

this decade. We in Estonia never shared this enthusiasm. But neither do we share the gloom of many Western observers today who seem to write off Russia and to say that nothing good will ever come out of there. I believe that Russia can indeed become a truly democratic country. But it will simply take a lot of time. What Russia needs during this time of growing up is firm guidance on what is and what is not permitted in our new world.

Today we see once again the bombing of villages and the killing of civilians in Chechnya. We see the deportation of tens of thousands of persons from Moscow—simply because of the different colour of their skin. And we see worrying calls for a strong man to lead Russia. All of these symptoms give cause for concern. We must in no way nurture these trends, we must in no way give people who advocate such policies a reason to believe that they are accepted or tolerated by the West. Rather we have to support those politicians in Russia who even today are expressing reservations about the war in Chechnya and the deportation of persons because of the colour of their skin. We must nurture the democratic forces in Russia, however weak, so that Russia may one day find the political will to abandon her post-feudal way of thinking and start to build a civil society. This means supporting the Russian democrats and providing assistance, but precisely targeted assistance. It means staying engaged with Russia. It means stability around Russia will be the best way to assist her democratic forces. It also means enlarging NATO to include those countries of central Europe that wish to join, including the Baltic states.

Ladies and Gentlemen, One of the fundamental tenets of our common heritage is the promotion of the free right of men and nations to choose their destiny. It is a tenet, which underpins the international society in which we live and where we wish to live. This is the principle, which should guide us when discussing the future NATO membership of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Any word—any hint—that Russia has a say in this matter will only strengthen those in Moscow who aim to do things the old feudal way. It will strengthen those who do not wish to have Russia become a member of the democratic society of nations. It will bring us all further from the goal of enhancing the sphere of stability and security in Europe.

In short, Baltic NATO membership is in the interest of those who wish to strengthen democracy in Russia.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have approached Baltic membership in NATO from two angles: from a European and from a Russian one. Europe's role within NATO is growing and the Baltic states are committed to being part of this development. We are willing to carry our share of the burden.

On the other hand, Russia's future is only now taking shape and Baltic membership of NATO will help steer this development in the right direction.

The Baltic Caucus in the Senate and in the House and Baltic Americans are a crucial element in our strategy for gaining membership of the Alliance. It is you who are our advocates both here in Washington and across the United States. I hope that my presentation here today has further served to strengthen your resolve and has provided you with some additional ideas on this issue. I am convinced that by working together we can achieve our common goal so that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania may in the near

future join the United States as full members of NATO.

By working together, Estonia and the US, the Baltic states and the US, Europe and the US, we can ensure that our world of tomorrow will be somewhat safer, somewhat more democratic, somewhat more prosperous than the world of today.

Thank you.

TRIBUTE TO REAR ADMIRAL
NORBERT R. RYAN, JR.

HON. FLOYD SPENCE

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 13, 1999

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rear Admiral Norbert R. Ryan, Jr., the outgoing Chief of Legislative Affairs for the U.S. Navy. During the past three years, he has proven to be an invaluable asset to the House Armed Services Committee, the House of Representatives and the Congress. It is an honor to have the opportunity to thank Rear Admiral Ryan for his dedicated service and to recognize him for his accomplishments.

A native of Mountainhome, Pennsylvania, Rear Admiral Ryan began his military career after graduating from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1967. From the beginning, Rear Admiral Ryan demonstrated his leadership skills, and in 1993 after a distinguished career as an aviator, Rear Admiral Ryan was selected for rear admiral (lower half). In 1996, Rear Admiral Ryan was selected to represent the Navy on Capitol Hill as Chief of Legislative Affairs. Given the significant changes in Navy leadership during his tenure, Rear Admiral Ryan's steadfast leadership and strategic vision may be credited with keeping the Navy's legislative strategy on course. Over the past three legislative cycles, I watched as he successfully navigated Navy leadership through difficult challenges to key naval programs including the F/A-18E/FSuperhornet, the CVN-77/CVN(X), the DD-21, Tactical Tomahawk, Virginia Class Submarines, shipyard maintenance and the Navy's role in Kosovo.

As Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, I have had the pleasure of working closely with Norb Ryan. His success has been due in no small part to the strong relationships that he has built with Members of the House and our staffs. He enhanced these action, and established an impressive program to maximize congressional exposure to the men and women who serve in the Navy and Marine Corps.

Rear Admiral Ryan may also be credited with initiating a series of Congressional Constituent Caseworker workshops by geographical region. Today, these workshops are invaluable to Members of Congress and ensure that we have the information we need on Navy programs to respond to the concerns of our constituents.

Rear Admiral Ryan's tireless efforts throughout his distinguished career have benefited America's Navy. He is a spirited and resourceful naval officer with whom it has been a pleasure to work. I look forward to working with Norb in the future and am certain that his contributions in the years ahead will continue to benefit both the Navy and the Nation.

While his presence on Capitol Hill will be missed, Rear Admiral Ryan will be doing critically important work in his new role as Chief of Naval Personnel. I can think of few officers as well suited to leading America's navy into the new millenium. As his career sails on, I would like to send Rear Admiral Ryan the traditional Navy farewell wish—"Fair Winds and Following Seas!"

TRIBUTE TO MIKE PETRO

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 13, 1999

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Firefighter Mike Petro for his dedication and service to the Orange County Fire Department. Mike Petro joined the fire service in 1984 as a volunteer fire fighter in north San Diego while he was a freshman in college. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection later hired him to be a Seasonal Firefighter. In 1989, Mike was hired as a Firefighter with the Orange County Fire Department, now the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA).

During Mike Petro's service career he has participated in and remains on several Fire Authority and County wide pre-hospital emergency care committees including: Local 3631 Pre-Hospital Care Committee, Equipment Project Team and EMS Continuous Quality Improvement Steering Committee. He has served as a Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Instructor and teaches CPR classes for the OCFA's community CPR program. Additionally, he is an Emergency Medical Technician instructor for Rancho Santiago Community College and a guest lecturer for Saddleback Community College's Paramedic program. Mike Petro has also been a Paramedic Preceptor and an assistant instructor for Career and Reserve OCFA fire fighter academies.

Mr. Speaker, firefighters provide key services in protecting communities and citizens, as well as our Nation's forests. Mike Petro has gone above and beyond the call of duty in his service to the Orange County Community. I am proud to recognize Mike Petro as Firefighter of the Year.

TRIBUTE TO ANSON COUNTY
JAYCEES

HON. ROBIN HAYES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 13, 1999

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Anson County, North Carolina chapter of the Jaycees.

The Anson County Jaycees were recognized as the number one chapter in North Carolina Jaycees Parade of Excellence.

The Jaycees are a national organization of men and women between the ages of 21-39 who want the best opportunities for leadership development, volunteerism, and community service.