

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A TRIBUTE TO LIVIU LIBRESCU

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 20, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, it is with deep sorrow that I rise today to mourn the passing of Liviu Librescu, a world renowned professor of aeronautical engineering who was tragically gunned down while saving the lives of his students at Virginia Tech this week.

Madam Speaker, I am compelled to honor Mr. Librescu, not because he is a fellow Holocaust survivor and college professor who persevered and overcame so much, but because he was a human being so extraordinary that his life's journey embodies the word hero.

Liviu Librescu was born in 1930 to a Jewish family in Ploiesti, Romania. During World War II, when Romania joined forces with Nazi Germany, he was imprisoned in a forced labor camp. Subsequently he was sent, along with his family and thousands of others, to a ghetto in the city of Focsani about 100 miles from his home. Hundreds of thousands of Jews from across Romania died in the Focsani Ghetto and in Transnistria, a Romanian-run Nazi killing field where Librescu's father, a lawyer, perished.

Liviu survived the horrors of the Focsani Ghetto and the Holocaust and nobly committed his life to academia, studying aerospace engineering at the Polytechnic University of Bucharest, where he received both his undergraduate degree in 1952 and his Masters in 1953. In 1969 he received his Ph.D. in fluid Mechanics from Academia de Stiinte din Romania.

Madam Speaker, Liviu Librescu was a brilliant mind and quickly established himself as a top researcher at the Bucharest Institute of Applied Mechanics and the Academy of Science of Romania. But his refusal to swear allegiance to the destructive Communist regime in Romania ultimately left him jobless. Without means to support his wife, Marlene, and two sons, Joe and Arie, Librescu tried to leave Romania for Israel. But under the Romanian communist regime Jews were not allowed to emigrate. In 1978 the Romanian government finally permitted Liviu to leave, but only after a direct request was made by the Prime Minister of Israel—Menachem Begin—to Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu.

From 1979 to 1986 Librescu was a Professor of Aeronautical and Mechanical Engineering at Tel-Aviv University and Haifa's Technion. In 1985 he took sabbatical from Tel Aviv University to research and teach at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia. He quickly became a vital part of the School of Engineering Science and Mechanics, and in 1986 decided to make Blacksburg and Virginia Tech his full-time home.

Professor Librescu had a distinguished career as one of Virginia Tech's premier lecturers; he published hundreds of prestigious

papers, received numerous awards and honorary degrees and did extensive research for NASA.

Madam Speaker, these extraordinary accomplishments in the face of such tribulations made Liviu Librescu a hero to those who knew him. But his actions on the morning of April 16, 2007 shine through as beacon of everything that embodies his heroic spirit. On that frightful morning when a deranged gunman chose Librescu's classroom as a target for his heinous, senseless murdering spree, Liviu Librescu barricaded himself against the classroom door in an attempt to lock the gunman out. He told his students to flee while he threw his body against the door. Librescu was fatally shot, but the gunman never managed to gain access and no student in the classroom was harmed.

Madam Speaker, I do not think the English language has words worthy enough to describe the selfless courage and boundless humanity of Liviu Librescu. The world has suffered a tragic loss with the end of this one life. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the legacy of Liviu Librescu, which lives on in the people that he saved and in the hearts he inspired worldwide.

IN RECOGNITION OF EARTH DAY 2007

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 20, 2007

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Earth Day, which we will celebrate April 22, 2007. On the very first Earth Day in 1970, 20 million Americans stood together for the environment. They filled our country's streets, parks, and auditoriums to announce their dedication to protecting the earth, and they asked their government to stand with them.

What began 37 years ago as a grassroots movement in the United States has now spread to 175 countries, and is observed each year by 500 million people worldwide. The importance of Earth Day is underscored by the threat of global climate change. As the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded with near certainty this February, people are a large part of the problem, but we are also capable of coming up with solutions.

I am proud that the new House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming met this week for the first time. I commend the Speaker for making this issue a priority, and I commend the new panel's members for their efforts in moving us towards solutions to the problem of global climate change.

The City of Chicago is leading the way in transitioning to a "green-friendly" world and is now a model for other cities across the country. Chicago is among the largest users of green energy in the country, and the city has

set a goal of using renewable energy for roughly a quarter of city operations.

As part of the process, Chicago has attracted two solar panel manufacturers to the city. Additionally, Chicago has planted or negotiated the construction of over 2 million square feet of rooftop gardens, more than all other U.S. cities combined.

Madam Speaker, I recognize that as a member of Congress and a father, we have a duty to preserve our Nation's environmental treasures for generations to come. This Earth Day, I hope that we can build on the momentum of my hometown and work together to improve the outlook for our planet and make this a better place for our children. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating this Earth Day, and many more to come.

HONORING MARINE CORPS FIRST LIEUTENANT SHAUN BLUE

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 20, 2007

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is with great respect and deep sadness that I wish to commend United States Marine Corps 1LT Shaun Blue for his bravery in the field of battle and his willingness to fight for his country. First Lieutenant Blue was killed in action during combat operations near Iraq's Anbar province on April 16, 2007. His sacrifice will be remembered by a community that has been struck hard by the devastating loss of one of its own.

A lifelong resident of Munster, Indiana, Shaun is remembered by his community as an intelligent, determined, and trustworthy leader. As a young boy, Shaun was active in the Boy Scouts, and it was at this time that his commitment and leadership abilities began to emerge. At Munster High School, Shaun was an accomplished student, graduating in the top 10 in his class and named a National Merit Scholar. As an athlete, Shaun participated on the cross-country and track and field teams, where his drive and dedication served as an example to his teammates and a source of pride for his school.

Following his graduation from Munster High School in 2000, Shaun went on to attend the University of Southern California, where he majored in philosophy. Shaun completed the ROTC program at USC with the intention of going on to serve as a leader for yet another group of his peers as an officer in the United States Marine Corps.

Having been on his second tour in Iraq, Shaun was fully committed to serving his country, and those with whom he served had the utmost respect and unwavering faith in his abilities. This respect was also shared by his superiors, as is evidenced by the numerous medals he was awarded, including the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Combat Action Ribbon, and the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon.

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