

themselves merely as Jews, and declared to be Jewish anyone born of a Jewish mother or—and this is the absolutely crucial fact—anyone who converted to Judaism. Which is to say, in terms of International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, adopted by the 20th General Assembly, anyone—regardless of “race, colour, descent, or nationally or ethnic origin . . .”

The state of Israel, which in time was the creation of the Zionist Movement, has been extraordinary in nothing so much as the range of “racial stocks” from which it Orient and Jew from the West. Most such persons could be said to have been “born” Jewish, just as most Presbyterians and most Hindus are “born” to their faith, but there are many Jews who are just converts. With a consistency in the matter which surely attests to the importance of this issue to that religions and political culture, Israeli courts have held that a Jew who converts to another religion is no longer a Jew. In the meantime the population of Israel also includes large numbers of non-Jews, among them Arabs of both the Muslim and Christian religions and Christians of other national origins. Many of these persons are citizens of Israel, and those who are not can become citizens by legal procedures very much like those which obtain in a typical nation of Western Europe.

Now I should wish to be understood that I am here making one point, and one point only, which is that whatever else Zionism may be, it is not and cannot be “a form of racism.” In logic, the State of Israel could be, or could become, many things, theoretically, including many things undesirable, but it could not be and could not become racism unless it ceased to be Zionism.

Indeed, the idea that Jews are a “race” was invented not by Jews but by those who hated Jews. The idea of Jews as a race was invented by nineteenth century anti-semites such as Houston Steward Chamberlain and Edouard Drumont, who saw that in an increasingly secular age, which is to say an age made for fewer distinctions between people, the old religions grounds for anti-semitism were losing force. New justifications were needed for excluding and persecuting Jews, and so the new idea of Jews as a race—rather than as a religion—was born. It was a contemptible idea at the beginning, and no civilized person would be associated with it. To think that it is an idea now endorsed by the United Nations is to reflect on what civilization has come to.

It is precisely a concern for civilization, for civilized values that are or should be precious to all mankind, that arouses us at this moment to such special passion. What we have at stake here is not merely the honor and the legitimacy of the State of Israel—although a challenge to the legitimacy of any member nation ought always to arouse the vigilance of all members of the United Nations. For a yet more important matter is at issue, which is the integrity of the whole body of moral and legal precepts which we know as human rights.

The terrible lie that has been told here today will have terrible consequences. Not only will people begin to say, indeed they have already begun to say that the United Nations is a place where lies are told, but far more serious, grave and perhaps irreparable harm will be done to the cause of human rights itself. The harm will arise first because it will strip from racism the precise and abhorrent meaning that it still precariously holds today. How will the people of the world feel about racism and the need to struggle against it, when they are told that it is an idea as broad as to include the Jewish national liberation movement?

As the lie spreads, it will do harm in a second way. Many of the members of the United Nations owe their independence in no small part to the notion of human rights, as it has spread from the domestic sphere to the international sphere exercised its influence over the old colonial powers. We are now coming into a time when that independence is likely to be threatened again. There will be new forces, some of them arising now, new prophets and new despots, who will justify their actions with the help of just such distortions of words as we have sanctioned here today. Today we have drained the word “racism” of its meaning. Tomorrow, terms like “national self-determination” and “national honor” will be perverted in the same way to serve the purposes of conquest and exploitation. And when these claims begin to be made—as they already have begun to be made—it is the small nations of the world whose integrity will suffer. And how will the small nations of the world defend themselves, on what grounds will others be moved to defend and protect them, when the language of human rights, the only language by which the small can be defended, is no longer believed and no longer has a power of its own?

There is this danger, and then a final danger that is the most serious of all. Which is that the damage we now do to the idea of human rights and the language of human rights could well be irreversible.

The idea of human rights as we know it today is not an idea which has always existed in human affairs, it is an idea which appeared at a specific time in the world, and under very special circumstances. It appeared when European philosophers of the seventeenth century began to argue that man was a being whose existence was independent from that of the State, that he need join a political community only if he did not lose by that association more than he gained. From this very specific political philosophy stemmed the idea of political rights, of claims that the individual could justly make against the state; it was because the individual was seen as so separate from the State that he could make legitimate demands upon it.

That was the philosophy from which the idea of domestic and international rights sprang. But most of the world does not hold with that philosophy now. Most of the world believes in newer modes of political thought, in philosophies that do not accept the individual as distinct from and prior to the State, in philosophies that therefore do not provide any justification for the idea of human rights and philosophies that have no words by which to explain their value. If we destroy the words that were given to us by past centuries, we will not have words to replace them, for philosophy today has no such words.

But there are those of us who have not forsaken these older words, still so new to much of the world. Not forsaken them now, not here, not anywhere, not ever.

The United States of America declares that it does not acknowledge, it will not abide by, it will never acquiesce in this infamous act.

HONORING BENJAMIN VINCI

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, Senator CLINTON and I rise today to recognize and honor the service of Benjamin Vinci of Port Chester, New York—a true American hero.

In 1941, at the age of 21, Benjamin Vinci left home to serve in the U.S. Army, and by December of that year, was stationed in Hawaii with the 97th

Army Coast Artillery Guard. Like so many there on the morning of December 7, 1941, Benjamin Vinci was going about his daily business. He had just completed all night guard duty and was eating breakfast when the whole base erupted in smoke and fire as Japanese war plans attacked Pearl Harbor and the surrounding area.

As bombers strafed the mess tent, a 50-caliber bullet hit Private Vinci in the back. But ignoring his wound, Benjamin Vinci reached an anti-aircraft emplacement and began to fight back. He stepped down only when he was ordered to find an ambulance and tend to his wound.

Along the way, instead of seeking cover, Benjamin Vinci ran down to the beach and rescued a man who had been shot through the legs. Helping the other soldier into a motorboat, he navigated through a hail of bombs and ammunition to the other side of the bay where he finally boarded an ambulance. But on the way to the hospital at Hickham field, planes targeted the ambulance and Benjamin Vinci was wounded again—this time a 50-caliber bullet coming to rest near his heart.

Mrs. CLINTON. In the aftermath of the attack, doctors believed Private Vinci's wounds were fatal, but he persevered. He received the Purple Heart and eventually was transferred to a hospital in Colorado, where doctors were able to remove one of the two bullets that had almost taken his life, but not both. He continues to carry with him the second bullet, which has never been able to be removed.

Disabled from his wounds, Benjamin Vinci returned to Port Chester after being discharged from the Army and resumed life as a civilian. For many years, Mr. Vinci worked as a vacuum cleaner salesman in Westchester County. He married Rose Civitella in 1945, and together they raised four children: Peter, Burnadette, JoAnn, and Joseph.

We honor and thank Benjamin Vinci for his tremendous sacrifice, vital contribution, and gallant service to our Nation. His acts of bravery are an exceptional example of the fortitude, determination, and strength of the American spirit. As Mr. Vinci carries the burden of his wounds and the bullet he received on that December morning of infamy, so too must we carry the memory of his heroic deeds, remembering and honoring all the men and women of that great generation—those veterans of World War II who saved our Nation, and the world.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Madam President, at the close of business yesterday, Thursday, July 26, 2001, the Federal debt stood at \$5,736,556,518,776.52, five trillion, seven hundred thirty-six billion, five hundred fifty-six million, five hundred eighteen thousand, seven hundred seventy-six dollars and fifty-two cents.

One year ago, July 26, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,669,530,000,000, five

trillion, six hundred sixty-nine billion, five hundred thirty million.

Five years ago, July 26, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,181,675,000,000, five trillion, one hundred eighty-one billion, six hundred seventy-five million.

Ten years ago, July 26, 1991, the Federal debt stood at \$3,558,449,000,000, three trillion, five hundred fifty-eight billion, four hundred forty-nine million.

Twenty-five years ago, July 26, 1976, the Federal debt stood at \$619,492,000,000, six hundred nineteen billion, four hundred ninety-two million, which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion, \$5,117,064,518,776.52, five trillion, one hundred seventeen billion, sixty-four million, five hundred eighteen thousand, seven hundred seventy-six dollars and fifty-two cents during the past 25 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CANAL STREET STREETCAR GROUNDBREAKING

• Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate New Orleans on the groundbreaking of the extension of the historic Canal Street Streetcar, which will eventually connect mid-city to downtown.

This groundbreaking is truly cause for celebration. It is a product of vision and hard work. The streetcar project enriches the city by combining New Orleans tradition with 21st century innovation. The new, state-of-the-art streetcars will be child safe, air-conditioned and in full compliance with disability laws. Not only is the streetcar project important to businesses and residents of the city, but it is also important for the expansion of tourism. By providing free, safe, public transportation, the Canal Street Streetcar will alleviate traffic on Canal Street. And it will connect all who take advantage of its use to several points of pride in the city such as the New Orleans Museum of Art.

Mayor Morial and the city council, Chairman Tucker, and several members of Louisiana's congressional delegation and I have worked hard for many years to secure funding to make this project a reality. Most recently, we helped secure \$23 million for the streetcar in a transportation measure. I congratulate the local leadership for helping to make this possible. All who support this project in Congress will continue to do our part so that one day in the not-too-distant future, the streetcar will be up and running. In fact, in Washington, I will honor this dedication with an entry in the Congressional Record. The Canal Street Streetcar is a symbol of our state's rich heritage and New Orleans's eclectic character. I am proud to be a part of its restoration.●

TRIBUTE TO KEN KASPRISIN

• Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, today I publicly thank Colonel Ken Kasprisin, who will leave his post as District Engineer and Commander of the St. Paul District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers today, July 27. Colonel Kasprisin is one of the finest individuals I have worked with as a U.S. Senator representing North Dakota, and we will miss him after he leaves the Corps.

North Dakota and the Nation owe Colonel Kasprisin a deep debt of gratitude. He has served as Commander of the St. Paul District since July, 1998, and he has served admirably. During that period, he has helped lead our communities through several flood disasters including the chronic flood at Devils Lake, ND. Throughout it all, he has always gone above and beyond the call of duty.

Colonel Kasprisin is among the most capable leaders I have ever had the pleasure of working with. He is a true professional, and has a unique ability to walk into a difficult condition, assess the situation, and calmly, but decisively, take action. He listens carefully to people and has a leadership style that invites creative solutions to complex problems.

Colonel Kasprisin is also a man of tremendous integrity. He cares deeply about the people of this nation, and his commitment to doing the right thing is unmatched. He has often been willing to fight for the needs of common citizens, even if it meant leading an uphill fight and challenging others within the Corps.

I know that the Colonel leaves the St. Paul Corps a better organization due to his leadership. The Colonel set high standards for his team, and they delivered time and time again. Under the Colonel's leadership, we have begun the flood protection project for Grand Forks, successfully fought several spring floods throughout the Red River Valley, and have continued to provide protection to residents of Devils Lake from the rising lake water. I will not forget the incredible contributions Colonel Kasprisin has made to the people of my State and the country.

But Colonel Kasprisin's departure from the Corps does not mean he is departing from public life. FEMA Director Allbaugh has tapped him to be the new FEMA Regional Director for the Pacific Northwest Region headquartered in Seattle. The Colonel's leadership will be a valuable addition to the FEMA team, and I believe Director Allbaugh made a great choice for that important position. Colonel Kasprisin will continue to make a difference in people's lives in that position and I am pleased that he has agreed to continue his public service.

I want to again express my deep appreciation and respect for Colonel Kasprisin for his service to my state and to our nation. We in North Dakota will miss you, Colonel, but wish you all the best in your new career.●

RETIREMENT OF MR. PAUL JOHNSON

• Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a dedicated and distinguished public servant. Paul W. Johnson, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations and Housing, is retiring at the end of this month after over 50 years of government service.

Paul Johnson began his career with the Federal Government serving on active duty with the Corps of Engineers beginning in 1949, and served as an engineer with the Army and the Air Force until he arrived at the Pentagon in 1962.

During his nearly forty years there, Paul Johnson became an institution in the Army and in the Pentagon. Since 1983, Paul has been the senior career official in the Army responsible for military construction, family housing, base realignment and closure, real property management and disposal, and real property maintenance issues for the active duty Army; the Army National Guard; and the Army Reserve. In this capacity, Paul is responsible for the management of over \$200 billion in assets.

For decades, whenever there has been an Army installation or property issue where the Congress needed information or help, we called "PJ", because we knew we could rely on his leadership and sound judgment. And PJ did not hesitate to reciprocate and let us know when the Army needed help from the Congress to solve a problem. When you were talking to PJ, there was never any doubt that he was working to do what was best for the Army.

We will miss him, and the Army will miss him even more. I am sure all members of the Senate who have worked with Paul over the years, especially my colleagues on the Armed Services and Appropriations Committees, will join me in congratulating him on his astonishing record of over half a century of public service and wish him and his family all the best as he begins a well-deserved retirement.●

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-3095. A communication from the General Counsel of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a nomination confirmed for the position of President of the Government National Mortgage Association, received on July 26, 2001; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3096. A communication from the Deputy Secretary of Defense, transmitting, the report of a retirement; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3097. A communication from the Chief of the Programs and Legislation Division, Office of the Legislative Liaison, Department of the Air Force, transmitting, the Air