

This is a place where the simplicity of life is fully enjoyed and its complexities are dealt with one day at a time.

While still facing economic and social challenges in its development, the Bahamas remain a popular tourist attraction which enjoys excellent relations with the U.S. The country and its government have worked diligently to uplift itself and move towards prosperity. The islands offer a rich diversity of geography, history, and beauty that attracts visitors and guests from around the world. Tourism alone provides an estimated 60 percent of the gross domestic product and employs about half the Bahamian work force. In 2000, more than 4 million tourists visited the Bahamas, 83 percent of them from the U.S. With help and assistance from its friends, the Bahamas will continue to grow in prosperity, peace, and beauty.

I congratulate the people of the Bahamas on their 32nd Independence Day and know that many more years of successful growth and economic development are ahead of them. I also wish our friends in the Bahamas years of peace and tranquility, independence and justice, and a robust and prosperous economy.

BAHAMAS IS BLESSED—DAME IVY

Governor-General Ivy Dumont reminded Bahamians of how blessed the country has been over the years, as celebrations to mark 32 years of independent nationhood unfolded at Clifford Park on Saturday night.

In her Independence Day message, Mrs. Dumont said since 1973, Bahamians have made much progress in national economic and political life. She challenged all political, spiritual and civic leaders to continue to adopt the fundamental doctrine upon which the country's independence was declared. That principle, she said, is a national commitment to self-discipline, industry, loyalty, unity and an abiding respect for Christian values and the rule of law.

"As a people we have many reasons to celebrate, not least being the blessings upon our nation flowing from our godly heritage. It is to this rich spiritual legacy that we, as Bahamians, attribute our orderly and sustained economic, social and political development. Accordingly, respect for and service to God must remain the centerpiece of our national life."

Prime Minister Perry Christie also noted the importance of observing the founding of the nation in his Independence Day message.

He pointed out that while other nations were forged out of war, revolution and bloodshed, The Bahamas emerged out of a peaceful transition from colonial rule to an independent state.

"For those of us who were witnesses to this momentous occasion—the birth of a nation—the enthusiasm, pride and reverence for this day will forever remain fresh in our minds," Mr. Christie said.

"It is important therefore, that we seek to pass on these same sentiments to the many who view the 10th July, 1973 as merely an historical date, so that the sense of patriotism and national pride will forever burn bright in the hearts and minds of all Bahamians."

He recalled that Independence Day has always been a time of great festivity throughout the country. Mr. Christie expressed that every nation should celebrate its founding and development, because nationhood embodies, among other attributes, the culture, ethnicity, values, history and the collective strength of a people.

Thirty-two years ago, under the watchful gaze of thousands of Bahamians, the Union

Jack was lowered and the black, aquamarine, and gold-coloured flag of an independent Bahamas was hoisted for the first time on Clifford Park.

The Bahamas was now a sovereign nation, having been a colony of Great Britain for 250 years.

THE WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2005

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2864, the Water Resources Development Act. I want to thank and commend Subcommittee Chairman JOHN DUNCAN and Ranking Member EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON and Committee Chairman DON YOUNG and Ranking Member JAMES OBERSTAR for reporting this bill.

This is a very important bill for the American public. The bill reauthorizes the funding for the Army Corps of Engineers for studies and for the development of projects vital to our nation's water resources. This bill will result in better flood control, improved water navigation, the prevention of beach erosion, and environmental restoration.

I have personally seen the positive effects of some of the environment restoration projects funded by the bill. The Hackensack Meadowlands in my district, which is one of the most densely populated areas in the State, is a beautiful, natural wetlands area. But unfortunately, for decades it had been used as a place to dump garbage and toxic waste. Since the remediation authorized by the Water Resources Development Act began in the Meadowlands 10 years ago, water quality has improved and wildlife has been thriving. In this 8,400-acre environmental park just minutes outside of Manhattan, there are more than 50 species of fish and shellfish in the Meadowlands, and there have been notable increases in populations of white perch, Atlantic silverside, and gizzard shad. Two hundred fifty species of birds can be seen in the Meadowlands, and more than 65 species of birds nest there. Migratory birds are in the Meadowlands during their migration cycle in growing numbers, which has made the area an important part of the American ecosystem.

The improvements that the reauthorization of the Water Resources Development Act have made possible are truly amazing. The remediation that has taken place so far in the Meadowlands is a wonderful example of what can be accomplished when concerned citizens, environmental advocates, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Army Corps of Engineers work together. But there is still much work to be done. This important bill will reauthorize the funds to continue the vital efforts to clean up the Meadowlands, as well as to fund numerous other projects that will improve our nation's water resources.

I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

A PROCLAMATION THANKING AIRMAN SCOTT SCHLEGEL FOR HIS SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 19, 2005

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker:

Whereas, Airman Scott Schlegel has served the United States in Operation Iraqi Freedom as a member of the United States Air Force Reserves; and

Whereas, Airman Scott Schlegel is to be commended for the honor and bravery that he displayed while serving our Nation in this time of war by saving a family from drowning; and

Whereas, Airman Scott Schlegel has demonstrated a commitment to meet challenges with enthusiasm, confidence, and outstanding service;

Therefore, I join with the family, friends and the entire 18th Congressional District of Ohio in thanking Airman Scott Schlegel of the United States Air Force for his service to our country. Your service has made us proud.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HARMONY MUSEUM

HON. MELISSA A. HART

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 19, 2005

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Harmony Museum on its 50th anniversary. For the past half century the Harmony Museum has provided the citizens of Harmony Village a detailed look into their past.

The museum was founded in 1955 by members of the Harmony volunteer fire department. Since its inception over 50,000 people have visited the museum to learn more about Harmony's rich historical tradition. Currently, 10 volunteers and a small but dedicated staff maintain the museum's buildings and provide tours.

The 50th anniversary celebration of the museum will include comments from former Historic Harmony President Ruth Werner, borough council President Jeff Smith and Esther Veith Ziegler, daughter of co-founder Reverend Loran Veith. A plaque will be presented to representatives of Harmony volunteer fire department and tours will be provided throughout the day till 4 pm.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring the Harmony Museum on its 50th anniversary. It is an honor to represent the Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania and a pleasure to salute organizations such as the Harmony Museum which provide such valuable services to the communities in which they reside.

TRIBUTE TO KATHRYN FOX

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 19, 2005

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate to one of my constituents,