

with itself and become open to the world in a fair and respectful manner. Hong Kong is central to that possibility. As such, it deserves our greatest attention, respect, and good will.

Hong Kong is important unto itself; it is also a model for others. In particular, what happens there is watched with great interest by the people of Taiwan. In a globalist world where peoples everywhere are seeking a sense of community to serve as a buttress against political and economic forces beyond the control of individuals and their families, it is next to impossible to reconcile political systems based on unlike institutions and attitudes. Mutual respect for differences is the key to peace and prosperity in a world in which history suggests conflict has been a generational norm.

IN RECOGNITION OF ROBERT C.
THORNTON, JR.

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, Staff Sgt. Robert C. "Robbie" Thornton, Jr., 35, of Fort Hood, TX, died on August 23, 2004 in Iraq. Staff Sgt. Thornton was a tank commander in the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, TX, and was killed when his patrol came under rocket-propelled grenade attack. He is survived by his wife Ellen, and children, Bradley, 6, and Breanna, 3. He is the son of Dominique Thornton, of Belen, NM, and retired Lt. Col. Robert Thornton, Sr.

Robbie Thornton was eager to serve his country, Mr. Speaker, and loved classical music. He was a graduate of Jacksonville High School in Jacksonville, Alabama, where he was known for his athletic ability, and attended Jacksonville State University. Like every other soldier, he dutifully left behind his family and loved ones to serve our country overseas.

Words cannot express the sense of sadness we have for his family, and for the gratitude our country feels for his service. Staff Sgt. Thornton died serving not just the United States, but the entire cause of liberty, on a noble mission to help spread the cause of freedom in Iraq and liberate an oppressed people from tyrannical rule.

We will forever hold him closely in our hearts, and remember his sacrifice and that of his family as a remembrance of his bravery and willingness to serve.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the House's remembrance on this mournful day.

IN APPRECIATION OF AIPAC

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, for more than half a century, the relationship between the United States and Israel has been a cornerstone of American national security and our commitment to freedom and democracy. During the cold war, Israel provided intelligence and support to our efforts to confront the ty-

anny of Soviet communism. The experience gained by Israeli soldiers, who fought three major wars against armies equipped with the latest Soviet military equipment, was invaluable to our efforts to devise equipment and tactics to maintain military superiority over the Soviet Union.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, Israel has continued to act as a valuable partner in our efforts to bring stability and freedom to an increasingly volatile and unstable part of the world. In 1991, Israel absorbed numerous Iraqi SCUD missile attacks without retaliating, so as not to fracture the global coalition that was working to oust Saddam Hussein's troops from Kuwait. Throughout its history, but especially in the 1990s and into this decade, Israeli civilians have been killed in enormous numbers in an ongoing campaign of suicide bombings and other acts of terrorism by those who will never countenance the existence of the Jewish State. Even as they mourned their dead, Israelis worked for peace with their Arab neighbors and the Palestinian people.

Most remarkably, despite these existential challenges, Israel has remained a democracy. Surrounded by autocracies, dictatorships and monarchies who have made its destruction a centerpiece of their national identity, Israel has continued to hold regular elections and its politics are some of the most spirited and free-wheeling in the world. Truly, Israel has remained "a light unto the nations." Time and again, Israel has sacrificed its security for its values—most recently this summer when the Israeli Supreme Court ordered the government to reroute part of the security fence.

For many in Congress, AIPAC has been an invaluable asset in helping us to understand the many dimensions of the American-Israeli partnership. AIPAC is effective because it has a long track record of providing policymakers and Members with accurate, comprehensive information about the Middle East. It is not surprising that AIPAC's annual meeting and dinner is an important event for Democrats and Republicans, Members of Congress and administration officials, presidents, governors and mayors. Our attendance is a testament to the esteem in which we hold AIPAC and the partnership between Israel and the United States that it seeks to advance.

I have worked with AIPAC throughout my tenure in Congress and I have found AIPAC members to be dedicated, patriotic Americans who deeply believe that the security of the United States and the security of Israel are mutually dependent. And I look forward to many more years of working with AIPAC and its members to address common threats to our security and to freedom-loving nations around the globe.

THE ROAD TO RUSSIAN TERROR
GOES THROUGH SAUDI ARABIA

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the U.S. State Department announced today that for the first time Saudi Arabia has been placed on a list of countries who have engaged in "particularly severe violations" of religious freedom, and faces possible sanctions by the

United States as a result. Today's action simply underscores a point that I have made time and time again, namely, that the Saudis have been funding for many, many years madrassas where Wahhabism is taught, and Wahhabism is a radical fundamentalist Muslim religion that teaches children to hate Christians and Jews, and to perpetrate violent acts against them.

Wahhabism is also the philosophical and religious underpinning of Saudi-born Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist network. The simple fact is, wherever you find Wahhabis you will find fertile ground for al-Qaida and its supporters.

The Russian people learned this painful lesson when 30 Chechen rebels took control of a schoolhouse on the first day of school, and killed at least 338 people, half of them children who were going to school for their first day. According to the reports, 10 of those people who were terrorists were Arabs, and we believe that they were probably from Saudi Arabia. In addition, the attacks were reportedly planned by Shamil Basayev, a Chechen rebel commander, and financed by Abu Omar as-Seyf, a radical Islamic Wahhabite, who is not surprisingly believed to be associated with al-Qaida.

Mr. Speaker, I commend to my colleagues an article published in the September 20, 2004, edition of the *Weekly Standard* and written by Stephen Schwartz, entitled "The Road from Riyadh to Beslan." The article lays out quite clearly how the Chechen separatist movement has been hijacked by the Islamist radical Jihadist movement, and makes a compelling case that we must compel Saudi Arabia to cut off funding for global Wahhabism if we are to avoid more 9/11s and Beslans. I urge my colleagues to read this article and I would like to have the text of this article placed into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD following my statement.

[From the *Weekly Standard*, Sept. 20, 2004]

THE ROAD FROM RIYADH TO BESLAN

(By Stephen Schwartz)

Three roads led to the horror at Beslan in the Russian republic of North Ossetia in which at least 330 people, most of them children, died: one road beginning in Grozny, the capital of neighboring Chechnya; one road beginning in Moscow, to the north; and one road beginning in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, far to the south. Americans need to know how such frightful events are connected to the global war on terror, and the degree to which they must threaten our own peace of mind.

The main culprits in Beslan were Islamic extremists. Since at least 1999, these violent fanatics, with backing from the Wahhabi sect of Saudi Arabia and financial support from radicals throughout the global Muslim community, have assiduously agitated to take over the Chechen national movement (about which more in a moment).

The participation of "Arabs"—meaning Saudis and other Wahhabi influenced Muslim foreigners—is a constant in reportage and comment on Beslan and earlier terrorist incidents in Chechnya, as well as in neighboring Ingushetia, in Georgia, and in Russia itself. The majority of Chechens, most of whom want only to be left alone, are not averse to the Wahhabi offensive, which is one reason most attacks now take place outside Chechnya.

Meanwhile, the Islamists hope to exploit old rivalries between the Chechens, Ingushes, and other Muslim peoples of the Caucasus