

of illicit drugs. Year after year billions upon billions of dollars end up in the hands of the cartel bosses who traffic these deadly goods. The flow of drugs will only stop if the flow of money can be contained. It can only be contained if our allies all over the world work together with us to rid the world of that terrible scourge. I rise today to pay tribute to one of those important allies, the Caribbean nation of Aruba. This small island state is leading the way in efforts to counter drug trafficking and drug-related money laundering.

In the past, money laundering organizations have attempted to use Aruba's offshore banking and incorporation systems, free-zone areas, and resort/casino complexes to transfer and to launder drug proceeds. However, the timely implementation and rigorous enforcement of anti money-laundering and asset-seizure laws have set an example for others to follow.

Prime Minister Nelson Oduber and the Government of Aruba should be commended for recently issuing several decrees on money laundering that include increased oversight of casinos and insurance companies. The Government of Aruba also is in the process of instituting reporting requirements for cross-border currency movements in excess of 20,000 Aruban florins, approximately US\$11,200. Aruba has a Financial Intelligence Unit and is a member of the Egmont Group, an international group of financial intelligence units.

The Aruba Organized Crime Unit and the Criminal Intelligence Unit of the Coast Guard of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba fight drug trafficking right alongside the United States Drug Enforcement Agency. Furthermore, Aruba serves as one of two forward operating locations in the Caribbean for U.S. counterdrug aircraft. The forward operating location, located at Queen Beatrix Airport near Oranjestad, provides a landing and servicing area for counterdrug detection and monitoring missions in the region.

For this cooperation, I would like to express the heartfelt thanks of the American people. With allies like Aruba on our side, we can win this war, too.

IN HONOR OF THE 350TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, on September 12, 2004 a service was held for the 350th anniversary of the Congregation Shearith Israel in New York City. The Congregation, founded by 23 impoverished Brazilian Jews seeking refuge in New Amsterdam, marked the beginning of Jewish life in America. What began as a small settlement, nearly 122 years before American independence, grew into a community that not only benefited from the equality and religious freedom found here, but had a profound influence on such ideals over the course of American history. The American Jewish community has played a role in the extension of freedom, justice and social equality to all our people. Mr. Speaker, I would like to enter into the RECORD the sermon given by Rabbi Marc D. Angel on the occasion of the

350th anniversary of the Congregation Shearith Israel.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." These words from the American Declaration of Independence reflect the deepest ideals and aspirations of the American people. America is not merely a country, vast and powerful; America is an idea, a vision of life as it could be.

When these words were first proclaimed on July 4, 1776, Congregation Shearith Israel was almost 122 years old. It was a venerable community, with an impressive history—a bastion of Jewish faith and tradition, and an integral part of the American experience. When the British invaded New York in 1776, a large group of congregants including our Hazan Rev. Gershom Mendes Seixas, left the city rather than live under British rule. Many joined the Revolutionary army and fought for American independence.

Some remained in New York, and conducted services in our synagogue building on Mill Street. Early in the war, two British soldiers broke into the synagogue and desecrated two Torah scrolls. This was not just an attack on scrolls, but was a symbolic assault on the spiritual foundations of Judaism, the self-same foundations upon which the American republic has been built. In our service today, we read from one of these Torah scrolls as a symbolic response to those soldiers, and to all those who would seek to undermine the eternal teachings of Torah and the principles of American democracy: we are not intimidated, we are not afraid. Generation by generation, we will continue to live by our ideals and by our faith. Generation by generation, we will lend our strength to the great American enterprise that promises hope and freedom, one nation under God, with liberty and justice for all.

Our story in America is not built on historical abstractions, but on generations of Jews who have played their roles in the unfolding of this nation. It is a very personal history, ingrained in our collective memory.

Attending this service today are descendants of Jews of the Colonial period, whose ancestors served in the American Revolution; descendants of families including de Lucena, Gomez, Nathan, Hendricks, Phillips, Franks, Cardozo, Seixas. We welcome descendants of Rev. Johannes Polhemus, minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, who was on the same ship as the first group of 23 Jews who arrived in New Amsterdam in September 1654.

We welcome representatives of our sister congregations that date back to the Colonial period: from the Touro Synagogue in Newport; from Mikveh Israel in Philadelphia; we have representatives or words of congratulations from the historic congregations in Savannah, Charleston and Richmond. We welcome members of our sister congregation, the Spanish and Portuguese community of London.

We welcome elected officials and representatives. We welcome officers of the 20th precinct, who serve our community with courage and dedication. We welcome leaders of the American Jewish community, and those who have worked so hard for Celebrate 350, the national umbrella group commemorating the 350th anniversary of American Jewry. Indeed we welcome all congregants and friends who have gathered here today on this historic occasion.

A number of those present today participated in the Tercentenary celebrations of 1954. We have a member here today whose mother—now 107 years old—was part of our

community during the 250th anniversary celebrations in 1904/5.

Among us are descendants of Jews from all parts of the world, Jews who came to America at different times and under different circumstances; including those who are themselves first generation Americans and first generation Jews. For 350 years, our generations have been part of the American experience, and have striven to make this a better nation.

We have just read from the Revolutionary Period Torah scroll, from the section known as "Kedoshim", only a few columns from where the British soldier damaged the scroll. Kedoshim opens with a challenge to the people of Israel to be a holy nation, to live according to the commandments of God, to have the courage and inner strength to maintain Torah ideals in a world that is not always receptive to such lofty teachings. The portion goes on to specify how we are to manifest holiness: through charity; honesty; commitment to truth and justice; through the avoidance of gossip and hatred. It culminates with the words: *ve-ahavta le-re-aha kamokha*, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself. The very principles of enjoined by this passage are the spiritual foundations of the United States of America. These teachings are constant reminders of how to live a good life and build a righteous society; they also are prods to make us realize how far short we fall from these ideals, how much more work remains to be done.

On this 350th anniversary of the American Jewish community, we reflect on the courage and heroic efforts of our forbearers who have maintained Judaism as a vibrant and living force in our lives. We express gratitude to America for having given us—and all citizens—the freedom to practice our faith. This very freedom has energized and strengthened America.

Within Congregation Shearith Israel, we have been blessed with men and women who have helped articulate Jewish ideals and American ideals. Their voices have blended with the voices of fellow Americans of various religions and races, to help shape the dream and reality of America.

The American Declaration of Independence pronounced that all men are created equal. In his famous letter to the Jewish community of Newport, in August 1790, President George Washington hailed the United States for allowing its citizens freedom—not as a favor bestowed by one group on another—but in recognition of the inherent natural rights of all human beings. This country, wrote President Washington, "gives bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance".

And yet, if equality and human dignity are at the core of American ideals, the fulfillment of these ideals have required—and still require—sacrifice and devotion. Reality has not always kept up with the ideal. In 1855, Shearith Israel member Uriah Phillips Levy—who rose to the rank of Commodore in the U.S. Navy—was dropped from the Navy's active duty list. He was convinced that anti-Semitism was at the root of this demotion. He appealed the ruling and demanded justice. He asked: are people "now to learn to their sorrow and dismay that we too have sunk into the mire of religious intolerance and bigotry? . . . What is my case today, if you yield to this injustice, may tomorrow be that of the Roman Catholic or the Unitarian, the Presbyterian or the Methodist, the Episcopalian or the Baptist. There is but one safeguard: that is to be found in honest, whole-hearted, inflexible support of the wise, the just the impartial guarantee of the Constitution." Levy won his case. He helped the United States remain true to its principles.

Shearith Israel member Moses Judah (1735–1822) believed that all men were created

equal—including black men. In 1799, he was elected to the New York Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slaves. During his tenure on the standing committee between 1806 and 1809, about 50 slaves were freed. Through his efforts, many other slaves achieved freedom. He exerted himself to fight injustice, to expand the American ideals of freed and equality regardless of race or religion.

Another of our members, Maud Nathan, believed that all men were created equal but so were all women created equal. She was a fiery, internationally renowned suffragette, who worked tirelessly to advance a vision of America that indeed recognized the equality of all its citizens—men and women. As president of the consumer league of New York from 1897–1917, Maud Nathan was a pioneer in social activism, working for the improvement of working conditions of employees in New York's department stores. Equality and human dignity were the rights of all Americans, rich and poor, men and women.

The Declaration of Independence proclaimed that human beings have unalienable rights; among them are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. These words express the hope and optimism of America. They are a repudiation of the tyranny and oppression that prevailed—and still prevail—in so many lands. America is a land of opportunity, where people can live in freedom. The pursuit of happiness really signifies the pursuit of self-fulfillment, of a meaningful way of life. America's challenge was—and still is—to create a harmonious society that allows us to fulfill our potentials.

President George Washington declared a day of national Thanksgiving for November 26, 1789. Shearith Israel held a service, at which Hazan Gershom Mendes Seixas called on this congregation “to unite, with cheerfulness and uprightness . . . to promote that which has a tendency to the public good.” Hazzan Seixas believed that Jews, in being faithful to Jewish tradition, would be constructive and active participants in American society.

Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness were not reserved only for those born in America; they are the rights of all human beings everywhere. This notion underlies the idealism of the American dream, calling for a sense of responsibility for all suffering people, whether at home or abroad. American Jews have been particularly sensitive and responsive to this ideal.

On March 8th, 1847, Hazan Jacques Judah Lyons addressed a gathering at Shearith Israel for the purpose of raising funds for Irish famine relief. The potato crop in Ireland had failed in 1846, resulting in widespread famine. Hazan Lyons well realized that the Jewish community needed charitable dollars for its own internal needs; and yet he insisted that Jews reach out and help the people of Ireland. He said that there was one indestructible and all-powerful link between us and the Irish sufferers: “That link, my brethren, is HUMANITY! Its appeal to hear surmounts every obstacle. Clime, color, sect are barriers which impede not its progress thither.” In assisting with Irish famine relief, the Jewish community reflected its commitment to the well-being of all suffering human beings. American Jewry grew into—and has continued to be—a great philanthropic community perhaps unmatched in history. Never have so few given so much to so many. In this, we have been true to our Jewish tradition, and true to the spirit of America.

Who articulated the hope and promise of America more eloquently than Emma Lazarus? “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breath free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send

these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.” How appropriate is it that her poem is affixed to the great symbol of American freedom, the Statue of Liberty.

Alice Menken, (for many years president of our Sisterhood) did remarkable work to help immigrants, to assist young women who ran into trouble with the law, to promote reform of the American prison system. She wrote: “We must seek a balanced philosophy of life. We must live to make the world worth living in, with new ideals, less suffering, and more joy.”

Americans see ourselves as one nation, indivisible, under God, with liberty and justice for all. Yet, liberty and justice are not automatically attained. They have required—and still require—wisdom, vigilance, and active participation. American legal tradition has been enriched by the insights and the work of many American Jews.

In one of his essays, Justice Benjamin Nathan Cardozo—a devoted member of Shearith Israel—referred to a Talmudic passage which has been incorporated into our prayer book. It asks that the Almighty let His mercy prevail over strict justice. Justice Cardozo reminded us that the American system relies not only on justice—but on mercy. Mercy entails not merely an understanding of laws, but an understanding of the human predicament, of human nature, of the circumstances prevailing in human society. Another of our members, Federal Judge William Herlands, echoed this sentiment when he stated the Justice without Mercy—is just ice!

Our late rabbi Henry Pereira Mendes, David de Sola Pool and Louis C. Gerstein, were singularly devoted to social welfare, to religious education, to the land of Israel. They distinguished themselves for their devotion to Zionism, and played their parts in the remarkable unfolding of the State of Israel. They, along with so many American Jews, have keenly understood how much unites Israel and the United States—two beacons of democracy and idealism in a very troubled world.

These individuals—along with so many other American Jews—were exponents of the American ideals and the American dream. During the past 350 years, the American Jewish community has accomplished much and contributed valiantly to all aspects of American life. We have been free to practice our faith and teach our Torah. We have worked with Americans of others faiths and traditions to mold a better, stronger, more idealistic nation.

America today is not just a powerful and vast country. It is also an idea, a compelling idea that has a message for all people in all lands. As American Jews, we are committed to the ideals of freedom and equality, human dignity and security, to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, the pursuit of harmony among ourselves and throughout the world. We have come far as a nation, but very much remains to be done. May God give us the strength and the resolve to carry on, to work proudly as Jews to bring the American dream to many more generations of humanity.

I close with a prayer spoken by Mordecai Manuel Noah at the consecration of our second Mill Street Synagogue on April 17, 1818: “May we prove ever worthy of His blessing; may He look down from His heavenly abode, and send us peace and comfort; may He instill in our minds a love of country, of friends, and of all mankind. Be just, therefore, and fear not. That God who brought us out of the land of Egypt, who walked before us like ‘a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night,’ will never desert his people Israel.”

MILITARY PERSONNEL FINANCIAL SERVICES PROTECTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 5, 2004

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5011, a bill to correct abusive practices in the sale of financial products to our military.

This bill was strongly supported by myself and all my colleagues on the Financial Services Committee because it provides a necessary correction to a real problem.

Over the past several years, we have seen the growth of unprincipled sales practices pushing marginal financial products, blatantly unsuitable for military personnel.

These contractual plans impose staggering fees and draconian early termination penalties.

They are so undesirable that they are not sold in the civilian market, where the force of normal competition has driven them out.

All the more shame that certain brokers used privileged on-base access to military personnel to force this product on servicemen facing combat.

Our nation's military personnel deserve the best possible financial advice about all the options available to them, with complete and accurate information, clearly presented.

At the very least, they shouldn't be subjected to unscrupulous sales practices or offered financial products that no civilian would choose and that are not suitable for any investor. We should have banned these products and practices years ago; it is high time to do so now.

CONGRATULATIONS TO PARTNERS OF THE AMERICAS ON THEIR 40 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, in 1963 President John F. Kennedy launched the Alliance for Progress, a program of government-to-government economic cooperation across the Western Hemisphere. At the same time, he called for the creation of a parallel people-to-people initiative and the Partners of the Alliance was established the following year. After its founding, the idea of engaging in citizen-to-citizen programs under the direct participation and leadership of the people of the Americas led to the Alliance's re-organization in the private sector. With this change in status also came a new name: Partners of the Americas.

Today Partners of the Americas celebrates 40 years of bringing together citizen volunteers, their institutions and communities from throughout the Americas to address shared concerns of economic, social and cultural development. Partners' commitment to building on these enduring relationships among people of Latin America, the Caribbean and the U.S. is what makes Partners truly unique. These relationships fostered by Partners help spark creative ideas, cultivate friendship and ultimately, produce positive change.