role patients can play in directing their own health care.

Under his leadership, the Medtronic Foundation has reached out to patient groups in unprecedented ways, giving \$12 million last year alone to non-profit organizations in communities worldwide.

As a fellow Minnesotan, I've watched Bill's personal efforts in the community with much admiration. His efforts as chair of the board of the United Way of Minneapolis and vice chair of the board of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, as well as his work on the boards of the American Red Cross and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, are just a few of the highlights.

Mr. Speaker, I highly commend Bill George for his visionary and innovative leadership. He has taken a great company and made it better with his strong commitment to bettering the lives of patients. Bill's integrity and leadership

qualities have made him a great role model for many aspiring leaders, and he is a true inspiration to many.

Bill George will be sorely missed by Medtronic, but the Twin Cities community will continue to benefit from all that he does for so many. I applaud Bill for a stellar career at Medtronic, and I wish him and his wonderful wife, Penny, and their family continued success and happiness in future years.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN E. PETERSON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2001

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 100, I put my voting card in and it did not register. Had it registered, I would have voted "Yea".

CONGRATULATING EISLEBEN
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH ON CELEBRATING THE
ONE HUNDRED FIFTIETH ANNI-
VERSARY

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2001

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor and pride that I stand before the House today to extend my congratulations to Eiselben Evangelical Lutheran Church as the congregation celebrates its 150th Anniversary.

Named after the town in Germany where Dr. Martin Luther, the founder of the Lutheran Church was born, Eiselben Lutheran Church was formed in 1848 in what is now known as Scott City. Formally organized in 1951, the first congregation was comprised of just 19 members gathered together in a home. But although small in numbers, they were large in faith. 1848 was a meaningful year. It was that year the first baptism was performed in the church and it was that same year the first communion was celebrated on the Sunday following Easter.

Slowly the congregation grew, and steadily the numbers rose to a point where in 1855, the church was fortunate enough to welcome the arrival of its first permanent pastor. A short time later, a log building was erected as the first house of worship in 1867 and a second facility was added in 1897—a school building.

Other timely and memorable events followed, including the organization of what is now the Lutheran Youth Fellowship in 1893. The church construction was completed in 1913 and the Ladies Aid Society was organized that year as well. Finally, Sunday School, the education program for the youth in the church community, began in 1922.

The church has seen many changes during its colorful 150-year history. Twenty-five pastors have dedicated their time and energy to growing this spiritual community including the current Rev. Robert Azinger.

Mr. Speaker, on this very special occasion, I ask that all of my colleagues join me in congratulating Eisleben Lutheran Church on its 150th anniversary. May the blessings they

have enjoyed thus far continue so that they might remain strong and solid for years to come.

ANTI-SEMITISM IN DAMASCUS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2001

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, during the historic visit of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to Syria earlier this week, Syria's new president Bashar al-Assad, in a speech welcoming the Pope in Damascus, spewed forth the most vile and vicious anti-Semitism. He said that the Jews "tried to kill the principles of all religions with the same mentality in which they betrayed Jesus Christ and the same way they tried to betray and kill the Prophet Muhammad."

This venomous remark was in stark contrast to the theme that the Pope voiced during his visit to Syria—peace and understanding. This was reflected in his visit to the Great Omayyad Mosque in Damascus, the first visit by any Pope to a Moslem house of worship. His Holiness on that occasion called for a "new attitude of understanding and respect" between Muslims, Christians and Jews.

The Wall Street Journal yesterday editorially expressed the concern for the response from President Bashar Assad and others in Syria. "But instead of being met by reciprocal gestures, Sheik Kuffaro, with Syrian President Bashar Assad, used the Pope's visit to showcase their own intolerance. The Sheik delivered a speech urging Christians and Muslims to line up against 'Jews and Zionists.' Assad helpfully reminded the Pope of the role played by Jews in the death of Christ. And from Syria's state-controlled media came the line that Israelis were 'enemies of God and faith.'"

The Journal also noted that vicious anti-Semitism which the Pope's visit brought out in his hosts is certainly not limited to Syria alone. The editorial quoted an Arab school text: "Perhaps Allah brought the Jews to our land so that their demise would be here," reads a characteristic passage of a Palestinian textbook for children. In Egypt, popular columnist Ahmad Ragab recently wrote, "Thanks to Hitler, blessed memory, who on behalf of the Palestinians, revenged in advance, against the most vile criminals on the face of this earth." The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, a notorious anti-Semitic tract penned in czarist Russia, remains in wide circulation throughout the Middle East."

Mr. Speaker, how much at odds with the purpose and message of the Papal visit were the vile words of President Assad. He used the occasion of the Papal visit to throw gasoline on the flames of anti-Semitism at a time when this region of the world is most in need of soothing remarks and racial healing. I welcome the condemnation of the statements of President Bashar Assad that have appeared in the large number of American newspapers.

Mr. Speaker, The Washington Post published an excellent editorial yesterday criticizing Bashar Assad's vicious anti-Semitic, outrageous and inflammatory statements. I ask that this editorial be placed in the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to read it.

VILE WORDS

Editorial, The Washington Post, Tuesday,
May 8, 2001

SYRIAN PRESIDENT Bashar Assad on Saturday offered a vivid, if vile, demonstration of why he and his government are unworthy of respect or good relations with the United States or any other democratic country. Greeting Pope John Paul II in Damascus, Mr. Assad launched an attack on Jews that may rank as the most ignorant and crude speech delivered before the pope in his two decades of travel around the world. Comparing the suffering of the Palestinians to that of Jesus Christ, Mr. Assad said that the Jews "tried to kill the principles of all religions with the same mentality in which they betrayed Jesus Christ and the same way they tried to betray and kill the Prophet Muhammad." With that libel, the Syrian president stained both his country and the pope, who so far has failed to adequately respond. He also confirmed something about himself that has become increasingly clear during the months since he inherited the presidency from his father: This 35-year-old naïf is headed in a dangerous direction.

John Paul's decision to visit Syria and to become the first pontiff to visit a mosque offered Mr. Assad a remarkable opportunity. The former ophthalmologist has been struggling to establish himself as a credible leader both in and outside of Syria, and could have drawn on the pope's enormous prestige by welcoming his latest attempt to reach out to another faith. But Mr. Assad seems to have little understanding of the world outside Damascus, or how he can productively relate to it. Since taking office, he has abandoned his father's uneven efforts to reach out to Israel and the West and instead taken a series of militant and provocative steps, ranging from increased support for the Hezbollah militia in southern Lebanon to the illegal export of hundreds of millions of dollars of Iraqi oil through a Syrian pipeline. At an Arab conference in March he proposed the reinstatement of a boycott against Israel, saying the Israelis were "worse than the Nazis." The Arab leaders wisely ignored his proposal, while his rhetoric drew widespread condemnation.

Having evidently learned nothing from that episode, Mr. Assad sought Saturday to recruit the pope and the Catholic Church for his war against Jews. Vatican officials maintained that the pope did not have prior notice of Mr. Assad's medieval appeal, and the pontiff's own words implicitly rejected it. But the Vatican's response to Mr. Assad was shockingly blase, considering the effort John Paul has made to repudiate the church's own history of anti-Semitism. "We are guests of the president and he expressed his opinion," said longtime papal spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls. "I wouldn't call it strong; I would call it clear."

What is clear is that Mr. Assad converted a visit meant to symbolize tolerance and reconciliation into a display of obtuseness by the Vatican in the face of religious ignorance and hatred. During the past decade the United States engaged diplomatically with Mr. Assad's father, gaining his support in the Persian Gulf War and drawing him into the Middle East peace process. Despite the totalitarian nature of his regime and its sponsorship of terrorism, Hafez Assad seemed to understand that peace with Israel and engagement with the West offered the only way forward for his country. His son clearly does not—and should be treated accordingly.