

HONORING IRENE GARAS

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 26, 2013

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Irene Garas and in recognition of her centennial birthday on April 29, 2013.

Irene Garas is a truly remarkable woman. As a Holocaust survivor, she has been a courageous example of perseverance and tenacity. During World War II, Irene, her daughter, Kathy, and her sister, Margaret, all avoided capture when the Nazis occupied Hungary. Irene escaped the deportation of virtually all Jewish residents in her community by hiding in an armoire in her apartment complex, ultimately obtaining forged papers identifying her with an alternate surname. She secured papers not only for herself, but also for Kathy and Margaret, helping them to avoid capture as well. Irene's first husband, Louis, was also incredibly daring, escaping from a labor camp to avoid deportation to another camp outside of Hungary in 1945.

After World War II, Irene's brother, who already lived in the United States, obtained visas that allowed a number of family members and friends to immigrate. Irene and seven other family members and friends left for America on the SS Washington from England, and arrived in New York City in March 1948. Before World War II, Irene was a well-respected corsetiere in her Hungarian hometown. When she arrived in the United States, she used her business skills and leadership abilities to open her own store in New York City—helping her to live the American dream.

Irene is cherished by her two children, Kathy and Andrew, her grandchildren—Gary, Michael, Julie, Lisa and Ira—and her five great-grandchildren: Chase, Alexa, Cydney, Zoe and Owen.

Like so many immigrants throughout our history, Irene fled from incredible danger and hardship to seek out liberties that many of us take for granted: the freedom to be herself and the ability to shape her own future. She is a role model for her community, and as a fellow New Yorker, it is an honor to acknowledge her during this momentous milestone in her life.

Mr. Speaker, I join with her family, friends, and neighbors in celebrating Irene Garas for her bravery, accomplishments and contributions to our community. I wish her many more joyous years.

98TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE**HON. SANDER M. LEVIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 26, 2013

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 98th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

For far too long, too many have failed to properly acknowledge this tragedy, let alone commemorate it and honor the lives of its victims. Indeed, despite reams of historical evidence, the actions of the Ottoman Empire 98 years ago have often been labeled something other than what they actually were: genocide.

In 1915, the government of the Ottoman Empire started a vicious and systematic campaign of genocide against the Armenian people. What began with the killing of 300 Armenian leaders ultimately resulted in the deaths of one and a half million people and the forced exile of another 500,000.

The chilling scale of this tragedy demands that we continue to commemorate the Armenian Genocide, and remember those who were lost. Throughout my time in Congress, I have cosponsored House resolutions that have affirmed the U.S. record regarding the true nature of this ethnic extermination, and honored its victims and survivors.

We must do all we can to ensure that the historical record contains the absolute truth—a commitment that will help fight against a sense of impunity. Through recognition and remembrance of the Armenian Genocide, we raise awareness of “man’s inhumanity to man,” helping to stop similar tragedies from happening in the future.

I respectfully request that all my colleagues join me today in honoring the victims and survivors of the Armenian Genocide.

AWARDING CONGRESSIONAL GOLD
MEDAL TO ADDIE MAE COLLINS,
DENISE McNAIR, CAROLE ROBERTSON,
AND SYNTHIA WESLEY

SPEECH OF

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 24, 2013

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I stand in solidarity with my colleagues in the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. On that Sunday morning of September 15, 1963, twenty-two people were wounded and four young African American girls, Addie Mae Collins, Cynthia Wesley, Carole Robertson, as well as Denise McNair lost their lives in an act of racial hatred.

The Sixteenth Street Baptist Church was a prime target because of its landmark status in the Civil Rights Movement, having hosted civil rights leaders, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. However, these individuals, who sought to strike fear in the hearts of those fighting for civil and human rights, undoubtedly failed. The bombing of these innocent individuals seeking to find solace in their spiritual faith redoubled the ardor of those fighting against racial prejudice and for equality.

Having been born into segregation, I know the sting of invidious discrimination. Nevertheless, it is heartening to see that all these years later we have made much positive progress toward equality as evidenced by the election of President Barack Obama and my own election to Congress. Notwithstanding the many strides toward freedom, the righteous struggle against hatred in all its forms continues. Let us today reaffirm our abiding commitment for human and civil rights for all.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly endorse and support H.R. 360, which posthumously awards a Congressional Gold Medal to Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Wesley, in recognition of the 50th commemoration of the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church.

IN RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL'S 65TH
INDEPENDENCE DAY**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 26, 2013

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate Israel's 65th Independence Day. Sixty-five years ago, the day before the expiration of the British Mandate, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion declared the establishment of Israel as the national home for the Jewish people. The celebrations taking place today in New York and across the country commemorate that inaugural event and underscore the special bond between the United States and Israel.

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations issued resolution 181, which approved the Special Committee on Palestine's partition plan establishing a Jewish state. On May 14, 1948 (the 5th of Iyar, 5708 according to the Jewish calendar), the day before the British mandate expired, David Ben-Gurion read the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel in the main hall of what was then the Tel Aviv Museum. President Harry S. Truman waited only minutes to issue the United States' formal recognition of the Jewish State.

Today, Israel remains a beacon of hope and democracy in the Middle East. Throughout its history, Israel has been a safe haven for Jews across the world who have faced persecution and repression. Nonetheless, Israelis have yet to know one day without war. Constantly under attack, Israel has rightfully defended its citizens while also searching for a true partner in peace. Americans strongly identify with Israel's historic struggle for independence and continued hope for a peaceful future. With shared values and shared ideals, Israel is the United States' closest ally in the Middle East. I remain hopeful for a long-term peace agreement so that Israel and its neighbors can finally know peace.

Israel draws its strength from the diversity and tenacity of its people. Israel has demonstrated that a small country with few natural resources, surrounded by hostile nations that deny its right to exist, can still thrive, thanks to its smart investments, an entrepreneurial culture, and a people determined to succeed.

Today, Israel is a center of scientific, medical and technological innovation, and a leader in agriculture, water purification, alternative energy and public health. Israel has more high tech start ups and a larger venture capital industry per capita than any other country in the world. In 2010, Israel became a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), marking it as one of the world's most highly developed economies.

Adversity has challenged Israel to innovate in ways that have improved lives across the globe. Lacking potable water, Israel has invested in desalination plants that have significantly reduced its need to pump water from the Sea of Galilee. Lacking arable land, it developed drip irrigation systems that are now being implemented in other desert countries. Lacking energy, it has pioneered advances in solar and wind energy. Lacking security, it has built some of the most effective security products and strategies.