

join with our Israeli friends to celebrate the remarkable story of Israeli independence, we take special pride in the role our nation has played and continues to play in supporting Israeli security and in promoting the special bilateral relationship from which our nations have derived great and mutual benefit.

IN RECOGNITION OF EUNICE W.  
JOHNSON

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 27, 2004*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Eunice W. Johnson, a nationally known business leader and humanitarian. On May 2, 2004, she will address the 129th Commencement Exercises at Talladega College in Talladega, Alabama.

Eunice Johnson is a graduate of Talladega College with a B.A. degree in sociology and a minor in art. She grew up in Selma, Alabama, where her father, Dr. Nathaniel Walker, was a physician, and her mother, Mrs. Ethel Walker, was the principal of the high school and taught education and art at the college level at Selma University. Following graduation from Talladega College, Eunice Johnson earned her Master's degree in social work from Loyola University in Chicago. She also studied journalism at Northwestern University and interior decorating at the Ray School of Design.

Mrs. Johnson is the secretary-treasurer of Johnson Publishing Company, Inc., which was founded by her husband, John H. Johnson, in 1942. Johnson Publishing Company publishes *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines and is the largest Black-owned publishing company in the world. Since 1961, she has been producer and director of *Ebony Fashion Fair*, the world's largest traveling fashion show, which has donated over \$49 million to the United Negro College Fund and other African-American charities. Out of her involvement in *Ebony Fashion Fair*, Mrs. Johnson created *Fashion Fair Cosmetics*, which is a world leader in cosmetics and skin care for women of color.

Eunice Johnson has been an active member of many community organizations in the Chicago area where she lives. She has received the Outstanding Black College University Alumnus Award from the Alabama A&M University Alumni Association and the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Talladega College and Shaw University. She is a Golden Life Member of Delta Sigma Theta and a member of the Advisory Board of the Harvard Graduate School of Business.

I am proud to recognize one of the most distinguished and successful alumni of Talladega College, Eunice W. Johnson, as she addresses the graduating class of 2004, and appreciate the House's attention to this important matter today.

CONGRATULATING GEORGE AND  
GERMAINE BRIANT

**HON. DAVID VITTER**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 27, 2004*

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize George and Germaine Briant, of

Hammond, LA. George and Germaine were married on July 20, 1921. Having spent over 80 years together, I am proud to honor George and Germaine as Louisiana's longest married couple.

George Briant is a World War I veteran. He was awarded the Purple Heart and the French Legion of Honor due to his outstanding service to this country. Following in his father's footsteps, their son George fought in World War 11. In 1945 at the age of 25, George was killed during the filming of a movie while on leave from his military duties.

On February 14, 2003, the Briants were recognized by the Louisiana Family Forum as the longest married couple in Louisiana. A dinner was also held in honor of the Briants at the Louisiana Governor's Mansion last year. George and Germaine currently reside at Live Oak Village in Hammond, where they are often seen happily spending all of their time together.

I come to the floor of the House of Representatives today to personally commend and honor the marriage of George and Germaine Briant. They serve as living examples of lifelong commitment, love, courage, and faith. Again, congratulations to George and Germaine on 80 years of marriage. I wish you a very Happy Anniversary.

ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY

**HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 27, 2004*

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel and to pay tribute to those who have given their lives for the achievement of the country's independence and its continued existence.

Israel's Independence Day comes just 8 days after the Holocaust Remembrance Day which is the day that has been set aside for remembering the victims of the Holocaust and for contemplating what can happen to civilized people when bigotry, hatred, and indifference reign. Lost 2 thousand years earlier, Jewish independence was restored in 1948 with the establishment of the State of Israel. Independence Day is a celebration of the renewal of the Jewish state and allows the Jewish people to continue development of their distinctive religion and culture.

However, their independence has come at a price. The State of Israel has faced obstacles and challenges to its very survival, with conventional military attacks leading the way to suicide bombers who have killed innocent Israeli men, women, and children. Through these adversities, Israel has endured with continued strength, conviction, and faith. As the only democracy in the region, it serves as a model for its neighbors and provides hope for the future. As the United States had to face the harsh realities of terrorism following the unthinkable attacks on our country on September 11, 2001, the bond between our nations has never been stronger.

Mr. Speaker, the commemoration of the independence of Israel is an important reminder of the contributions of Israel to democracy worldwide. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Israel's independence

and to pay tribute to the fallen men, women, and children that have died in Israel's continued struggle for independence and democracy.

COMMEMORATING THE ARMENIAN  
GENOCIDE

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 27, 2004*

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, as a proud member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, and the representative of a large and vibrant community of Armenian Americans, I rise today to join my colleagues in the sad commemoration of the Armenian Genocide.

Today, we continue the crusade to ensure that this tragedy is never forgotten. This 89th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide is an emotional time. The loss of life experienced by so many families is devastating. But, in the face of the systematic slaughter of 1.5 million people, the Armenian community has persevered with a vision of life and freedom.

Armenian Americans are representative of the resolve, bravery, and strength of spirit that is so characteristic of Armenians around the world. That strength carried them through humanity's worst: Upheaval from a homeland of 3,000 years, massacre of kin, and deportation to foreign lands. That same strength gathers Armenians around the world to make certain that this tragedy is never forgotten.

Without recognition and remembrance, this atrocity remains a threat to nations around the world. I've often quoted philosopher George Santayana who said: "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it." And to remember, we must first acknowledge what it is—Genocide.

Tragically, more than 1.5 million Armenians were systematically murdered at the hands of the Young Turks. More than 500,000 were deported. It was brutal. It was deliberate. It was an organized campaign and it lasted more than 8 years. We must make certain that we remember.

Now, we must ensure that the world recognizes that Armenian people have remembered, and they have survived and thrived.

Out of the crumbling Soviet Union, the Republic of Armenia was born, and independence was gained. But, independence has not ended the struggle.

To this day, the Turkish government denies that genocide of the Armenian people occurred and denies its own responsibility for the deaths of 1.5 million people.

In response to this revisionist history, the Republic of France passed legislation that set the moral standard for the international community. The French National Assembly unanimously passed a bill that officially recognizes the massacre of 1.5 million Armenians in Turkey during and after WWI as genocide.

Several nations have since joined in the belief that history should beset straight. Canada, Argentina, Belgium, Lebanon, The Vatican, Uruguay, the European parliament, Russia, Greece, Sweden and France, have authored declarations or decisions confirming that the genocide occurred. As a country, we must join these nations in recognition of this atrocity.

I am proud to join more than 100 of my colleagues in cosponsoring H. Res. 193, which emphasizes the importance of remembering and learning from past crimes against humanity. We must demand that the United States officially acknowledge the forced exile and annihilation of 1.5 million people as genocide.

Denying the horrors of those years merely condones the behavior in other places as was evidenced in Rwanda, Indonesia, Burundi, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Iraq. Silence may have been the signal to perpetrators of these atrocities that they could commit genocide, deny it, and get away with it.

As Americans, the reminder of targeted violence and mass slaughter is still raw. We lost nearly 3,000 people on September 11. I cannot imagine the world trying to say that this did not occur. The loss of 1.5 million people is a global tragedy.

A peaceful and stable South Caucasus region is clearly in the U.S. national interest. Recognizing the genocide must be a strategy for this goal in an increasingly uncertain region. One of the most important ways in which we honor the memory of the Armenian victims of the past is to help modern Armenia build a secure and prosperous future.

The United States has a unique history of aid to Armenia, being among the first to recognize that need, and the first to help. I am pleased with the U.S. involvement in the emphasis of private sector development, regionally focused programs, people-to-people linkages and the development of a civil society.

I recently joined many of my colleagues in requesting funding for Armenia including for Foreign Military Financing, for Economic Support Funds, and for assistance to Nagorno-Karabakh.

Armenia has made impressive progress in rebuilding a society and a nation in the face of dramatic obstacles. I will continue to take a strong stand in support of Armenia's commitment to democracy, the rule of law, and a market economy—I am proud to stand with Armenia in doing so. But there is more to be done. Conflict persists in the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Congress has provided funding for confidence building in that region, and I will continue my support of that funding and the move toward a brighter future for Armenia. But in building our future, we must not forget our past. That is why I strongly support the efforts of the Armenian community in the construction of the Armenian Genocide Memorial and Museum. Because so many Armenians have spoken of the destruction, they have made certain that we remember.

Nothing we can do or say will bring those who perished back to life, but we can imbue their memories with everlasting meaning by teaching the lessons of the Armenian genocide to the next generation and help Armenia build its future.

IN RECOGNITION OF KIDS DAY  
AMERICA/INTERNATIONAL

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 27, 2004*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the "Kids Day

America" event in Anniston, AL, to be held this year on May 15, 2004. "Kids Day America" is in its 10th year and is a special day set aside across the nation to address health, safety, and environmental issues that affect us as individuals and as a community. Wade Clinic of Chiropractic of Anniston is the official chiropractic office representing the event.

This year in Anniston, "Kids Day America" will benefit the Wellness Education Foundation, a national nonprofit organization formed for the purpose of educating communities across the country about wellness issues. The Anniston Police Department is bringing McGruff, the Crime Dog; the Calhoun County Sheriff's Department will be present to fingerprint ID children; the Calhoun County LINC Program will be presenting parenting workshops; the Health Department will be distributing information; and the Alabama Power Company will be presenting their "SafetyOpolus."

More than 1500 communities have participated in "Kids Day America." With the help and support of thousands of local police departments, county sheriff offices, dentists, and photographers who volunteer, the children who attend will be able to complete their own Child Safety ID cards.

I salute "Kids Day America" for the service it provides and commend Wade Clinic of Chiropractic of Anniston, Alabama, for its sponsorship of this event on May 15, 2004.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ISRAEL ON  
ITS NATIONAL DAY

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 27, 2004*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the people of Israel who celebrate their Independence Day today in accordance with the Hebrew calendar. Fifty-six years ago, on May 14 1948, the Jewish people proclaimed the establishment of their own state and Israel was born. After hundreds of years of diaspora and persecution and three years after the full horrors of the holocaust were disclosed to the world, the Jewish people were finally able to return to the land of their biblical roots.

The Israeli and the American people have had a special relationship ever since 1948. President Harry S Truman was the first head of state to recognize the new country. He had always seen the extraordinary connection of the American people and the Jewish population in the Middle East. In his memoirs he stressed that both the Americans and the Jews in the Near East were pioneers who turned unexploited lands into powerful engines of growth. Under the hard working hands and the sweat of the Jewish people, the bleak desert started to bloom and within years of its existence the state of Israel became an economical developed country which attracted immigrants from all over the world.

Even before the state of Israel was established, President Truman foresaw that the Jewish state would be a stable democracy with values similar to those of the United States. Truman admired Israel's first President Chaim Weizmann as a great statesman and the relationship of these two men was one of mutual understanding and respect. These sen-

timents are still dominant between Americans and Israelis today.

Israel has had to fight against external foes from the very beginning of its existence. With great bravery, the Israeli people have been defending their country for 56 years and have lost more than 21,700 soldiers and thousands of civilians in this struggle. Yesterday, the Israeli people observed a special annual day of remembrance for the victims of this fight. I want to express my sympathy to the people of Israel for their human losses in the past and in the present. The American people are deeply concerned about the ongoing conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis and hope that these two people will soon find a way to live together in peace.

I wish the Israeli people a peaceful and cheerful Independence Day. They have every reason to be proud of their country.

ON THE LOSS OF LANCE  
CORPORAL MATTHEW K. SERIO

**HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN**

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 27, 2004*

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sorrow that I rise to recognize the death of Lance Corporal Matthew K. Serio, a brave Marine who served with dignity and honor in Iraq. I join his family and the people of Rhode Island in mourning this great loss.

On Monday, April 5, Lance Corporal Serio was killed by enemy fire during combat operations near Fallujah, Iraq. A member of Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, Lance Corporal Serio was serving his second tour of duty in Iraq. He graduated from North Providence High School in 2001, where he distinguished himself as a member of the football team. After graduation, he pursued a lifelong dream and immediately enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps.

I extend my deepest condolences to his parents Anthony and Sharon, his younger brother Chris, and his older brother A.J., who serves in the Navy. The people of North Providence and Rhode Island have demonstrated their love and appreciation for Matthew's sacrifice and have spoken highly of his contributions to their lives. Those who knew him well recalled his friendliness and compassion, as well as his patriotism and love of service.

His loss causes us to reflect on the bravery demonstrated by our men and women in uniform as they carry out their obligations in the face of danger. When their nation called them to duty to preserve freedom, liberty and the security of their neighbors, they answered without hesitation. We remember those who have fallen not only as soldiers, but also as patriots who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. May we keep their loved ones in our thoughts and prayers as they struggle to endure this difficult period and mourn the heroes America has lost.

We will continue to hope for the safe and speedy return of all of our troops serving throughout the world.