

and around the world celebrate their independence from the former Soviet Union. Sadly, they will also be mourning the victims of the September 11th attack on our country. Armenia's early response to the attack was to assist American staff in ensuring the security of the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan. President Kocharian joined other world leaders in expressing both his solidarity with America and his shock and sorrow in a letter sent to President Bush. I would like to ask unanimous consent to submit President Kocharian's letter to President Bush for the record.

Since its independence, democratic nations have welcomed Armenia into the family. I am proud that this Congress has consistently voted to provide humanitarian economic development assistance to help Armenia preserve democracy and the institutions of civil society and to continue its transition to a free market economy.

The United States has a fundamental national interest in bringing about stability in the strategically located Caucasus region and in supporting those emerging nations like Armenia that share our values. Given the horrific events of September 11th, it becomes even more important to ensure that the countries in the Caucasus move forward together—economically and politically. We must redouble our efforts to ensure that the tensions in the region subside and that the long-standing differences that divide the countries of the region are resolved. Winners and losers in the Caucasus will only foster greater insecurity and instability at a time when we need to bring everyone together to combat terrorism. I have been encouraged by Armenia's ongoing attempts to reach out to its neighbors—Turkey and Azerbaijan—in a constructive manner.

Mr. Speaker, the story of the Armenian people is an unforgettable story of triumph over adversity and tragedy. Earlier in this century, in one of history's most horrible crimes against humanity, 1.5 million Armenian men, women and children were slaughtered by the Ottoman Turkish Empire. We must continue to remind the world that this genocide is an historic fact—despite the efforts of so-called "revisionists," many of them funded by the Turkish government, to deny the truth—and to make sure that our nation, the world community, and especially the Turkish nation come to terms with and appropriately commemorate this historic fact.

Mr. Speaker, it was the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 that allowed the Armenian people to re-establish a state and a nation, to create a society where their language, culture, religion and other institutions would prosper. The people of Armenia have endeavored to build a free and proud nation, based on the principles of democracy and a market economy.

The tiny, landlocked Republic of Armenia is surrounded by hostile neighbors, who have imposed blockades halting the delivery of basic necessities and greatly hindering economic development. Despite the dual blockades, Armenia continues to implement economic and democratic reforms. During the first six months of this year, Armenia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased by 6.4 percent over last year's level. And during the last year, both the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have publicly noted Armenia's economic progress.

Despite this progress, I would like to say that the economic reality of daily life for the

people of the Republic of Armenia continues to be extremely hard.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that as we mark future Independence Days of the Republic of Armenia, we can look back with pride on building peace and prosperity in the entire Trans-Caucasus region, so that the people of Armenia and their neighbors can enjoy a stable and hopeful future. I hope that the Republics of Turkey and Azerbaijan will respond positively to Armenia's repeated offers to normalize relations. Specifically, I hope that Turkey will allow for the exchange of diplomats and allow the free flow of goods and people across the borders. And I hope that, with the active participation of the United States, we will resolve the Nagorno Karabagh conflict, in a manner that guarantees the security and self-determination of the people of Karabagh.

Finally, I wish the Armenian people well on the occasion of their independence day, and, more important, in their ongoing effort to establish good relations with its neighbors and build a vibrant democracy so that their children may prosper in the homeland of their ancestors.

PRESIDENT OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA,  
Yerevan, 11 September 2001.

His Excellency GEORGE W. BUSH,  
President of the United States of America,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT, I have learned with utter shock the news about the terrorist attacks on The World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon building in Washington, which resulted in human loss and massive destruction. The evil of terrorism has shown its ugly face and should be confronted with determination and resolve. Armenia joins the world in condemning this most deplorable and inhuman act of violence. On behalf of the people of Armenia and myself personally, I express our most heartfelt condolences to the people of America and to the bereaved families. We share your grief and wish you strength and patience.

ROBERT KOCHARIAN.

A TRIBUTE TO BRIGADIER GENERAL WILLIE RAY JOHNSON AND COLONEL ROGER FISHER HALL, JR.

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 21, 2001

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to two of North Carolina's finest gentlemen, Brigadier General Willie Ray Johnson and Colonel Roger Fisher Hall, Jr., on their service to and retirement from the North Carolina National Guard.

Theodore Roosevelt, our Nation's 25th president and a member of the National Guard, once said, "It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man crumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; . . . who knows the great enthusiasm, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who . . . knows in the end the triumph of high achievement." For a combined 68 years, General Johnson and Colonel Hall have

been in the arena as part of our Nation's military force and our State's emergency response and community support. And they have served us well.

Since joining the Guard at age 17, General Johnson has served in a variety of assignments and been awarded many decorations. From Supply Officer to Platoon Leader to Maintenance Battalion Commander to Deputy Adjutant General, Ray has served his State and country with distinction and devotion. This service has led to many awards including the Bronze Star Medal, National Defense Service Award, the Kuwait Liberation Medal, and the North Carolina Meritorious Unit Citation. In addition to his National Guard service, General Johnson has been an integral part of civic activities in Sampson County including president of the Roseboro Area Economic Development Commission, member of the Sampson County Shrine Club and a member of the Trustee Board of Sampson Regional Medical Center.

Enlisting in the Guard just prior to his 20th birthday, Colonel Hall has also served in several capacities and received numerous decorations. From Transportation Officer to Motor Officer to Headquarters Commandant to Commander, Colonel Hall has served with character and commitment. His work has been honored by receipt of the Bronze Star Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Armed Forces Reserve Medal, and the Meritorious Service Medal. Colonel Hall is a member of the Board of Directors of BB&T Bank, has been named Business Person of the Year in Hope Mills, has served as past president of the Cumberland County Democratic Party, and serves me well as Executive Vice-Chairman of the Seventh Congressional District Military & Veterans Affairs Committee.

Mr. Speaker, the North Carolina National Guard is one of the most respected and reliable guard forces in the world. General Johnson and Colonel Hall have been an integral part of their success, and on behalf of the citizens of southeastern North Carolina, I thank them for the service they have given to our State and Nation. May God's strength, peace, and joy be with both of them always.

MEMORIAL TO MS. GALE CINCOTTA

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 21, 2001

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, in these times of stress, as we unite and come together as a Nation, we look for leadership and for example to those who have preached unity, who have practiced organization—the bringing together of the diverse people of America for the common good.

Mr. Speaker, last month we lost a great American who spent her life bringing people together for the common good. She did not aspire to public office or great power. She eschewed financial reward. She never left her community.

Mr. Speaker, Gale Cincotta was born in 1929 and grew up in on Chicago's Westside. Gale Cincotta's experiences as a wife, as a mother, as a Westside resident led her to a career as an advocate for the interests of her neighbors, and for common folk everywhere; as